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To: aquaculturereview
Subject: Aquaculture consultation

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I own and manage a successful international traded cosmetic brand which is based on wild harvesting of seaweed. The company has seen exponential growth since its formation and does not envisage this abating in the near future. We are now in a position to see that other opportunities exist in seaweed aquaculture, particularly in the food industry, though needless to say there are great opportunities for cosmetic, health based supplements and pharma usage.

However the uncertainty under licensing, the commercial barriers to allowing for zoning for setting up infrastructure and the lack of knowledge in commercialising land based aqua culture systems puts too much of a burden of risk on entrepreneurial companies like us. Even if we can see the very obvious opportunities that exist.

Ireland has long had a small cottage industry of harvesting seaweed for use in fertilisers and food application. Though the nature of these business make them impractical to scale and problematic to manage with the uncertainty of harvesting rights. Therefore the only viable solution, long term are land based systems.

The advantages are many. They can be scaled on sites with relative small footprints. They have no significant environmental impact. They can work in conjunction with other systems in a symbiotic capacity.

We appreciate that seaweed aquaculture is a very small portion of the overall industry, but its potential, as a super food is massive and support should be provided to allow companies scope to develop best practice in trial periods. Particularly as Ireland positioned to best exploit these opportunities.

At this time, we are in our infancy of investigating seaweed based food products outputted from land based aquaculture systems and clarity in the licensing scope will be pivotal if we are to progress with any investment.

Kind regards,
Mark Walton
Managing Director

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