

SA seaweed to be turned into food

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A CHINESE company has invested in Australian research to turn seaweed into high-value products including cosmetics, agricultural chemicals, food and medicine.

The Gather Great Ocean Group (GGOG), based in Shandong Province, will provide \$450,000 over three years to further the research at Adelaide's Flinders University.

The university marine products development director Wei Zhang said a new macroalgae research laboratory would develop sustainable technologies to convert beach-cast seaweed in South Australia into a range of products.

"The southern waters of South Australia have a huge diversity of macroalgae types that are a rich source of food and chemicals," Professor Zhang said.

"This sustainable natural resource is unique to Southern Australian waters.

"Each year, storms wash up these seaweeds along our shorelines by the millions of tonnes.

"So our aim is to sustainably convert some of this biomass into high-value products to meet global market demand."

Prof Zhang said researchers would identify seaweed species with commercial potential and apply energy-efficient and sustainable advanced manufacturing technologies to increase product diversity, volume and yields.

The laboratory was also expected to attract significant international investment, creating new jobs in regional SA.

Science Minister Grace Portolesi said the partnership between Flinders and GGOG would help position South Australia as a key player in macroalgae research, an industry estimated to be worth more than \$2 billion in the Asia-Pacific.