

DISCOVERING THE SAFE USE OF SEAWEED ACROSS THE FOOD VALUE-CHAIN

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Seaweed is seen as promising biomass in the future circular economy with a wide range of applications. Recent market developments have shown the potential to use seaweed in various foods and beverages. When cultivated seaweed is used for food or during food production, the image of a circular seaweed bioeconomy emerges. However, before seaweed can enter the market, it must be safe. This means that the effects on the ecosystem and the workers involved in its production must be considered in addition to food safety. Along with the beneficial effects of seaweed on a circular agricultural system, like removing pollutants from the water, seaweed cultivation can also result in negative impacts. In our research, we reviewed the scientific literature, held interviews, and conducted a survey to identify possible hazards from food and environmental safety perspectives, and to consider occupational health and safety (OHS) experiences related to the seaweed-food value chain. Our focus was on identifying food, environmental, and OHS concerns pertinent to seaweed chain actors bringing seaweed to the food market. In this poster, we present the preliminary findings of our ongoing multi-disciplinary research, which supports the future development of safety protocols for the seaweed sector. The results can be used by seaweed food value-chain actors when bringing seaweed to the market and when seeking a future circular agricultural economy.

Keywords: seaweed, hazard, safety, multi-disciplinary