

Press Release

Kassel (Germany), December 3, 2020

Settlement with community of plaintiffs:

K+S reaches agreement with Herleshausen municipality

As part of the settlement negotiations with the plaintiff community of Hessian and Thuringian municipalities and associations in the Werra region, K+S has signed an agreement with the municipality of Herleshausen (Werra-Meissner district). An agreement is also being prepared with other members of the plaintiff community.

"As part of our environmental strategy, we have been working successfully for three years to reach agreement with local authorities and associations disputing existing permits for injection or discharge into the Werra. I am now pleased to have concluded an agreement with the municipality of Herleshausen, which reflects the municipality's concern for an intact environment and is intended to provide a solid basis for good cooperation," said Dr. Burkhard Lohr, Chairman of the K+S Board of Executive Directors, on the occasion of the signing ceremony in Herleshausen town hall.

Under the terms of the settlement, K+S has assured the municipality to discontinue the injection of saline wastewater into the underground by the end of 2021 and refrain from using the Oberweser pipeline. This agreement furthermore comprises an understanding on the implementation of a concept of measures to further reduce the environmental impact on the Werra river and the joint implementation of a nature conservation project along the Werra or one of its feeding streams. In return, Herleshausen will declare the pending lawsuit against the discharge permit for saline wastewater into the Werra to be settled.



In the future, too, K+S and the Herleshausen community intend to find mutually agreeable solutions to any conflicts of opinion that may arise. The settlement complements the agreements already reached by K+S at the end of 2017 with BUND and the municipality of Gerstungen. Another part of the ongoing process of reaching an understanding involves negotiations with the Hamelner Erklärung e.V. district alliance comprising local authorities along the Werra and Weser rivers in the federal states of Hesse, North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony.

"We will continue contributing to reduce the environmental impact of our operations and will consistently pursue innovative solutions. For another 40 years, we aim to process domestic raw materials on the Werra into products in worldwide demand, and we have a strong responsibility for our employees and their families," Lohr concluded.

Background: Successful progress in water protection

Since 2011, K+S has invested around 500 million euros on water protection in the Werra plant area alone. Through the construction of new production facilities at the Hattorf and Wintershall (both in Hesse) and Unterbreizbach (Thuringia) sites, the volume of saline wastewater has been reduced 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 rivers, as the salt load has been halved. The positive effects are also evident in the stabilization and increase in the fish populations in the middle and lower Werra river: about twelve species have returned to suitable living and breeding conditions in the river.



About K+S

K+S considers itself a customer-focused, independent minerals company for the Agriculture, Industry, Consumers, and Communities segments. Our more than 14,000 employees enable farmers to provide nutrition for the world, solutions that keep industries going, improve daily life for consumers and provide safety in the 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.kpluss.com.

Your contact person

Press:

Ulrich Göbel

Phone: +49 561 9301-1722

ulrich.goebel@k-plus-s.com