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Tender

CEFAS25-139 Request for Quotation for the analysis of seabed imagery

CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SCIENCE

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Scope

Reference

C32638

Description

To view this opportunity please go to <https://atamis-9529.my.site.com/login> You will need to log in or create a new supplier account. The opportunity can then be found searching 'CEFAS25-139 Request for Quotation for the analysis of seabed imagery'.

Cefas and Natural England (NE) have been working collaboratively to deliver monitoring surveys within Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as part of the ongoing MPA programme. These surveys aim to support Natural England's monitoring objectives and provide robust evidence to inform conservation measures.

Two recent surveys were undertaken at designated Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs): Beachy Head East MCZ in November 2023 and Cape Bank MCZ in September 2025. Both sites are important for understanding subtidal habitats and associated species, and the surveys were designed to gather high-quality data to meet specific ecological

objectives.

Beachy Head East MCZ is an inshore site located along the East Sussex coast near Eastbourne, within the Eastern Channel region. Covering an area of approximately 195 km², the survey focused on:

- Mapping the extent and distribution of subtidal sediment, rock, and biogenic reef habitats.
- Collecting quantitative information on species composition across sedimentary and rocky biotopes.
- Identifying the presence of *S. spinulosa* formations and, where possible, providing data to inform Reefiness assessments.
- Recording any presence of non-native species.

Cape Bank MCZ, is an inshore site situated in the Western Channel and Celtic Sea region to the west of Land's End, spans roughly 474 km². The survey objectives included:

- Acquiring high-quality video and image data to verify the extent and distribution of subtidal moderate energy circalittoral rock features.
- Determining the main characterising species within these habitats to enable temporal comparisons with previous datasets.

2. Requirements:

The Supplier is required to undertake the analysis of seabed imagery (video and still images) collected at Beachy Head East and Cape Bank MCZs. This analysis will include the production of imagery-specific Geographic Information System (GIS) deliverables. The imagery for analysis is detailed in Table 1, and maps of the stations sampled are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

More detailed metadata will be provided to the awarded Supplier following Contract award. All video observations were captured using a drop-down camera (DDC) system.

2.1. General project specifications:

The Supplier will:

- Undertake the analysis of seabed imagery (video and still images) as outlined in this document and its appendices.

- Use BIIGLE to annotate video and still images in accordance with methodology described in Appendix A. Cefas and NE will provide guidance on use of BIIGLE for MPA projects during the start-up meeting, if needed.
 - o Record the majority of information in BIIGLE first and subsequently used to populate the provided proformas. Where explicitly agreed by Cefas/NE, certain data may be entered directly into the proformas.
 - o Develop and maintain substrate and taxonomic image reference collections in BIIGLE.
- Produce all specified deliverables (see section 4), including GIS outputs and a comprehensive analysis report.
 - o The GIS outputs will be provided as an ESRI ArcMap GIS geodatabase (“.gdb”) using the sample information provided (see also section 2.2.3). The database will contain one A still image feature-class (labelled “_STILL”) and two video specific feature-classes (labelled “_VIDSOL” and “_VIDTR”).
 - o The comprehensive analysis report will include a summary of the results, the description of the methodology, and some details on the quality Assurance (QA) process and any remediation undertaken (see also section 4.1)
- Ensure that still image and video references used in analysis outputs are identical to those used in the naming of the original media, to enable future reconciliation between data and media. If identical naming is not possible, a suitable alternative should be sought with Cefas (e.g. a lookup table, or closely similar naming) .

Any deviation from this methodology must be approved in writing by Project Manager.

2.2. Analysis Methodologies

The Supplier must perform all analyses in accordance with the specifications set out below and in Appendix A. Any deviation must be approved in writing by the Project Manager prior to implementation.

2.2.1. Video Data (All Transects)

Video will be analysed in BIIGLE using the label trees shown in Table 2. A high-level review will be conducted as described in Turner et al (2016). Tier selection for each tree is specified in Table 2 and further clarified in Appendix A.

Each video will be analysed and labelled using provided BIIGLE label trees (unless specified otherwise). The following steps outline the tasks required to generate the necessary information:

1. Where possible, Video will be segmented into areas of continuous seabed broadscale habitat (BSH) type greater than or equal to 5 m along transect distance. The segment labels should be used to delineate these segments and labels from other trees should be attached to each segment using the “add label” tool in BIIGLE. Alternative options (e.g. using time stamp, can be considered.
2. The EUNIS 2007/12 classification system will be used, and a new segment should be started if the habitat classification changes.
- EUNIS 2007/12 classification system. Initially this label tree should be used to assign BSH types, that is up to level 3 of the hierarchy (e.g. Sublittoral sands and muddy sands).
3. Each segment will be assigned an Image quality using labels from two label trees. Further analysis of video segments will be dependent on the image quality score. For example, if a segment is given a score of zero, no further analysis should be carried out for that segment:
 - Image quality, a summary of these labels is shown in Table 3.
 - NMBAQC image quality, a summary of these scores is shown in Table 4 but described in more detail in section 2.1 of Turner et al (2016).
4. Use the Habitat Features Of Conservation Importance (FOCI) label tree to identify any habitat segments containing the FOCI habitats listed in NE & JNCC, 2010 .
5. Identify evidence of anthropogenic impacts on the seabed:
 - Use the litter label tree to record the presence of litter using the categories listed in Annex 5.1 of the Joint Research Centres Guidance on Monitoring of Marine Litter in European Seas .
 - Use the Anthropogenic label tree to annotate trawl marks or anthropogenic impacts other than litter. The tree may be extended with new labels if required in agreement with Cefas (extensions must be documented).
6. Use the habitat label tree to assign biotopes, up to level 6 of the EUNIS 2007/12 classification system and in accordance with Parry (2019) .
7. A reference collection of representative images must be provided for each discreet BSH identified.

2.2.2. Analysis of Stills Imagery

Still images must be analysed in BIIGLE using the label trees shown in Table 5.

Annotations will be assigned in a two-tier process. Tier 1 annotations are referred to as “image labels” are associated with image metadata (BSH, quality etc) whilst “Tier 2” annotation are faunal annotations applied over observations of biota (See table 5 for further information on the Two-Tier system). Optionally tier 1 labels may be added directly into the proforma instead of being applied to still images, where this is done it must be consistent (i.e. there must not be a mixture of BIIGLE annotations and proforma entries for image quality) and agreed with Cefas/NE. More details on the still annotation types and how they must be applied are provided in Appendix A.

Total value (estimated)

- £33,333 excluding VAT
- £40,000 including VAT

Below the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 9 March 2026 to 30 November 2026
- Possible extension to 31 May 2027
- 1 year, 2 months, 23 days

Description of possible extension:

6 months extension if required

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 71620000 - Analysis services

Participation

Conditions of participation

As per bidder pack

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
- Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)

Submission

Enquiry deadline

28 January 2026, 12:00pm

Tender submission deadline

30 January 2026, 12:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

Download the Bidder Pack at <https://defra-family.force.com/s>Welcome> and search for

CEFAS25-139 Request for Quotation for the analysis of seabed imagery.

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Award criteria

Name	Type	Weighting
Quality	Quality	70.00%
Pricing	Cost	20.00%
Social Value	Quality	10.00%

Procedure

Procedure type

Below threshold - open competition

Contracting authority

CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SCIENCE

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