



INDABA PREVIEW

Okapi's second coming

New floats have been hard to get away and at its first attempt, the now-listed Okapi Resources Ltd fell short.

The company, chaired by AVZ Minerals Ltd's Klaus Eckhof with Nigel Ferguson as managing director, succeeded second time around with overwhelming support to find a home on the ASX in October.

"Everything seems to be revitalised in the industry, there is a lot of buzz around the place and juniors seem to be getting a good share of interest at the moment," Ferguson told **Paydirt**.

"We were probably three months ahead of the eight ball when we first tried to do the float. We almost got it across the line and it was only \$250,000 shy. We pulled it, rebadged it as Okapi and that was extremely well received. We were over the moon with the response and were \$600,000 over-subscribed."

Unfortunately some of the top 20 applicants had to be cut back in their original pursuit of shares, but such is the interest, Okapi stock has been picked up on market and at the time of print the company was trading at 31c/share.

"I think it is on the back of management and the gold project in the DRC," Ferguson said of Okapi's popularity.



Nigel Ferguson

According to Ferguson, investor scepticism towards DRC has waned and the potential opportunities in country are starting to be fully realised.

"I think people are becoming more and more aware of what the DRC is and what it can provide you with. Historically, there has been a lot of bad noise coming out of the country, there is still bad noise but not as bad as it used to be," he said.

"The returns for what you put in are just amazing. Moto Gold Mines

– which Klaus had previously – was an absolute stonker and I think there is probably another one or two of those in there. There are some huge, high-grade tin plays going on, while the Chinese have moved on a lot of the copper-gold projects in the DRC."

Okapi's immediate focus is on the brownfields Mambasa gold project, which was chosen because it sits in a similar structural and stratigraphic setting to the 20 moz Geita mine in Tanzania and the 1 moz Makapela and 1.3 moz Adumbi projects in DRC.

The main structure targeted for exploration contains Adumbi along strike and to the north-west.

Okapi's exploration campaign has

started with mapping, sampling of outcrops and soil sampling to define drill targets.

Current artisanal activity and historic production of 1,000kg gold from the area are impressions for Okapi to follow-up on.

"I think Mambasa is going to come on quite nicely and I think we should have some drill targets out of that which we can hit with a man portable diamond rig," Ferguson said.

Alongside Mambasa, Okapi listed with the small, high-grade Crackerjack gold project in Western Australia.

Early indications are that Crackerjack won't amount to a multi-million ounce project, but Ferguson is certain there is potential for 500,000oz gold.

Work is under way to determine if there is enough encouragement to conduct a drilling programme at Crackerjack.

"We have also been approached by a couple of companies who are interested in doing JVs. That area has been left [untouched] for sometime but it is starting to get some good attention now, so there is a bit of a penchant to get up there and get things done," Ferguson said.

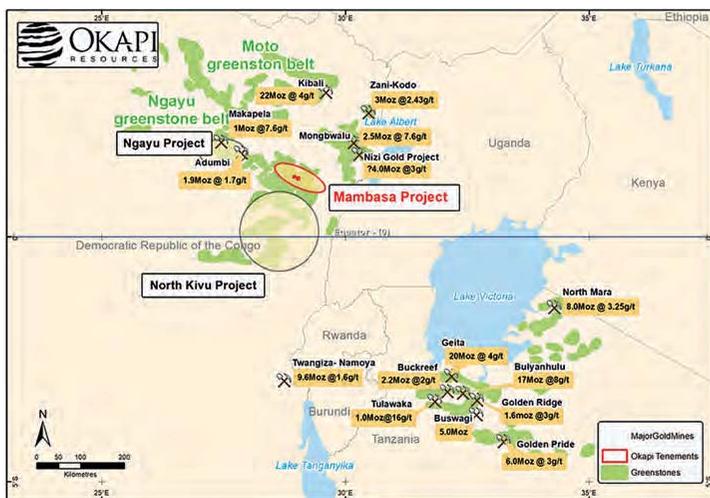
Market conditions in the gold sector are conducive for explorers to get active and Okapi is also looking to expand its portfolio in both jurisdiction and commodity.

Opportunities in Africa are enticing for Okapi, while gold and lithium plays are front of mind.

"Commodity-wise, nothing is being left out because lithium is the here and now – and I think there is going to be another two to four years of that – but we see there is still a lot of noise here on the gold," Ferguson said. "And, I think copper is going to make a good comeback, so we think copper and cobalt are the perfect mix.

"Africa is where we'll look. We might be tempted elsewhere if there is a sizeable project available or I can see value in it. I think there is scope for a couple of things in WA and there are things we are looking at which might be of interest. Then, there is the DRC which is of interest and we are just starting to crank up there."

– Mark Andrews



Mambasa is a brownfields project favoured for its position in similar structural and stratigraphic settings as Geita