

Minister Geoff Brock

Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Local Government

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New regional industry to create Limestone Coast jobs

A \$360,000 State Government grant will help establish an innovative new industry in the Limestone Coast which will initially create 20 jobs and bring investment to the region through harvesting and processing seaweed.

Regional Development Minister, Geoff Brock said the seaweed harvesting initiative - the first operation of its kind in the region - would broaden the Limestone Coast's manufacturing sector and generate significant regional employment opportunities, as well as long-term economic value to the State.

"The Gather Great Ocean Group will establish a seaweed harvesting site at Beachport and a processing plant in Snuggery, near Millicent, creating 20 full time equivalent jobs, as well as 14 jobs during construction," Mr Brock said.

"The company's long-term aim is to expand the operational and manufacturing component of the business bringing its total investment in the Limestone Coast to around \$21 million.

"This expansion is expected to generate significant additional employment opportunities across the two sites allowing the company to offer much needed skilled jobs for young people in the region.

"Gather Great Ocean Group is a high-technology seaweed processing business headquartered in China, exporting to over 30 countries worldwide and servicing the printing, food and pharmaceutical industries.

"This will bring significant export growth opportunities into regional South Australia, and is a great example of how our state can benefit from international investment," Mr Brock said.

CEO of Gather Great Ocean Group Australia, Yang Wu (Walt) said the project represented a long-term prospect for the Limestone Coast in the areas of manufacturing, innovation, and high-end research and development.

"We will be harvesting seaweed at Beachport and processing at the Snuggery site, keeping the operation entirely local to become involved with the local community and promote local economic development," he said.

"In the short term, we will be harvesting and processing seaweed into fertiliser for commercial application. In the long term, however, we are planning on expanding our operations to produce Sodium Alginate (Algin) – an extract of seaweed used as a thickener, gelling agent and emulsifier in the food and pharmaceutical industries.

"We have partnered with Flinders University to research the conversion of seaweed into high-value products, which will introduce innovative South Australian products to new markets internationally and increase the skills base of the region."

Gather Great Ocean Group received the \$360,000 grant through the enhanced \$15 million a year Regional Development Fund.

The project aligns with the State's strategic priority of Growing Advanced Manufacturing, and the economic priorities of 'Unlocking the full potential of South Australia's resources, energy and renewable assets', and 'Growth through innovation'.

The State Government's Regional Development Fund drives economic growth and productivity by offering grants to boost investment in regional infrastructure and to create jobs and new opportunities for regional South Australia.

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