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Media Release

Central Australia Hydrogen Project Awarded Major Project Status

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An off-grid hydrogen project in Central Australia is building momentum, with the Northern Territory Government announcing it has gained Major Project Status.

The Desert Bloom Hydrogen project is a staged commercial-scale green hydrogen operation. It has the potential to grow to a \$15 billion project, and deliver around 410,000 tonnes per annum of hydrogen for domestic and international export markets.

Water is a precious resource and a sustainable water source is critical to development of renewable hydrogen projects in the Territory. This technology provides an innovative solution for securing a sustainable water source for the production of renewable hydrogen in Central Australia. The technology works by capturing water from the atmosphere in arid environments

The project is backed by Sanguine Impact Investment, which has committed \$1 billion required for the project's initial stages, and to provide the capital to roll out the full project.

Depending on how the project rollout is sequenced, it is expected that at its peak, more than 1,000 full-time jobs will be required for construction, both in Darwin and on-site in multiple locations, and more than 120 full-time jobs will be created to operate and maintain the project.

Construction for the first stage of the project will require approximately 100 full-time construction jobs, and 6 full-time jobs for ongoing operations.

The next steps of this project include the Territory Government working with Desert Bloom Hydrogen to develop the staged project to its potential export scale, including identifying suitable land in Central Australia to harness solar energy and ensuring adherence to standard best practice regulatory processes and approvals.

Awarding of Major Project Status follows the company's 12 week trial in the Barkly earlier this year.

The Government's Northern Territory Hydrogen Masterplan outlines the Territory's competitive advantages and how the Territory will leverage these advantages to be a centre of hydrogen technology research, production and use in Australia.

Desert Bloom Hydrogen's proponent, Aqua Aerem, an innovative Australian and internationally owned company that is closely aligned with the nation's push to drive new technology and accelerate the development of the domestic hydrogen industry. The project's scale and ambition matches that of the Territory Government.

Quotes from Chief Minister Michael Gunner:

"Being the comeback capital means creating more jobs in more places in the Territory – and Desert Bloom now marks the Territory's first Hydrogen Major Project.

"We are supporting a world-leading renewable hydrogen project, in technology that captures water from the atmosphere in arid environments.

"With one of the best solar resources in the world – and the development of projects like Desert Bloom – the Territory will play a leading role in the emerging renewable hydrogen market."

Quotes from Minister for Renewables and Energy, Eva Lawler:

"The Territory Labor Government supports hydrogen technology in the Territory. With its potential to expand to a \$15 billion project, Desert Bloom will further champion renewable hydrogen investment as part of the Territory's transition to renewables – this is laid out in our Hydrogen Masterplan.

“The Desert Bloom Hydrogen technology provides an innovative approach to secure a sustainable water supply, which is an essential in the development of renewable hydrogen and will be particularly valuable in arid areas.

“As renewable hydrogen technologies are continuously evolving, having projects like this in the Territory is further cementing the Territory as a renewables super hub, while also creating long term jobs in the process.”

Quotes from Aqua Aerem CEO Gerard Reiter:

“This is proven technology that is ready to produce green hydrogen at commercial scale by 2023 with no impact on our water supplies. Desert Bloom will produce 410,000 metric tons of green hydrogen annually for export and domestic use when at full scale.

“The NT is the perfect place for this project, with the best solar conditions in the world, existing infrastructure that can be repurposed for hydrogen, and a strategic location close to the big Asian demand centres. On top of that, the NT Government has a big vision for a hydrogen-powered jobs boom that we are proud to be part of.”

Quote from Major Project Commissioner Jason Schoolmeester:

“Desert Bloom Hydrogen presents an exciting opportunity to accelerate the Territory’s hydrogen industry - production, supply and service, and research and training.

“The provision of renewable power to our regional industries including mining and agribusinesses, will provide a competitive advantage in a world that is increasingly focused on sustainable supply chains.”