

## **Groundbreaking Ceremony for "Blue Harvest" Pilot Project at SOHAR Freezone to Promote Circular Economy and Sustainability**

**SOHAR, January 8, 2025** – In a strategic move to drive innovation and environmental sustainability, SOHAR Freezone marked the groundbreaking of the "Blue Harvest" pilot project. This initiative focuses on cultivating Elephant Grass (*Miscanthus*) over 2,000 square meters to produce renewable raw materials through sustainable agricultural practices. The project underscores SOHAR Freezone's commitment to pioneering innovative solutions that align with Oman Vision 2040 and support long-term sustainability goals.

"Blue Harvest" is a pioneering project in applying the circular economy in Oman, with the goal of producing *Miscanthus* fibers for use in 3D-printable concrete and bioplastics for indoor construction materials. Additionally, the project plays a significant role in reducing CO2 emissions, capturing 44 tons of CO2 per hectare annually. From the outset, the Embassy of the Netherlands in Muscat has been a steadfast supporter of the project.

The project reflects fruitful collaboration among multiple local and international partners. This includes a partnership with Wageningen University & Research in the Netherlands, which leads the project with its expertise in sustainable agriculture, and local universities such as Sohar University, Sultan Qaboos University, and the German University of Technology with the ELAF Technology Center. Other key partners include Dutch companies such as Vybrant, which developed the concept, Dealin Green, which supplies the plants, and Royal Eijkelpamp, specializing in soil and water monitoring and AI-driven solutions.

In this regard, Emile Hoogsteden, CEO of SOHAR Port, stated: "We are proud to collaborate with a range of local and international partners to bring this ambitious project to life. Blue Harvest represents a major step forward in promoting the circular economy in Oman. This project not only underscores our commitment to sustainability but also contributes to developing innovative solutions to improve soil and water quality, while mitigating the impacts of climate change in the region. We look forward to expanding this initiative into more economically viable applications, further solidifying SOHAR Freezone's position as a leading hub for sustainable investment."

The project marks a significant milestone in fostering knowledge exchange between Oman and the Netherlands, focusing on developing sustainable solutions in agriculture and construction, optimizing water resources, and improving soil quality in the region.

For more information about SOHAR Port and Freezone, please visit [soharportandfreezone.om](https://soharportandfreezone.om).

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### **About SOHAR Port and Freezone**

As one of the world's most rapidly growing integrated industrial and logistics projects, SOHAR Port and Freezone capitalizes on its strategic location to cement its status as a crucial logistics hub in the region and globally. A unique collaboration between the Port of Rotterdam and ASYAD Group marks it as a key mega-project in Oman, offering a range of services including logistics, petrochemicals, metals, and the region's first dedicated agro terminal. With over 20 years of operation, SOHAR is the main gateway for Oman's import and export, contributing 2.1% to the nation's GDP and creating almost 36,000 jobs. Committed to sustainable development and advanced technology, SOHAR is modernizing logistics infrastructure in line with the economic diversification goals of Oman's 2040 Vision.