



JERSEY RAMSAR MANAGEMENT PLAN AND SITE STRATEGY 2025-2029

Les Pierres de Lecq

Ramsar site reference number 1457



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1. Purpose of the document

The main purpose of this document is to describe the Ramsar five-year management strategy for Les Pierres de Lecq and define the management objectives of the Jersey Ramsar strategy.

The previous management plan was published during 2012, so this document aims to reset our vision for the site and set out our management objectives for the period 2025-2029. Setting management principles for five years allows for adaptive management, alignment with policy and funding cycles, addressing emerging threats, stakeholder engagement and the maintenance of ecological character.

2. Introduction and location of the site

Les Pierres de Lecq, also known as the Paternosters reef, is a small offshore reef located approximately five kilometres north of Greve de Lecq, Jersey. Jersey is a Channel Island situated in the 'Golfe Normano-Breton', approximately 22km west of France and 136km south of the UK (see Figure 2.1).

The Paternosters reef is situated on an underwater plateau (average depth 5 to 15 metres below chart datum) which covers an area of 280 hectares. The reef is separated from the Jersey mainland by seabed with an average depth of 24 to 30 metres below chart datum except in La Fosse de Plémont, a sub marine trench to the south of the reef that reaches depths of 50 metres.

At high tide just four small patches of rock (whose combined area is less than 0.3 hectares) remain uncovered within the reef. At low tide the reef becomes a complex series of low-lying rocky reefs and heads that are distributed across the length and breadth of the underwater plateau.

Les Pierres de Lecq is situated offshore in an exposed location and are difficult to reach without the use of a private boat or canoe. Unlike Les Écréhous and Les Minquiers, Les Pierres de Lecq does not have a sufficient area of dry land to allow the construction of huts, landing stages or other man-made objects. Except for fishermen and canoeists, the reef is rarely visited and is somewhat off the beaten track. Consequently, there had been little organised scientific study of this reef's natural history, including its marine biology knowledge of which, prior to the survey of Chambers and Morel (2011), was limited to a handful of unconfirmed species records (see Figure 2.2).

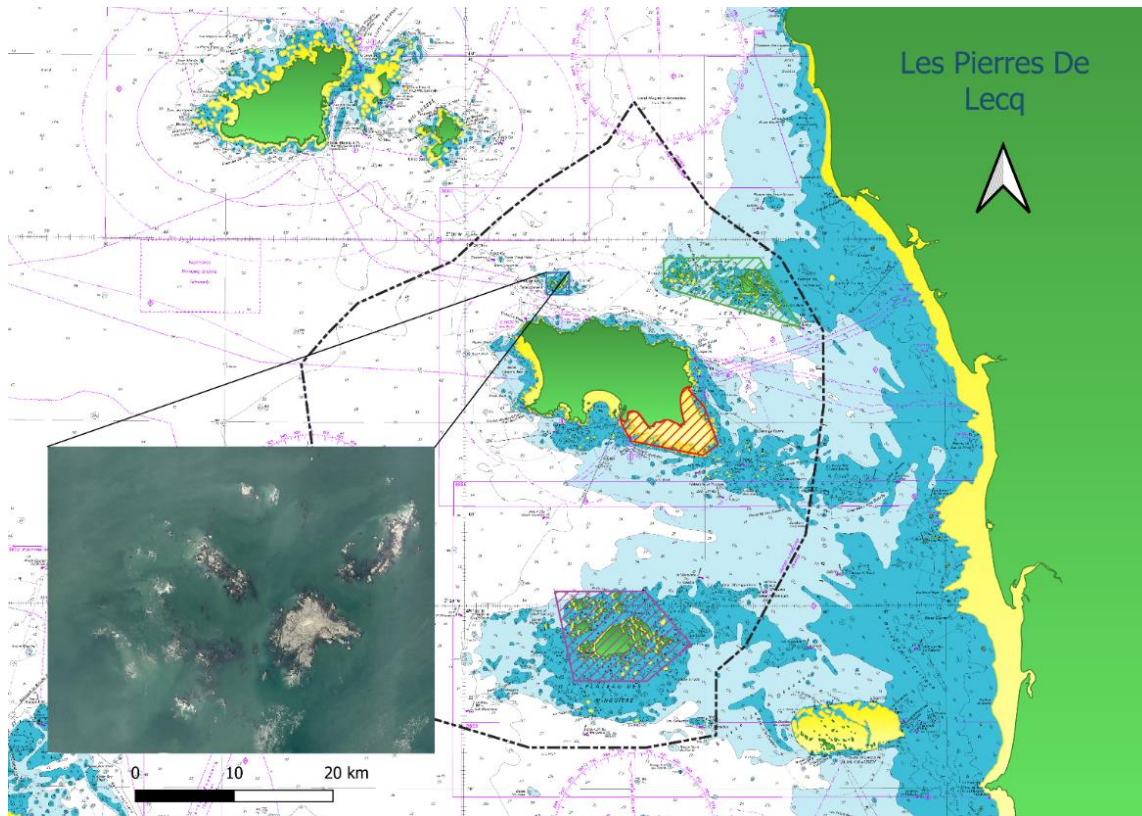


Figure 2.1 Les Pierres de Lecq (Paternosters): an intertidal habitat survey. Paul Chambers and Greg Morel (2011)

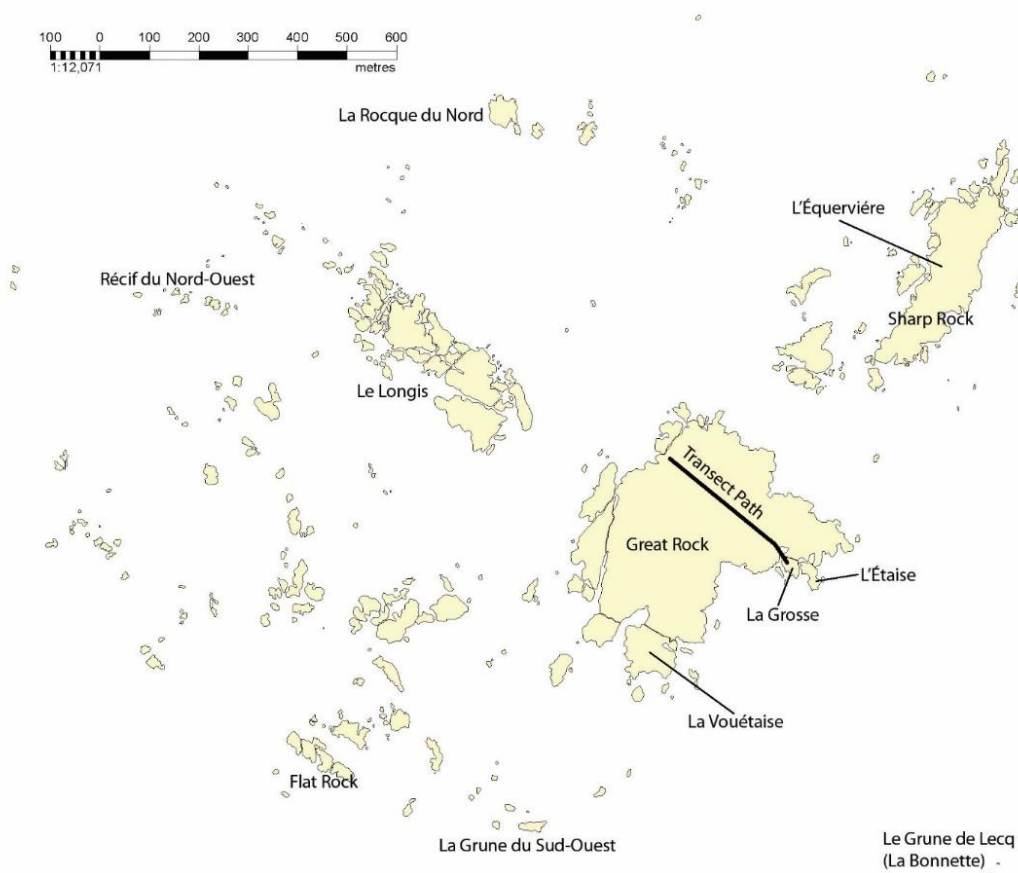


Figure 2.2. Les Pierres de Lecq (Paternosters): an intertidal habitat survey. Paul Chambers and Greg Morel (2011)

3. Biodiversity within the site

The site is rich in biodiversity. Around 200 marine species have been recorded and a wide range of subtidal, tidal and coastal habitats are present. There are extensive areas of shallow water habitat and numerous intertidal pools, which provide habitat and act as a nursery area to a wide range of fish and invertebrate species, including commercial species such as crabs and lobsters. Cold-water reefs host a high diversity of life and provide an edge of range habitat, where many southern and northern European marine species find their outer limit of tolerance. Thus, species such as the Green ormer, which are associated with warmer southern European waters and are rare or absent from British coasts, coexist with those normally associated with colder northern waters, such as the Beadlet anemone. A small number of species are listed as Vulnerable under IUCN criteria or are regionally scarce, including the Pink sea-fan, Five shilling shell and Sunset cup-coral. The site and surrounding area support a small but mobile population of breeding Grey seal. One of the largest populations of Bottlenose dolphins in the British Isles regularly uses the area. Other cetaceans observed in the site include Common dolphin and occasionally the Harbour porpoise. It also represents the only area around Jersey that is commonly used by Risso's dolphin. Although the site is not used by nesting birds, as it very exposed and even the highest rocky outcrops are regularly over-washed by the sea, the exposed reef is an important resting site for birds and feeding ground for seabirds.

There are also some important wrecks at Les Pierres de Lecq:

- “The Paternoster reef includes two historically important wrecks and their place in the archaeology and heritage of Jersey should be recognised. One of the wrecks, M/v Heron, is one of the most popular wrecks dived from Jersey with a diverse amount of marine life such as huge schools of pouting, anemones and sea squirts. The wreck lay on the Paternoster reef undiscovered until 2006.” (Bouley Bay Dive Centre, 2023).
- “The Heron, a 57m cargo vessel carrying tomatoes and other produce from Jersey, sank after hitting the reef in September 1961. The wreck has now become an important artificial reef for many sessile species including Pink sea-fan (protected in the 2021 Wildlife Law), present as a dense colony in the forward hold. There are also colonies of Deadman’s fingers and Jewel anemones” (Kevin McIlwee, Jersey Marine Conservation, 2024).
- “More recently an important 1st world war French supply ship known as the Hironde, was discovered. The wreck site contains important artefacts including the ships guns and remains of the engine. The ship sank while carrying supplies to the trenches, evading German U Boats.” (Kevin McIlwee, Jersey Marine Conservation, 2024).

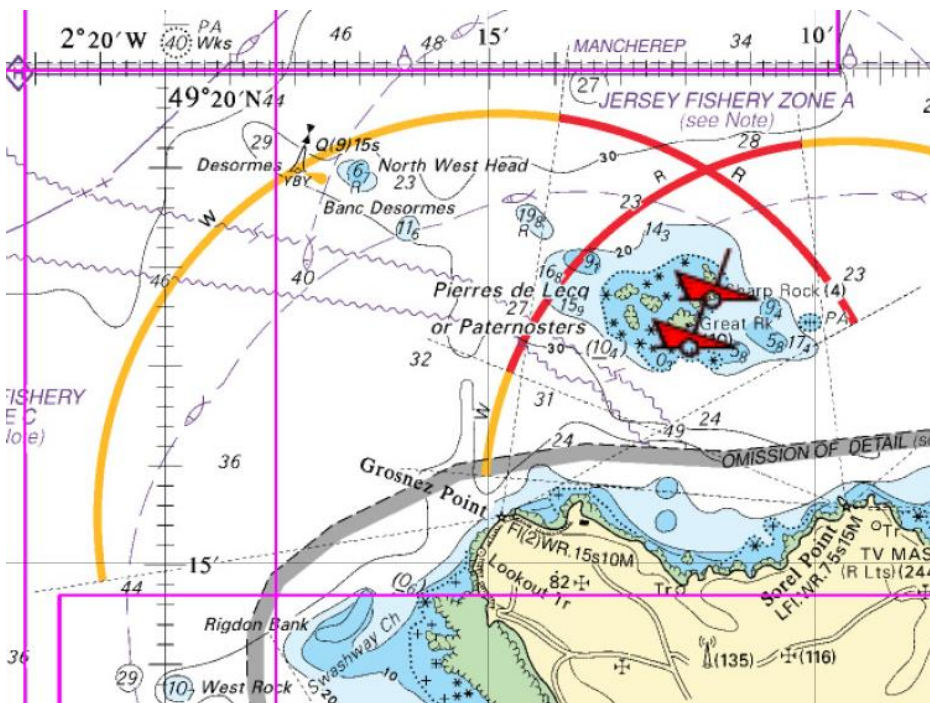


Figure 3.1. The locations of known shipwreck sites at the Paternosters, M/v Heron and Hironde (Kevin McIlwee, Jersey Marine Conservation, 2024).

A Grey seal colony is present around the vicinity of Sharp Rock. From data retrieved from underwater hydrophones between 2018-2021, the Paternosters reef had the highest level of activity for dolphin species in comparison to all other receiver sites in Jersey. (B.Hart, 2023 *The influence of seasonality and the diurnal cycle on the spatial distribution of dolphins and porpoises in Jersey's territorial waters*).

A full and detailed account of all animals, plants and ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of this site can be found on the Ramsar Information Sheet (Ramsar (2024) *Ramsar Information Sheet: Les Écréhous and Les Dirouilles Reefs, Jersey*. Available at: <https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/1457>

4. Strategic aims in the context of Ramsar

The strategic aims are designed to meet the Ramsar obligations set out in Section 1.7 of the Jersey Ramsar Management Framework.

The main strategic aims for this 5-year cycle for the Jersey Ramsar Management Authority are:

Strategic aim 1: to monitor and improve the ecological health of the four Ramsar sites

Strategic aim 2: to support and encourage Marine Resources in the delivery of the recommendations set out in the Jersey Marine Spatial Plan, in so far as those recommendations are relevant and deliver positive outcome for the Ramsar sites. The Jersey Marine Spatial Plan is a once in a generation piece of policy being delivered by the Marine Resources Team within Natural Environment and will bring significant benefits in terms of site protection to the Marine Environment, and very specifically to the Ramsar sites [Jersey Marine Spatial Plan – Priorities and Actions Plan \(gov.je\)](#)

Strategic aim 3: to encourage research, education and data exchange both within Jersey and the other Channel Islands relevant to Ramsar sites and their management.

5. Management objectives

To meet our Ramsar obligations, the following specific management objectives and actions have been set for this site, which will give direction to the management of the four sites and inform the annual action plans.

The management objectives for all four of Jersey's Ramsar sites will be the same at the outset but it is envisaged that, as the monitoring programme develops, and as more data become available, tailored management within each site will be refined over time.

Strategic aim 1 – to monitor and improve the ecological health of the four Ramsar sites

Management objectives to meet this strategic aim:

- **Objective 1** - to conduct a threat/risk assessment of each site through stakeholder engagement with the Jersey Ramsar Advisory Group (JRAG). See section 6 for an overview of the risk assessment framework.
- **Objective 2** - to use the status outcomes of the assessment to establish the monitoring priorities for the sites.
- **Objective 3** - to baseline and maintain datasets relating to the biodiversity of the Ramsar site, in accordance with scientifically accepted best practice.
- **Objective 4** - to work in partnership with NGOs, professional bodies and organisations where they can assist in supporting or delivering monitoring activities to a scientifically accepted standard.
- **Objective 5** - to produce a short annual report on the monitoring progress each year for 5 years to be delivered at the end of March in the following year. The report at the end of year 5 (March 2030) will be more in depth and comment on the ecological condition of the site, with a discussion topic around the limits of acceptable change and potential for reviewing tolerance limits in the future.

It is important to note that the monitoring programme for each site is tailored according to the site-specific risks, as identified during the stakeholder workshops held as a part of preparing the Management Plans.

Strategic aim 2 - to support and encourage Marine Resources in the delivery of the recommendations set out in the Jersey Marine Spatial Plan, in so far as those recommendations that are relevant and deliver positive outcome for the Ramsar sites

Management objectives to meet this strategic aim:

- **Objective 1** - to facilitate the implementation of policy recommendations from the Marine Spatial Plan with respect to the Ramsar sites

Strategic aim 3 - to encourage research, education and data exchange both within Jersey and the other Channel Islands relevant to Ramsar sites and their management

Management objectives to meet this strategic aim:

- **Objective 1** - to improve public knowledge about Ramsar site designation, facilitating the positive management and wise use of the Ramsar sites.
- **Objective 2** - to encourage information sharing between user groups of the sites.
- **Objective 3** - to promote knowledge-sharing and scientific best practice for monitoring activities between the Channel Islands Ramsar stakeholder groups, holding quarterly meetings where possible.
- **Objective 4** - to promote Ramsar research topics for students locally, through appropriate channels such as the Jersey Community Foundation.
- **Objective 5** - to encourage community involvement in data collection, through data collection and the use of citizen science applications.
- **Objective 6** - to develop a Channel Islands Ramsar network, and thus work with other site managers to unify the approach to the management of the Ramsar sites.

6. Risk Assessment framework

A risk-based approach to management is a beneficial tool to apply to Ramsar sites because it enables managers to identify and prioritise the most significant risks and threats to the site's ecological character and functions. It involves assessing the likelihood and potential impact of these threats and conflicts and helps to determine which are the most significant. By prioritising the most significant risks and threats, it ensures that resources are used efficiently and that the most pressing issues are identified, monitored, understood and addressed first.

The risk assessment matrix (see Matrix 6.1) formed the basis of discussion during a series of JRAG stakeholder engagement workshops in 2023, where each of the Ramsar sites main conflicts and threats were assessed and scored accordingly by the membership of JRAG. The outcome of the risk assessments can be found in Appendix 1.

The risk assessments were approved by JRAG in January 2024.

		IMPACT/SEVERITY					
		0	1	2	3	4	5
LIKELIHOOD		Not relevant	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
E Very Likely/ Almost Certain	Could happen or has happened in 1 month	NO IMPACT	1E RMA	2E GoJ NE	3E UK	4E Ramsar	5E Ramsar
D Likely	Could happen or has happened between 1 & 6 months	NO IMPACT	1D RMA	2D GoJ NE	3D UK	4D Ramsar	5D Ramsar
C Possible	Could happen or has happened between 6 months & 1yr	NO IMPACT	1C RMA	2C GoJ NE	3C UK	4C UK	5C Ramsar
B Unlikely	Could happen or has happened between 1yr & 10yrs	NO IMPACT	1B RMA	2B RMA	3B GoJ NE	4B UK	5B UK
A Rare	Could happen or has happened beyond 10yrs	NO IMPACT	1A RMA	2A RMA	3A RMA	4A GoJ NE	5A UK

Ref	Significance	Description
1A,2A,3A, 1B,2B 1C,1D,1E	Accept	The risk is acceptable, RMA sign off
2C,2D,2E 3B,4A	Tolerable	Consideration should be given to further reducing the risk. If the risk remains AMBER, it may be accepted by the GoJ Natural Environment Department.
3C,3D,3E 4B,4C,5A,5B	Undesirable	The risk is high and immediate action may be required. Further control measures to reduce the likelihood/severity of the risk should be introduced. If the risk remains RED, it may only be accepted following a review and approval by UK.
4D,4E 5C,5D,5E	Highly Undesirable	The risk is high and immediate action or cessation of the activity may be required. Further control measures to reduce the likelihood/severity of the risk should be introduced. If the risk remains PURPLE, it may only be accepted following a review and approval by Ramsar Secretariat.

Matrix 6.1. A risk assessment framework for assessing risk or threat levels within the Ramsar sites.

7. Monitoring

The Jersey Ramsar Management Authority will maintain an up-to-date monitoring schedule, detailing the monitoring being undertaken, the frequency, who is completing the monitoring and who is responsible for reporting on that activity. The document is a living and dynamic document and will be updated as and when appropriate.

The monitoring programme consists of:

- monitoring that routinely occurs within the Government of Jersey's Natural Environment department through business as usual.
- additional monitoring activities that have been recommended or identified as necessary and relate specifically to Ramsar e.g. time lapse cameras at the Écréhous.
- additional monitoring in partnership with NGOs, professional bodies and organisations.
- monitoring that is conducted by other professional bodies but where we have access to the data set or reporting.

JRAG can request an up-to-date monitoring schedule at any time.

8. Resourcing

The Government of Jersey will ensure sufficient resource to meet the management objectives on an ongoing basis.

9. Annual report production

An interim verbal mid-year report will be given to JRAG, with a written report annually. The written report will highlight any issues that have arisen during the year and will provide any recommendations for the following year. The recommendations will form the basis of an annual action plan which will be appended to the annual report.

10. Record of Review and adaptive management

It might be necessary to update the Ramsar Management Plans from time to time. Wetlands are dynamic ecosystems that can undergo significant changes over time due to natural processes, climate change, and human activities. A five-year review cycle allows managers to adapt strategies to these changes and ensure that management practices remain effective, but we may update the management plans on a more regular basis to ensure the plans stay relevant and responsive to each site's current ecological needs.

Any updates will be recorded in the below table.

Review Date	Reason for Review (Incident, Annual)	Risk reviewed / Comments Comments	Reviewers
27/08/2024	DRAFT	First draft available for review	Natural Environment
27/08/2024	DRAFT	Second draft available for review	Natural Environment
31/10/2024	DRAFT	Draft available for final review by JRAG	Natural Environment
04/11/2024	Approval	JRAG Executive committee (on behalf of JRAG) provide approval for document	JRAG
18/12/2024	Approval	Document approved and signed	Minister for the Environment

Appendix 1 – Risk assessment outcomes

The following risk matrix was developed during a series of workshops conducted by the JRMA (now JRAG) in 2023. The risk ratings reflect consensus reached among approximately 20–25 stakeholders. While every effort was made to achieve balanced and representative outcomes, the agreed ratings may involve compromises and are inherently subjective. Users should consider these factors when interpreting the matrix and apply their professional judgement when using it as a decision-making tool.

Risk Assessment outcome

Name of Assessor(s): Natural Environment, Government of Jersey
 Approved By: Ramsar Management Authority (now JRAG)
 Location: Les Pierres de Lecq
 Activity: Ramsar Conservation, Wise Use
 Review Date: Annually or following an incident, complaint or change in legislation
 Workshop Date: 24th October 2023
 RMA Attendees: Refer to minutes published gov.je

Threats	Inherent Risk Rating	Current mitigations (legislation, processes, studies etc)	Current Risk Rating	Potential future mitigations (suggested in workshops)
1. CONFLICT OF USE (Human)				
a) Commercial (fisheries) and tourism	0A	Infrastructure and Environment Planning Application Process Sea Fisheries regulations and licence conditions Recreational fishing regulations Aquatic Resources regulations Food and Environmental Protection Act (1985) and pebble law Wildlife Law 2021 (+ Areas of Special Protection) Ports of Jersey charter code of conduct General harbour regulations Policing of beaches (parishes) – vehicles and dogs on leads etc Collision Regulations	0A	Jersey's Marine Spatial Planning (2024) Extension of No Mobile Gear Zone (NMGZ) to Ramsar boundary Requirement for improved information on website for visitors/tourists
b) Commercial (fisheries) and recreational (fisheries)	1E		1E	
c) Recreational (fisheries) and visitors	0A		0A	
d) Residents and visitors	0A		0A	
e) Residents and fisheries	0A		0A	
2. CONFLICT OF USE (Wildlife)				
a) Fisheries	4D	Infrastructure and Environment Planning Application Process Aquatic Resources regulations Sea Fisheries regulations Licence conditions Recreational fishing regulations FEPA and pebble law Wildlife Law (+ ASPs) Ports charter code of conduct General harbour regulations Policing of beaches (parishes) – vehicles and dogs on leads etc Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) (Signage / Codes of Conduct) Customs and immigration regulations WiSe courses	1D	CI Ramsar website and future CI collaboration (high priority) Jersey's Marine Spatial Plan (JMSP) 2024 Area of Special Protection (ASP) for seals in Wildlife Law Extension of No Mobile Gear Zone (NMGZ) to Ramsar boundary Recreational permit scheme (future) Requirement for improved information on website for visitors/tourists Develop communications strategy Regulations for Moorings outside harbour limits Examination of law governing commercial charter access/process
b) Visitors	3C		2C	
c) Residents	0A		0A	
d) Recreational fishing activity	2E		1E	
3. INVASIVE SPECIES				
	2B	Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021 covers invasive species	2B	Implement marine monitoring plan and horizon scanning using recent Natural Environment (Biosecurity) reports 1) Non-native marine species in the Channel Islands (2017) 2) Rapid Risk Assessment for Marine Non-native Invasive Species in Channel Islands (2023) 3) Horizon scanning of new non-native species in Guernsey (2022)
4. CLIMATE DRIVEN MARINE CHANGE				
a) sea level rise	4C	Shoreline Management Plan 2020 (feeds into Island Plan) Voluntary Carbon offsetting by site users Ongoing environmental monitoring eg Marine Resources sea surface temperature monitoring Carbon neutral roadmap (2022)	4C	Jersey's Marine Spatial Plan (JMSP) 2024 Commission study and Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) of climate change on bird nesting sites (reproductive behaviour) Undertake habitat mapping granite/soft sediment (erosion) Echrehou Residents Association (ERA) to collect data on storm damage
b) sea temperature rise	4C		4C	
c) Storm impact (coastal erosion/ Suspended sediment)	4C		4C	

5. WATER QUALITY				
a) Nutrient inputs (runoff and sewage)	1E	Monitoring toxic algae and biotoxins (Public health) Heavy metal monitoring Agricultural regulations Pollution regulations	1E	Review of pollution control measures
b) Pollution events	5B		5B	
6. KNOWLEDGE LIMITATIONS				
a) Carbon stores within sites and their value	3C	Blue Carbon report (2022) Société Jersiaise ornithology department Sea Search data (JNCC)	2C	Expansion of Sea Search data Jersey's Marine Spatial Plan (JMSP) 2024 Blue Carbon PhD (ongoing)
b) Abundance, distribution, composition, condition of the priority species, species interactions, ecological communities and habitats	3B		2B	
c) Sea bird breeding success	0A		0A	
d) Understanding use of the site (% composition usage)	2B		2B	
7. COMMERCIAL SHIPPING				
	0A	Vessel Traffic Organisation service Harbour Regulations Collision regulations West Cardinal	0A	Update lead line surveys to map uncharted rocks (commercial shipping) New bathymetry survey needed Exclusion zones for large vessels Further research to understand impact of noise pollution on marine life (hydrophones)
8. NEW RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES				
	1A		1A	Highlight any new activities at regular JRMA meetings No drone zone (under Wildlife Law)
9. ARCHAEOLOGICAL, GEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL ARTEFACTS (Non biological)				
	4B	Infrastructure and Environment Planning Application Process	3B	Create inventory and map location of artefacts, bones, geology, shipwrecks, burial sites or other cultural sites/features. Especially shipwrecks such as The Heron 1960's