

The principal producer is the U.S.A. with an annual average of 10 million tons of processed kaolin.

In 1991 kaolin production in Chile was 62,991 tons, a 94.3% increase over 1990 production. The main national producers are Cemento Polpaico near Santiago, Sociedad Legal Minera Catalina in the Third Region, Industria Minera Vasalli in the V Region, and Minera Pacifico in the VI Region.

Minera Pacifico, located in the Litueche sector, has been developing a renovation project since 1987, which contemplates the installation of a hydrocyclone plant, high density magnetic separators, new technology for chemical bleaching, selective separation and filtering processes. The company produces approximately 5,000 tpy.

Chilean kaolin exports are around 7,000 tons annually.

### III.5.9 Cimita.

The production of Cimita increased from 82 tons in 1987 to 2,602 tons in 1991. Cimita is used in the chinaware and ceramics industry, and the main Chilean producer is Industria Minera Vasalli in the V Region.

### III.5.10 Sodium chloride (rock salt).

Chile has enormous reserves of very pure sodium chloride in the Grande Salt Mine and many other smaller salt mines in the North.

Almost all production comes from Grande Salt Mine in the I Region, which belongs to Salina Punta de Lobos.

Approximately 20% of the total is consumed in Chile for textile use and the production of caustic soda. The rest is exported to the U.S.A. and Canada where the coarse product is used to remove snow from winter roads. The product that comes from the deepest layers of the mine is used for water treatment, leather tanning and food preparation, and also as table salt.

Production was 1,676,253 tons in 1991 compared to 1,834,471 tons in 1990, the highest figure in recent years.

### III.5.11 Salina Punta de Lobos - Privately Owned.

This company is the largest national producer. It exploits the open pit mines of Loberas and Shonitas in the Grande Salt Mine, and operates a processing plant in Patillos and bulk shipment facilities near Patillos.

### III.5.12 Other producers.

In the Lagunas Salt Mine, I Region, there is a solar evaporation plant operated by Yarur. Many other small producers extract the product manually from salt mines near Iquique and Calama.

Sociedad Chilena del Litio is also accumulating large amounts of sodium chloride as a by-product of lithium carbonate and potassium chloride. This salt is not marketed, because the price does not compensate the high freight cost. Minsal will also be a large producer when their potassic salt project materializes.

### III.5.13 Quartz.

Quartz production was 492,038 tons in 1991 compared to 543,307 tons the previous year. It is mainly used in copper processing plants.

Codelco Chile (El Teniente) is an important producer and consumer.

There are also about two dozen small producers from many deposits between the II and the VIII Region.

### III.5.14 Kieselguhr.

The only producer of kieselguhr in Chile is Sociedad Minera Condor, which exploits many deposits in the I Region and has a processing plant that was set up in 1982. This company, formed in 1980, was called Chaquiri. It belongs to two Spanish and two Chilean investors who also own the mining companies Mónica and Macarena that produce calcium carbonate, bentonite and pumice stone.