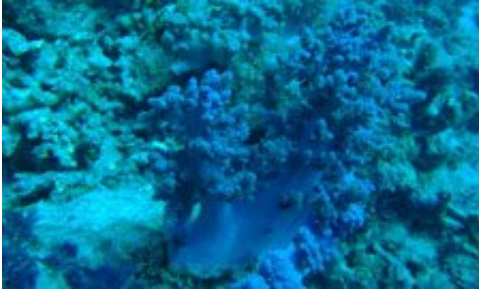


# Sunscreen from the sea

September 12 2012

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King's College London has entered into an agreement with skincare company Aethic to develop the first sunscreen based on MAA's (mycosporine-like amino acids), produced by coral.

It was last year that a team led by Dr Paul Long at King's discovered how the naturally-occurring MAA's were produced. Algae living within coral make a compound that is transported to the coral, which then modifies it into a sunscreen for the benefit of both the coral and the [algae](#). Not only does this protect them both from [UV damage](#), but fish that feed on the coral also benefit from this sunscreen protection.

The next phase of development is for the researchers to work with Professor Antony Young and colleagues at the St John's Institute of [Dermatology](#) at King's, to test the efficacy of the compounds using [human skin](#) models.

Aethic's Sôvée sunscreen was selected as the best 'host' product for the compound because of its existing broad-spectrum UVA/[UVB](#) and photostability characteristics and scientifically proven ecocompatibility credentials.

Dr Paul Long, Reader in Pharmacognosy at King's Institute of Pharmaceutical Science, said: "While MAA's have a number of other potential applications, human sunscreen is certainly a good place to begin proving the compound's features. If our further studies confirm the results we are expecting, we hope that we will be able to develop a sunscreen with the broadest spectrum of protection. Aethic has the best product and philosophy with which to proceed this exciting project."

Allard Marx, CEO of Aethic, added: "With the recent launch of Sôvée we believe that we are already leading the industry. Together with King's we would like to raise our product benefits to an even higher level using MAA's. We are very excited about the potential."

For further information on the research behind the MAA compound, please visit the [King's website](#).

Provided by King's College London

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