

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### National non-profit invests close to a quarter of a million dollars in local economy

*Bundaberg Region's biggest environmental reforestation project sees 80,000 native trees, worth nearly a quarter of a million dollars, going into the ground at the Barolin Nature Reserve.*

In partnership with Bundaberg Regional Council, Greenfleet set out to turn nearly 90 ha of land back to native bush as part of the non-profit's carbon offset program and at no cost to Council.

The reforestation project is a win for Council, the community, the local economy and the environment. This will revitalise one of the region's most popular and significant natural areas by helping to protect the endangered turtles hatching at the Mon Repos beach and creating new job opportunities for local indigenous people.

Greenfleet CEO, Wayne Wescott, said the trees represented real action on climate change.

"This will become one of more than 425 forests we have planted across Australia and New Zealand since 1997 on behalf of our supporters. As it grows, the forest at Barolin Nature Reserve will capture carbon pollution from the atmosphere, conserve biodiversity, provide extra habitat for wildlife and more bushland for people to enjoy," he said.

"The trees will also play a vital role in helping the endangered marine turtles at Mon Repos by reducing the glow of lights onto the beach. Mon Repos rangers explained that the baby turtles need a dark beach so that they can get safely out to sea. I am very proud that, in the long-term, the Greenfleet forest will help them to survive," Wayne Wescott explained.

Greenfleet aims to restore the biodiverse ecosystems of the areas where it plants the trees. The seeds of the 80,000 trees were sourced locally, reflecting the mix of species that would have grown in the Reserve prior to clearing and grown in a local nursery.

This project creates jobs for the local community. Greenfleet worked with the Gidarjil Development Corporation to provide employment opportunities to members of the Gooreng Gooreng people, traditional owners of the land. A crew of six kicked off the tree planting after Easter and finished last week.

A tree planting day is to be held on Tuesday 9 May with some of the project's key stakeholders and supporters from the community; including staff from Churches of Christ in Queensland, which is helping to fund this revegetation work through their carbon offsets. Other key supporters include Smartgroup, Telstra and Disney.

Under the project, Greenfleet will maintain the planted areas until the forest is established to ensure good survival of the trees and in return Council has guaranteed that the trees will remain in place for a minimum of 30 years. Greenfleet and the Bundaberg Regional Council are looking to establish further plantings across the region.

**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 8.7 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](http://www.greenfleet.org.au)

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