JERSEY RAMSAR ADVISORY GROUP (JRAG)
TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

BACKGROUND.

Further to the States of Jersey (hereinafter referred to by its current name, the Government of Jersey (GoJ)) becoming a Contracting Party to the Convention on Wetlands ('the Ramsar Convention') in 2000, Jersey has designated four areas of coastal waters and reefs as Ramsar sites, encompassing 18,756 hectares of Jersey's marine environment (those areas below Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) out to the Island's 12 mile territorial limits of local waters). The southeast coast or Violet Reef was designated in 2000 and the offshore reefs of Les Minquiers, Les Écréhous & Les Dirouilles and Les Pierres de Lecq (commonly known as the Paternosters) were designated in 2005. The Ramsar Convention provides a framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources through the integrated management of land, water and living resources, in a manner that promotes the three objectives of the Convention:

- Conservation;
- Sustainable use; and
- The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from each site.

The Convention requires management plans for each site to be developed by GoJ, with the support of stakeholders. The Management Plans primarily identify the objectives for the sites and sets out the management measures required. Under the Ramsar Convention a Management Authority needs to be established by each Contracting Party to implement the process. In Jersey the Management Authority is GoJ, represented by the Minister for the Environment ('the Minister'), in turn represented by the Department for the Natural Environment ('DNE'). The role of the Jersey Ramsar Advisory Group (hereafter referred to as "JRAG") is to support GOJ and to hold it to account against its obligations under the Ramsar Convention (as summarised in Appendix 1) and to advise on and make recommendations about the Management Plans. The JRAG shall liaise with GoJ through DNE.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE JERSEY RAMSAR ADVISORY GROUP

The group is known as the Jersey Ramsar Advisory Group.

The JRAG shall:

(i) Include a broad range of representative interests to provide a balance of viewpoints and expertise to enable informed debate;
(ii) Bring a range of experience from its members in matters relating to conservation, use and management of Jersey's Ramsar sites; and
(iii) Allow for the designation of, inter alia, technical, site specific, management and special interest committees within JRAG, as considered necessary to best operate the JRAG, to promote the implementation of the Vision and Objectives of JRAG and to ensure that all tasks outlined in the 5 Year Management and Annual Action Plans are completed by the appropriate parties.

Members of JRAG will comprise stakeholders with a direct interest[1] in the areas affected by the Ramsar Convention. Membership of JRAG may be gained by invitation from the JRAG Chairperson in response to

[1] 'Direct interest' means that the stakeholder falls into one of the following categories
a) Department for the Natural Environment, which has direct responsibility for the Ramsar Sites;
b) Ports of Jersey, which manages harbour areas within the Ramsar sites;
c) Commercial entities deriving all or part of their business from within the Ramsar Sites including but not limited to fishing and aquaculture, charter boat operators and tour guides;

applications received from interested parties wishing to join, and new Members will be voted in by consensus of the existing JRAG members. Applications should be made to the Chairperson for consideration at the next meeting of JRAG, at least four weeks before such meeting. Interested parties can locate the date of the next meeting from the last minutes published on the website (www.ci-ramsar.com) or by emailing jrag.jersey@gmail.com. Interested parties that are not invited as members may choose to become a member of a wider JRAG Forum to receive summary notes from JRAG meetings and other occasional communications, rather than becoming attending members (see 4.1 below).

Before appointment to JRAG, members will be asked to confirm:

(i) their support of JRAG and its purpose;
(ii) a willingness to attend meetings; and
(iii) a willingness to work within the Vision and Objectives of JRAG.

Members are required to uphold the core aims of JRAG while developing and advising upon programmes which aim to raise public awareness and understanding of what Ramsar encapsulates. These programmes will be introduced and implemented by GoJ. The aims and objectives as decided by the membership of JRAG will take precedence over those of individual members or their organisations.

2.0 JRAG'S VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POWERS

Vision:

To ensure the sustainable use of the designated Ramsar sites for the current and future enjoyment by all, through monitoring the production and implementation of the rolling 5 Year Management and Annual Action Plans for Jersey's Ramsar Sites by GoJ.

Objectives and responsibilities

- To provide advice and support to GoJ on the administration and management of Ramsar sites as required under the Convention.
- To advise upon the creation of 5 year Management Plans for each site, with annual action plans where appropriate; the Management Plans to be implemented by GoJ;
- To monitor and report on GoJ delivery against the Management Plans and action plans;
- To monitor environmental risks and opportunities that arise with potential to impact the Ramsar sites and to advise GoJ on recommended actions;
- To consider recommending the designation of additional sites, both coastal and inland areas; and
- To take any other action deemed appropriate to further the vision of JRAG.

JRAG should not direct its energies to all Jersey marine related matters but should focus on Jersey's obligations under the Ramsar Convention as they relate to the designated sites. JRAG may however offer opinions on other marine conservation matters.

Powers

JRAG is empowered by the Minister for the Environment to oversee and audit the management of the Ramsar Sites by GoJ and to advise on the design of the Management Plans. This includes reviewing and approving workplans for the Minister to endorse and appropriately resource to ensure they can be carried out using best practice and with appropriate scientific rigor by GoJ.

JRAG has power to recommend that additional locations should be added to the list of Jersey Ramsar sites.

d) Owners of land or property within the sites, including the Receiver General and the Écréhous and Maitresse Ile (Minquiers) Residents Associations;
e) The Connetables of the Parishes of which any of the Ramsar Sites form a part; and
f) Conservation Groups/NGOs whose remit includes matters directly relevant to the Ramsar Sites.

Resources

GoJ shall provide appropriate level of resource, be it funding or other resource, to enable JRAG to fulfil its function, following discussion and agreement with the Natural Environment Department. This includes funding or personnel to provide sufficient administrative support to the Chairperson for the purposes of administering JRAG.

3.0 ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF JRAG

3.1. MEMBERSHIP OF JRAG

JRAG must have a balanced representation from key stakeholder groups with a direct interest in the Ramsar sites. Membership will consist of one Principal representative from each sector or organisation that is invited to be represented, as specified in Appendix 2 (as amended from time to time). An Alternate may be designated by each invited Member to ensure there is representation at meetings. JRAG may agree to the attendance of additional representatives per sector or organisation. However, where decisions are voted upon at a meeting of JRAG, only one vote will be allowed per sector or listed organisation.

If the Principal representative of a member organisation is unable to attend a meeting of JRAG, then the Alternate or another substitute should attend. To ensure that business is progressed effectively at meetings, Members should be aware that any substitute that they appoint should be authorised to speak with JRAG on their behalf and have the ability to take decisions on issues under consideration.

The membership shall remain manageable in size in order to ensure that JRAG may function effectively. The maximum number of members shall be 30. Any inactive member not contributing to JRAG may be removed by the Chairperson in order to allow a position for proactive new members.

A wider JRAG Forum of other interested parties may be established on an 'information only' basis. That is to say, the wider forum will be kept informed of JRAG activity and developments, but those individuals or organisations that constitute the forum will have no voting rights.

It is the responsibility of Members:

a) To work together to plan the delivery of the vision and objectives of JRAG, as defined within this ToR and in the 5 Year Management Plans;
b) When working on Ramsar affairs, to prioritise Ramsar objectives over personal ones;
c) To update other JRAG members on relevant developments regularly;
d) To report back from JRAG meetings to their sector/organisation/management/ colleagues;
e) To act as a point of contact for and feedback on Ramsar and JRAG for organisations and interested parties within their sector to ensure the widest possible stakeholder engagement;
f) To provide expertise and guidance in their particular field;
g) To use only suitably experienced and briefed staff and representatives to attend JRAG meetings;
h) To operate within the confines of all relevant legislation; and
i) To attend JRAG meetings

3.2. CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson will be independent of the GoJ, and will be appointed at a meeting of JRAG by a majority of votes. Proper notice of such an election shall be given to all members, and a quorum of 7 members must be present in person, or by proxy, in order for the election to be valid.

The position of Chairperson will be for a fixed term of three years, although the incumbent may stand for re-election.

In the event that JRAG does not have a properly elected Chairperson, members may elect a temporary chairman for a period of up to twelve months.

The Chairperson's primary duties are:

a) To act as liaison between the Members of JRAG and with DNE;
b) To steer the development of JRAG through the coordination of its activities, events and projects;
c) To act as liaison/representative of JRAG with other NGOs and organisations;
d) To convene regular meetings including at least one annual public meeting;
e) To coordinate the promotion of JRAG and production of the annual progress report; and
f) To act as spokesperson for press/PR matters (or to delegate such matters to an appropriate person)

JRAG shall have the power, by a majority vote of its membership, to suspend the voting rights of any member should they be found to breach the terms of reference of JRAG.

3.3 COMMITTEES

JRAG may form and assign powers to committees or sub working groups to implement the Objectives and to support specific tasks as set out in the 5 Year Management and Annual Action Plans.

The Chairperson may form an executive committee, to provide support to the Chairperson.

3.4 ADMINISTRATION, REPRESENTATION AND REPORTING

3.4.1 Government of Jersey

Responsibility for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention obligations in Jersey lies with the Director of DNE, answerable to the Chief Officer of Infrastructure and Environment and to the Minister of the Environment. The Director of DNE will designate a Staff Lead to be responsible for managing all Ramsar Convention matters on behalf of GoJ, and will also provide a representative (or representatives) to assist with the administrative duties of JRAG, including but not limited to organising meetings, minute taking and the drafting and circulation of papers. Alternatively, GoJ shall provide funding for a part time external administrator to fulfil this role.

The DNE Ramsar administrator will act as the point of contact between the GoJ and JRAG and stakeholders and will liaise directly with the Chairperson in respect to the administrative requirements of JRAG and the reporting obligations of the GoJ.

3.4.2 Local Reporting

DNE shall report to JRAG with respect to the progress in executing the management plans for each site. An informal oral report shall be made midyear, with a more formal written report to be made on an annual basis. Should insufficient progress be made by the time of the mid-year report, JRAG shall initially discuss the issues with DNE, but may raise the lack of progress with the Minister if deemed appropriate – for example if DNE is not being provided with sufficient resource to execute the management plans.

JRAG shall provide a brief annual report detailing progress against the management plans and other activities, including the DRAFT action plan for the year ahead. The report will be presented at the annual public meeting of JRAG and will be published online.

3.4.3 Reporting to Ramsar Secretariat

DNE shall fulfil reporting requirements to the Ramsar Secretariat, which means reporting to DEFRA in the UK, which is responsible for including Channel Islands Ramsar information in its reporting.

3.5. MEETINGS

3.5.1 Members' Meetings

A meeting of the Members of JRAG will be held at least twice annually or as otherwise deemed appropriate by consensus of the Members. Notice of such meetings will be given by email at least one month before the meeting and an Agenda will be distributed one week before the meeting.

Ad hoc meetings may be called by the Chairperson or a minimum of three members.

Agendas and minutes of Members' meetings will be made publicly available via the GoJ website and upon request to JRAG.

Unless otherwise determined, the quorum for a Members' Meeting shall be seven, provided that one such person, in person or by proxy, shall be the Chairperson or his/her nominated substitute.

Decisions should be by consensus. However, should this not prove possible, a decision shall be made by a simple majority (by show of hands), with one vote per organisation or sector. -When it is known a vote will be required, all relevant information shall be circulated at least one week before the meeting and responses by email accepted from those unable to attend the meeting at which the vote will take place. Voting may be made by email but preferably will be in person to ensure members consider all aspects discussed before voting takes place.

3.5.2 Public Meetings

Public meetings will be held annually but can be incorporated into events organised by other parties.

3.5.3 Committees and sub working groups

Meetings will be held at a frequency, and to a quorum, as deemed appropriate to fulfil the specific objectives and/or tasks of that committee.

4. OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

4.1. DEALING WITH EXTERNAL BODIES

Formal statements made on behalf of JRAG to external bodies will be conducted through the Chairperson, or by members of a committee tasked with such communications. No Member shall state or imply that any comments made by, or reports presented on behalf of, their own organisations, have the endorsement of JRAG unless such an endorsement has been previously agreed by JRAG and confirmed in writing by its Chairperson. This does not include the general promotion of Jersey's Ramsar sites or the work of JRAG by Members speaking on behalf of their own organisations.

4.2 REVIEW OF JRAG ARRANGEMENTS

JRAG members will be given the opportunity to review the effectiveness and remit of this Terms of Reference document at any meeting of the Members of JRAG or at a frequency as deemed appropriate by the members of JRAG.

5. FUNDING

In addition to any funding or administrative support provided by DNE to JRAG, funding and other resources may be required to deliver against the management plans~~.~~ This funding and resource should, where reasonable and appropriate, be provided by the Government of Jersey (as a signatory to the Ramsar Convention) in accordance with the Ramsar Management Plans and any agreed schedule of works.

APPENDIX 1
JERSEY'S OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE RAMSAR CONVENTION

By signing up to the Ramsar Convention, GoJ has committed to the following obligations:

a. Designation of suitable wetlands

b. Monitoring changes to listed areas

c. Creation of nature reserves and wetland restoration projects

d. Conservation

e. Encouraging growth of waterfowl populations

f. Training of personnel

g. Encouraging research and data exchange

h. International cooperation

i. Financial contribution towards Conference of Contracting Parties

j. Financing/resourcing

APPENDIX 2
MEMBERSHIP OF JRAG

Members of JRAG will comprise stakeholders with a direct interest in the areas affected by the Ramsar Convention. The list of Members has been compiled on the basis that these individuals or organisations represent the key stakeholders or parties interested in the Ramsar sites for leisure, commercial or conservation reasons. Other individuals or organisations can apply to be added to the list.

Department for the Natural Environment, which has direct responsibility for the Ramsar Sites

- Department for the Natural Environment (Marine Resources representing the Minister for the Environment)
- Department for the Natural Environment (secretariat)
- Department for the Natural Environment (representing Land Resource Management Team)

Ports of Jersey

- Ports of Jersey

Commercial Entities

- Jersey Fishermen's Association
- Jersey Inshore Fishermen's Association
- Jersey Aquaculture Association
- Chairman of the Marine Resources Panel
- Jersey Tour Guides Association (sector)
- Commercial Charter operators (sector)

Owners of Land/Property

- Receiver General
- Écréhous Residents Association
- Maîtresse Ile Residents Association

Connétable of Parishes of which a Ramsar Site forms a part:

- Constable of St Helier
- Constable of St Martin
- Constable of Grouville
- Constable of St Clement
- Constable of St Ouen

Conservation Groups/NGOs

- Société Jersiaise
- National Trust
- Earth Project Jersey
- Jersey Marine Conservation
- BLUE Marine Foundation
- Jersey National Park
- Jersey Heritage (Aspiring Island Geopark)

Education/Research Institutes

- Jersey International Centre of Advanced Studies (JICAS)