

Dome Gold Mines Limited Grows in Fiji

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Dome Gold Mines Limited was established in Fiji in 2007, but investment in mineral exploration slowed dramatically following the Global Financial crisis of 2008.

John McCarthy, Dome Gold Mines Limited chief executive officer said recovery from the Global Financial crisis and a subsequent fall in oil and metal commodity prices resulted in a major reduction in exploration activity worldwide.

“Dome continued to maintain its Fiji operations and undertake exploration through this difficult period and in October 2013 Dome Gold Mines Ltd was listed on the ASX in Australia.

“Although it has been challenging at different times, over the years the Company has continued to advance its projects.

“Dome has employed several young Fijian geologists as well as older geologists with long experience in Fiji.”

Mr McCarthy said the Company takes care to operate fully within Fiji Government laws and regulations as well as the traditional customs of the Fijian villages involved in our operations.

“At Sigatoka the Company has employed and trained local people to operate its innovative sonic drilling rig to obtain reliable samples of the sand for laboratory testing. “Dome is totally focussed on its exploration projects in Fiji and does not have projects in other countries.”

Below is an extract of an interview with Mr McCarthy:

Can you tell us a bit about your company?

Dome Gold Mines Limited is a mineral exploration company that has been exploring in Fiji for magnetite (iron ore) and heavy minerals, copper and gold since 2007. The primary objective of Dome is to discover sufficient minerals to support commercial mine development that will benefit the people of Fiji as well as the Company's investors. Dome is an ASX listed explorer and developer focusing activities on its 100% held projects in Fiji.

The company holds 3 different Special Prospecting Licences. (SPL) issued by the Ministry of Resources and Development.

– Sigatoka heavy mineral sand; – SPL1495 located at the mouth of the Sigatoka River where extensive sand deposits are prospective for magnetite and other non-magnetic heavy minerals.

Over a long period of time the river bed has become choked with sediment, which continues to be deposited after each major rainfall event.

By dredge mining and fresh water washing/processing of this sand-gravel material the contained magnetite and heavy minerals can be recovered and the tailing from this operation will produce a sustainable supply of washed and screened industrial sand and gravel for construction and land reclamation purposes.

On land, prior to mining top soil is removed and preserved and the sand and gravel are put back into mined areas and covered with this top soil to become more productive land for agriculture or to provide level land for development. The sand deposit being explored at Sigatoka excludes the large dunes of the Sand Dunes National Park and any locations where housing has already been constructed.

– Ono Island- SPL1451 is an area prospective for epithermal gold-silver deposits in a volcanic setting. Dome's exploration has shown that the northern part of Ono Island has been subjected to alteration of the rocks that is also found in other volcanic settings and is indicative of hydrothermal fluids that can carry and deposit metals near or at surface.

At Ono, geologists interpret from the geological and geophysical work completed that metal deposition may have taken place at a depth of approximately 150m and deeper below present surface. The Company's geologists are now preparing to drill several holes on Ono to obtain rock samples for analysis to determine if gold and silver are present at concentrations of commercial interest.

– Nadrau- SPL1452 is located north and west of the well-known Namosi porphyry copper deposits. Intrusive rocks of a similar geological age are present on the SPL and Dome has discovered anomalous levels of Copper, gold and other metals in soils that may indicate the presence of copper bearing porphyries hidden beneath the surface. Future exploration will involve geophysical surveys to investigate the intrusive at depth to learn if there are responses that indicate the presence of metals and to provide focus for drilling to obtain laboratory analysis of the concentrations of copper and gold.

Why did you want to set up your business here?

Dome got interested and setup business in Fiji because Fiji is host to a range of world class mineral deposits. Fiji is politically stable and offers a mining friendly operating environment and security of project tenure.

There is an increasing level of capital being invested in the country's metals & mining industry by exploration and mining companies from around the world.

How many employees do you have?

Dome employs 6 full time local staff:

- 1 local accountant
- 2 local geologists
- 1 Country manager/senior geologist
- 1 Community liaison officer/senior geologist
- 1 housekeeper

We also employ and train local people as casual labour during work programs to operate the sonic drill rig, to assist the drill rig operators, to collect core and to assist geologist with logging and sampling of the drill core. From time to time experts in fields related to the exploration program are contracted from offshore to assist and train our young geologists and to help with interpretation and other aspects of their work.

Who is your target market?

A senior marketing manager will look after major export accounts for magnetite (iron ore) and non-magnetic heavy minerals as well as products that can be recovered for Fiji use. Dome is planning on supplying several different markets- the titanomagnetite concentrate steel smelting industry, non-magnetic heavy mineral producers, surplus tailings for local industrial uses, gold to the international markets via quality gold refiners and copper (gold) concentrate to copper smelters and ultimately the copper consumers.

What were some of the challenges you faced while setting up the business in Fiji?

- Heavy rains and tropical cyclones can interrupt field work, particularly in the central mountainous areas on the larger islands
- Dome relies at this stage on support from investors so when there is a downturn in commodity prices on international markets this can make investors hesitate to provide funds for mineral exploration or development.
- Delays in approval for licences or permits can cause concern with investors and interrupt investment
- Liaising with local landowners can be challenging and the Company takes great care to continually explain to local land owners/users the type of work that is proposed, its duration and to settle on appropriate co make the locals to understand about the work. The company has an active community relations plan that concentrates on school and public amenity improvements. This program will be expanded when mining is underway.

What are some of your future plans?

Sigatoka heavy mineral sand SPL1495 plans to progress to a Definitive Feasibility Study(DFS) during 2018 including updates of JORC 2012 resource estimates and Environmental Impact assessment reports including drilling of additional sonic drill holes in prospective areas not previously sampled.

Ono Island - SPL 1451 plans are in place to undertake an exploration drilling program during first half of 2018.

Nadrau- SPL 1452, plans to do further exploration by undertaking Induced Polarization (IP) and ground magnetometer surveys later in 2018.

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