



2017–2018 Minerals Yearbook

CENTRAL AMERICA [ADVANCE RELEASE]

THE MINERAL INDUSTRIES OF CENTRAL AMERICA

BELIZE, COSTA RICA, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA, AND PANAMA

By Jesse J. Inestroza

Note: In this chapter, information for 2017 is followed by information for 2018.

BELIZE

In 2017 and 2018, the production of mineral commodities—notably crude petroleum—represented only a minor part of the economy of Belize (Central Bank of Belize, 2019, p. 27–28). The legislative framework for the hydrocarbon sector in Belize is provided by the Petroleum Act (revised 2003) and Petroleum Regulations, statutory instrument No. 112 of 1992. Data on mineral production are in table 1. Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities. More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Belize can be found in previous editions of the U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Latin America and Canada, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/latin-america-and-canada-north-america-central-america-and-caribbean>.

Reference Cited

Central Bank of Belize, 2019, 2018 annual report & statement of accounts: Belize City, Belize, Central Bank of Belize, 135 p. (Accessed December 12, 2019, at <https://www.centralbank.org.bz/docs/default-source/4.2.4-annual-reports/annual-report-2018.pdf?sfvrsn=2/>.)

COSTA RICA

In 2017 and 2018, the production of mineral commodities—notably cement, crushed stone, diatomite, gold, petroleum refinery products, and sand and gravel—represented only a minor part of the economy of Costa Rica (Central Bank of Costa Rica, 2019, p. 124). The legislative framework for the mineral sector in Costa Rica is provided by the Mining Code Law No. 6797 of 1982. Data on mineral production are in table 1. Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities. More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Costa Rica can be found in previous editions of the U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Latin America and Canada, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/latin-america-and-canada-north-america-central-america-and-caribbean>.

Reference Cited

Central Bank of Costa Rica, 2019, Memoria anual 2018 [Annual report 2018]: San Jose, Costa Rica, Central Bank of Costa Rica, 130 p. (Accessed December 20, 2019, at https://activos.bccr.fi.cr/sitios/bccr/publicaciones/DocMemoriaAnual/Memoria_Anual_2018.pdf.)

EL SALVADOR

In 2017 and 2018, the production of mineral commodities—notably cement and raw steel—represented only a minor part of the economy of El Salvador (Banco Central de Reserva de El Salvador, 2019). The legislative framework for the mineral sector in El Salvador is provided by law No. 544/1995. Data on mineral production are in table 1. Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities. More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of El Salvador can be found in previous editions of the U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Latin America and Canada, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/latin-america-and-canada-north-america-central-america-and-caribbean>.

Reference Cited

Banco Central de Reserva de El Salvador, 2019, Gross domestic product—Production, expenditure and income. At current prices: San Salvador, El Salvador, Banco Central de Reserva de El Salvador. (Accessed October 18, 2019, via <https://www.bcr.gob.sv/bcrsite/?cdr=160&lang=en>.)

GUATEMALA

In 2017 and 2018, the production of mineral commodities—notably antimony, gemstones, gold, gypsum, lead, limestone, nickel, raw steel, silver, and zinc—represented only a minor part of the economy of Guatemala (Ministerio de Energía y Minas, 2019, p. 11–13, 16). The legislative framework for the mineral sector in Guatemala is provided by Decree No. 48/1997. Data on mineral production are in table 1. Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities. More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Guatemala can be found in previous editions of the U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Latin America and Canada, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/latin-america-and-canada-north-america-central-america-and-caribbean>.

Reference Cited

Ministerio de Energía y Minas, 2019, Anuario estadístico minero 2018 [Annual mining statistics 2018]: Guatemala City, Guatemala, Ministerio de Energía y Minas, 27 p. (Accessed December 21, 2019, via <http://www.mem.gob.gt/mineria/estadisticas-mineras/anuario-estadistico-minero/>.)

HONDURAS

In 2017 and 2018, the production of mineral commodities—notably antimony, cement, gold, lead, silver, and zinc—represented only a minor part of the economy of Honduras (Banco Central de Honduras, 2019, p. 45–46). The legislative framework for the mineral sector in Honduras is provided by Decree No. 32/2013. Data on mineral production are in table 1. Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities. More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Honduras can be found in previous editions of the U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Latin America and Canada, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/latin-america-and-canada-north-america-central-america-and-caribbean>.

Reference Cited

Banco Central de Honduras, 2019, Memoria 2018 [2018 report]: Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Banco Central de Honduras, 65 p. (Accessed October 18, 2019, at https://www.bch.hn/download/memoria/memoria_anual_2018.pdf.)

NICARAGUA

In 2017 and 2018, the production of mineral commodities—notably cement, gold, gypsum, lime, petroleum refinery products, and silver—represented only a minor part of the economy of Nicaragua (Banco Central de Nicaragua, 2019, p. 143). The legislative framework for the mineral sector in Nicaragua is provided by law No. 525/2001. Data on mineral production are in table 1. Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities. More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Nicaragua can be found in previous editions of the U.S. Geological

Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Latin America and Canada, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/latin-america-and-canada-north-america-central-america-and-caribbean>.

Reference Cited

Banco Central de Nicaragua, 2019, Informe anual 2018 [Annual report 2018]: Managua, Nicaragua, Banco Central de Nicaragua, 166 p. (Accessed December 18, 2019, at https://www.bcn.gob.ni/publicaciones/periodicidad/anual/informe_anual/2018/Informe%20Anual%202018.pdf.)

PANAMA

In 2017 and 2018, the production of mineral commodities—notably cement, gold, lime, and salt—represented only a minor part of the economy of Panama (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censo, 2019). The legislative framework for the mineral sector in Panama is provided by law No. 23/1963. Data on mineral production are in table 1. Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities. More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Panama can be found in previous editions of the U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Latin America and Canada, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/latin-america-and-canada-north-america-central-america-and-caribbean>.

Reference Cited

Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censo, 2019, Cuentas nacionales [National accounts]: Panama City, Panama, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censo. (Accessed December 21, 2019, via <http://www.inec.gob.pa/archivos/P9231Avance%20Anual%20y%20Trimestral-2018.xlsx>.)

TABLE 1
CENTRAL AMERICA: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Country and commodity ²	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
BELIZE					
Petroleum, crude thousand 42-gallon barrels	642	528	449 ^r	860	801
COSTA RICA					
Cement, hydraulic ^c thousand metric tons	1,500	1,600	1,600	1,800	1,900
Diatomite do.	18 ^c	20 ^c	20 ^c	7	7
Gold, mine, Au content kilograms	100 ^c	100 ^c	100 ^c	4,255	3,699
Petroleum, refinery ^c thousand 42-gallon barrels	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Stone, sand, and gravel:					
Sand and gravel, construction thousand metric tons	7,724	7,700 ^c	7,700 ^c	7,700 ^c	6,000 ^c
Stone, crushed:					
Limestone, including calcareous materials do.	1,944	1,950 ^c	1,950 ^c	1,950 ^c	1,900 ^c
Sandstone do.	145	150 ^c	150 ^c	150 ^c	150 ^c
Unspecified, rock and rough stone do.	12,020	12,000 ^c	12,000 ^c	12,000 ^c	10,000 ^c
EL SALVADOR					
Cement, hydraulic ^c thousand metric tons	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Iron and steel:					
Raw steel	121,000	124,000	100,000	96,000	99,000
Products, semimanufactured ^c	110,000	111,000	95,000	95,000	95,000
GUATEMALA					
Antimony, mine, concentrate, Sb content	159	-- ^r	25	25 ^c	25 ^c
Barite	43	544	500	43	40 ^c
Cement, hydraulic ^c thousand metric tons	3,500	3,500 ^r	3,600	3,700	3,800
Clays:					
Bentonite	38,368	718 ^c	18,081	20,542	20,000 ^c
Kaolin	1,285	1,101	793	657	700 ^c
Feldspar, mine	10,410	10,340	30,428	29,145	30,000 ^c
Gemstones, jadeite	521	589	216	1,891	1,611
Gold, mine, Au content kilograms	5,928	5,641	3,826	1,646	200 ^c
Gypsum, mine thousand metric tons	82	111	131	135	133
Iron and steel, raw steel do.	395	403	314	294	300
Lead, mine, concentrate, Pb content	10,359 ^r	10,193 ^r	4,181 ^r	13,803	264
Lime hydrated ^c thousand metric tons	-- ^r	-- ^r	170	170	170
Magnesite	24,268	20,000	23,954	16,298	20,000 ^c
Nickel, ferronickel, Ni content	5,040 ^r	10,826	8,688	12,416	14,688
Petroleum:					
Crude thousand 42-gallon barrels	3,669	3,664 ^r	3,285 ^r	3,519	3,363
Refinery:					
Asphalt 42-gallon barrels	237,700	163,671	82,939	278,514	589,552
Diesel do.	280,240	268,699	291,943	240,250	338,591
Kerosene do.	3,520	3,000 ^c	3,000 ^c	--	521
Refinery fuel do.	20,000 ^c	19,000 ^{r,c}	16,521	17,000 ^c	21,613
Pumice and related materials, pumice, sand	192,725	387,976	569,476	570,000 ^c	570,000 ^c
Silver, mine, Ag content kilograms	631,382	862,197	793,083	336,943	--
Stone, sand, and gravel:					
Sand and gravel, construction:					
River sand thousand metric tons	314	181	99	100 ^c	100 ^c
Silica sand	53,200 ^r	324,658	515,921	69,021	69,000 ^c
Unspecified, common thousand metric tons	235	622	281	591	728
Stone, crushed:					
Basalt	22,874 ^r	12,816 ^r	50,032	60,000 ^c	60,000 ^c
Basaltic andesite	2,324,208 ^r	2,574,334	2,789,343	3,030,955	5,503,883
Dolomite	10,305	33,837	16,583	20,000 ^c	14,994
Limestone, crude	2,823,106	5,036,552	2,050,691	5,583,172	2,072,312
Marble	75,716	168,331	76,152	26,254	63,207

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 1—Continued
CENTRAL AMERICA: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Country and commodity ²	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
GUATEMALA—Continued					
Stone, sand, and gravel:—Continued					
Stone, crushed:—Continued					
Marl	65,898	60,957	60,000 ^c	60,000 ^c	60,000 ^c
Schist	310,091	358,382	556,723	394,315	390,000
Talc and related materials, talc	7,250	3,779	2,733	1,981	2,000 ^c
Zinc, mine, concentrate, Zn content	13,394	14,810 ^r	5,564 ^r	6,100	--
HONDURAS					
Antimony, mine, concentrate, Sb content ^c	94	21	3	3	12
Cement, hydraulic ^c thousand metric tons	1,700	1,700	1,700	1,700	1,800
Gold, mine, Au content kilograms	2,762 ^r	2,598 ^r	2,607	2,657	2,064
Lead, mine, concentrate, Pb content	15,509	9,844	4,400 ^r	6,760	9,893
Silver, mine, Ag content kilograms	56,827	34,369	19,275 ^r	21,785	31,182
Zinc, mine, concentrate, Zn content	29,509	22,992	14,579	20,436	28,421
NICARAGUA					
Cement, hydraulic ^c thousand metric tons	700	700	700 ^r	900	910
Gold, mine, Au content kilograms	8,648 ^r	6,814 ^r	8,391	7,377	7,703
Gypsum, including anhydrite, mine	57,390	50,370	41,750	66,740	70,341
Lime	4,679	4,104	5,000 ^c	5,200 ^c	5,000 ^c
Petroleum, refinery:					
Asphalt thousand 42-gallon barrels	105,900	132,200	113,700	101,510	128,071
Diesel do.	1,591,000	1,421,700	993,400	1,221,340	1,520,128
Fuel oil do.	1,942,700	2,236,700	2,200,900	2,118,070	1,776,491
Gasoline do.	815,500 ^r	839,800 ^r	776,800	854,620	819,070
Kerosene, turbo fuel do.	216,700	256,200	271,800	287,310	200,028
Liquefied petroleum gas do.	116,600	155,300	213,600	231,260	202,284
Silver, mine, Ag content kilograms	13,889	18,577	21,382	15,149	11,263
Stone, sand and gravel:					
Sand and gravel, construction thousand metric tons	453	357	286	296	218
Stone, crushed:					
Quarried unspecified do.	9,857	10,237	8,880	9,419	5,828
Tuff, volcanic do.	160 ^r	171 ^r	181	222	199
Unspecified do.	2,175	1,954	2,251	1,232	1,415
PANAMA					
Cement, hydraulic ^c thousand metric tons	2,190	2,200 ^r	2,200 ^r	1,900	2,000
Gold, mine, Au content kilograms	2,954	2,000 ^c	400 ^c	400 ^c	400 ^c
Lime ^c	3,500 ^r	3,500 ^r	4,000	4,200 ^c	4,400 ^c
Salt	56,500	60,000 ^c	60,000 ^c	41,094	38,107

^cEstimated. ^rRevised. do. Ditto. -- Zero.

¹Table includes data available through October 17, 2019. All data are reported unless otherwise noted. Estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²Additional commodities may have been produced, but available information was inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

TABLE 2
CENTRAL AMERICA: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRIES IN 2018

(Thousand metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Country and commodity	Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ^e
BELIZE			
Petroleum, crude thousand 42-gallon barrels	Belize Natural Energy Ltd., 100%	Never Delay and Spanish Lookout oilfields, Cayo District	475
COSTA RICA			
Cement, limestone, including marl	LafargeHolcim Costa Rica S.A. (LafargeHolcim Ltd., 59.8%, and other private, 40.2%)	Cartago cement plant, Aguas Calientes	1,200
Do.	CEMEX Costa Rica S.A. (CEMEX S.A.B de C.V., 98.7%, and other private, 1.3%)	Colorado de Abangares cement plant, Guancaste Province, and Guatuso de Patarra cement grinding and bagging plant, San Jose	1,100
Clay	do.	Tajo Finca clay quarry, near city of Platanar	100
Steel, semimanufactures	Laminadora Costarricense S.A. (Mittal Steel Company N.V., 50%, and Grupo Pujol-Martí, 50%)	Rolling mill, steel manufacturing complex, Guapiles, Jimenez de Pococi, Alajuela, y Tibas	450
Stone, limestone	CEMEX Costa Rica S.A. (CEMEX S.A.B de C.V., 98.7%, and other private, 1.3%)	Cerro Pena Blanca limestone quarry, Guancaste Province	300
Do.	LafargeHolcim Costa Rica S.A. (LafargeHolcim Ltd., 59.8%, and other private, 40.2%)	La Chilena and three other quarries near Cartago cement plant, Cartago Province	650
EL SALVADOR			
Cement	Cemento de El Salvador S.A. de C.V. (LafargeHolcim Ltd., 64.25%, and other private, 35.75%)	El Ronco and Maya plants, near Metapan, Santa Ana Department	1,900
Steel:			
Raw	Corporación Industrial Centroamericana S.A. de C.V. (private, 100%)	Electric arc furnace, Quetzaltepeque, La Libertad Department	125
Semimanufactures	do.	Billet casting machine and rolling mill, Quetzaltepeque, La Libertad Department	110
Stone, limestone	Cemento de El Salvador S.A. de C.V. (LafargeHolcim Ltd., 64.25%, and other private, 35.75%)	Quarries near Aldea El Zapote and Santa Ana, Santa Ana Department	440
GUATEMALA			
Antimony	Minas de Guatemala S.A. (private, 100%)	Clavito, La Florida, Los Lirios, and Torlon Mines, Ixtahuacan, Huehuetenango Department	NA
Do.	do.	Los Angeles Mine, Guatemala Department	NA
Do.	metric tons do.	Cantera Los Manantiales Mine, Chiquimula Department	160
Do.	do.	Escobal Mine, Laguna de Ayarza, Santa Rosa Department	NA
Cement	Cementos Progreso S.A., 100%	San Gabriel plant, San Juan, Sacatepéquez Department, San Miguel plant, Sanarate, El Progreso Department, and La Pedrera plant, Guatemala City	6,000
Copper	Minera Quetzal, S.A.	Cubulco municipality, Baja Verapaz Department	NA
Do.	Tahoe Resources Inc., 100%	Escobal Mine, Laguna de Ayarza, Santa Rosa Department	NA
Gold	kilograms Goldcorp Inc., 100%	Marlin Mine, near municipalities of San Miguel Ixtahuacan and Sipakapa, San Marcos Department	6,500
Do.	Exploraciones Mineras de Guatemala, S.A.	Progreso VII Derivada, San Jose del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc Municipalities, Guatemala Department	NA
Do.	Ricas ek Tanbirm S.A.	San Antonio La Paz, El Progreso Department	NA
Do.	Entre Mares de Guatemala, S.A.	Asuncion Mita, Jutiapa Department	NA

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 2—Continued
CENTRAL AMERICA: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRIES IN 2018

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country and commodity		Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ^e
GUATEMALA—Continued				
Lead		Tenango Mining Company S.A., 100%	Caquipec Mine, Alta Verapaz Department	NA
Do.		Tahoe Resources Inc., 100%	Escobal Mine, Laguna de Ayarza, Santa Rosa Department	800
Lime		HORCALSA S.A. (Cementos Progreso S.A., 100%)	San Miguel plant, Sanarate, El Progreso Department	180
Nickel		Compañía Guatemalteca de Niquel, S.A. (Solway Investment Group, 98.2%, and Government of Guatemala, 1.8%)	Fenix Project, El Estor municipality, Izabal, Department	20,000
Petroleum, crude	thousand 42-gallon barrels	Perenco plc, 100%	Rubelsanto and West Chinaja fields, Alta Verapaz Department, and Caribe, Tierra Blanca, and Xan fields, Peten Department	4,500
Silver	kilograms	Tahoe Resources Inc., 100%	Escobal Mine, Laguna de Ayarza, Santa Rosa Department	6,200
Do.	do.	Goldcorp Inc., 100%	Marlin Mine, near municipalities of San Miguel Ixtahuacan and Sipakapa, San Marcos Department	2,000
Steel:				
Raw		Siderúrgica de Guatemala S.A. (SIDEGUA) {Corporación Aceros de Guatemala S.A. [Corporación Centroamericana del Acero S.A. (Gerdau S.A., 30%, and other private, 70%), 100%], 100%}	Electric arc furnace, near city of Escuintla, Escuintla Department	800
Semimanufactures		Indeta S.A. (INDETA) {Corporación Aceros de Guatemala S.A. [Corporación Centroamericana del Acero S.A. (Gerdau S.A., 30%, and other private, 70%), 100%], 100%}	Rolling mill at Colonia San Ignacio, Mixco, near Guatemala City	200
Zinc	kilograms	Tahoe Resources Inc., 100%	Escobal Mine, Laguna de Ayarza, Santa Rosa Department	6,200
HONDURAS				
Cement		Cementos del Norte S.A. de C.V. (LafargeHolcim Ltd., 24.2%, and Inversiones Continental S.A., 75.8%)	Rio Bijao plant, municipality of San Pedro Sula, Cortes Department	1,100
Do.		Cementos Argos SA de CV, 53.3%, and other private, 46.7%	Piedras Azules plant, municipality of Comayagua, Comayagua Department	1,300
Gold	kilograms	Aura Minerals Inc., 100%	San Andres Mine, municipality of La Union, Copan Department	3,300
Lead		Ascendant Resources Inc, 100%	El Mochito Mine, Santa Barbara Department, 90 kilometers south of San Pedro Sula	15
Silver	kilograms	do.	do.	60,000
Zinc		do.	do.	40
NICARAGUA				
Cement		CEMEX Nicaragua S.A. (CEMEX S.A.B. de C.V., 100%, but on lease from Government)	San Rafael del Sur plant, 45 kilometers from Managua, and milling plant in Managua	600
Cement, clinker		LafargeHolcim de Nicaragua S.A. (LafargeHolcim Ltd., 70%, and other private, 30%)	Nagarote grinding plant, San Rafael del Sur	350
Gold	kilograms	B2 Gold Corp., 95%	Limon Mine, Talavera deposit, 160 kilometers north of Managua	1,200
Do.	do.	B2 Gold Corp., 100%	La Libertad, 110 kilometers east of Managua	4,500
Do.	do.	Míneros S.A., 89.99%	Rio Bambana, Atlántico Norte	2,000
Do.	do.	do.	Bonanza, North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region	1,150

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 2—Continued
CENTRAL AMERICA: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRIES IN 2018

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country and commodity		Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ^e
PANAMA				
Cement		CEMEX Panamá (Cemex Latam Holdings S.A., 100%)	Cement plant, Panamá Province	2,100
Do.		Argos Panamá S.A. (Cemento del Grupo Argos, 100%)	Quebrada Ancha plant, municipality of Colon, Province of Colon	1,300
Gold	kilograms	Artisanal miners	Various locations	1,600
^e Estimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. Do., do. Ditto. NA Not available.				