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News

New SA scheme to offset car emissions

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But the green initiative will come at a cost with the customer asked to pay up front to supply the trees that will soak up the greenhouse gases.

Conservation group the Canopy Project, together with the Adelaide-based Toyota CMI, on Tuesday launched Australia's first offset scheme for cars.

Using a formula developed by the Australian Greenhouse Office, CMI car buyers will be able to make a donation at the time they buy their new vehicle to cover the cost of planting enough trees to soak up the carbon emissions the car will put out over the next 40,000 kilometres.

The donation can then be claimed as a tax deduction.

The contribution for a small car has been set at \$134, enough to cover the cost of trees to soak up 6.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

A medium-sized car will cost \$198 and a large car or four-wheel-drive \$322.

The trees will be planted on a 50 hectare property near Kanmantoo, east of Adelaide, and will be registered on the property title to protect them even if the land is sold.

Canopy chief project designer Leonard Cohen said CMI was the first car dealer in Australia to have a program that would precisely offset emissions.

He said the scheme also offered ordinary people the opportunity to take action on climate change.

"The war against carbon is real and everyone wonders what they can do to make a difference," Mr Cohen said.

"Now there is the capacity for action."

CMI managing director Paul Crawford said his company's market research showed that 87 per cent of its new car buyers were willing to pay extra to ensure their car was carbon neutral.

He said CMI expected about 1,000 of its customers each year to take up the offer.

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