

2016 Minerals Yearbook

LAOS

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF LAOS

By Yolanda Fong-Sam

In 2016, the production of mineral commodities—notably copper, gold, and tin—represented a minor part of the economy of Laos. The legislative framework for the mineral sector in Laos is provided by the Law on Minerals No. 02/NA of December 20, 2011 (Lao PDR Trade Portal, 2012; Arion Legal Lao PDR Lawyers, 2017). 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 Laos can be found in previous editions of the U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Asia and the Pacific, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/asia-and-pacific>.

References Cited

Arion Legal Lao PDR Lawyers, 2017, Update on the revision of Lao Law on Minerals: Vientiane, Laos, Arion Legal Lao PDR Lawyers, June 16. (Accessed December 22, 2017, at <http://arionlegal.la/update-on-the-revision-of-the-law-on-minerals/>.)

Lao PDR Trade Portal, 2012, Law on Minerals (revised version) No. 02/NA: Vientiane, Laos, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Department of Import and Export. (Accessed December 22, 2017, at <http://www.laotradeportal.gov.la/index.php?r=site/display&id=602>.)

TABLE 1
LAOS: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Commodity ²	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
METALS					
Antimony, mine production, Sb content	521	804	620	1,166 ^r	242
Bismuth, refinery production	--	--	2,000	2,000 ^e	2,000 ^e
Copper:					
Mine production, concentrate, Cu content	63,285	64,885	71,155	78,449	89,187
Leaching, electrowon	86,295	90,030	88,541	89,253	78,492
Gold, mine production, Au content kilograms	6,415	6,838	5,265	6,893	6,765
Iron ore, mine production:					
Gross weight	316,400	904,757	1,148,571	1,200,000 ^e	1,200,000 ^e
Fe content	196,172	560,949	712,114	745,000 ^e	744,000 ^e
Lead, mine production, Pb content	4,510	1,000	--	--	--
Silicon, silicon metal	15,301	12,472 ^r	9,503 ^r	5,673 ^r	6,499
Silver, mine production, Ag content kilograms	20,081	32,262	39,806	51,763	50,904
Tin, mine production, Sn content	762	579	866	900 ^e	1,300 ^e
Zinc, mine production, Zn content	1,600	1,500	--	--	--
INDUSTRIAL MINERALS					
Barite	21,900	10,500	30,610	95,000 ^e	80,000 ^e
Cement, hydraulic ^e	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,900,000 ^r	2,000,000 ^r	2,000,000
Clay and shale, common clay	512,587	445,714	1,656,475	1,700,000 ^e	1,700,000 ^e
Gypsum	578,543	772,138	707,908	708,000 ^e	708,000 ^e
Potash, K ₂ O content	42,798	86,499	210,983	200,000 ^e	200,000 ^e
Salt, rock	11,980	6,099	8,706	9,000 ^e	9,000 ^e
Stone, sand, and gravel:					
Sand and gravel, construction, sandstone	1,214,668	1,211,899	391,186	400,000 ^e	400,000 ^e
Stone, crushed, limestone	1,014,000	3,781,176	773,148	800,000 ^e	800,000 ^e
MINERAL FUELS AND RELATED MATERIALS					
Coal:					
Anthracite	133,583	104,260	110,317	110,000 ^e	110,000 ^e
Lignite	578,068	403,925	99,144	100,000 ^e	100,000 ^e

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. -- Zero.

¹Table includes data available through November 29, 2017. All data are reported unless otherwise noted. Estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²In addition to the commodities listed, sapphire and other varieties of stone may have been produced in Laos, but available information was inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

TABLE 2
LAOS: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2016

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity		Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ^e
Barite		Barite Mining Co., Inthavong Mining Co., Lao Development Construction Co., Phethongkham Co., Oravan Barite Co., and Singphououfar Co.	Muongfuong and Sanakham, Vientiane Province	30,000 ¹
Do.		PetroVietnam Drilling Mud Corp. of Vietnam and VTS Group of Laos	Vilabouly District, Savannakhet Province	50,000
Cement		Lao Cement Co. Ltd. (China Yunnan Corp. for International Techno-Economic Cooperation and Lao State Agricultural Industry Development Enterprise Imp-Exp & General Service)	Vang Vieng Cement Plant No. I, Vientiane Province	100,000
Do.		do.	Vang Vieng Cement Plant No. II, Vientiane Province	240,000
Do.		Lao Cement Industry Co. Ltd	Thakhek Cement Plant, Khammouane Province	850,000
Do.		Luang Prabang Cement Co. Ltd.	Luang Prabang Cement Plant, Luang Prabang Province, 340 kilometers of Vientiane	100,000
Do.		Wanrong Cement I	Vangvieng, Vientiane Province	78,000
Do.		Wanrong Cement II (Yunnan Industrial Economic Co., 60%, and Agricultural and Forestry Development and Service Co. of Laos, 40%)	do.	200,000
Do.		Wanrong Cement III	Savannakhet Province	200,000
Do.		Zhongyayici Co.	Saravan Cement Plant, Saravan Province	450,000
Coal:				
Anthracite		Agriculture Industry Development Enterprises	Viengphoukha, Luangnamtha Province	60,000
Lignite		Viengphoukha Coal Mine Co. Ltd.	do.	300,000
Copper:				
Mine production, Cu content		Phu Bia Mining Ltd. (PanAust Ltd., 90%, and Government, 10%)	Phu Kham copper-gold operation located in Xaisomboun special zone, 140 kilometers north of Vientiane, Vientiane Province	90,000
Metal, refined		Lane Xang Minerals Ltd. (MMG LXML) (MMG Ltd., 90%, and Government, 10%)	Sepon, Vilabouly District, Savannakhet Province	93,000
Gemstones, sapphire	carats	Bokeo Mining Co. Ltd.	Bokeo Province	300,000
Do.	do.	Buhae Industrial Corp.	Houaxay District, Bokeo Province	500,000
Do.	do.	Lao International Trade and Service	do.	400,000
Gold, mine production, Au content	kilograms	Lane Xang Minerals Ltd. (MMG LXML) (MMG Ltd., 90%, and Government, 10%)	Sepon, Vilabouly District, Savannakhet Province	7,500
Do.	do.	Phu Bia Mining Ltd. (PanAust Ltd., 90%, and Government, 10%)	Phu Kham copper-gold operation located in Xaisomboun special zone, 140 kilometers north of Vientiane, Vientiane Province	3,200
Do.	do.	PanAust Ltd.	Ban Houayxai gold-silver project, located approximately 25 kilometers west of the Phu Kham copper-gold operation	4,000
Gypsum		Lao State Gypsum Mining Co. Ltd.	Champhon District, Savannakhet Province	200,000
Do.		Mining Development Economy Cooperation (OEDCD)	Tha Kect District, Khammouane Province	150,000
Do.		Savan Gypsum Mining Co. Ltd.	Champhon District, Savannakhet Province	70,000
Do.		LAVICO Co. Ltd. (a Laos-Vietnam joint venture)	Xebangfay District, Khammouane Province	100,000
Iron ore		Lao SPG CMC Mining Co. Ltd. (Gimpex Ltd.)	Houaphanh Iron Ore Mine, Xamneua District, Houaphanh Province	NA

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 2—Continued
LAOS: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2016

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies and major equity owners		Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ^e
Limestone	Laos Cement Co. Ltd. (a Laos-China joint venture)		Vangvieng, Vientiane Province	250,000
Do.	Agriculture Industry Development Enterprises		do.	150,000
Do.	V.S.K. Co. Ltd.		Tha Kect District, Khammouane Province	150,000
Do.	Phanangnon Co. Ltd.		do.	100,000
Potash, K ₂ O content	SinoAgri Mineral Resources Exploration Ltd. (Beijing Jiang Zhi Yuan Investment Ltd. and China National Agricultural Means of Production Group Corp.)		Plant in Sakhon Nakon Basin in the Khammouane Province	200,000
Do.	Laotian Potash Mining Industry Ltd. Co.		Potassium chloride plant, Vientiane Province	50,000
Silver	kilograms	Phu Bia Mining Ltd. (PanAust Ltd., 90%, and Government, 10%)	Phu Kham copper-gold operation located in Xaisomboun special zone, 140 kilometers north of Vientiane, Vientiane Province	15,100
Do.	do.	PanAust Ltd.	Ban Houayxai gold-silver project, located approximately 25 kilometers west of the Phu Kham copper-gold operation	37,000
Tin, mine production, Sn content	Lao-North Korea Tin Mines		Hinboune District, Khammouane Province	120
Do.	SV Mining Co. Ltd.		do.	300

^eEstimated. Do., do. Ditto. NA Not available.

¹Estimated combined capacity of the six local barite mining companies.