

Widgeimooltha Nickel Mine (W.A.)

- Metals Exploration, Outokumpu (Finland). Just announced interest in developing mine.

9. IRON

A major mineral in Australia, iron ore exports account for some 25 per cent of mineral export income.

Approximately 90 per cent of the iron resources are located in Western Australia in the Pilbara area. In order of importance, the major mines are as follows:

Mt. Newman-Whaleback. Mt. Newman Mining (BHP)
 Mt. Tom Price. Hamersley Iron (CRA)
 Robe River (Panawonica). Cliffs (WA) Mining
 Paraburdoo. Hamersley Iron
 Mt. Goldsworthy. Goldsworthy Mining

In addition, there are mines at Cockatoo Island, Koolan Island and Koolyanobbing (all Dampier) in Western Australia; Middleback Range in South Australia, and Savage River in Tasmania. The mines are all open-cut. BHP is the sole Australian steel producer.

The world market for iron ore has been depressed for some years, and until the steel industries of Japan (55 per cent of iron ore exports) and Western Europe improve, production will remain static. There will be sufficient demand for only one of the planned projects to proceed in the 1980s and the companies are each making great efforts to ensure that it is theirs. Area C is considered the front runner.

With the continuous labor problems halting production and exports of iron ore with increasing frequency, traditional customers are beginning to seek more secure sources of ore.

PROJECTSArea C Iron Ore Mine

- Goldsworthy (Consolidated Gold Fields, MIM, Utah). \$600 million. To replace Goldsworthy, which will shut down in 1983. This project appears to have some priority (according to statements by W.A. Minister of Industrial Development), and the Japanese are reconsidering their involvement. ten million TPY by 1983.

Deepdale Iron Ore Project (W.A.)

- Dampier Mining (BHP), longer-range prospects for development. Mid-1980s.