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THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2024

AUSTRALIAN CLIMATE CHANGE LEADER PROF TIM FLANNERY TO HEADLINE INTERNATIONAL SEAWEED CONFERENCE DEBUTING IN AUSTRALIA NEXT MARCH

The organisers of the longstanding Seagriculture Conferences, DLG Benelux, together with local industry host the Australian Sustainable Seaweed Alliance (ASSA) today announce that **Professor Tim Flannery**, one of Australia's leading writers on climate change and an internationally acclaimed scientist, explorer and conservationist, will open the global seaweed gathering,18-20 March 2025 in Adelaide, Australia.

Professor Flannery, a former "Australian of the Year" and Councillor at the Climate Council, joins other speakers including **Steve Meller,** CEO, President and Co-Founder of CH4 Global, **Professor Emeritus Rocky de Nys**, Chief Scientific Officer at Sea Forest, and **Nick Hill**, Co-Founder of Coast 4C, a 2024 finalist of The Earthshot Prize, a globally significant environmental initiative led by William, Prince of Wales.

Australian Seaweed Institute Founder and CEO **Jo Kelly**, a champion and pioneer of seaweed for reef health will also share her insights with delegates, as will The Nature Conservancy's Senior Aquaculture Scientist **Heidi Alleway** on aquaculture and regenerative aquatic food systems. Seaweed as a nature positive industry will also be a focus for both.

Further, discussions over the two days will be moderated by the Institute for Marine & Antarctic Studies' (IMAS) **Professor Catriona MacLeod**, also a board member of both ASSA and the World Aquaculture Society amongst other leadership roles, including Research Program Leader at the Marine Bioproducts Cooperative Research Centre (MBCRC).

Finally, joining a Tim Flannery moderated climate change panel discussion first up is **Professor Catriona Hurd** also from IMAS, and an internationally respected eco-phycologist and Professor on seaweed eco-physiology with expertise in Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal.

The first in-person event following an earlier online conference, Seagriculture Asia-Pacific 2025 will be premiering in Australia and marks a pivotal moment for the Seagriculture Conferences series, expanding its borders and venturing into a new region, bringing together participants from the Asia-Pacific within the seaweed value chain.

Up to 300 international and Australian delegates will gather at the Adelaide Convention Centre from 19 - 20 March 2025 and in addition, participants have the opportunity to join an exclusive site visit on 18 March 2025 to the stunning Fleurieu Peninsula south of Adelaide. .

ASSA CEO Lindsay Hermes said the day tour cohort will have the opportunity to participate in a range of one-of-a-kind experiences as they meet with fellow conference attendees ahead of the official conference:

- Day tour delegates will have opportunity to hear from some of the **South Australian Research & Development Institute's (SARDI's) top seaweed scientists** and see their work up close
- Day tour delegates will have the chance to **speak to a Ngarrindjeri Elder about how sustainable, traditional fishing practices** support a balanced ecosystem, and see a demonstration from local business, Kuti Co
- Day tour delegates will also be able to sample some of **South Australia's finest and freshest seafood at the Kuti Shack,** a restaurant nestled in the sandhills at Goolwa Beach, an hour or so south of Adelaide.

“From the stunning natural landscapes of South Australia and a breathtaking beachside restaurant to cutting-edge research facilities and the chance to see first-hand how the Ngarrindjeri People have harvested the ocean for thousands of years, the Seagriculture Asia-Pacific site visit is one not to miss,” Mr Hermes said.

“Further, DLG and ASSA are delighted to have someone of Professor Tim Flannery’s calibre agree to formally open our conference the following day, joining leaders of major Australian commercial seaweed operators and pioneers working across the Asia Pacific, with more speakers to be announced in the coming weeks.”

“The Asia Pacific is critical to the ongoing growth of a globally significant seaweed industry, which is also why we are taking an Australian industry delegation to South Korea this month, to share knowledge, establish new relationships and better understand well-established supply chains in this market leader, in order to further develop our local industry at here at home.”

The day tour on 18th March includes presentations at the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI), an institution dedicated to increasing the productivity, adaptability, and economy of South Australia's primary industries, enabling sustainable use of natural resources, addressing agricultural barriers and providing applied solutions.

More broadly, the Government of South Australia, along with its Team Adelaide partners *Business Events Adelaide* and the Adelaide Convention Centre, are proud sponsors of the conference, with Adelaide and surrounds, renowned for its dynamic cultural scene, picturesque landscapes, and burgeoning innovation hub, providing an ideal setting. Delegates will have the opportunity to experience a region known for its commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship, reflecting the core values of the industry.

"ASSA continues to work closely with our key partners the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), SARDI, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA) and the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), our ASSA corporate and affiliate members right around the country and other key stakeholders to deliver this conference and drive our high tech, high growth and highly sustainable industry forward," Mr Hermes continued.

“Our Asia-Pacific region is a world leader in seaweed production with a rich history deeply intertwined with the cultivation and use of this marine resource. From traditional seaweed farming methods to state-of-the-art technology on land and in the ocean, all of which delegates will have the opportunity to see, our region offers delegates a wealth of knowledge and experience to explore.”

“Seagriculture Asia-Pacific 2025 will provide participants a unique platform to learn about the diverse seaweed industry in the region and understand innovative approaches that contribute to its sustainable development. Bring on March 2025.”

The Seagriculture conference has been successfully organized by DLG Benelux since 2012 and has built up a solid reputation as the leading conference for the seaweed industry. The addition of the Asia-Pacific edition complements the existing European and US conferences.

Locally, the Australian Government committed $8 million to the Developing Australia’s Seaweed Farming Program, within which ASSA and FRDC are collaborating to accelerate seaweed aquaculture in Australia. This includes support for a National Hatchery Network and scientific team in South Australia, as well as support for knowledge sharing opportunities, with Seagriculture Asia-Pacific 2025 being a prime example.

The funding also includes a series of contracted projects including the development of a portable seaweed hatchery or ‘Lab on Wheels’ and two dedicated online seaweed education and permit application information portals, both of which will be available for conference delegates to view at the Adelaide Convention Centre via a live “Lab on Wheels” outdoor exhibit and two interactive “Seaweed Central” online display screens.

Registration is now available and there are also generous conference discounts available for any group or individual that joins ASSA before the end of the year. The headshots and bios of some of the speakers announced today are below, with further speakers to be announced in coming weeks:

Professor Tim Flannery – Australian climate change leader

Professor Tim Flannery is one of Australia's leading writers on climate change. An internationally acclaimed scientist, explorer and conservationist, Professor Flannery was named Australian of the Year in 2007. Professor Flannery has held various academic positions including Professor at the University of Adelaide, director of the South Australian Museum in Adelaide, Principal Research Scientist at the Australian Museum and Visiting Chair in Australian Studies at Harvard University in the Department of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology. A well-known presenter on ABC Radio, NPR and the BBC for more than a decade, he has also written and presented several series on the Documentary Channel including The Future Eaters (1998), Wild Australasia (2003), Islands in the Sky (1992) and Bushfire (1997). He has published more than 27 books including 'The Future Eaters' (1994), 'The Weather Makers' (2005) and 'The Climate Cure' (2020).

Steve Meller – CEO President & Co-founder, CH4 Global

Steve is an internationally recognized innovation strategist with experience across nearly every industry. After a successful academic career as a neuroscience research professor, he led a series of global product innovation initiatives for Fortune 500 All-Star Procter & Gamble (P&G). He was also a key contributor to sustainability solutions for P&G that resulted in savings of more than US$1 billion while reducing carbon impact. Steve has founded and co-founded numerous companies on multiple continents across diverse sectors, including CH4 Global, where – as CEO – he leads this climate-tech company in delivering market-disruptive products to bend the climate curve. Steve also has served on start-up advisory boards and has presented to Fortune 200 CEOs for on behalf of Gerson Lehrman Group

Professor Emeritus Rocky de Nys, Chief Scientific Officer, Sea Forest

As the Chief Scientist and Emeritus Professor within the College of Science and Engineering at James Cook University, Australia, Rocky works broadly across the fields of algal biology, chemistry, and aquaculture. He has played a leading role in the discovery and development of Asparagopsis for the abatement of methane and mitigating the carbon footprint of agriculture.

Jo Kelly, Founder & CEO, Australian Seaweed Institute & Chair, Australian Sustainable Seaweed Alliance

Jo Kelly is on a mission to harness the power of seaweed to protect oceans, reduce carbon emissions, create livelihoods in coastal communities and nourish the planet. An industry strategist and impact entrepreneur with over 25 years' experience in business, Jo is passionate about advancing nature-based solutions to deliver environmental, social and economic outcomes at scale. Her company, the Australian Seaweed Institute is pioneering a nature-based solution for native seaweeds to protect the Great Barrier Reef on a very large scale within a decade. Jo is Chair of Australian Sustainable Seaweed Alliance, Myer Innovation Fellow, AMP Tomorrow Maker & Nuffield Scholar. Jo has presented at the UN Oceans Conference, European Commission's Algae Summit, the Economist's Ocean Summit & Monaco Ocean Week.

Heidi Alleway, Senior Aquaculture Scientist, The Nature Conservancy

Heidi Alleway is the Senior Aquaculture Scientist for TNC's global aquaculture strategy, where she leads a science portfolio focused on advancing the organizations strategy on restorative aquaculture and smart siting and contributes to broader efforts to advance regenerative food systems and seafood initiatives. Her research experience spans aquaculture, fisheries and fisheries habitat, biosecurity and historical ecology with much of her work having been conducted in an applied setting, working with and for government, industry and communities. This has included spatial planning and development of aquaculture zoning as well as supporting policy, regulation, and environmental monitoring and research.

Nick Hill - Co-founder & CEO, Coast 4C

With two decades of experience in sustainable enterprises for coastal communities, fundraising, and leadership, Nick holds a PhD in seaweed farming and fishing livelihoods. Coast 4C was a finalist in the Revive our Oceans category of the 2024 Earthshot Prize, the category being one of five 'Earthshots' – simple but ambitious and universal goals for 2030 that, if achieved, will repair the planet before irreversible damage occurs. Coast 4C connects investment in coastal agriculture with conservation through regenerative seaweed farming. This approach brings benefits to areas critical to Earthshot's mission: community, conservation, commerce and climate. Prior to co-founding Coast 4C, Nick was co-founder of Net-Works™ (the award-winning project from which Coast 4C spun out) and Our Sea Our Life.

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