



**Iascach Intíre Éireann  
Inland Fisheries Ireland**

**Code of Business Conduct  
for the Board of IFI**

Approved

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## 1. Introduction

The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (CoPGSB) 2016 requires that all public bodies develop and publish a Code of Conduct for Board members.

Inland Fisheries Ireland's (IFI) Code of Conduct aims to ensure that the Board carries out its role and responsibilities to the highest ethical standards. It is, however, impossible to cover every eventuality that could arise in the conduct of each board member's duties. Accordingly, Board members should be aware that the spirit as well as the wording of the ensuing rules should be observed. Board members **should also become familiar with the CoPGSB and its fiduciary principles for Board members**. Board Members are subject to the provisions of the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 and Standards in Public Office Act 2001, as well a general obligation to observe all applicable rules, regulations, legislation and laws including but not limited to the **Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016**.

The Code is additional to, and does not in any way restrict, the legal obligations of members. Where any provision of this Code requires a Board member to do something that would bring them or the Authority into conflict with legal obligations, including the Inland Fisheries Act 2010, Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 and Standards in Public Office Act 2001, the **legal obligations take precedence**.

The Code is intended to:

- affirm the mission and values of IFI;
- establish an agreed set of general principles;
- promote and maintain confidence and trust; and
- prevent development or acceptance of unethical practices.

## 2. IFI values

IFI's mission is to conserve, protect, restore, and advocate for our fisheries, fish, habitats and biodiversity. In carrying out this vital mission the Board must build and maintain the trust and confidence of those with whom it deals and sustain a reputation for honesty, integrity, independence, transparency and fair dealing.

- We are committed to the **environment** and **sustainability**.
- We work **collaboratively** and with **professionalism**.
- We communicate **openly** and **transparently**.
- We act with **respect, integrity**, and **accountability**.

## 3. General Principles

### 3.1 Integrity – Board members:

- 3.1.1** Shall diligently and in good faith to the full extent of their skill and knowledge, carry out their functions as Board Members for the sole purposes for which these functions are authorised

by virtue of legislation, or administrative guidelines, or Board policy, as the case may be, in the best interests of IFI.

- 3.1.2** Will disclose outside employment/business interests in conflict or in potential conflict with IFI business. No conflict of interest, whether perceived, potential, or actual, should exist between the work of a board member and any outside interest.
- 3.1.3** Designated under the Ethics in Public Office Acts, 1995, must make the appropriate disclosure of interest provided for in that Act to IFI.
- 3.1.4** Will not seek, accept or derive, at any time during membership of the Board or thereafter, any unauthorised profit, corporate gifts, hospitality, preferential treatment or benefits as they might affect or appear to affect the ability of the donor or the recipient to make independent judgement on business transactions (see [Gifts and Hospitality Policy](#)).
- 3.1.5** Will ensure compliance with best practices around the procurement of goods, services and works, to achieve value for money outcomes which are strategically aligned to the business needs of IFI.
- 3.1.6** Should ensure a culture of claiming expenses only as appropriate to business needs and in accordance with good practice in the public sector generally.
- 3.1.7** Should ensure that IFI's annual report and financial statements accurately reflect IFI's business performance and are not misleading or designed to be misleading.
- 3.1.8** Should avoid the use of IFI's resources or time for personal gain, for the benefit of persons/organisations unconnected with IFI or its activities or for the benefit of competitors.
- 3.1.9** Commit to not acquire information or business secrets by improper means.

**3.2 Information** - Board Members should ensure that there is:

- 3.2.1** Support by IFI Board members, management and employees for the provision of access to general information relating to IFI activities in a way that is open and enhances IFI's accountability to the general public.
- 3.2.2** Respect for the confidentiality of sensitive information held by IFI. This would constitute material such as:
  - o commercially sensitive information (including, but not limited to, future plans or details of major organisational or other changes such as restructuring);
  - o personal information; and
  - o information received in confidence by the public body.
- 3.2.3** No disclosure of any information relating to proceedings at Board Meetings, or any other confidential information relating to IFI or its business, functions or transactions, other than to properly authorised persons, within or acting for IFI, or as required by law. Board members can only disclose information during their term of office or thereafter with the specific approval of the Board or an officer authorised to act on behalf of the Board.
- 3.2.4** Appropriate prior consultation procedures with third parties where, exceptionally, it is proposed to release sensitive information in the public interest.

- 3.2.5 Compliance with relevant statutory provisions (e.g. data protection and Freedom of Information legislation).
- 3.2.6 Appropriate disposal or return of documentation obtained during their term(s) as a Board member. They should not retain documentation obtained during their terms as a Board member and should return such documentation to the Secretary of the Board or otherwise indicate to the Secretary of the Board that all such documentation in their possession has been disposed of in an appropriate manner. If former Board members require access to these Board papers, this can be facilitated by the Secretary of the Board (5.7 CoPGSB2016).

### **3.3 Obligations – Board Members should ensure:**

- 3.3.1 The fulfilment of all regulatory and statutory obligations imposed on IFI including the Inland Fisheries Act 2010.
- 3.3.2 That there is compliance with IFI and legal tendering and purchasing procedures, as well as complying with prescribed levels of authority for sanctioning any relevant expenditure.
- 3.3.3 The introduction of controls to prevent fraud including adequate controls to ensure compliance with prescribed procedures in relation to claiming of expenses for business travel.
- 3.3.4 The co-operation with internal audit in the internal audit process by Board members and other staff.
- 3.3.5 That they make reasonable provisions to attend all Board meetings.
- 3.3.6 That they comply with procedures laid down in relation to conflict-of-interest situations, including in regard to acceptance of positions following employment and/or engagement by IFI that may give rise to the potential for conflicts of interest and to confidentiality concerns.
- 3.3.7 All of their activities are in accordance with the ethical considerations implicit in these procedures, whether covered specifically herein or otherwise in the CoPGSB, and with any other rules, procedures or guidelines that may apply from time to time including training on and awareness of best practices.
- 3.3.8 That they shall not take any action which could involve the Board in unauthorised costs or expenditure or in libelous, slanderous or incriminating statements. [S.39]
- 3.3.9 That any statements emanating from the Board should come from the Chair or Chief Executive only or other persons duly authorised by the Board.

### **3.4 Loyalty – Board members acknowledge the responsibility:**

- 3.4.1 To be fully committed in all its business activities while mindful that the organisation itself must at all times take the public interest into account.

### **3.5 Fairness – Board members should ensure:**

- 3.5.1 Compliance with employment equality and equal status legislation.
- 3.5.2 Commitment to fairness in all business dealings.

**3.5.3** That IFI values service users and other stakeholders and treat them equally with dignity and respect.

**3.6 Work/External Environment** – Board members should:

- 3.6.1** Promote the development of a culture of 'speaking up' whereby workers can raise concerns regarding serious wrongdoing in the workplace without fear of reprisal.
- 3.6.2** Place highest priority on promoting and preserving the health and safety of employees.
- 3.6.3** Ensure that community concerns are fully considered.
- 3.6.4** Minimise any detrimental impact of the operations on the environment.
- 3.6.5** Function as an example of diligence and professionalism for all other staff members, e.g., including completion of relevant staff training.
- 3.6.6** Be aware that the actions of the members of a Board where these are intra vires their powers and functions under the Fisheries Acts and in accordance with any procedural requirements adopted by the Board, will be treated as actions of the Board. However, they are not indemnified by the Minister nor by any other party against personal loss or injury occurring in the course of discharging their duties (see Appendix 1 - Indemnity).

## **4. Non-compliance**

If a Board member finds evidence that there is non-compliance with any statutory obligations that apply to IFI, he/she should immediately bring this to the attention of their fellow Board members with a view to having the matter rectified. The matter should also be brought to the attention of the relevant Minister by the Chairperson indicating (i) the consequences of such non-compliance and (ii) the steps that have been or will be taken to rectify the position. It is the Chairperson's responsibility to make such issues known to the Minister.

## **5. Review**

The Board members shall commit to reviewing this Code on a regular basis as appropriate. The Board members shall also be familiar with relevant policies and procedures including but not limited to:

- Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies
  - Audit and Risk Committee Guidance
  - Business & Financial Reporting Requirements
  - Remuneration and Superannuation
- DECC Oversight Agreement with IFI 2026-2028
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Guidelines for the Appointment of Co-opted Members to Committees of the Board of IFI
- Board Member Travel and Subsistence Expenses Policy Procedure
- Declaring Conflicts of Interest Policy & Procedure

- [Protected Disclosures Policy](#)
- [Risk Management Policy](#)
- [Matters for Decision of the Board](#)

The policies mentioned are subject to change and new policies will be introduced. You can find the most recent policies here: [Governance - Board of IFI](#).

## 6. Further Questions

If you have any questions about the code, you can direct them to the Board Secretariat.

## 7. Status of this Code

This Code (April 2026) supersedes previous Codes of Conduct for Board members.

## 8. Confirmation

I confirm that

- I have received, read and fully understand the Inland Fisheries Ireland's Code of Business Conduct for Board members and,
- I comply, and will continue to comply, with the Code and will confirm compliance with the code as and when required.

Board member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 1 - Indemnity**

Where Board members act intra vires their powers and functions under the Fisheries Acts and in accordance with any procedural requirements adopted by the Board, their actions will be treated as actions of the Board. Legal costs arising from claims against the Board in the performance of its functions should be provided for in the annual estimates and expressly so where a claim is known or anticipated. IFI maintains Directors and Officers liability insurance, which provides coverages to Board members in respect of claims arising from the discharge of their duties, subject to the terms and conditions of the relevant policy. These protections may not be afforded where members act outside their powers.

When signing documents without the Board's seal, Board members' and officers' signatures must clearly state that it is for and on behalf of the Board of Inland Fisheries Ireland otherwise they may become personally liable if the Board defaults. The seal is the Board's formal signature and authenticating signatures on sealed documents merely confirm the affixing of the seal. A record is maintained of all instances where the seal is used.