# Nordic Seaweed - from Research to Innovative Business Opportunities

First, I would like to thank the organizers and Nordisk Innovation for arranging this event. Last year I also had the pleasure to speak at a Nordic seaweed event here in the Faroes, on that occasion I spoke about the framework for the new blooming industry. I am very pleased that you also choose to make this event happen here, and I think it would be a great idea to continue along the same route and make Faroe Islands a center for seaweed innovation.

The pioneers and idealists, who started out many years ago with visons for a rich future seaweed industry, are now beginning to see the results of their work, as the world is getting ready for seaweed from the north:

* The knowledge is growing,
* the farming techniques are maturing,
* the customer base is growing,
* the seaweed-farmers are ready to expand and
* Investors are getting ready.

Now the regulatory bodies have to act fast to ensure that the framework is in place, and that rules and regulations for growing, harvesting and producing seaweed allow the industry to reach its full potential

The Faroese parliament, Løgtingið, will adopt a new and updated aquaculture act this year, which you will hear more about later today. The updated framework shall ensure the best possible environmental protection of our aquatic environment and make room for innovation and commercial utilization of “new” species such as seaweed and shellfish.

Seaweed is a remarkable resource. The superfood growing all around our coastlines is saving nutrients for us to use while cleansing the environment. How could any resource possibly be better? In future, I guess researchers may wonder why it took so long to utilize seaweed in large scale, but now it seems that the time is ripe.

The research will continue, and I am sure we will see many new discoveries the coming years, which that makes the theme of this event even more pressing. How shall we turn the research into innovative business opportunities? You have been invited to take part in this event because you have knowledge, experience and interest in the future seaweed industry. I hope the tour yesterday has given food for thought, new connections and fresh ideas, and that you also will find this second day of the event productive and fruitful.

In the Nordic Countries, we are blessed with the cleanest oceans and the finest seaweed. This is a privilege but also a great responsibility. Seaweed can be an answer to many of the challenges the world is facing today both concerning the environment and the health of the world’s population, and it is our responsibility to make the best use of our rich resources and make them available to the world. From our coasts and seas, we can harvest sustainable sea vegetables for superfood, we can extract potent ingredients for the medicine industry and we can produce sustainable industrial ingredients and even green fuel.

The biggest question may therefore not be **how** to use the seaweed, but where to start.

Luckily, that is not a political decision. The question, of how to maximize the value of our seaweed is all up to you: the researchers, the innovators and the entrepreneurs.

The seaweed adventure has just begun, and I am very optimistic and excited to see how the industry will evolve.

Good luck and thank you