

CLIMATE ASSEMBLY SESSION:

Intro to carbon offsetting

JERSEY ELECTRICITY SUBMISSION PAPER:

We should not try to buy our way out of this

- Carbon abatement projects (including fuel switching, energy efficiency and electrification of transport) and carbon sequestration (such as tree planting or carbon capture technologies) and offsetting all have important parts to play if Jersey is to become carbon neutral. **But the scale of carbon reduction we can achieve with abatement projects mean carbon offsetting should be a last resort**, not the first choice. We firmly believe we have a responsibility to reduce what we can and only offset what we can't. In most cases technologies are available today to do this and we cannot morally buy our way out of the consequences our own actions and lifestyles have on climate change.
- **In addition**, EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) prices for carbon offset credits increased six-fold in two years from 2017 to 2019 from around 5 Euros/tonne of carbon equivalents to nearer 30 Euros/tonne. Costs are likely to rise in the future as demand increases due to national and international commitments to carbon neutrality. **It would therefore be more sustainable – and ethical – to invest in carbon reduction in preference to relying on carbon offsetting.** Carbon abatement and sequestration activities are an investment in our future and will lead to lower costs over the longer term.

We are already leading local sequestration projects

- **On-Island carbon sequestration schemes can enhance Jersey's landscape** for the benefit of Islanders now, increase biodiversity by protecting wildlife habitats and bring long-lasting environmental benefits for future generations.
- **Jersey Electricity is already leading several key Island projects** as seen at Mourier Valley where we are jointly funding (and delivering) with Jersey Water, the reforestation of 20 acres of ancient woodland on the north coast in partnership with the National Trust for Jersey and Jersey Trees for Life. The £40,000 project will take three years to complete and see the planting of over 6,000 trees.
- **We have also launched another £60,000 planting project among all 12 parishes** and we have partnered with the Government and Earthwatch Europe to pilot the Channel Islands' first intense carbon-absorbing Tiny Forest at Hautlieu School.
- **We would like to see planning consents eased of these types of schemes** to encourage and enable more such local carbon sequestration and stronger community engagement.

Seagrass – the super carbon sequester

- Another local option we would be keen to support and see investigated is the cultivation of Seagrass. It has been found to absorb carbon dioxide faster than trees which take 100 years to absorb one tonne of CO₂. But like many of our natural assets it has been in rapid decline, with up to 92% of the plant likely to have disappeared from the UK's coast over the last century. Work has now begun on lowering a million Seagrass seeds onto the seabed off Pembrokeshire to create a new 20,000 square-metre meadow which will also help boost fish numbers and support marine wildlife.

