

## **REGULATORY TENDENCIES AND ABATEMENT TECHNOLOGIES USED IN THE CHILEAN COPPER INDUSTRY.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In the last decades, the Chilean copper mining and metallurgical industry have had to modify their technological processes to meet the environmental regulations implemented by the Chilean government, and also to support the pressure of the public opinion.

Thus, air quality standards for sulfur dioxide and particulate matter (primary and secondary), plans for reducing emission of arsenic by the Chilean copper smelters, effluents discharge limits, among others regulations were applied by the environmental agency. Additionally, agreements on cleaner production were carried out by mining sector and government. Now, a draft law on mine closure, and another on environmental mining wastes (abandoned mines) are being discussed by the authorities and the mining sector.

In the context, production and environmental impacts in different ways to produce copper in the Chilean mining industry are reviewed and regulatory tendencies as well as abatement technologies today used are exposed and discussed in this presentation.

Pyro, hydro and electrometallurgical processes employed and their current effluent and contaminants are presented showing various alternatives of treatment in the copper industry.

An update of regulations established in Chile vis a vis copper production, with an especial attention to mine closure are also presented.

Presented at Copper 2007