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Production report 1Q12 - Dealing with seasonality

Vale had a good operational performance in 1Q12, despite the challenges posed by severe weather conditions. The summer season in the Southern Hemisphere was extremely rainy, hitting Brazilian mining districts such as the Iron Quadrangle in the southeast and Carajás in the north of the country, where our iron ore operations are concentrated.

We continued to ramp-up a group of new operations diversified by business – bulk materials, base metals and fertilizers – and by geography – South America, the Middle East and Africa – which includes Moatize, Oman, Tres Valles, Onça Puma and Bayóvar, new platforms of value creation.

For instance, Moatize, a world-class asset, produced 501,000 t of high quality hard coking coal and 193,000 t of thermal coal in 1Q12.

The ramping up of these operations was instrumental in reaching quarterly record output levels for pellets, metallurgical coal and phosphate rock.

The tests conducted at VNC through integrated refinery operations were successful and we were able to produce 1,100 t of nickel oxide. An important by-product was the knowledge provided by this experience, which will be very useful to further improve the production process.

Despite the risks ahead of us, the production of nickel oxide at VNC is a major achievement, to the extent that it is an important step towards the operation of a large nickel limonite lateritic project for the first time in the industry.

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More information



Mônica Ferreira

monica.ferreira@vale.com

Rio de Janeiro

+55 (21) 3845-3636

Fatima Cristina

fatima.cristina@vale.com

Rio de Janeiro

+55 (21) 3485-3621