



# PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

SATURDAY, JUNE 5 1982

TELEVISION ANNOUNCEMENT TODAY OF  
LAUNCH OF THE AUSTRALIAN YEAR OF THE TREE

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(One Minute Statement)

On World Environment Day, the United Nations Association of Australia launched the Year of the Tree.

Trees soften the hard edge of the city landscape, clean the air and provide a buffer against noise. They are important to the farmer. They provide a renewable source of valuable materials and, of course, they provide a home for Australia's unique wildlife.

Unfortunately, there are fewer and fewer trees in Australia despite the planting and conservation efforts of governments organisations and individuals. Tree decline affects the standard of living of all Australians. A major national tree programme is one of the proposals for the Australian Bi-Centenary in 1988.

Over the next year the Government will make a start with a pilot project to cost half a million dollars. Apart from helping the Year of the Tree campaign, the Government will encourage people across Australia to learn about trees, to plant them and to care for them. There will be demonstration projects on tree planting and support for national community-based activities.

Trees are an important part of our heritage. The Year of the Tree deserves and needs the support of all Australians.

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PRIME MINISTER'S ADDRESS

(Five Minute Film)

On World Environment Day the United Nations Association of Australia launched the Year of the Tree.

They are part of the uniqueness of our national heritage. Trees help farmers to maintain and even increase the productivity of land - halting the loss of water and soil.

Although our timber and paper come from trees, modern forestry can ensure that those trees are renewed.

Few city dwellers can deny that trees soften the hard edge of the urban landscape. Their shade is welcome on a hot and sunny day. They even help buffer the noise of traffic.

For our native animals they're much more than something beautiful to look at: indeed they're essential for the survival of most species.

Unfortunately, there are fewer and fewer trees in Australia, despite the planting and conservation efforts of Governments, organisations and individuals. Vast areas of forest and bushland have been cleared for farming, roads, power lines and towns. Trees are still being lost through land clearing, and also through soil erosion and salinity, disease and fire.

The loss of our trees has now reached a critical stage. Less than 5% of the nation is now covered, and there are many serious local problems. Tree decline affects the standard of living of all Australians. It reduces the productivity of land, lowers rainfall, and degrades the environment.

A major national tree programme is one of the proposals for the Australian Bicentenary in 1988. Over the next year the Government will make a start with a pilot project to cost half a million dollars. Apart from helping the Year of the Tree campaign, the Government will encourage people across Australia to learn about trees, to plant them and to care for them. There will be demonstration projects on tree planting and support for national community-based activities.

You can plant and conserve trees . . . use only waste timber for firewood . . . respect fire restrictions . . . and save newspapers and cartons for recycling.

Trees are for our future. They're for the future of our children and for the future of their children. The Government can help, but to be successful, to ensure a successful future, every one of us needs to be involved.