# Sulphuric Acid from Mine Waste

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Critical Minerals Trailblazer Showcase Townsville, Sept 2024

**ASX: COB** 



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# Strategic Priorities

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Global

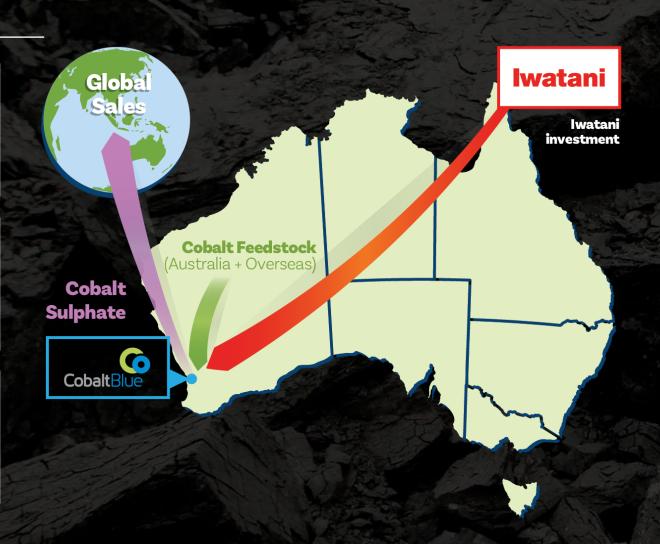
Unlocking Value and Positive Impact from Mine Waste

Cobalt-Nickel
Refinery

Kwinana, WA
Metal Processing
for the Battery
Supply Chain

Broken Hill Cobalt Project

Broken Hill, NSW Responsibly Sourced Cobalt

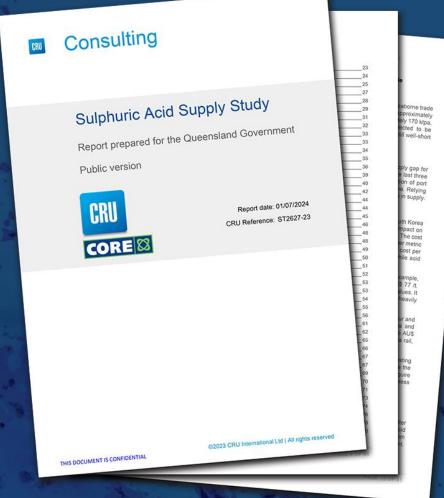




# Sulphuric Acid in NW Qld

- Mt Isa Copper smelter closing ~2030
- Smelter supplies sulphur gas to Incitec Pivot acid plant
- Sulphuric acid required by
  - IPL's Phosphate Hill operation
  - Cu heap leach operations
  - Julia Creek vanadium operations
  - And more...
- Significant economic impacts related to acid supply
- DSD commissioned Sulphuric Acid Supply Study in 2023:

https://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/regions/ regional-priorities/a-strong-and-prosperous-north-westqueensland/achievements-and-deliverables



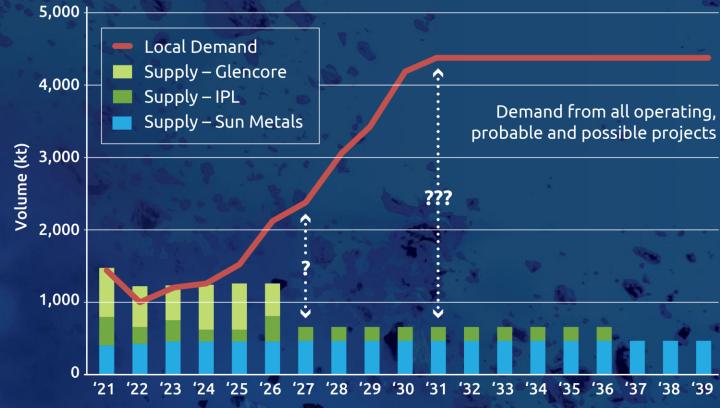
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# Current/Future Acid Demand – NW Qld



## Local supply and demand of sulphuric acid



Adapted from CRU presentation; Sulphuric Acid Supply Study, 1st August 2024



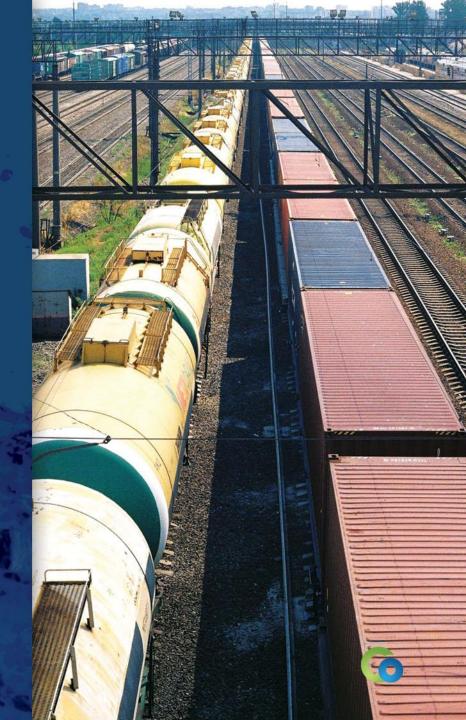
# Possible Solutions: Imports or Local Source

## Import Sulphuric Acid or Sulphur

- By-passes local supply issues
- Large infrastructure upgrades required to port facilities
- Unit cost of acid/sulphur exceeded by transport costs

## Local Source – Reprocess pyrite-rich mine tailings

- Sufficient pyrite to meet demand
- Environmental benefit from removing pyrite from tailings/waste stockpiles
- No port or long-distance transport upgrades required
- Not affected by global price cycles



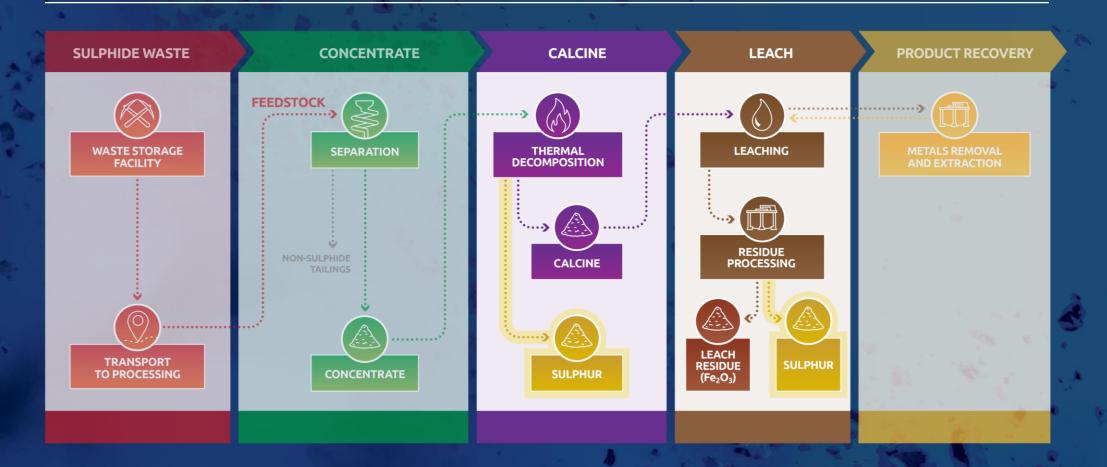
# Possible Solutions: Local Source

- Roaster + Acid Plant to make Sulphuric Acid:
  - Conventional route known technology
  - Produces S off-gas for acid plant
  - Metals can be extracted from roaster calcine
  - High toxic emissions (e.g. Pb, As)
  - High capital cost

### Cobalt Blue process:

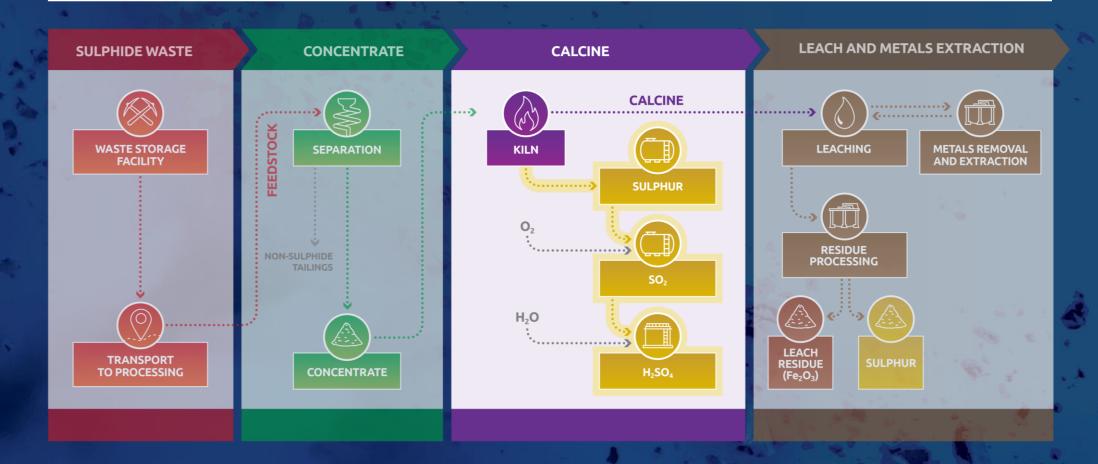
- No toxic emissions
- Flexible process makes sulphur or sulphuric acid plus metals
- Proven at demonstration scale risk of unknowns during upscale?
- Unknown costs... we can answer these questions! (hint: less than a roaster)

# The Cobalt Blue flow sheet – sulphur prill





## The Cobalt Blue flow sheet – sulphuric acid





# Flin Flon Tailings Project

Site: Flin Flon TSF

Location: Manitoba, Canada

Commodities: Zn-Cu-Ag

**Status:** initial testwork completed. Confirms >90% conversion of pyrite to pyrrhotite from tailings sample, with capture/removal of elemental sulphur



Estimated > 100 million tonnes contained in tailings dam at Flin Flon. Tailings contains Zn, Cu, Ag and Au.

# **H** DBAY

Cobalt Blue and Hudbay Minerals collaborating to apply Cobalt Blue's processing technology to the Flin Flon tailings facility, Manitoba.

Testwork results to date have achieved >90% conversion of pyrite to pyrrhotite + sulphur.

An overall flowsheet is now being designed for the final step of testwork.

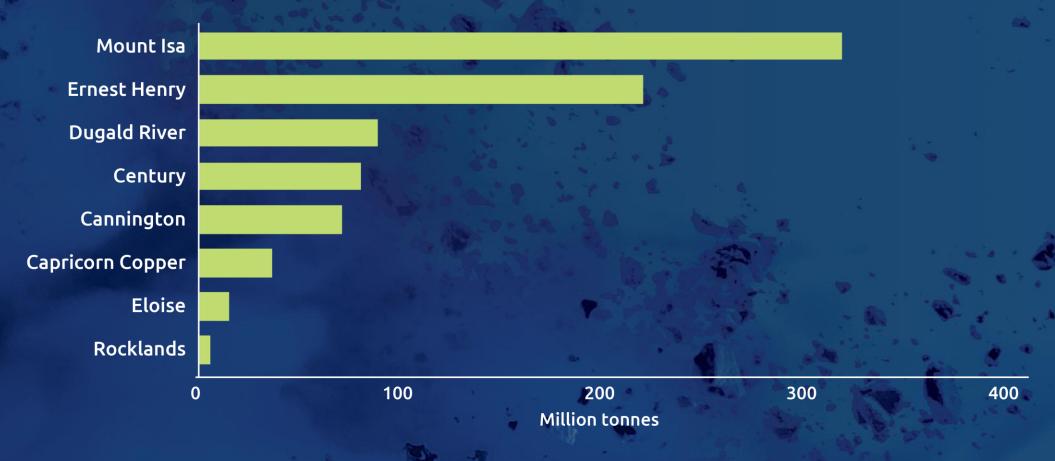
## Pyrite Feedstocks

- Multiple pyrite sources available:
  - Mount Isa
  - Ernest Henry
  - Osborne
  - Capricorn Copper
  - Rocklands
  - Eloise
  - Cannington
  - Century



# Pyrite Feedstocks

## Estimated tailings size comparison





# Regulatory environment

## Two streams to consider:

Sites currently under a mining lease (a company holds the site)

#### Company-owned sites:

- (Almost) all permits in place
- May need to expand mining lease footprint and approvals to accommodate new infrastructure
- Existing lease-holder owns the liability
- Existing lease-holder has land access and native title agreements in place

# Abandoned sites administered by the state government

#### Abandoned sites:

- No permits in place
  - Environmental
  - Mine plan
  - Native title
  - Land access
- Recommercialisation entity will have to take on liability (or negotiate with govt)
- Different states have different approaches to imposing/forgiving historical liabilities



