

Mining Elites 2020 recap: Excellence in Battery Metals

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EXCELLENCE IN BATTERY METALS: Alphamin Resources

Alphamin Resources should have a bumper 2020 year on the back of successful commissioning at its Bisie tin mine in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2019.

Alphamin started construction of its Bisie mine in 2017 which once at steady-state production will deliver an average of 9 642 tpa of tin in a +60% concentrate.

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Over its 12-year lifespan, Bisie is expected to produce 152 300 t of high grade tin. The project has a payback

period of less than two years and Alphamin estimates it will be in the lowest cost quartile of all tin producers.

Initially, Alphamin plans to mine the Mpama North ore body and then used revenue generated to start operations at Mpama South, extend Mpama North at depth, and will eventually look to explore further for additional tin resources within its licence area.

The company was able to export the concentrate it processed during the commissioning process all the way to its offtake partner Gerald Metals in Kampala; this is a positive sign as it is the last link in the chain in terms of derisking the project.

Interestingly, Alphamin had to deal with the ‘somewhat welcome challenge’ of keeping the plant feed grade down.

While miners were anxious to provide ore with grades (up to 10% Sn, it would have flooded the plant. A gravity concentrate plant doesn’t like you to throw too much of the material it is to recover at it in bursts. Fortunately the company has been able to balance this and has created a concentrate grade that is almost perfect.

In addition to helping meet global demands for tin, Bisie is also viewed as a catalyst to revive a region that has been affected by conflict and resulted in mining operations that never delivered benefits for the many communities in the region.

The company has committed itself to producing responsibly produced tin, thereby reducing minerals from conflict-affected regions entering the supply chain.

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