

Media release

Beach enters major coastal wetlands restoration partnership

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Beach Energy has entered into a three-year partnership with Deakin University's Blue Carbon Lab, to help restore some of Australia's critical coastal wetlands.

The 'Regenerating Our Coasts' project will use a new approach to wetland restoration by deploying biodegradable structures that help new wetlands to establish and thrive.

Blue Carbon ecosystems in Australia (saltmarshes, mangroves, and seagrass beds) are efficient carbon sinks that act as a nature-based solution against climate change.

Dr Stacey Trevathan-Tackett from Deakin University's Blue Carbon Lab said it is vital to raise awareness about the value of these ecosystems and support coastal restoration research.

"Globally, wetlands have declined by as much as 71% since the early 1900s, while in Australia, much of our coastal wetlands have disappeared since European settlement, including half of the saltmarsh ecosystems in Victoria's Port Phillip Bay," said Dr Trevathan-Tackett.

"In some cases, restoration of coastal wetlands is difficult due to environmental conditions being too harsh to allow for the establishment and growth of coastal plants.

"This new program aims to develop and trial methods to enhance blue carbon recovery.

"Biodegradable structures that can help stabilise the soil will be used and may provide an opportunity to jumpstart revegetation in areas where natural regeneration is difficult.

"Together, this program aims to advance the health and stewardship of our coastal ecosystems through meaningful ecological and social impact."

Beach's CEO Morné Engelbrecht said that Beach is committed to supporting community projects that support the environment.

"It is exciting to be a part of such an innovative partnership with Blue Carbon Lab, helping to re-establish coastal wetlands that are critical to combating climate change," said Mr Engelbrecht.

"Beyond the environmental benefits of this partnership, it presents a good opportunity for our staff to pull on their boots and get involved by planting new wetlands that have the best chance of successful growth.

"This is also Beach's largest ever environmental partnership and demonstrates our commitment to leaving a positive contribution to the communities in which we operate."

For more information about the Leading Innovations in Coastal Wetland Restoration Project, visit bluecarbonlab.org/facilitated-restoration.

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