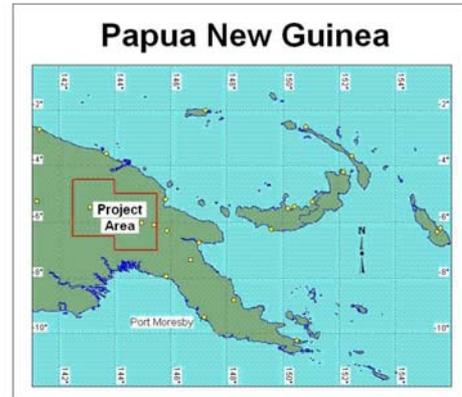




Mapping the mineral prospectivity of the PNG Highlands

The mining industry contributes significantly to the economic wealth of Papua New Guinea, yet the country is still considered to be under explored and highly prospective for the discovery of new mineral deposits (in particular gold and other precious metals and base metals). Unfortunately an overall decline in exploration activity over the last ten years is now causing concern for the long-term future of the industry. One way to reverse this trend is by creating and releasing attractive multidisciplinary geological information that will encourage mining investors by reducing their exploration costs and risks. The European Development Fund, under its SYSMIN funding arrangement, is proposing to remedy the situation by financing several large projects under a Mining Sector Support Programme (MSSP). This includes a systematic geological and geochemical mapping programme over the PNG Highlands covering an area of about 72 000 km². The BGS in partnership with Deutsche Montan Technologie (DMT) and the South African Council for Geoscience (CGS) was awarded the contract to undertake this work in December 2005. The project has an overall budget of €3.8 million and will take five years to complete, starting in April 2006.



The principal outputs and activities will include:

- Production of 24 geological maps at 1:100k scale (digital and printed)
- Production of 24 geochemical maps at 1:100k scale (digital)
- Production of 24 mineralogical maps at 1:100k scale (digital)
- Production of three 1:250k metallogenic maps (digital) highlighting prospective areas
- Training of PNG geologists, through on the job field training and in specific thematic skills to produce a national cadre of some 20 geologists trained in multi-thematic mapping
- Assist with setting up and implementing co-operation agreements with European academic institutions
- Improve the standard tools and equipment for the PNG Geological Survey, including setting up a thin-section laboratory with capability for separating heavy minerals, and improved curation of rock storage.

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(Project title and duration: *Geological mapping and mineral potential assessment of the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, 2006–11*)