

\$7M Earn-in and Joint Venture Agreement Executed with KoBold Metals Company

Iondrive Limited (ASX: ION) ("Iondrive", "ION" or the "Company"), formerly Southern Gold Ltd, is pleased to advise it has secured an Earn-In and Joint Venture Agreement ("JV" or the "Agreement") with a subsidiary of KoBold Metals Company ("KoBold") on its Samgugen, Seobyeok, Danyang, Seosan, and Cheongpyeong Lithium Projects in South Korea.

Highlights

- Iondrive advances its strategic focus on minerals critical to the clean energy transition through an Earn-in and Joint Venture Agreement with KoBold for Lithium Projects.
- KoBold Metals Company is a US-based, privately held, mineral exploration company that couples geology, geoscience, data science, machine learning, and artificial intelligence to search for critical minerals needed for the clean energy transition and to accelerate growth in electric vehicles.
- KoBold is backed by world-class technology investors including Breakthrough Energy Ventures (initiated by Bill Gates) and Silicon Valley venture capital firm Andreessen Horowitz, as well as institutional investors such as T. Rowe Price and Canadian Pension Plan Investment Board.
- Under the terms of the Agreement, KoBold can earn a 75% interest in Iondrive's greenfields Samgugen, Seobyeok, Danyang, Seosan and Cheongpyeong Li Projects through a two-stage earn-in of \$AUD7 million over 5 years.
- Iondrive can retain a 25% interest in the projects through proportionate funding.
- KoBold must spend a minimum of \$AUD 500,000 in the first 18 months before being able to withdraw from the Agreement.
- KoBold will initially engage Iondrive as in-country Field Operator for a minimum period of 18 months which will assist ION in reducing its operating costs in South Korea.

Iondrive Managing Director Robert Smillie said:

"We are extremely excited to partner with KoBold, a global player in lithium and critical minerals exploration. This joint venture underscores South Korea's untapped lithium potential, especially in light of the growing demand for lithium in the battery and EV sectors both here and globally."

"KoBold will earn stakes in 5 of our 6 greenfields Li projects, and Iondrive will continue to advance our Yeondong Li Project. I am very pleased that the Agreement also allows for future collaborative Li exploration, leveraging ION's extensive geological database and KoBold's exploration expertise. This new partnership holds great promise for harnessing South Korea's lithium resources and is an important pathway forward for our stated strategy of focussing on minerals critical to the clean energy transition, together with the commercialisation of ION's next-generation battery technologies."

KoBold Metals Company CEO Kurt House said:

“KoBold is pleased to enter into an agreement with Iondrive to explore the lithium potential of South Korea. Iondrive has identified several projects with prospective geology and historical lithium anomalies that have remained unexplored for decades. KoBold’s library of analytical tools and proprietary technology are being applied to these projects to maximise the effectiveness of exploration and increase our chances of a significant discovery. By exploring for lithium in collaboration with the in-country expertise of Iondrive, we are not just advancing KoBold’s mission but also supporting South Korea in their strategic goal of developing a secure supply chain of critical minerals.”

About KoBold Metals Company

KoBold Metals Company, a US-based company, is making substantial strides in mineral exploration, investing in exploration across 60 active projects spanning 3 continents. Founded in 2018, KoBold Metals Company is backed by world-class technology investors including Breakthrough Energy Ventures (initiated by Bill Gates), and Silicon Valley venture capital firm Andreessen Horowitz, as well as institutional investors such as T. Rowe Price and Canadian Pension Plan Investment Board.

KoBold Metals Company leverages artificial intelligence through proprietary analytical tools and big data to address the global shortage of critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, copper, and nickel. The surging demand for these minerals, driven by the electric vehicle and mobile device industries, underscores the pressing need for innovative technologies to locate new deposits and reduce uncertainty in mineral prospecting.

Key Terms of Agreement

KoBold can earn a 75% interest in Iondrive’s Samguen, Seobyeok, Danyang, Seosan and Cheongpyeong Li Projects through a two stage earn-in arrangement of \$AUD7 million over 5 years:

- Stage 1: exploration and evaluation of Samguen, Seobyeok, Danyang, Seosan and Cheongpyeong Li Projects, \$AUD 2 million sole funded by November 2026 for 51% interest, with a minimum spend of \$500K by May 2025.
- Stage 2: the option to sole fund exploration of an additional \$AUD5 million by November 2028 for a total 75% interest.
- Iondrive can maintain its 25% interest by funding its pro-rata commitment after Stage 2.
- If Iondrive’s interest falls below 10%, this interest is replaced with a 1% net smelter royalty, subject to a US\$9,540,000 cap.

ION’s wholly owned subsidiary, Korea Metals Resources (KRM), will be engaged as Field Operator by KoBold during the earn-in period for a minimum of 18 months. Under the Agreement, costs for 3 South Korean field staff working on a full-time basis in providing Field Operator services can be charged, up to a total annual amount not exceeding \$150,000, assisting ION in reducing its cost base in South Korea.

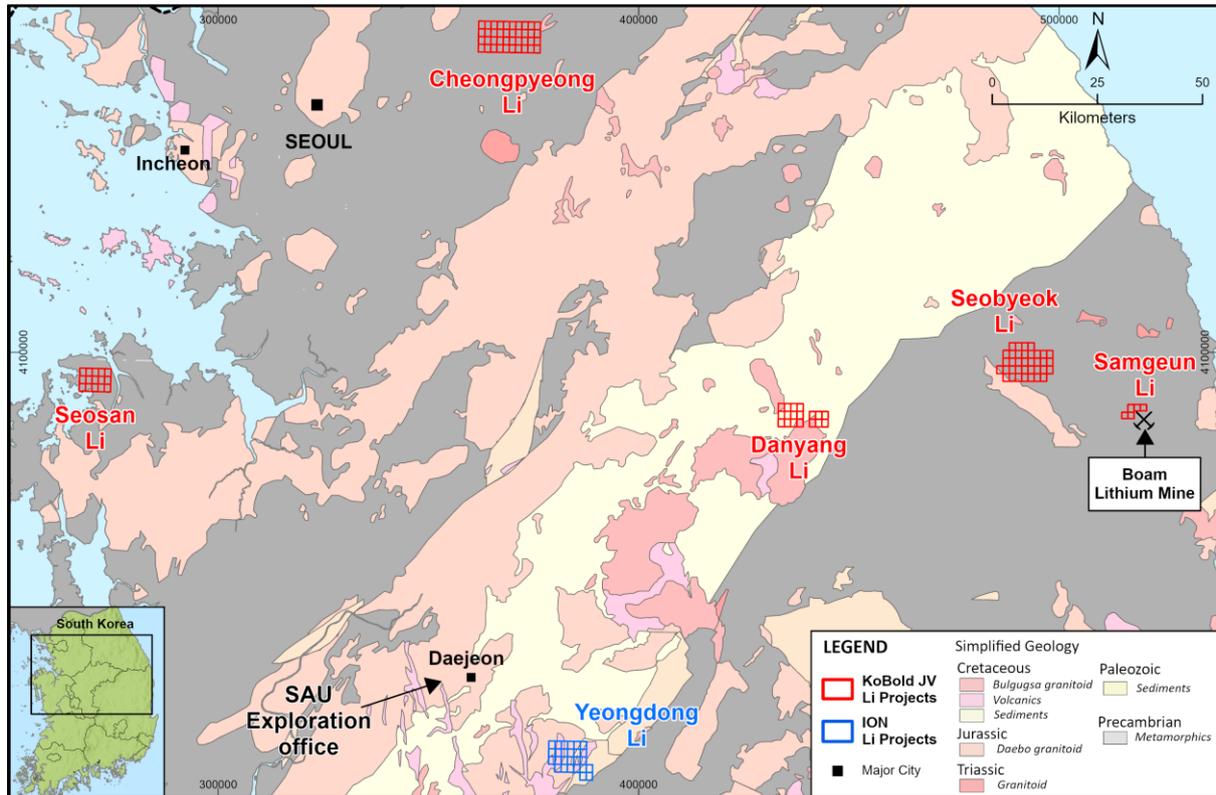
Joint Venture Lithium Projects

In April 2023, Iondrive announced exploration licence applications for Li across a number of key projects in South Korea¹. These greenfields project areas were identified after a country-wide prospectivity study by consultancy RSC. This study highlighted prospective geology, including granites and pegmatites, historical mines and occurrences, and Li stream-sediment anomalies from field surveys undertaken by Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources (KIGAM).

¹ See ASX announcement from 27th April 2023 entitled “Iondrive develops new lithium exploration portfolio in South Korea”. Competent Person: Dr Michael Gazley

In September, the Company announced encouraging geochemical results from its first round of fieldwork conducted at these and additional Li projects acquired through further desk-top analysis.² These results also included favourable fertility and fractionation geochemical analysis from pegmatite and granite samples, important pathfinder indicators for the formation of LCT pegmatites.

During this period, KoBold undertook extensive due diligence work on ION's Li projects, including site visits in April-May this year, and has selected five of ION's six Li projects to be included in the Earn-In and Joint Venture Agreement. These include the Samgwen, Seobyek, Danyang, Seosan and Cheongpyeong Li Projects (Figure 1).



The **Samgwen Li Project** comprises five exploration licence applications and is located ~2 km northwest of the historical Boam Li mine, which was mined historically for spodumene and lepidolite in pegmatite. Reconnaissance exploration reported by Iondrive has identified numerous zones of pegmatite and broad areas of amphibolite-facies metasediments, ideal hosts for pegmatite emplacement, with a maximum value of 0.32% Li₂O returned from a metasedimentary rock chip sample in close contact with pegmatite.³

The **Seobyek Li Project** comprises 36 exploration licence applications covering 98.8km², with pegmatites mapped by KIGAM located throughout the Iondrive exploration licence applications. Recent fieldwork reported by Iondrive identified several pegmatite and granitic bodies occurring in a metasedimentary host in the east of the project. Results reported include 1.1% Li₂O and 0.14% Li₂O,

² See ASX announcement from 13th September entitled "Encouraging Lithium grades, LCT pathfinders and REEs identified at Iondrive projects". Competent Person: Dr Michael Gazley.

^{3,4} See ASX announcement from 13th September entitled "Encouraging Lithium grades, LCT pathfinders and REEs identified at Iondrive projects". Competent Person: Dr Michael Gazley.

both occurring in metamorphic rock in close contact with granite, and many of the pegmatite and granite intrusions sampled returned prospective Mg/Li, Nb/Ta and K/Rb values.⁴

The **Danyang project** comprises 18 tenement applications and totals ~48 km², with two historical Li mines documented in the region. Recently reported fieldwork returned rock chip samples with particularly strong lithium fertility and fractionation indicators, with a broad suite of samples with extremely low Mg/Li, Nb/Ta and K/Rb values, indicative of a highly fractionated system.⁵ Many of the licence applications are coincident with a national park; however, Iondrive understands that the South Korean tenement system has provision to grant licences in such areas and will follow due process with the Mine Registration Office.

Cheongpyeong and Seosan Li Projects are recently acquired projects consisting of 55 licence applications across nearly 150 km² (Figure 1). A recent review of historical data suggests Li-bearing pegmatites may occur in these areas, and while the Li contents of rock chips reported from the first phase of reconnaissance exploration were generally low, areas of these projects remain to be investigated and the Company believes positive exploration potential remains.⁶

Next Steps

Exploration planning under the Agreement is expected to commence this month, with fieldwork including stream sediment sampling, rock-chip sampling and geological mapping to occur in the coming months. Fieldwork will also be undertaken at Seobyeok Li Project to confirm the location of previously mapped pegmatite dikes by KIGAM.

Authorised for release by the Chair of Iondrive Limited.

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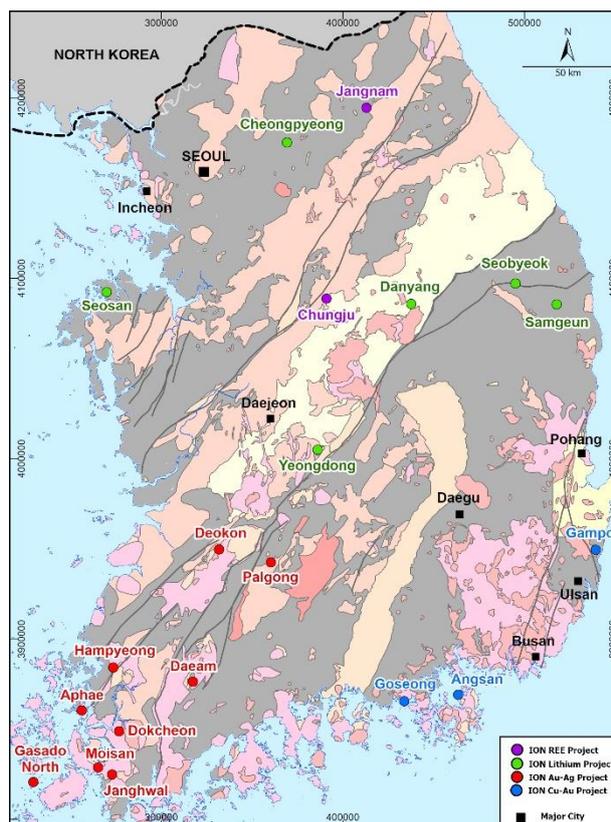
^{5,6} See ASX announcement from 13th September entitled "Encouraging Lithium grades, LCT pathfinders and REEs identified at Iondrive projects". Competent Person: Dr Michael Gazley.

Iondrive Limited: Company Profile

Iondrive, formerly Southern Gold Ltd, is a successful mineral exploration and battery technology commercialisation group listed on the Australian Securities Exchange (under ASX ticker "ION"). The mineral exploration business includes 100% interest in a substantial portfolio of REE, Li and precious metals exploration projects in South Korea. Backed by a first-class technical team, Iondrive's aim is to find world-class deposits in a jurisdiction that has seen very little modern exploration. The commercialisation business holds three exclusive world-wide licences comprising the next generation battery technologies comprising 1) an enhanced performance non-flammable lithium-ion based battery, 2) a low-cost, environmentally sustainable method for recycling lithium batteries, and 3) a low-cost, high cycle life water-based battery.

Reference to Previous Announcements

Previous ION exploration and historical stream-sediment sampling results referred to in this announcement have been previously announced to the ASX, as specified in footnotes 2,3,5 & 6. The announcements are available to the public at <https://southerngold.com.au/investors/asx-announcements/>, <https://wcsecure.weblink.com.au/pdf/ION/02658284.pdf> and <https://wcsecure.weblink.com.au/pdf/ION/02711597.pdf>



Forward-looking statements

Some statements in this release regarding estimates or future events are forward looking statements. These may include, without limitation:

- Estimates of future cash flows, the sensitivity of cash flows to metal prices and foreign exchange rate movements.
- Estimates of future metal production; and
- Estimates of the resource base and statements regarding future exploration results.

Such forward looking statements are based on a number of estimates and assumptions made by the Company and its consultants in light of experience, current conditions and expectations of future developments which the Company believes are appropriate in the current circumstances. Such statements are expressed in good faith and believed to have a reasonable basis. However, the estimates are subject to known and unknown risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from estimated results.

All reasonable efforts have been made to provide accurate information, but the Company does not undertake any obligation to release publicly any revisions to any "forward-looking statement" to reflect events or circumstances after the date of this presentation or ASX release, except as maybe required under applicable laws. Recipients should make their own enquiries in relation to any investment decisions from a licensed investment advisor.