

Nickel 28 Releases Ramu Q4 and Full Year 2022 Operating Performance

written by Raj Shah | February 27, 2023

February 27, 2023 ([Source](#)) – Nickel 28 Capital Corp. (“**Nickel 28**” or the “**Company**”) (TSXV: **NKL**) (FSE: **3JC0**) is pleased to provide an update on the strong operational results for the quarter ending December 31, 2022 and for the full year of 2022 for the Company’s largest asset, being its interest in the Ramu Nickel-Cobalt (“**Ramu**”) integrated operation in Papua New Guinea. Nickel 28 currently holds an 8.56% joint-venture interest in Ramu which is operated by Metallurgical Corporation of China.

Full Year and Q4 2022 Ramu Highlights:

- Ramu Q4 2022 nickel production of 8,480 tonnes, representing a 33% increase from the same period last year and full year production of 34,302 tonnes of contained nickel in Mixed Hydroxide Precipitate (“**MHP**”), which was a 9% increase from 2021 and represented 105% of nameplate capacity.
- Ramu Q4 2022 cobalt production of 702 tonnes, representing a 21% increase from the same period last year and full year production of 2,987 tonnes of contained cobalt in MHP, essentially flat from 2021.
- Ramu Q4 2022 nickel sales of 13,613 tonnes and full year sales of 37,250 tonnes of contained nickel.
- Ramu Q4 2022 cobalt sales of 1,150 tonnes and full year sales of 3,289 tonnes of contained cobalt.
- LME average nickel price of US\$11.47/lb. in Q4 2022, representing a 28% increase from the same period last

year. The full year LME nickel price averaged US\$11.61/lb., an improvement of 38% over the 2021 average of US\$8.39/lb.

- Fast Markets average cobalt price of US\$23.00/lb. in Q4 2022, representing a 23% decrease from the same period last year. Full year cobalt prices averaged US\$30.08/lb. compared to US\$24.34/lb. for 2021 representing an increase of 26%.
- Full year 2022 cash costs were US\$3.37/lb. of nickel produced, net of byproduct credits, in MHP which consistently ranks as one of the lowest cash costs for an integrated High Pressure Acid Leach operation.

“2022 was a rebound year as the world emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic and markets began to return to normal consumption patterns,” stated Nickel 28’s Chairman, Anthony Milewski. “In comparison to the year prior, Ramu’s operational performance improved significantly as reflected by both production numbers being up substantially and sales also rebounding. Cash costs were up in 2022 reflecting the impact of higher input costs; however, in Q4 of 2022 we started to see an easing of prices on these input costs. These lower input costs combined with continued improvements in operational performance have us confident that shareholders can expect to see an even stronger year in 2023. Additionally, we’ve been getting a lot of inquiries into what sales terms Ramu is able to achieve in terms of nickel and cobalt payability. Although this is considered commercially sensitive information, I can state that Ramu consistently attains the higher end of reported payabilities of Ni and Co as reported by companies such as Benchmark, S&P Platts and Fast Markets. Ramu’s product is of higher quality than some of the MHP being produced and our customers appreciate the consistent quality and regular supply which enables us to maximize value for the product,” continued Mr. Milewski.

To that end and given the significant improvement in sales in 2022, management expects to be in a position to update shareholders on positive news regarding Nickel 28's joint venture debt position in the coming months as the Company edges closer to being debt free and realizing increased free cash flow, which will be made available to shareholders in accordance with our announcement on January 30, 2023.

Ramu's unaudited operating performance for the period is presented below (along with comparison to prior years).

	2021	2022		
	Q4	Full Year	Q4	Full Year
Ore Processed (dry kt)	670	3,375	838	3,488
MHP Produced (dry tonne)	16,287	81,577	20,933	85,538
Contained Nickel (tonne)	6,368	31,594	8,480	34,302
Contained Cobalt (tonne)	579	2,953	702	2,987
Nickel Capacity Utilization (% of design ¹)	78%	97%	104%	105%
MHP Shipped (dry tonne)	12,994	84,107	32,987	93,330
Contained Nickel (tonne)	4,987	32,793	13,613	37,250
Contained Cobalt (tonne)	478	3,035	1,150	3,289

Cash Cost Actual ⁽²⁾	\$ 2.35	\$ 2.06	\$ 4.61	\$ 3.37
<i>Note (1)</i>	<i>Ramu design capacity of 32,600 tonne/year contained Ni</i>			
<i>Note (2)</i>	<i>Actual Cash Cost net of byproduct credit</i>			
A.	<p>The foregoing production figures have not been audited and are subject to change. As the Company has not yet finished its fiscal year-end annual close procedures and the annual audit of its financial statements for the period ended January 31, 2023 is not complete, the estimated financial information presented in this press release is preliminary, subject to final fiscal year-end closing adjustments, and may change materially. The information presented above has not been audited by the Company's auditor, should not be considered a substitute for audited financial statements, and should not be regarded as a representation by the Company as to the actual financial results.</p>			

Attention Nickel 28 Shareholders

Shareholders interested in Nickel 28's strategy or otherwise wishing to engage with senior management are reminded that Nickel 28 is participating in the BMO Global Metals, Mining & Critical Minerals Conference in Hollywood, Florida, USA from February 26 – March 1, 2023, and shareholders or potential investors can register for a meeting through BMO's booking system or by calling your BMO representative. Nickel 28 will

also be participating in the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) conference in Toronto, Ontario, Canada from March 5 – 8, 2023 and shareholders or potential investors interested in meeting with the Nickel 28 team can contact senior management at info@nickel28.com. Shareholders and potential investors may also sign-up any time for email updates at www.nickel28.com/contact/contact-details/

About Mixed Hydroxide Precipitate

The Ramu High Pressure Acid Leach (“HPAL”) operation in Papua New Guinea is one of a handful of nickel operations that produces MHP product and one of only two that has been commissioned in the last 20 years that consistently exceeds design capacity. Ramu MHP contains approximately 40% nickel, 4% Co on a 60% wet basis (the balance being moisture), making it a high value nickel intermediate product that can be converted to a multitude of finished products. MHP is currently the most coveted feedstock in the manufacturing of nickel sulphate and cobalt sulphate products for the lithium-ion battery industry.

About Nickel 28

Nickel 28 Capital Corp. is a nickel-cobalt producer through its 8.56% joint-venture interest in the producing, long-life and world-class Ramu Nickel-Cobalt Operation located in Papua New Guinea. Ramu provides Nickel 28 with significant attributable nickel and cobalt production thereby offering our shareholders direct exposure to two metals which are critical to the adoption of electric vehicles. In addition, Nickel 28 manages a portfolio of 13 nickel and cobalt royalties on development and exploration projects in Canada, Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This news release contains certain information which constitutes

'forward-looking statements' and 'forward-looking information' within the meaning of applicable Canadian securities laws. Any statements that are contained in this news release that are not statements of historical fact may be deemed to be forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are often identified by terms such as "may", "should", "anticipate", "expect", "potential", "believe", "intend" or the negative of these terms and similar expressions. Forward-looking statements in this news release include, but are not limited to: statements and figures with respect to the operational and financial results of the Ramu project; statements related to the repayment of the Company's Ramu operating debt (including the timing thereof) and the timing of repayments and payments under the Ramu Nickel project joint venture agreement by the operator; statements related to the Company's future use of excess cash flow from the Ramu Nickel project (and the receipt and timing thereof); statements related to the production impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; and statements with respect to the business and assets of the Company and its strategy going forward. Readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties, most of which are beyond the Company's control. Should one or more of the risks or uncertainties underlying these forward-looking statements materialize, or should assumptions underlying the forward-looking statements prove incorrect, actual results, performance or achievements could vary materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements.

This news release also contains references to estimates of mineral reserves and mineral resources. The estimation of mineral reserves and mineral resources is inherently uncertain and involves subjective judgments about many relevant factors. Mineral resources that are not mineral reserves do not have

demonstrated economic viability. The accuracy of any such estimates is a function of the quantity and quality of available data, and of the assumptions made and judgments used in engineering and geological interpretation, which may prove to be unreliable and depend, to a certain extent, upon the analysis of drilling results and statistical inferences that may ultimately prove to be inaccurate. Mineral reserve and mineral resource estimates may have to be re-estimated based on, among other things: (i) fluctuations in nickel, cobalt or other mineral prices; (ii) results of drilling; (iii) results of metallurgical testing and other studies; (iv) changes to proposed mining operations, including dilution; (v) the evaluation of mine plans subsequent to the date of any estimates; and (vi) the possible failure to receive or maintain required permits, approvals and licences.

The forward-looking statements contained herein are made as of the date of this release and, other than as required by applicable securities laws, the Company does not assume any obligation to update or revise them to reflect new events or circumstances. The forward-looking statements contained in this release are expressly qualified by this cautionary statement.

Neither the TSX Venture Exchange nor its Regulation Services Provider (as that term is defined in the policies of the TSX Venture Exchange) accepts responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this release. No securities regulatory authority has either approved or disapproved of the contents of this news release.

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