

## Media Release

4 October 2011

Greening Australia, Tasmania CEO, Jonathan Duddles today welcomed the Climate Change Minister, Cassy O'Conner to the launch of phase two of the Biodiverse Carbon Permanent Research sites in the Derwent catchment. A team of forestry contractors working alongside the Greening Australia and University of Tasmania science team commenced planting today

The project involves planting over 120,000 plants to form a woodland community that links nationally recognised reserve communities in an integrated network across three sites. The biodiverse carbon plantation will become an ecosystem in it's own right, as well as providing valuable science data and capturing carbon from the atmosphere through biosequestration.

A series of permanent research site, the project forms the most comprehensive collection of genetic resources of a restoration species yet undertaken in Australia, with world leading experimental design linking genetics, ecology and carbon established on multiple sites.

The native eucalypt species being tested, *Eucalyptus pauciflora* and *Eucalyptus tenuiramis*, are genetically diverse and seed source may impact carbon allocation strategies, as well as impact on long-term survival and total carbon storage.

Each and every plant is recorded in a database with GPS references and environmental information which is already yielding valuable information about the most effective ways of restoring Tasmania's dry landscapes. It also gives us unique information on how a plant community can also become the best way of capturing and storing carbon.

"The strategic reforestation of private land helps reconnect and build resilience in the conservation estate (public and private), to allow for the movement of species and genes (plants and animals) that is anticipated with climate change" Mr Duddles said.

Mr Duddles added research has indicated that degraded and unused farm land offers the greatest opportunity for rehabilitation and carbon sequestration, with the landowners involved having signed 130 year covenants with Greening Australia to allow access to 100ha for the project.

A major insect attack at one of the sites in the first year of the project provided a surprisingly good opportunity to collect valuable results from the uniquely integrated experimental design. There was clear evidence that seedlings germinated from locally collected seed were less susceptible to the insect damage.

The project will also provide valuable data on:

- Carbon storage above ground as well as below ground soil carbon
- The performance of trees from different seed sources
- The success of different mixes of tree and understory species
- Biodiversity improvements

Mr Duddles said the project is funded via the Tasmanian government, the Australia Research Council and the sale of carbon credits.

Mr Duddles added that so far leading Tasmanian businesses, Stornoway, Targa Tasmania, Pennicott Wilderness Journeys and Innkeepers Tasmania have all bought carbon credits.

"Many businesses are keen to start to build a carbon price into their balance sheet, however we have found that they want the money spent locally to benefit Tasmania's environment.

"This project is fantastic because we are growing a carbon stockpile, rehabilitating a landscape and helping businesses get used to an emerging economic environment." Mr Duddles concluded.

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## Questions and answers.

What is the focus of the project?

Carbon sequestration and biodiversity restoration using native biodiverse plantings  
The use of local native, versus more distant seed sources for restoration planting  
How the species envelopes for common native species in the dry landscapes of Tasmania will change under climate change.  
The survival and growth of different mixtures and designs of plantings for tree and understory species grown for carbon sequestration

What role will biosequestration have in the response to climate change?

Biosequestration plays an important role in the mix of solutions for tackling climate change through strategic revegetation at a landscape scale.

Why is revegetation important?

Revegetation in dry landscapes sequesters a considerable amount of carbon, over 200 tonnes per hectare over 25 years

Biodiverse carbon revegetation offers the ability to buffer and reconnect native vegetation on farms is a critical adaptation strategy to protect and build resilience in the private land conservation estate.

Biodiverse carbon revegetation on farms has long been regarded as an important strategy by farmers to improve the productive value of their properties through wind shelter, water filtration, soil stabilisation and now carbon storage.

Undertaking strategic biodiverse reforestation doubles the outcome for the investment (mitigation and adaptation).

We believe that undertaking strategic biodiverse reforestation rather than single species plantations will be more acceptable to rural communities.

What indications are there that the carbon market will be viable?

In anticipation of a price on carbon, Tasmanian landowners are embracing the opportunities to participate in the carbon market through reforestation of the less productive parts of their farms for multiple benefits.

Tasmanian business are already offsetting their emissions and see this as an important part of their strategies to reduce their carbon emissions, while improving the ecological condition and productive value of Tasmanian landscapes.