Effects of Different Acids on Solvent Extraction of REEs from Coal Ash

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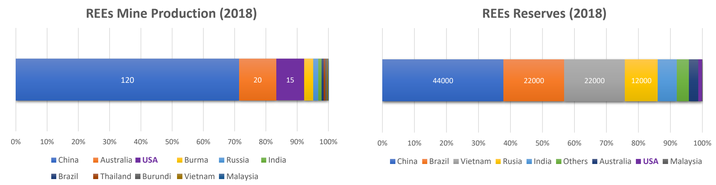
Rare Earth Elements

❑ Critical Elements in High-Tech, Defense, Clean Energy

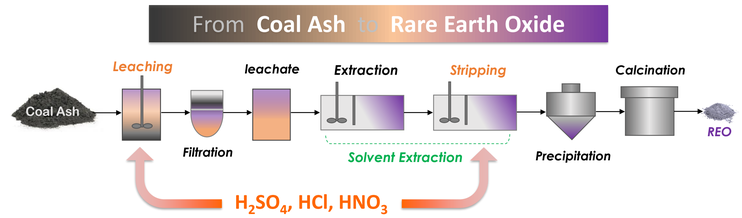
❑ Global Reserves and Mine Production (1000 tons, source: USGS)

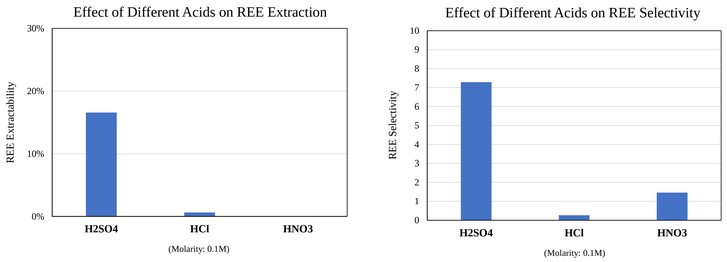


USA: 9% of World REE Production - Imbalance - USA: 1% of World REE Reserves

❑ USA: Net Import Reliance of REE Compounds and Metals=100%

Effect of Different Acids

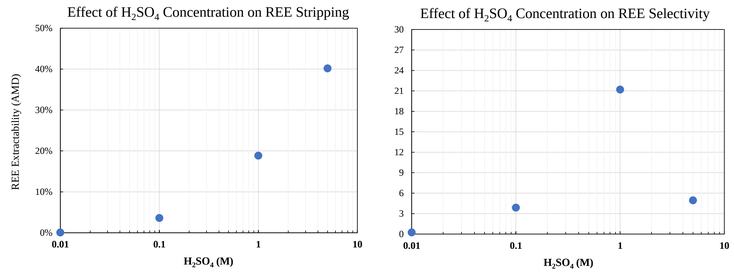




✓ Suitable Acid for REE Extraction from Coal Ash: H_2SO_4

REEs from AMD

❑ Validation with Other Coal-Based Resources: Acid Mine Drainage (AMD)



Acid Conc. ↑ REE-Strip ↑

✓ Highest REE Selectivity: **~1M H_2SO_4** in the strip

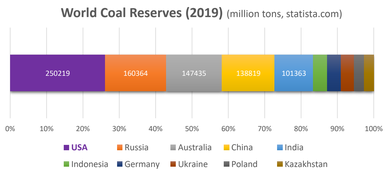
✓ High acid concentration (5M): Increase MM extraction → Decrease REE selectivity

REEs in Coal Ash

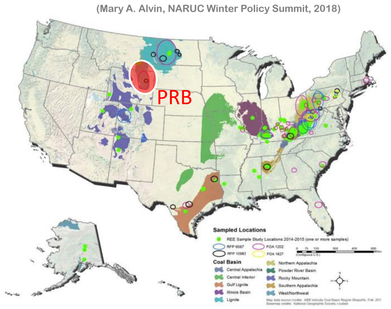
❑ USA: world's largest coal reserves (26%)

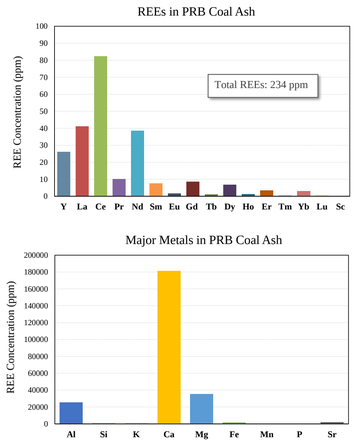
❑ Avg. REEs in Coal: 62 ppm

❑ REEs in Coal Ash: ~300 ppm



(Mary A. Alvin, NARUC Winter Policy Summit, 2018)

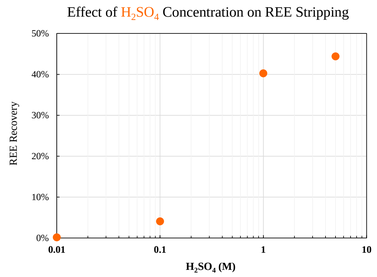




❑ Coal Ash Used in This Study: Power River Basin (PRB) Coal Ash

❑ Total REEs: 234 ppm

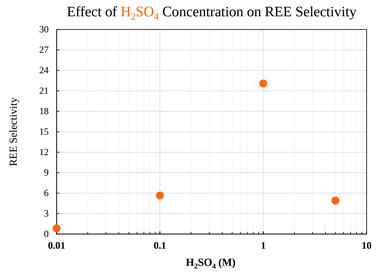
Effect of Acid Concentration



$$REE\ Recovery = \frac{C_{TREE\ in\ S}}{C_{TREE\ in\ L}}$$

(**TREE**: Total REEs, **S**: Strip, **L**: Leachate)

✓ **Increase** in acid concentration → **Increase** in REE-stripping from organic phase



$$REE\ Selectivity = \frac{C_{TREE\ in\ S}}{C_{MM\ in\ S}} \Big/ \frac{C_{TREE\ in\ L}}{C_{MM\ in\ L}}$$

(**MM**: Major Metals)

✓ Highest REE Selectivity: **~1M H_2SO_4** in the strip

Conclusion

✓ H_2SO_4 has shown much higher REE extractability and REE selectivity from coal ash than HCl and HNO_3.

✓ The highest REE selectivity over major metals was obtained at 1M H_2SO_4 in the stripping solution.

✓ The same REE extraction behaviors were observed with other coal-related resource (AMD).

Acknowledgement

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