

## **Press Release**

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Kassel – May 25, 2016

### **Expansion into the Asia-Pacific Region**

### **K+S Launches Solar Salt Project in Australia**

- Component of the “Salt 2020” growth strategy
- Plans to supply the expected growth in Asia
- Initial focus on obtaining necessary permits
- Early estimates foresee a capital expenditure volume of about AU\$ 350 million (about € 225 million);
- Estimated production capacity of 3.5 million tonnes of salt per year
- Possible production start in 2022

In a first step, K+S has purchased mining licenses for the Ashburton salt project from a local group of investors, and has initiated planning for the construction of a solar salt production facility near Onslow in Western Australia.

“We want this project to give a boost to our planned expansion into the Asian markets. We see big potential there, and want to sustainably participate in the expected growth there in the future. The purchase of the licenses is the foundation to achieve this,” says Mark Roberts, the board member responsible for the K+S Group’s Salt business unit.

The Ashburton Salt project is still in the very early stages of development. K+S is currently preparing the required documents to apply for the necessary environmental permits and completing a feasibility study for the project. Annual production capacity could be approximately 3.5 million tonnes of solar salt, and about 75 direct jobs may be created at

the new site. The salt produced in Australia is to be mainly supplied to the chemical industry in Asia, particularly to China. For the full realization of the project, early K+S estimates anticipate an approximate capital expenditure of AU\$ 350 million (€ 225 million). The approval process is expected to last at least three years, and only when the necessary permits have been granted will K+S make a final decision on whether to build the solar salt production facility, in 2019 at the earliest.

To produce solar salt, ocean water flows into large open evaporation ponds, in which the salt crystallizes after being exposed to sunlight for several months. Finally, in a multi-stage process, the salt is harvested, dried and loaded onto ships for distribution.

K+S will draw from its experience in solar salt field operations gained in the Bahamas, Brazil and the United States.

You can find out more about the Ashburton salt project at [www.k-plus-s.com/ashburton](http://www.k-plus-s.com/ashburton).

#### **About K+S**

K+S is an international operating resources company. We have been mining and processing mineral raw materials for more than 125 years. The products we produce from them are used worldwide in agriculture, food and road safety and are important elements in numerous industrial processes. Potash and salt are integral nutrients for the megatrend of a constantly growing and increasingly prosperous global population striving for a higher standard of living. This will result in increasing consumption of mineral resources. We serve the resulting growth in demand from production sites in Europe, North America and South America as well as through a global distribution network. K+S is the world's largest salt producer and one of the top potash providers worldwide. With more than 14,000 employees, K+S achieved revenues in financial year 2015 of about € 4.2 billion and an EBIT of € 782 million. Learn more about K+S at [www.k-plus-s.com](http://www.k-plus-s.com).

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