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ADB supports Australis for ocean-based aquaculture in Vietnam

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The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Australis Holdings, Inc. (Australis) signed a $15 million convertible note to promote climate-resilient, ocean-based barramundi and seaweed aquaculture in Vietnam.

The investment will fund working capital to expand Australisâ?? operations at Van Phong Bay in central Vietnam and support the development of a second regional production hub in southern Vietnam. An additional $3 million grant will be provided by the Climate Innovation and Development Fund (CIDF), administered by ADB.

â??Three billion people across the world depend on seafood for protein, even as global fish stocks fall due to overfishing and temperature rise,â?• said Suzanne Gaboury, ADB Director General for Private Sector Operations. â??ADBâ??s assistance willÂ support the governmentâ??s efforts to develop sustainable aquaculture, particularlyÂ large-scale farming ofÂ high-valueÂ species for export.Â Aquaculture can support low-carbon protein production, while tropical ocean farming is more resilient to climate risks. This is our first aquaculture equity investment in Vietnam, and we are proud to partner with Australis.â?•

Australis is the worldâ??s largest barramundi producer. Also known as Asian sea bass, the species is adaptable and resilient, well suited to aquaculture, with high export value. Australis pioneered the development of modern, large-scale marine aquaculture in Vietnam.

â??ADBâ??s financing will support the continued growth of our operations in central Vietnam as well as the development of a large new regional production hub where weâ??ve established a group of leases that will allow us to achieve 50,000 tons of annual barramundi production,â?• says Josh Goldman, Australis Chief Executive Officer.

The CIDF grant to Australisâ?? subsidiary Greener Grazing LLC, will support research and development into the cultivation of asparagopsis taxiformis seaweed for commercial ocean farming. This species of seaweed has been demonstrated to significantly reduce enteric methane emissions when included in cattle feed. Seaweed farms can mitigate ocean acidification and enhance the climate resilience of marine ecosystems and have carbon sequestration potential.