

Press release

Rio Tinto approves US\$200 million funding towards an expansion of Pilbara operations to 330Mt/a capacity

14 July 2010

Rio Tinto today announced US\$200 million funding to prepare for the expansion of its iron ore operations in Western Australia.

The funding will allow dredging contracts to be issued as part of early works on the expansion of the Cape Lambert port (CLB), supporting the Pilbara operations' overall capacity increase to 330 million tonnes a year (Mt/a).

The dredging is associated with the proposed construction of an additional 1.8 kilometre, four-berth jetty and wharf at Cape Lambert to increase its current annual capacity of 80 million tonnes by a further 100 million tonnes.

Rio Tinto's planned growth of its Pilbara iron ore operations to 330 Mt/a capacity consists of the following steps:

- 225 Mt/a by Q1 2011 - Dampier port systems efficiencies (in implementation)
- 230 Mt/a by Q2 2012 - Dampier port incremental gains (in feasibility study)
- 280 Mt/a by H1 2014 – CLB 1st 50 Mt/a increment (now in feasibility study)
- 330 Mt/a by H1 2016 - CLB 2nd 50 Mt/a increment (pre-feasibility completed)

Rio Tinto chief executive Iron Ore and Australia Sam Walsh said the dredging works would help ensure that subsequent decisions on the expansion of operations could be implemented as quickly and efficiently as possible.

"Rio Tinto has a proven track record of managing large-scale iron ore expansion projects, and this decision should be seen in that light. It is important at this stage that we advance this process in an orderly manner, and this decision does that," Mr Walsh said.

"While the Australian Government's decision to abandon its Resource Super Profits Tax in favour of the proposed Minerals Resource Rent Tax was a major step forward, we remain cautious over what legislation will finally be in place."

The dredging works are dependent upon a number of government and other approvals, most notably that of the Robe River joint venture partners with regard to the Cape Lambert port.

Cont.../

About Rio Tinto

Rio Tinto is a leading international mining group headquartered in the UK, combining Rio Tinto plc, a London and NYSE listed company, and Rio Tinto Limited, which is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange.

Rio Tinto's business is finding, mining, and processing mineral resources. Major products are aluminium, copper, diamonds, energy (coal and uranium), gold, industrial minerals (borax, titanium dioxide, salt, talc) and iron ore. Activities span the world but are strongly represented in Australia and North America with significant businesses in South America, Asia, Europe and southern Africa.

For further information, please contact:

Media Relations, Australia / Asia

David Luff
Office: +61 (0) 3 9283 3620
Mobile: +61 (0) 419 850 205

Media Relations, EMEA / Americas

Tony Shaffer
Office: +44 (0) 20 7781 1138
Mobile: +44 (0) 7920 041 003
Christina Mills
Office: +44 (0) 20 7781 1154
Mobile: +44 (0) 7825 275 605

Media Relations, Canada

Bryan Tucker
Office: +1 (0) 514 848 8151
Mobile: +1 (0) 514 825 8319

Investor Relations, Australia

Dave Skinner
Office: +61 (0) 3 9283 3628
Mobile: +61 (0) 408 335 309
Simon Ellinor
Office: +61 (0) 7 3361 4365
Mobile: +61 (0) 439 102 811

Investor Relations, London

Mark Shannon
Office: +44 (0) 20 7781 1178
Mobile: +44 (0) 7917 576597
David Ovington
Office: +44 (0) 20 7781 2051
Mobile: +44 (0) 7920 010 978

Investor Relations, North America

Jason Combes
Office: +1 (0) 801 204 2919
Mobile: +1 (0) 801 558 2645

Website: www.riotinto.com

Email: media.enquiries@riotinto.com / enquiries.mediaaustralia@riotinto.com

High resolution photographs and media pack available at: <http://www.riotinto.com/media>