




Introducing the
Jersey Marine Spatial Plan

December 2024

The vision of the Jersey Marine Spatial Plan is for a thriving marine environment providing environmental, economic, cultural and social benefits

 Fiona Fyfe



Executive Summary

Open sea and offshore reefs cover 95% of Jersey's territory, and are fundamental to the island's identity, economy and connectivity. The coast and sea are used for both work and leisure, forming an ever-changing backdrop to islanders' lives. Below the surface is a hidden world of underwater habitats supporting a wealth of marine life, and a rich archaeological legacy.

Examples of the benefits provided by Jersey's marine environment include fish to eat, storage of carbon in plants and sediments, absorption of wave energy, cycling of water and pollution capture. The vitality of Jersey is therefore intrinsically linked to the health of its seas. However, despite its importance, Jersey's marine environment is under pressure, from climate change and human activities.

Marine spatial planning provides a means of managing Jersey's coasts and seas in a coordinated manner which enables them to thrive, and takes account of the many different ways in which they are used. It covers all parts of the marine environment: the sea bed, the water column, the sea surface and the air above. Many coastal nations have already prepared marine spatial plans, or are in the process of doing so, so the *Jersey Marine Spatial Plan* (JMSP) brings Jersey into line with international best practice.

The vision of the JMSP is for a thriving marine environment providing environmental, economic, cultural and social benefits. It was proposed in the 2022 *Bridging Island Plan* (BIP), and has four key purposes:

- 1 To provide a framework for organising human and marine resources and activities in Jersey's territorial waters.
- 2 To develop a network of Marine Protected Areas.
- 3 To inform the policies of the next iteration of the Island Plan.
- 4 To support co-ordinated development and decision-making on all aspects affecting the marine environment.

The JMSP forms an overarching strategic framework setting the approach for a range of tools, including land use planning, marine resource management and fishing regulation. The JMSP is not a statutory document, but will give direction to other legislative and policy tools, which will be used to deliver the actions set out in the JMSP. Implementing the JMSP will involve different government departments and organisations working together.

The JMSP will help Jersey to fulfil its international obligations, such as the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which requires 30% of the marine environment to be protected by 2030. It will also contribute to efforts to address the climate and biodiversity crises; help to promote sustainable fishing practices; reduce conflicts between different users of the marine environment, and increase the resilience of services and infrastructure.

The Government of Jersey Marine Resources team has worked in partnership with external specialist consultants and many local stakeholders to produce the JMSP. The result is a document which reflects the wide-ranging concerns and aspirations of Jersey's residents with regard to the marine environment. Everyone involved shares a desire to see Jersey's seas thriving, and delivering benefits to people and to nature.



📷 Eleanor Lister



📷 Matt Sharp



📷 Jersey Electricity plc

From sweeping sands to jagged rocks, and from busy harbours to empty wildernesses, Jersey's spectacular and diverse seascapes encompass many natural and human-made features. The JMSP contains priorities to maintain this diversity of seascapes, and the offshore landmarks which form focal points in views from the coast and sea.

Jersey's waters contain an extra-ordinary range of habitats within a relatively small area. Each habitat plays a different role within the overall ecosystem of Jersey's marine environment. There are some existing nature conservation designations, including Ramsar sites, Marine Protected Areas, Sites of Special Interest, Areas of Special Protection and a No-Take-Zone. Some of the most valuable habitats (kelp forests, maerl beds and seagrass meadows) are listed for protection under international convention. The JMSP contains priorities for the protection of the natural environment through existing and new designations, including the expansion of the Marine Protected Area network.

People have been fishing in Jersey's waters since prehistoric times, and fishing continues to contribute to the island's economy and identity. Today, potting for lobster and crab dominates, with other metiers including dredging, diving, trawling, netting and angling for species such as scallops and various finfish. Intertidal aquaculture of oysters and mussels also contributes to the island's economy. The JMSP proposes a three-tier framework with different levels of protection in each tier: Regulated Fishing Zone, Seabed Protection Zone, and highly-protected No Take Zones.

Centuries of habitation and use have left their marks on Jersey's coastal and marine environment, from early prehistoric sites through to 20th Century fortifications. On the seabed are wreck sites, some of which are known to divers, but many of which are not yet recorded. The JMSP contains priorities to increase understanding and protection of maritime cultural heritage sites, particularly within intertidal and marine environments.

Recreation and tourism are a vital part of Jersey's economy, and also very important for the health, wellbeing and enjoyment of local people. Activities involve powered and non-powered craft, as well as those without craft. Coastal and marine recreation supports many coastal businesses, and is concentrated in the most popular beaches and bays. The JMSP contains priorities to promote coastal and marine recreation in ways which are safe, accessible, enjoyable, and minimise impacts on wildlife.

The sea forms an integral part of Jersey's transport network. Around Jersey's coast, beaches, harbours, slipways and piers allow connectivity between land and sea, and coastal defences help to manage the risks of coastal flooding. Larger vessels access the port at St Helier and travel through Jersey's waters using shipping lanes. On the seabed, cables provide power and communication to the island, and it is likely that in the future the marine environment will become a source of renewable energy. The JMSP contains priorities to increase the resilience of infrastructure and promote sustainable use of marine resources.



Download the poster map and full plan using the QR code or link below...



Visit: www.gov.je
and search MSP

Prepared by Fiona Fyfe Associates,
Countryside and Karin Taylor
for Government of Jersey Marine Resources

