Green future for Kowanyama: National partnership to plant 1,000 trees bears fruit

Business, non-profit and local government have united in Kowanyama to plant 1,000 new trees and provide a new source of fresh food.

Greenfleet, Telstra employees and Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council will plant 1,000 new trees in Kowanyama on World Environment Day (June 5). The trio have come together to revegetate the local area as it recovers from damage caused by Cyclone Nora earlier this year.

Greenfleet and Telstra have worked with the council to understand the community's needs, and will plant a mix of native and fruit-bearing trees to not only revegetate, but also create a source of fresh fruits such as bush lemons, mangos and mulberries.

Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council Mayor Michael Yam said the Council was dedicated to working with the community to preserve the region's environment.

"One of our main strategic priorities is to value and protect Kowanyama's pristine natural environment," Mayor Yam said.

"The new trees will provide a much-needed source of fresh fruit for the local community. We are delighted to be collaborating on this initiative, that supports our focus on healthy lifestyles, a safe community and economic opportunities," he added.

Greenfleet CEO Wayne Wescott said the planting day would involve the local community.

"Students from Kowanyama State School and RISE Ventures' youth program will participate, taking real climate action that will have a tangible impact on their community," Wescott said.

"It's important for us that the trees we plant are the right fit for the environment and the people living there. We've been led by the community and picked plants that they want to see. We're proud to be facilitating this," he said.

Telstra Fleet Operations Manager, Steve Ellis said he and the other Telstra employees were delighted to be working with the local community to achieve a greener future for Kowanyama.

"We are proud to play a part in the reduction of carbon emissions intensity by 68 per cent from our 2014 baseline year, exceeding our 2017 target of 55 per cent, and are committed to working with Greenfleet in helping our communities respond to climate change and to initiatives which also contribute to community well-being," Ellis said.

Telstra and its employees are one of Greenfleet's largest supporters, contributing to over 1.4 million trees being planted and offsetting 372,647 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions since 2003.

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