Fluorspar flux supply – is relief in sight?

With relatively few commercially developed fluorspar sources worldwide, will steel producers be able to secure adequate supplies in the future?

Fluorspar is a mineral composed primarily of calcium fluoride (CaF₂). Commercial grades are generally categorised by CaF₂ content: metallurgical grade, ‘metspar’ (85-87% CaF₂) is mainly used as a fluxing agent in steelmaking, but is also used in cement clinker manufacture; ceramic grade (85-96%) used to make certain glasses and ceramics; and acid grade, ‘acidspar’ (≥97%), accounting for 60-65% of total fluorspar production, is used to make hydrofluoric acid (HF) the precursor to a wide range of fluorochemicals, fluoropolymers.

The fluorspar demand market in 2018 was estimated at 6.36Mt, of which acidspar accounted for 63% and metspar 37%.

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Fluorspar input to steelmaking

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