




## NEWS UPDATE

9<sup>th</sup> January 2019

### AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT APPROVES THE SANDY RIDGE FACILITY

-  **Australian Government approval secured with 15 conditions under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth) (EPBC Act)**
-  **Australian Government approval signifies confidence that Tellus can manage matters listed under the EPBC Act at Australia's first dual near-surface kaolin clay mine and arid near-surface geological waste repository**
-  **The next steps involve obtaining the Facility's Works Approval and Operating Licenses**

Tellus Holdings Ltd (Tellus) is pleased to advise that it has received approval (EPBC 2015/7478) from the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy (DEE) for its Sandy Ridge Facility located within the Goldfields Region of Western Australia (WA).

The Sandy Ridge Facility or the "Action" is a proposed open-cut kaolin clay mine and arid near-surface geological waste repository within the mine voids, and associated infrastructure for the storage, treatment, recovery and permanent isolation (disposal) of hazardous and intractable wastes (including low level radioactive wastes), approximately 75 km north-east of Koolyanobbing.



Fig 1: Sandy Ridge layout (artist impression)

Approval under the EPBC Act includes five conditions specific to the Action and ten standard administrative conditions that will protect the environment during construction, operation, closure and rehabilitation of the Sandy Ridge Facility. The five conditions specific to the Action include a requirement for surface water monitoring and management, the development of a deep groundwater Monitoring and Management Plan and a requirement to implement the PFAS National Environmental Management Plan.

The Australian Government's approval signifies they are confident that Tellus has considered and can manage the possible impacts that relate to matters listed under the EPBC Act. Tellus has undertaken extensive studies over many years with local indigenous families, local scientists, national and international experts and has consulted widely with the local, state and national stakeholder groups. The approval by the Australian Government is a show of support for Tellus' evidence-based and risk-based environmental assessment and management plans and is an important next step in securing the remaining approvals required for the Sandy Ridge Facility.

A copy of the Australian Government's approval and conditions will be provided on the DEE website at: <http://epbcnotices.environment.gov.au/referralslist/> (EPBC 2015/7478).

Building on these 15 Australian Government conditions and the 13 WA Environmental Ministerial conditions received in June 2018, the next regulatory related steps over the next few months for Tellus is obtaining approval for the Facility's Works Approval and Operating Licenses.

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“Tellus expects to create up to 100 jobs during the construction phase of the project and 80 jobs at peak operational manning supported by a 71-man accommodation camp. Tellus has a policy of buying local and hiring local and most opportunities that will be advertised will start during 2019,” said Tellus Managing Director, Duncan van der Merwe.

“The Facility provides much needed sustainable infrastructure that can assist in “cleaning up country”, support the circular economy, create jobs and generate business opportunities. Australia is one of the largest emitters of hazardous waste on a per capita basis. A massive legacy stockpile has built-up across WA and the country as there is insufficient world’s best practice infrastructure at competitive price points” he said.

### **About Sandy Ridge**

*Tellus is proposing to develop the Sandy Ridge facility, Australia’s first dual open-cut kaolin mine and arid near-surface geological waste repository in a 70-million year- old kaolin clay bed with a 25-year operating licence, which is located 240 kilometres by road west north west of Kalgoorlie.*

*The proposal would involve mining up to 290,000 tpa of kaolin clay and receiving up to 100,000 tpa of Class IV and V waste (“hazardous waste”) at the gate over 25 years. Only wastes generated within WA, other Australian States and Territories, and the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone can be accepted, subject to meeting the facility’s waste acceptance criteria.*

### **About kaolin clay**

*The kaolin to be mined is suitable for applications in the ceramics, paint and environmental remediation industries.*

### **About geological repositories**

*The mine voids created by the kaolin mining would then be used as a semi-arid, near surface waste geological repository. Geological repositories are facilities that can offer long term storage, treatment, recovery and permanent isolation of equipment and hazardous waste services.*

*Geological repositories provide the highest level of containment for hazardous waste (chemical waste) and low level radioactive waste (LLW) from the biosphere over geological time.*

*This is achieved through a combination of carefully selected active and passive control measures. This is known as a multi-barrier system that can permanently isolate waste from the biosphere.*

*In its simplest definition, hazardous waste is waste that can harm the environment or human health and therefore should be removed from the biosphere where it can pose a threat.*

### **About Tellus Holdings:**

*Tellus Holdings Ltd (“Tellus”) mission is to contribute towards a cleaner Australia by developing a portfolio of geological repositories that provide waste storage, recovery and permanent isolation solutions plus complementary salt and clay products to our clients.*

*This dual revenue model involves mining the commodities kaolin clay and rock salt in thick dry remote beds which creates world’s best practice geological repositories. The voids created by mining are then used to store equipment, archives and waste using a multi- barrier system as part of an integrated safety case. Tellus plans to permanently isolate hazardous waste using environmentally sound management (ESM) principles that protect the environment and human health.*

*Tellus also uses long-term storage that supports the circular economy by placing like-with-like materials for operational safety reasons and to create opportunities for the future recovery of valuable materials. Tellus’ business model mirrors overseas solutions operating in the UK, Europe and North America.*

*Tellus is developing the proposed Sandy Ridge facility in Western Australia (WA) and the proposed Chandler facility in the Northern Territory (NT). Both Sandy Ridge and Chandler were awarded Major Project Facilitation Service by the Australian Government and Chandler was awarded Major Project Status by the NT Government.*

### **For further information:**

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