



MEDIA RELEASE

IAN MACFARLANE

Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources

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QUEENSLAND NICKEL PROJECT EARMARKED AS NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECT

The Gladstone Pacific Nickel Project, which could boost Australia's nickel exports by \$750 million per year, has today been awarded Major Project Facilitation status by the Australian Government.

Australian Industry Minister, Ian Macfarlane, today announced the new status in recognition of the project's national significance. The first stage is estimated to deliver \$1.5 billion worth of investment to the country and create 400 long term jobs.

"This project will make a significant contribution to national economic growth and regional job opportunities, but it will also offer Australia the chance to lead the way on a technological and mineral processing front," said Mr Macfarlane.

"Part of the project is to build a processing plant in Gladstone which will comprise a modern, 'fourth generation' high pressure acid leaching process plant and refinery. The introduction of this technology places Australia well in the global nickel market."

"The construction of a nickel ore mine and a beneficiation plant at Marlborough will also generate a significant number of regional jobs. 1300 positions are expected to be created at the peak of project construction with 400 permanent jobs to follow."

"Overall the project will meet some of the anticipated global short fall in future nickel supply and present the Australian industry with an opportunity to push Australia to the forefront of this type of processing technology," said Mr Macfarlane.

Gladstone Pacific Nickel will also implement world best practice to minimise pollution and environmental impacts of the project, including consideration of a 175 kilometre pipeline for transport of slurry to the process plant at Gladstone.

"Having achieved Major Project Facilitation (MPF) status, the Gladstone Pacific project will be assisted by the Australian Government's national inward investment agency, *Invest Australia*, with necessary government approvals at all levels."

"*Invest Australia* will work with the proponents to gain all necessary government, environmental and community approvals as well as identify relevant government programs that may assist the project," said Mr Macfarlane.

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