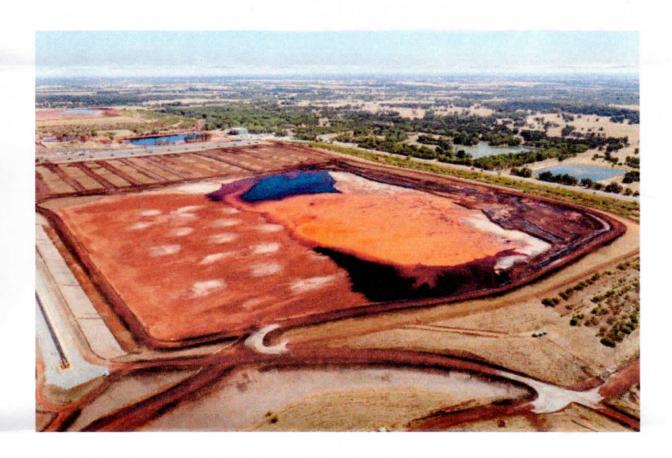
## The target is the system to break down the highly alkaline materials in alumina red mud tailings using native extremophile microbes

The remediation of red mud has become a major problem globally and there is yet to be an effective solution. "Worldwide, there are about five billion tonnes of red mud in storage facilities and dams, and this increases by 125 million tonnes or more each year," explains SMI's Longbin Huang. "Such red mud deposits contain large amounts of caustic soda and alkaline minerals that aren't easily dissolved or washed away, resulting in extremely alkaline and salty conditions that are difficult for normal living soil microorganisms and plants to overcome." Huang's breakthrough was to develop a 'bioweathering' approach to break down these alkaline materials. Working with industry partners Rio Tinto and Queensland Alumina Limited, he turned to one of the only forms of life found in red mud – naturally occurring extremophile microbes that thrive in highly alkaline environments.



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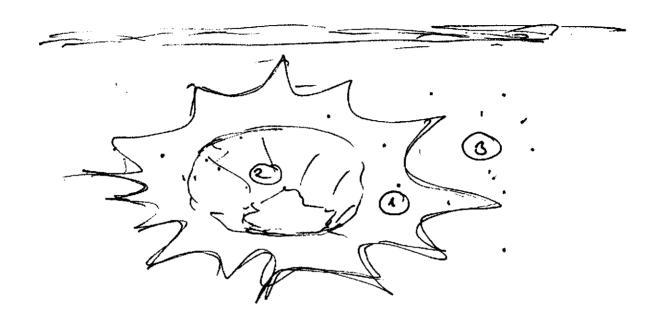
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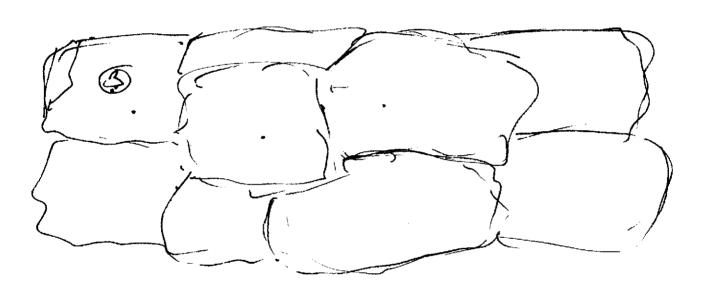
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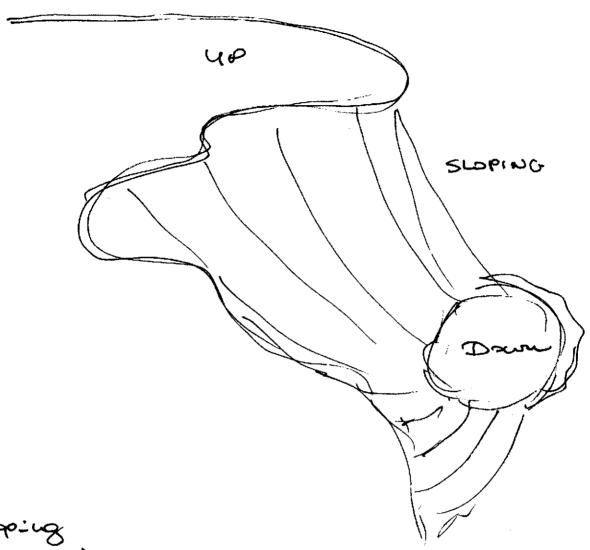
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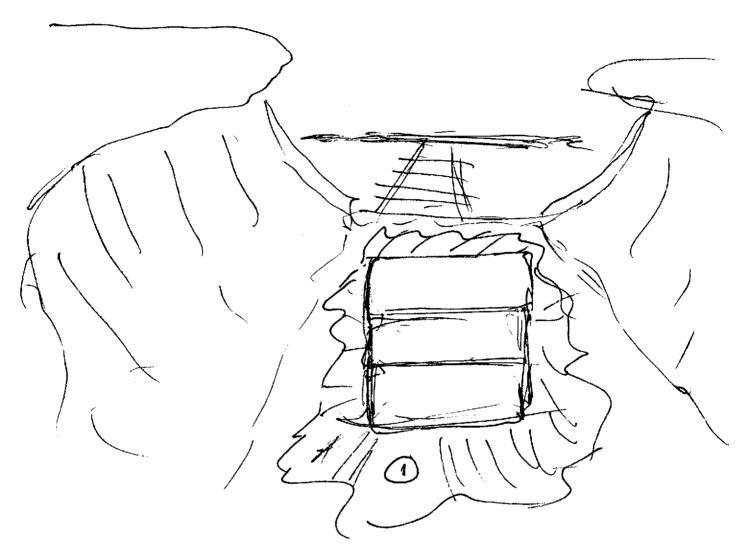
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