

Rating

**Australian Equity Research** 

13 March 2024

**SPECULATIVE BUY** from UNDER REVIEW

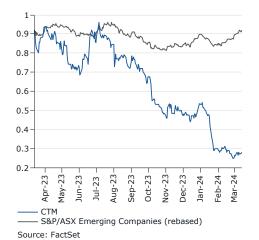
Price Target A\$0.80 previously UR

Price A\$0.28

# **Market Data**

CTM-ASX

52-Week Range (A\$):	0.23 - 0.99
Avg Daily Vol (000s) :	137
Market Cap (A\$M):	138.6
Shares Out. (M) :	495.0
Dividend /Shr (A\$):	0.00
Net Debt (Cash) (A\$M):	34.7
Enterprise Value (A\$M):	111.7
Cash (A\$M):	1.2
NAV /Shr (A\$):	0.80
NAV /Shr (5%) (A\$):	1.56
P/NAV (x) :	0.36



Priced as of close of business 13 March 2024

Centaurus Metals Limited (ASX:CTM) is a nickel sulphide focussed developer aiming to bring the 100%-owned Jaguar Project into production by 2027.

Rating and Target Price Changes

# Centaurus Metals Limited **EV Materials**

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# A simplified nickel sulphide concentrate operation

Last week, Centaurus Metals (CTM-ASX) announced that it was deferring the downstream component of its upcoming DFS for the Jaquar Nickel Sulphide Project in Carajás Mineral Province, Brazil. This has led us to review our assumptions. CTM will now revert to a more conventional sulphide concentrate production scenario, reshaping the initial Scoping Study released in March 2021, albeit with 66% more metal in resource. This simplified sulphide DFS, shifting away from that of nickel sulphate production, is set to be delivered by the end of June.

Why the reshaping of the Jaguar DFS? Given the fall in nickel company values over the past 12 months owning to a sharp drop in the nickel price in response to increased supply out of Indonesia, CTM could have been facing upwards of a US\$750m capex hurdle in the Jaquar DFS. Straight concentrate production will allow for a much more palatable capex figure and likely lower operating costs, in our view.

What a new DFS could look like for Jaguar? CTM has grown the Jaguar resource base considerably in the three years since the Scoping Study as outlined in our initiation of coverage. As per our assumptions table in Figure 1, we assume a 70Mt @ 0.85% Ni open pit mining inventory (versus a 109Mt @ 0.87% Ni resource inclusive of 86Mt @ 0.85% Ni M&I) producing 22kt of nickel sulphide (NiS) for 20 years at a C1 of US\$4.80/ lb and AISC of <US\$6.00/lb versus a CG long-term nickel price of US\$9.25/lb and spot of US\$8.23/lb. We model a straight line grade (0.85% Ni) and strip ratio (7.1:x) profile. We expect capex for a 3.5Mtpa plant to be in the order of US\$400m, noting that Ero Copper Corp. (ERO-TSX: C\$23.00 | BUY, C\$26.00 target, Dalton Baretto, Canaccord Genuity Corp.) is nearing completion of a US\$310m, 3.5Mtpa open pit operation at Tucumã some 50km from CTM's Jaguar, with first production expected in 2H24 (Figure 2). While ERO will produce a copper concentrate, we see close similarities in likely costs to build large base metals projects in the region. We have inflated our assumed operating costs for Jaguar by 40-50% on CTM's Scoping Study assumptions. We model an 18-month build, with first production coming in early CY27. We estimate average EBITDA and FCF at A\$250mpa and A\$134mpa, respectively.

Alternative opportunities: For Jaquar, we do not write off up-scaling of throughput given the long mine life/large resource, but this comes with increased capex. Conversely and perhaps more likely, CTM may look to mine the higher-grade portions of the Jaguar pits in a smaller-scale, less capital intensive offering, noting the 28.6Mt @ 1.51% Ni high-grade component of the resource; with 30% of this high-grade sitting within 100m of surface.

Funding: Our model assumes US\$450m (A\$670m) inclusive of working capital could be required to build Jaguar. To aid funding, we assume a 20% project sell down to a strategic partner at FID; for 20% of the project NPV, less a 20% discount. This could yield US\$120m (A\$180m) in funding with CTM to retain 80% ownership of the project (Figure 3). This would leave CTM with a ~US\$240m (A\$360m) funding gap, which we assume is covered through a mix of debt and equity.

Valuation and recommendation: We have updated our model for what we think an initial DFS assessing NiS concentrate production at Jaguar will look like. Our unrisked NAV equates to \$1.25/sh for CTM. Adding 50% risking to our valuation given the unknowns around funding, scale, and costs, our price target is \$0.80 (\$0.70 at spot). We therefore retain our SPECULATIVE BUY rating on valuation grounds.

We believe a nickel development asset is a challenging sell in this current market environment. However, Jaquar is one of the largest undeveloped nickel projects on the ASX and is potentially low cost owing to the power supply situation in Brazil (hydro). When the tides turn and nickel pricing is more favorable, CTM will be one of the first files to be dusted off, in our view.



Figure 1: CTM prior and Canaccord Genuity project assumptions

cg/	Units	CTM Scoping Study March 2021	CTM Value-Add Scoping Study May 2021	CGe May 2023	CGe Mar 2024	CGe Spot
Resource tonnes	Mt	58.9	58.9	108.0	108.0	108.0
Resource grade	%	0.96%	0.96%	0.87%	0.87%	0.87%
Assumed mine inventory	Mt	32.8	45.0	81.0	70.0	70.0
Avg LOM Nickel grade	%	0.84%	0.80%	0.81%	0.85%	0.85%
Strip ratio Strip ratio	w:o	6.5	6.5	7.1	7.1	7.1
Mine Life	yrs	10	12.5	20.0	20.0	20.0
Milled	Mt	24	33.7	59.0	68.5	68.5
Avg LOM Nickel grade	%	1.08%	1.01%	0.96%	0.85%	0.85%
Average annual ore processed	Mtpa	2.4	2.7	3.0	3.5	3.5
Nickel recovery	%	78%	82%	75%	75%	75%
LOM recoverable nickel	kt	203	262	424	437	437
Avg annual recoverable nickel sulphide	ktpa	20	21	21	22	22
Average LOM nickel price	US\$/lb	7.50	7.50	9.00	9.25	8.23
Total Revenue	US\$M	2,422	4,530	7,995	6,311	5,955
Total Operating Costs	US\$M	1,377	2,469	2,710	4,148	4,128
Mining - o/p	US\$/t	2.41	2.62	3.30	3.50	3.50
Mining - underground	US\$/t	50.54	47.53	-	-	-
Processing	US\$/t	11.33	28.02	28.00	17.00	17.00
G&A+Logistics	US\$/t	5.68	4.59	5.46	5.00	5.00
C1	US\$/lb	2.41	3.29	4.28	4.80	4.80
AISC	US\$/lb	2.97	3.94	5.00	5.87	5.85
Royalties	US\$M	110	165	199	140	133
Total Project capital	US\$M	316	501	654	640	640
Pre-production capital	US\$M	178	288	393	400	400
Sustaining capital	US\$M	138.0	213	262	240	240

Source: Company Reports, Canaccord Genuity estimates

Figure 2: CG assumptions versus ERO DFS assumptions

cg/	Units	CGe Mar 2024	Ero Copper - Tucumã Copper Project
Strip ratio	w:o	7.1	3.7
Mine Life	yrs	20.0	12.0
Milled	Mt	68.5	41.6
Average annual ore processed	Mtpa	3.5	3.5
Mining - o/p	US\$/t	3.50	2.23
Processing	US\$/t	17.00	5.92
G&A+Logistics	US\$/t	5.00	1.52
Total Project capital	US\$M	640	506
Pre-production capital	US\$M	400	310
Sustaining capital	US\$M	240	196

Source: Company Reports, Canaccord Genuity estimates

Figure 3: Project sell down assumptions

	How much?	When?	Amount?
Project Selldown: 20% of NPV at the time -20% discount	20%	Jun-25	
NPV (US\$m) @ 30-Jun-25			\$754
20% of NPV (US\$m) @ 30-Jun-25			\$151
20% of NPV (US\$m) @ 30-Jun-25 -20% discount			\$121
20% of NPV (A\$m) @ 30-Jun-25 -20% discount			\$180

Source: Canaccord Genuity estimates

Figure 4: CGe current vs prior production and grade

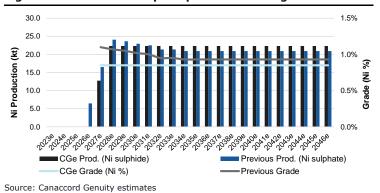
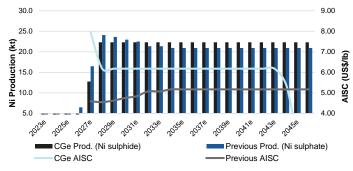


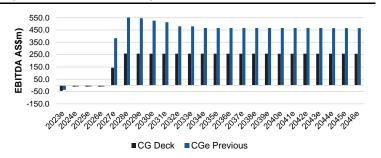
Figure 5: CGe current vs prior production and AISC



Source: Canaccord Genuity estimates

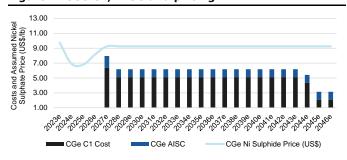


Figure 6: CGe current vs prior EBITDA



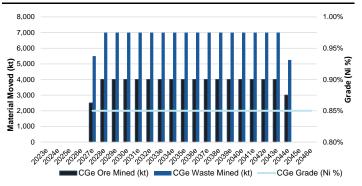
Source: Canaccord Genuity estimates

Figure 7: CGe C1, AISC and pricing



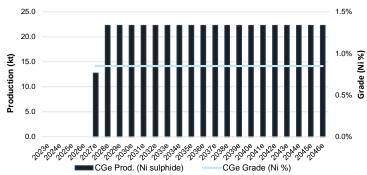
Source: Canaccord Genuity estimates

Figure 8: CGe material mined and grade



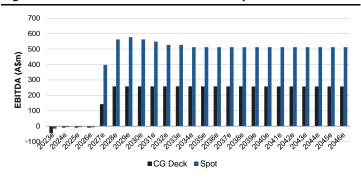
Source: Canaccord Genuity estimates

Figure 9: CGe production and grade



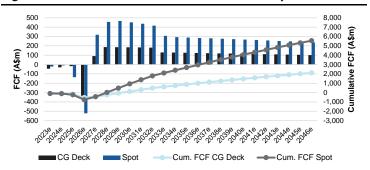
Source: Canaccord Genuity estimates

Figure 10: CGe EBITDA at CG deck and spot



Source: Canaccord Genuity estimates

Figure 11: CGe free cash flow at CG deck and spot



Source: Canaccord Genuity estimates



Figure 12: Financial Summary

Centaurus	Metals Ltd		Α	SX:CTM									
Analyst:			Paul How ard							Rating:		SP	EC BUY
Date:			13/03/2024						т	arget Price:		٠.	A\$0.8
ear End:			December										
Market Infor	rmation							Company Description					
Share Price	uuvii			A\$	0.28			Centaurus Metals Limited (ASX:CTM) i	s a nickel sult	hide develon	er aiming to b	ring the 100%	-owned
Market Capit	talisation			A\$m	138.6			Jaguar Project into production by 2027					
12 Month Hi				A\$	0.99			Province in Brazil. Scoping Studies for	both an upstr	eam mining o	peration to pro	duce nickel s	sulphide in
12 Month Lo				A\$	0.23			concentrate, and a downstream value-					
ssued Capit	tal			m	495.0			completed. A DFS is expected in the Ju					
Options				m	0.0			Profit & Loss (A\$m)	2022a	2023e	2024e	2025e	2025
Fully Diluted	l .			m	495.0			Revenue Other Income	0.0 0.5	0.0 0.0	0.0	0.0 0.0	0.0
								Operating Costs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Valuation					A\$m	Risk Adj.	A\$/share	Exploration expensed/written off	-36.2	-39.4	-5.0	-5.1	-5.1
Jaguar			NPV @ 12%		390.6	50%	0.46	Corporate/Other expenses	-7.9	-5.3	-4.8	-4.8	-4.8
otential by-	product credi	ts			-	0%	-	EBITDA	-43.6	-44.8	-9.8	-9.9	-9.9
	& Other asset	s			50.0		0.06	Dep'n	-0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Corporate					(24.2)		(0.03)	Net Interest	1.3	0.9	1.0	2.9	-1.7
	at 31-Dec-23	3			34.7		0.04	Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TM Options					-		-	Tax	0.0	14.9	1.3	1.1	1.8
Future Equity	У				208.8 <b>659.9</b>		0.25 <b>0.79</b>	NPAT (reported)	-42.6	-29.0 0.0	-7.5 0.0	-5.9 0.0	-9.8 1.0
Price/NAV					659.9		0.79 0.36x	Abnormals NPAT	0.0 <b>-42.6</b>	-29.0	-7.5	-5.9	-8.8
Frice/NAV	•						0.30x	·• A1	42.0	23.0	-1.5	-3.3	-0.0
							5.50	EBITDA Margin	nm	nm	nm	nm	nm
								EV/EBITDA	nm	nm	nm	nm	nm
Assumption	ıs		2022a	2023e	2024e	2025e	2025e	EPS	-\$0.086	-\$0.059	-\$0.015	-\$0.012	-\$0.018
Nickel Price			11.89	9.73	6.92	6.80	8.16	EPS Growth	22%	85%	-78%	-33%	27%
Cobalt Price	(US\$/lb)		28.95	15.57	12.70	12.70	14.30	PER	-3.3x	-4.8x	-18.5x	-23.4x	-15.7x
AUD:USD			0.69	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.68	Dividend Per Share	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
								Dividend Yield	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Sensitivity								Cash Flow (A\$m)	2022a	2023e	2024e	2025e	2025e
\$2.00								Cash Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
\$1.80	_							Cash paid to suppliers & employee	-3.8	-5.3	-4.8	-4.8	-4.8
								Tax Paid	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
\$1.60								Exploration and growth	-36.2	-38.2	-4.8	-4.8	-4.8
\$1.40		<b>Y</b>						+/- Working cap change	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
\$1.20								Operating Cash Flow	-40.0	-43.5	-9.6	-9.6	-8.6
\$1.00					-			Exploration evaluation	0.0	0.0	-20.0	-20.2	-20.4
\$0.80								Capex	0.0	0.0	0.0	-168.0	-333.5
\$0.60		-				<b>_</b>		Other Investing Cash Flow	-6.9 <b>-6.9</b>	-1.3 <b>-1.3</b>	0.0 <b>-20.0</b>	180.0 <b>-8.2</b>	0.0 <b>-353.9</b>
\$0.40							······· <del>·</del>	Debt Drawdown (repayment)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	178.8
\$0.20								Share capital	72.5	47.5	30.0	178.8	0.0
\$0.00	-30%	-20%	100/	0%	100/	20%	30%	Dividends	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	-30%		-10% S\$ Exchange Rate	0%	10% Nickel F		30%	Net interest	0.0	-2.1	1.0	2.9	-1.7
			-					Financing Cash Flow	72.5	45.4	31.0	181.7	177.1
Production I	Metrics		2025e	2026e	2027e	2026e	2027e	Opening Cash	8.3	34.0	34.7	36.8	201.4
Jaguar	-1- (1.0)			0.0	40.0	00.0	00.0	Increase / (Decrease) in cash	25.6	0.6	1.3	163.9	-185.4
Nickel sulph:	iate (kt) A\$/lb Ni payab	lo)	0.0 0.0	0.0 0.00	12.8 9.13	22.3 7.32	22.3 7.32	FX Impact Closing Cash	0.2 <b>34.0</b>	0.1 <b>34.7</b>	0.8 <b>36.8</b>	0.8 <b>201.4</b>	0.8 <b>16.7</b>
AISC (A\$/Ib N		ile)	0.0	0.00	11.35	8.83	8.83	Closing Cash	34.0	34.7	30.0	201.4	10.7
MIGC (MAIN I	vi payable)		0.0	0.00	11.55	0.03	0.03	Op. Cashflow/Share	-\$0.08	-\$0.09	-\$0.02	-\$0.02	-\$0.02
								P/CF	nm -	-3.2x	nm	-14.4x	-16.1x
Resources					Mt	Ni (%)	Ni (kt)	FCF	nm	nm	nm	nm	nm
Jagaur Proje	ect							EV/FCF	nm	nm	nm	nm	nm
Measured					14	1.07	149	FCF Yield	-34%	-32%	-21%	-13%	-262%
Indicated					72	0.81	581						
Inferred					22	0.94	208	Balance Sheet (A\$m)	2022a	2023e	2024e	2025e	2025e
Total					108	0.87	939	Cash + S/Term Deposits Other current assets	34.0 1.4	34.7 0.0	36.8 0.0	201.4 100.8	15.7 200.1
Assumed M	ining Invento	rv			M+	Ni (%)	Ni (kt)	Current Assets	1.4 35.4	34.7	36.8	302.2	200.1 215.9
Jagaur Proje		,			IVIC	141 (70)	ivi (Nt)	Property, Plant & Equip.	<b>35.4</b> 8.9	<b>34.7</b> 8.9	8.9	176.9	510.4
Open Pit					70	0.85	595	Exploration & Develop.	0.0	0.0	0.0	168.0	501.5
Undergrou	ınd				0	0.00	0	Other Non-current Assets	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total					70	0.85	595	Payables	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
								Short Term Debt	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
								Long Term Debt	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	178.8
Iron Ore Ass	sets							Other Liabilities	0.8	2.5	165.1	429.8	856.1
Reserves					Mt	Fe (%)	Fe (Mt)	Net Assets	49.3	67.9	90.4	263.2	253.4
Jambreiro					05.1	05.007	0	Shareholders Funds	236.3	283.8	313.8	492.6	492.6
Proved Probable					35.4 13.1	25.8% 27.2%	9	Reserves Retained Earnings	-5.8 -181.1	-5.8 -210.1	-5.8 -217.6	-5.8 -223.5	-5.8 -233.4
Total					48.5	26.2%	13	Total Equity	49.3	-210.1 <b>67.9</b>	90.4	-223.5 <b>263.2</b>	-233.4 <b>253.4</b>
					40.0	/0			70.0	31.3	30.4	_00.2	200.4
Resources					Mt	Fe (%)	Fe (Mt)	Debt/Equity	1%	0%	0%	0%	71%
Jambreiro, C	Canavial, Pas	sabém						Net Debt/EBITDA	0.8x	0.8x	3.8x	21.0x	-18.8x
Total					193.7	29.0%	56	Net Interest Cover	nm	nm	nm	nm	-5.9x
								ROE	-86%	-43%	-8%	-2%	-3%
								ROIC	-285%	-324%	-84%	-1%	-1%
								Book Value/share	0.10	0.14	0.18		

Source: Company Reports, Canaccord Genuity estimates, FactSet



# Appendix: Important Disclosures

# **Analyst Certification**

Each authoring analyst of Canaccord Genuity whose name appears on the front page of this research hereby certifies that (i) the recommendations and opinions expressed in this research accurately reflect the authoring analyst's personal, independent and objective views about any and all of the designated investments or relevant issuers discussed herein that are within such authoring analyst's coverage universe and (ii) no part of the authoring analyst's compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the specific recommendations or views expressed by the authoring analyst in the research, and (iii) to the best of the authoring analyst's knowledge, she/he is not in receipt of material non-public information about the issuer.

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#### **Sector Coverage**

Individuals identified as "Sector Coverage" cover a subject company's industry in the identified jurisdiction, but are not authoring analysts of the report.

#### **Investment Recommendation**

Date and time of first dissemination: March 13, 2024, 09:46 ET

Date and time of production: March 13, 2024, 09:46 ET

#### **Target Price / Valuation Methodology:**

Ero Copper Corp. - ERO

Our target price is based on an equal weighting of 5.0x ntm EBITDA and 1.0x NAV, both measured as at January 1, 2025.

Centaurus Metals Limited - CTM

Our price target (NPV12%) is on a fully diluted basis and risked 50% to account for changing scope of the project. Our project valuation is based on our interpreted development/production scenario at Jaguar. Given the early stage of development of the project along with the financing and permitting stages to progress through, we have applied an 50% risk weighting to our project valuation to capture project and financing risks. Our net asset valuation per share is based on a fully financed scenario inclusive of equity dilution and fully drawn project debt.

# Risks to achieving Target Price / Valuation:

Centaurus Metals Limited - CTM

#### Financing risks

As an exploration and development company with no material income, CTM is highly reliant on equity and debt markets to fund development of its assets and progress its regional exploration pipeline. Further, we can make no assurances that accessing these markets will be done without further dilution to shareholders.

# **Exploration and development risks**

Exploration is subject to a number of risks and can require a high rate of capital expenditure. Risks can also be associated with conversion of resources and lack of accuracy in the interpretation of geochemical, geophysical, drilling and other data. No assurances can be given that exploration will delineate further mineral resources nor that the company will be able to convert the current Mineral Resource into Ore Reserves. The Scoping Studies completed to date are at a low (+/-40%) level of accuracy and present both upside and downside risk to our valuation.

# Operating risks

If/when in production, the company will be subject to risks such as plant/equipment breakdowns, metallurgical (meeting design recoveries within a complex flowsheet), materials handling and other technical issues. An increase in operating costs could reduce the profitability and free cash generation from the operating assets considerably and negatively impact valuation. Further, the actual characteristics of an ore deposit may differ significantly from initial interpretations which can also materially impact forecast production from original expectations.

# **Commodity price and currency fluctuations**

As with any development company, CTM is directly exposed to commodity price and currency fluctuations. Commodity price fluctuations are driven by many macroeconomic forces including inflationary pressures, interest rates and supply and demand factors. These factors could reduce the profitability, costing and prospective outlook for the business.

#### Geopolitical risks

CTM's key asset is located in Brazil, which is considered an emerging market. As such, CTM, through the Jaguar Nickel Sulphide Project, carries a higher degree of economic, political, social, legal and legislative risk. Brazil has a well-established and stable mining industry.

Ero Copper Corp. - ERO



Ero is subject to operating risks, as well as fluctuations in metal prices and the BRL exchange rate. In addition, the company currently has a significant amount of financial leverage.

#### **Distribution of Ratings:**

## Global Stock Ratings (as of 03/13/24)

Rating	Coverag	IB Clients		
	#	%	%	
Buy	605	65.83%	22.64%	
Hold	134	14.58%	8.21%	
Sell	13	1.41%	15.38%	
Speculative Buy	157	17.08%	47.77%	
	919*	100.0%		

<sup>\*</sup>Total includes stocks that are Under Review

# **Canaccord Genuity Ratings System**

**BUY:** The stock is expected to generate returns greater than 10% during the next 12 months.

HOLD: The stock is expected to generate returns from -10% to 10% during the next 12 months.

**SELL:** The stock is expected to generate returns less than -10% during the next 12 months.

NOT RATED: Canaccord Genuity does not provide research coverage of the relevant issuer.

Given the inherent volatility of some stocks under coverage, price targets for some stocks may imply target returns that vary temporarily from the ratings criteria above.

\*As of January 1, 2024, the Ratings History Chart will reflect the new Canaccord Genuity Ratings System as defined above.

#### **Risk Qualifier**

SPECULATIVE: The stock bears significantly above-average risk and volatility. Investments in the stock may result in material loss.

#### 12-Month Recommendation History (as of date same as the Global Stock Ratings table)

A list of all the recommendations on any issuer under coverage that was disseminated during the preceding 12-month period may be obtained at the following website (provided as a hyperlink if this report is being read electronically) http://disclosures-mar.canaccordgenuity.com/EN/Pages/default.aspx

#### Required Company-Specific Disclosures (as of date of this publication)

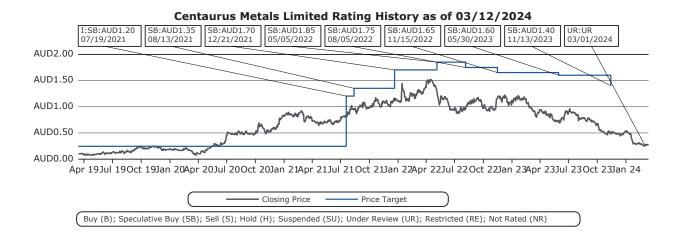
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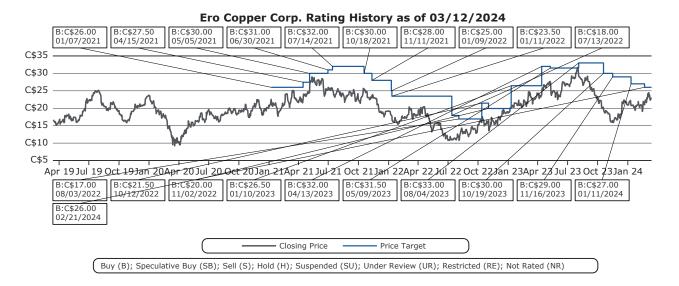
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