



Type what you want to search

Search



12/09/2016



Vale gets operating license for the S11D project

Largest project in the company's history and the mining industry will start commercial operations in January 2017

Vale announces that it obtained Friday, Dec 9, the operating license for the S11D mine and plant, the largest iron ore project in the company's history and the mining industry. The license, valid for 10 years, was issued by Ibama environmental agency after it verified the compliance of the actions and environmental control measures executed by Vale during the installation license.

The S11D mine and plant are located in Canaã dos Carajás, in the in southeast Pará of Pará. The project will start commercial operations in January 2017. Total investments are estimated at US\$ 14.3 billion, of which US\$ 6.4 billion in the mine and plant and US\$ 7.9 billion in building a 101-km railway branch line, double-tracking the Carajás Railway and expanding Ponta da Madeira Maritime Terminal in São Luís.

The rail spur had its start-up in the beginning of October with the circulation of the first empty 330-wagon train. The new berth for the Pier IV, in Ponta da Madeira, began its commissioning, with three VLOCs loaded in November. The commissioning at the mine and plant is also progressing well.

The S11D project entails installing an iron ore mine and processing plant, with three production lines - each one able to process 30 million metric tons per year. The ore will be extracted through open-pit mining and transported from the mine to the plant by a long-distance conveyor belt. The plant, iron ore stockyards and distribution yards, piles of waste rock and overburden (containing iron ore with high phosphorus levels), and train manoeuvre and loading area are all sited in an area of pastureland outside Carajás National Forest.

Through this solution, it was possible to reduce the amount of vegetation cleared in the forest by more than 40%, compared with the original master plan, which called for 2,600 hectares to be cleared. Carajás National Forest covers 412,000 hectares, and even after S11D has been fully implemented, just 4% of it will have been affected by mining activities since Vale came to the region 30 years ago.

Besides reducing its impact on the forest, the company has also acquired various areas around the plant to meet the environmental conditions for the project's implementation. Part of this area is being rehabilitated and is in a program to join up forest fragments. These are degraded properties, previously used for pasture, which are being restored to reconnect with native forest. In all, more than 5,000 acres of degraded areas, equivalent to 2,200 soccer fields, are being recovered. This work is being carried out in partnership with the Vale Institute of Technology, monitored by the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio) and the Brazilian environmental protection agency, IBAMA.

The project is named after its location: block D of ore body S11, which lies in the Southern Hills of Carajás. To the north is Carajás Mine, operating since 1985 in the neighbouring municipality of Parauapebas. Geologically speaking, S11D is just one block of an ore body, which has been divided up into four parts: A, B, C and D. The mineral potential of the S11 ore body is 10 billion metric tons of iron ore, of which blocks C and D alone possesses reserves of 4.24 billion metric tons. The first drilling in the region took place in the 1970s. At the turn of the century, the first technical capacity and financial viability studies were carried out, which led to the project's present configuration. The project's preliminary licence was issued in June 2012 and its installation licence was obtained one year later. The mine's lifespan is currently estimated to be 48 years.

More information



Mônica Ferreira

monica.ferreira@vale.com

Rio de Janeiro

+55 (21) 3845-3636

Fatima Cristina

fatima.cristina@vale.com

Rio de Janeiro

+55 (21) 3485-3621

Murilo Fiuza

murilo.fiuza@vale.com

Rio de Janeiro

+55 (21) 3485-3627