

Appointment of a Chair to The UK National Decade Committee

Briefing pack for applicants

Closing Date: 7th April 2023

1. UK National Decade Committee

1.1 Background

The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 (UN Ocean Decade) has the vision of “The Science We Need for the Ocean We Want”, and a mission of “Transformative ocean science solutions for sustainable development, connecting people and our ocean”.

Bringing together interdisciplinary professionals, ocean users and wider society, the UN Ocean Decade will facilitate global communication and new collaborative partnerships to ensure that ocean science delivers greater benefits for both ocean ecosystems and for society (UNESCO-IOC, 2023).

The UN Ocean Decade provides a convening framework for diverse stakeholders to co-design and co-deliver solution-oriented research needed for achieving a clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse ocean by 2030 (UNESCO-IOC, 2023). Capacity development, ocean literacy and the removal of barriers to full gender, generational, and geographic diversity are essential elements of the Decade. The Decade will promote the emergence of an extensive stakeholder engagement network including National Decade Committees, regional and thematic stakeholder fora (UNESCO-IOC, 2023).

A UK National Decade Committee (UK NDC) was appointed in 2022 to inspire, coordinate and facilitate UK engagement with the UN Ocean Decade through an all-society approach. With members from across the breadth of ocean science, the Committee includes established researchers and several early career ocean professionals all coming together to champion the UN Ocean Decade within the UK’s Ocean Science and sustainability communities, as well as supporting regional and international engagement through the UN Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC). Furthermore, the Committee will support goals of the Integrated Review for promoting UK science internationally and the UK vision that by 2030 the ocean will be effectively governed, clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse, linking resilient and prosperous coastal communities around the world, and supporting sustainable economic growth for the UK, the Overseas Territories and the Crown Dependencies.

The UK NDC is a non-statutory, independent expert group. Appointed Committee members serve in their personal capacity, supported by a Secretariat led by the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), government representatives from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and Devolved Administrations (DAs), and representatives to the IOC. Interim Co-Chairs from Defra and FCDO are in place until an independent Chair is recruited.

1.2 Aims of the UK NDC

The key objectives of the Committee are to:

- Communicate and inspire UK engagement, keeping the UK ocean community up to date and aware of opportunities within the UN Ocean Decade.
- Coordinate UK engagement with the UN Ocean Decade to deliver its societal outcomes, including through support to the UK Delegation to the IOC.
- Facilitate the co-design and co-delivery of Ocean Decade Actions in the UK as part of our national contribution to the UN Ocean Decade, promoting and enabling delivery of transformational ocean science to meet its societal outcomes.
- Inform and support UK policy awareness of the UN Ocean Decade and respond to UK policy priorities for the UN Ocean Decade.

2. Role Specification

We are seeking an independent Chair to provide effective and strategic leadership for the Committee. The Chair will work collaboratively with the Secretariat, Committee members, Defra and other government representatives in an interdisciplinary team. The Chair will bring energy and vision to build and maintain the Committee's momentum and ensure agreed aims are met. The Chair role will be a fixed term appointment for two years, with the potential for reappointment. The Chair will be based in the United Kingdom. The Secretariat invites applications for the position of Chair of the UK NDC Committee to provide the leadership, support and collaborative working required.

The Chair will lead the Committee and will be responsible for providing effective and strategic leadership to the Committee to drive forward the Committee's agenda, including developing its operations, work plans and outputs with support from the Secretariat and Defra. The Chair will be the point of contact between the NDC and Defra, together with the Secretariat, and will have regular access to departmental officials to build working relationships and to maximise committee effectiveness. As the lead spokesperson for the UK NDC, the Chair will also have significant interaction with the IOC and will share representation at IOC events accordingly with the Secretariat.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Setting the strategic direction for the Committee to ensure delivery towards the UK NDC's four key objectives (in line with the Terms of Reference).
- Drive forward the actions and outcomes for the Committee by providing momentum and leadership to its work.
- The ability to chair complex multidisciplinary discussions, drawing out the views of all members, arriving at consensus, navigating uncertainty and producing relevant and clear outcomes.
- Overseeing the development of the Committee's work plan by its members. Ensuring workplans are set and delivered within available resources.

- Provide strategic direction and retain oversight of the planning and delivery of UK NDC meetings. This includes acting as the key point of contact for the Secretariat to provide approval for meeting agendas and circulation of UK NDC documents.
- Maintain visible leadership on behalf of the UK NDC to external stakeholders, including providing senior representation to the IOC and acting as the primary Committee spokesperson in media engagement.

2.1 Essential criteria

Candidates must demonstrate the following essential criteria:

a) Leadership

- Provide responsible, inclusive and fair leadership to motivate and inspire Committee members. The ability to chair complex multidisciplinary discussions, drawing out the views of all members, arriving at consensus, navigating uncertainty and producing relevant and clear outcomes.
- Demonstrate effective decision-making to drive forward work of the Committee.

b) Communicating and influencing

- Effective communication with the Committee, the Secretariat, Defra and UK Government, UN-IOC and wider stakeholders of relevance to the Committee's work (in the UK and internationally).

c) Working Together

- A collaborative working style and an aptitude for partnership working and stakeholder engagement, including engaging with people in a respectful and inclusive way.

d) Seeing the bigger picture

- Understand the strategic drivers for the Committee's work related to the UN Ocean Decade purpose, challenges and stakeholders. Align Committee activities to contribute to achievement of the outcomes of the committee's agreed workplan.
- Strong understanding of the national and international ocean-science landscape including UK Government and Devolved Administrations activity.

2.2 Desirable (but not essential) criteria

- Experience working with UK Government and the Devolved Administrations.
- The ability to retain a broad professional network, including individuals and groups working as part of the Ocean Decade Community.

While this is not a public appointment, the successful candidate is expected to abide by standards outlined in the Nolan principles of public service (Annex A – The seven principles of public life).

2.2 Time commitment

The time commitment of the role will be 20-30 days a year. This includes four meetings of the Committee per financial year, typically two in-person meetings and two virtual meetings per year, intersessional meetings and engagement with the Secretariat and the Committee, and briefings with the Secretariat in relation to each full UK NDC meeting, where appropriate.

The successful candidate will receive support from the Interim Co-Chairs during a transitional period.

2.3 Term of Office

The appointment will commence by May 2023 and for continuity, the post holder is expected to commit to a period of 2 years, with the potential for reappointment. Please note the successful applicant will not be an employee of Cefas during their term of appointment, however, you will be expected to complete the appointment under a services contract, terms of which are available upon request.

2.4 Remuneration and expenses

The Chair will be remunerated as described below:

- £320/day for every day of no less than 7.5 hours devoted to performing the Chair functions up to a maximum of 20-30 days (unless agreed otherwise).
- Reasonable (only standard class rate) travel and subsistence expenses are also paid in line with the Cefas Travel and Subsistence Policy.

3. Appointment Process

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

To apply, please submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) letter (max. 2 pages) outlining why you are interested in the role and how you meet the requirements. The EOI should give evidence of the strength and depth of your ability to meet the essential criteria for this role. Please provide specific examples to demonstrate how you meet each of the essential criteria.

Candidates should also submit their CV with education, professional qualifications and employment history and the names and contact details for two referees.

Your EOI letter and CV should be returned to the following email address by the closing date: 12.00 (midday) on 7 April 2023. Email to ndc.secretariat@cefas.co.uk and state 'The UK NDC Chair vacancy' in the subject line.

If you have any questions about the appointments process, require additional assistance to support you in your application, or would like an informal discussion about the role, please contact ndc.secretariat@cefas.co.uk.

Applications will be sifted based on the essential criteria detailed above. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an informal online interview in week commencing 24 April 2023, via MS Teams and will last for approximately 45 minutes.

4. Diversity and Inclusion

We welcome applicants from across the full spectrum of ethnicity, gender, lived experience, career stage and academic discipline. This appointment will be made on merit following a fair and open competition.

Equal Opportunities

UK Government and Devolved Administrations have a policy of equality of opportunity. We aim to promote equal opportunity policies whereby no one suffers unfair discrimination either directly or indirectly, or harassment, on grounds such as race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or age.

Disability

We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. 'Minimum criteria' means you must provide sufficient evidence in your application, demonstrating that you meet the minimum level of competence required for each essential criterion, as well as meeting any of the qualifications, skills or experience required.

If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a nondisabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes where possible. If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, please refer to the 'How to apply and submit your application' section.

5. Conflicts of Interest and Due Diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the UK NDC and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your application. Failure to disclose any conflicts could result in being asked to stand down from the Committee.

If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Committee 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 Committee Secretariat, and they may wish to explore issues with you should you be invited to interview.

6. Data Protection

UK Government and the Devolved Administrations are committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal information and does so in accordance with data protection law including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All the information you provide will be used to proceed with the appointment listed in this information pack. For more information see [Personal information charter -Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science.](#)

Annex A – The seven principles of public life

While this position is not a public appointment, the following seven principles of public life are a standard expected of the Chair of the UK NDC.

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.