**MEDIA RELEASE 20 July 2020**

**[Council Name] calls on Australians to commit to regeneration this National Tree Day**

This National Tree Day, [insert council name] is encouraging Australians to show their commitment to regeneration and **#HugATreeForNTD** as part of National Tree Day 2020.

Schools Tree Day (July 31) and National Tree Day (August 2) are Australia’s largest annual tree-planting and nature care events and take place on the last weekend of July. Whilst official National Tree Day group planting events have been cancelled this year due to the impact of COVID-19, [council name] remains committed to celebrating trees and helping communities around Australia connect with nature on these days.

[Insert details of alternative event eg. Plant giveaway, adopt-a-tree etc.]

We also encourage residents to plant in their backyard or garden where possible, check out the range of resources available online at [**treeday.planetark.org**](https://treeday.planetark.org/) and get involved with the **#HugATreeForNTD** campaign on social media.

The call-to-action comes with the release of the 2020 National Tree Day research report, entitled **Regeneration: for our land, our people and our future**, with new research showing the impact of the year’s unprecedented events on Australia’s environment and collective wellbeing.

The 2020 Tree Report analyses the impact of the twin traumas of the summer 2019/20 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic and the path forwards towards regeneration for our land, our people and our future. The report incorporates insights from experts in the fields of regeneration ecology, indigenous fire management practices, psychology and child/family wellbeing to explore how our land and communities have been impacted and how together, we can start the journey towards regeneration.

“After the unparalleled start to the year we have had here in Australia, regeneration of our land and our wellbeing is more critical now than ever,” said Planet Ark Deputy CEO Rebecca Gilling.

“We are calling on all Australians to make a pledge to regenerate through connecting with nature, whether that be by planting a tree in the backyard, doing some weeding in local bushland or simply hugging a tree!”

To read the **Regeneration: for our land, our people and our future** report, visit [insert link].

National Tree Day is an initiative organised by Planet Ark in partnership with major sponsor Toyota Australia and its Dealer Network.

**-ENDS-**

**For further information, interviews or images please contact:**

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**Guidance for the Public**

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across Australian communities and the ongoing uncertainty around potential restrictions on gatherings, Planet Ark has made the difficult decision to cancel official National Tree Day planting events this year.

For more information, please visit [**treeday.planetark.org**](https://treeday.planetark.org/).

**About Planet Ark**

Planet Ark Environmental Foundation is an Australian not-for-profit organisation with a vision of a world where people live in balance with nature. Established in 1992, it is one of Australia’s leading environmental behaviour change organisations with a focus on working collaboratively and positively. Planet Ark promotes and creates simple, positive environmental actions – for everyone.