

MINING REPORT

9th edition

P·P·O

INDACOCHEA

WWW.PPOLEGAL.COM

WHAT'S NEW IN MINING?

"TRIPLE ENERGY CRISIS": BOLIVIA COULD RUN OUT OF GAS IN FIVE YEARS

La Razón

06/11/2025: The SIB warned that current natural gas reserves amount to only 4.5 TCF, with an annual consumption of around 0.7 TCF. At this rate, reserves could be depleted in five years, forcing the country to import gas and deepening the energy and economic crisis. Furthermore, 70% of electricity generation depends on gas-fired thermoelectric plants, which makes the country vulnerable to a supply crisis.

[Leer más](#)

GOVERNMENT PUSHES FOR CONSENSUS TO AMEND HYDROCARBONS LAW NO. 767

La Razón

06/14/2025: The Government presented a bill to amend Law 767, aiming to improve the profitability of gas exploration and exploitation projects.

The Hydrocarbons Committee of the Chamber of Deputies has already approved the technical proposal, with support from the Bolivian Chamber of Hydrocarbons and Energy. The bill is expected to be reviewed by commissions and chambers to advance its enactment

[Leer más](#)

COMIBOL LAUNCHES OPERATIONS OF GOLD AND ANTIMONY COMPANIES

Ahora Digital

05/31/2025: The Minister of Mining and Metallurgy, Alejandro Santos, announced that the Bolivian Mining Corporation (COMIBOL) has started operations in new strategic state-owned companies for gold and antimony exploitation. He highlighted that the Amayapampa Mining Company in Potosí currently produces 12 kilograms of gold monthly using machinery valued at over Bs 39 million, with production expected to increase to 15 kilograms in June. Additionally, the Pico Suto Mining Company in San Ramón is set to begin operations within 30 days.

[Leer más](#)

WHAT'S NEW IN MINING?

SIGNING OF AGREEMENT FOR MINING PROSPECTING AND EXPLORATION IN POTOSÍ

Opinión

05/07/2025: Since the enactment of Law 1503 in May 2023, the Central Bank of Bolivia (BCB) has actively purchased fine gold in the domestic market, accumulating a total of 23.57 tons valued at approximately 2.357 billion dollars. In just the first four months of 2025, the BCB acquired 4.94 tons of gold, equivalent to about 527 million dollars, reflecting a sustained purchasing pace that contributes to the strengthening of reserves.

[Leer más](#)

INSPECTION FOR POSSIBLE ILLEGAL EXTRACTION AT HUANUNI MINE

Bolivian Chamber of Deputies

06/18/2025: The Government, Defense, and Armed Forces Committee of the Chamber of Deputies conducted an inspection at the Huanuni mine following reports of illegal mineral extraction (known as "juqueo"). The preliminary report has already been approved unanimously, and additional reports from the relevant ministries are planned to be requested, along with coordinating technical actions to advance the investigation.

[Leer más](#)



ANALYSIS AND OPINION

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF COMMERCIALIZATION LICENSES

The Guide for the Issuance of Commercialization Licenses (Version 1), approved through Administrative Resolution AJAM/DJU/RES-ADM/6/2025, marks an important step in regulating the trade of minerals and metals in Bolivia. Developed by the Jurisdictional Administrative Mining Authority (AJAM), it addresses the need, as identified by various regional offices, for greater uniformity, efficiency, and transparency in the issuance of Commercialization Licenses (CL).

Adopted in April 2025 as a mandatory internal instrument for all Departmental and Regional Directorates of AJAM, the guide does not modify Law No. 535 on Mining and Metallurgy or its regulations. Instead, it systematizes existing provisions into clear, standardized procedures for both new applications and adjustment processes. It outlines each stage from application submission to resolution, specifying responsibilities, required documentation, and deadlines. This structure reduces ambiguity, limits administrative discretion, and incorporates modernization measures, including recommendations for a digital license management system with automated alerts.

The guide reinforces Chapter VI of Law 535, which governs the CL's requirements, procedures, obligations, and sanctions. Previously, application of these rules varied by region; the guide now ensures consistent enforcement. It also promotes coordination with entities such as SENARECOM, essential for verifying commercialization data, and strengthens links between license issuance and other legal obligations, including payment of the annual Bs 20,000 mining license fee, registration in the Mining

Registry, and compliance with environmental and tax requirements.

Among its most notable contributions is the standardization of procedures, reducing regional discrepancies and improving process traceability. It introduces a dedicated procedure for adjustment cases, enabling pre-Law 535 operators to regularize their activities. This supports oversight and legal compliance.

Implementation includes an internal dissemination phase and public outreach via AJAM's communication channels, ensuring that mining operators understand their rights and obligations. The guide is also designed for periodic updates to reflect regulatory changes or administrative improvements.

Conclusion

The Guide for the Issuance of Commercialization Licenses strengthens state oversight of mineral and metal commercialization by translating legal mandates into practical procedures. It improves legal certainty for stakeholders, enhances AJAM's institutional framework, and supports compliance with constitutional principles governing the economic and social role of mining. Its success will depend on the operational capacity of regional offices and sustained central-level support and monitoring.

Did you know that

MERCURY USE IN BOLIVIAN MINING AND THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN UNDER THE MINAMATA CONVENTION

Although mining is one of Bolivia's most dynamic economic sectors, the use of mercury remains one of its most polluting practices due to excessive and uncontrolled application. Mercury's toxic nature causes severe environmental damage, particularly to rivers, protected areas, and Indigenous populations.

Many Indigenous communities along contaminated Amazonian rivers depend heavily on fishing for both subsistence and trade—an activity rooted in millennia-old cultural traditions. The Central of Indigenous Peoples of La Paz (CPI LAP), representing affected communities, conducted a scientific study revealing alarming results: some individuals were found to have mercury levels five to six times higher than the limits recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).

In recognition of the risks posed by mercury use in mining, Bolivia signed the Minamata Convention on Mercury on October 10, 2013, ratified it through Law No. 759 on November 18, 2015, and brought it into force on August 16, 2017. The Convention seeks to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic mercury emissions and releases. Under Article 7, signatories must prepare a National Action Plan (NAP) within three years, setting out measures to reduce mercury use in Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM).

Bolivia did not meet the original Article 7 deadline but, through the Vice Ministry of Mining Policy, Regulation, and Oversight, has resumed efforts to complete and deliver the NAP before the end of the current government term. The plan focuses on three priority areas: (i) eliminating mercury-based grinding activities, (ii) introducing clean technologies and responsible practices, and (iii) improving extraction efficiency. It is organized into eight strategic pillars:

1. Formalization of ASGM operations
2. Reduction of illegal mining
3. Reduction of mercury use
4. Control of mercury imports and consumption
5. Implementation of a Mercury and Health Plan
6. Improvement of gender conditions in the ASGM sector
7. Continuous dissemination of the NAP
8. Enhanced access to financing for ASGM operators

The National Action Plan represents a critical step toward cleaner and more sustainable mining in Bolivia. It offers a framework for introducing modern processing methods, tightening mercury import controls, reducing health risks, and advancing formalization in the ASGM sector. Successful implementation of the Minamata Convention's provisions will bring tangible benefits for Indigenous communities, protect fragile ecosystems, and support a more responsible and competitive mining industry.

CONTACTS

If you require more information about the content of this document, please contact the PPO Indacochea team.



Mattias Garrón

Partner

mgarron@ppolegal.com



Luis Fernando Valle

Senior associate

lvalle@ppolegal.com



Victor Armaza

Senior Associate

varmaza@ppolegal.com



Nicolas Angulo

Associate

nangulo@ppolegal.com

SANTA CRUZ

Av. San Martín No. 155
Ambassador Business Center | Piso 18

Av. Piraí #2115 esq. Baracea

LA PAZ

Av. Ballivián No. 555 Edif. El Dorial | Piso 14

COCHABAMBA

Edificio Empresarial Torre 42, Piso 6,
Calle Papa Paulo No. 604

SUCRE

Calle Ayacucho N° 255, Casa empresarial
FEPCH, segundo patio | Piso 2

COBIJA

Av. 16 de Julio No. 149 Centro

Tel. (+591) 6 200 20 20

P · P · O INDACOCHEA