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Your next vehicle could be a tree-wheeler

NEW car buyers in Adelaide will have the opportunity to offset the carbon emissions of their new vehicles.

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 Adelaide-based Toyota dealer

CMI, yesterday 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 the scheme offered ordinary people the opportunity to take action on climate change.