

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 16 June 2017

New forest at Johanna Beach to grow tourism, environment and the economy for Great Ocean Road region

Greenfleet's Great Ocean Road Restoration Project is growing rapidly, with 14,000 trees being planted this month at Johanna Beach.

Two thousand native seedlings are already in the ground at the site, and this new forest will sprout a range of benefits for the local community and the region, including:

- **Enhancement of a tourism icon:** The 17-hectare site is a part of both the Great Ocean Road and the Great Ocean Walk, making it a major tourism spot.
- **Climate action:** Protected for 30 years, the new forest will capture over 11,000 tonnes of carbon out of the air as it grows, combating climate change.
- **Environmental improvement:** The addition of 14,000 trees to the area – which has previously been cleared for agriculture – will improve water quality and biodiversity by providing new habitat for native animals.

Greenfleet CEO Wayne Wescott said the program was a clear example of how action on climate change was practical and attainable.

“The Great Ocean Road is an iconic tourist hotspot for good reason, as it features the best that Australia’s environment has to offer. We’re honoured to be doing our part to safeguard one of our most precious resources and further beautify the area,” he said.

“We’re not only enabling action on climate change, we’re doing it in a way that improves our local environment, our communities and our economy.”

The project demonstrates that taking action on climate change is not only possible, but also easy.

For example, as part of the Great Ocean Road Restoration Project, Greenfleet has partnered with Europcar to allow their customers to offset some of the carbon emissions of their hire car trips, with those donations used to plant trees along the Great Ocean Road.

“A lot of people hire cars to visit the Great Ocean Road, so not only are they taking climate action, they’re helping to directly improve the area they’re visiting by leaving a legacy,” said Mr Wescott.

The charity is on the lookout for more local landowners who would like to have their properties revegetated at no cost to them, as projects such as these are entirely funded by Greenfleet’s carbon offset program.

About Greenfleet: With 20 years’ experience, Greenfleet is Australia’s most trusted source of biodiverse carbon offsets. As an environmental not-for-profit organisation, Greenfleet’s mission is to protect our climate by restoring our forests. Since 1997, Greenfleet has planted more than 8.9 million native trees across Australia and New Zealand – restoring more than 425 native and biodiverse forests. Greenfleet services many of Australia’s leading brands, including Disney, Telstra and Smartgroup, and is supported by thousands of individuals. Visit: www.greenfleet.org.au