

## **INDUSTRIAL MINERALS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN IBEROAMERICA**

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Iberoamerican countries are very well known for their metallic mining products. Little is known about the Industrial Minerals and Rocks (IMR) potential, although they are beginning to play an important role in the development of this region. The exploitation of construction materials, dimension stone, clays, salts, gems, fertilizers, prime materials for chemicals and many others can provide a source of richness and a technological challenge for these countries. Academic institutions and state agencies have understood this opportunity and are preparing national inventories, maps and databanks with useful information for companies and investors. It is important to have a whole idea of the possibilities of Iberoamerican countries in exploiting their own IMR resources. It is important to know, not only the proved amount of minerals, but also the possible use, the mining costs and the final prices, depending on the applications. The Iberoamerican Network on IMR (CYTED) is working on a map and a manual about these materials in Latin American countries, and some data are given in this paper. It is relevant to point out the importance of sustainable development, in which the adequate social satisfaction is the great priority, and the preservation of the environment. Availability of information and the impact of technology choice will lead to a recognition of the important role of small and medium scale sector. IMR are shown as important sources of employment and national and regional income.