



Report and recommendations of the Environmental Protection Authority



Gold Mine Developments on Lake Lefroy – s46 request for amendments to Ministerial Statement 548

St Ives Gold Mining Company Pty Ltd

Report 1493

November 2013

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

GOLD MINE DEVELOPMENTS ON LAKE LEFROY, SEVEN KILOMETRES SOUTH-EAST OF KAMBALDA – INQUIRY UNDER SECTION 46 OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1986 TO REMOVE IMPLEMENTATION CONDITIONS AND PROPONENT COMMITMENTS OF MINISTERIAL STATEMENT 548

The Minister for Environment has requested (7 October 2013) that the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) inquire into and report to the Minister on St Ives Gold Mining Company Pty Ltd's proposed deletion of the implementation conditions and proponent commitments for the Gold Mine Developments on Lake Lefroy, 7 kilometres south-east of Kambalda.

The following is the EPA's Report and Recommendations (No. 1493) pursuant to Section 46(6) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (the EP Act).

Background

In July 2000, WMC Resources Ltd (St Ives Gold) obtained authorisation under Ministerial Statement 548 to undertake gold mining activities on Lake Lefroy, seven kilometres south-east of Kambalda under EP Act. The mine was purchased by Gold Fields Limited in December 2001, the parent company of St Ives Gold Mining Company Pty Ltd (SIGM).

In 2011, an expansion of lake based mining activities was assessed by the EPA (Assessment Number 1809, EPA Report 1411) and was approved under Ministerial Statement 879 in November 2011. As a result of the release of Ministerial Statement 879, SIGM's lake-based operations became the subject of two ministerial statements, 548 and 879.

In February 2012, SIGM wrote to the EPA seeking removal of implementation conditions and proponent commitments of Ministerial Statement 548 under Section 46 of the EP Act so that a single contemporary statement applies to SIGM's lake-based operations.

Assessment of the proposed removal of conditions and commitments

The environmental regulation of the St Ives Gold Mine under Part IV of the EP Act comprises a number of standard implementation conditions and Proponent commitments. The proponent is proposing to remove implementation conditions and proponent commitments from Ministerial Statement 548.

In Report 1411, the EPA provided advice that the EPA supported a change to implementation conditions under Section 46 of the EP Act to ensure that a single contemporary and consolidated Ministerial Statement applies across the St Ives Gold Mine proposal area.

The EPA has reviewed SIGM's application and supports the proposal that the implementation conditions and proponent commitments of Ministerial Statement 548 are either completed and no longer apply, or are superseded by Ministerial Statement 879 for the expanded open-cut and underground mining operations. Ministerial Statement 879 incorporates a defined project area which includes the existing mining operations authorised under Ministerial Statement 548.

A summary of this Section 46 assessment is presented in Table 1 and Table 2, below:

EPA conclusion and recommendations

In view of the request by SIGM, the EPA concludes that the environmental regulation of the St Ives Gold Mine can be effectively wholly managed under Ministerial Statement 879, which effectively replaces all implementation conditions and proponent commitments in Ministerial Statement 548.

Having inquired into this matter, the EPA recommends to the Minister for Environment that:

1. it is appropriate to remove all implementation conditions and proponent commitments from Ministerial Statement 548; and
2. after complying with section 46(8) of the EP Act, the Minister issues a Statement of decision to remove all implementation conditions and proponent commitments from Ministerial Statement 548.

Table 1 - Summary of condition changes

Original condition	Assessment
<p><u>Condition 1</u> Implementation</p>	<p>Condition deleted. This was a standard condition at the time for all proposals. Contemporary ministerial statements contain standard conditions which would address this, and this condition is superseded by Condition 1 of Ministerial Statement 879.</p>
<p><u>Condition 2</u> Proponent Commitments</p>	<p>All commitments are to be deleted. All proponent commitments and any gaps that were identified have been incorporated and addressed in Ministerial Statement 879.</p>
<p><u>Condition 3</u> Proponent</p>	<p>Condition deleted. This was a standard condition at the time for all proposals and is now superseded by Condition 2 of Ministerial Statement 879.</p>
<p><u>Condition 4</u> Commencement</p>	<p>Condition deleted. This was a standard condition at the time for all proposals and is now superseded by Condition 3 of Ministerial Statement 879.</p>
<p><u>Condition 5</u> Compliance Auditing</p>	<p>Condition deleted. This was a standard condition at the time for all proposals and is now superseded by Condition 4 of Ministerial Statement 879.</p>
<p><u>Condition 6</u> Environmental Management Program</p>	<p>Condition deleted – condition requirements have been met or are superseded by Ministerial Statement 879.</p> <p>Condition 6-1 requires the preparation of an Environmental Management Program (EMP) prior to ground disturbing activities. The EMP was submitted and approved by the EPA in 2000, prior to the commencement of mining.</p> <p>Condition 6-2 requires the EMP be reviewed and updated annually or as new pits are developed. Since 2000, the proponent has been reviewing and updating the EMP in accordance with this condition. The EPA considers that the requirement to prepare an annual compliance report under Condition 4 of Ministerial Statement 879 and an Environmental Monitoring Plan under Condition 5 of Ministerial Statement 879 achieves the same environmental outcomes as Condition 6-2 of Ministerial Statement 548.</p> <p>Condition 6-3 and 6-4 require that the EMP is implemented and that the EMP is made publically available. Audits have indicated that the EMP has been implemented and is publically available. The EPA considers that conditions 6-3 and 6-4 have been fulfilled and do not require replication in Ministerial Statement 879.</p>
<p><u>Condition 7</u> Final Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan</p>	<p>Condition deleted - condition has been completed.</p> <p>Condition 7 requires the preparation and implementation of a Final Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan. SIGM prepared a draft mine closure plan in 2008 and submitted this plan to applicable agencies for review as required by</p>

	<p>Condition 7. The closure plan was updated and submitted to the EPA as part of the Beyond 2010 assessment. As such the requirement to prepare the Final Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plan under Condition 7-1 has been complied with.</p> <p>As part of the Beyond 2010 EPA assessment, the EPA considered that with the release of the EPA/DMP <i>Guidelines for Preparing Mine Closure Plans</i> and the statutory requirements of the <i>Mining Act 1978</i>, that the DMP can manage mine closure and rehabilitation of the St Ives Gold Mine. This is noted in Ministerial Statement 879 under note number 4.</p>
<p><u>Condition 8</u> Identification of Alternative and Additional Sites</p>	<p>Condition deleted – condition no longer applies.</p> <p>Condition 8 of Ministerial Statement 548 allowed for the proponent to undertake mining at additional sites within the project area to those previously approved provided it could demonstrate to the EPA that the environmental impacts of mining are substantially the same as at those sites previously identified for mining, provided all the other requirements of the project are met.</p> <p>The EPA no longer considers this condition relevant under Ministerial Statement 879 as any non-substantial change to a proposal would be assessed by the EPA under section 45C of the EP Act. Any substantial change would require a new and separate assessment under the EP Act.</p>

Table 2 - Summary of commitment amendments

Original Commitment	Assessment
<u>Commitments 1</u> Groundwater	Commitment deleted – commitments were incorporated into the 2010 assessment on Lake Lefroy, and any major gaps in relation to historical performance and commitments in Ministerial Statement 548 were identified and addressed in the 2010 assessment.
<u>Commitments 2</u> Surface water	Commitment deleted – commitments were incorporated into the 2010 assessment on Lake Lefroy.
<u>Commitments 3-4</u> Lake Lefroy	Commitments deleted – commitments were incorporated into the 2010 assessment on Lake Lefroy. Extensive hydrological and hydrogeological modelling to inform the Beyond 2010 Public Environmental Review (PER) resulted in a better understanding of the environment of Lake Lefroy and an increased capacity to meet the commitments made in the PER. The EPA also considers that the monitoring plan required under Condition 5 of Ministerial Statement 879 will ensure that proponent's commitments will be met for the St Ives Gold Mine in relation to monitoring of the impacts.
<u>Commitments 5-7</u> Rehabilitation	Commitments deleted – commitments were incorporated into the 2010 assessment on Lake Lefroy.
<u>Commitment 8</u> Surface water	Commitment deleted – commitments were incorporated into the 2010 assessment on Lake Lefroy.
<u>Commitments 9</u> Fauna	Commitment deleted – commitments were incorporated into the 2010 assessment on Lake Lefroy.
<u>Commitments 10-11</u> Rehabilitation	Commitments deleted – commitments were incorporated into the 2010 assessment on Lake Lefroy.

OEPA MIN: 2013-0349

RECOMMENDED ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

**STATEMENT TO AMEND CONDITIONS APPLYING TO A PROPOSAL
(PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 46 OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1986)**

Proposal: Gold Mine Developments on Lake Lefroy, 7 Kilometres South-East of Kambalda

Proponent: St Ives Gold Mining Company Pty Ltd

Proponent Address: 50 Colin Street, West Perth WA 6005

Assessment Number: 1984

Previous Assessment Number: 1250

Report of the Environmental Protection Authority: 1493

Previous Report of the Environmental Protection Authority: 976

Previous Statement Number: 548

The implementation of the proposal to which the above report of the Environmental Protection Authority relates is subject to the conditions and procedures contained in Ministerial Statement No. 548, as amended by the following:

1. Implementation Conditions 1 to 8 and Proponent Commitments 1 to 11 are deleted as the proposal is subject to the conditions and procedures contained in Ministerial Statement 879 (published on 16 November 2011).

**HON ALBERT JACOB MLA
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT; HERITAGE**