

Nicolas Jouault

April 5th 2022

Re Portelet No Take Zone designation

Dear Constable Jackson

It is disappointing to hear that you think there has been a lack of consultation on this matter when it has been in the pipeline for so many years, and "No Take Zones"(NTZ) were recommended in the 2008 Coastal Strategy (supposed of have been out in 2003). The site itself was discussed several times at the Marine Resources Panel, on which professional fishermen have several representatives. I would also have expected you would have welcomed such a prestigious site in your Parish that will receive national attention as a conservation area.

I do share your concerns about conservation management. We have a National Park and Ramsar areas with not even wardens present to educate, advise and manage these areas of importance. The Puffin protection zone at Plemont is not enforced.

I regularly raise concerns about wildlife law infringements at Les Ecrehous to the Environment Department, and to date no action has been taken other than I was put under investigation by the Parish of St Martin for protecting nesting birds.

I have a proposal going to the Chefs de Police committee this month, in that each Parish should have an Honorary Officer whose remit would be to undertake environmental and wildlife issues, it may also encourage people to come forward and undertake Parish honorary duties, it has met favour with most people I have discussed it with.

The marine environment is a public domain, and as the vast majority wish to see some of it protected, I would say that the protection of 0.0001% of that area for the wildlife and habitat is in no way draconian, just a very small step in ensuring an improved environment and protecting the long-term interests of our fishers. It will be a welcome boost to tourism and educational initiatives if correctly managed, it should also improve local food security. NTZ's are a proven tool in improving fishery management, and the initial ones implemented in New Zealand are now being extended to allow fish to access offshore breeding grounds. Evidence shows that current fishing regulations in Jersey are failing to stop the demise of commercial fisheries, with lobster, crab, whelks, bass, and ormers catches falling year on year, for example bass was around 38 tonnes a couple of decades ago, and is now in single figures. Ormers on the market in the 19th century would be 15 to 30 tons a tide, the total now is probably no more than a few 100 individuals. It was interesting to observe the increase in number of ormers at Les Ecrehous during covid restrictions to numbers I had not seen in my lifetime, the limited access by the French at the time certainly improved stocks, only to see them disappear when French were allowed to land again, one can only presume some illegal fishing took place.

One solution that may help the smaller coastal fishing boats would be the implementation of a buffer zone around the NTZ, that could only be accessed by the smaller coastal boats (say of St Brelade. and St Helier) who would benefit from the overspill of the productive NTZ.

Given this zone has taken so long to implement I am now pushing for the creation of a second site, I do hope that your panel might suggest how best to speed up the process, as I do not expect it to be created in my lifetime at the rate the authorities move on meaningful conservation matters.

For the record Scrutiny agreed with my suggestion of implementing "No Take Zones" in their review on netting that you and I attended in 2008, at the time I also raised the issue of poor Fisheries management and suggested Honorary officers could be used, but this was not taken up.

Yours sincerely Nicolas Jouault

Marine Biologist