

1 **In situ multiple sulfur isotope analysis by SIMS of pyrite, chalcopyrite,**
2 **pyrrhotite, and pentlandite to refine magmatic ore genetic models**

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4 LaFlamme, Crystal^{a*}, Martin, Laure^b, Jeon, Heejin^b, Reddy, Steven, M.^c, Selvaraja,
5 Vikraman^a, Caruso, Stefano^a, Bui, Thi Hao^d, Roberts, Malcolm P.^b, Voute, Francois^a,
6 Hagemann, Steffen^a, Wacey, David^b, Littman, Sten^c, Wing, Boswell^d, Fiorentini, Marco^a,
7 Kilburn, Matthew R.^b

8 ^aCentre for Exploration Targeting, ARC Research Council Centre of Excellence for Core to
9 Crust Fluid Systems (CCFS), University of Western Australia, Australia

10 ^bCentre for Microscopy, Characterisation, and Analysis, ARC Centre of Excellence for Core
11 to Crust Fluid Systems (CCFS), University of Western Australia, Australia

12 ^cThe Institute for Geoscience Research, Department of Applied Geology, Curtin University
13 of Technology, Australia

14 ^dDepartment of Earth and Planetary Sciences and GEOTOP, McGill University, Canada

15 ^eMax-Planck-Institut für Marine Mikrobiologie, Bremen, Germany

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18 *corresponding author: crystal.laflamme@uwa.edu.au

19
20 **ABSTRACT**

21 With growing interest in the application of in situ multiple sulfur isotope analysis to a variety
22 of mineral systems, we report here the development of a suite of sulfur isotope standards for
23 distribution relevant to magmatic, magmatic-hydrothermal, and hydrothermal ore systems.
24 These materials include Sierra pyrite (FeS₂), Nifty-b chalcopyrite (CuFeS₂), Alexo pyrrhotite
25 (Fe_(1-x)S), and VMSO pentlandite ((Fe,Ni)₉S₈) that have been chemically characterized by
26 electron microprobe analysis, isotopically characterized for $\delta^{33}\text{S}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S}$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S}$ by
27 fluorination gas-source mass spectrometry, and tested for homogeneity at the micro-scale by
28 secondary ion mass spectrometry. Beam-sample interaction as a function of crystallographic
29 orientation is determined to have no effect on $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ isotopic measurements of
30 pentlandite. These new findings provided the basis for a case study on the genesis of the
31 Long-Victor nickel-sulfide deposit located in the world class Kambalda nickel camp in the
32 southern Kalgoorlie Terrane of Western Australia. Results demonstrate that precise multiple
33 sulfur isotope analyses from magmatic pentlandite, pyrrhotite and chalcopyrite can better
34 constrain genetic models related to ore-forming processes. Data indicate that pentlandite,
35 pyrrhotite and chalcopyrite are in isotopic equilibrium and display similar $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ values
36 +0.2‰. This isotopic equilibrium unequivocally fingerprints the isotopic signature of the

1 magmatic assemblage. The three sulfide phases show slightly variable $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ values
2 ($\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{chalcopyrite}} = 2.9 \pm 0.3\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{pentlandite}} = 3.1 \pm 0.2\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{pyrrhotite}} = 3.9 \pm 0.5\text{‰}$), which
3 are indicative of natural fractionation. Careful in situ multiple sulfur isotope analysis of
4 multiple sulfide phases is able to capture the subtle isotopic variability of the magmatic
5 sulfide assemblage, which may help resolve the nature of the ore-forming process. Hence,
6 this SIMS-based approach discriminates the magmatic sulfur isotope signature from that
7 recorded in metamorphic- and alteration-related sulfides, which is not resolved during bulk
8 rock fluorination analysis. The results indicate that, unlike the giant dunite-hosted komatiite
9 systems that thermo-mechanically assimilated volcanogenic massive sulfides proximal to
10 vents and display negative $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ values, the Kambalda ores formed in relatively distal
11 environments assimilating abyssal sulfidic shales.

12

13 **HIGHLIGHTS**

- 14 • Characterisation of four sulfide standards for multiple sulfur isotope analysis: pyrite,
15 chalcopyrite, pyrrhotite, and pentlandite for distribution
- 16 • Analysis of orientation effect in pentlandite
- 17 • Natural sulfur isotope fractionation between pentlandite and pyrrhotite
- 18 • Case study multiple sulfur isotope analysis of three sulfide phases within world-class
19 Long-Victor komatiite-hosted nickel-sulfide deposit

20

21 **KEYWORDS**

22 Multiple sulfur isotopes, SIMS, in situ, sulfide minerals, ore genesis

23

24 **1. INTRODUCTION**

25 Sulfur is a trace element in silicate melts, typically concentrated below 0.2 wt.%. However, it
26 is an essential element in a wide range of environments including the lithosphere, biosphere,
27 hydrosphere, and atmosphere. In recent years, our understanding of the sulfur cycle and its
28 role in the evolution of these terrestrial reservoirs has been revolutionised by the study of the
29 sulfur isotope composition of pyrite, the most common sulfide mineral (Farquhar et al., 2000;
30 Kump, 2012 and references therein; Strauss, 1997; Thomassot et al., 2015). We have gained a
31 fundamental understanding into the development of early Earth's processes, in particular
32 those linked to the emergence of life and the development of an oxygenated atmosphere
33 (Farquhar et al., 2000), by the discovery of mass independent fractionation (MIF) of sulfur
34 isotopes.

35

36 Sulfur resides in the Earth's mantle, crust and hydrosphere but is locally concentrated in
37 mineralised systems typically associated with ore deposits, where it acts as the primary
38 complexing ligand in the formation of sulfide minerals. Mantle- and crustally-derived
39 magmas have brought large quantities of economic metals from the Earth's interior to the

1 near surface, and hydrothermal fluids have remobilised and re-precipitated these metals
2 within the crust as different sulfides. The sulfur itself may be sourced from a variety of
3 compositional reservoirs, each with distinct isotopic compositions. Mixing and interactions
4 with the mantle, crustal magmas, hydrothermal fluids, country rocks, or meteoric waters
5 imparts specific isotopic signatures, resulting in minerals with a range of isotopic
6 compositions. As such, intra-grain and inter-grain chemical and isotopic variations in sulfur-
7 rich mineralised systems record the interaction of these different reservoirs and offer unique
8 insights into the complex fluid-rock interactions within mineral systems (McCuaig et al.
9 2010). For example, in magmatic ore deposits, sulfur isotope data have fingerprinted the
10 source of the sulfur linked to ore genesis (Bekker et al., 2009; Chang et al., 2008; Fiorentini
11 et al., 2012a; Hiebert et al., 2013; Leshner and Groves, 1986; Penniston-Dorland et al., 2008;
12 Sharman et al., 2013) and constrained the geodynamic framework where these deposits
13 formed (e.g., Chen et al., 2015; Fiorentini et al., 2012b; Giacometti et al., 2014). Similarly,
14 sulfur isotope studies have proven to be vital in characterising magmatic-hydrothermal (Helt
15 et al., 2014; Xue et al., 2013) and hydrothermal systems (e.g., Jamieson et al., 2013; Leach et
16 al., 2005; Sharman et al., 2015). Constraining the sulfur isotopic signature in magmatic-
17 hydrothermal mineral systems is useful in delineating the source of sulfur, and is an
18 important parameter to understand how, when and where sulfur saturation occurs (e.g., Evans
19 et al., 2014). In addition, such data provides a better understanding of the geodynamic
20 environment in which the mineralising process occurs which impacts on the targeting
21 rationale applied during exploration (e.g., Fiorentini et al., 2012a). Consequently, ore
22 deposits are a perfect laboratory for understanding the source and mobility of sulfur in a wide
23 variety of settings.

24
25 Mineral systems and ore deposits have characteristically complex microscale intra-granular
26 and inter-granular textures due to variations in their chemistry during formation and
27 subsequent re-equilibration during cooling (e.g., pentlandite exsolution in pyrrhotite; Durazzo
28 and Taylor, 1982). In situ sulfur isotope analysis at the microscale has the potential to
29 revolutionise our understanding of ore forming processes. The development of in situ
30 analytical techniques using laser ablation-(multi-collection)-inductively coupled plasma mass
31 spectrometry (LA-MC-ICPMS; see Bühn et al., 2012; Craddock et al., 2008) and large
32 geometry secondary ion mass spectrometry (SIMS; see Farquhar et al., 2013; Ireland et al.,
33 2014; Ushikubo et al., 2014; Whitehouse, 2013) now allows high-precision isotopic analysis
34 of multiple sulfur isotopes with spot sizes nearing ten microns. The ultra-high sensitivity of
35 SIMS in particular affords the ability to measure the least common stable isotopes of sulfur,
36 ^{33}S (0.75%) and ^{36}S (0.02%), together with the more abundant ^{32}S (95.02%) and ^{34}S (4.21%)
37 isotopes, simultaneously from the same volume of material. This gives the potential to
38 identify the anomalous sulfur isotopic signatures indicative of mass independent fractionation
39 (MIF; $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$) together with $\delta^{34}\text{S}$.

40
41 Instrumental mass fractionation in SIMS is intrinsically linked to the composition and
42 crystallographic orientation of the material being analysed and the specific conditions under
43 which the analysis is performed. Therefore, accurate isotopic measurements require careful
44 standardization against a suitable matrix-matched reference material (Eiler et al., 1997; Stern,

1 2008). Although a number of reference materials have been developed for acquiring in situ 2-
2 sulfur isotopes (e.g., [Kozdon et al., 2010](#)), the majority of published in situ 3- or 4-sulfur
3 isotope analyses have been acquired from the most common sulfide mineral, pyrite. As such,
4 many SIMS laboratories worldwide have developed “in-house” pyrite (and to a lesser degree
5 other) standards for multiple sulfur isotope analysis (Balmat, Isua 248474, Ruttan; see
6 [Whitehouse, 2013](#); [Ushikubo et al., 2014](#); [Hauri et al., 2016](#)). With growing interest in the
7 application of in situ sulfur isotope analysis to a wide variety range of mineral systems, there
8 is an increased need for reference material for a variety of common sulfide minerals, which
9 presently remain scarce. In addition to composition, sulfide crystallography has previously
10 been demonstrated to potentially create an orientation effect-induced instrumental mass bias
11 on sulfur isotope analysis for certain sulfides including galena (PbS) and sphalerite
12 ((Zn,Fe)S) but not others including pyrite (FeS₂), pyrrhotite (Fe_(1-x)S), and chalcopyrite
13 (CuFeS₂) ([Kozdon et al., 2010](#); [Kita et al., 2011](#)). Of these sulfides, most have a diamond-
14 cubic crystal structure, with the exception of galena which has a cubic hexoctahedral
15 structure. Here, we build on this observation to demonstrate that orientation effect does not
16 induce instrumental mass fractionation on $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ in another cubic hexoctahedral
17 sulfide - pentlandite ((Fe,Ni)₉S₈).

18
19 Deviations from mass dependent fractionation are typically (but not uniquely) triggered by
20 the presence of an oxygen-poor atmosphere that existed before the Great Oxidation Event at
21 ca. 2.4 Ga in which ultraviolet radiation was the driver for mass independent photochemical
22 separation of sulfur isotopes (e.g., [Farquhar et al., 2000](#); [Farquhar and Wing, 2003](#)). For this
23 reason, the measure of ³³S has become essential to evaluate the full suite of isotopic features
24 of Archean rocks (e.g., [Bühn et al., 2012](#); [Farquhar et al., 2013](#)), and those from younger
25 terranes that might be sourcing Archean rocks (e.g., [Cabral et al., 2013](#); [Selvaraja et al., in](#)
26 [submission](#)). The least abundant stable isotope of sulfur, ³⁶S, behaves similarly to ³³S, and has
27 also become increasingly important for fingerprinting Archean source rocks and
28 understanding early Earth processes. The $\Delta^{36}\text{S}/\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ ratio can elucidate between mass
29 dependent processes and contributions from Archean MIF sources when magnitudes of mass
30 dependent fractionation deviations are small ([Farquhar et al., 2007](#); [Johnston, 2011](#)).

31
32 We present multiple sulfur isotope data from pentlandite, pyrrhotite, and chalcopyrite from
33 an Archean komatiitic massive nickel-sulfide deposit. To do so, we have developed four
34 reference materials (pyrite, chalcopyrite, pyrrhotite, and pentlandite) that we have fully
35 chemically and isotopically characterized for multiple sulfur isotope analysis. We present
36 multiple sulfur isotope results from multiple sulfides within the deposit to constrain the
37 source of the sulfur that triggered sulfide saturation and investigate the geodynamic setting in
38 which this magmatic system was emplaced.

39 40 **2. METHODS**

41 To determine the chemical and isotope composition of potential sulfide reference materials
42 we combined three analytical techniques. Firstly, we performed wavelength dispersive
43 spectrometry (WDS) by electron probe micro-analysis (EPMA) on a multitude of grains (or
44 grain fragments) of each candidate reference material to ensure that the reference material is

1 chemically homogeneous across a number of grains (or grain fragments). Chemical
2 compositions (spot analyses) were linked to chemical WDS maps and scanning electron
3 microscope backscatter electron (SEM-BSE) images to highlight potential chemical zonation,
4 mineralogical inclusions, and fractures. Details of SEM-BSE and EPMA-WDS are presented
5 in the Supplementary Material.

6
7 Secondly, at least five grains (or grain fragments) of each candidate reference material were
8 analysed for in situ multiple sulfur isotopes by SIMS to determine whether an adequate level
9 of reproducibility exists at the intra- and inter-grain scale (isotopic homogeneity). Multiple
10 materials were tested prior to selecting the material that displayed adequate isotopic
11 homogeneity (reproducibility on $^{34}\text{S}/^{32}\text{S}$ better than 0.5‰). For instance, five materials from
12 different environments were tested to find a suitable chalcopyrite standard (see section 5.1 for
13 discussion on selecting sulfide reference material). To further determine on what scale
14 sufficient homogeneity existed once the reference material was selected, more than 40 grains
15 for each material were analysed. If the reference material was deemed suitable, multiple
16 grains or grain fragments (in the case of material derived from large crystals) were analysed
17 by bulk multiple sulfur analyses. Bulk analyses were completed by fluorination gas-source
18 mass spectrometry. In each case, sulfur was extracted from 5 to 11 separate aliquots (of
19 extracted sulfur from separate grains or grain fragments) and analysed for its multiple sulfur
20 isotopic composition. We further evaluated the homogeneity of the SIMS material by
21 completing an MSWD test on the data after [Wing and Farquhar, \(2015\)](#). The respective
22 analytical techniques are described in detail below.

23
24 For the case study, we investigated the chemical composition and multiple sulfur isotope
25 signature of three phases (pentlandite, pyrrhotite, chalcopyrite). A micro-X-ray Fluorescence
26 (XRF) elemental map was acquired to visually investigate the textural relationship between
27 the three sulfide phases and choose samples for in situ and bulk isotope analyses (details
28 regarding analytical set up are presented in the Supplementary Materials). EPMA analyses on
29 pyrrhotite and pentlandite were completed to ensure a similar chemical composition to the
30 reference materials (see Appendix A). In situ isotope signatures of pentlandite, pyrrhotite and
31 chalcopyrite were compared to ten bulk rock fluorination values that incorporated all the co-
32 existing sulfide phases (see Appendix B and C). We also used the case study material to
33 assess the crystallographic orientation effect in pentlandite. To do so, Electron Backscatter
34 Diffraction Analysis (EBSD) was completed on this sample and pentlandite crystal
35 orientation was compared with multiple sulfur isotope results.

36 37 2.1 Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometry

38 2.1.1 *Analytical set up and conditions*

39 In situ sulfur isotopic ratios were measured using a CAMECA IMS1280 large-geometry ion
40 microprobe at the CMCA, UWA. Sample mounts were made by coring 3 mm diameter pucks
41 from rock fragments using a drill press fitted with diamond drill bits, then mounted and cast
42 in the central portion of a 25 mm in diameter epoxy mount. Standard blocks (cast separately
43 to be reused) were made by mounting 1-2 grain fragments of pyrite chalcopyrite and 1 mm
44 diameter pucks of rock fragments host to pyrrhotite and pentlandite. Reference materials

1 were cast in epoxy ~8 mm from the edge of a mount. Sample mounts and standard blocks
2 were trimmed to a thickness of 5 mm using a precision saw, coated with 30 nm of gold, and
3 mounted together (after being appropriately trimmed) in the sample holder (further details
4 provided in the Supplementary Materials). Care was taken to set the surfaces of the standard
5 and sample blocks at the same level in the sample holder. If necessary, a small amount of
6 carbon paint was applied to provide good conductivity between both pieces. To ensure that
7 results are not a product of analytical artefacts due to X-Y-Z positioning, a reference material
8 is also mounted and cast with the sample block to compare with values generated from the
9 standard block. Additional details regarding sample preparation for SIMS analysis are
10 presented in the Supplementary Materials.

11
12 The ion microprobe was operated in multicollection mode using a Cs⁺ primary beam with an
13 intensity of ~1–4 nA in Gaussian mode that interacted with the sample at 20 keV. In some
14 instances, depending on the nature of the sample (i.e., size of sulfides, surrounding material,
15 whether sulfides are mounted as individual grains or incorporated in rock chips) a normal
16 incidence electron flood gun was used for charge compensation. Following a 30 s pre-sputter,
17 secondary sulfur ions from the target sample were extracted at -10 kV and admitted to the
18 mass spectrometer with a field magnification of 133×, with automated centering of the
19 secondary beam in the field/aperture (both x and y; aperture size 4000 μm) and entrance slit
20 (x direction only; slit width 60 μm or 90 μm in some cases). The NMR magnetic field
21 controller locked the axial mass at the beginning of each session, and the mass spectrometer
22 operated at a mass resolution (M/ΔM) of about 2500 (exit slit width of 500 μm on the
23 multicollector). Under these conditions, the hydrite interference ³²S¹H on the ³³S peak was
24 avoided by offsetting the ³³S peak centre to the low mass side.

25
26 For triple sulfur isotope measurements (³²S, ³³S and ³⁴S), a 15 μm raster was applied, and the
27 sulfur isotopes were simultaneously detected by three Faraday Cups using amplifiers with
28 10¹⁰ Ω (L'2), 10¹¹ Ω (L1), and 10¹¹ Ω (FC2 or H1) resistors. Data were collected over 123 s
29 of acquisition time in 20 integration cycles. Count rates on ³²S varied from 1×10⁹ to 3.5×10⁹
30 cps on pyrite, depending on the intensity of the primary beam but is typically 2.2–2.4×10⁹ cps
31 with a 2.5 nA primary beam.

32
33 Quadruple sulfur isotope (³²S, ³³S, ³⁴S, and ³⁶S) analysis has different analytical protocols to
34 include the measurement of ³⁶S using a low-noise ion counting electron multiplier (EM) in
35 the H2 position of the multicollector axis. A higher primary beam current (3–4 nA), larger
36 raster (30 μm for pre-sputter and 20 μm for analysis) and longer acquisition time (279 s in 45
37 integration cycles) were necessary to achieve adequate repeatability on ³⁶S. The count rates
38 on ³⁶S of typically 2–4×10⁵ cps for pyrite cause a significant gain drift for the EM. Hence, the
39 EM high voltage was optimised using a Pulse Height Amplitude (PHA) distribution curve at
40 the start of each session, and the gain drift was measured three times during each analysis (at
41 the beginning, middle and end) and corrected by the CAMECA CIPS software (see
42 [Schuhmacher et al., 2004](#)). In the case of unknown material, measurements were interspersed
43 with matrix-matched reference material to calibrate isotope ratios and monitor internal
44 sample repeatability.

1

2 2.1.2 Data processing and error propagation

3 In situ sulfur isotope measurements by SIMS are corrected in two steps. Firstly, the pyrite
4 standard (Sierra; see section 3.1) is analysed once every five to eight analyses, regardless of
5 whether the pyrite is being used as the primary standard for that particular session, allowing
6 for the assessment of the stability of the instrument during the given analytical session, and
7 correct for instrumental drift. Secondly, sample isotopic ratios are corrected for instrumental
8 mass fractionation using the correction factor α , determined by normalising the mean of all
9 measurements on the matrix matched reference material, R_{std} , to the isotopic ratio of the
10 reference material R_{RM} as obtained by independent bulk methods (e.g. fluorination gas-source
11 mass spectrometry):

$$12 \quad (1) \quad \alpha = \frac{R_{std}}{R_{RM}}$$

13 The propagated uncertainty for the δ^xS value of each sample spot takes into account the
14 internal error on the raw isotopic ratios, the uncertainty on the drift correction where
15 necessary and the uncertainty on the standard measurement, calculated as the standard
16 deviation on the mean isotopic ratios measured in the standards.

17

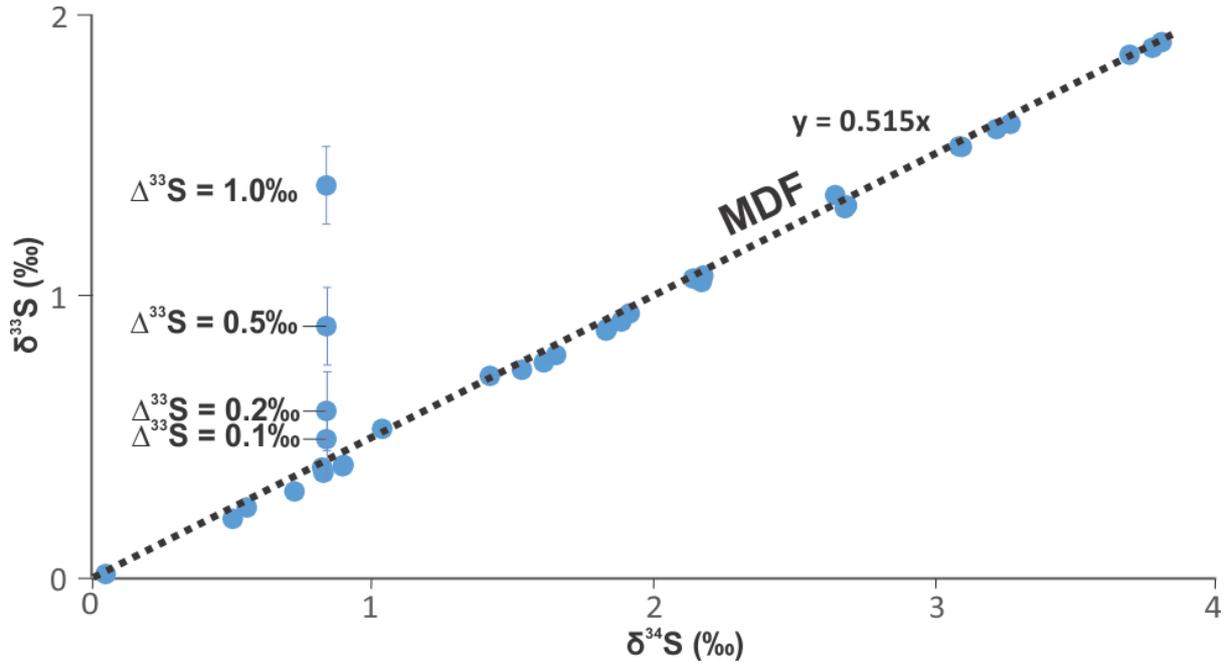
18 Identifying MIF has become increasingly important in assessing a number of geological
19 environments because it reveals fundamental information pertaining to the age and source of
20 sulfide mineralization (e.g., [Johnston, 2011](#)). MIF is presented as $\Delta^{33}S$ and $\Delta^{36}S$ to quantify
21 the deviation from the mass dependant fractionation slope; however, these values can be
22 small in magnitude – often much less than 1.0‰ (see Figure 1). Therefore, it is important to
23 systematically quantify uncertainty on these values to ascertain whether a MIF signature does
24 indeed exist.

25

26 The mass independent relationship is denoted by the $\Delta^{33}S$ and $\Delta^{36}S$ notation to represent the
27 deviation between the isotopic ratios measured and those predicted according to mass
28 dependent fractionation, and is defined as:

$$29 \quad (2) \quad \Delta^xS_i = \delta^xS_i - 1000 \times \left[\left(\frac{\delta^{34}S_{V-CDT}}{1000} + 1 \right)^\lambda - 1 \right]$$

30 where x is either 33 or 36 and λ is the slope of the mass dependent fractionation line (0.515
31 for $\delta^{33}S$ and 1.91 for $\delta^{36}S$; [Hulston and Thode, 1965](#); [Ono et al., 2006a](#)). The λ values
32 approximate the relationships for high temperature equilibrium isotopic fractionations
33 ([Farquhar and Wing, 2003](#)).



1

2 **Figure 1:** Calculated magnitudes of mass independent fractionation as deviations from the mass dependent
 3 fractionation line (MDF) presented in $\delta^{33}\text{S}$ vs. $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ space. The small deviations from the MDF line represent
 4 mass independent fractionation. This highlights the importance of: 1) precise and accurate multiple sulfur
 5 isotope measurements, and 2) quantification of uncertainty on $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$. Although not expressed in this figure,
 6 quantifying $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ is equally important.

7

8 The uncertainty on $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ is calculated by propagating the uncertainties on $\delta^{33}\text{S}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S}$,
 9 and $\delta^{36}\text{S}$; however, paired sulfur isotope ratios covary in $\delta^{33}\text{S}$ – $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\delta^{36}\text{S}$ – $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ space. To
 10 account for this relationship, we determined the covariance on the reference material of the
 11 analytical session and propagated to the measurements of $\delta^{33}\text{S}$ and $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ ($\sigma_{\delta^{34}\text{S}\delta^{33}\text{S}}$) and $\delta^{36}\text{S}$
 12 and $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ ($\sigma_{\delta^{34}\text{S}\delta^{36}\text{S}}$). The uncertainty on $\Delta^x\text{S}$ is calculated here in a similar manner to
 13 [Farquhar et al. \(2013\)](#) but also accounts for this covariance in the formulation of the
 14 uncertainties on $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ as follows:

15

$$(3) \sigma_{\Delta^x\text{S}} = \sqrt{\sigma_{\delta^x\text{S}}^2 + \sigma_{\delta^{34}\text{S}}^2 \times \left[\lambda \times \left(1 + \frac{\delta^{34}\text{S}}{1000} \right)^{-(1-\lambda)} \times \sigma_{\delta^{34}\text{S}}^2 \right]^2 + 2 \times \sigma_{\delta^{34}\text{S}\delta^x\text{S}} \times \left[\lambda \times \left(1 + \frac{\delta^{34}\text{S}}{1000} \right)^{-(1-\lambda)} \right]}$$

17

18

19 where variables are as in equation 2.

20

21 2.2 Fluorination gas-source mass spectrometry

22 Samples for fluorination coupled with gas-source mass spectrometry were analysed at the
 23 Stable Isotope Laboratory of the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at McGill
 24 University, Montreal, Canada. Sulfide-bearing samples were microdrilled using a 1 mm

1 diameter hand drill. Each sample was microdrilled multiple times. Sulfur was chemically
2 extracted from the 15–30 mg powders to form silver sulfide by chromium reduction as
3 described by [Canfield et al. \(1986\)](#). Silver sulfide was fluorinated at 225°C in a Ni bomb
4 under F₂ atmosphere for nine hours to produce SF₆. The samples were purified cryogenically
5 and by gas chromatography and introduced by SF₆ line into a Thermo Electron MAT 253
6 mass spectrometer fitted with a dual inlet to measure ³²SF₅⁺, ³³SF₅⁺, ³⁴SF₅⁺, and ³⁶SF₅⁺. Sulfur
7 isotopic ratios are expressed on the V-CDT scale, on which the δ³⁴S, Δ³³S, and Δ³⁶S values of
8 the Ag₂S reference material, IAEA-S-1, are taken to be -0.3‰, 0.094‰, and -0.7‰,
9 respectively ([Wing and Farquhar, 2015](#)). The precision and accuracy of the bulk fluorination
10 system is evaluated by repeat analyses that return uncertainty (2SD) on δ³⁴S, Δ³³S, and Δ³⁶S
11 values as better than 0.15‰, 0.02‰ and 0.4‰, respectively. The Δ³³S and Δ³⁶S values are
12 calculated in the same manner as described in equation 2.

14 2.3 Electron Backscatter Diffraction Analysis (EBSD)

15 EBSD analysis of pentlandite to compare crystallographic orientation with multiple sulfur
16 isotope analysis was undertaken on a Tescan MIRA3 field emission SEM at the Microscopy
17 and Microanalysis Facility, John de Laeter Centre, Curtin University, Australia. Pentlandite
18 from massive sulfide ore was analysed within four pucks that were prepared into a mount as
19 described in the Supplementary Materials. Following standard petrographic diamond
20 polishing, the mount was polished chemically and mechanically to 60 nm using colloidal
21 silica in pH10 NaOH. Prior to analysis the sample was coated with a 5 nm carbon film.
22 EBSD data were acquired from a sample tilted at 70° using an Oxford Instruments Aztec 3.0
23 system operating at 12 kV, a beam intensity of 16 nA and fixed working distance of 20 mm.
24 Pentlandite, pyrrhotite and magnetite orientation data were collected from each sample.
25 Crystallographic data required to create the theoretical match units, by which empirically
26 collected patterns are compared, were derived from Rajamani and Prewitt (1975) for
27 pentlandite, Wechsler et al. (1984) for magnetite and Alsen (1925) for pyrrhotite. EBSD data
28 were collected using the “mapping” mode of the Aztec EBSD software with a step size of 10
29 μm, a minimum of 8 bands and a Hough resolution of 60. In all cases, solutions gave mean
30 angular deviation (MAD) values of <1° and calculation intergrain orientations are
31 reproducible.

32
33 Post-processing of EBSD data was undertaken using Oxford Instruments Channel 5.12
34 software. Noise reduction protocols applied to the data were the Channel “wildspike”
35 correction and a 5 nearest neighbour zero solution algorithm. EBSD data are shown as
36 standard phase and inverse pole figure maps in the Supplementary Materials.

38 3. MATERIALS

39
40 Sulfides are inherently heterogeneous both chemically and mineralogically. Therefore,
41 identifying natural specimens that may be used as sulfur isotope reference material is a
42 difficult task whereby geological environment, pressure-temperature conditions, chemical
43 composition, and grain size need to be considered. In the case of selecting reference material
44 for pyrite and chalcopyrite, small pieces (~2 cm³) of much larger crystals from hydrothermal

1 deposits demonstrate a more reasonable degree of chemical and isotopic homogeneity over
2 small individual crystals that make up massive to sulfide-rich layers. For each of these
3 sulfides, although the total volume amount of reference material characterized is small (in
4 order to ascertain isotopic homogeneity), advancements in SIMS and LA-ICPMS capabilities
5 and procedures (i.e., new sample holder geometry in SIMS; [Peres et al. 2012](#); and large
6 volume cells in LA-ICPMS) allow for the repeat use of the same reference material mounted
7 in standard blocks.

8
9 In the case of pyrrhotite and pentlandite, these two sulfide phases are commonly exsolved
10 from a monosulfide solid solution and typically have intra-grain associations in magmatic
11 environments ([Durazzo and Taylor, 1982](#); [Kelly and Vaughn, 1983](#)). Furthermore, the
12 chemical compositions of pyrrhotite ($\text{Fe}_{(1-x)}\text{S}$; $x = 0.0\text{--}0.2$) and pentlandite ($(\text{Fe}, \text{Ni})_9\text{S}_8$) are
13 variable, reflective of conditions under which they formed. Pyrrhotite and pentlandite do not
14 commonly form large hydrothermally-derived crystals, and so characterized reference
15 material is derived from a small piece of a sulfide-rich and massive sulfide horizon,
16 respectively. Images of the reference materials are presented in the Supplementary Materials.
17 The effects of intra-grain and inter-grain textures on isotopic and chemical homogeneity of
18 pyrrhotite and pentlandite reference materials are assessed in sections 4.3 and 4.4. Additional
19 discussion on selecting reference materials is presented in section 5.1.

20 21 3.1 Pyrite – Sierra

22 Sierra is a 2 cm³ cube from a large 9 kg cube of pyrite sourced from a mine in the Cretaceous
23 stratigraphy of the Sonora region of Mexico. Although the exact provenance is unknown, the
24 area experienced widespread igneous activity during the late Cretaceous, resulting in the
25 formation of widespread porphyry copper mineralisation across the region ([Barra and
26 Valencia, 2014](#)). Sierra is mounted as 0.5 mm wide fragments of pyrite from the 2 cm³ cube
27 of Sierra for SIMS analysis.

28 29 3.2 Chalcopyrite – Nifty-b

30 The Nifty-b is a 2 cm³ piece of a larger 8 cm³ grain of chalcopyrite from the Nifty copper
31 deposit in the Proterozoic Paterson Orogen of Western Australia. Mineralization is hosted by
32 the Nifty stratigraphic member of the Yeneena Supergroup and occurs as hydrothermal
33 chalcopyrite-quartz-dolomite replacement of low grade shale ([Anderson et al., 2001](#)). Nifty-b
34 is mounted as 0.5 mm wide fragments of chalcopyrite pyrite from the 2 cm³ piece of Nifty-b
35 for SIMS analysis.

36 37 3.3 Pyrrhotite – Alexo

38 The Alexo monoclinic pyrrhotite forms subhedral 0.1–2 mm grains within a matrix of
39 peridotite. It is from the nickel-sulfide Alexo deposit within the ca. 2.7 Ga Abitibi granite-
40 greenstone belt of the Superior Craton, Canada. The sample comprises magmatic pyrrhotite
41 grains composed of disseminated to net-textured sulfides at the contact between olivine
42 cumulate komatiite rocks of the Munro Group and footwall andesitic rocks of the Hunter
43 Mine Group ([Naldrett, 1966](#)). The local metamorphic grade at Alexo is prehnite-pumpellyite-
44 facies. Based on stratigraphic associations, the timing of the nickel-sulfide mineralization at

Alexo is assumed to have occurred at ca. 2.7 Ga (Fyon and Green, 1991), which is coeval with other world-class komatiite-hosted nickel-sulfide systems worldwide (Barnes et al., 2013; Fiorentini et al., 2011; 2010). The Alexo sample was first isotopically defined by Bekker et al. (2009). A 2 cm x 3 cm x 0.5 cm pyrrhotite-rich layer of peridotite was trimmed from a larger hand sample. Alexo is mounted as 1 mm diameter pucks from this sample for SIMS analysis.

3.4 Pentlandite – VMSO

The VMSO pentlandite is from an amphibolite-facies massive sulfide lens from the Victor South shoot in the komatiite hosted nickel-sulfide Long-Victor deposit of the Kambalda camp. The Kambalda camp is situated in the ca. 2.7 Ga Kalgoorlie Terrane in the Yilgarn Craton of Western Australia (Barnes et al., 2013 and references therein). At Kambalda, nickel-sulfide deposits are associated with thick channelized komatiite flow units in stratigraphic contact with a thick pile of pillowed and massive tholeiitic basalts (Lunnon Basalt Formation), locally overlain by sulfidic metasedimentary rocks (e.g., Lesher and Groves, 1986). Subsequent folding has rotated the komatiitic channels from 30° to a vertical dip to the east and 10° plunge to the south as well as resulting in the localised remobilisation of some of the original sulfides into new structurally controlled positions (Stone et al., 2005). The VMSO sample was first isotopically defined by Bekker et al. (2009). It comprises 0.1–0.5 mm magmatic pentlandite grains interlayered at the cm-scale with pyrrhotite and pyrite from the basal sulfide layer of the Silver Lake Member of the Kambalda Formation. A 1 cm wide pentlandite rich layer trimmed from the sample. From this layer, VMSO is mounted as 1 mm diameter pucks from the host massive sulfide lens for SIMS analysis.

4. RESULTS

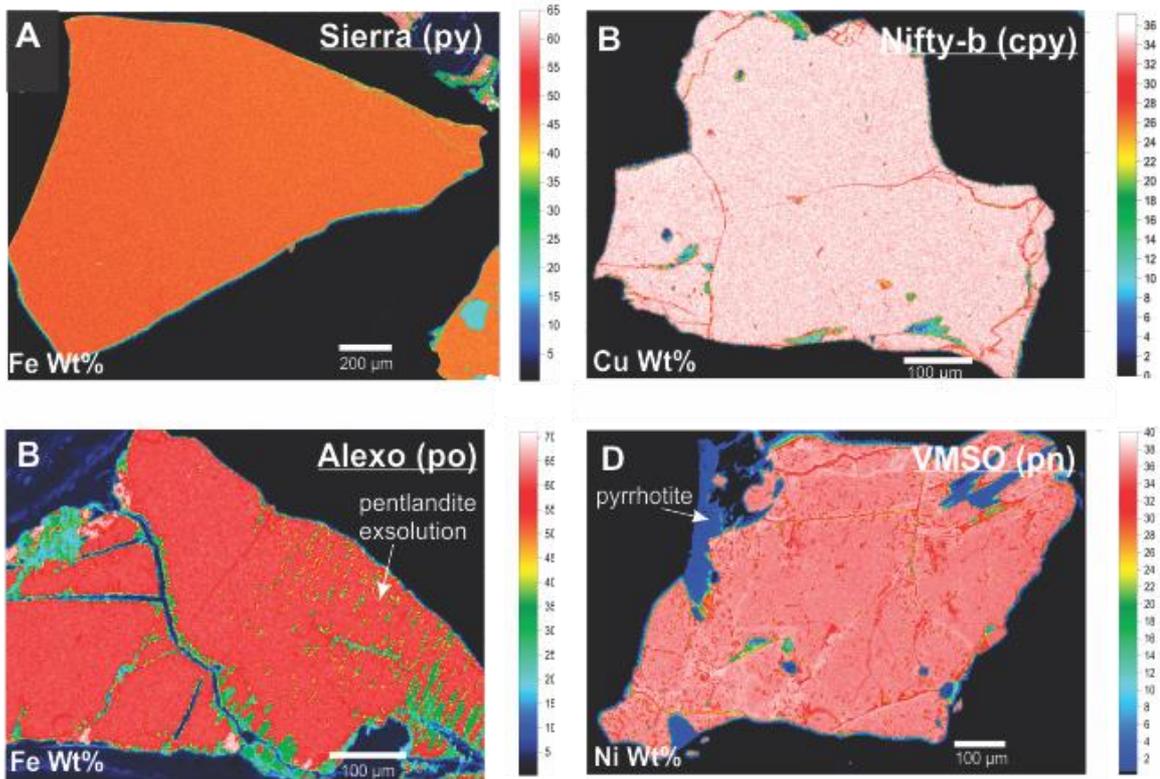
The following section presents chemical and isotopic results pertaining to standard development work for four new sulfide reference materials: pyrite (Sierra), chalcopyrite (Nifty-b), pyrrhotite (Alexo), and pentlandite (VMSO). A summary of mineral chemical composition collected by WDS for each reference material is presented in Table 1. The main sulfide forming elements and common trace elements are presented in the Supplementary Materials. Figure 2 shows select elemental maps (by WDS) of reference material.

Table 1: Summary of the chemical composition determined by wavelength dispersive spectrometry. Uncertainty is two standard deviations (2SD).

Standard	Mineral	Formula	Chemical composition (wt.%)			
			Fe (2SD)	Other (2SD)	Co (2SD)	S (2SD)
Sierra	Pyrite	FeS ₂	53.3 (0.5)	-	-	46.7 (0.4)
Nifty-b	Chalcopyrite	CuFeS ₂	34.5 (1.4)	Cu: 29.8 (1.2)	-	34.7 (0.5)

Alexo	Pyrrhotite	$\text{Fe}_{0.90}\text{S}$	60.5 (1.2)	-	-	38.6 (0.4)
VMSO	Pentlandite	$\text{Fe}_{4.1}\text{Ni}_{4.8}\text{Co}_{0.1}\text{S}_8$	29.4 (0.8)	Ni: 35.8 (0.9)	0.3 (0.1)	32.9 (0.4)

1



2

3 **Figure 2:** Compositional maps of: A) Sierra pyrite (Fe wt.%), B) Nifty-b chalcopyrite (Cu wt.%), C) Alexo
 4 pyrrhotite (Fe wt.%), D) VMSO pentlandite (Ni wt.%). Wavelength dispersive spectrometry maps are collected
 5 by EPMA.

6

7 Table 2 shows the accumulated SIMS isotopic data to define analytical repeatability of the
 8 four reference materials. Uncertainty reported in Table 2 and the text is twice the standard
 9 deviation of the mean. A compilation of in situ sulfur isotopic measurements for reference
 10 materials and unknown samples is presented in Supplementary Material.

11

12 **Table 2:** In situ SIMS sample repeatability for four presented reference materials and their
 13 corresponding uncertainty (reported as twice the standard deviation of the mean). “n” is the
 14 number of measurements.

15

16

Standard	SIMS sample repeatability (‰)				
	$\delta^{33}\text{S}$ (2SD)	$\delta^{34}\text{S}$ (2SD)	$\delta^{36}\text{S}$ (2SD)	$\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ (2SD)	$\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ (2SD) ¹
Sierra (py)	0.15 (n=1417)	0.25 (n=1417)	0.90 (n=861)	0.08 (n=1417)	0.77 ² (n=861) ³
Nifty-b (ccp)	0.14 (n=149)	0.23 (n=149)	0.63 (n=87)	0.08 (n=150)	0.48 ⁴ (n=88) ⁵
Alexo (po)	0.17 (n=340)	0.30 (n=340)	0.74 (n=199)	0.11 (n=340)	0.52 ⁶ (n=199) ⁷
VMSO (pn)	0.21 (n=246)	0.33 (n=246)	0.90 (n=105)	0.12 (n=246)	0.72 ⁸ (n=105) ⁹

10

11 Table 3 and text presents the weighted mean bulk sulfur isotope compositions ($\delta^{33}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$,
12 $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$, $\delta^{36}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$) measured by fluorination gas-source mass spectrometry (from multiple
13 aliquots of each reference material) and associated uncertainty, defined as two standard
14 deviations of the mean. All sulfur isotope results presented in the text are reported on the V-
15 CDT scale. Figure 3 demonstrates $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ isotope homogeneity of the reference materials. To
16 demonstrate that the reference material was homogeneous within the analytical uncertainty of
17 the fluorination gas-source mass spectrometry, an MSWD test was completed as detailed in
18 [Wing and Farquhar \(2015\)](#). Briefly, a population was considered homogeneous if all values
19 within a given sample population were consistent with a single mean value and returned
20 within a 95% confidence interval. Because the analytical error is well defined, MSWD is
21 used to estimate an independent “goodness of fit” to demonstrate separately that the reference
22 material is homogeneous and consistent within a single mean value. Bulk fluorination data
23 for four new reference materials are presented in the Supplementary Material.

24

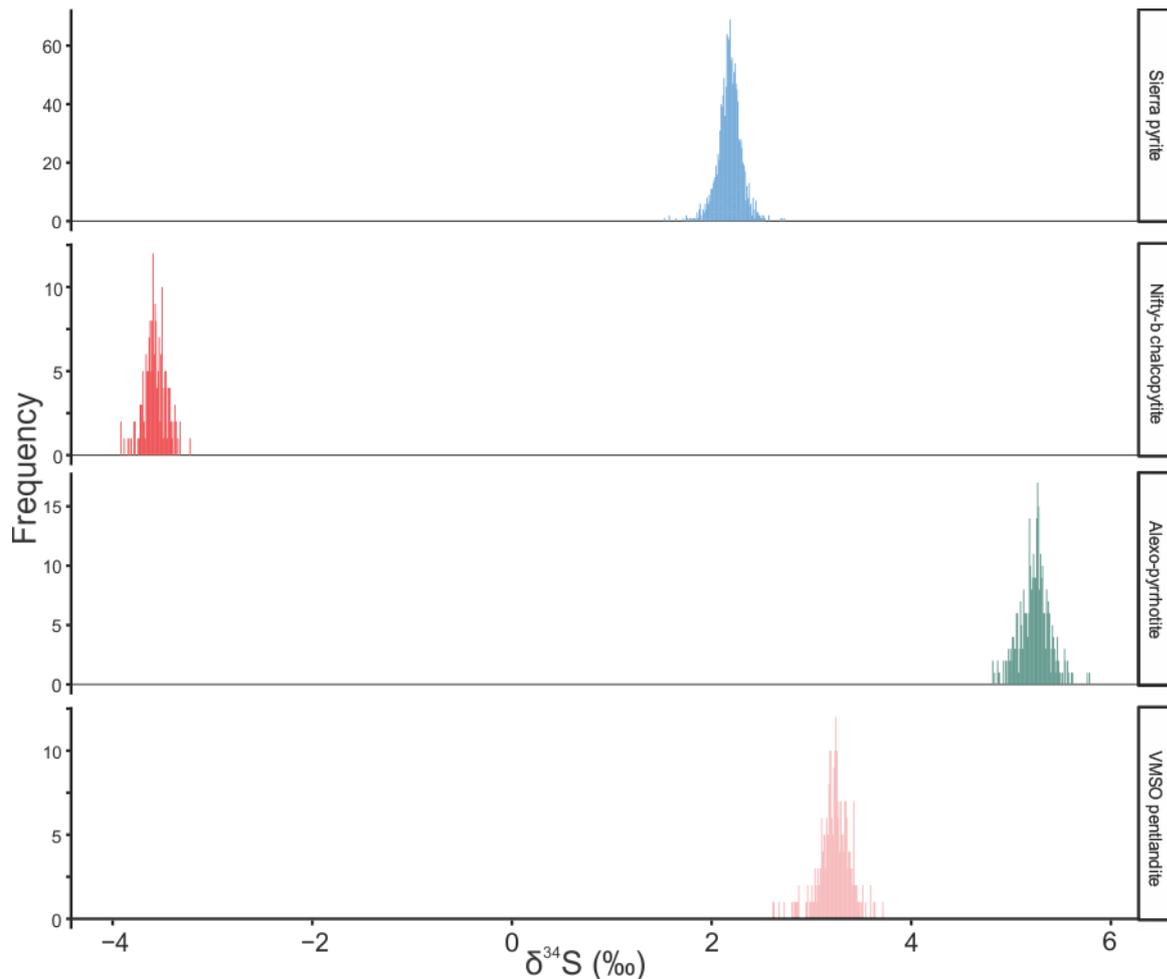
25 **Table 3:** Weighted mean bulk sulfur isotope compositions ($\delta^{33}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$, $\delta^{36}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$,
26 $\Delta^{33}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$, $\Delta^{36}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$) as measured by fluorination gas-source mass spectrometry. 2SD is two
27 standard deviations of the mean. SE is the standard error associated with the mean, and
28 MSWD is an independent goodness-of-fit check after [Wing and Farquhar \(2015\)](#). “n” is the
29 number of independent extractions and measurements of separate aliquots.

Ref.	Bulk measurement (‰)														
	n	$\delta^{33}\text{S}$	2SD	1SE	MSWD	$\delta^{34}\text{S}$	2SD	1SE	MSWD	$\delta^{36}\text{S}$	2SD	1SE	MSWD	$\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ (2SD)	$\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ (2SD)
Sierra (py)	12	1.09	0.15	0.02	0.99	2.17	0.28	0.04	0.89	3.96	0.60	0.09	1.00	-0.02 (0.01)	-0.18 (0.15)
Nifty-b (ccp)	5	-1.78	0.21	0.03	2.08	-3.58	0.44	0.07	2.22	-7.15	0.63	0.13	1.11	-0.06 (0.03)	-0.36 (0.45)
Alexo (po)	9	1.73	0.20	0.03	1.87	5.23	0.40	0.05	1.77	10.98	0.59	0.10	0.95	-0.96 (0.04)	1.02 (0.27)
VMSO (pn)	11	1.66	0.24	0.02	2.67	3.22	0.51	0.05	2.89	6.37	0.83	0.09	1.92	0.00 (0.02)	0.24 (0.35)

30

31

32



1
2 **Figure 3:** Probability density plots for $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ for normalized reference material to demonstrate the low degree of
3 uncertainty, normal distribution and lack of outliers.

4
5 **4.1 Pyrite – Sierra**

6 The chemical composition of Sierra, determined by EPMA ($n=78$ from five fragments),
7 reveals that it is composed of 46.7 ± 0.5 wt.% Fe and 53.3 ± 0.4 wt.% S, with trace amount of
8 Co (~ 400 ppm). WDS mapping further demonstrates that Sierra grain fragments are
9 chemically homogeneous (Figure 2a) and free of inclusions. Twelve different fragments of
10 the 2 cm^3 piece known as Sierra were analysed by fluorination gas-source mass spectrometry
11 and yielded weighted averaged values of: $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 1.09 \pm 0.15\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S} = 2.17 \pm 0.28\text{‰}$, and
12 $\delta^{36}\text{S} = 3.96 \pm 0.60\text{‰}$. Values for $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ are calculated as $-0.02 \pm 0.01\text{‰}$ and $0.18 \pm$
13 0.15‰ , respectively, indicating that Sierra does not contain a MIF signature. Sierra has been
14 measured as a primary reference for triple sulfur isotopes 1417 times amongst which 861
15 times included quadruple sulfur isotopes over 59 analytical sessions (see Figure 3).

16 Reproducibility of SIMS analyses on Sierra was $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.15\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S} = 0.24\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S} =$
17 1.04‰ . Reproducibility on $\Delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.08\text{‰}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S} = 0.77\text{‰}$. Different fragments of the
18 much larger pyrite, known as ‘Sonora’, have been described by [Farquhar et al. \(2013\)](#), [Evans](#)
19 [et al. \(2014\)](#) and [Wacey et al. \(2011\)](#). The Sonora fragments have slightly lighter values of
20 $\delta^{33}\text{S}$ (0.83‰), $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ (1.61‰), and $\delta^{36}\text{S}$ (3.25‰) than those we determine here for Sierra.

21
22 **4.2 Chalcopyrite – Nifty-b**

1 WDS analyses ($n = 352$) reveal that Nifty-b chalcopyrite is composed of 34.5 ± 1.4 wt.% Cu,
2 29.8 ± 1.2 wt.% Fe, and 34.7 ± 0.5 wt.% S, with trace amounts of Zn (~300 ppm). WDS
3 mapping demonstrates that Nifty-b is homogeneous and inclusion-free but contains fractures
4 that can be avoided during isotope measurements (Figure 2b). Five different grain fragments
5 of Nifty-b were analysed by fluorination gas-source mass spectrometry and yielded a
6 weighted average of: $\delta^{33}\text{S} = -1.78 \pm 0.21\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S} = -3.58 \pm 0.44\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S} = -7.15 \pm 0.63\text{‰}$.
7 Values for $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ are calculated as $0.06 \pm 0.03\text{‰}$ and $0.36 \pm 0.50\text{‰}$, respectively (the
8 large error on $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ prevents observation of MIF in this isotopic system). Nifty-b has a small
9 but consistent MIF signature. Nifty-b has been measured as a primary chalcopyrite reference
10 for triple sulfur isotopes 149 times, and for quadruple sulfur isotopes 87 times in 15
11 analytical sessions over the course of three years. Average measurement repeatability of
12 SIMS analyses on Nifty-b was $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.14\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S} = 0.23\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S} = 0.63\text{‰}$.
13 Reproducibility on $\Delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.08\text{‰}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S} = 0.48\text{‰}$.

14

15 4.3 Pyrrhotite – Alexo

16 Alexo pyrrhotite has very fine exsolution lamellae, $<10 \mu\text{m}$ in width, which are
17 heterogeneously dispersed. WDS analyses of Alexo ($n = 61$) reveal that it is composed of
18 60.5 ± 1.2 wt.% Fe and 38.6 ± 0.4 wt.% S. Exsolution lamellae are composed of cobalt-
19 bearing pentlandite with a composition of 32.3 ± 1.7 wt.% Fe, 32.3 ± 1.5 wt.% Ni, 1.2 ± 0.1
20 wt.% Co, and 33.1 ± 0.6 wt.% S ($n = 23$). These pentlandite lamellae are very fine and WDS
21 mapping demonstrates that they are unevenly distributed throughout the grain (see Figure 2c),
22 making them difficult to observe during SIMS analysis. Alexo pyrrhotite contains inclusions
23 of magnetite ($50 \mu\text{m}$) and conjugate fracture sets; both features can be readily avoided during
24 SIMS analysis.

25

26 Nine different grains of Alexo were analysed by fluorination gas-source mass spectrometry
27 and yielded a weighted average of: $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 1.73 \pm 0.20\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S} = 5.23 \pm 0.40\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S} =$
28 $10.98 \pm 0.59\text{‰}$. Uncertainty is reported as the standard error of the mean. Values for $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$
29 and $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ are calculated as $-0.96 \pm 0.04\text{‰}$ and $1.02 \pm 0.27\text{‰}$, respectively, indicating that
30 Alexo has a MIF signature. The values represent the bulk composition of Alexo,
31 incorporating both pyrrhotite and the pentlandite exsolution lamellae. Alexo has been
32 measured as a primary pyrrhotite reference for triple sulfur isotopes 340 times, and for
33 quadruple sulfur isotopes 199 times in 27 analytical sessions (see Figure 5). Reproducibility
34 of SIMS analyses on Alexo was $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.17\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S} = 0.30\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S} = 0.74\text{‰}$.
35 Reproducibility on $\Delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.11\text{‰}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S} = 0.52\text{‰}$.

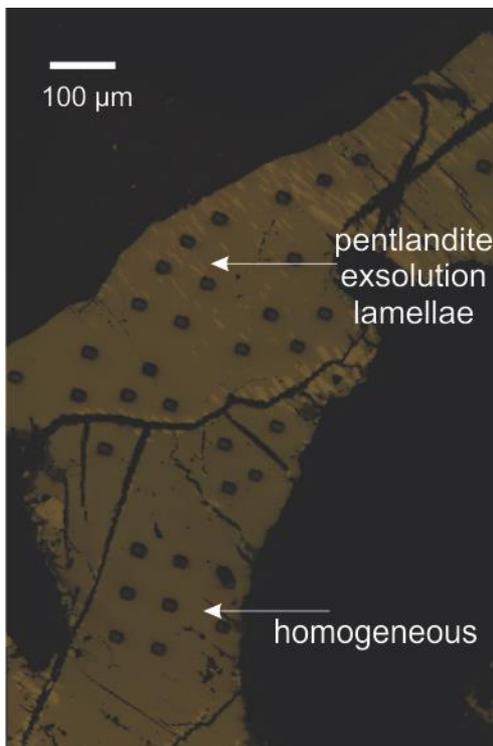
36

37 4.3.1 *The effect of pentlandite exsolution in Alexo pyrrhotite*

38 Unmixing of the solid solution pyrrhotite-pentlandite $(\text{Fe,Ni})_{1-x}\text{S}$ at temperatures below ~ 600
39 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ via exsolution of pentlandite is a common and ubiquitous petrochemical feature of
40 magmatic nickel-sulfide ore deposits (e.g., Kelly and Vaughn, 1983; Naldrett et al., 1967). To
41 unravel and decipher the sulfur isotopic record hosted by pyrrhotite grains from magmatic
42 deposits, it is important to understand the effect of potential isotope fractionation between the
43 two phases of the Alexo pyrrhotite reference material (also derived from a magmatic ore
44 deposit). The sulfur isotopic composition of Alexo, determined by fluorination gas-source

1 mass spectrometry, itself incorporates a small amount (1–5%) of pentlandite exsolution. This
2 investigation is crucial because: 1) lamellae may be fast pathways of isotopic exchange in an
3 open system, 2) instrumental mass fractionation may be affected by the incorporation of more
4 than one phase (see [Hervig et al., 2002](#)), and 3) natural isotopic fractionation of pentlandite-
5 pyrrhotite may be reflected in the bulk analysis and not represented in the SIMS analysis
6 (when avoiding exsolution lamellae).

7
8 Because lamellae are so fine and difficult to observe even with adequate BSE imaging, it is
9 impossible to solely analyse exsolution lamellae (Figure 4). Therefore, to evaluate the effect
10 on sulfur isotope composition of the presence of exsolution lamellae within Alexo pyrrhotite
11 on sulfur isotope composition, 60 in situ analyses were carried out in two groupings: 1) 30
12 analyses of areas with an abundance of exsolution lamellae, and 2) 30 analyses of areas free
13 from exsolution lamellae. Alexo grains were reimaged after SIMS work to identify which
14 analyses incorporated some component of exsolution lamellae (Figure 9). Group one yields
15 average $\delta^{33}\text{S}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S}$, $\delta^{36}\text{S}$ values equal to $1.75 \pm 0.20\text{‰}$, $5.27 \pm 0.43\text{‰}$, and $11.12 \pm 0.98\text{‰}$,
16 respectively. Group two yields average $\delta^{33}\text{S}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S}$, $\delta^{36}\text{S}$ values equal to $1.70 \pm 0.22\text{‰}$, $5.18 \pm$
17 0.44‰ , and $10.83 \pm 0.98\text{‰}$, respectively. Analyses for the entire run were normalised to the
18 bulk value of Alexo, a value that incorporates some component of pentlandite exsolution, but
19 that returns a low MSWD (1.8) across nine separate grain extractions and analyses. These
20 results demonstrate that exsolution of pentlandite within Alexo pyrrhotite are minimal
21 enough to be masked by the measurement repeatability and so do not impact sulfur isotope
22 measurements. Therefore, Alexo is an adequate reference material for the determination of
23 sulfur isotope composition of pyrrhotite.



25

1 **Figure 4:** Example of compositionally homogeneous area of Alexo pyrrhotite compared to areas of significant
2 pentlandite exsolution. Raster spots show examples of assessment of two different areas of the grain to
3 determine effect on instrumental mass fractionation.
4

5 4.4 Pentlandite – VMSO

6 WDS analyses demonstrate that VMSO pentlandite is composed of 29.4 ± 0.8 wt.% Fe, 35.8
7 ± 0.9 wt.% Ni, 0.3 ± 0.1 wt.% Co, and 32.9 ± 0.4 wt.% S ($n = 45$), with trace amounts of Sb
8 (~ 150 ppm), Se (~ 600 ppm) and Cu (~ 500 ppm). VMSO pentlandite contains small (~ 100
9 μm) inclusions of magnetite and is intergrown with pyrrhotite and pyrite. WDS mapping
10 demonstrates that the pentlandite portion of VMSO is homogeneous but that fractures and
11 sulfide intergrowths should be avoided (Figure 4d). Analysis of the intergrowths reveal
12 compositions of 59.5 ± 0.6 wt.% Fe and 39.3 ± 0.1 wt.% S, for pyrrhotite ($n = 13$) and $45.6 \pm$
13 0.2 wt.% Fe, 0.9 ± 0.0 wt.% Co, and 53.5 ± 0.2 wt.% S, for pyrite ($n = 11$). The pyrrhotite
14 and pyrite components and oxide inclusions are readily identified in BSE imaging and can be
15 easily avoided during SIMS analysis.
16

17 Eleven different grains of the pentlandite portion of VMSO were analysed by fluorination
18 gas-source mass spectrometry and yielded a weighted average of: $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 1.66 \pm 0.24\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S}$
19 $= 3.22 \pm 0.51\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S} = 6.37 \pm 0.83\text{‰}$. Uncertainty is reported as the standard error of the
20 mean. Values for $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ are calculated as $0.00 \pm 0.02\text{‰}$ and $0.24 \pm 0.35\text{‰}$,
21 respectively, indicating that VMSO does not have a MIF signature. The elevated MSWD on
22 sulfur isotope measurements of VMSO is discussed in section 5.1.3. VMSO has been
23 measured as a primary pentlandite reference for triple sulfur isotopes 255 times, and for
24 quadruple sulfur isotopes 98 times in 22 analytical sessions (see Figure 5). Reproducibility of
25 SIMS analysis on VMSO was $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.21\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S} = 0.33\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S} = 0.90\text{‰}$.
26 Reproducibility on $\Delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.12\text{‰}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S} = 0.72\text{‰}$.
27

28 4.4.1 *Investigation into the homogeneity of VMSO pentlandite*

29 Bulk measurements of VMSO pentlandite yield larger uncertainties and greater MSWD
30 values ($\delta^{33}\text{S} = 1.66 \pm 0.23\text{‰}$ (MSWD 2.67), $\delta^{34}\text{S} = 3.22 \pm 0.51\text{‰}$ (MSWD 2.89), and $\delta^{36}\text{S} =$
31 $6.37 \pm 0.83\text{‰}$ (MSWD 1.92)) than other sulfide reference material, indicating that it is a
32 more isotopically heterogeneous material. Pentlandite does not exist naturally as large single
33 crystals; therefore, this reference material has a certain level of isotopic heterogeneity
34 attributed to micro-scale intergrowths of pentlandite and pyrrhotite within the reference
35 material, a feature typical of sulfide ore in magmatic deposits. Although these two sulfide
36 phases are cogenetic, slightly different isotopic compositions between the two phases are
37 expected due to natural equilibrium isotopic fractionation. The $<\text{mm}$ -scale intergrowths are
38 large enough to be easily avoidable during SIMS analysis; however, the incorporation of a
39 small component of pyrrhotite during extraction of (relatively) large volumes of sulfur for
40 bulk analysis is unavoidable (see pyrrhotite-pentlandite intergrowth in Figure 2d).
41

42 To evaluate the sulfur isotope composition of the pyrrhotite portion of VMSO, seven in situ
43 SIMS analyses of the pyrrhotite intergrowths were normalized using Alexo pyrrhotite. Sulfur
44 isotope analysis of pyrrhotite intergrowths yielded values of $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 2.07 \pm 0.26\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S} =$

1 $3.86 \pm 0.18\%$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S} = 8.09 \pm 0.26\%$. These values are slightly elevated to the determined
2 isotopic composition of VMSO pentlandite but within the envelope of uncertainty. Therefore,
3 the uncertainty on the bulk values mask the incorporation of a component of pyrrhotite
4 during the extraction process. We determine VMSO reference material to be adequate for in
5 situ sulfur isotope analysis of pentlandite but to be used with the expectation of propagating
6 poorer analytical precision.

7 8 **5. DISCUSSION**

9 Mineral systems are natural laboratories that provide invaluable information on the flux of
10 metals and fluids that are cycled among the different reservoirs of our planet. Most of this
11 information is stored as chemical and isotopic signatures, which are preserved in the
12 magmatic and hydrothermal sulfide phases that comprise the mineralization hosted in
13 different mineral systems. However, the interpretation of the information stored in sulfides
14 requires care, as the minero-chemical features of sulfides are prone to be reset over a wide
15 range of physical conditions. The resulting complexity recorded in the chemical and isotopic
16 nature of any given sulfide assemblage may be cryptic to bulk rock analysis, but can be
17 resolved with an in situ analytical approach, which allows the investigator to carefully select
18 specific grains or crystal fractions and avoid others.

19 20 5.1 Selecting and validating sulfide reference material

21 In the case of selecting reference material for pyrite and chalcopyrite, small pieces ($\sim 2 \text{ cm}^3$)
22 of much larger crystals from low grade hydrothermal deposits yield a much higher degree of
23 chemical and isotopic homogeneity over small individual crystals that make up sulfide-rich
24 layers. Here, we demonstrate this fact by comparing the Sierra standard (a fragment of a large
25 hydrothermal crystal) to other available pyrite sulfur isotope standards that occur as small
26 individual grains within a stratigraphic horizon.

27
28 Grains of Isua 248474 pyrite (kindly supplied by Martin Whitehouse) from the Isua
29 greenstone belt, SW Greenland ([Whitehouse, 2013](#)) were used as secondary standards to
30 assess the adequacy of Sierra as a reference material. Isua 248474 has reported bulk sulfur
31 isotope values of $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 4.33 \pm 0.24\%$ (1σ), $\delta^{34}\text{S} = 1.99 \pm 0.18\%$ (1σ) ([Baublys et al., 2004](#)).
32 A total of 216 SIMS analyses (in 19 analytical sessions) have been completed on Isua 248474
33 pyrite as an unknown using Sierra as the primary reference material and yield an average of
34 $\delta^{33}\text{S} = 4.45 \pm 0.66\%$, $\delta^{34}\text{S} = 2.60 \pm 0.86\%$, and $\delta^{36}\text{S} = 2.74 \pm 1.60\%$ and a calculated MIF
35 signature: $\Delta^{33}\text{S} = 3.11 \pm 0.33\%$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S} = -2.38 \pm 0.81\%$. Variability within the Isua
36 248474 pyrite standard has been observed by [Whitehouse \(2013\)](#) who reports some
37 dispersion to lower values for $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ but yields an average $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ that is higher but within error of
38 the accepted bulk measurement of [Baublys et al. \(2004\)](#). Here, our Isua 248474
39 measurements normalised to Sierra have a high uncertainty, consistent with the isotopic
40 variability observed by [Whitehouse \(2013\)](#).

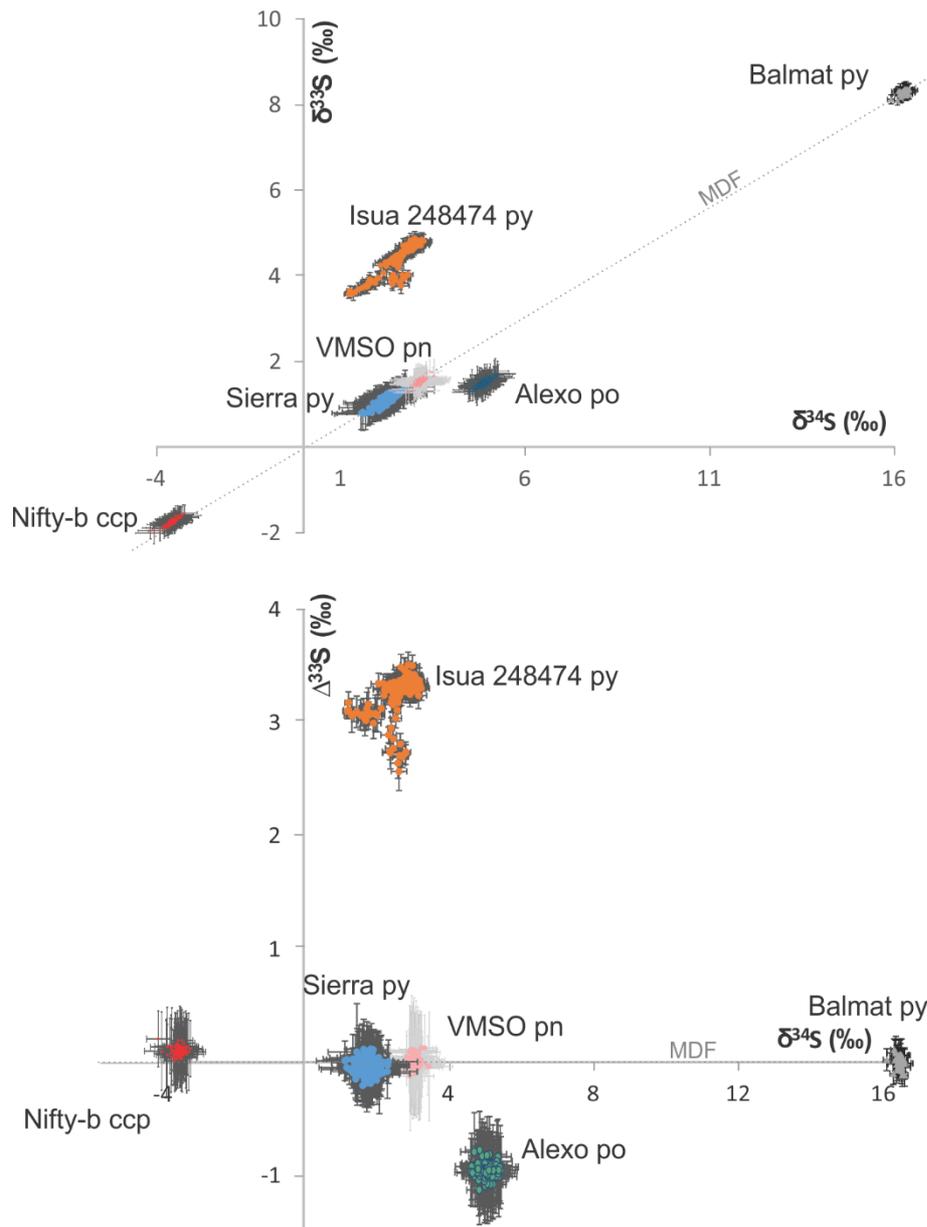
41
42 A grain of UW Balmat pyrite (kindly supplied by John Craven) from the Adirondack
43 Mountains, New York was also assessed. UW Balmat pyrite was originally described by
44 [Crowe et al. \(1990\)](#) who reported $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ equal to $14.63 \pm 0.38\%$ (2SD). Further to that,

1 [Graham and Valley \(1992\)](#) describe the UW Balmat pyrite as only being isotopically
2 homogeneous at the $\sim 1.0\%$ level. Pyrite from a slightly different stratigraphic section of the
3 deposit (UWPy-1) does not show any MIF anomaly ([Williford et al., 2011](#)). Two analytical
4 sessions for triple isotopes give 31 analyses of UW Balmat pyrite with an average $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ of
5 $16.23 \pm 0.18\%$ (2SD). Our values for $\delta^{33}\text{S}$ equal $8.30 \pm 0.12\%$ and yield a $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ of -0.03% ,
6 confirming the lack of a MIF signature. We attribute the variability in both the Isua 248474
7 and UW Balmat pyrite standards to being separate grains distributed between laboratories.

8
9 In the development of a chalcopyrite standard, four separate materials were tested for isotopic
10 homogeneity. Two materials were fragments of large hydrothermal chalcopyrite crystals
11 which yielded a much higher degree of $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ reproducibility than the two other materials
12 derived from massive sulfide horizons in magmatic systems. The pyrite and chalcopyrite
13 results demonstrate that small fragments of large hydrothermal sulfide crystals are more
14 isotopically homogeneous and more suitable standards than individual sulfide grains in
15 sulfide-rich layers.

16
17 In the case of pyrrhotite and pentlandite, these minerals do not commonly occur as large
18 hydrothermal crystals and so the most homogeneous reference material were selected from
19 massive sulfide layers from magmatic ore deposits. Preliminary investigation into how
20 chemical heterogeneity (i.e., micro-exsolution and intergrowths between the two phases)
21 affects isotopic homogeneity in sections 4.3 and 4.4, demonstrate that Alexo and VMSO
22 reference materials are suitable for the determination of sulfur isotope composition of
23 pyrrhotite and pentlandite and ideal for the investigation of magmatic deposits (in which
24 unknown sulfides will have similar textures). However, for comparison, further effort to
25 development a hydrothermal pyrrhotite standard is warranted.

26
27 We have presented chemical and isotopic compositions for a suite of chemically and
28 isotopically homogeneous sulfide reference materials that are representative of the sulfide
29 mineralogy of magmatic and hydrothermal mineral systems. Figure 5 presents plots of: 1)
30 $\delta^{33}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ vs. $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$, and 2) $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ vs. $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ for all reference material analysed in this
31 study. Two of the four sulfide standards (pyrrhotite and chalcopyrite) contain a MIF
32 component, a feature that is recommended to confidently assess the accuracy of $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ and
33 $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ measurements ([Whitehouse, 2013](#)). SIMS measurements on the sulfur isotope dataset
34 demonstrate that the reference materials are adequately isotopically homogeneous and return
35 repeatability on the order of uncertainty on the bulk measurements. Furthermore, bulk
36 measurements deem the reference material homogeneous by the MSWD test as detailed in
37 [Wing and Farquhar \(2015\)](#).



1

2 Figure 5: Plots of: (a) $\delta^{33}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ vs. $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ and (b) $\Delta^{33}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ vs. $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ for all sulfide reference material
 3 (Sierra pyrite, Nifty-b chalcopyrite, Alexo pyrrhotite, and VMSO pentlandite) measured by SIMS in this study.
 4 Error crosses are the overall uncertainty (at the 2SD level) based on propagating the individual analysis
 5 repeatability with the reproducibility for the relevant analytical session. The Sierra pyrite is used as the primary
 6 reference for measuring previously characterised pyrite reference material Isua 248474 and UW Balmat pyrite
 7 (see [Whitehouse, 2013](#); [Graham and Valley, 1992](#)).

8

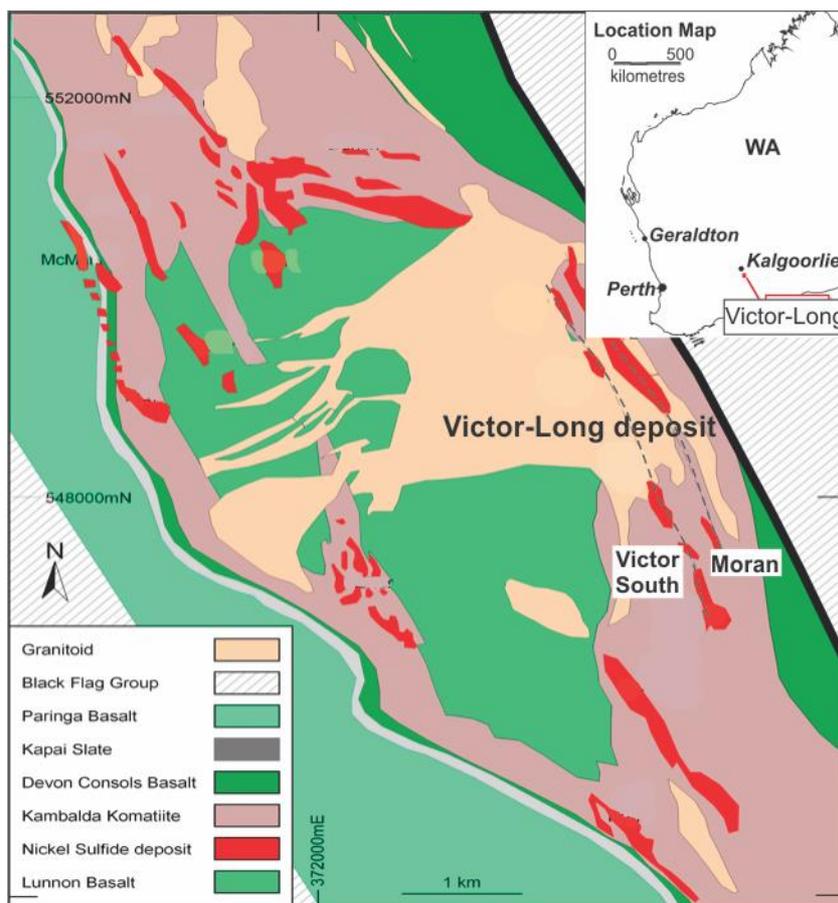
9 5.2 In situ multiple sulfur isotope analysis of a nickel-sulfide deposit, Kambalda

10 The in situ SIMS multiple sulfur isotope data from this study are used to constrain the nature
 11 of the ore-forming process in the Moran shoot, within the Kambalda camp of Western
 12 Australia. The results are compared with existing data from the Victor South shoot along the
 13 Victor channel, where the VMSO reference material was collected and analysed, in order to
 14 reflect on the sulfur isotope architecture of the various channels exposed in the Long-Victor
 15 deposit. The integrated dataset also permits discussion of the large-scale setting of the
 16 Kambalda camp in relation to other world-class nickel-sulfide deposits in the Kalgoorlie

1 Terrane of the Yilgarn Craton, which hosts the largest resources and reserves of nickel-
2 sulfide mineralisation associated with komatiites (Barnes and Fiorentini, 2012). We utilise
3 the case study to validate the presented reference material, assess the natural fractionation
4 factor of $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ between pyrrhotite and pentlandite, and assess whether crystallographic
5 orientation of pentlandite induces biases on $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ measurements.

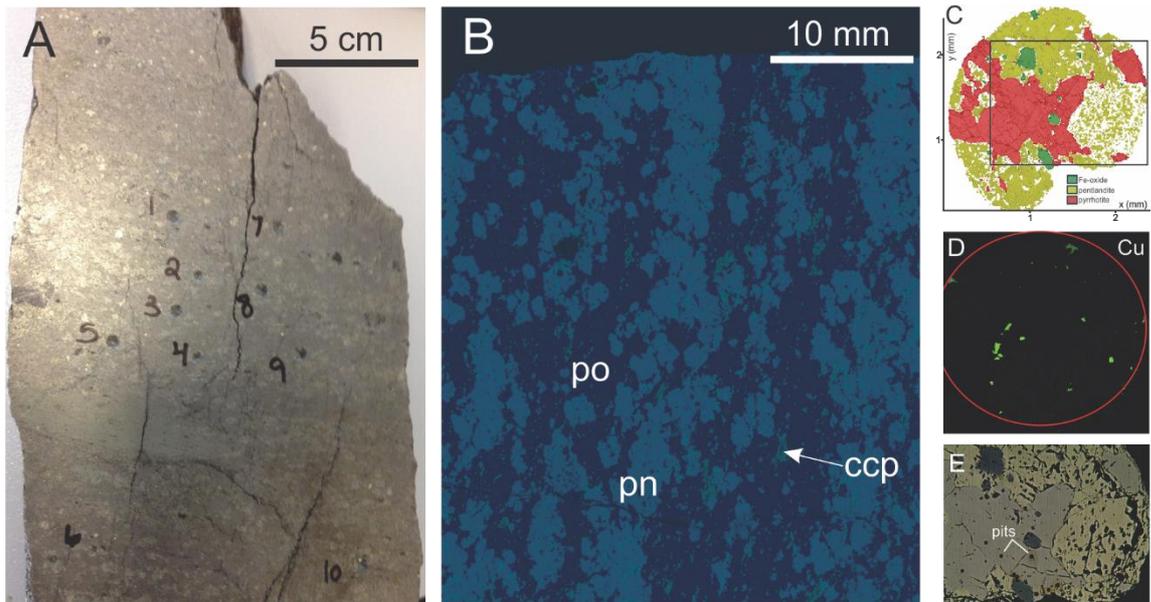
7 5.2.1 Moran shoot, Long-Victor deposit, Kambalda camp

8 The case study focussed on the identification of the multiple sulfur isotope signature of the
9 major magmatic sulfide phases (pyrrhotite, pentlandite and chalcopyrite) hosted in the
10 massive sulfide layer at the base of the Moran shoot at Kambalda, Western Australia. The
11 spatial and genetic relationship between the Victor South shoot, where VMSO reference
12 material was collected, and the Moran shoot, where the sample for the case study was
13 collected, is discussed in Barnes et al. (2013) and presented in Figure 6. Briefly, the Moran
14 shoot is hosted in the same channelized structure that hosts the larger Long shoot. This
15 channel runs roughly parallel to the Victor channel in which the Victor South shoot is hosted.
16 The Moran shoot attains 500 m along strike but is open to the south, where the boundaries of
17 the mineralised body are not defined.



20 **Figure 6:** Location of the Victor-Long nickel-sulfide deposit of the Kambalda camp, Western Australia after
21 Bekker et al. (2009) and references therein. The Victor-Long deposit is host to the Victor South and Moran
22 shoots, discussed in this study.

1 The ore body largely comprises massive and matrix sulfides dominantly composed of
 2 pentlandite (38%) and pyrrhotite (58%), with minor (4%) chalcopyrite (Figure 7). Pyrrhotite
 3 and pentlandite are intergrown and are in equilibrium. Chalcopyrite forms small (<40 μm)
 4 interstitial grains in equilibrium with the other sulfides at pentlandite-pyrrhotite boundaries.
 5 Multiple sulfur isotope data were acquired from four 5 mm in diameter pucks of ore and
 6 values for $\delta^{34}\text{S}$, $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$, $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ are presented in Table 4. WDS data were also acquired from the
 7 pentlandite and pyrrhotite to ensure similar chemical composition to the reference material.
 8



9

10 **Figure 7:** A) Hand sample of the Moran Shoot massive sulfide horizon of the Long-Victor deposit, Kambalda
 11 camp. Numbers demarcate localities drilled for bulk analysis. B) Micro-XRF map of slab of nickel-sulfide ore
 12 from the Moran shoot, Long-Victor deposit, Kambalda camp. Massive sulfide is composed dominantly of
 13 pentlandite (light blue) and pyrrhotite (dark blue) with minor chalcopyrite (green). The proportion of sulfides is
 14 calculated from the Micro-XRF map to be 38% pentlandite (pn), 58% pyrrhotite (po), and 4% chalcopyrite
 15 (ccp). C) EDS phase map showing distribution of NiS (pentlandite; yellow), FeS (pyrrhotite; red), and FeO (iron
 16 oxide; green). D) EDS Cu map showing chalcopyrite in green. E) Reflected light photomicrograph of
 17 pentlandite (yellow)-pyrrhotite (grey) association with small interstitial grains of chalcopyrite (orange). Area
 18 delineated by black box in C. Ion probe pits are small black boxes and are 15 μm in length.

19

20 **Table 4:** Multiple sulfur isotope results ($\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$, $\Delta^{33}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$, $\Delta^{36}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$) acquired by SIMS
 21 using reference material presented in this manuscript to correct for instrumental mass
 22 fractionation. “*n*” is the number of measurements.

	Chemical composition	Sulfur isotope composition (‰)						
		$\delta^{34}\text{S}$	2SD	$\Delta^{33}\text{S}$	2SD	$\Delta^{36}\text{S}$	2SD	<i>n</i>
pentlandite	$\text{Fe}_{4.1}\text{Ni}_{4.8}\text{Co}_{0.1}\text{S}_8$	2.91	0.35	0.25	0.10	-0.03	0.40	73
pyrrhotite	$\text{Fe}_{0.90}\text{S}$	3.90	0.20	0.26	0.13	-0.01	0.24	19
chalcopyrite	CuFeS_2	3.10	0.54	0.16	0.08	-0.04	0.21	13

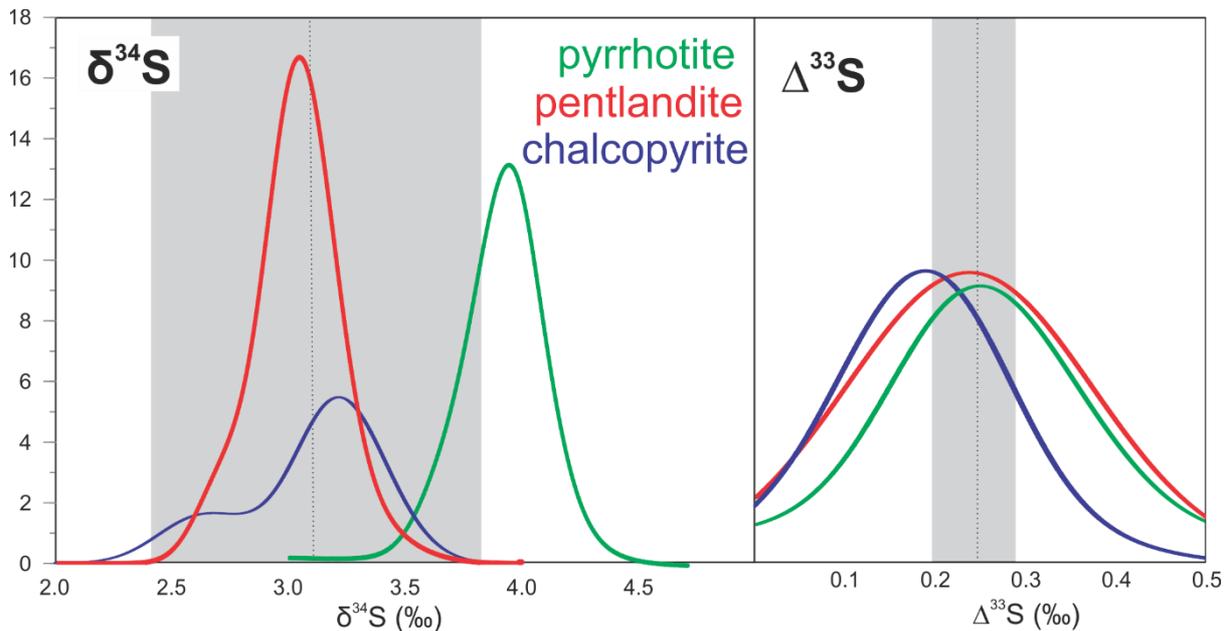
23

24 The in situ SIMS data presented in Table 4 compare well with 10 aliquots of bulk sulfide
 25 material from the same ore shoot, which returned $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$, $\Delta^{33}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$, $\Delta^{36}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ equal to

1 $3.10 \pm 0.70\text{‰}$ (2SD), $0.24 \pm 0.04\text{‰}$ (2SD), and $-0.21 \pm 0.10\text{‰}$ (2SD). The large uncertainty
 2 on $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ in the bulk data demonstrates that the yielded sulfur isotope results represent an
 3 average isotopic composition of the three sulfide phases (as depicted by the SIMS $\delta^{34}\text{S}$
 4 results).

5
 6 The case study is aimed at emphasizing the significance of a multi-sulfide phase in situ
 7 analytical approach in the determination of the multiple sulfur isotope signature of Archean
 8 komatiite-hosted nickel-sulfide deposits. Results indicate that the magmatic sulfide
 9 assemblage of the massive sulfide horizon hosted in the Moran shoot of the Long-Victor
 10 deposit in the Kambalda region of Western Australia comprises pentlandite, pyrrhotite and
 11 chalcopyrite. These phases are in isotopic equilibrium and display similar values for $\Delta^{33}\text{S} =$
 12 $\sim +0.2\text{‰}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S} = \sim -0.02\text{‰}$. However, the three sulfide phases show variable $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ values
 13 ($\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{pentlandite}} = \sim 2.9\text{‰}$, $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{chalcopyrite}} = \sim 3.1\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{pyrrhotite}} = \sim 3.9\text{‰}$), which are indicative
 14 of natural isotope fractionation. Natural $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ fractionation among the sulfides that make up a
 15 multi-sulfide phase ore assemblage cannot be easily resolved through bulk rock analysis (as
 16 presented in Figure 8). This in turn may lead to misinterpretations of subtle sulfur isotope
 17 variations. In situ analysis also has the potential to highlight the presence of secondary
 18 sulfides. Therefore, the in situ approach provides the user the ability to resolve ambiguities
 19 that may arise through whole-rock isotope analysis.

20



21

22 **Figure 8:** Probability density plots (bin size 10) of $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ pyrrhotite, pentlandite, and chalcopyrite results
 23 for the Moran shoot of the Long-Victor deposit, Kambalda. A representative subset of pentlandite results are
 24 chosen. All three sulfide phases yield the same $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ values ($+0.2\text{‰}$) demonstrating they are likely cogenetic and
 25 from the same source. The variable $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ are a result of natural isotopic fractionation between the three sulfide
 26 phases (of which pentlandite and pyrrhotite compose 96% of the ore body). Variability in $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ chalcopyrite is a
 27 product of few analyses (13) of small interstitial grains. Whole rock bulk fluorination values (from 10 aliquots)
 28 depicted by dashed line and uncertainty (2SD) by grey box.

29

30 5.2.2 Source of sulfur to trigger sulfide saturation

1 The multiple sulfur isotope data collected from the Moran shoot is assessed in conjunction
2 with the multiple sulfur isotope signature of VMSO, which was collected from the Victor
3 South shoot. [Bekker et al. \(2009\)](#) originally measured the multiple sulfur isotope signature of
4 the ore sample from which the VMSO pentlandite standard was made. The bulk rock
5 fluorination data indicated that the massive sulfide in the Victor South shoot did not display
6 any evidence of MIF. This result was not discussed in detail in [Bekker et al. \(2009\)](#), but it
7 clearly portrayed Kambalda as being radically different from the giant komatiite-hosted
8 deposits in the northern part of the Kalgoorlie Terrane, which display a very pronounced
9 negative MIF signature (up to -0.7‰). The bulk rock isotope signature of the VMSO ore
10 sample is reflected in the lack of MIF recorded in the VMSO pentlandite standard presented
11 in this study.

12
13 In the Long-Victor deposit, the relationship between the Victor South and Moran shoots is
14 described in [Barnes et al. \(2013\)](#). For the sake of the argument here, the most important
15 message to be taken away from the study of [Barnes et al. \(2013\)](#) is that different shoots,
16 which originated from the emplacement of komatiite magma along spatially close but distinct
17 volcanic channels, may have resulted from the equilibration of variable proportions of sulfide
18 and silicate liquids. Evidence of this variable proportion, which is expressed as R Factor
19 ([Campbell and Naldrett, 1979](#)), is not only recorded in the highly variable metal tenor of the
20 ore shoots and associated variable degrees of chalcophile element enrichment and depletion
21 in the host komatiite channelized units, but it is also preserved in the sulfur isotopic
22 architecture of the deposit, as discussed in [Leshner and Burnham \(2001\)](#) and [Fiorentini et al.
23 \(2012a\)](#). This should serve as a word of caution for any exploration targeting tool based on
24 sulfur isotope analysis to track crustal assimilation as a proxy for magma fertility.

25
26 Evidence of a positive MIF anomaly ($\Delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.2\text{‰}$) recorded in three sulfide phases of the
27 Moran shoot suggests thermo-mechanical assimilation of sulfidic shales ($\Delta^{33}\text{S} = \text{up to } 0.8\text{‰}$;
28 [Bekker et al., 2009](#)) during komatiite emplacement. The magnitude of MIF as expressed by
29 $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ is small and so to relate the sulfur isotope signature to photochemical reactions related
30 to an oxygen-poor atmosphere (rather than mass dependent processes as described by
31 [Johnston, 2011](#)), we evaluate the $\Delta^{36}\text{S}/\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ relationship. The $\Delta^{36}\text{S}/\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ ratio ranges from
32 -0.04 to -0.88 , extending the known Archean ratio beyond -1 to -2 of [Johnston \(2011\)](#). The
33 ratio is significantly different to the predicted range of mass dependent fractionation
34 processes ($\Delta^{36}\text{S}/\Delta^{33}\text{S} = -9$ to -7 ; [Ono et al., 2006b](#); [Johnston et al., 2007](#)).

35
36 The lack of any MIF anomaly in the Victor South shoot suggests higher R factor values for
37 the channel, which was effectively flushed with higher volumes of mantle-derived silicate
38 magma carrying no MIF anomaly, thus diluting any evidence of crustal MIF. However, it is
39 crucial to state that in magmatic systems, near-zero $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ or $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ values permit a mantle
40 source ($\delta^{34}\text{S} = -1.28 \pm 0.33\text{‰}$; $\Delta^{33}\text{S} = 0.00\text{‰}$; [Labidi et al., 2013](#)) but do not prove it if the
41 full complexity of homogenization processes is considered. However, non-zero $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ or $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$
42 values prove a non-mantle source and can be further confirmed by the $\Delta^{36}\text{S}/\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ ratio
43 ([Farquhar et al., 2007](#); [Johnston, 2011](#)). The data from two different shoots at Kambalda
44 highlight the variation that characterizes ore-forming processes in magmatic systems. This

1 variation is translated downstream in the complexity of the interpretation of chemical and
2 isotopic data that are used as proxies to target mineralisation in exploration (Fiorentini et al.,
3 2012a).

4
5 In addition to the deposit-scale observations discussed above, the in situ multiple sulfur
6 isotope data presented in this study also provide key insights into the geodynamic setting
7 where the Kambalda komatiites were emplaced. Unlike the giant dunite-hosted komatiite
8 systems that thermo-mechanically assimilated volcanogenic massive sulfides proximal to
9 vents in the Agnew-Wiluna greenstone belt (cf. Fiorentini et al., 2012b), the integrated results
10 from both the Moran (case study) and Victor South (VMSO sample) shoots indicate that
11 Kambalda ores assimilated abyssal sulfidic shales. This inference is based on the very
12 different MIF signatures that are observed: the dunite-hosted systems in the northern
13 Kalgoorlie Terrane (Fiorentini et al 2012b) and elsewhere globally (e.g., Heggie et al., 2012a,
14 b) commonly display negative $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ values (up to -1.0‰), whereas Kambalda-style
15 channelized systems either display no MIF or positive (up to $+1.1\text{‰}$) signatures. These
16 variable inter-shoot isotopic results at Kambalda are reflected in the variable platinum group
17 element signature of the various channelized systems (Barnes et al., 2013). At the broader
18 scale, these data support the hypothesis that dunite-hosted systems are generally
19 characterized by lower R factors, where evidence of crustal contamination from proximal
20 volcanogenic massive sulfides is preserved, in contrast to Kambalda-type deposits where
21 evidence of crustal contamination by sulfidic shales is partially to completely erased due to
22 extreme magma flux along channelized environments.

23 24 5.2.3 *In situ data to identify natural fractionation between pentlandite-pyrrhotite*

25 The complex sulfide mineralogy hosted in any mineralized sample may document various
26 stages of the ore forming process. However, even when sulfide phases are cogenetic and in
27 equilibrium, natural isotopic fractionation between sulfide pairs may occur due to crystal
28 structure, temperature of formation, and chemical composition (e.g., O'Neil, 1986). For
29 instance, the speciation of the sulfur source and the mass of a metal speciation can affect the
30 preference for ^{34}S incorporation in one sulfide over another during precipitation (Bachinski,
31 1969; Seal, 2006 and references therein). This means that the isotopic signature of a single
32 sulfide phase hosted in a sulfide layer may not be representative of the true isotopic
33 composition of that very horizon.

34
35 Although, fractionation of sulfur isotopes between cogenetic sulfide minerals has been
36 investigated by Bachinski (1969), Li and Lui (2006), Ohmoto and Rye (1979), Seal (2006),
37 among others, the natural isotope fractionation of sulfur isotopes between pentlandite and
38 pyrrhotite has not yet been quantified; however it is an important element in the study of
39 magmatic ore deposits. In the case study focussed on the Moran shoot of the Long-Victor
40 deposit, if we interpret pyrrhotite and pentlandite to be in equilibrium we conclude that
41 pyrrhotite has a natural affinity for ^{34}S over pentlandite. Our results that demonstrate
42 enrichment in $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ in pyrrhotite over chalcopyrite are in agreement with Li and Lui (2006).
43 This same trend is also described for VMSO pentlandite above (also derived from a

1 magmatic ore deposit) and has been observed in other magmatic ore deposits (LaFlamme,
2 unpublished data).

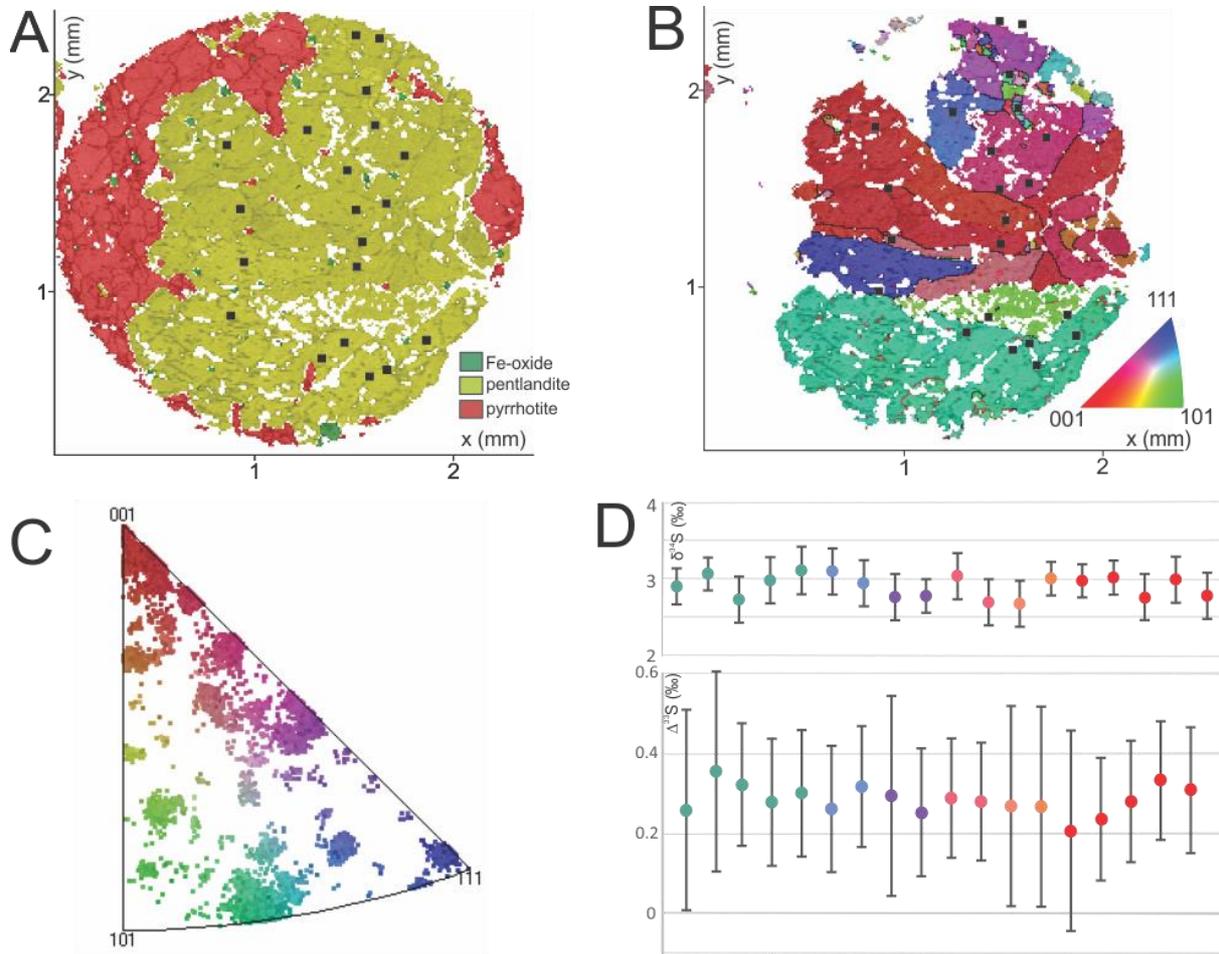
3
4 Multiple sulfur isotope analysis of massive sulfide from the Moran shoot at Long-Victor
5 deposit yields $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ pentlandite = $2.91 \pm 0.35\text{‰}$ ($n=73$) and $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ pyrrhotite = $3.90 \pm 0.20\text{‰}$
6 ($n=19$). These two phases make up >96% of sulfides in this ore body and are within error of
7 the bulk fluorination results ($\delta^{34}\text{S} = 3.10 \pm 0.70\text{‰}$; $n=10$). Multiple sulfur isotope analysis of
8 the massive sulfide horizon at the Victor South shoot (from which VMSO reference material
9 is derived) yields $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ pentlandite (measured as bulk fluorination value and incorporates a
10 minor component of unavoidable pyrrhotite) = $3.22 \pm 0.51\text{‰}$ ($n=11$) and $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ pyrrhotite
11 (normalized to Alexo pyrrhotite) = $3.86 \pm 0.18\text{‰}$ ($n=7$). This is a circular problem because it
12 is impossible to get a true value for pentlandite unaccompanied by pyrrhotite for VMSO, and
13 the values for in situ analyses from the Moran shoot rely on a correction for instrumental
14 mass fractionation normalised to the VMSO reference material. Here though, we assume the
15 cogenetic sulfides from both shoots are in natural equilibrium, and so we can broadly
16 estimate $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{pyrrhotite-pentlandite}}$ to be $0.7\text{--}1.0 \pm 0.5\text{‰}$. The natural equilibrium isotopic
17 fractionation between pyrrhotite and chalcopyrite determined at the Moran shoot to be $\delta^{34}\text{S} =$
18 $\sim 0.2\text{‰}$, is in agreement with that defined by Li and Lui (2006). Therefore, in ore bodies with
19 multiple sulfide phases in equilibrium, $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ values are a reflection of the relative proportions
20 of those phases. Therefore, care should be applied when small deviations in isotopic
21 signatures derived from bulk analyses of massive sulfide bodies are used to interpret
22 variations in the source of sulfur, volatiles and metals in ore bodies (e.g., Bekker et al., 2009;
23 Fiorentini et al., 2012b; Li et al., 2009). In fact, these variations may solely be reflecting
24 proportional differences of sulfide phases, or may homogenise different phases of
25 mineralisation with different isotopic signatures. In turn this can lead to a better
26 understanding of small spatial and temporal changes in multiple sulfur isotopes related to the
27 magmatic and/or hydrothermal environment.

28 29 5.2.4 Test for potential crystallographic orientation effects in pentlandite

30 The integration of EBSD with high-spatial resolution isotopic analyses allows the potential
31 role of crystal orientation on isotopic data quality to be assessed (Taylor et al., 2012). The
32 potential effects of grain orientation on sulfur isotope measurements in the Moran Shoot
33 pentlandite have been assessed by comparison of EBSD-derived crystal orientation
34 information with sulfur isotope data (as $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$) from known ion probe analysis sites.
35 Results demonstrate that no orientation effect on $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ exists for pentlandite (Figure
36 7). Inverse pole figures (of which one sample is shown in Figure 9) relate count rates to grain
37 orientation in which analyses are plotted based on the angular relationship between the mount
38 x-direction and the main crystal axes. Comparison of grain orientation data from ~50
39 pentlandite grains and 73 multiple sulfur isotopes analyses demonstrates a consistent value of
40 $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$, within the envelope of single analysis uncertainty irrespective of grain
41 orientation.

42
43 Certain sulfide minerals (galena and sphalerite) have been shown to exhibit a crystal
44 orientation effect resulting in instrumental mass bias towards ^{34}S , while others (pyrite,

1 pyrrhotite and chalcopyrite) do not (Kozdon et al., 2010; Kita et al., 2011). Here, our data
 2 indicate that there is no resolvable crystallographic orientation control on either $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ or $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$
 3 due to the interaction of the beam with the pentlandite grain. This is a completely new
 4 outcome as the orientation effect on beam-pentlandite interaction was not previously known.
 5



6
 7 **Figure 9:** Example of orientation effect in pentlandite analysed by electron backscatter diffraction (EBSD).
 8 Pentlandite from massive sulfide lens mounted as pucks (1 puck shown here) drilled from a massive sulfide lens
 9 at the Moran shoot, Kambalda. A: EDS phase map showing distribution of NiS (pentlandite; yellow), FeS
 10 (pyrrhotite; red), and FeO (iron oxide; green). B: Inverse pole figure map, plotted with respect to the user-
 11 defined x direction. Black lines show grain boundaries with $>10^\circ$ misorientation. C: Inverse pole figure (lower
 12 hemisphere equal area projection) for the sample x direction showing grain orientations indicated by colours of
 13 pentlandite grains shown in B ($n=17195$ data points). D: $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ from pentlandite with colour matched to
 14 crystallographic orientation shown in B and C.

15

16 6. CONCLUSIONS

17 Instrumental mass fractionation is dependent on the chemical matrix of the material being
 18 analysed (the so-called matrix effect). For different sulfide minerals, the matrix effect is
 19 likely due to a combination of factors including varying sulfur contents, varying cation
 20 compositions and different crystallographic systems, giving rise to different ionisation
 21 potentials and different sputtering rates (e.g., Kozdon et al., 2010). The matrix effect between
 22 conjugate pyrite-sulfide pairs is a complex problem (at least partly) related to the presence of
 23 multiple and subtle instrument conditions and analytical protocols. Hence, SIMS inter-

1 mineral fractionation factors (even within a single laboratory) to calculate sulfur isotope
2 ratios should be used with caution and only as a last resort. Multiple sulfur isotope studies
3 should also take caution against propagating $\delta^{33}\text{S}$ and $\delta^{36}\text{S}$ from $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ following the mass
4 dependent fractionation relationship for reference materials in which these values have not
5 been quantified. It has been shown that $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$ anomalies can occur in a range of
6 environments even outside of Archean terranes (i.e., at Proterozoic craton margins, [Selvaraja
7 et al., 2016; this study](#) (Proterozoic Nifty-b chalcopyrite reference material); [LaFlamme,
8 unpublished data](#), at modern hydrothermal vents; [Ono et al., 2006b](#); [Farquhar et al., 2007](#); and
9 in other environments, [Cabral et al., 2013](#)). Therefore, for the reasons above, unknown sulfur
10 isotope analyses should be normalised to chemically and isotopically characterised reference
11 material, four sulfides of which are presented here.

12
13 At the Long-Victor nickel-sulfide deposit in the world class Kambalda nickel camp in the
14 southern Kalgoorlie Terrane of Western Australia, a case study demonstrates how precise
15 multiple sulfur isotope analyses from magmatic pentlandite, pyrrhotite and chalcopyrite can
16 better constrain genetic models related to ore-forming processes. Results indicate that
17 pentlandite, pyrrhotite and chalcopyrite are in isotopic equilibrium and yield the same value
18 for $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ (+0.2‰). The three magmatic phases show variable $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ values ($\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{chalcopyrite}} =$
19 2.9‰ , $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{pentlandite}} = 3.1\text{‰}$, and $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{pyrrhotite}} = 3.9\text{‰}$), which are indicative of natural
20 fractionation. The results indicate that unlike the giant dunite-hosted komatiite systems that
21 thermo-mechanically assimilated volcanogenic massive sulfides proximal to vents and
22 display negative $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ values, the Kambalda ores formed in relatively distal environments
23 assimilating abyssal sulfidic shales. Careful in situ analysis is able to image the subtle
24 isotopic variability of the magmatic sulfide assemblage, which may help resolve the nature of
25 the ore-forming process. This approach may help to discriminate the magmatic sulfur isotope
26 signature from that recorded in metamorphic- and alteration-related sulfides, which may not
27 be resolved during bulk rock fluorination analysis.

28

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5 <http://www.cafs.mq.edu.au>.

6 7 **8. LIST OF FIGURES**

8 **Figure 1:** Calculated magnitudes of mass independent fractionation as deviations from the
9 mass dependent fractionation line (MDF) presented in $\delta^{33}\text{S}$ vs. $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ space. The small
10 deviations from the MDF line may represent mass independent fractionation. This highlights
11 the importance of: 1) precise and accurate multiple sulfur isotope measurements, and 2)
12 quantification of uncertainty on $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$. Although not expressed in this figure, quantifying $\Delta^{36}\text{S}$
13 is equally important.

14
15 **Figure 2:** Demonstration of compositional homogeneity of: A) Sierra pyrite (Fe wt.%), B)
16 Nifty-b chalcopyrite (Cu wt.%), C) Alexo pyrrhotite (Fe wt.%), D) VMSO pentlandite (Ni
17 wt.%). Wavelength dispersive spectrometry maps are collected by EPMA.

18
19 **Figure 3:** Probability density plots for $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ for normalized reference material to demonstrate
20 the low degree of uncertainty, normal distribution and lack of outliers.

21
22 **Figure 4:** Example of compositionally homogeneous area of Alexo pyrrhotite compared to
23 areas of significant pentlandite exsolution. Raster spots show examples of assessment of two
24 different areas of the grain to determine effect on instrumental mass fractionation.

25
26 **Figure 5:** Plots of: (a) $\delta^{33}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ vs. $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ and (b) $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ vs. $\delta^{34}\text{S}_{\text{V-CDT}}$ for all sulfide
27 reference material (Sierra pyrite, Nifty-b chalcopyrite, Alexo pyrrhotite, and VMSO
28 pentlandite) measured by SIMS in this study. Error crosses are the overall uncertainty (at the
29 2SD level) based on propagating the individual analysis repeatability with the reproducibility
30 for the relevant analytical session. The Sierra pyrite is used as the primary reference for
31 measuring previously characterised pyrite reference material Isua 248474 and Balmat pyrite
32 (see [Whitehouse, 2013](#); [Graham and Valley, 1992](#)).

33
34 **Figure 6:** Location of the Victor-Long nickel-sulfide deposit of the Kambalda camp, Western
35 Australia. The Victor-Long deposit is host to the Victor South and Moran shoots, discussed
36 in this study.

37
38 **Figure 7:** A) Hand sample of the Moran Shoot massive sulfide horizon of the Long-Victor
39 deposit, Kambalda camp. B) Micro-XRF map of slab of nickel-sulfide ore from the Moran
40 shoot, Long-Victor deposit, Kambalda camp. Massive sulfide is composed dominantly of
41 pentlandite (light blue) and pyrrhotite (dark blue) with minor chalcopyrite (green). The
42 proportion of sulfides is calculated from the micro-XRF map to be 38% pentlandite, 58%
43 pyrrhotite, and 4% chalcopyrite. C) EDS phase map showing distribution of NiS (pentlandite;

1 yellow), FeS (pyrrhotite; red), and FeO (iron oxide; green). D) EDS Cu map showing
2 chalcopyrite in green. E) Reflected light photomicrograph of pentlandite (yellow)-pyrrhotite
3 (grey) association with small interstitial grains of chalcopyrite (orange). Ion probe pits are
4 small black boxes and are 15 μm in length.

5

6 **Figure 8:** Probability density plots (bin size 10) of $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ pyrrhotite, pentlandite, and
7 chalcopyrite results for the Moran shoot of the Long-Victor Deposit, Kambalda. A
8 representative subset of pentlandite results are chosen. All three sulfide phases yield the same
9 $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ values (+0.2‰) meaning they are cogenetic and from the same source. The variable
10 $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ are a result of natural isotopic fractionation between the three sulfide phases (of which
11 pentlandite and pyrrhotite composed >96% of the ore body). Whole rock bulk fluorination
12 values (from 10 aliquots) depicted by dashed line and uncertainty (2SD) by grey box.

13

14 **Figure 9** Example of orientation effect in pentlandite analysed by electron backscatter
15 diffraction (EBSD). Pentlandite mounted as a puck drilled from a massive sulfide lens at
16 Kambalda. A: Phases of massive sulfide as defined by electron dispersive spectrometry as
17 NiS (pentlandite; light green), FeS (pyrrhotite; red), and FeO (iron oxide; dark green). B:
18 Inverse Pole Figure with respect to the x direction. Black lines demonstrate more than 10°
19 misorientation which are interpreted as grain boundaries. C: Inverse Pole Figure diagram for
20 the x direction (17195 data points) as equal area projection in the lower hemisphere. D: $\delta^{34}\text{S}$
21 and $\Delta^{33}\text{S}$ from pentlandite with colour matched to crystallographic orientation demonstrating
22 no orientation effect with respect to crystallographic orientation.

23

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