
DELIVERING A MARINE PARK FOR JERSEY

For people, nature and climate

A BRIEFING BY **BLUE MARINE FOUNDATION**

APRIL 2022



**BLUE MARINE
FOUNDATION**



Photo: James Bowden



BLUE MARINE FOUNDATION

FIVE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

to safeguard Jersey's marine environment for future generations.

1

Designate a Marine Park covering at least 30 per cent of Jersey's territorial waters, matching global targets.

2

Close the entirety of the Marine Park to destructive bottom-towed fishing gear¹.

3

Agree a 'just transition' plan for the approximately eight Jersey fishing vessels that currently use bottom-towed gear.

4

Champion low-impact fisheries within the Marine Park through the development of a low-impact fisheries strategy.

5

Fulfil Jersey's carbon neutral targets by protecting Jersey's blue carbon habitats from disturbance.

A VISION FOR A MARINE PARK

Jersey has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to show global leadership by creating a Marine Park in its waters that delivers for people and nature, and reveal the Island as one of the world's most accessible marine eco-tourism destinations.

Jersey's beautiful marine environment, with its kelp forests, seagrass and maerl beds, showcase some of the best shallow marine habitats in the British Isles. Many species call these waters home, such as dolphins, seals, tuna and on occasion, even the odd sunfish.

A Jersey Marine Park would cover approximately 900 square kilometres and protect 'high-value habitats' – habitats that are essential for biodiversity, carbon sequestration, sustaining fisheries and the wellbeing of Jersey's population - from inappropriate development and damaging activities. It would include all shallow marine habitats, extending approximately to the 20m depth contour and

would incorporate existing No Mobile Gear Zones and conservation designations at Les Minquiers, Les Écréhous and around Jersey's coastline. Such an area would be several times the size of the Island itself, equating to over 30 per cent of Jersey's territorial waters. These areas provide extensive ecosystem services and their protection would allow for substantial growth of Jersey's natural capital.

Designation of a Marine Park would emphasise the incredible marine environment that surrounds our island by providing a shared sense of responsibility and ownership, as envisaged when the Crown gifted the seabed to the population of Jersey in 2015.

A Jersey Marine Park would cover approximately

900km²



Photo: James Bowden

Designation of a Marine Park would showcase the incredible marine environment that surrounds our island by providing a shared sense of responsibility and ownership



A STUNNING AND DIVERSE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

The Bailiwick of Jersey consists mostly of marine waters within which sit smaller parcels of dry land. Jersey is the most southerly island of the British Isles and is just 22 kilometres from the coast of France, with a population of around a hundred thousand people.

Jersey's land area covers 120 square kilometres but is dwarfed by the surrounding 2,455 square kilometres of territorial sea. This ratio of land to sea illustrates the significance of the ecology and processes of the marine environment to the life on land.

The island has 90 kilometres of coastline which includes everything from dramatic cliffs and wide sandy bays through to small harbours and the port of St Helier. This interface between land and sea is an important influence on the Island's character. The character and ecology of Jersey's rocky reefs and intertidal sediment flats are found nowhere else in Europe. The south, south-east and west coast have a very shallow,

gently sloping shore profile, which means that at low tide, the island can expand by a quarter, as up to 30 square kilometres of intertidal area becomes accessible. In contrast, the north and south west coasts are characterised by steep granite cliffs.

Jersey marine waters are also rich with sites of cultural, archaeological and historical significance including La Cotte de St Brélade, one of the most important Palaeolithic (Neanderthal) sites in North-West Europe. In St Ouen's Bay, storms may reveal the remains of a Neolithic forest while intertidal rocks sport a diversity of Napoleonic coastal fortifications and Second World War structures.

2,455 sq km

OF TERRITORIAL SEA

Photo: James Bowden

WILDLIFE

Beneath the waves Jersey's marine environment is bursting with life with over 3,000 known plant and animal species. The Minquiers and other offshore reefs harbour rocks and kelp containing rare pink sea fans, sunset cup corals, ormers and marbled electric rays. Seagrass beds provide nurseries for cuttlefish and bream and sandy gravels are important spawning grounds for finfish.

350

JERSEY IS HOME TO OVER 350 BOTTLENOSE DOLPHINS, ONE OF THE LARGEST PODS IN EUROPE



The habitats found across Jersey's marine environment are diverse. Local maerl² beds (of which an estimated 15 per cent are currently under protection) have been recorded to contain up to 173 species per meter squared, the highest diversity of species within Jersey's marine habitats. The seaweeds found on the northwest coast are considered likely to host the greatest diversity of seaweed in the British Isles³. Seaweeds play an important role in providing shelter and nursery grounds for a variety of species. The southeast holds some of the most diverse clam beds in Northern Europe⁴ and the rocky intertidal zone and outlying reefs hold flooded gully and waterfall habitats⁵ known nowhere else in the region.

Jersey also provides sanctuary for larger mega-fauna and is home to a pod of over 350 resident Bottlenose dolphins. This is one of the largest pods in Europe and they are often seen from beaches, cliffs and when out on the water. As well

Beneath the waves Jersey's marine environment is bursting with life with over 3,000 known plant and animal species.

as Bottlenose dolphins, the deeper-water Common dolphin, Harbour porpoise and Risso's dolphin all visit Jersey's waters. Jersey's offshore reefs provide a rich source for sharks to feed on with Porbeagles (vulnerable on the IUCN red list⁶) and Blue sharks recorded as visitors. Above the waves, a diversity of bird species seabirds can be found in Jersey at various times of the year. Species including terns, gulls and razorbills have important breeding sites in Jersey, although like the rest of the British Isles, their numbers are in decline.

The international importance of Jersey's marine ecology is recognised by the designation of almost 190 square kilometres of inter-tidal habitat as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention and 150 square kilometres of marine waters as protected areas under the OSPAR Convention.

In addition to this the Government has designated several No Mobile Gear Zones and No Parlour Pot Zones that together comprise a network of Marine Protected Areas, closed to bottom towed fishing, covering roughly 6.6 per cent of the island's territorial waters. Despite this, large areas of seabed remain unprotected. The long-term ecological and economic success within Jersey's territorial waters must come via the establishment of a coherent network of MPAs, covering at least 30 per cent encompassed as part of a Marine Park. These will act as nursery areas and genetic reserves to the benefit and resilience of the local marine environment as well as the people and businesses that depend upon it.

THE STATE OF JERSEY'S WATERS

Jersey has territorial waters (Exclusive Economic Zone, or EEZ) of 2,455 square kilometres (nearly 20 times the size of the island).

While these have been historically rich fishing grounds, in recent years catches have been declining due to overfishing⁷: Whelk, lobster and brown crab landings per unit of effort are down 42 per cent, 43 per cent and 65 per cent respectively from their peak⁸. As of 2020, Jersey's fishery directly supported 180 jobs. Compared to historic highs of well over 1,000 jobs in fishing, it is clear that poor fisheries management has damaged local livelihoods and the Jersey economy.

Lobster and crab made up approximately 70 per cent of the value of Jersey commercial landings in 2020⁸. These species require healthy habitats to breed and feed.

Approximately 90 per cent of Jersey's commercial fishing boats only use static gear (pots, nets, diving and hook and line) to fish for whelk, lobster, crab, scallop and wetfish.

There is significant evidence outlining the

negative impacts that bottom-towed fishing methods have on breeding, spawning, nursery and feeding grounds of these commercially important species^{9,10,11}. For example, maerl beds (such as those found off Jersey's east coast) often act as nursery grounds for juvenile scallops (which represent nearly 10 per cent of Jersey's annual fishing economy⁸). These species require healthy, biodiverse habitats to act as food sources, shelter and nursery grounds. It stands to reason that allowing the destruction of habitats and the seabed by bottom-towed trawling and dredging negatively impacts these key commercial species.

Of the 123 Jersey fishing vessels with a commercial licence¹², approximately ten vessels (alongside numerous French vessels¹³) use bottom-towed gear (trawling and dredging).

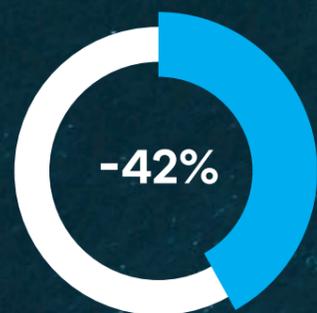
The proposed Marine Park would not be a no-take zone and would remain open to low-impact, static fishing methods such as potting, hook and line, netting and diving.

Today, only 6.6 per cent of Jersey's EEZ is closed to bottom-towed gear.

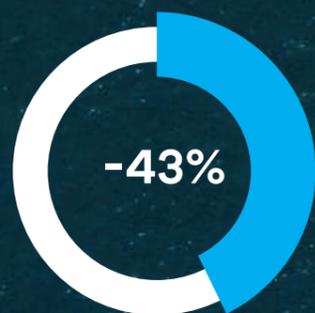
As of 2020, Jersey's fishery directly supported

180 JOBS

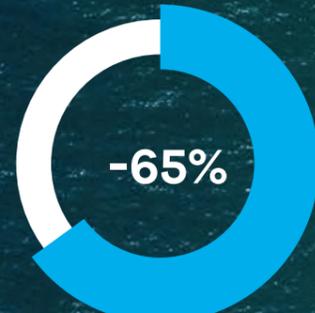
LANDINGS PER UNIT OF EFFORT ARE DOWN



WHELK



LOBSTER



BROWN CRAB

Photo: James Bowden

Lobster and crab made up approximately 70% of the value of Jersey commercial landings in 2020⁸

123

Jersey fishing vessels with a commercial licence. Approximately ten vessels use bottom-towed gear.

~90%

OF JERSEY'S COMMERCIAL FISHING BOATS ONLY USE STATIC GEAR

ACHIEVING 30 BY 30

30 by 30 is a global initiative for countries to protect 30 per cent of their land and sea by 2030.

The target has been globally recognised by scientists and economists as the minimum level of protection required to reverse adverse ecological impacts, preserve fish populations, increase resilience to climate change and sustain long-term ocean health. While this ambition for 30 per cent protection covers the world as a whole, this percentage of protection will be achieved when each individual jurisdiction allocates 30 per cent of their own territorial waters, regardless of size.

Such targets are a key feature of initiatives such as the Global Ocean Alliance¹⁴, of which Jersey's closest neighbours, UK and France are participants.

The proposed Marine Park would enable Jersey to achieve 30 by 30 for its marine environment and set a global example.

Such targets are a key feature of initiatives such as the Global Ocean Alliance¹⁴, of which Jersey's closest neighbours, UK and France are participants.

30%

The percentage of protection targeted by the Global Ocean Alliance, of which Jersey's closest neighbours, France and the UK, are participants.

CASE STUDY: (DEVON AND DORSET)

THE LYME BAY FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION RESERVE

The Lyme Bay Reserve was established as a Special Area of Conservation in 2010, with 312 square kilometres protected from dredging and trawling.

In 2008 a Marine Protected Area (MPA) covering 60 square nautical miles (206 square kilometres) was designated to protect nationally important rocky reefs home to cold water corals and pink sea fans. In 2010 the area was extended to cover 90 square nautical miles (312 square kilometres) to form the Lyme Bay and Torbay Candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC). Since 2008 the area has been closed to trawling and dredging but remained open to static gear fisheries such as potting, nets, rod and line and scallop diving.

In 2012, Blue Marine Foundation formed the Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve Working Group to work with fishermen and other stakeholders to manage the MPA. Led by local fishermen the Reserve has its own voluntary code of conduct to manage fisheries within sustainable limits. Fishermen have also collaborated with scientists to monitor recovery of marine life and fish stocks within the MPA. The 'Reserve Seafood' brand was created to sell local produce and infrastructure such as chiller units and ice machines were invested in to increase the quality of catch.

Areas within the Lyme Bay Reserve have seen a 52 per cent increase in the number of species since 2008 and 370 per cent more commercial species abundance inside the MPA than in the area outside. Fishermen on the scheme have reported increased catches, better routes to market, and higher job satisfaction¹⁵.

The results from Lyme Bay have proven fisheries and conservation can coexist in protected areas and has given the local fishing industry a voice.

Blue Marine has been working with the Lyme Bay fishermen since the outset, forming a working group to deliver a collaborative approach and building on lessons learnt. BLUE would be delighted to advise on how a similar process could be created for Jersey.

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52%

increase in the number of species

CASE STUDY: (SCOTLAND)

LAMLASH BAY

Lamlash Bay on the Isle of Arran is just over a square mile in size and is home to maerl beds similar to those found in Jersey. Maerl beds are an important habitat for many plants and animals, but are vulnerable to bottom-towed fishing gear given the slow rate at which they can grow.

Following a hugely effective local community campaign run by The Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST), the Lamlash protected area was designated in 2008 as one of only four no-take zones (NTZs) in the British Isles where all forms of fishing (including trawling and dredging) are removed. Following on from the success of this designation, a wider area surrounding the



NTZ was designated as an MPA in 2016. By 2019, research was already demonstrating dramatic increases in reproductive biomass within the MPA¹⁶.

As well as storing carbon, maerl provides a vital seabed habitat. Populations of both lobsters and scallops in the NTZ have quadrupled since 2008, and other seaweeds have returned to the area, which is also a nursery for cod.

Local residents have benefited from growth in tourism to the area: the COAST Visitor Centre was built in 2018 and hosted 11,000 visitors from 2018 to 2019.

Populations of both lobsters and scallops in the NTZ have quadrupled since 2008



HOW CAN WE BETTER PROTECT MARINE LIFE AND JOBS IN JERSEY'S WATERS?

Evidence exists to demonstrate that it is possible to have conservation benefits, carbon sequestration, improved fish stocks and the resulting boost to fishing communities (and the follow-on benefit to the wider community).

There is a simple solution: Marine Protected Areas where some or all types of fishing are restricted within specific spatial areas, which are monitored and enforced.

MPAs have proven to be spectacularly successful: fish biomass is on average nearly seven times higher in fully closed areas than in adjacent unprotected areas and over three times greater than in partially protected areas¹⁷.

Such an increase in biomass for Jersey's waters would provide a huge boost to the fishing community, helping the Jersey fishing industry to become more resilient and livelihoods of fishermen to improve, in return for their low-impact efforts.

The States of Jersey have already made a strong commitment to marine conservation by

establishing several areas protected from dredging and bottom-trawling at Les Minquiers, Les Écréhous and inshore areas around the Island.

These areas cover around 6.6 per cent of Jersey's territorial waters. Marine habitats are already showing a strong recovery in these areas, benefitting fish stocks and other marine species.

However, much of Jersey's waters, over 93 per cent, currently remain unprotected. Blue Marine believes that the extension of existing No Mobile Gear Zones to cover a much larger area would prove to be a highly beneficial asset to fishing, tourism and the wider economy of Jersey. The Government of Jersey can support this process through the designation of a Marine Park.

Photo: Samantha Blampied



The Government of Jersey can support this process through the designation of a Marine Park.

Photo: Kevin Mollwee

Monitoring and enforcement will be the responsibility of the Government of Jersey, supported by the participating fishermen and other stakeholders. As part of a transition to a low-impact fishery, BLUE will be working with fishermen to conduct research to assist in the development of appropriate fisheries management plans. Work such as this is hugely important to be run alongside a Marine Park initiative, to safeguard the long-term future of the fleet.

There are opportunities to build on existing initiatives to promote local sustainably-caught seafood. These include work done by BLUE such as Jersey Hand Dived and Jersey and the Genuine Jersey seafood campaign. This work could be built upon to form a Jersey Marine Park seafood brand, promoting the high sustainability and quality standards of the produce harvested from the Marine Park.

THE BREXIT OPPORTUNITY

This is a once in a near 200-year opportunity to restore and protect Jersey's marine life:

The fisheries agreement that Jersey previously operated under, the Bay of Granville Agreement, was first concluded in 1839¹⁸. This agreement, and its subsequent iterations, led to the unusual situation of France granting licences for its own vessels to fish in Jersey waters. This led to difficulties in Jersey's ability to enforce restrictions on fishing vessels that did not fulfil Jersey's requirements, for example the provision of adequate catch data.

Under the new UK-EU Trade and Co-Operation Agreement (TCA), the Government of Jersey

is now the issuing authority for all licences for vessels wishing to fish in Jersey waters. This gives Jersey, for the first time since 1839, the opportunity to manage the fisheries within its own waters effectively.

These new powers not only provide an opportunity for the sustainable management of fishing vessel activity, but also the introduction of species-specific management plans, designed to safeguard the future of the fleet.

Photo: Matt Sharp



THE CARBON OPPORTUNITY

The global ocean has absorbed a third of the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions produced by human activities over the past two centuries¹⁹.

It is the world's largest carbon sink, holding 50 times more carbon than the atmosphere and over ten times the amount of carbon held in all terrestrial vegetation, soils and microbes combined²⁰.

Bottom-towed fishing gear disturbs the carbon stored in marine sediments, releasing it into the ocean as CO₂. Scientists believe that a substantial proportion of this CO₂ is released into the atmosphere from the ocean, contributing directly to global warming. This extra CO₂ in seawater reduces the ocean's capacity to absorb it from the atmosphere. Moreover, the CO₂ contributes to ocean acidification, harming wildlife and disrupting the food chain.

Protecting the seabed and other carbon-storing habitats from damage by bottom-towed fishing

gear would cut off a major direct source of emissions and allow those carbon stores to rebuild. Recent analysis has shown that ocean-based climate solutions could resolve 21 per cent of the 'emissions gap' – the difference between our current global trajectory (that will result in more than 3°C of warming) and emissions consistent with limiting temperature increase to 1.5°C²¹ (the aim outlined in Strategic Policy 1 within Jersey's Carbon Neutral Roadmap).

Jersey's Carbon Neutral Strategy commits to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030²², with the ambition of becoming the first carbon neutral jurisdiction in the British Isles. Closing areas of Jersey's territorial waters to bottom-towed fishing gear will be a necessary part of the process to achieve Jersey's carbon neutrality targets.

JERSEYS MARINE ENVIRONMENT
SEQUESTERS AN ESTIMATED
60,000 tons
OF CARBON ANNUALLY²³

Photo: Sue Daly



THE SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY

On top of the physical impacts that Covid-19 has placed on our health, the last two years have placed immense strain on the mental health of the population.

Not by coincidence, this period has also been a time in which people discovered, more than ever, the positive impacts of a connection to nature and sea. A sense of community around the ocean was fostered and strengthened, with sea swimming becoming more popular than ever.

BLUE are currently working to strengthen and foster this relationship with the development of a snorkel trail and education outreach programme. Such an initiative will work to bring Jersey's population closer to their marine environment, fostering the next generation of marine and climate change scientists.

BLUE has been heavily involved with the development of the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park, working in collaboration with Plymouth City Council to build on Plymouth's rich naval history and provide a designation for Plymouth residents to be proud of and foster interaction with their marine environment.

A Marine Park designation would increase opportunities for the Island to connect with our incredible marine environment, boosting a sense of community and shared responsibility to ensure appropriate management. Beyond stewardship, a Marine Park also brings opportunities for developing stronger links between academic institutions both off-island and at home. It will provide an accessible destination for scientists to study ecosystem services including biodiversity, fisheries and carbon sequestration. It could draw in new audiences, sustaining and enhancing locals' and visitors' understanding and appreciation of our connection to the sea.



Photo: James Bowden

A Marine Park designation would increase opportunities for the Island to connect with our incredible marine environment.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Blue Marine Foundation urges all States Members and candidates to undertake the following steps in order to restore and protect Jersey's marine life and fishing jobs.

1

Incorporate the five policy recommendations at the start of this briefing into your manifesto and campaign to protect Jersey's marine environment and fishing industry.

2

Build on the Government's commitment to designate further Marine Protected Areas (as specified within the Bridging Island Plan) and secure a network covering at least 30 per cent of Jersey's waters by 2025.

3

Meet with Blue Marine to discuss the benefits of MPAs and how a Jersey Marine Park would deliver benefits for people, nature and climate.

Photo: James Bowden

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT FREDDIE WATSON
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Photo: James Bowden

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