

# Project Update 2020

## SW-Grow Kick off meeting- Stornoway August 2019

All project partners involved in SW-GROW were present at the kick-off meeting that was held in An Lanntair in Stornoway in August 2019. During this event, organised by Lead Partner Lews Castle College, the project plans and work packages were discussed. The objective of the meeting was to ensure that the project work packages delivered increased economic opportunities to the Seaweed Industry across the NPA. A tour of seaweed cultivation sites for potential pilots was included.



*The SW-Grow Team at Callanish Stones*

## SW-GROW Project Launch - Údarás na Gaeltachta

On the 6th 2019 December Údarás Na Gaeltachta officially launched the project SW-GROW, along with two other EU Funded marine based projects. The event was launched by the Chair of Údarás na Gaeltachta and Prof. Ciarán Ó hOgartaigh president of NUIG; - the project officer Cliodhna Ní Ghriofa gave a brief presentation on the project.

This event highlighted the importance of the seaweed industry to the rural Irish coastal communities and was a valuable platform for communicating the benefits of SW-Grow that will accrue to the local seaweed industry.



*Prof. Ciarán Ó hOgartaigh left, SW-GROW, EMPORIA4KT, ACCESS3SEA project officers and Chairperson of Údarás, Anna Ní Ghallachair.P*

## Seaweed Seminar January 2020

Údarás na Gaeltachta organised a seaweed seminar in Galway, Ireland. The aim of this event was to inform the seaweed industry of Ireland of the objectives of the SW-GROW project and introduce them to stakeholders. This will support and develop their businesses by exposing potential investors, marketeers, government



*Speakers present on the day L-R Máire Ní Einníú, Jim Keogh, Wayne Murphy, Maria Hayes, Ronan Sulpice, Teresa Morrissey, John Quinlan, Clíodhna Griffin, Juile Maguire, Freddie O Mahony, Mark White, James Burke*

authorities, technologists and scientists in the industry to the project. The event included a question and answer session with the speakers. There were presentations from Wayne Murphy (HATCH), James Burke (Retail Branding specialist), Maria Hayes (Teagasc) and many more.

Over 120 participants took part and there was considerable interest from the media - including an interview on prime drive-time radio. This gave SW-Grow important national exposure.

## Cultivation of Seaweed

TARI Faroe Seaweed, in the Faroe Islands, has contributed to Work Package 1 - based on "Quality Improvement". They have completed one cultivation cycle of *Alaria Esculenta* and *Saccharina Latissima*, and documented growth of the seaweed, nutrients and microbes in both seaweed tissue and seawater. More information on this topic will be available in the next press release.



## Project Partner Meeting Faroe Islands February 2020

In February 2020 Project partners from SLU, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Lews Castle College and DTU held a meeting hosted by TARI Faroe seaweeds in Tórshavn. This meeting focussed on work-to-date and was used to review and plan for the next six months. During the visit, Project Partners visited TARI seaweed sites and observed seaweed cultivation being carried out in the Faroese fjords. Discussions took place on the feasibility of using renewable hydro power as a source for a seaweed drying pilot.



*SW-Grow Team, Cultivation Tanks, Cultivation lines at sea*

## Characterisation of Seaweed



*Jonas in Greenland holding samples for Storage/Shelf Life Testing*

SLU, ARTEK and NUIG have been working on the characterisation of seaweed samples received from project partners and project associates. These are being tested for carbon, nitrogen, ash, calorimetric content, nutritional content, and subsequently tested for DNA to create a DNA database of the seaweeds in the NPA region. Studies to characterise the microorganisms found on the seaweed, and further studies on Storage/shelf life and sensory properties of seaweed are also underway. An Lanntair are collating a desk based survey of existing seaweed products and branding worldwide to create a directory of marketing imagery and product marketing material.



## Seaweed Drying Systems

An experimental blown air-drying rig has been designed by Lews Castle College to evaluate the effects of air temperature, velocity, humidity, and partial drying on drying time, efficiency, and product quality. Data on drying curves and water activity isotherms have been obtained for *Alaria Esculenta*, and plans are being developed for *Palmaria Palmata*. A plan has been put in place for a hybrid solar wind drying system with piloting and testing scheduled for later in the year. The objective of the solar wind drying system is to have an online tool where seaweed producers can input their location and certain desired parameters and an optimised and customised production system will be recommended. More information on these tasks will be available in the forthcoming press release.



*Measuring Alaria Esculenta*

## Seaweed waste minimization

The team at the University of Iceland has been working on pre-processing seaweed for gasification. The first step of this process was setting up a pellet machine to pelletise dried seaweed. The pelletised seaweed will be used in a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) system to test the burning quality of seaweed and its fuel efficiency. The team is also currently carrying out some preliminary drying tests using a food drying oven to establish numbers for calculations and to ensure that the dried seaweed will be dry enough to be used in pellets later.



*Experimental blown air-drying rig*

**For more information on the project please contact [c.nighriofa@udaras.ie](mailto:c.nighriofa@udaras.ie) or follow our Facebook & Twitter**