



# 2013 Minerals Yearbook

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## AZERBAIJAN

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# THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF AZERBAIJAN

By Elena Safirova

Azerbaijan produced a wide range of metals and industrial minerals, including aluminum, bromine, iodine, iron ore, limestone, and steel. Its major importance as a world mineral producer, however, was based on its crude oil industry and, more recently, its natural gas industry. The country had been a significant crude oil producer for more than a century, but the focus since independence in 1991 has been on developing offshore resources in the Caspian Sea. Oilfield and gasfield development was concentrated in two projects—the Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli (ACG) offshore oilfield complex and the Shah Deniz offshore gasfield (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014).

## Minerals in the National Economy

In 2013, the real gross domestic product (GDP) of Azerbaijan increased by 3.5%. The nominal GDP amounted to \$73.56 billion,<sup>1</sup> and industrial production contributed 58.7% to the total GDP. Mining and quarrying accounted for 77.2% of the country's industrial output whereas the rest of the industrial output was produced by manufacturing (16.5%) and electricity, heating, and water production and distribution (6.3%). In 2013, industrial production increased by 1.8% and production by the mining and quarrying sector increased by 0.7% compared with that of 2012. (State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2014a, b).

In 2013, Azerbaijan exported about \$32.8 billion worth of goods and services, which was a 3.9% decrease compared with export revenues in 2012. Of that amount, 92.7% came from exports of mineral fuels, mineral oils, and products made of them. The main export partners of Azerbaijan were Italy (which received 25.0% of Azerbaijan's total exports), Indonesia (11.6%), Thailand (6.9%), Germany (5.7%), Israel (5.3%), France (4.7%), Russia (4.5%), the United States (4.1%), and Greece (3.4%). Azerbaijan's total imports in 2013 were valued at about \$10.7 billion, and the main imported commodities included machinery and equipment (27.7%); food and beverages (13.9%); vehicles, aircraft, and transportation equipment (13.4%); base metals and articles made of them (12.1%); precious stones and precious metals (8.7%); and chemicals (7.0%). The country's major import partners during the year were Russia (which provided 14.1% of Azerbaijan's imports), Turkey (13.7%), the United Kingdom (12.5%), Germany (7.7%), Ukraine (5.5%), China (5.3%), France (4.0%), Brazil and the United States (3.5% each), and Kazakhstan (2.9%). Net exports of \$22.1 billion afforded Azerbaijan opportunities to continue investing in infrastructure, stabilizing the economy, and reducing poverty in the country (State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2014c; U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2014).

<sup>1</sup>Where necessary, values have been converted from Azerbaijani manats (AZN) to U.S. dollars (US\$) at an annual average rate of AZN 0.785=US\$1.00.

## Production

In 2013, production of silver increased by 228% because the only mine producing it had expanded. Production of bentonite increased by 151%, and salt and cement production increased by 17% each. On the other hand, alumina and caustic soda were not produced at all and sulfuric acid production essentially stopped. Output of limestone and lime was reduced by 40% and 37%, respectively. Copper and iron ore production decreased by 35% and 32%, respectively. These and other data on mineral production are in table 1.

## Structure of the Mineral Industry

Azerbaijan's major mineral industry facilities are listed in table 2.

## Commodity Review

### Metals

**Gold, Silver, and Copper.**—In 2009, Anglo Asian Mining PLC (Anglo Asian) of the United Kingdom began gold production at the Gedabek gold, silver, and copper mine, which is located about 55 kilometers (km) from the city of Ganja. In 2013, the company reported producing 1,619 kilograms (kg) of gold; 650 kg of silver; and 327 metric tons (t) of copper. Anglo Asian was controlled by R.V. Investment Group Services (51% interest), and the Government of Azerbaijan, through the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR), owned a 49% interest. The original production-sharing agreement between Anglo Asian and the Government, which was signed in 1997, included development of six deposits in southwestern Azerbaijan—the Gedabek, the Gosha Bulag, the Gyzyt Bulag, the Ordubad, the Soyutlu, and the Vezhnali fields. The Ordubad, the Soyutlu, and the Vezhnali fields are located in the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh where conflicts with ethnic Armenians took place from 1988 to 1994. According to the agreement, Anglo Asian planned to mine a total of 400 t of gold, 2,500 t of silver, and 1,500 t of copper, and the Government was to receive its share of the gross profits in gold, which would help the country build up its gold reserves (Alizade, 2013; Anglo Asian Mining PLC, 2014; Moroz, 2014; Worldeconomy.biz, 2015).

In September, Anglo Asian opened a new plant at Gedabek that would process ore using the agitation leaching method. Agitation leaching allows the recovery of up to 90% of the gold contained in the ore compared with up to 70%, which is common for heap leaching. According to preliminary data, the average extraction rate at the plant was expected to be about 85% for oxide ore and about 69% for sulfide ore. The new plant was expected to process about 100 t of ore per hour and would lead to an overall increase in gold production of about 20%.

In addition, because of the adoption of new technologies, Anglo Asian planned to reduce its production costs to \$500 per troy ounce of gold (Mineral.ru, 2013b; Moroz, 2014).

At the beginning of September, a small amount of ore was mined from the Gosha Bulag deposit for testing. Anglo Asian was planning to start regular mining operations at Gosha before the end of 2013. In 2014, the ore mined at Gosha would be sent to the new processing plant at Gedabek. The total area of the Gosha deposit is 300 square kilometers (km<sup>2</sup>), and it is located within 50 km of the Gedabek deposit. It was planned that Gosha alone would produce between 300 and 450 kilograms per year (kg/yr) of gold (MinerJob.ru, 2013a, b).

**Iron and Steel.**—In April, the President of Azerbaijan signed a document that would create a steel-producing complex in the country. According to the document, the new complex would be a ZAO (Closed Joint Stock Company) that would be managed by the Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Economic Development, and the State Committee on Property. The complex would include such Government-owned production facilities as the OAO Daskesan Filizsaflashdirma (a mining and metallurgical complex) and the OAO Azerboru (a steel plant). It was not clear if the OOO Baku Steel Co., a private company, would become a part of the complex and, if so, on what conditions. The Azerbaijani Steel Complex would be a full-cycle enterprise, including the entire technological production chain from the mining of ore to the manufacturing of the final product (Contact.az, 2013; Echo.az, 2013; Nadzhafov, 2013).

### **Mineral Fuels**

**Natural Gas.**—In 2013, Azerbaijan produced and sold as a commodity 17,895 million cubic meters of natural gas, which was an increase of 3.8% compared with the output in 2012. As of January 2014, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, which referenced the Oil and Gas Journal, Azerbaijan's gas reserves were approximately 990 billion cubic meters. Almost all Azerbaijan's gas was produced at two offshore fields—the ACG complex and the Shah Deniz field (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014).

The Shah Deniz natural gas and condensate field started producing at the end of 2006. The field is located on the deepwater shelf of the Caspian Sea where the water depth reaches 500 meters. The total resources of Shah Deniz were estimated to be 1.2 trillion cubic meters of natural gas and 240 billion tons of gas condensate. The field was being developed by a consortium of companies led by BP p.l.c. of the United Kingdom. According to the initial agreement signed in 1996, BP (the project operator) and Statoil ASA of Norway each had a 25.5% interest. State Oil Corp. of the Republic of Azerbaijan (GNKAR), Naftiran Intertrade Co. (NICO), Total S.A. of France, and OAO Lukoil of Russia each had a 10% share, and Türkiye Petrolleri Anonim Ortaklığı (TPAO) had a 9% share. Shah Deniz was expected to reach full production capacity in 2017 and to start supplying European customers with natural gas sometime in 2019. In 2013, production at Shah Deniz increased by 26.8% to 9.8 billion cubic meters of gas (Oilru.com, 2012; BP.com, 2014; Dadashev, 2014; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014).

Azerbaijan was planning to increase its natural gas production rapidly in the next decade; it was expecting to produce 20 billion cubic meters by 2015 and to double production by 2025. In addition to ACG and Shah Deniz, other promising natural gas fields in the country included the Absheron, the Ashrafi, the Babek, and the Umid fields. Babek reportedly had estimated resources of 400 billion cubic meters, followed by Absheron and Umid, which had 340 billion and 200 billion cubic meters, respectively. The State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) planned to start development of Babek in 2019 and then to start development at the Karabakh and the Ashrafi fields in 2020 and 2023, respectively. The Karabakh's resources were estimated to be 20 billion cubic meters of natural gas and 20 million metric tons (Mt) of gas condensate, and the Ashrafi's resources were estimated to be 13 billion cubic meters of natural gas and 17 billion metric tons of gas condensate (Mustafaeva, 2012; Oilru.com, 2012; Mineral.ru, 2013a; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014).

**Petroleum.**—In 2013, the volume of crude oil production in Azerbaijan increased to 43.2 Mt, or by 0.4% compared with that of 2012. In 2013, oil extraction from the Caspian Sea comprised 96.1% of the total petroleum produced. The major source of crude oil in the country was the ACG field, which had been in operation for more than 15 years. The ACG field is located about 100 km east of Baku in the Caspian Sea and covers 430 km<sup>2</sup>. The ACG field had an estimated 5 billion barrels of reserves; it produced mostly Azeri Light, which is a medium-light and sweet crude that is valued for its middle-distillate yield. The ACG petroleum project was developed by a consortium of companies lead by BP, which had a 35.78% share in the project. Other participants included SOCAR (11.65%), Chevron Corp. of the United States (11.27%), INPEX Corp. of Japan (10.96%), Statoil of Norway (8.56%), Exxon Mobil Corp. of the United States (8.01%), TPAO of Turkey (6.75%), Itochu Corp. of Japan (4.3%), and Hess Corp. of the United States (2.72%). In 2013, the ACG field alone produced 32.7 Mt of crude oil. (Alizade, 2014; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014).

Azerbaijan's crude oil was refined domestically at two refineries—the Azerneftiyag refinery and the Heydar Aliyev refinery. The total (combined) refining capacity of both refineries was about 400,000 barrels per day [about 22 million metric tons per year (Mt/yr)], but the actual production was much lower. In 2013, the refineries increased production by about 6% compared with that of 2012. In particular, kerosene production increased by 12.2%; that of bitumen, by 8.6%; gasoline, by 8.5%; and diesel fuel, by 5.3% (Interfax.az, 2014; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014).

In 2013, Azerbaijan exported a total of 36,708 Mt of petroleum and the export revenues were \$27.98 billion. Most of the crude oil was exported by pipelines. Azerbaijan had three export pipelines—the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC), the Baku-Novorossiysk, and the Baku-Supsa—and about 80% of the petroleum was exported through the BTC pipeline (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014).

## Outlook

In 2013, Azerbaijan continued to focus its attention on oil and gas production, but also made efforts to reinvest the proceeds from exporting hydrocarbons in other economic sectors, such as products of ferrous and nonferrous metallurgy. Azerbaijan is also investing resources in building petroleum processing and petroleum transporting facilities, both domestically and abroad, to provide export opportunities for Azerbaijan's oil as well as to expand the national petroleum industry beyond extraction of crude oil.

In the next few years, it is likely that oil production will remain stable. Natural gas production, on the other hand, has the potential to double in the next 10 years. Gold, copper, and silver production is likely to increase when the Gedabek and the Gosha Mines reach their production capacities and perhaps some other polymetallic deposits enter the development stage.

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TABLE 1  
AZERBAIJAN: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>METALS</b>					
Alumina	9,600	--	6,200	101,800 <sup>r</sup>	--
Aluminum, primary and secondary	--	--	20,000 <sup>e</sup>	54,890 <sup>r</sup>	53,290
Copper ore, metal content	--	184	611	502	327
Gold kilograms	333	1,900	1,775	1,563	1,619
<b>Iron and steel:</b>					
<b>Iron ore, marketable:</b>					
Gross weight	--	57,800	214,300	207,300 <sup>r</sup>	141,400
Fe content <sup>e</sup>	--	32,900	103,000 <sup>r</sup>	99,300 <sup>r</sup>	67,700
<b>Steel:</b>					
Crude	78,874	128,600	234,000	267,700	222,800
Pipes	6,918	36,545	98,500	61,773 <sup>r</sup>	60,785
Silver kilograms	--	1,500	1,217	626 <sup>r</sup>	630
<b>INDUSTRIAL MINERALS</b>					
Bentonite	10,581	18,073	20,700 <sup>r</sup>	36,700 <sup>r</sup>	92,000
Bromine <sup>e</sup>	3,400	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
Caustic soda	7,041	6,220	9,800	300 <sup>r</sup>	--
Cement	1,538,000 <sup>r</sup>	1,278,800	1,425,000	1,966,000	2,296,100
Gypsum	45,630	49,200	100,800	149,984 <sup>r</sup>	169,028
Iodine kilograms	300,000 <sup>e</sup>	300,000 <sup>e</sup>	350,000 <sup>e</sup>	240,400 <sup>r</sup>	249,100
Lime, construction	684	802	2,229	16,894 <sup>r</sup>	10,662
Limestone	1,228,775	1,173,863	1,200,000 <sup>e</sup>	1,696,977 <sup>r</sup>	1,013,531
Salt, marketable	5,466	4,449	5,128 <sup>r</sup>	5,345	6,268
Sand, construction	662,800 <sup>r</sup>	1,178,000	1,335,200	2,211,200	2,138,600
Sulfuric acid	12,400	10,100	15,500	4,300 <sup>r</sup>	200
<b>MINERAL FUELS AND RELATED MATERIALS</b>					
Natural gas million cubic meters	16,325	16,673	16,361 <sup>2</sup>	17,242	17,895
<b>Petroleum:</b>					
<b>Crude:</b>					
In gravimetric units	50,416,000	50,838,000	45,626,000	42,982,000	43,163,000
In volumetric units 42-gallon barrels	351,000,000	352,000,000	331,610,000 <sup>3</sup>	320,667,000 <sup>3</sup>	313,700,000
<b>Refinery products:</b>					
In gravimetric units	6,032,790 <sup>r</sup>	6,169,600 <sup>r</sup>	5,150,000 <sup>e</sup>	4,800,000	5,088,000
In volumetric units 42-gallon barrels	51,520,000 <sup>r</sup>	52,688,000 <sup>r</sup>	43,981,000 <sup>r</sup>	40,992,000	43,500,000

<sup>e</sup>Estimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. <sup>r</sup>Revised. -- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Table includes data available through January 15, 2015.

<sup>2</sup>Only natural gas sold as a commodity; includes associated gas.

<sup>3</sup>Only marketable crude petroleum; includes gas condensate.

TABLE 2  
AZERBAIJAN: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2013<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity		Major operating companies and major equity owners	Locations or deposit names	Annual capacity <sup>e</sup>
Alumina		Ganja refinery	Ganja	450,000
Aluminum		OJSC Azerbaijan Aluminum [Azeraluminum (Azeral)] (Det. AL Aluminum)	Sumqayit	60,000
Do.		OJSC Azerbaijan Aluminum [Azeraluminum (Azeral)]	Ganja smelter	50,000
Alunite ore		Zaglik alunite mining directorate	Zaylik, Daskasan region	600,000
Cement		NA	Plants in Karadagly and Tavuzcay region	2,000,000 <sup>2</sup>
Clays, bentonite		NA	Dash-Salakhliinskoye deposit	100,000
Copper ore		Anglo Asian Mining PLC (R.V. Investment Group Services, 51%, and Government, 49%)	Gedabek	NA
Gold	kilograms	Anglo Asian Mining PLC (R.V. Investment Group Services, 51%, and Government, 49%)	Gedabek	2,000
Do.		Azerbaijan International Mineral Resources Operating Co. (AIMROC)	Chovdar deposit, near Ganja	NA
Iodine and bromine		NA	Plants in Baku, Karadagly, and Neftcala	NA
Iron ore, marketable, Fe content		OAQ Daskesan Filizsaflashdirma	Daskasan region	70,000
Lime		AAC Co.	Plant in Baku region	65,000
Natural gas, processing		NA	Plant in Karadagly region	NA
Petroleum and natural gas:				
Crude petroleum and gas condensate		Azerbaijan International Operating Co., (AIOC) in conjunction with BP p.l.c., Chevron Corp., State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR), Total S.A., Inpex Corp., Statoil ASA, Exxon Mobil Corp., Türkiye Petrolleri A.O. (TPAO), Itochu Corp., Devon Energy Corp., and Delta Hess (joint venture of Delta Oil and Hess Corp.)	Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli (ACG) offshore oilfields in the Caspian Sea	55,000,000
Natural gas	billion cubic meters	International consortium consisting of BP p.l.c., Statoil ASA, OAO Lukoil, Oil Industries' Engineering and Construction (OIEC), State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR), Total S.A., and Türkiye Petrolleri A.O. (TPAO)	Shah Deniz gas condensate field	10
Petroleum, refined		NA	Azerneftiyag refinery in Baku	12,000,000 <sup>3</sup>
Do.		NA	Heydar Aliyev Baku refinery	10,000,000 <sup>3</sup>
Salt (rock salt)		NA	Hehram and Pusyan deposits, Naxcivan region	2,500,000
Silver	kilograms	Anglo Asian Mining PLC (R.V. Investment Group Services, 51%, and Government, 49%)	Gedabek	NA
Steel:				
Crude		OOO Baku Steel Co.	Baku	400,000
Pipe, tubes		OAQ Azerboru	Sumqayit	400,000
Ingots		Baku Steel Casting	Baku	NA

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. Do. Ditto. NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Many location names have changed since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Many enterprises, however, are still named or commonly referred to based on the former location name, which accounts for discrepancies in the names of enterprises and that of locations.

<sup>2</sup>Capacity estimates are totals for all enterprises that produce cement.

<sup>3</sup>Capacity for crude petroleum distillation.