

Seaweed farm to be established in Devon after securing funding

A pilot seaweed farm is set to be established in Devon after the project secured a cash injection from the county council.

Environmental business Algapelago Marine, which was awarded an undisclosed sum through the local authority's Green Innovation Fund, is planning to bring forward its scheme to create the farm and processing operation in Bideford Bay, with plans to scale up each year following the pilot.

The company is working with academics from Plymouth Marine Laboratories, Portsmouth University and the Eden project to research the potential for the seaweed market in capturing carbon and improving coastal habitats.

According to Devon County Council, the seaweed crop can be used for animal feed, fertilisers, bioplastics and cosmetics – reducing the carbon footprint of these products due to the low-intensity of the cultivation process.

Councillor Rufus Gilbert, Devon County Council cabinet member for economic recovery and skills, said: "This is another excellent example of where the Green Innovation Fund is helping a local business to develop an opportunity for green growth.

"As well as the environmental benefits of tackling carbon, the project provides the potential to create sustainable local jobs and contribute towards the regeneration of the Bideford Bay area which is good news for Devon's economy."

Humphrey Atkinson, co-founder of Algapelago Marine, said the funding had helped bring the seaweed farm "from the drawing

board to reality”.

He said: “We are excited to now scale up the company to bring local jobs and a new industry to the area in the shape of sustainable mariculture in support of the Devon Carbon Plan and its journey towards its net-zero targets.”

The Green Innovation Fund is funded through Devon County Council’s £6m recovery programme which aims to support four key areas – small and medium enterprises, employment and skills, the green recovery, and the hardest-hit towns and communities.

The Green Innovation Fund has already invested more than £750,000 in innovative projects and technologies which will drive green growth in Devon’s economy, the council added.

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