



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **XSTRATA COPPER TO CONDUCT SEPIK RIVER SURVEY**

Brisbane, 5 November 2008

Xstrata Copper will conduct a survey into the aquatic life and water quality of the Sepik River Catchment area in Papua New Guinea, as part of its evaluation of the Frieda River Copper-Gold project.

This study will commence this month and provide important environmental baseline data information about water-based life in the Sepik River Catchment following the introduction of non-native fish species as part of a stocking program in the early 1990s.

The work will be conducted in partnership with Australian environmental consulting company Hydrobiology, the National Fisheries Authority, the Department of Environment and Conservation and local communities along the Sepik River.

Frieda River Project General Manager, Dugi Wilson, said the surveys would provide information on the biological condition of the Sepik River catchment, including details about the habitats, fish, small aquatic animals and water and sediment quality in the Sepik River catchment.

"They will also provide valuable information about the success of the fish stocking program in the early 1990s and the health of fish populations and the river system," Mr Wilson said.

The surveys will be conducted in two stages. The first stage includes the Leonard Schultz River catchment, Sepik River mainstream and off-river water bodies in November and December. The second stage includes the Upper Sepik River, May River and Frieda River in January 2009.

"This information will enable us to develop a detailed understanding of the environmental conditions in the project area which will help us to plan more effectively," Mr Wilson said.

"Xstrata Copper is very conscious of the negative impact some past mining practices have had on the environment and communities in Papua New Guinea, and given this legacy, we take our environmental responsibilities especially seriously and believe operating to the highest international standards is essential to our long-term success," he said.

"Xstrata is becoming recognised as one of the world's most responsible mining companies, despite our relatively short history.

"Our commitment to sustainable development is fundamental to the way we operate our businesses globally, and we are proud to bring this philosophy and corporate culture to the Frieda River project."

**ENDS**

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**About the Frieda River Project**

The Frieda River copper-gold project is located near the border of the Sandaun and East Sepik Provinces of north-western Papua New Guinea. Xstrata Copper holds approximately 75% interest in the project and Highlands Pacific and OMRD the remaining 25%. Xstrata Copper is the project operator.

For more information about the Frieda River Project, or the Sepik River Survey please contact Michael Hawkins Tel 675 320 1276 or visit

[http://www.xstrata.com/assets/pdf/xcu\\_sustainability\\_2007\\_friedariver.en.pdf](http://www.xstrata.com/assets/pdf/xcu_sustainability_2007_friedariver.en.pdf)

**About Xstrata Copper**

Headquartered in Brisbane, Xstrata Copper is one of the commodity business units within the major global diversified mining group Xstrata plc. Its operations and projects span eight countries: Australia, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Canada, the USA, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea. Its operations are administered by five separate divisions, based close to the mining operations, namely the North Queensland, Minera Alumbrera, North Chile, Southern Peru and Canada divisions. It also has a recycling business (Xstrata Recycling) with plants in the United States and offices in Canada and Asia.

Xstrata Copper is the fourth largest global copper producer with annual attributable production capacity of over one million tonnes. Its world-class portfolio of six copper development projects provides the potential to double annual production through organic growth.

**About Xstrata plc**

Xstrata is a global diversified mining group, listed on the London and Swiss Stock Exchanges, with its headquarters in Zug, Switzerland. Xstrata's businesses maintain a meaningful position in seven major international commodity markets: copper, coking coal, thermal coal, ferrochrome, nickel, vanadium and zinc, with additional exposures to platinum group metals, gold, cobalt, lead and silver, recycling facilities and a suite of global technology products, many of which are industry leaders. The Group's operations and projects span 18 countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Germany, New Caledonia, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Tanzania, the USA and the UK. Xstrata employs approximately 56,000 people, including contractors.