Guernsey

49° 27’ N, 2° 34’ W
Guernsey

The Bailiwick of Guernsey consists of a group of islands situated in the English Channel, in the Gulf of St. Malo. The largest island, Guernsey is 45km from France and about 100km from England.

Guernsey, the largest island is 63km²

Seven inhabited islands and a large number of uninhabited islets.

Guernsey: 63,000; Alderney: 2,400; Sark: 600; Herm: 60. Jethou, Brecqhou and Lihou are also inhabited.

The major islands have a plateau at about 100m above sea level and have cliffs around all or part of their coast. The geology is metamorphic gneisses and granite. Alderney is the only island with large areas of sedimentary rock.

International business (banking, insurance along with fund, company and trust administration) and tourism are the main sectors of the economy but agriculture (the Guernsey cow is renowned worldwide) and horticulture, manufacturing, commerce and fisheries are also important.
Legislative and Policy Framework

Multilateral environmental agreements
Bailiwick of Guernsey (Guernsey) has been included in the UK’s ratification of six MEAs. Status of ratification of key MEAs: See also Appendix 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multilateral Environmental Agreement</th>
<th>Included in ratification?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Convention on Biological Diversity</td>
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<td>Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention on Migratory Species</td>
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<td>Ramsar Convention on Wetlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Heritage Convention</td>
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National environmental legislation
Guernsey has 33 pieces of legislation that are relevant to the environment. See Appendix 3 for a list of Guernsey laws. In addition, http://www.guernseylegalresources.gg/ccm/portal/ has details of laws and ordinances from the 1970s onwards for Guernsey, Alderney & Sark.

National environmental strategies
Guernsey has a States Strategic Plan as a medium term planning document for the island, http://www.gov.gg/ccm/navigation/government/states-strategic-plan/. This document is primarily a business plan but it considers the environmental effects of local policies. See Appendix 4.

Protected Areas
Fifty sites in Guernsey have been recognized as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs), but they have little legal protection. See Appendix 5 for a map and list of SNCIs or go to http://maps.digimap.gg/SitesOfNatureConservation/

Research Priorities
The Guernsey Renewable Energy Commission (GREC) was formed in 2008 to investigate the potential for, facilitate and consent the development of, macro renewable energy projects, particularly tidal. Research has started on the ecological effect that tidal power devices will have but the research priority is to continue this research to investigate ecological impacts after their commissioning.
Institutional Arrangements

**Government:** The Environment Department advises the States on Environmental policy including sustainable development of the natural environment. Further details about the role of the Environment Department can be found at Appendix 6.

**Non-Governmental Organisation:** There are at least seven NGOs involved in biodiversity and habitat conservation in Guernsey. See Appendix 6 for more details.

Ecosystems and Habitats

**Terrestrial:** Guernsey has about 30 classes of vegetation. See Appendix 7 for details. The dominant vegetation is grasslands. Most threatened habitats are saltmarshes, dune slacks and open dune. The terrestrial habitats most important for their biodiversity include Dune, Coastal and Marshy Grasslands.

**Marine:** The marine flora and fauna is particularly rich, the island has many species not found further north in the British Isles.

Species

The terrestrial species found are a subset of those in North West France. Over 13,000 species have been recorded from the islands not counting bacteria, protozoa or single-celled algae. Complete lists of the insects, arachnids, many invertebrate groups, plants and fungi together with a list of the literature references to their occurrence in all the Channel Islands can be downloaded from the Guernsey Biological records Centre website at: http://www.biologicalrecordscentre.gov.gg/files/downloadlists.html. See Appendix 8 for a discussion of species diversity and species of significance.
Threats

**Invasive species:** A third of the vascular plants in the Bailiwick are non-native, many of these are of no concern. Some invasive species are native. Rats are a particular threat to breeding birds. Appendix 6 discusses invasive species of concern.

**Climate change:** Sea level rise, particularly in the North of the island which is very low lying, is expected to reduce important wildlife habitat. See Appendix 9 for more information.

Projects

Guernsey has undertaken a number of terrestrial and marine projects over the last five years. See Appendix 10.

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**Case Study: Protection of species-rich marshy grassland habitats by La Société Guernesiaise.**

**Funded by:** La Société Guernesiaise, donations, bequests

**Dates:** 1975-present

In the 1970s La Société Guernesiaise realised that many species and habitats were under threat in the island, particularly wet meadow habits famous for their orchids which were threatened by draining, building and modern farming methods. La Société changed its constitution to enable it to purchase land and started buying up these threatened fields.

**Main outcomes:**

Now the majority of the fields in the island with this habitat are owned or managed by La Société and these biodiverse areas are preserved and sensitively managed, at least in the short-term. See Loose-flowered Orchid in Appendix 5 for a description of one of the plants.

Triangular Field Vicheries © Guernsey Biological Records Centre
Contacts

See also Appendix 11

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Project Partners
Alderney Wildlife Trust; Chief Pleas, Sark; Guernsey Biological Records Centre; States of Guernsey Commerce and Employment Department; States of Alderney; La Société Guernesiaise. See Appendix 8 for further contact details.

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See also Appendix 12

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Appendices

All Appendices referred to in this chapter are available at
http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5821