

Mining decision just one of many junior will have to face as it progresses Faddy's

By Tania Winter

Just how Geopacific Resources Ltd's Fiji gold story will evolve is still not clear.

But whatever happens, its Faddy's deposit is currently shaping up as a near term production play.

The question now is whether the junior will toll mill the high grade Paddy's material through the Vatakoula mill, currently owned by Vatakoula Gold Mines Plc, or look at the larger picture and define a sulphide resource beneath the oxide to create a bigger mine.

According to managing director Ian Pringle, the company is also looking at some of the larger potential targets in its five project areas – including large copper-gold porphyry and epithermal systems such as is found at its RakiRaki play.

"Some of the larger porphyry type targets occur in our Vuda, Nuku and Nadi South areas and we are looking at the possibility of getting some deep drill holes into those areas," Pringle said.

However, if Geopacific elects to toll treat the oxide material to create cash flow from Faddy's, it will be looking at an initial production rate of several thousand ounces.

"We have really been looking more closely at doing something much larger in our own right," Pringle said.



Trenching has proven to be a useful exploration tool.

To this end, the junior is planning a 10,000m drilling program on the sulphide resource where it still remains open at 250m depth and along trend.

"The drilling may be done at the same time that we are toll treating the oxide resource, and undertaken in stages," Pringle explained.

"We have undertaken geology along the trend and found there are some very nice quartz vein structural targets that have not been tested.

"It will obviously require time and funding to complete a significant drilling program to prove this up into JORC resources."

Geological challenges

Mineralisation at Faddy's is predominantly hosted by a major zone of shearing, and the highest gold grades are associated with zones of intense clay alteration.

Extensive drilling programs by previous companies involved both diamond and percussion/RC work and showed the mineralised zone to have a strike length of at least 650m and a depth of more than 240m.

The higher gold price had also triggered interest from money providers, but Pringle said the group was still assessing its options.

Ground the company holds near Newcrest Mining Ltd's Namosi copper project has also generated interest from companies keen to fund Geopacific's deeper work.

At Namosi, Newcrest recently returned an intersection of 570m at 0.55% copper, within which 76m at 2.24% copper was outlined.

Work by Geopacific has shown that the previous work underestimated the sulphide and oxide resource at Faddy's.

"The sampling prior to our work had really been grassroots exploration drilling and missed a lot of the high grade gold," Pringle explained.

"Why it missed it is fairly obvious when you see the rock – a good proportion of the



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gold was washed out of the core when it was cut.

"We are expecting the tonnes will be much the same, but the grade of the gold is pretty much open slather."

Field success

Drilling and surface channel sampling on the eastern part of the deposit by Geopacific has seen the group take strenuous efforts to minimise core losses.

This activity also increased grades within the re-drilled area by an average of 76%. The indicated and inferred resources currently stand at 355,000t grading 2.18 g/t, and forms only a small part of Faddy's mineralisation.

If the increase in grade achieved through better sampling within the Geopacific test zone is repeated throughout the known mineralised area, there is potential to treble the current average gold grade.

Beyond the limits of previous drilling, the mineralised zone remains open to the east, west and at depth.

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