

AURUM

GLOBAL EXPLORATION

AURUM GEOLOGISTS IDENTIFY NEW URANIUM PLAY IN MAURITANIA

PROJECT BRIEF

A group of private investors, familiar with the petroleum industry in Mauritania, were seeking to expand their business on-shore. Recent favourable changes in the country's Mining Law led the company to enlist Aurum Exploration Services to review the mineral potential of Mauritania and to identify any key commodities for future mining.

CHALLENGES

Mauritania is an arid, West African country. The range of challenges included its geological and topographic features; logistics; and a newly-introduced, sixteen-point mineral exploration permitting process.

SOLUTION

Aurum Exploration Services put together a three-person geological team, led by Dr Sandy Archibald, which travelled to Mauritania to oversee the project.

Preliminary Research

- The team visited the Mauritanian Geological Survey to gain as much background information on the geology of the country as possible
- It made contact with the Mining Department in order to fully understand the processes required to acquire mineral exploration and mining permits, and to review the mining law to determine how favourable the country is for foreign companies
- Team members also consulted with the Cadastral department (the mineral licensing board) in order to identify areas of the country that were currently under licence by other mining companies, and for which specific commodities

Discovery

- After collating the preliminary information, the team began processing the data using GIS software. This enables Aurum to assess the facts across layers such as topography, geology, mineral occurrences, geophysics, radiometrics and satellite imagery. The team was able to identify the specific areas of the crust that were more favourable for various commodities.
- The team determined there was good potential for gold, copper and uranium in several areas. The best potential for uranium was determined to be in the north of the country and, based on this information, the team made eight licence applications on behalf of Mauritania Ventures Limited (MVL; at this point a 50:50 joint venture between the private investors and AIM-listed exploration company)

Exploration

- Using the data collected during the preliminary targeting stages, the field team ventured into the Sahara Desert to follow up on the best targets
- In an eight week period Aurum's geologists used a combination of airborne radiometric spectrometry data, sampling and mapping to verify their initial findings
- By targeting airborne gamma ray anomalies of only nine counts per second (CPS), further excavation of pits and trenches produced results up to 22,000 CPS and the visible presence of uranium mineralization. Subsequent geochemical analysis showed that the mineralization contained up to 0.29% U₃O₈.
- Aurum presented this result to the client, who subsequently asked the team to undertake further exploration in additional areas. The company's geologists returned to the field and defined more uranium mineralized zones.

RESULTS

Using carefully gathered data, innovative thinking and expert field exploration, Aurum Exploration Services was able to discover uranium mineralization in an area of Mauritania that had not previously been investigated – and to do so quickly, accurately and effectively.



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