

Press Release

Kassel (Germany) – August 15, 2019

On the decision of the FGG Ministerial Conference:

K+S welcomes the decision made today by the Ministerial Conference of the River Basin Community (FGG) Weser to replace the saline wastewater pipeline to the Oberweser with more cost-efficient alternative measures. The underground storage of saline wastewater is therefore of fundamental importance. The FGG Weser provides clarity for the disposal after it has been confirmed that the injection will be completed at the end of 2021.

Underground storage creates long-term disposal prospects

"Today's meeting strengthens our conviction that, by having constructive dialogue with the FGG Weser, we are taking the right steps to achieve the ambitious objectives of the river management plan," says Dr. Burkhard Lohr, Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of K+S.

According to Lohr, K+S has been strengthened by having developed a promising path for the environmentally friendly and safe disposal of production wastewater by permanently storing it underground. Lohr: "We are working intensively on being able to bring highly mineralized production wastewater underground after the end of injection from 2022 onwards. By storing it underground, K+S is implementing a long-term disposal solution that is aligned with management planning."

Only a few days ago, the Regional Council in Kassel approved the operation of a new intermediate storage facility for the temporary storage of production wastewater in an abandoned mine field.

However, for long-term storage underground, complex issues still have to be dealt with in accordance with the applicable river management planning. K+S is therefore looking forward to continuing the constructive talks with FGG Weser.

"We will continue to make our contribution to relieving the environmental burden and will continue to drive forward innovative solutions. At the Werra plant, we want to process domestic raw materials into products in world-wide demand for another 40 years, and we have a great responsibility for our employees and their families," concludes Lohr.

Background: Water protection bears fruit

At the Werra plant alone, K+S has invested about 500 million euros in water protection since 2011. Through the construction of new production facilities at the Hattorf and Wintershall (both in Hesse) as well as Unterbreizbach (Thuringia) sites, it has been possible to reduce the volume of saline wastewater to 5.5 million cubic meters per year (compared with 14 million cubic meters in 2007). This has also significantly improved the ecological conditions for the Werra and Weser, because the salt burden has been halved. The positive effects can also be seen in the stabilization and increase in fish populations in the middle and lower Werra river: around twelve species find suitable habitats and breeding grounds again.

About K+S

K+S is a customer-focused, independent minerals company for the Agriculture, Industry, Consumers, and Communities segments and wants to grow the EBITDA to € 3 billion by 2030. Our approximately 15,000 employees enable farmers to provide nutrition for the world, solutions that keep industries going, improve daily life for consumers and provide safety in winter. We continually meet the growing demand for mineral products from production sites in Europe, North and South America as well as a worldwide sales network. We strive for sustainability because we are deeply committed to our responsibilities to people, environment, communities and economy in the regions in which we operate. Learn more about K+S at www.k-plus-s.com.

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