



27 May 2021

24 Boyd St
Woorim, QLD 4507

The House Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Members,

Re: Inquiry into the Australian Aquaculture Sector

The Australian Sustainable Seaweed Alliance (ASSA) has been formed with the core purpose to accelerate seaweed industry development in Australia. Four key industry partners have joined forces to invest in the group: FutureFeed Pty Ltd, CH4 Global, Australian Seaweed Institute and the University of Tasmania (Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies).

The *Australian Seaweed Industry Blueprint*ⁱ outlines a pathway to develop a \$100 million seaweed industry by 2025 and a \$1.5 billion industry by 2040. The industry is projected to employ 1200 people in the next 5 years and create 9000 new direct jobs by 2040, with the majority in regional areas around the Australian coastline. Indigenous groups are already engaging in the opportunities, and indigenous knowledge and care of sea country will be central to sustainable development of seaweed aquaculture.

There are major environmental benefits that can be achieved from a large-scale seaweed industry: specifically, significant reduction of Australia's carbon footprint and substantial improvements in water quality for long term ocean health and Great Barrier Reef protection.

The Blueprint was developed in partnership with AgriFutures Australia, who are continuing their support for industry development initiatives. ASSA are now driving the implementation of the Australian Seaweed Industry Blueprint, and working with industry, government, research and supply chain partners to achieve industry potential rapidly.

While the foundations for growth are strong, the sector faces particular challenges and has unique characteristics that distinguish it from other primary producers and necessitate a specific Government strategy and action plan. Access to ocean lease space, streamlined aquaculture policy and early-stage R&D funding are critical factors to realise the potential the seaweed industry offers Australia.

We require Government support to:

- work with industry and State Governments to plan for sustainable and large-scale marine seaweed aquaculture growth;







- streamline aquaculture marine lease approvals to facilitate development of the sector;
- ensure the laws and frameworks governing the establishment and operation of marine and land-based aquaculture actually enable industry investment;
- encourage innovation by investing in facilities, programs and research supported by industry.
- appreciate that sustainable seaweed aquaculture can positively impact the marine environment, and how it differs from other types of aquaculture.

ASSA is excited about the future of seaweed aquaculture, and the scope for working together to sustainably grow the sector towards its \$1.5 billion goal and beyond. We need a Federal and State government aquaculture strategy and policy to embrace seaweed as an industry of the future, with enormous potential to have environmental, social and economic benefits for Australia.

A sustainable Australian seaweed industry can directly support a Sustainable Ocean Economy, Emissions Reduction goals and the National Aquaculture Strategy. More widely, it would produce significant benefits for the economy, including driving economic development and jobs growth in regional Australia. The ASSA Board would welcome the opportunity to brief the panel, please contact Jo Kelly [REDACTED] to make arrangements.

Yours Faithfully

Jo Kelly	Regan Crooks	Adam Main	Catriona MacLeod
Director, ASSA CEO, Australian Seaweed Institute 	Director, ASSA CEO – FutureFeed Pty Ltd. 	Director, ASSA GM South Australia, CH4 Global 	Director, ASSA Head of Ecology & Biodiversity Centre, University of Tasmania 

ⁱ Australian Seaweed Industry Blueprint, August 2020. Download free copy here: [Australian Seaweed: A \\$1.5 billion blue economy opportunity | AgriFutures Australia](#)