

Today Västerbotten, Tomorrow the World?

The business idea of Botnia Exploration is to be a pure exploration company without any ambitions to start mining. But is that really so? What's hidden behind the corner?

Mining & Minerals 2009: "We've always given priorities to gold and we always will. Several of our high priority projects are located in the Gold Line in Västerbotten. But one thing should never exclude another."

Strong, almost aggressive words from a junior exploration company. But then Bengt Ljung himself, CEO and founder of Botnia Exploration, is everything but a junior.

"I'm way past my retirement. But my mind and heart is forever set on mining."

And for sure Bengt Ljung is committed to the industry holding several heavy board assignments. Like for example chairman in NCA – a company in charge of all blasting and vibration control procedures within the huge railway project Citybanan in Stockholm, and The Swedish Mining & Tunnelling Group (SMTG), which supply technology and equipment for mining and underground operations. Or Member of the Board in Wassara AB – a wholly owned subsidiary to LKAB, and Bergteamet AB – one of the most complete suppliers of underground mining services in Europe. But it is Botnia Exploration, a refined project management company for precious and base metals in Sweden and Scandinavia, Bengt is most passionate about.

"I founded Botnia 2007. Today we currently hold

around 40 approved exploration projects in Sweden, including the ten projects we acquired from Hansa Resources. Many of these projects are considered as high priority projects, but it is our "dark horses" – our tungsten and nickel projects, that has created some heavy international interest for the moment..."

Sounds like a lot of high priorities to me?

"We should not forget the most recent one; our purchase of Hansa Resources AB," Bengt says and smiles before he enthusiastically continues:

"The takeover of the Hansa-projects provides our project portfolio with a very high level of geological interesting opportunities and our ambition is to work intensively with the exploration and drilling work to enable the upgrading of a number of projects to higher levels and phases. This means that we are clearly approaching the commercialization of our high priority projects and already advanced our positions with approximately 4-5 years."

"This is of such importance that we've produced a presentation available at our website as a first step in our long-term plan to increase awareness about the increased company values and development. And we intend to follow this up with additional videos and presentations around the country."

Business Development

One project from the takeover is an old Lundin Mining-project (NAN) called Vargbäcken. Vargbäcken is located in the Vindelgransele region, an area with great potential.

In Botnia Exploration's long term plan for the area, local concentration and mineral processing from all the current deposits are included. Estimated ore tonnages is 3 million tonnes gold mineralization, located within the Vindelgransele area, within a radius of five kilometres from each other and within the exploration permit of Botnia Exploration.

This April Bengt and Chief Geologist Göran Petterson held an information meeting with the residents in the Vindelgransele region regarding the intended test mining in Vargbäcken.

"We handed out the background data for the consultation process, which has been submitted to the County Administrative Board in Umeå. The meeting was an important part of the coming work for Botnia Exploration, since good cooperation with the local parties in the area makes it easier and significantly shortens the time until mining can start," Bengt confirms.

The meeting will be followed by a consultation meeting with the County Administrative Board in



According to Bengt the coming mining in the area of Vindelgransele may result in an upswing for the entire district and could even be seen as the future for the municipality; putting an end to the out migration.



Bengt founded the company Botnia Exploration in 2007, of which he is still the CEO.



Umeå after which Botnia Exploration intend to call all stakeholders to a formal consultation meeting in May or June before the final application for environmental permit is submitted.

"At approval, we expect that test mining can be started immediately. With the current gold prices and dollar rates the intended test mining will result in a financial surplus which will be used for further development of Vargbäcken and the nearby projects of the company; Middagsberget and Stenberget."

In addition to the gold deposits in Vargbäcken, Middagsberget and Stenberget, Botnia Exploration also owns the sulphide ore project Granlunda located next to Vargbäcken. From a tonnage point of view the deposit is small, but strategically well adapted for the project portfolio and well suited for small scale mining.

"We believe that the coming mining in the area of Vindelgränsele may result in an upswing for the entire district and could even be seen as the future for the municipality; putting an end to the out migration."

M for Metal, M as in Money

As late as October the tungsten project in Hälsingland was considered a "dark horse". But time flies and things change; today Bengt is more than positive to the former outsider.

"I think this is really exciting! And now with

Professor Olle Grönder – an internationally leading expert in tungsten in our team, I see a large opportunity to quickly fulfil our ambition to commercialize our product portfolio related to tungsten."

Almost 70 % of all tungsten is used for production of hard metal which is used for cutting processing, mining and exploration. Components of hard metal are also used in different types of wearing applications, such as studs in tyres and steel rolls. Tungsten is also an important alloy additive for tool steel and high speed steel, used for cutting and shaping tools. In addition to that, tungsten is an efficient conductor of electricity and heat. In pure form, the metal is used as filament in for example light bulbs and electron tubes.

"Metals, both base and precious, have had superior returns as investments lately. This means that when analyzing and forecasting the price of metal it's no longer enough to get industrial demand, mining supply and stocks right. Investment demand is also increasingly important, and this means good business."

So what's next?

"Without saying too much, we're negotiating with one of the world's largest mining company regarding a Swedish nickel project. Currently there is no nickel mining in Sweden. And this could be really, really big," smiles Bengt.

To be continued as they say.

Do you want to learn more about Botnia Exploration?

Botnia Exploration is an exploration company focused on precious and base metals in the Nordic countries, aiming at the early phases of development of ore deposits. Botnia was founded 2007. During the end of 2009 the company shares was traded at the MTF Aktietorget in Stockholm.

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