

Appointment of Cefas Management Board Chair

Briefing pack for applicants

Deadline: 13th July 2026



"Thank you for your interest in becoming Chair of the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas).

As an Executive Agency of Defra, Cefas provides high-quality evidence and advice that underpins decision-making for the sustainable management of the UK's marine and freshwater environments, working closely with partners across government, industry, and the international community.

This is an exciting time to join Cefas as it continues to strengthen its impact and reputation as a trusted scientific authority. Through its work, Cefas plays a key role in underpinning Defra's priorities to restore nature while supporting growth and development, including the ambition for thriving, productive seas. From fisheries and aquaculture to marine biodiversity, climate resilience and environmental protection, Cefas' work is central to addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing our natural environment.

The successful candidate will provide strategic leadership to the Cefas Board, supporting strong governance and organisational performance, and ensuring Cefas continues to deliver high-quality, impactful science. You will also have a key role in building effective relationships across the Defra group and the wider scientific community.

If you believe you have the skills and experience to take on this rewarding role, I encourage you to apply."



**Sally Randall -
Director General for Environment at Defra
(Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)**

Cefas: Leading marine science for nature, society and growth

CEFAS (the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) is an Executive Agency of Defra. Through our science, we help strengthen food security, restore the marine environment and support economic growth. Our applied science, evidence and advice enable the marine and freshwater environment to provide the essentials of life - food, water, energy and health - now and for future generations.

As a centre of scientific excellence, we apply our unique capabilities to address complex, interlinked challenges affecting our rivers, seas and the ocean including sustainable fisheries, recovery of marine ecosystems in a changing climate, clean energy expansion and blue economic growth. We work in partnership with UK and international governments, the seafood, energy and marine industries, non-governmental organisations, research institutes and universities to build consensus, using data and evidence to support shared solutions.

Our Mission

By providing critical national scientific capability, we lead marine science for Defra/Government, working across organisations, sectors and borders. We respond to emergencies and build resilience in marine systems. We work across the UK and internationally, to share knowledge and grow expertise.

Our expertise focuses on addressing knowledge gaps and influencing better decision making. By understanding the impact of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution we help to balance the needs of nature, society and the economy, safeguarding security, livelihoods and wellbeing.

As a centre of scientific excellence, we apply our unique capability to address the most complex and interlinked environmental challenges.

Our partnerships span UK and international governments, the seafood, energy and marine industries, non-governmental organisations, research institutes, and universities. By convening these expert communities, we work together to build consensus through data and on evidence towards shared solutions.

Our Future

Whilst working to deliver excellent science for nature, society and growth, we must adapt to respond to the economic, societal and environmental challenges we face. By changing our ways of working, we will build more influential partnerships and integrate our data and technology becoming smaller, smarter and more productive.

About the Cefas Management Board

The Cefas Management Board is an advisory board, providing strategic leadership, challenge, and assurance to support the Chief Executive in leading the agency and delivering its long-term objectives. The Board provides advice on Cefas' strategic direction, helping to ensure alignment with ministerial priorities and overseeing a robust framework of governance, risk management, and control. It scrutinises organisational performance, provides strategic advice on policy and delivery and supports the Chief Executive in fulfilling his responsibilities as Accounting Officer, and the wider senior leadership team. This includes ensuring value for money, scientific excellence, and the effective delivery of Cefas's remit.

CMB Chair – Role description

The Cefas Management Board requires an effective independent Chair to ensure the Board provides appropriate assurance and oversight of the agency's performance and delivery of its objectives. The Chair provides leadership to the Non-Executive Directors as they fulfil their role in providing support and challenge to the Chief Executive and senior leadership team. The Chair also acts as an ambassador for the organisation, building and maintaining strong relationships with key partners and stakeholders and engaging with the local community on behalf of Cefas.

In this role you will be required to attend regular meetings in-person at Cefas' sites in Lowestoft and Weymouth as well as Defra's office in London.



Our Board

Non-Executive Directors



DR RUTH BOUMPHREY

Appointed 2021

Career includes environmental protection, Head of Earth Observation, marine science and technology, and engineering related research.



PROFESSOR RACHEL MILLS

Appointed 2021

Career includes leadership roles at King's College London, where she is currently Senior Vice President (Academic) and at the Universities of Sussex and Southampton. Deep Sea oceanographer and ocean chemist.



MELANIE SIGGS

Appointed 2025

Career spans global strategic roles for both commercial and NGO organisations across the food systems and timber sectors. She has specialised in fisheries and aquaculture over the past 18 years.



SIMON REEVE

Appointed 2025

An Independent Director with significant international leadership experience spanning maritime, environment, energy & technology sectors.



GARETH BAYNHAM-HUGHES - Defra Representative (Non-Executive)

Appointed 2025.

Career includes current role as Director of Marine and Fisheries in Defra and previous positions including Animal Health & Welfare Director and Deputy Director for Environmental Principles & Oversight.

Executive Directors



NEIL HORNBY

Cefas Chief Executive Appointed 2021

Career includes a range of senior roles in central government, including most recently as Marine and Fisheries Director in Defra. Previous roles include responsibility for floods policy and nuclear energy.



TIM GREEN

Chief Operating Officer Appointed 2005

Career includes an equal split within both the public and private sector in a range of finance and operations leadership roles in Defra and the professional services, leisure, construction and healthcare sectors.



PROFESSOR GRANT STENTIFORD

Chief Scientist Appointed 2023

Joined Cefas in 2000 with a PhD in invertebrate pathology. An aquatic animal health specialist with broad interests in development of sustainable aquatic food systems.



DR SIÂN LIMPENNY

Strategy and Delivery Director Appointed 2020

Joined Cefas in 1994, completed a PhD then worked as a Marine scientist. Appointed as Cefas Divisional Director in 2013, Middle East Operations Director in 2017 and Strategy and Delivery Director in 2022.



STEVE ADDISON

International Funding and Partnerships Director Appointed 2014

31 years' experience in the environmental, marine and finance industries including extensive financial and business development expertise gained in international banking and Oil and Gas markets.

Criteria

We require exceptional experience and knowledge, together with the ability to influence strategic management debates at Board Level (or equivalent) and decisions on a breadth of corporate and delivery issues. We are looking for someone with enthusiasm for operating within a complex scientific, technical and environmentally connected organisation, able to blend strong communication skills, problem-solving and public service principles. While not essential, you would have an advantage if you could demonstrate previous engagement in marine issues in the UK and/or internationally with beneficial contacts and personal networks alongside a good understanding of UK government objectives and relevant national and international policies.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate all the following essential criteria:

- **Leadership:** Previous board experience within the private, public, or voluntary sector alongside senior executive or non-executive leadership experience. A proven ability to offer both strategic guidance and constructive challenge to the Executive Team.
- **Strategic thinking:** A good understanding of the context Cefas operates in, with the ability to assess complex issues, encourage innovation and identify and manage risks.
- **Change management:** Extensive experience of effectively implemented change programmes that deliver transformation while maintaining focus on core objectives.
- **Innovative delivery:** Foster a culture that encourages and values the exploration of new, efficient ways of working to ensure the organisation operates within its financial means while maximizing impact.
- **Effective Engagement:** Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with a track record of building trusted and collaborative working relationships across Cefas teams based in multiple locations, while building and maintaining influential working relationships externally, involving a wide range of partners and stakeholders.
- **Enthusiasm:** A strong interest in the marine environment and the role science, technology and data can play in driving economic growth whilst enhancing the environment and social outcomes.
- **Judgement:** Evidence of independence of mind, a sense of perspective and sound judgement, together with the ability to provide impartial, objective and pragmatic advice.
- **Trust:** An ability to engender trust and confidence including a commitment to work with openness, collaboration and transparency. The successful candidate must abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life (See Annex A).



Personal Attributes:

- Demonstrates unwavering integrity, probity, and high ethical standards, underpinned by a strong grasp of governance principles and control systems, and the ability to apply them appropriately and effectively.
- Possesses the ability to maintain perspective, identify critical issues, and engage in intelligent questioning, constructive debate, and challenge.
- Brings independence of thought and sound judgement, offering impartial, objective, and pragmatic advice.
- Exhibits the strength of character required to seek and secure comprehensive and satisfactory answers within a Board environment.
- Highly effective communicator with strong relationship-building skills, including the ability to influence, negotiate, challenge appropriately, and listen with sensitivity and respect.
- Committed to the Seven Principles of Public Life, with the dedication and availability to invest the necessary time to understand the organisation's dynamics and strategic context.

Commitment

- You will be expected to devote approximately 25 days for the Cefas Management Board Chair role per year.
- This allows for attendance at Board meetings, involvement in Board sub-committees, associated preparation time and other ad hoc Chair activities.
- Meetings generally take place either at Cefas sites in Lowestoft or Weymouth, the Defra office in London or virtually via MS Teams.
- Remuneration will be £500 per day along with reimbursement expenses.
- The successful candidates will be appointed for a period of three years with the possibility of an additional three year extension.

How to Apply

To apply, all candidates are required to provide:

- a Curriculum Vitae (CV) of no more than two A4 sides
- a supporting statement of no more than 1000 words, setting out how you meet the essential criteria
- diversity information
- information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues.

You will have the opportunity to make a reasonable adjustment request or apply under the disability confident scheme before you submit your application.

The Advisory Assessment Panel reserves the right to only consider applications that contain all the elements listed above, and that arrive before the published deadline for applications.

Please review the Annexes in this Pack before applying, including Annex C on Ineligibility Criteria & Conflicts of Interest.

Applications should be sent to Cefas Chief of Staff, Rachel Chatfield
rachel.chatfield@cefas.gov.uk

Deadline for applications is: **Monday 13th July 2026**

The Recruitment Process

The closing date for applications is **Monday 13th July 2026**. We expect to have these shortlisted through the summer, with panel interviews to be confirmed in September 2026 after Parliamentary Recess.

It is essential that your statement of suitability gives full but concise information relevant to the appointment, clearly demonstrating how you meet the essential criteria.

The Assessment Panel will consist of Gareth Baynham-Hughes Director of Marine and Fisheries, Defra, Les Philpott Chair of the Marine Management Organisation and another independent panel member.

Further details about the format will be provided in advance.

You will be able to claim reasonable travel expenses incurred travelling to and from the interview (please note you may be asked to justify travelling costs if Cefas considers the claims excessive). Please let us know beforehand if you are likely to claim, along with the approximate costs by contacting cmboffice@cefas.gov.uk

Annex A - Seven Principles of Public Life



Selflessness: Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their Office.

Openness: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Annex B - 12 Principles of Governance for Public Body NEDs

Expertise

- Consider and act in the best interests of your organisation and its objectives; delivering the outcomes expected by your sponsor department, ministers and ultimately the public.
- Consider the broader mission and duties of your sponsoring Secretary of State, his or her Department and the Government. or her Department and the Government.
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties and the organisation's Framework Document and act within its powers.
- Exercise reasonable care, skill, and diligence in the exercise of their authority and judgement.

Scrutiny and challenge

- Maintain independence from the executive to allow scrutiny of management and in meetings agree goals and objectives and monitor performance and the reporting of performance so that the public who use your organisation receive a high-quality service.
- Satisfy yourself on the integrity of budget setting to deliver objectives and financial information and reporting against budgets, and that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible. Meet the requirements of Managing Public Money, including supporting the Accounting Officer in fulfilling their duties to provide propriety and value for money in the use of public funds.
- Champion high standards of risk management by ensuring your organisation has effective risk reporting, controls and governance, risk expertise and risk tolerances to effectively manage risk.
- Represent your organisation to the department and to Ministers, as well as ensuring Ministers' views are considered by the executive team of the organisation, as appropriate.

Support

- Support the board in succession planning and be prepared to put yourself up for re-appointment, as well as promoting the need for a diverse board.
- Participate in and promote regular reviews of your organisation, as well as the board's own effectiveness, with particular focus on the organisation's purposes and its efficiency in meeting these purposes. Engage in the appraisal process, including self-reflection on your own abilities.
- Listen carefully to, ask appropriate questions of and support management to encourage discussion in a manner that promotes a culture where all perspectives are listened to, while fulfilling the individual Director's duties and responsibilities and respecting and valuing the expertise of the executive team.
- Promote the success of the entity having regard to the interests of all members and stakeholders, and all risks

Annex C – Ineligibility Criteria & Conflicts of Interest

Ineligibility Criteria:

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you become bankrupt or make an arrangement with creditors;
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors;
- you are disqualified from acting as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- you have been convicted of a criminal offence; the conviction not being spent for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (c. 53);
- you become subject to a debt relief order or a bankruptcy restrictions order;
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

Conflicts of interest and due diligence:

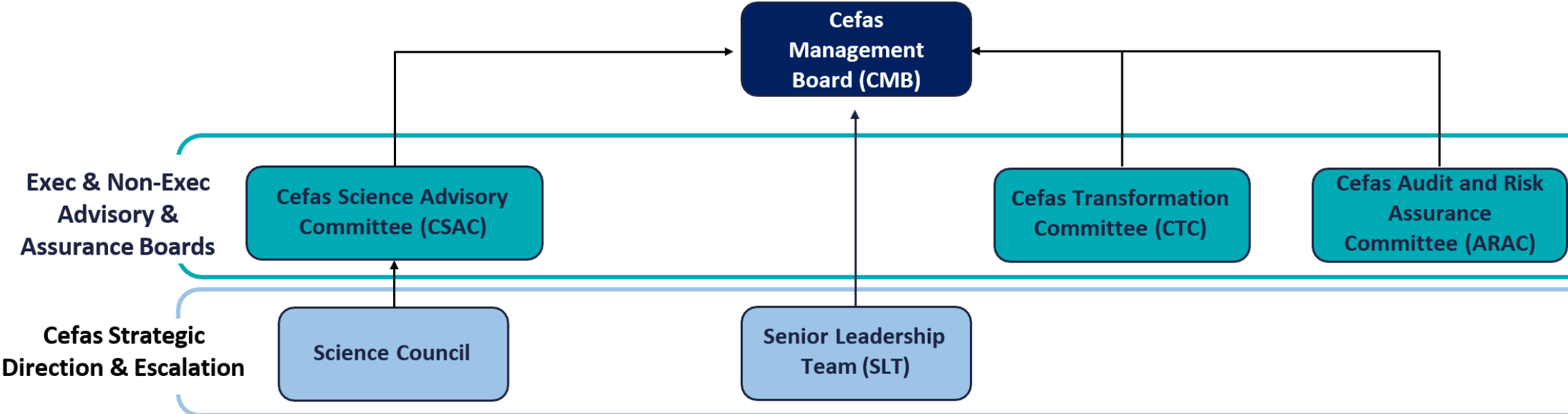
If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of Cefas or Defra, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your application. I

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue(s) in your application.

In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media. As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs, or any other publicly available information.

This information may be made available to the Advisory Assessment Panel, and they may wish to explore issues with you should you be invited to interview. The information may also be shared with ministers.

Annex D – Board & Sub-Board Structure

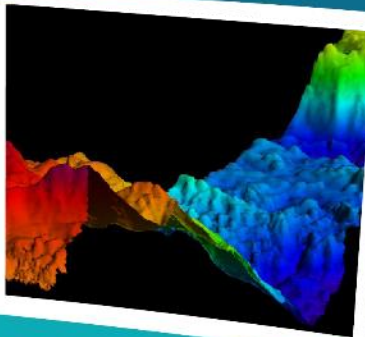


Thank you for your interest

For questions or more information
please contact
Cefas Chief of Staff Rachel Chatfield
rachel.chatfield@cefas.gov.uk

To learn about Cefas scan the QR
code or visit
linktr.ee/CefasGovUK

SCAN ME



Centre for Environment,
Fisheries & Aquaculture
Science

