

## **COPELAND ISLANDS**

### **Views About Management The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 Article 28(2)**

#### **A statement of Environment and Heritage Service's views about the management of the Copeland Islands Area of Special Scientific Interest ("the ASSI")**

This statement represents the views of Environment and Heritage Service about the management of the ASSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the area's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. Environment and Heritage Service has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the ASSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the ASSI and there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest. It is also very important to recognise that management may need to change with time.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation or activity. The written consent of Environment and Heritage Service is still required before carrying out any operation or activity likely to damage the features of special interest (see the Schedule on pages 3 - 5 for a list of these operations and activities). Environment and Heritage Service welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the ASSI to ensure that the management of this area maintains and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

#### **MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES**

The Copeland Islands support a range of habitat types that are important for wildlife, especially birds. These include the network of burrows for breeding Manx Shearwater, the areas with low vegetation and shell or stone for breeding terns, the wet grasslands for breeding small gulls, the grasslands for breeding waders and the rocky shores for breeding sea duck. Environment and Heritage Service would like to see the habitat and its species continue to be conserved and enhanced.

Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of these habitats, through the development of their structure and the conservation of their associated native plants and animals. Specific objectives include:

Encourage the maintenance of the burrow complexes used by breeding Manx Shearwater; this includes all banks and earth walls that support burrows.

Encourage the maintenance of habitat suitable for breeding terns, small gulls and waders through the appropriate management of grasslands and wetlands

and of the shoreline for the needs of breeding sea duck and other bird species, together with seals.

Encourage the maintenance of an appropriate rabbit population to ensure ongoing development of burrows and maintenance of grazing for those areas where no other grazing stock are present.

Encourage the maintenance of an environment with limited disturbance to minimise human impact on the breeding birds and other native plants and animals.

Ensure the continued absence on the islands of pest species, such as rats, ferrets and feral cats. Such introduced pest species can have a devastating impact on ground and burrow nesting birds.

Discourage non-native plant species, especially those that tend to spread at the expense of native wildlife.

Maintain the diversity and quality of other notable habitats associated with the islands, such as saltmarsh and fen. These adjoining habitats can often be very important for wildlife.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the  
Department of the Environment  
hereunto affixed is authenticated  
by



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**Dr J S Faulkner**  
Senior Officer of the  
Department of the Environment

Dated the 31<sup>st</sup> of MARCH 2004