

## Brazil Finds Large Sylvite Beds in the Amazon

Contributed by Thaís Brianezi  
Monday, 28 March 2005

Brazil's National Department of Mineral Production (DNPM) is coordinating an analysis of the largest Brazilian sylvite beds found in the state of Amazonas, with the objective of establishing partnerships for exploration.

Sylvite is a mineral from which potassium chloride (KCl) is extracted to be used as a fertilizer. Currently, Brazil imports 85% of the total potassium chloride consumed in the country.

The remaining 15% come from the Taquari-Vassouras mine, located in the state of Sergipe, in the Northeast of the Brazil.

Amazon sylvite beds were found in the 1980s, by Petrobrás. Estimated reserves are to the order of 1 billion tons, more than twice the 450 million-ton beds found initially in Sergipe, where sylvite is explored by the Companhia Vale do Rio Doce.

Current annual production of potassium chloride is 600 thousand tons, which supplies part of the Center-South of the country.

One of Brazil's government priorities is to invest in mineral research and exploration, says minister of Mines and Energy, Dilma Rousseff.

According to the minister, if Brazil is to have development in mining, the government has to have an updated and modern mining department.

Brazil was told last year that Canadian mining interests could invest as much as US\$ 2 billion in gold, nickel, copper and diamond operations in Brazil.

Last year the DNPM inaugurated a data bank network connecting its 25 districts nationwide at a cost of US\$ 25 million.

Translation: Andréa Alves

Agência Brasil