

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1st QUARTER 2023
MINE REHABILITATION FUND COMMITTEE MEETING
Berong Nickel Corporation
(MPSA No. 235 – 2007 – IVB)

Hybrid: MGB MIMAROPA Region Conference Room and Zoom
15 March 2023 | 9:00 am

ATTENDANCE:

MRFC Members:

1. Engr. Glenn Marcelo C. Noble	Chairperson and OIC - Regional Director MGB MIMAROPA Region
2. Ms. Bibiana Lyn T. Aguha	Representing Dir. Lormelyn E. Claudio, CESO IV Co-Chairperson and Regional Exec. Director DENR MIMAROPA Region
3. Ms. Swin R. Tanduyan	Representing Mr. Joe Amil M. Salino Regional Director, EMB MIMAROPA Region
4. Ms. Rhoda B. Roque	Representing Atty. Teodoro Jose S. Matta Executive Director, PCSDS
5. Atty. Noel E. Aquino	Representing Hon. Victorino Dennis M. Socrates Provincial Governor, LGU – Palawan
6. Ms. Loreto L. Cagatulla (via Zoom)	Program Manager, Palawan NGO Network, Inc. (PNNI)
7. Fr. Jasper A. Tabangay	Social Action Director, Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa City (AVPP)
8. Engr. Deo V. Gachalian	Compliance and Permitting Manager, Berong Nickel Corp. (BNC)

Not Present

1. Ms. Marie Grace T. Pascua	Regional Director, NCIP MIMAROPA
2. Hon. Joselito O. Ayala	Mayor, Municipality of Quezon, Palawan

Guests and Participants:

1. Engr. Marc Raymund L. Zamora	Resident Mine Manager, BNC
2. Engr. Julie Ann A. Perez	Mine Engineer, BNC
3. Mr. Jay Pee R. Dela Cruz	MEPEO, BNC
4. Atty. Anne Marie L. Corominas	Community Programs and Chief Impact Officer, PNNI

MMT Members:

1. Engr. Al Janry S. Tuazon	Sr. Sci. Research Specialist, MGB MIMAROPA
2. Ms. Zosima D. Jampit	Sr. Envi. Mgt. Specialist, EMB MIMAROPA

Secretariat (MGB MIMAROPA):

1. Engr. Alvin S. Requimin	Division Chief, MSESDD, MGB MIMAROPA
2. Engr. Hanna Lee B. Arriesgado	Supv. Sci. Res. Specialist, MGB MIMAROPA
3. Engr. Venus V. Jesoro	Sr. Envi. Mgt. Specialist, MGB MIMAROPA

52 **I. PRELIMINARIES**

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54 Engr. Glenn Marcelo C. Noble, MGB MIMAROPA Regional Director and MRFC
55 Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m. upon confirmation of a
56 quorum (7 out of 10) by the secretariat.
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59 **II. MEETING PROPER**

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61 **A. Approval of the Provisional Agenda**

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63 The Chairperson requested the committee members to peruse the Provisional
64 Agenda for the 1st Quarter 2023 MRFC meeting, for any comments and/or
65 additional issues/concerns/topics for inclusion in the agenda.
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67 Ms. Loreto L. Cagatulla (PNNI) requested that an update on BNC's Dangla
68 Range and Longpoint Projects be included in the "Other Matters" for
69 discussion.
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71 Without objections to the additional matter raised, the provisional agenda was
72 approved and adopted for the 1st Quarter 2023 MRFC.
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74 **B. Review and approval of the Draft Minutes of the 4th Quarter 2022 MRFC meeting**
75 **held on 14 December 2022**

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77 The Chairperson requested the committee for comments on the draft minutes
78 of the 4th Quarter 2022 MRFC meeting for BNC.
79

80 With a few minor corrections/clarifications, the minutes for the 4th Quarter 2022
81 MRFC meeting for BNC was approved.
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83 **C. Matrix of Issues and Concerns and Matters Arising from the 4th Quarter MRFC**
84 **Minutes of the Meeting**

85
86 **1. BNC's Final Mine Rehabilitation and Decommissioning Fund (FMRDF)**

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88
 - Engr. Deo V. Gachalian (BNC) confirmed that Landbank's annual fee
89 for maintaining a trust account is 1% of the total amount and
90 approximates 1 million pesos annually in the case of BNC. The
91 Chairperson remarked that this amount would rather be spent on the
92 ground than be paid as fees. He added that he will raise the matter
93 during the management conference.
94

95 **2. MRFC Documents**

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 - The Chairperson instructed the secretariat to provide the members with
98 the google drive link for the documents within the day.
99

100 **3. Certificate of Commendation**

- For review of RED Claudio as this is her proposal. To be signed next MRFC Meeting.

D. Technical Reports

1. Presentation of Highlights of the 4Q2022 MMT Validation

Engr. Al Janry S. Tuazon (MGB MIMAROPA) presented the findings and recommendations for Berong Nickel Corporation (BNC) during the 4th quarter 2022 MMT monitoring.

- On the number of days of monitoring, Engr. Alvin S. Requimin (MGB MIMAROPA) asked the difference between 4-day (2nd & 4th quarters) and 3-day (1st and 3rd quarters) monitoring. Engr. Tuazon replied that the EMB MIMAROPA does its semi-annual validation on the 2nd and 4th quarters simultaneous with the MMT activities and that an extra day will be needed for their report writing.

2. Presentation of highlights of the 1st Quarter 2023 Water, Air and Noise Monitoring and Sampling

The MMT sampling group, represented by Ms. Zosima D. Jampit (EMB MIMAROPA) presented the highlights of the 1st Quarter 2023 Water, Air and Noise Monitoring and Sampling.

- Regarding the groundwater's lead and cadmium level, Ms. Cagatulla is wary that the levels of these heavy metals are already at the maximum range. She inquired if the groundwater being tested are being used by the public/residents of the community. Ms. Jampit said that the well is not being used and that there are also signages that warn people against its consumption.
- In presenting the lead and cadmium results, the Chairperson asked Ms. Jampit to check the way the graph is being presented, especially if the results are below the instrument's detection limit.

3. Presentation of compliance with the 4Q2022 MMT's field findings and recommendations and presentation of physical and financial accomplishments, including updating and established Funds.

Mr. Jay Pee R. Dela Cruz (BNC) presented the company's FMR/DP Implementation, compliance with the 4Q2022 MMT findings and recommendations, and other accomplishments.

- On the implementation of forest fire prevention measures, Fr. Jasper A. Tabangay observed that the view deck in area 3 is surrounded by Agoho tree. He added that utilizing the said deck would be a challenge once the trees grow taller. He asked how the view deck will be used in that case. Mr. Dela Cruz replied that the company is planning to put railings on the roof to elevate the view deck and that the company is also looking for other areas which could potentially serve as view deck.

- The Chairperson raised a concern on the annual target on land preparation, wherein the annual target is 34 has. yet the accomplishment is 20has. He asked the company if it is possible to accomplish the remaining 14 hectares and the target number of seedlings to be planted by the end of June, to which the company answered in the affirmative.
- Ms. Rhoda B. Roque (PCSDS) requested clarification regarding the timeline for the targets of the FMRDP. The company clarified that they are completing the 6-year FMRDP within a compressed 2-year period.
- The Chairperson asked for a revised plan indicating the compressed timeline and targets of the company. Engr. Gachalian said that the company will submit the said document.
- Ms. Roque added a query regarding the maintenance activities and timeline. The company replied that the 2-year period is provided for rehabilitation while the remaining 4 years of the 6-year FMRDP is for its maintenance until its ready to be turned-over to the community.

E. Presentation of recent drone shots/videos of rehabilitation areas

Included in Item D.3 during the company's presentation.

F. Other Matters

1. Update on the Expansion of BNC - Dangla Range and Longpoint

The Chairperson asked the company for an update on the matter as raised by Ms. Cagatulla of PNNI.

- Engr. Gachalian said that they only have an authority to verify for the Dangla and Longpoint projects and they are not applying for an expansion.
- The Chairperson asked for the plan of the company on their current operation, and if the company is planning to include Dangla Range and Longpoint as an extension of the mining operations of BNC.
- Engr. Gachalian replied that the Dangla Range and Longpoint projects are still under exploration and does not yet have an approved feasibility study and exploration report.
- Ms. Cagatulla said that they have been getting reports of ongoing exploration on the said locations. She inquired if the company has the necessary permits from PCSDS and EMB MIMAROPA. The company said that they do have an SEP Clearance from PCSDS for the Authority to Verify Minerals. As to the ECC, Engr. Gachalian said that they will apply

for the same if they will be proceeding with the development and production stage. A copy of the SEP Clearance was provided to the secretariat in response to Ms. Cagatulla's request for a copy of the same.

- Ms. Cagatulla expressed a number of concerns about the exploration activities in the mentioned areas, citing the presence of vulnerable species. She informed the group that the PNNI had already sent a letter to the PCSDS regarding this matter in 2021. The Chairperson requested the PCSDS to note Ms. Cagatulla's statement and respond to the aforementioned letter from the PNNI.

III. ADJOURNMENT

All matters properly discussed and there being no other issue/concern for deliberation, the meeting was adjourned at 12:32 pm on the motion of Atty. Aquino.

Attesting to the correctness of the foregoing:

LADY MENDELYN J. CATALUÑA/AL JANRY S. TUAZON

Secretariat

MRFC/MGB MIMAROPA

Approved by:

GLENN MARCELO C. NOBLE

Regional Director, and

Chairperson, MRFC for BNC