

# THE WORLD COPPER FACTBOOK 2021



**INTERNATIONAL COPPER STUDY GROUP**

# The World Copper Factbook 2021

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## About ICSG

The International Copper Study Group (ICSG) was formally established as an autonomous inter-governmental organization on 23 January 1992, following a series of Ad Hoc meetings sponsored by the United Nations (UNCTAD) in 1986 and 1987 to review the world situation of copper and discuss the need for such a body. ICSG serves to increase copper market transparency and promote international discussions and cooperation on issues related to copper.

In order to fulfill its mandate, the Study Group has three main objectives:

- Increase market transparency by promoting an exchange of information on production, consumption, stocks, trade, and prices of copper, by forecasting production and consumption, and by assessing the present and future capacities of copper mines, plants, smelters and refineries.
- Promote international cooperation on matters related to copper, such as health and the environment, research, technology transfer, regulations and trade.
- Provide a global forum where industry and governments can meet and discuss common problems/objectives. The ICSG is the only inter-government forum solely dedicated to copper.

The current members of ICSG are:

	Australia		Japan
	Belgium		Luxembourg
	Brazil		Mexico
	Chile		Mongolia
	China		Peru
	DR Congo		Poland
	European Union		Portugal
	Finland		Russian Federation
	France		Serbia
	Germany		Spain
	India		Sweden
	Iran		United States
	Italy		

As part of its mandate to provide a global forum where industry and governments can meet and discuss common problems and objectives, ICSG meetings are held twice per year, typically in the Spring and Fall at ICSG Headquarters in Lisbon, Portugal. The meetings of the Study Group are open to government members, their industry advisors and invited observers.

## ICSG Officers and Secretariat

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The International Copper Study Group's World Copper Factbook © 2021 is published by the ICSG.

## Selected ICSG Publications

- **COPPER BULLETIN (monthly).** The ICSG Copper Bulletin includes annual and monthly statistics on copper and copper products, their production, usage and trade by country, as well as stocks and exchange prices, providing a global view of supply and demand. Subscribers to the Copper Bulletin receive the Yearbook as part of their annual subscription.
  - **ICSG STATISTICAL YEARBOOK.** The ICSG Copper Bulletin yearbook includes annual statistics on copper and copper products, their production, usage and trade by country, as well as stocks and exchange prices, providing a global view of supply and demand for the past 10 years. The Yearbook serves as a useful tool for consultations and analysis on the longer term evolution of world copper production, usage, stocks and prices. Subscribers to the Copper Bulletin receive the Yearbook as part of their annual subscription.
  - **DIRECTORY OF COPPER MINES AND PLANTS.** The Directory of Copper Mines and Plants highlights current capacity and provides a five-year outlook of forecasted capacity for over 1,300 existing and planned copper mines, smelters and refineries on a country by country basis, including separate tables for SX-EW plants. Salient data and information for each mine, smelter and refinery are included and the Directory separates operations between Operating, Developing, Feasibility and Exploration stages. The Directory is published twice per year.
  - **ICSG STATISTICAL DATABASE.** The ICSG maintains one of the world's most complete historical and current databases with statistics on copper production capacities, data on copper production, consumption, stocks, prices, recycling and trade for copper products. In 2012 ICSG launched its **online statistical database** that gives subscribers direct access to ICSG historical data. It also provides subscribers with specific extraction tools for downloading the data.
  - **DIRECTORY OF COPPER & COPPER ALLOY FABRICATORS (FIRST USE).** This directory provides a global overview of companies and plants involved in the first use of copper.
  - **EUROPEAN SEMI MANUFACTURED COPPER PRODUCTS CAPACITY (2019).** A study focusing on providing a complete picture of fabrication and copper use in Europe.
  - **SOLID WASTES IN COPPER, LEAD, ZINC AND NICKEL MINING, SMELTING AND REFINING (2019).** The study examines mine, smelter and refinery solid wastes and assesses a range of issues related to these wastes.
  - **SMELTING AND HYDROMETALLURGY TREATMENT FOR COPPER SULPHIDE ORES AND CONCENTRATES (2019).** This study focuses on key issues related to plants processing copper sulphide ores and concentrates of different complexity.
  - **COPPER USE IN FABRICATION IN JAPAN, KOREA, TAIWAN (CHINA) AND VIETNAM (2018).** A study focusing on providing a complete picture of fabrication and copper use in the Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam.
  - **INDUSTRIAL USE OF REFINED COPPER AND SCRAP IN FABRICATION IN CHINA (2017).** A study focusing on providing a complete picture of fabrication and copper use in China.
  - **MANUFACTURE AND USE OF SEMI-FABRICATED COPPER IN LATIN AMERICA/CANADA (2017).** A study focusing on providing a complete picture of fabrication and copper use in Latin America and Canada.
  - **CHINA COPPER MINING INDUSTRY.** A study focusing on providing a complete picture of the copper mining industry in China.
- To subscribe to ICSG publications, please see our **Order Form on Page 60**. Alternatively, please visit our website at [www.icsg.org](http://www.icsg.org)

## Chapter 1: Cu Basics

### What is Copper?



Copper is a malleable and ductile metallic element that is an excellent conductor of heat and electricity as well as being corrosion resistant and antimicrobial. Copper occurs naturally in the Earth's crust in a variety of forms. It can be found in sulfide deposits (as chalcopyrite, bornite, chalcocite, covellite), in carbonate deposits (as azurite and malachite), in silicate deposits (as chrysocolla and diopside) and as pure "native" copper.

Copper also occurs naturally in humans, animals and plants. Organic life forms have evolved in an environment containing copper. As a nutrient and essential element, copper is vital to maintaining health. Life sustaining functions depend on copper.

Copper and copper-based alloys are used in a variety of applications that are necessary for a reasonable standard of living. Its continued production and use is essential for society's development. How society exploits and uses its resources, while ensuring that tomorrow's needs are not compromised, is an important factor in ensuring society's sustainable development.

Copper is one of the most recycled of all metals. It is our ability to recycle metals over and over again that makes them a material of choice. Recycled copper (also known as secondary copper) cannot be distinguished from primary copper (copper originating from ores), once reprocessed. Recycling copper extends the efficiency of use of the metal, results in energy savings and contributes to ensuring that we have a sustainable source of metal for future generations.

The demand for copper will continue to be met by the discovery of new deposits, technological improvements, efficient design, and by taking advantage of the renewable nature of copper through reuse and recycling. As well, competition between materials, and supply and demand principles, contribute to ensuring that materials are used efficiently and effectively.

Copper is an important contributor to the national economies of mature, newly developed and developing countries. Mining, processing, recycling and the transformation of metal into a multitude of products creates jobs and generates wealth. These activities contribute to building and maintaining a country's infrastructure, and create trade and investment opportunities. Copper will continue to contribute to society's development well into the future.



Images courtesy of the Copper Development Association.

## Copper Properties and Benefits

<b>Chemical Symbol</b>	<b>Cu</b>
<b>Atomic Number</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Atomic Weight</b>	<b>63.54</b>
<b>Density</b>	<b>8960 kg m<sup>-3</sup></b>
<b>Melting point</b>	<b>1356 K</b>
<b>Specific Heat cp (at 293 K)</b>	<b>0.383 kJ kg<sup>-1</sup> K<sup>-1</sup></b>
<b>Thermal conductivity</b>	<b>394 W m<sup>-1</sup> K<sup>-1</sup></b>
<b>Coefficient of linear expansion</b>	<b>16.5 x 10<sup>-6</sup> K<sup>-1</sup></b>
<b>Young's Modulus of Elasticity</b>	<b>110 x 10<sup>9</sup> N m<sup>-2</sup></b>
<b>Electrical Conductivity (% IACS)</b>	<b>1.673 x 10<sup>-8</sup> ohm-m</b>
<b>Crystal Structure</b>	<b>Face-Centered Cubic</b>

Copper makes vital contributions to sustaining and improving society. Copper's chemical, physical and aesthetic properties make it a material of choice in a wide range of domestic, industrial and high technology applications.

Alloyed with other metals, such as zinc (to form brass), aluminum or tin (to form bronzes), or nickel, for example, it can acquire new characteristics for use in highly specialized applications. In fact, society's infrastructure is based, in part, on copper.

### Key Physical Properties of Copper



But copper's benefits extend beyond mechanical characteristics:

- Copper is **essential to the health** of plants, animal and humans. Deficiencies, as well as excesses, can be detrimental to health.
- **Antimicrobial Properties.** Due to copper's antimicrobial properties, copper and copper alloy products can be used to eliminate pathogens and reduce the spread of diseases.
- **Recycling.** Copper is one of the most recycled of all metals. Virtually all products made from copper can be recycled and recycled copper loses none of its chemical or physical properties.
- **Energy Efficiency.** Copper can improve the efficiency of energy production and distribution systems.

### Selected Copper Definitions

- **Anode.** The positive terminal in an electrolytic cell where electrons leave a device to enter the external circuit. A copper anode at 99 percent purity will dissolve.
- **Blister.** The product of a converting furnace. It is an intermediate, more concentrated (with respect to the desired metal) material than matte, from which it is made, and is usually transferred to another furnace for further concentration.
- **Cathode.** The negative terminal in an electrolytic cell where copper is plated during electrowinning or electrolytic refining. Copper so plated is referred to as “cathode” and is generally about 99.99 percent pure.
- **Contained Copper.** Contained copper is defined as the analytical amount of copper outputted in concentrates and precipitates.
- **Copper concentrate.** A product of flotation milling. It composes sulfide minerals and entrained material and contains one-third each copper, iron, and sulfur. It can be processed pyrometallurgically in a smelter to produce matte or hydrometallurgically (pressure leaching) to produce pregnant leach solution, both products requiring further processing to obtain copper metal.
- **Direct melt scrap.** Direct-melt, or re-melt scrap is secondary material that can be used directly in a furnace without cleanup through the use of fluxes and poling and re-refining.
- **Electrorefining.** An electrolytic refining process where less pure copper anode is dissolved and high-purity copper is plated at the cathode.
- **Electrowinning.** An electrolytic refining process where the anode is inert, and rich (copper-loaded) electrolyte continually replaces lean (copper-depleted) electrolyte as copper is plated at the cathode.
- **Fire-refined copper.** The product of a fire-refining furnace. It is an intermediate, more concentrated (with respect to the desired metal) material than blister, from which it is made. Fire-refined copper contains about 99 percent copper, the exact percentage depending on the process parameters.
- **Primary copper.** Copper extracted from ores and recovered as copper metal or copper-bearing chemicals.
- **Secondary refined material.** Secondary refined material represents scrap that has been fire-refined, or that has been converted to anode at the smelter level and then electrolytically refined.
- **Solvent extraction.** A method of separating one or more metals from a leach solution by treating with a solvent that will extract the required metal, leaving the others. The metal is recovered from the solvent by further treatment.
- **Stocks.** ICSG reports refined copper stocks as those held by the exchanges, consumers, producers and governments. Merchant stocks are included where it is certain that these are nonduplicative to those already reported. Only refined products at plant sites are included. Items such as wire rod, tube and other semifabricated forms are not included.
- **Usage.** Copper usage represents refined copper used by semifabricators. Usage data is either directly reported, or ICSG estimates an **apparent usage** using the following formula: Refined copper production + refined imports - refined exports + refined beginning stocks - ending stocks.

Sources: ICSG and USGS.

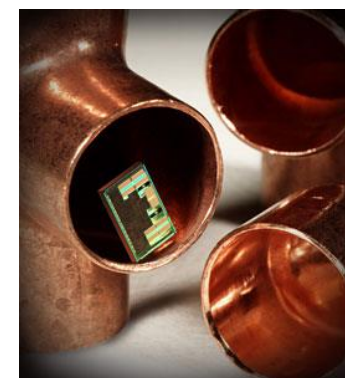


## Copper in History

Archaeological evidence demonstrates that copper was one of the first metals used by humans and was used at least 10,000 years ago for items such as coins and ornaments in western Asia. During the prehistoric **Chalcolithic Period** (derived from *chalkos*, the Greek word for copper), man discovered how to extract and use copper to produce ornaments and implements. As early as the 4th to 3rd millennium BC, workers extracted copper from Spain's Huelva region.

The discovery that copper, when alloyed with tin, produces bronze, led to the **Bronze Age**, c. 2,500 BC. Israel's Timna Valley provided copper to the Pharaohs (an Egyptian papyrus records the use of copper to treat infections and to sterilize water). Cyprus supplied much of the Phoenician, Greek and Roman needs for copper. "Copper" is derived from the latin *Cyprium*, literally Cyprian metal. The Greeks of Aristotle's era were familiar with brass as a valued copper alloy. In South America, the pre-Columbian Maya, Aztec and Inca civilizations exploited copper, in addition to gold and silver. During the **Middle Ages**, copper and bronze works flourished in China, India and Japan.

The discoveries and inventions relating to electricity and magnetism of the late 18th and early 19th centuries by scientists such as Ampere, Faraday and Ohm, and the products manufactured from copper, helped launch the **Industrial Revolution** and propel copper into a new era. **Today**, copper continues to serve society's needs. Although copper has been in use for at least 10,000 years, innovative applications for copper are still being developed as evidenced by the development of the copper chip by the semi-conductors industry.



Images courtesy of the British Museum, the Copper Development Association and ICSG.

## Copper Today

The global demand for copper continues to grow: world refined usage has more than tripled in the last 50 years thanks to expanding sectors such as electrical and electronic products, building construction, industrial machinery and equipment, transportation equipment, and consumer and general products. Some of the highlights of 2020 copper production and usage are listed below. In the chapters that follow, more in-depth information is presented on copper production, trade, usage, and recycling. For the most up-to-date information on the global copper market, please visit our website at [www.icsg.org](http://www.icsg.org).

### Copper Production Highlights



Preliminary figures indicate that global **copper mine production** in 2020 reached 20.6 million tonnes. The largest producer of mined copper was **Chile** (5.7 million tonnes).



**Smelter production** in 2020 reached 21.0 million tonnes. **China** was the largest producer of blister & anode in 2020.



**Refinery Production** in 2020 increased to 24.5 million tonnes, including 3.9 million tonnes of secondary refined production. China was the largest producer.

### Copper Usage Highlights

**Refined copper usage** (usage by semis plants or the first users of copper) in 2020 reached 25.0 million tonnes. **China** was also the largest consumer of refined copper in 2020 with apparent usage of around 14.4 million tonnes.



According to the International Copper Association (ICA), equipment was the largest copper end-use sector in 2020, followed by building construction and infrastructure.



**New copper applications** being developed include antimicrobial copper touch surfaces, lead-free brass plumbing, high tech copper wire, heat exchangers, and new consumer products as well.



Images courtesy of CDA and Luis Hernán Herreros from [www.visnu.cl](http://www.visnu.cl), © Copyright Anglo American (Faena Los Bronces y Mantos Blancos – Chile)

## Chapter 2: Copper Resources and Long-Term Availability of Copper

### Copper Reserves and Resources

Typically, the future availability of minerals is based on the concept of reserves and resources. Reserves are deposits that have been discovered, evaluated and assessed to be economically profitable to mine. Resources are far bigger and include reserves, discovered deposits that are potentially profitable, and undiscovered deposits that are predicted based on preliminary geological surveys (see definitions below).

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), copper reserves currently amount to around 870 million tonnes (Mt). Identified and undiscovered copper resources are estimated at around 2,100 Mt and 3,500 Mt, respectively. The latter does not take into account the vast amounts of copper found in deep sea nodules and land-based and submarine massive sulphides. Current and future exploration opportunities will lead to increases in both reserves and known resources.

**Definitions (<http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/mcs/2014/mcsapp2014.pdf>)**

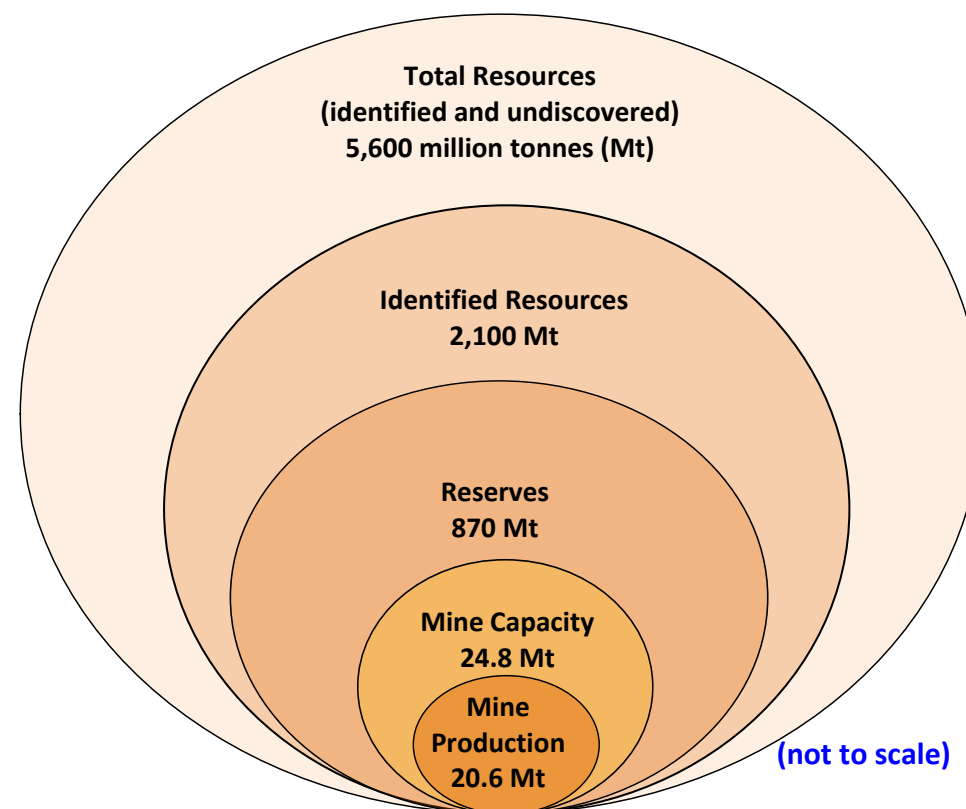
**Resource:** A concentration of naturally occurring solid, liquid, or gaseous material in or on the Earth's crust in such form and amount that economic extraction of a commodity from the concentration is currently or potentially feasible.

**Identified Resources:** Resources whose location, grade, quality, and quantity are known or estimated from specific geologic evidence. Identified resources include economic, marginally economic, and sub-economic components.

**Undiscovered Resources:** Resources, the existence of which are only postulated, comprising deposits that are separate from identified resources. Undiscovered resources may be postulated in deposits of such grade and physical location as to render them economic, marginally economic, or sub-economic.

**Reserves:** That part of the reserve base (part of an identified resource that meets specified minimum physical and chemical criteria related to current mining and production practices, including those for grade, quality, thickness, and depth) which could be economically extracted or produced at the time of determination. The term reserves need not signify that extraction facilities are in place and operative.

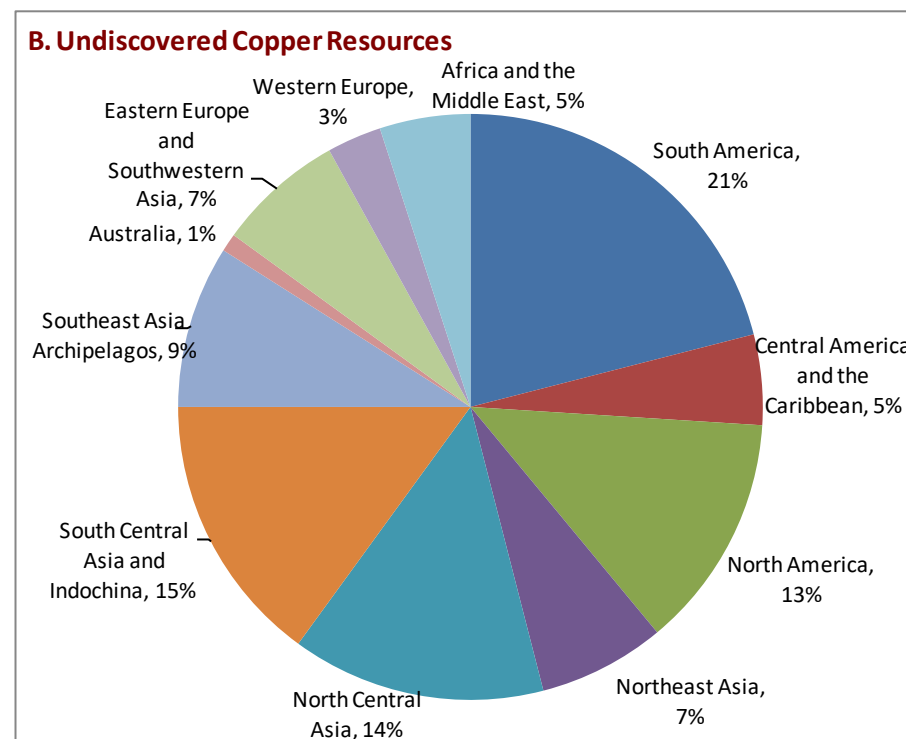
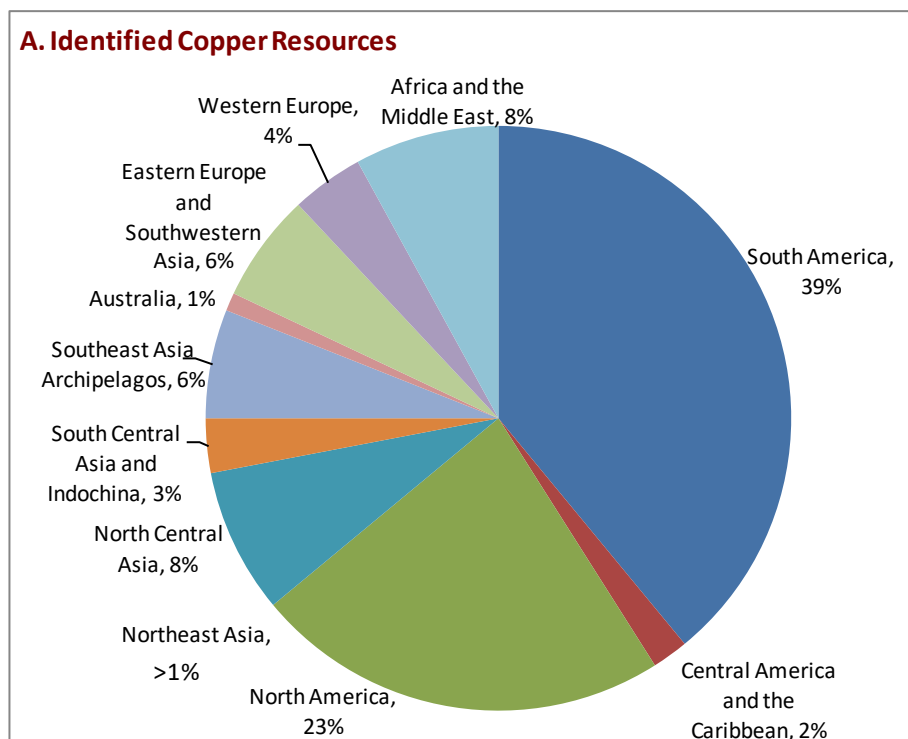
**2020 World Copper Reserves & Mine Production <sup>1/</sup>**  
(undiscovered resources not including deep sea nodules and land-based and submarine massive sulfides - contained copper)



<sup>1/</sup> Source: USGS (resources/reserves data) and ICSG (capacity/production data)

## Global Distribution of Identified and Undiscovered Copper Resources in Porphyry and Sediment-hosted Stratabound Copper Deposits <sup>1/</sup>

In 2013 the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) completed a geology-based, cooperative international assessment of copper resources of the world <sup>2/</sup>. The USGS assessed undiscovered copper in two deposit types that account for about 80% of the world's copper supply. Porphyry copper deposits account for about 60% of the world's copper. In porphyry copper deposits, copper ore minerals are disseminated in igneous intrusions. Sediment-hosted stratabound copper deposits, in which copper is concentrated in layers in sedimentary rocks, account for about 20% of the world's identified copper. The mean undiscovered totals for porphyry and sediment-hosted deposits are 3,100 and 400 Mt respectively, resulting in a global total of 3,500 Mt of copper. With identified copper resources currently estimated at 2,100 Mt, total copper resources (undiscovered + identified) are estimated at 5,600 Mt.



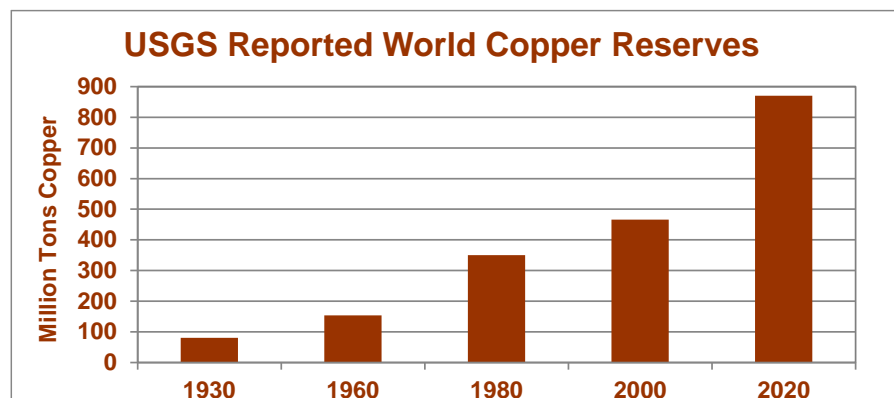
1/ Undiscovered Copper Resources - A Global Assessment, April 2014, Presentation at ICSG meeting, Lisbon, by Mrs Jane M. Hammarstrom (USGS Global Mineral Resource Assessment Team)

2/ Supporting studies, including documentation of the assessment methodology and descriptions of individual tracts, are available on the USGS Mineral Resources Program Web site, at [https://www.usgs.gov/energy-and-minerals/mineral-resources-program/science/global-mineral-resource-assessments?qt-science\\_center\\_objects=0#qt-science\\_center\\_objects](https://www.usgs.gov/energy-and-minerals/mineral-resources-program/science/global-mineral-resource-assessments?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects)

### Are We Going to Run Out of Copper<sup>1</sup>?

**It is highly improbable.** Since 1960, there has always been, on average, 38 years of reserves, and significantly greater amounts of known resources (USGS data). In addition, recycling, innovation and mining exploration continue to contribute to the long-term availability of copper.

Despite increased demand for copper produced from ore in recent years, increases in reserves have grown, and there is more identified copper available to the world than at any other time in history.



In the period 2010-2020, 207 million tonnes of copper have been mined. In that same period however, reserves have grown by 240 million tonnes to 870,000 million tonnes copper. This reflects additional exploration, technological advances and the evolving economics of mining.

Technology has a key role to play in addressing many of the challenges faced by new copper production. Known and as yet unknown innovations will ensure new mine production continues to provide vital copper supplies.

In addition copper recycling plays an important role in copper availability since today's primary copper is tomorrow's recycled material. Unlike other commodities such as energy or food, copper is not "consumed". Copper is one of the few raw materials which can be recycled repeatedly without any loss of performance, and key stakeholders such as policy-makers, scrap collectors, copper producers and recyclers must all focus on ensuring that yesterday's metal is recycled and re-used.

While this will ensure a progressive move towards a more sustainable economy, the loop cannot be completely closed for two reasons. Firstly, demand will continue to increase due to population growth, product innovation and economic development. Secondly in most applications, copper stays in use for decades.

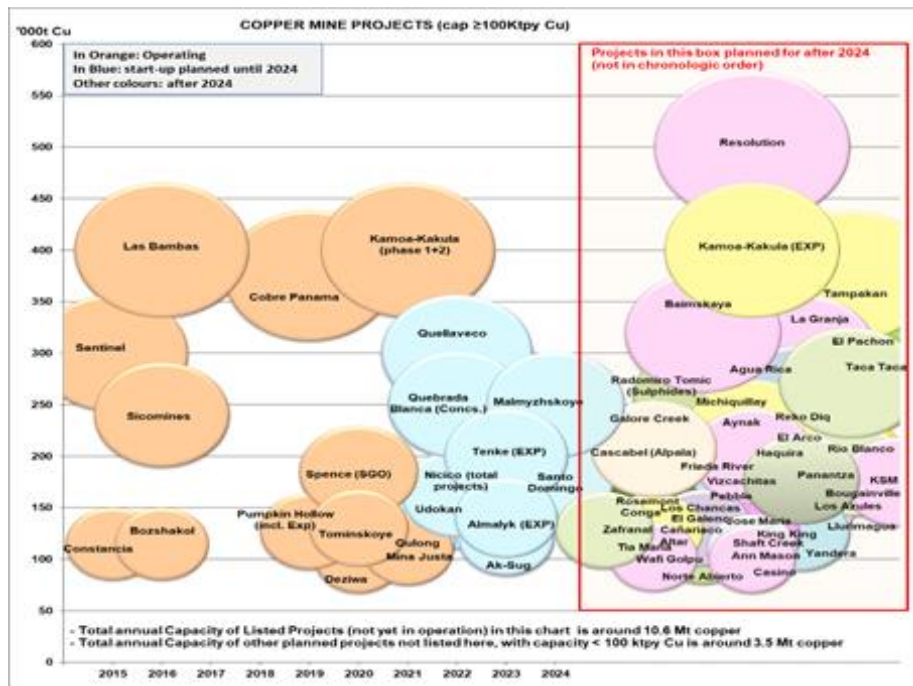
Consequently, meeting future metals demand will continue to require a combination of primary raw materials, coming from mines, as well as recycled materials, while innovative policies and technology should continue to contribute to improvements in recycling performance and resource efficiency.

Based on the latest knowledge on geological availability and continuous industry innovation there are good reasons to believe that copper will continue to be a vital and positive contributor to society well into the future.

1/ Based on the International Copper Association briefing note on copper's long-term availability. See <http://copperalliance.org/about-copper/long-term-availability/>

## Future Copper Supply – Mine Projects

There are several copper mine projects currently being evaluated or developed that will contribute to future supply growth. In its Directory of Copper Mines and Plants, the ICSG presents detailed global information on copper mine projects currently under development and in feasibility or exploration status. The Chart below, based on information in the latest Directory, presents the major copper mine projects with annual production capacities above 100,000 tons of copper that together represent additional annual production capacity of around 10 Million tons of copper. There are also many smaller projects currently being developed or assessed.



Source: ICSG Directory of Copper Mines and Plants

## Deep Sea Minerals Exploration

The oceans represent around 70% of the world surface and the ocean floor is believed to contain important mineral resources including copper. To meet increasing copper demand, the discovery and exploration of new resources will be crucial and sea floor deposits could represent an important opportunity for additional supply. However, the challenge is to be able to exploit those deposits while respecting all environmental standards and turn them into economically-viable operations

In light of new developments in science and technology, as well as changing economic circumstances, commercial interest in deep sea mining has grown in recent years. The International Seabed Authority (ISA) ([www.isa.org.jm](http://www.isa.org.jm)) is the entity that issues regulations and procedures to regulate prospecting, exploration and exploitation of marine minerals in the international seabed area (defined as the seabed and subsoil beyond the limits of national jurisdiction). ISA is mandated under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea to organize, regulate and control all mineral-related activities in the international seabed area for the benefit of mankind as a whole. In so doing, the ISA has a duty to ensure the effective protection of the marine environment from harmful effects that may arise from deep-seabed related activities.

ICSG has identified two off-shore copper projects that could be producing in the near future: the Solwara 1 project located in the Bismarck Sea, Papua New Guinea and the polymetallic nodules project in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone (CCZ) of the Pacific Ocean.

### Chapter 3: Copper Production

#### How is Copper Produced?

Geologists look for signs and/or anomalies that would indicate the presence of a mineral deposit. Under the right geological, economic, environmental and legal conditions, mining can proceed.

Primary copper production starts with the extraction of copper-bearing ores. There are three basic ways of copper mining: surface, underground mining and leaching. Open-pit mining is the predominant mining method in the world.

After the ore has been mined, it is crushed and ground followed by a concentration by flotation. The obtained copper concentrates typically contain around 30% of copper, but grades can range from 20 to 40 per cent. In the following smelting process, sometimes preceded by a roasting step, copper is transformed into a “matte” containing 50-70% copper. The molten matte is processed in a converter resulting in a so-called blister copper of 98.5-99.5% copper content. In the next step, the blister copper is fire refined in the traditional process route, or, increasingly, re-melted and cast into anodes for electro-refining.



The output of electro-refining is refined copper cathodes, assaying over 99.99% of copper.

Alternatively, in the hydrometallurgical route, copper is extracted from mainly low grade oxide ores and also some sulphide ores, through leaching (solvent extraction) and electrowinning (SX-EW process). The output is the same as through the electro-refining route - refined copper cathodes. ICSG estimates that in 2020, refined copper production from SX-EW represented around 16% of total copper refined production.

Refined copper production derived from mine production (either from metallurgical treatment of concentrates or SX-EW) is referred to as “primary copper production”, as obtainable from a primary raw material source. However, there is another important source of raw material which is scrap. Copper scrap derives from either metals discarded in semis fabrication or finished product manufacturing processes (“new scrap”) or obsolete end-of-life products (“old scrap”). Refined copper production attributable to recycled scrap feed is classified as “secondary copper production”. Secondary producers use processes similar to those employed for primary production. ICSG estimates that in 2020, at the refinery level, secondary copper refined production reached 16% of total copper refined production.

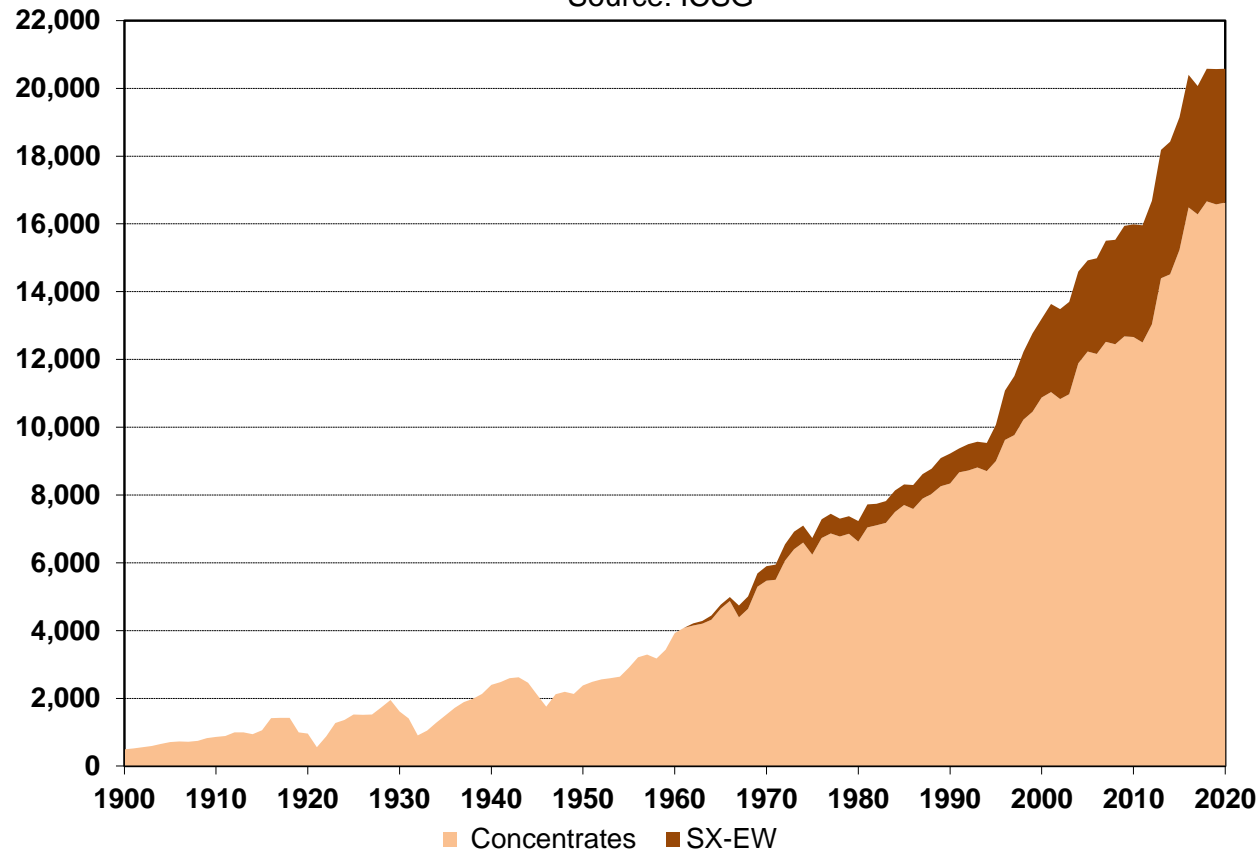


## Copper Mine Production

### World Copper Mine Production, 1900-2020

(thousand metric tonnes copper)

Source: ICSG



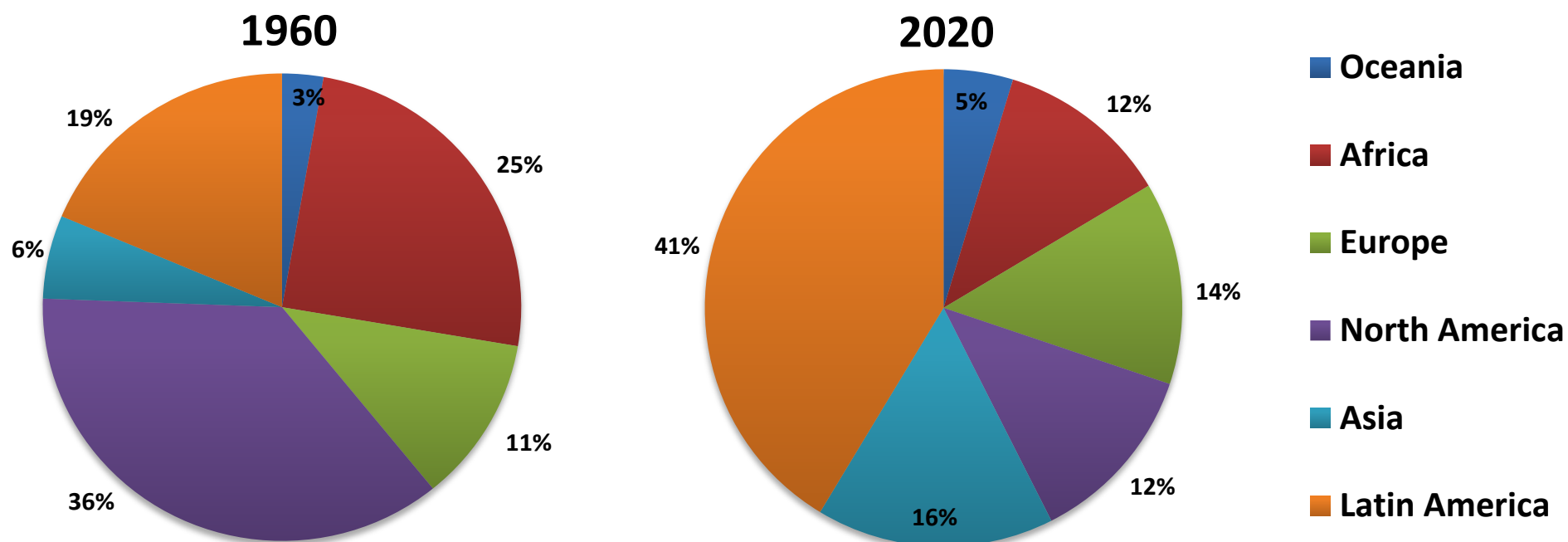
Since 1900, when world production was less than 500 thousand tonnes copper, world copper mine production has grown by 3.2% per annum to 20.6 million tonnes in 2020. SX-EW production, virtually non-existent before the 1960s, stood at 3.9 million tonnes in 2020.



## Copper Mine Production by Region, 1960 versus 2020

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG

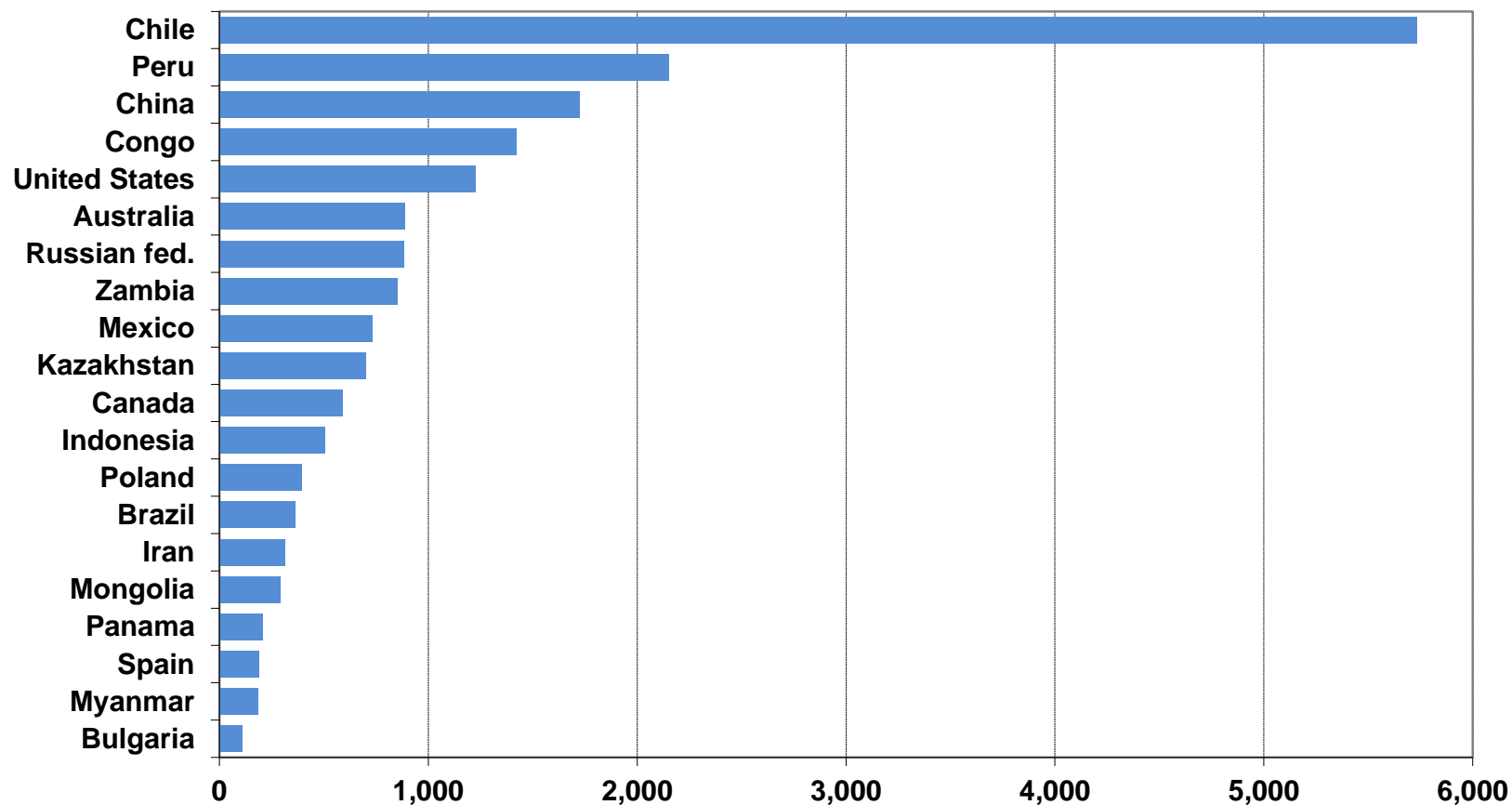


From less than 750,000 tonnes copper in 1960, copper mine production in Latin America has increased to 8.5 million tonnes in 2020, representing 41% of the global total. Asia has also exhibited significant growth. The region's share of global production has increased from just 6% to 16% over the respective period. Conversely, North America's share declined from 36% to 12%.

## Copper Mine Production by Country: Top 20 Countries in 2020

(Thousand metric tonnes copper)

Source: ICSG

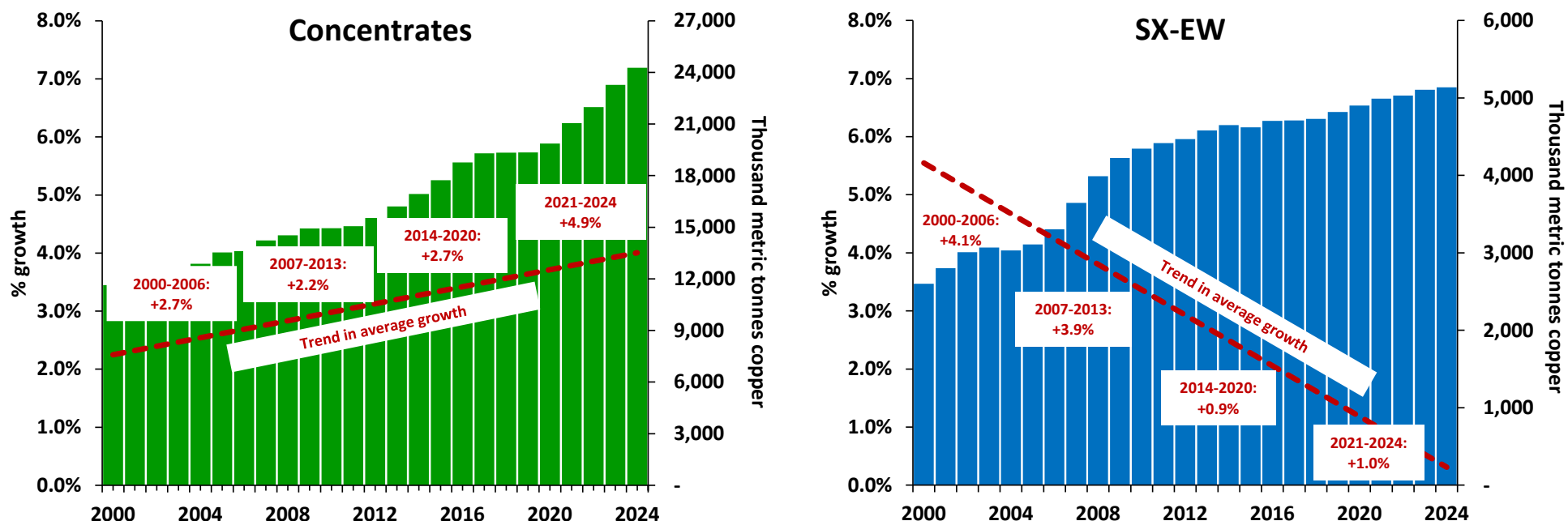


Chile accounted for almost a third of world copper mine production in 2020 with mine output of 5.7 million tonnes copper. Peru, which has seen a sharp increase in output since 2015, accounted for 10% of world mine production.

## Trends in Copper Mining Capacity, 2000-2024

Thousand metric tonnes copper (Bars) and Annual percentage change (Line)

Source: ICSG Directory of Copper Mines and Plants – March 2021 Edition



Copper mining capacity is estimated to reach 29.4 million tonnes copper in 2024, with 17% being SX-EW production. This will be 22% higher than global capacity of 24.8 million tonnes copper recorded in 2020. Growth in copper mine capacity is expected to average 4.9% per year going forward as new capacity is added at existing and some new operations. The ratio between production and capacity is called the capacity utilization rate. The world mine capacity utilization rate was around 83% in 2020.

*Note: Capacity data reflects production capabilities not necessarily production forecasts*

## Top 20 Copper Mines by Capacity (basis 2021)

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG Directory of Copper Mines and Plants – March 2021 Edition

Rank	Mine	Country	Owner(s)	Source	Capacity
1	Escondida	Chile	BHP Billiton (57.5%), Rio Tinto Corp. (30%), Japan Escondida (12.5%)	Concs & SX-EW	1,510
2	Grasberg	Indonesia	PT Freeport Indonesia (PT Inalum and the provincial/regional government 51.2% and Freeport-McMoRan Inc 48.8%)	Concentrates	700
3	Collahuasi	Chile	Anglo American (44%), Glencore plc (44%), Mitsui (8.4%), JX Holdings (3.6%)	Concs & SX-EW	610
4	Buenavista del Cobre (former Cananea)	Mexico	Grupo Mexico	Concs & SX-EW	525
5	Morenci	United States	Freeport-McMoRan Inc 72%, 28% affiliates of Sumitomo Corporation	Concs & SX-EW	520
6	Cerro Verde II (Sulphide)	Peru	Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc. 54%, Compañía de Minas Buenaventura 19.58%, Sumitomo 21%	Concentrates	500
7	Polar Division (Norilsk/ Talnakh Mills)	Russia	Norilsk Nickel	Concentrates	450
7	Antamina	Peru	BHP Billiton (33.75%), Teck (22.5%), Glencore plc (33.75%), Mitsubishi Corp. (10%)	Concentrates	450
9	Las Bambas	Peru	MMG (62.5%), Guoxin International Investment Corporation Limited (22.5%), CITIC Metal Co., Ltd. (15%)	Concentrates	400
10	El Teniente	Chile	Codelco	Concs & SX-EW	399
11	Los Pelambres	Chile	Antofagasta Plc (60%), Nippon Mining (25%), Mitsubishi Materials (15%)	Concentrates	370
12	Chuquibambilla	Chile	Codelco	Concs & SX-EW	360
13	Cobre Panama	Panama	First Quantum Minerals Ltd 90%, Korea Panama Mining Corp. (LS-Nikko Copper Inc. and Korean Resources Corporation) 10%	Concentrates	350
14	Kansanshi	Zambia	First Quantum Minerals Ltd (80%), ZCCM (20%)	Concs & SX-EW	340
14	Los Bronces	Chile	Anglo American 50.1%, Mitsubishi Corp. 20.4%, Codelco 20%, Mitsui 9.5%	Concs & SX-EW	340
14	Radomiro Tomic	Chile	Codelco	Concs & SX-EW	340
17	Kamoto	Congo	Katanga Mining Ltd (86.33% Glencore plc) 75%, Gecamines 25%	SX-EW	300
17	Sentinel	Zambia	First Quantum Minerals Ltd	Concentrates	300
17	Toromocho	Peru	Chinalco	Concentrates	300
20	Bingham Canyon	United States	Kennecott	Concentrates	280

**Note: Capacity data reflects production capabilities not necessarily production forecasts**

### Constraints on Copper Supply

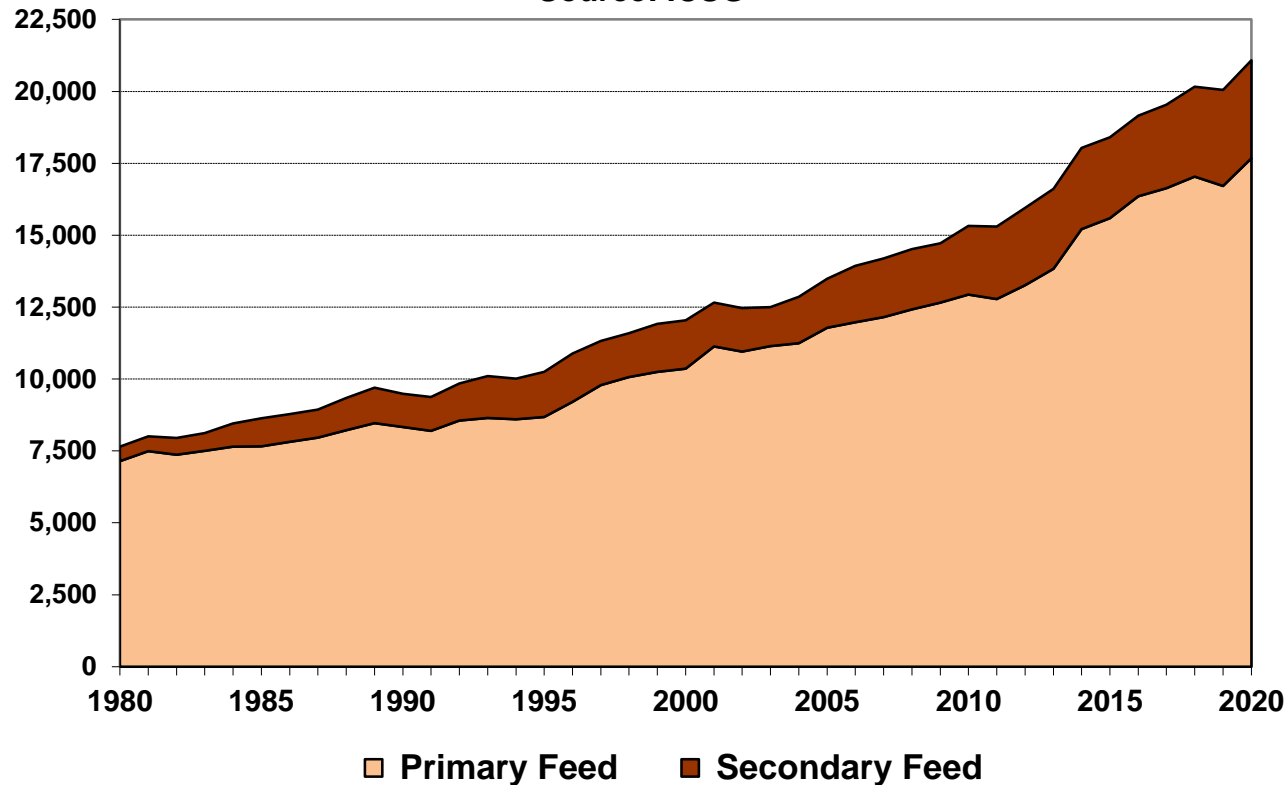
With copper concentrate in strong demand, there has been growing interest in understanding the obstacles that can prevent copper mine supply from coming on-stream. Below are some of the **operational and financial constraints** identified from a study undertaken by the ICSG. For more information about ICSG research related to constraints on copper supply, please contact the ICSG Secretariat at [mail@icsg.org](mailto:mail@icsg.org)

- Declining ore grades: a serious issue in developed copper areas such as the USA and Chile
- Project finance: prolonged economic and price volatility may have significant impact on cost of capital
- Tax & investment regimes: recent research indicates these are less important than geological endowments
- Other cost issues: lower capital expenditure may have adverse long term effect on copper supply; operating cost escalation
- Water supply: a critical issue in dry mining districts
- Energy: coal is the fuel chosen to power main copper mines and processes... climate change may increase costs
- Other environmental issues: governments are becoming more aware of the impact of mining to the surrounding environment in recent years. In countries like Peru and the Philippines, the relationship with indigenous community is also a key factor.
- Resource nationalism: It has become a priority for certain governments to develop their mineral resources that have not been exploited until now. While willing to develop their natural resources, countries might be seeking to extract strong revenue flows from them. It will be important to balance royalty/taxation levels with the need to encourage capital investment to develop their rising industries.
- Sulphuric acid supply and price: 16% cost factor for SX-EW projects
- Skilled labor: open labor markets would help address this constraint
- Labor strikes: tend to increase when refined prices are high and GDP is growing faster, but tend to be longer and less frequent otherwise
- High domestic costs if there is “Dutch disease” (resulting in higher exchange rates due in part to strong exports)
- Rate between imported inputs and domestic input costs affected by the currency strength of the producer
- Political risks: Security and transport accessibility is crucial to mine operation



## Copper Smelter Production

**World Copper Smelter Production, 1980-2020**  
 Thousand metric tonnes copper  
 Source: ICSG

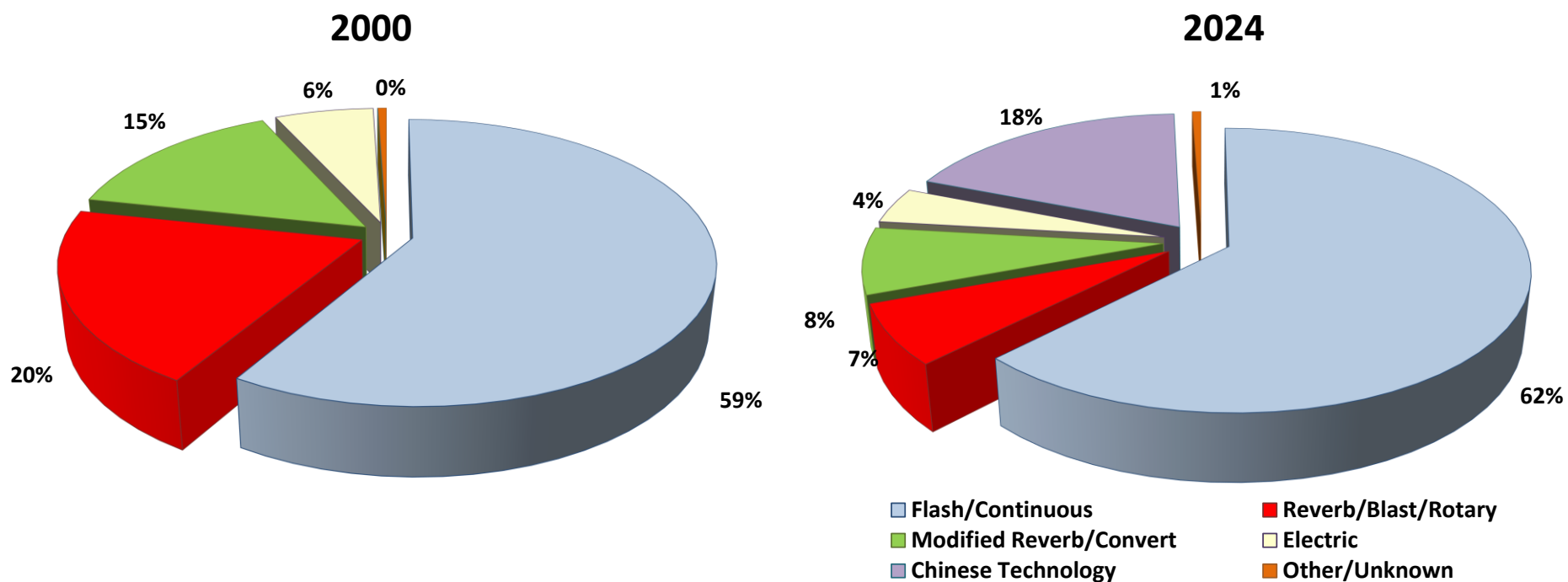


Smelting is the pyrometallurgical process used to produce copper metal. In 2020, world copper smelter production reached 21.1 million tonnes copper. Recently, the trend to recover copper directly from ores through leaching processes has been on the increase. Primary smelters use mine concentrates as their main source of feed (although some use copper scrap as well). Secondary copper smelters use copper scrap as their feed.

## Trends in Copper Smelting Capacity, 2000 and 2024

Percentage share of total capacity, by technology type

Source: ICSG Directory of Copper Mines and Plants – March 2021 Edition



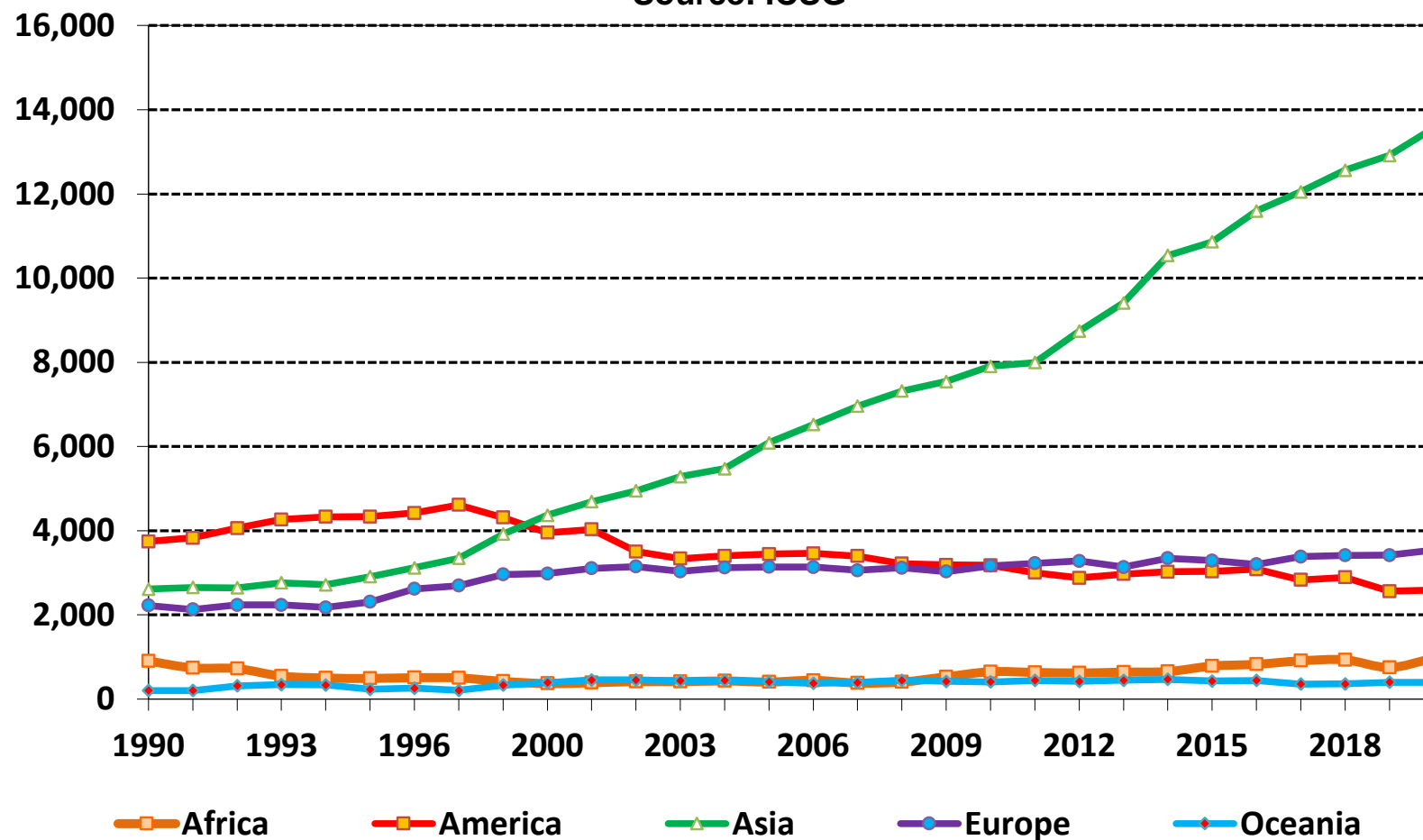
The use of Flash/Continuous technology accounted for 59% in total copper smelting capacity in 2000. This share rose to 65% in 2020. It is expected to remain around this level until 2024. There has also been a rapid expansion of Chinese technology, which first emerged in 2004. It now accounts for around 18% of total copper smelting capacity.

*Note: Capacity data reflects production capabilities not necessarily production forecasts*

## Copper Smelter Production by Region, 1990-2020

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG



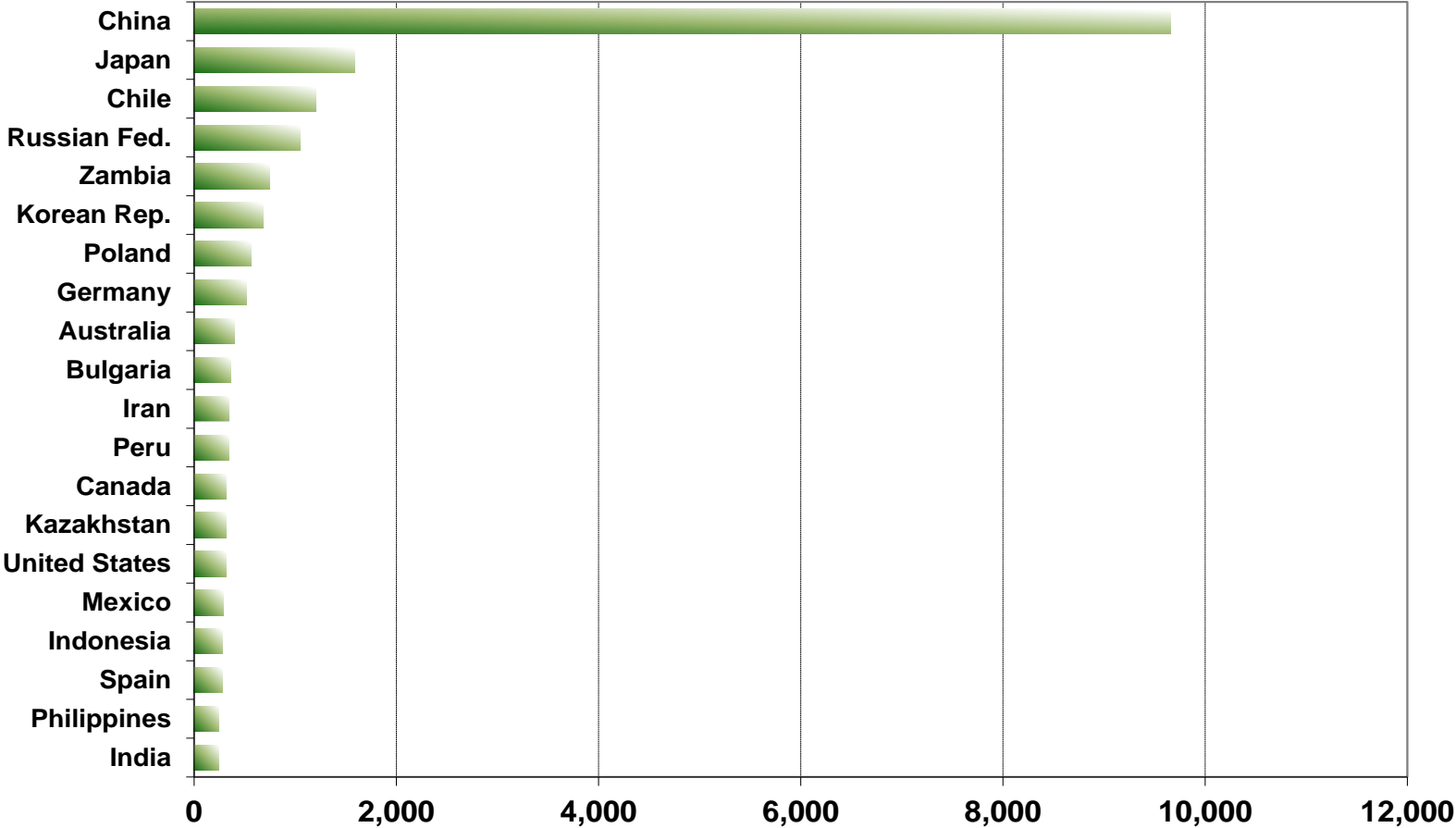
Asia's share of world copper smelter output jumped from 27% in 1990 to 64% in 2020 as smelter production in China expanded rapidly.



### Copper Smelter Production by Country: Top 20 Countries in 2020

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG



In 2020, China accounted for almost 50% of world copper smelter production, followed by Japan (8%), Chile (6%) and Russian Federation (5%).

*Note: Capacity data reflects production capabilities not necessarily production forecasts*

## Top 20 Copper Smelters by Capacity (basis 2021)

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG Directory of Copper Mines and Plants – March 2021 Edition

Rank	Smelter	Country	Operator/Owner(s)	Process	Capacity
1	Guixi (smelter)	China	Jiangxi Copper Corp.	Outokumpu Flash	600
2	Birla Copper (Dahej)	India	Birla Group (Hidaco)	Outokumpu Flash, Ausmelt, Mitsubishi Continuous	500
3	Chuquicamata (smelter)	Chile	Codelco	Outokumpu/ Teniente Converter	450
3	Jinchuan (Fangchenggang smelter)	China	Jinchuan Non-Ferrous Metal Co.	Flash smelter	450
3	Hamburg	Germany	Aurubis	Outokumpu, Contimelt, Electric	450
3	Besshi/ Ehime (Toyo)	Japan	Sumitomo Metal Mining Co. Ltd.	Outokumpu Flash	450
3	Saganoseki/ Ooita (smelter)	Japan	JX Nippon Mining & Metals Co., Ltd.	Outokumpu Flash	450
8	El Teniente (Caletones)	Chile	Codelco	Reverberatory/ Teniente Conv.	400
8	Chifeng	China	Chifeng Jinfeng (Yunnan Copper 45%, Taisheng 45%, Jinfeng Copper 10%)	Side-Blown	400
8	Chinalco Southeast Copper (smelter)	China	Chinalco	Flash Smelter	400
8	Jinguan (smelter)	China	Tongling Non-Ferrous Metals Group	Flash Smelter	400
8	Xiangguang copper (smelter)	China	Yanggu Xiangguang Copper Co	Outokumpu Flash	400
8	Sterlite Smelter (Tuticorin)	India	Vedanta	Isasmelt Process	400
8	Norilsk (Nikelevy, Medny)	Russia	Norilsk Nickel	Reverb, Electric, Vanyukov	400
15	Pirdop (smelter)	Bulgaria	Aurubis (99.77%)	Outokumpu Flash	360
15	Ilo Smelter	Peru	Southern Copper Corp (Grupo Mexico 88.9%, international investment community 11.1%)	Isasmelt Process	360
17	Onahama/ Fukushima	Japan	Mitsubishi Materials Corp. (55.714%), Dowa Metals & Mining Co. Ltd.(31.621%), Furukawa Metals & Resources Co. Ltd. (12.665%)	Mitsubishi/ Reverb.	354
18	Heding Copper	China	Jiangxi Copper Corp. ( Zhejiang Jiangtong Fuye Heding Copper Co., Ltd.)	Side-Blown	350
18	Jinlong (Tongdu)	China	Tongling Nonferrous Metals Corp. (57.4%), Sumitomo (35%), Pingguo Aluminium Co.	Flash Smelter	350
18	Sarchesme Copper Complex (smelter)	Iran	National Iranian Copper Industry Co.	Flash Smelter	350

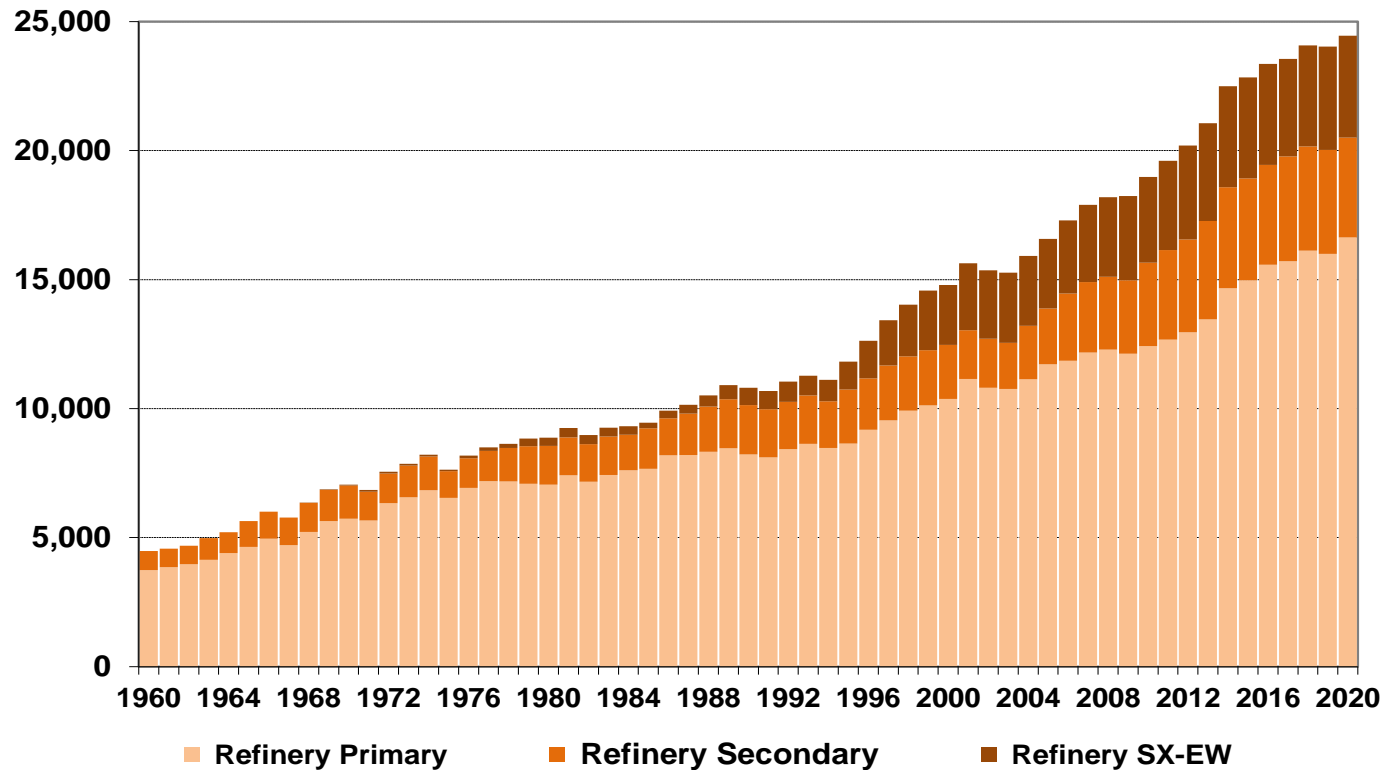
**Note: Capacity data reflects production capabilities not necessarily production forecasts**

## Refined Copper Production

### World Refined Copper Production, 1960-2020

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG

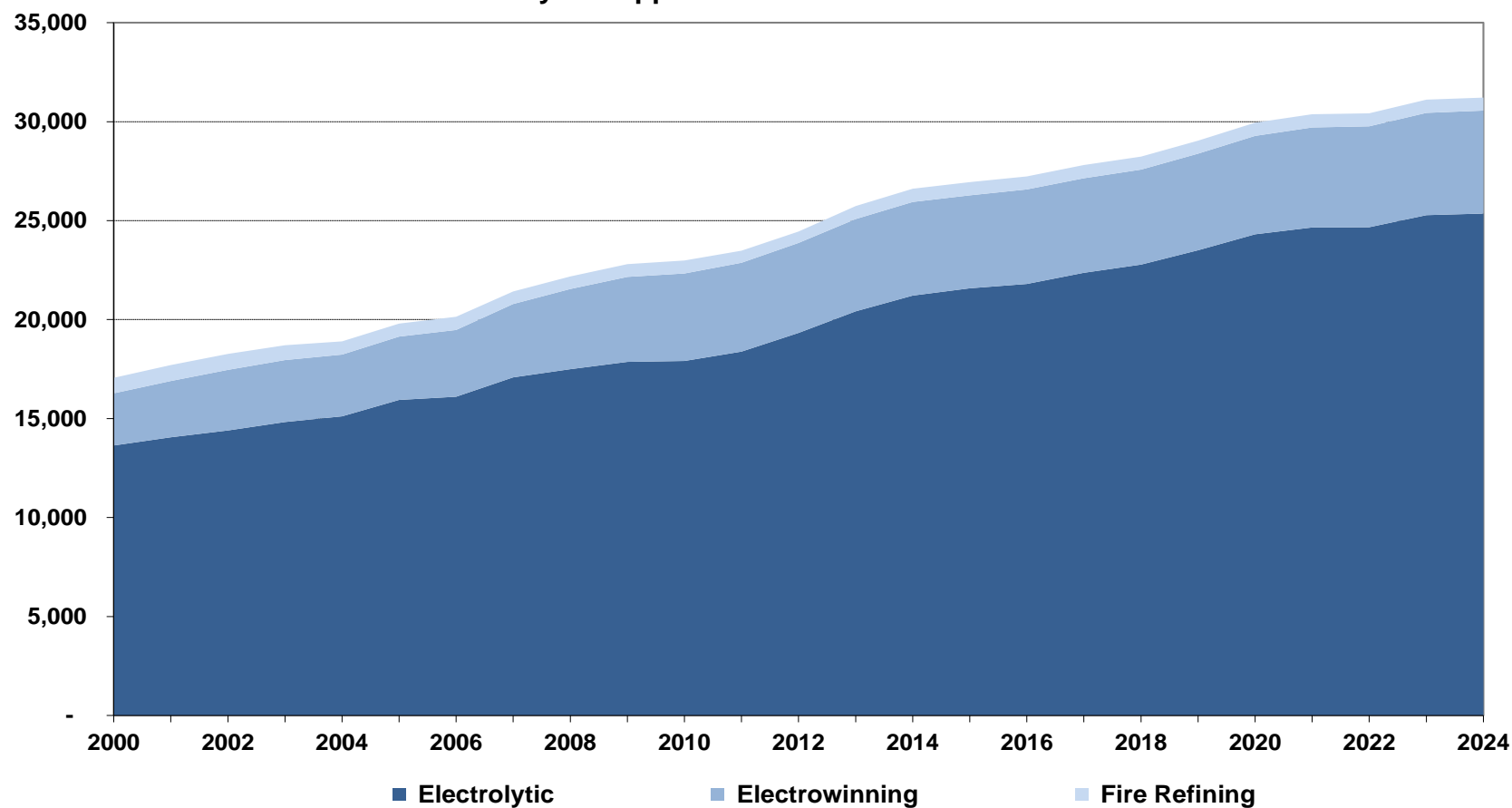


With the emergence of solvent extraction-electrowinning (SX-EW) technology, refined copper produced from leaching ores has increased from less than 1% of world refined copper production in the late 1960's to 16% of world output in 2020. World copper refined production amounted to 24.5 million tonnes in 2020.

### Trends in Refined Capacity, 2000-2024

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG Directory of Copper Mines and Plants - March 2021 Edition



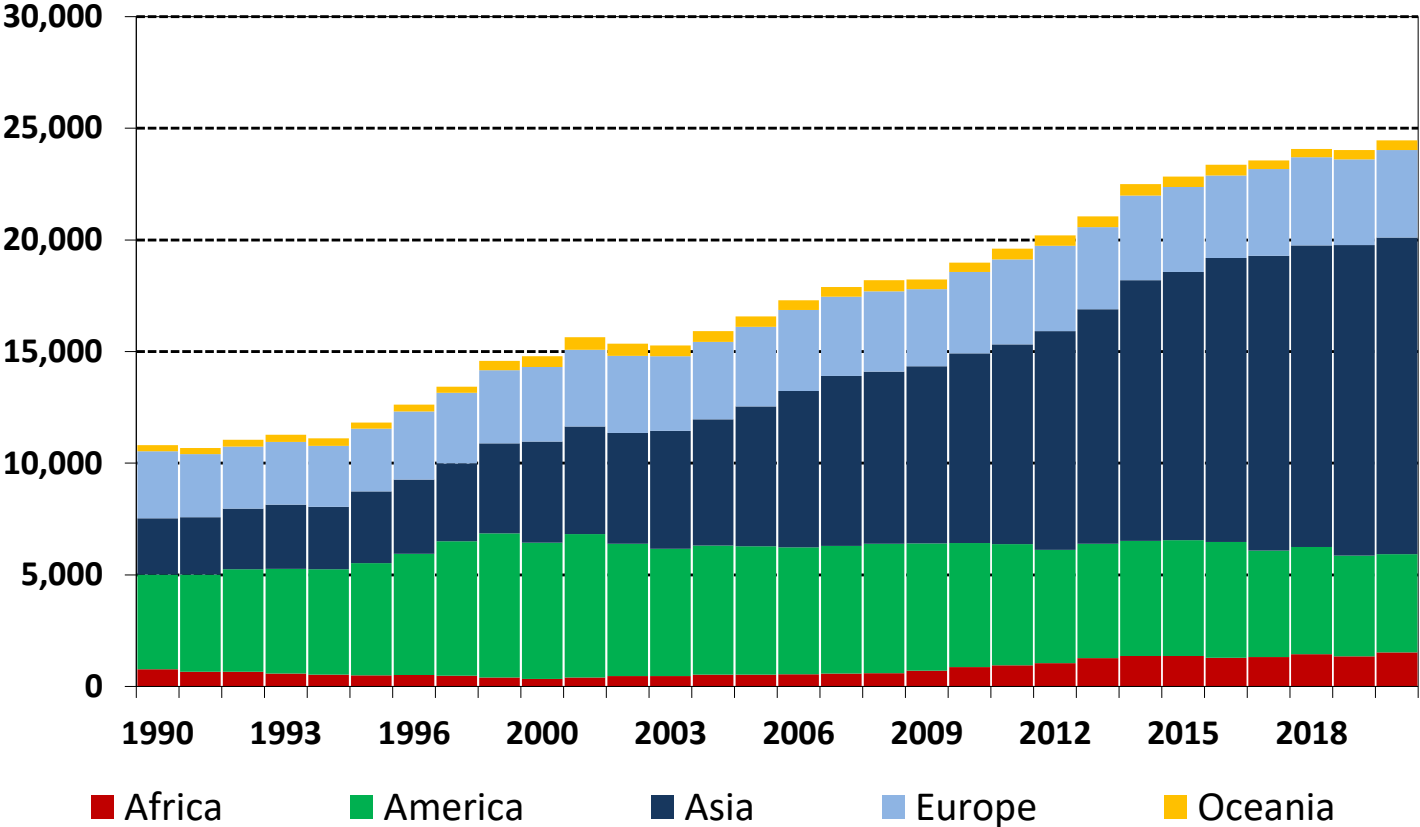
This chart shows world copper refinery capacity by refining process. The ratio between production and capacity is called the capacity utilization rate. The world refinery capacity utilization rate was around 82% in 2020.

*Note: Capacity data reflects production capabilities not necessarily production forecasts*

### Refined Copper Production by Region, 1990-2020

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG



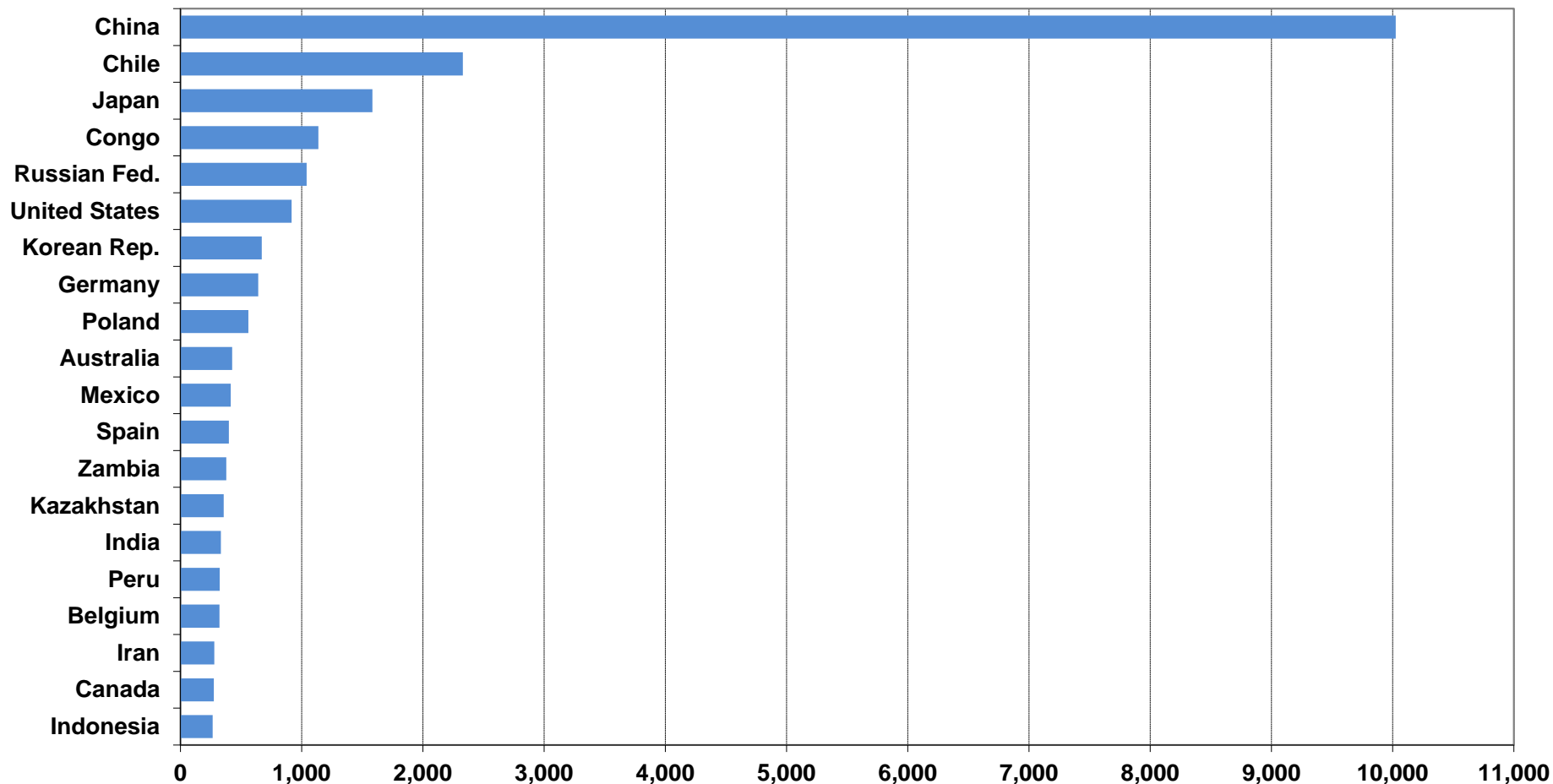
Regions with the highest output of refined copper in 1990: the Americas (4,250 kt), followed by Europe (3,004 kt)

Leading region in the world in 2020: Asia (14,169 kt) as compared to 2,505kt in 1990.

## Refined Copper Production by Country: Top 20 Countries in 2020

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG



In 2020, China accounted for 41% of world copper refined production, followed by Chile (10%), Japan (6%) and Congo (5%).

## Top 20 Copper Refineries by Capacity (basis 2021)

Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG Directory of Copper Mines and Plants – March 2021 Edition

Rank	Refinery	Country	Owner(s)	Process	Capacity
1	Guixi	China	Jiangxi Copper Corporation	Electrolytic	1100
2	Shandong Fangyuan	China	Dongying, Shandong	Electrolytic	700
3	Daye/ Hubei (refinery)	China	Daye Non-Ferrous Metals Co.	Electrolytic	600
3	Jinchuan	China	Jinchuan Non Ferrous Co.	Electrolytic	600
5	Yunnan Copper	China	Yunnan Copper Industry Group (64.8%)	Electrolytic	500
5	Birla	India	Birla Group (Hidalco)	Electrolytic	500
7	Sterlite Refinery	India	Vedanta	Electrolytic	460
7	Pyshma Refinery	Russia	UMMC (Urals Mining & Metallurgical Co.)	Electrolytic	460
9	Jinchuan (Fangchenggang	China	Jinchuan Non-Ferrous Metal Co.	Electrolytic	450
9	Toyo/Niihama (Besshi)	Japan	Sumitomo Metal Mining Co. Ltd.	Electrolytic	450
9	Amarillo	United States	Grupo Mexico	Electrolytic	450
9	Chuquicamata Refinery	Chile	Codelco	Electrolytic	450
13	Onsan Refinery I	Korean Republic	LS-Nikko Co. (LS, Nippon Mining)	Electrolytic	440
14	Hamburg (refinery)	Germany	Aurubis	Electrolytic	416
15	El Paso (refinery)	United States	Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc.	Electrolytic	415
16	Las Ventanas	Chile	Codelco	Electrolytic	410
17	Baiyin	China	Baiyin Nonferrous Metals	Electrolytic	400
17	Jinguan (refinery)	China	Tongling Non-Ferrous Metals Group	Electrolytic	400
17	Jinlong (Tongdu) (refinery)	China	Tongling NonFerrous Metal Corp. 52 %, Sharpline	Electrolytic	400
17	Zijin	China	Zijin Mining Company 50%, Minxi Xinghang 50%	Electrolytic	400

*Note: Capacity data reflects production capabilities not necessarily production forecasts*

## Chapter 4: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Mining

### What is Corporate Social Responsibility?

Corporate Social Responsibility refers to the continuing commitment by “the corporation” to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large.

The basis of CSR is rooted in Archie Carroll’s “Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility.”<sup>1</sup> In this Pyramid a corporation has **four** types of responsibilities. The first and most obvious is the **economic** responsibility to be profitable. The second is the **legal** responsibility to obey the laws set forth by society. The third, which is closely linked to the second, is the **ethical** responsibility. That is to do what is right even when business is not compelled to do so by law. The fourth is the **philanthropic** responsibility. It is best described by the resources contributed by corporations toward social, educational, recreational and/or cultural purposes.



Source: 1/ based on Archie Carroll’s research on The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility: Toward the Moral Management of Organizational Stakeholders (1991)  
2/ <https://www.miningfacts.org/communities/what-is-corporate-social-responsibility/>

### Why is CSR Important?

Corporate Social Responsibility has been around since the 1950s, but its importance and practice took hold much later. With mining activity increasing, CSR is more relevant than ever before.

CSR programs usually invest in infrastructure (potable water, electricity, schools, roads, hospitals, hospital equipment, drainage repairs, etc.), building social capital (providing high-school and university education, workshops on gender issues, information on family planning, improving hygiene, etc.), and building human capital (training local people to be employed by the mining business or to provide outsourced services, promote and provide skills on microbusiness, aquaculture, etc.).<sup>2</sup>

Mining companies engage in CSR programs because:

- From a community perspective, they provide a mechanism of compensation for the social and environmental costs associated with mining. CSR is also a means through which a mining company can be seen to actively give back to the community.
- Mining companies also benefit from CSR programs by building better relations with the local communities in which they operate. The economic risks of not having good community relations include project delays, and even mine closures.





## Chapter 5: Copper Trade

Copper products across the value chain are traded internationally. Often, countries where upstream copper production capacity exceeds downstream production capacity will import the raw materials needed to meet their production needs, and vice versa. **Major product categories** of copper traded internationally include:

- Copper concentrates
- Copper blister and anode
- Copper cathode and ingots
- Copper scrap and
- Copper semis

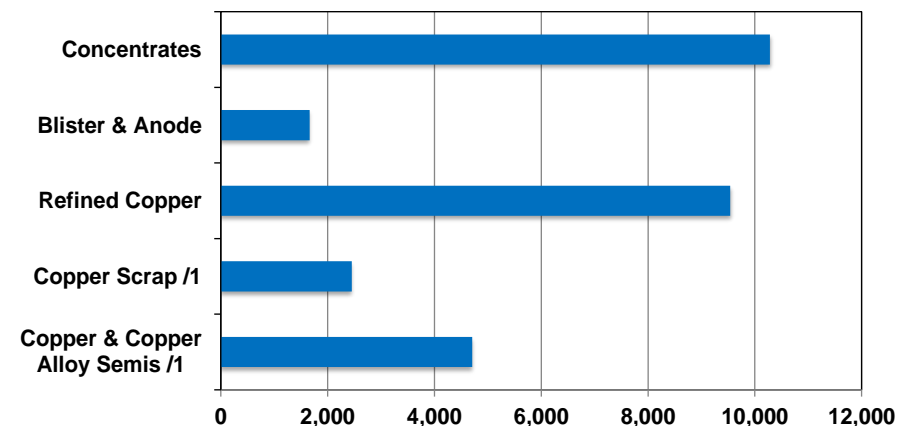
Copper powders and compounds are also traded globally, but typically in much smaller quantities. In addition, copper is contained in end-use products that are traded globally including automobiles, appliances, electronic equipment and other products. Changes in **trade regulations**, such as import duties or export quotas, can have significant impacts on the international trade of copper. For more information about the international trade of copper and changes in regulations that can affect the trade of copper, please contact the ICSG Secretariat at [mail@icsg.org](mailto:mail@icsg.org)



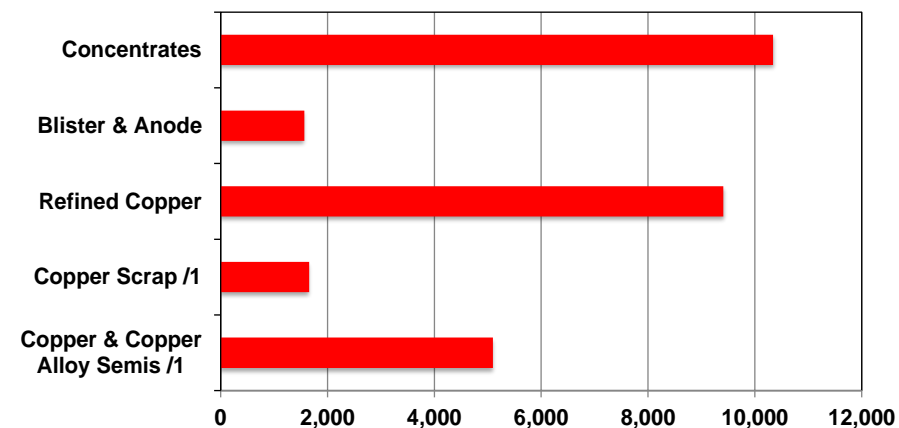
<sup>1</sup> Gross weight.

<sup>2</sup> Exports and Imports might not match due to transit time, under-reporting or product misclassification

**World Copper Imports by Product Category, 2020 /2**  
 Thousand metric tonnes copper (unless otherwise noted)  
 Source: ICSG



**World Copper Exports by Product Category, 2020 /2**  
 Thousand metric tonnes copper (unless otherwise noted)  
 Source: ICSG



## Major International Trade Flows of Copper Ores and Concentrates<sup>1</sup>

### Major **Exporters** of Copper Ores and Concentrates, 2020

1. Chile
2. Peru
3. Mexico
4. Australia
5. Mongolia
6. United States
7. Indonesia
8. Brazil
9. Kazakhstan
10. D.R. Congo



### Major **Importers** of Copper Ores and Concentrates, 2020

1. China
2. Japan
3. Korean Rep.
4. Spain
5. Germany
6. Bulgaria
7. Mexico
8. India
9. Finland
10. Russian Fed.

Image courtesy of the Copper Development Association.

<sup>1</sup>Figure is intended to illustrate trade flows but not actual trade routes. Detailed trade matrices are available in ICSG Statistical Yearbook.

## Major International Trade Flows of Copper Blister and Anode<sup>1</sup>

Major **Exporters** of Copper Blister and Anode, 2020

1. Zambia
2. Chile
3. Bulgaria
4. Belgium
5. Spain
6. South Africa
7. Netherlands
8. Peru
9. Pakistan
10. Italy



Major **Importers** of Copper Blister and Anode, 2020

1. China
2. Belgium
3. India
4. Canada
5. Austria
6. Germany
7. Korean Rep.
8. Netherlands
9. Japan
10. Sweden

Image courtesy of the Copper Development Association.

<sup>1</sup>Figure is intended to illustrate trade flows but not actual trade routes. Detailed trade matrices are available in ICSG Statistical Yearbook.

## Major International Trade Flows of Refined Copper<sup>1</sup>

### Major Exporters of Refined Copper, 2020

1. Chile
2. Japan
3. Russian Fed.
4. Kazakhstan
5. Australia
6. Poland
7. Peru
8. Korean Rep.
9. Philippines
10. Zambia



### Major Importers of Refined Copper, 2020

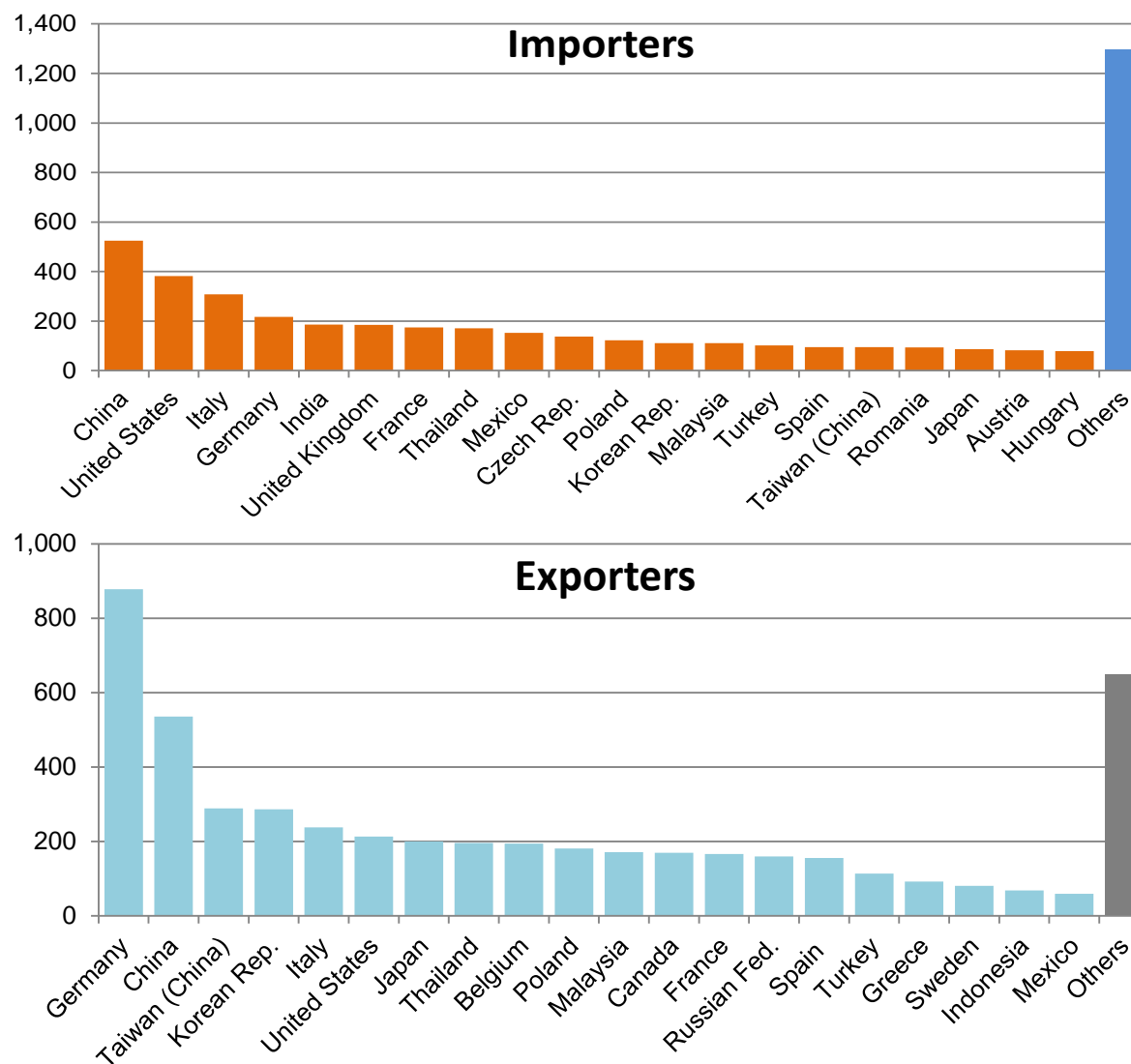
1. China
2. United States
3. Germany
4. Italy
5. Taiwan (China)
6. Turkey
7. Thailand
8. Korean Rep.
9. Brazil
10. France

Image courtesy of the Copper Development Association.

<sup>1</sup>Figure is intended to illustrate trade flows but not actual trade routes. Detailed trade matrices are available in ICSG Statistical Yearbook.

## Leading Exporters and Importers of Semi-Fabricated Copper Products, 2020

Thousand metric tonnes gross weight, Source: ICSG



## Chapter 6: Commodity Copper: Exchanges, Prices and Stocks

Copper, as any other good or merchandise, is traded between producers and consumers. Producers sell their present or future production to clients, who transform the metal into shapes or alloys, so that downstream fabricators can transform these into different end-use products. One of the most important factors in trading a commodity such as copper is the settlement price for the present day (spot price) or for future days.

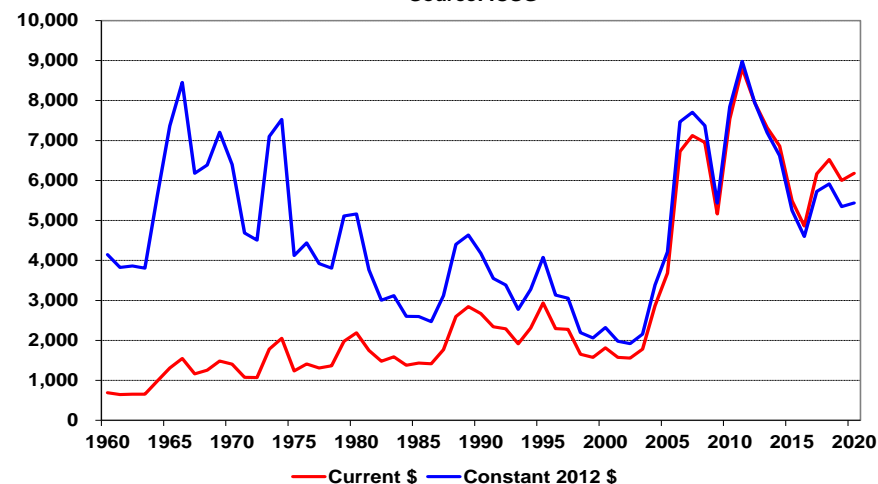
### Exchanges

The role of a commodity exchange is to facilitate and make transparent the process of settling prices. Three commodity exchanges provide the facilities to trade copper: The London Metal Exchange (LME), the Commodity Exchange Division of the New York Mercantile Exchange (COMEX/NYMEX) and the Shanghai Futures Exchange (SHFE). In these exchanges, prices are settled by bid and offer, reflecting the market's perception of supply and demand of a commodity on a particular day. On the LME, copper is traded in 25 tonne lots and quoted in US dollars per tonne; on COMEX, copper is traded in lots of 25,000 pounds and quoted in US cents per pound; and on the SHFE, copper is traded in lots of 5 tonnes and quoted in Renminbi per tonne. More recently, mini contracts of smaller lots sizes have been introduced at the exchanges.

Exchanges also provide for the trading of futures and options contracts. These allow producers and consumers to fix a price in the future, thus providing a hedge against price variations. In this process the participation of speculators, who are ready to buy the risk of price variation in exchange for monetary reward, gives liquidity to the market. A futures or options contract defines the quality of the product, the size of the lot, delivery dates, delivery warehouses and other aspects related to the trading process. Contracts are unique for each exchange. The existence of futures contracts also allows producers and their clients to agree on different price settling schemes to accommodate different interests.

Exchanges also provide for warehousing facilities that enable market participants to make or take physical delivery of copper in accordance with each exchange's criteria.

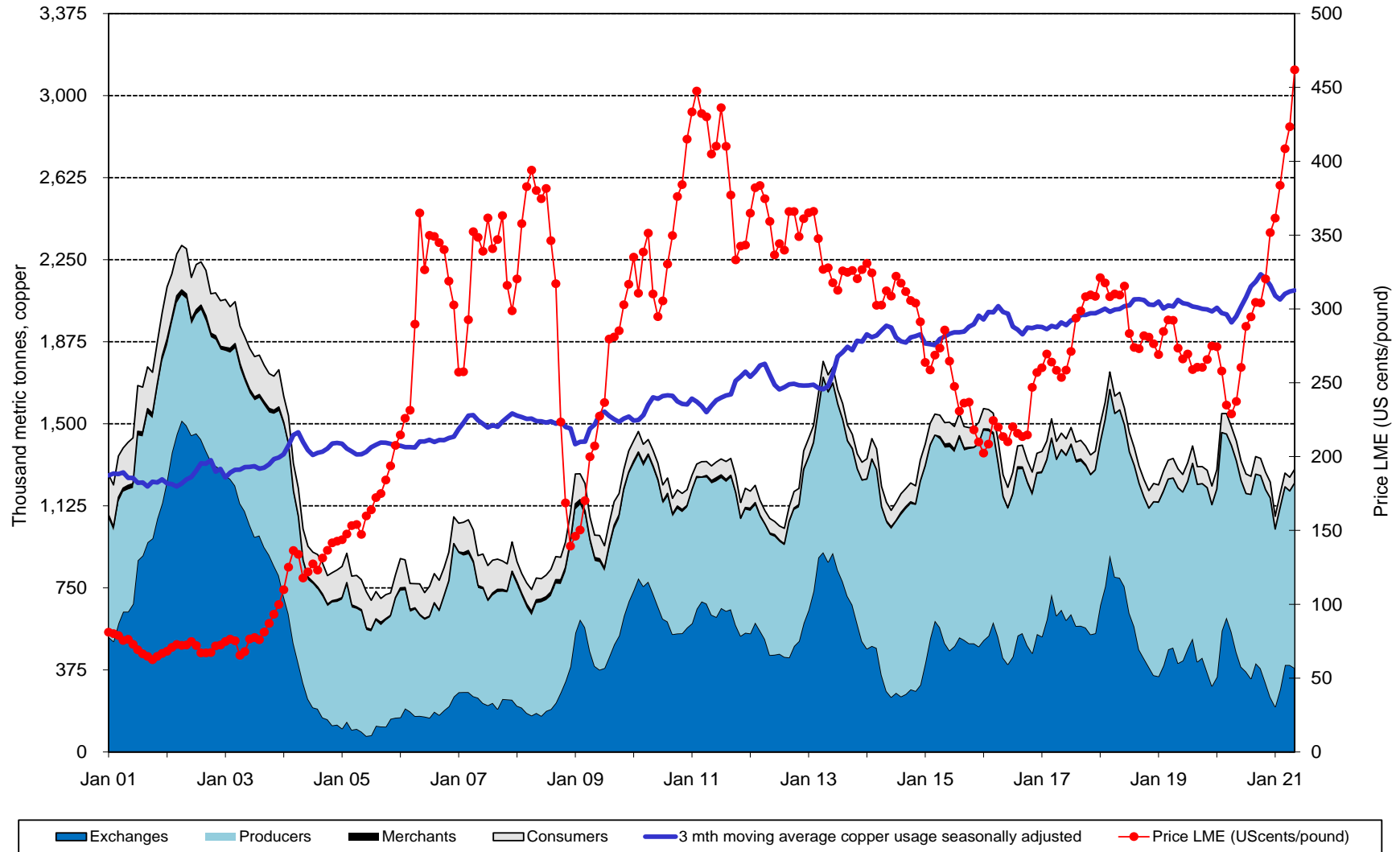
**Average Annual Copper Prices (LME Settlement), 1960-2020**  
US\$ per tonne  
Source: ICSG



## Copper Stocks, Prices and Usage (Jan 2001-May 2021)

Thousand metric tonnes copper and US cents/pound

Source: ICSG



## Chapter 7: Copper Usage

### How Is Copper Used?

Copper is shipped to fabricators mainly as cathode, wire rod, billet, cake (slab) or ingot. Through extrusion, drawing, rolling, forging, melting, electrolysis or atomization, fabricators form wire, rod, tube, sheet, plate, strip, castings, powder and other shapes. The fabricators of these shapes are called the first users of copper. The total use of copper includes copper scrap that is directly melted by the first users of copper to produce copper semis.

Copper and copper alloy semis can be further transformed by downstream industries for use in end use products such as automobiles, appliances, electronics, and a whole range of other copper-dependent products in order to meet society's needs. This section provides a range of information about refined copper usage, total use, major uses of copper and end-use.

For the most up-to-date information on refined copper usage, please visit the ICSG website at [www.icsg.org](http://www.icsg.org)

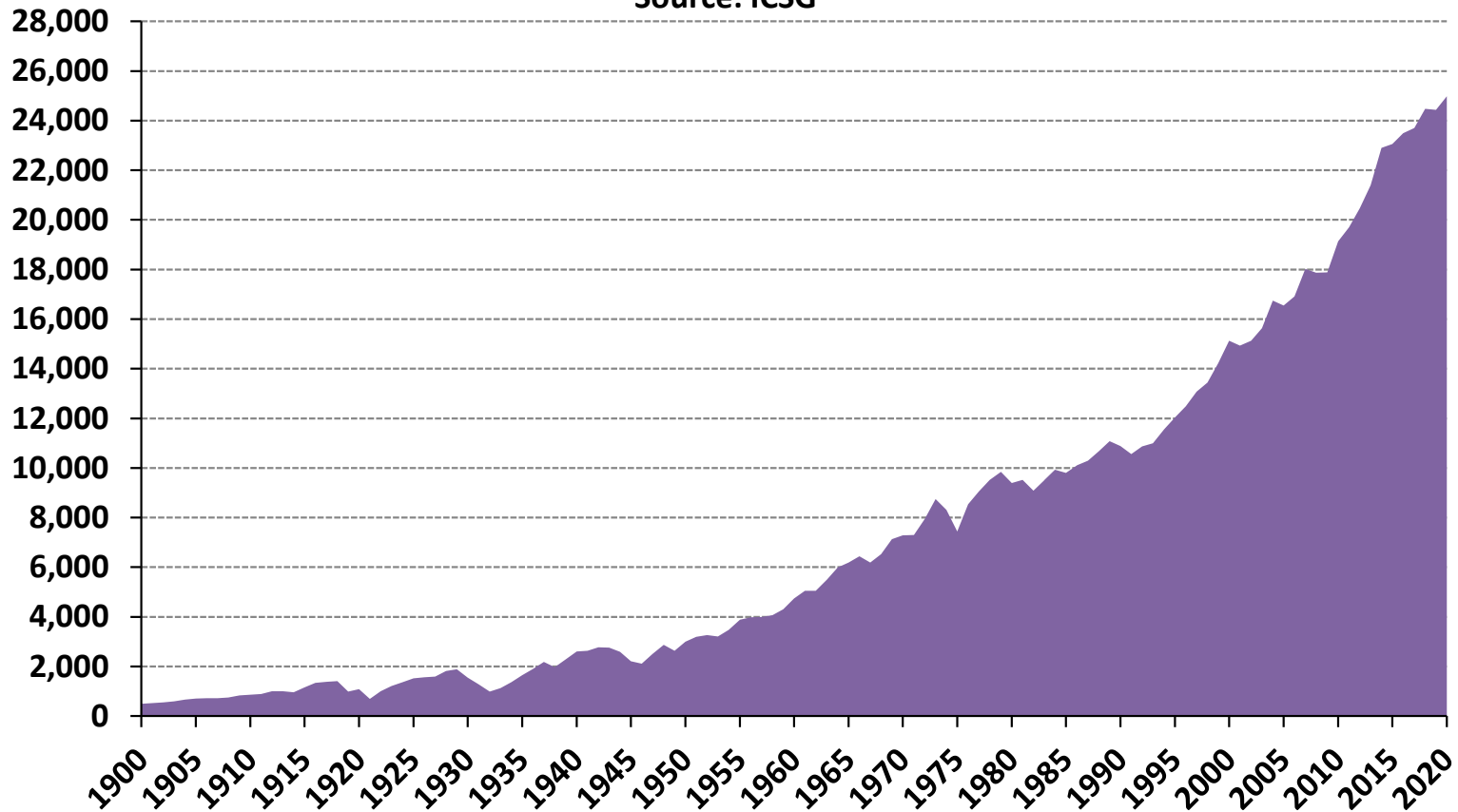




## World Refined Copper Usage, 1900-2020

Thousand metric tonnes copper

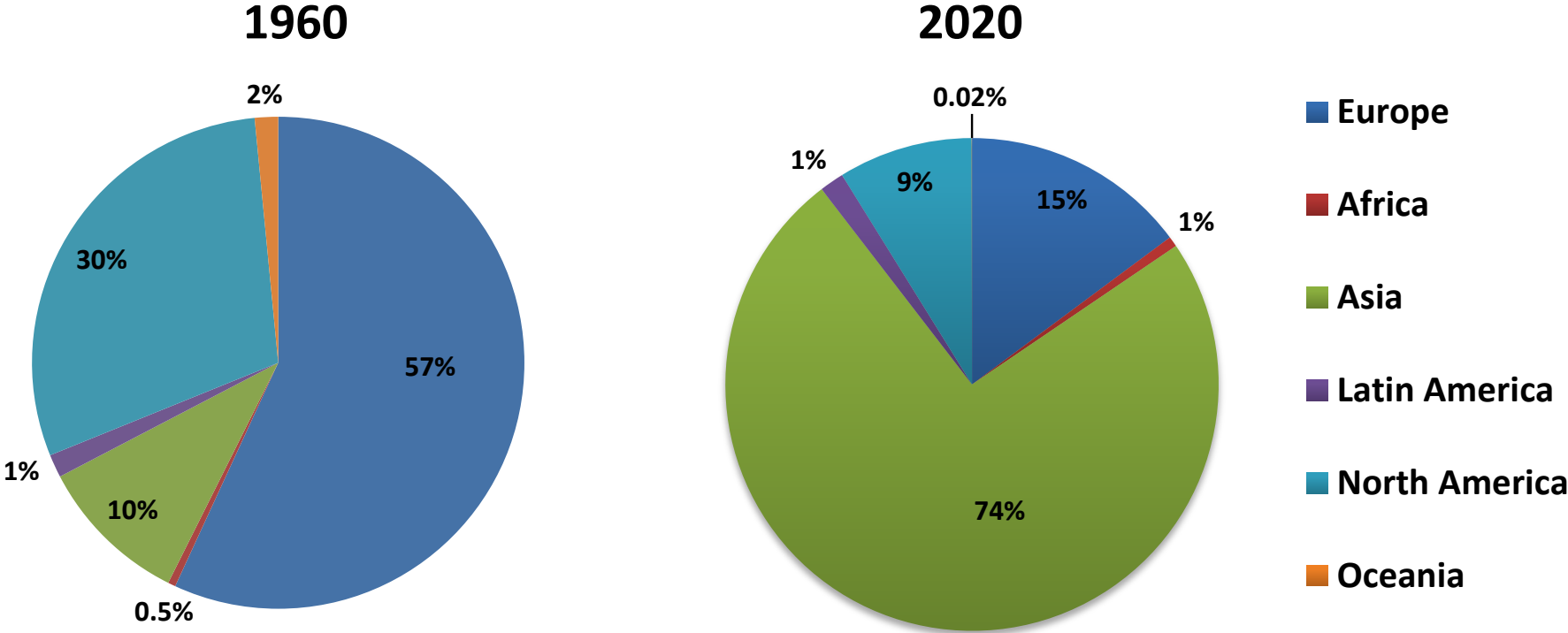
Source: ICSG



Since 1900, apparent usage for refined copper has increased from less than 500 thousand tonnes to 25.0 million metric tonnes in 2020 as usage over the period grew by a compound annual growth rate of 3.4% per year.

### Refined Copper Usage by Region, 1960 versus 2020

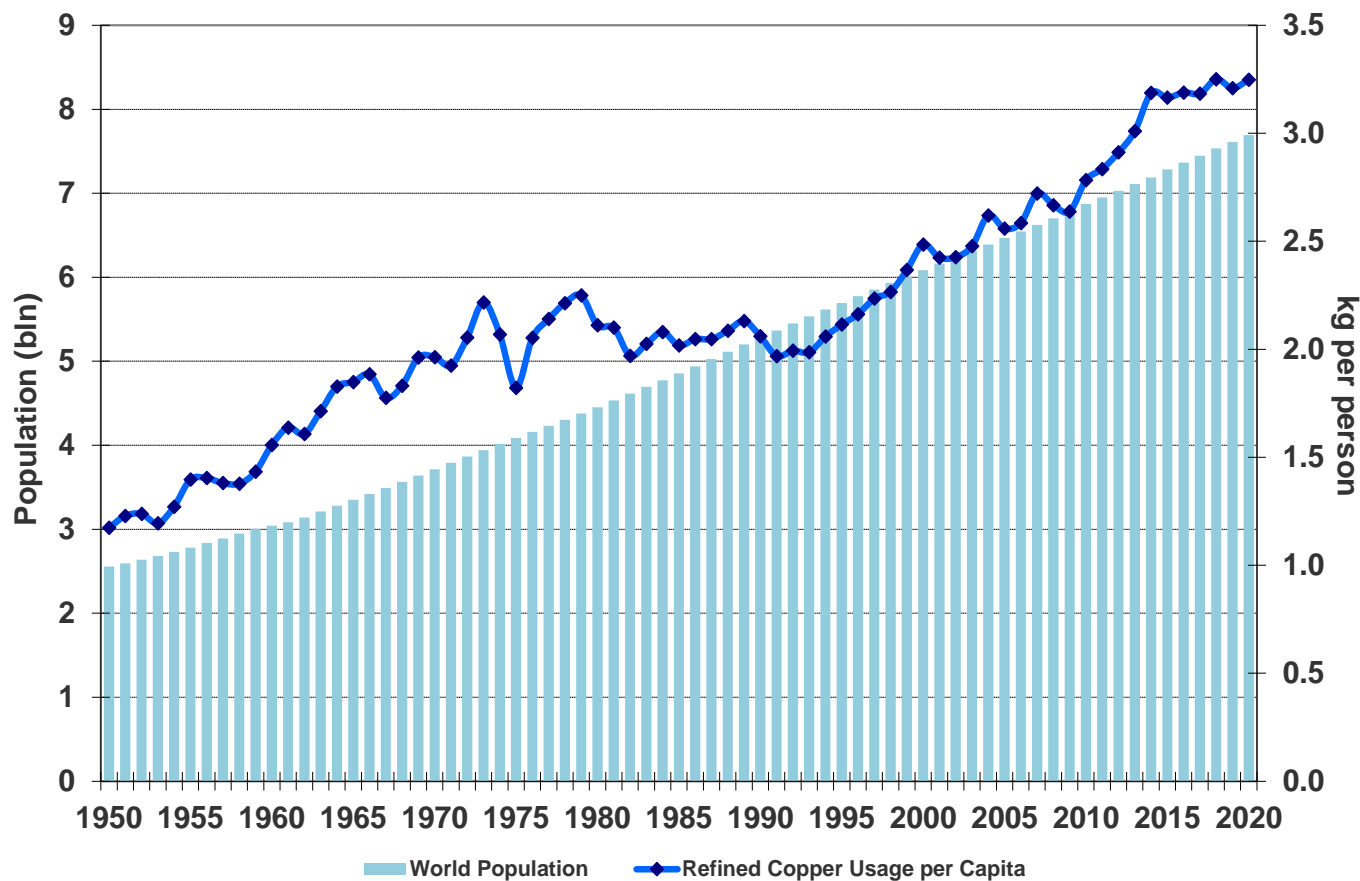
Thousand metric tonnes copper  
Source: ICSG



The key driver of global refined copper usage has been Asia, where demand has expanded eight-fold over the past four decades mainly due to China.

### World Refined Copper Usage\* per Capita: 1950-2020

Sources: ICSG and US Census Bureau

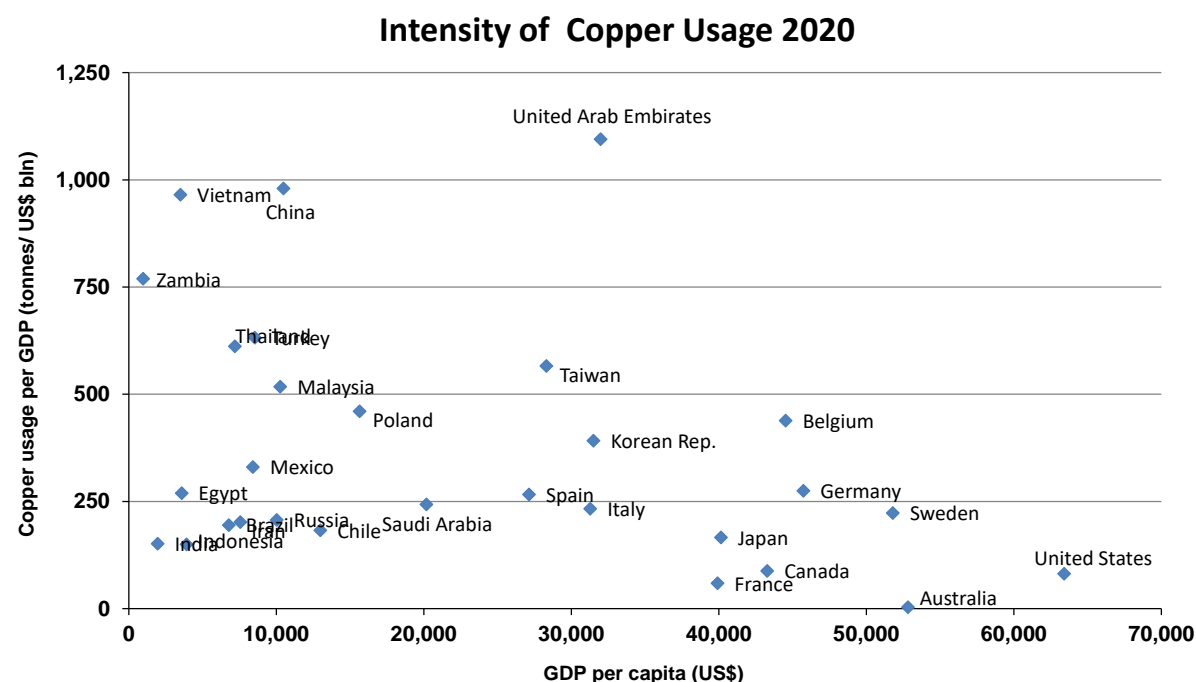


\*Refined copper is typically used by semis fabricators or the “first users” of refined copper, including ingot makers, master alloy plants, wire rod plants, brass mills, alloy wire mills, foundries and foil mills. As a result, per capita usage of refined copper refers to the amount of copper used by industry divided by the total population and does not represent copper used in finished products per person.

## Intensity of Refined Copper Usage\*

Sources: ICSG and International Monetary Fund

2020 data	GDP per capita (US\$)	Intensity (tonnes/US\$bn)
Australia	52824	3.678
Belgium	44531	438.618
Brazil	6783	194.996
Canada	43278	88.281
Chile	12990	182.785
China	10484	979.983
Egypt	3587	269.727
France	39907	59.664
Germany	45733	275.035
India	1965	151.417
Indonesia	3922	150.053
Iran	7555	202.058
Italy	31288	233.436
Japan	40146	166.029
Korean Rep.	31497	392.122
Malaysia	10270	517.737
Mexico	8421	330.324
Poland	15654	460.406
Russian Fed.	10037	207.118
Saudi Arabia	20178	243.160
Spain	27132	266.339
Sweden	51798	223.210
Taiwan	28306	566.216
Thailand	7190	611.850
Turkey	8548	632.351
United Arab Emirates	31983	1,095.182
United States	63416	81.475
Vietnam	3499	965.516
Zambia	981	769.658

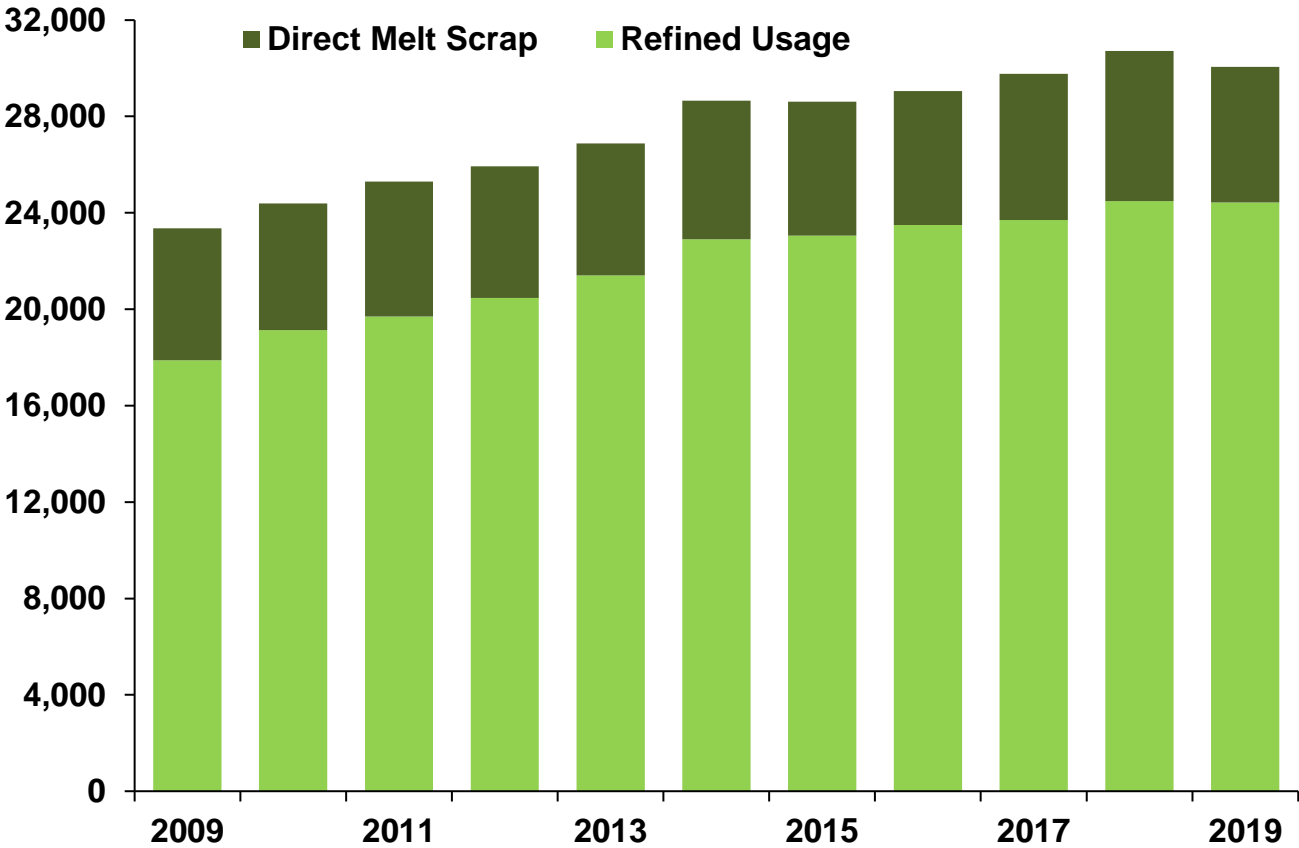


\*Refined copper is typically used by semis fabricators or the “first users” of refined copper, including ingot makers, master alloy plants, wire rod plants, brass mills, alloy wire mills, foundries and foil mills. As a result, intensity of refined copper usage per GDP refers to the amount of copper used by industry divided by GDP and does not represent copper used in finished products per person.

### Total Copper Usage, Including Direct Melted Copper Scrap, 2009-2019

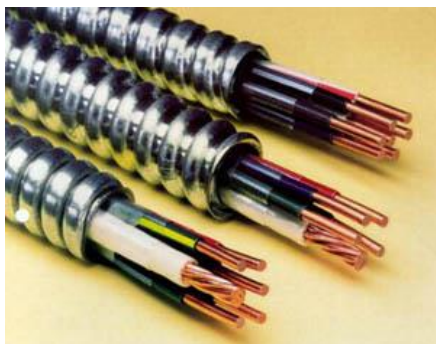
Thousand metric tonnes copper

Source: ICSG Recyclables Survey April 2021



### Major Uses of Copper: Electrical

Copper is the **best non-precious metal conductor** of electricity as it encounters much less resistance compared with other commonly used metals. It sets the standard to which other conductors are compared.



Copper is also used in power cables, either insulated or uninsulated, for high, medium and low voltage applications.

In addition, copper's exceptional strength, ductility and resistance to creeping and corrosion makes it the preferred and safest conductor for commercial and residential building wiring.



Copper is an essential component of **energy efficient** generators, motors, transformers and renewable energy production systems. **Renewable energy**

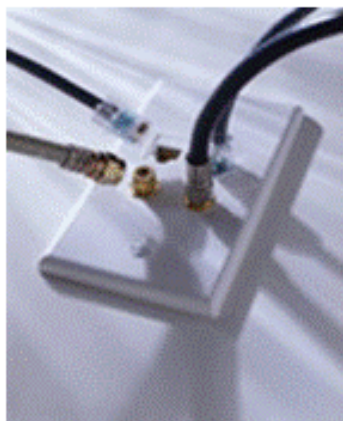
sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, fuel cells and other technologies are all heavily reliant on copper due to its excellent conductivity.

ICSG, in partnership with the Common Fund for Commodities, the International Copper Association and the International Copper Promotion Council (India), undertook the Transfer of Technology for High Pressure Copper Die Casting in India project. The project facilitated the transfer of technology related to the manufacture of rotors, motors and motor systems using more energy efficient high pressure copper die castings.



Images courtesy of the Copper Development Association.

## Major Uses of Copper: Electronics and Communications



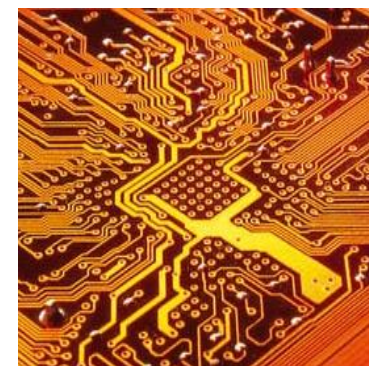
**Copper plays a key role in worldwide information and communications technologies.**

HDSL (High Digital Subscriber Line) and ADSL (Asymmetrical Digital Subscriber Line) technology allows for high-speed data transmission, including internet service, through the

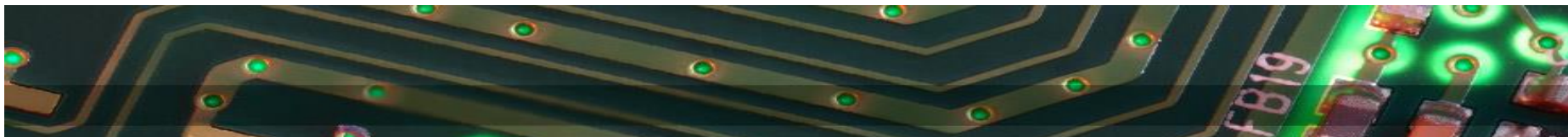
existing copper infrastructure of ordinary telephone wire.

Copper and copper alloy products are used in domestic subscriber lines, wide and local area networks, mobile phones and personal computers.

Semiconductor manufacturers have launched a revolutionary "copper chip." By using copper for circuitry in silicon chips, microprocessors are able to operate at higher speeds, using less energy. Copper heat sinks



help remove heat from transistors and keep computer processors operating at peak efficiency. Copper is also used extensively in other electronic equipment in the form of wires, transformers, connectors and switches.



Images courtesy of the Copper Development Association and European Copper Institute.

## Major Uses of Copper: Construction



Copper and brass are the materials of choice for plumbing, taps, valves and fittings. Thanks in part to its aesthetic appeal, copper and its alloys, such as architectural bronze, is used in a variety of settings to build facades, canopies, doors and window frames.

Unlike plastic tubing, copper does not burn, melt or release noxious or toxic

fumes in the event of a fire. Copper tubes also help protect water systems from potentially lethal bacteria such as legionella. Copper fire sprinkler systems are a valuable safety feature in buildings.



The use of copper doorknobs and plates exploits copper's **biostatic properties** to

help prevent the transfer of disease and microbes.

Copper roofing, in addition to being attractive, is well known for its resistance to extreme weather conditions. Major public buildings, commercial buildings and homes use copper for their rainwater goods and roofing needs. The telltale green patina finish, that gives copper the classic look of warmth and richness, is the result of natural weathering.



Images courtesy of the Copper Development Association and the International Copper Association.



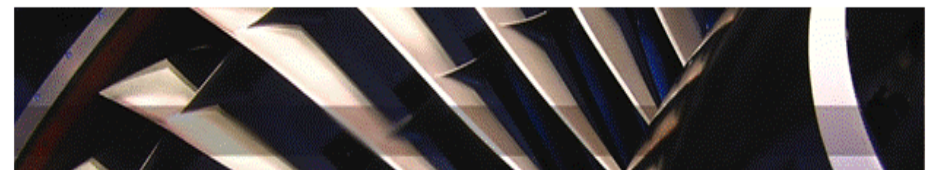
## Major Uses of Copper: Industrial Machinery and Equipment

Wherever industrial machinery and equipment is found, it is a safe bet that copper and its alloys are present. Due to **their durability, machinability and ability to be cast with high precision** and tolerances, copper alloys are ideal for making products such as gears, bearings and turbine blades.

Copper's superior heat transfer capabilities and ability to withstand extreme environments makes it an ideal choice for heat exchange equipment, pressure vessels and vats.

The **corrosion resistant properties** of copper and copper alloys (such as brass, bronze, and copper-nickel) make them especially suitable for use in marine and other demanding environments.

Vessels, tanks, and piping exposed to seawater, propellers, oil platforms and coastal power stations, all depend on copper's corrosion resistance for protection



Images courtesy of the Copper Development Association.

## Major Uses of Copper: Consumer and General Products

From the beginning of civilization copper has been used by various societies to make **coins** for currency.



Today, countries are replacing lower denomination bills with copper-based coins, as these coins last 10, 20 and even 50 times longer.

In the United States, one cent coins and five cent coins contain 2.5% and 75% copper, respectively, while other U.S. coins contain a pure copper core and 75% copper face.<sup>1</sup> In the recently expanded European Union, the Euro coins, first introduced in 2002, also contain copper.

Images courtesy of the International Copper Association and the Copper Development Association.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Copper and copper-based products are used in offices, households and workplaces. **Computers, electrical appliances, cookware, brassware, and locks and keys** are just some of the products exploiting copper's advantages.



In addition, in areas known to be copper deficient, copper is used by farmers to supplement livestock and crop feed.

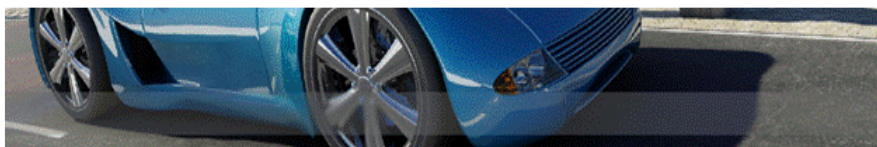
## Major Uses of Copper: Transportation

All major forms of transportation depend on copper to perform critical functions.



Copper-nickel alloys are used on the hulls of boats and ships to **reduce marine biofouling**, thereby reducing drag and improving fuel consumption.

Automobiles and trucks rely on copper motors, wiring, radiators, connectors, brakes and bearings. Today, the average internal combustion engine contains about 22.5 kg (50 lbs) of copper, while luxury cars on average contain around 1,500 copper wires totaling about 1.6 km (1 mile) in length.



Images courtesy of the Copper Development Association and the European Copper Institute.

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES

**Electric vehicles (EVs)** contain approximately four times more copper than conventional cars. It is used in batteries, windings and copper rotors used in electric motors, wiring, busbars and charging infrastructure.

### Copper Use in EVs

- Conventional cars 23kg
- Hybrid electric vehicles (HEV) 40 kg
- Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV) 60 kg
- Battery electric vehicles (BEVs) 83 kg
- Hybrid electric bus (Ebus HEV) 89 kg
- Battery-powered electric bus (Ebus BEV) 224-369 kg (depending on the size of battery)

Source: ICA



It is estimated that globally over 10 million electric vehicles were on the road in 2020. In an effort to reduce carbon emissions it is expected that the use of EVs will continue to rise. The demand for EVs is also expected to increase as a result of technology improvements, increased affordability and the deployment of

more electric chargers (each EV charger will add 0.7 kg of copper. Fast chargers can add up to 8 kg of copper each). This increase will result in greater demand for copper.



Copper's superior thermal conductivity, strength, corrosion resistance and recyclability also make it ideal for automotive and truck radiators. New manufacturing technologies, processes and innovative designs are resulting in lighter, smaller and more efficient radiators.

Copper is used extensively in **new generation airplanes and trains**. New high-speed trains can use anywhere from 2 to 4 tonnes of copper, significantly higher than the 1 to 2 tonnes used in traditional electric trains.



### Growth Markets for Copper Usage

In the longer term, copper could benefit from use in the following markets:<sup>1</sup>

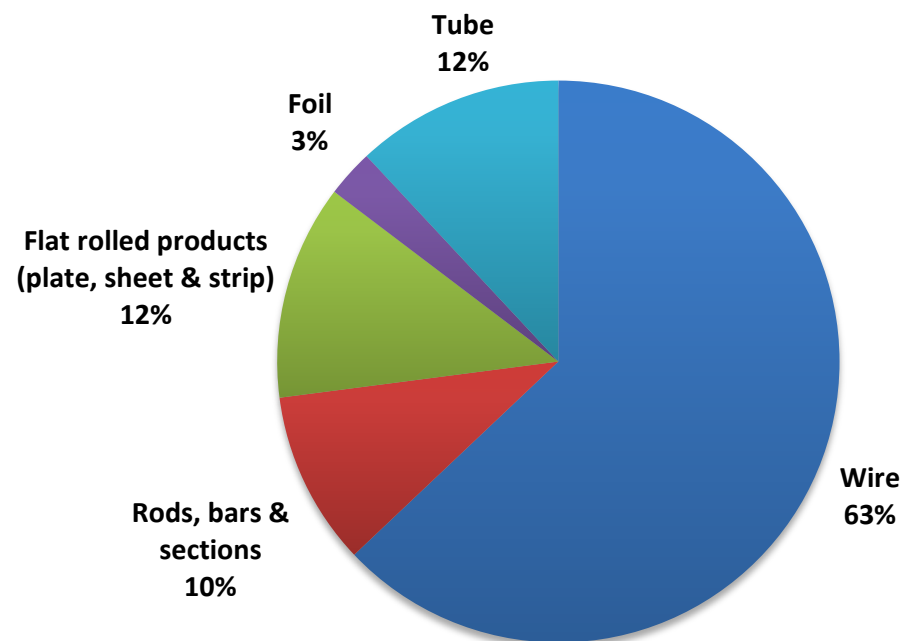
- 1. Antimicrobial** – copper is gaining popularity as an alternative to plastic in medical applications, such as sterile table tops and medical cart handles
- 2. Aquaculture** – marine aquaculture nets and pens made with copper-alloy mesh are emerging as an effective solution to important problems facing the near-shore fish farming industry
- 3. Electrical Propulsion** – powering EVs require changes to the electrical infrastructure that will benefit from copper
- 4. Renewable Energy** – copper plays important roles in clean energy systems from wind to solar thermal plants
- 5. Seismic Energy Dissipation** – earthquake damage can be controlled through the use of copper-based devices that absorb energy to limit building motions
- 6. Ultra-conductive Copper Components** – progress is being made in the methods of incorporating nanocarbon materials into copper in a way that promises to deliver large efficiency improvements in electrical energy transmission and distribution networks
- 7. Electrical Vehicles (EVs)** – to reduce carbon emissions. Rising number of EVs is expected to result in increased copper usage

Images courtesy of the Copper Development Association and the European Copper Institute. Source: 1/ ICA Annual Reports

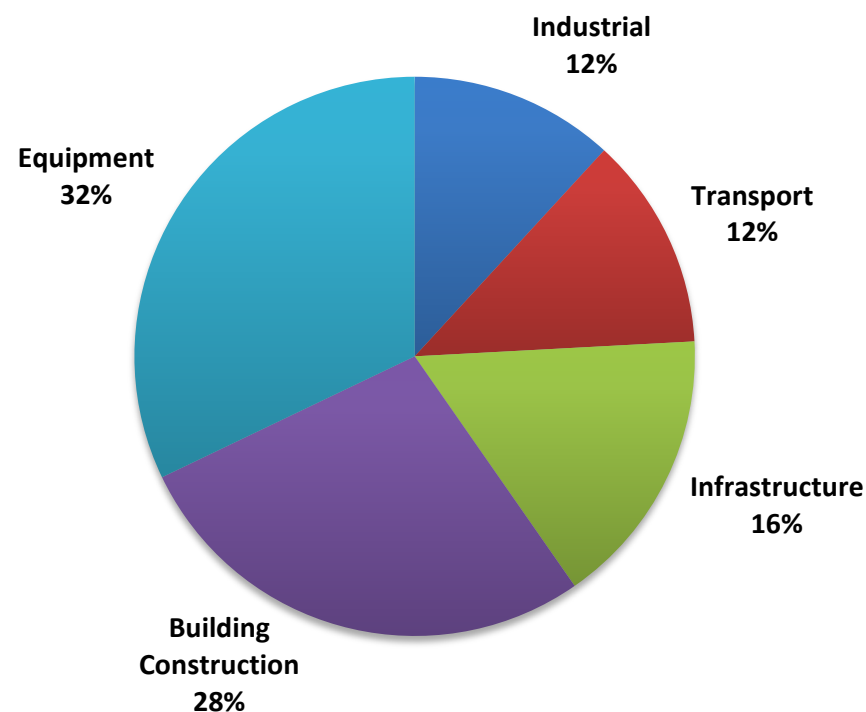
## Major Uses of Copper, 2020

Source: International Wrought Copper Council (IWCC) and International Copper Association (ICA)

### First-Use (Semis Production\*)



### End-Use



\*copper and copper alloy production

**Notes:**

Copper foil production includes foil produced by the rolling process and by electro-deposition

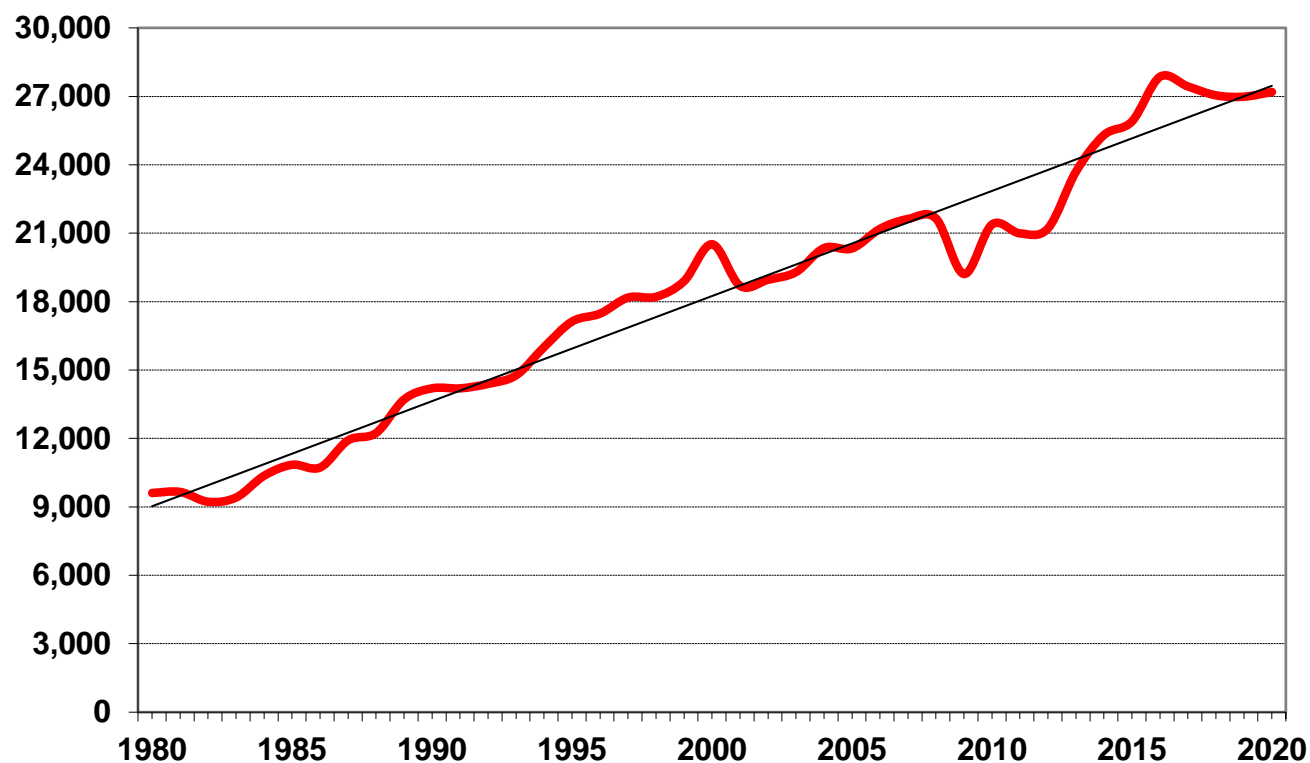
The copper content of alloy semis is assumed to be 70%

## World Copper and Copper Alloy Semis Production

World Copper and Copper Alloy Semis Production, 1980-2020<sup>P</sup>

Thousand metric tonnes gross weight

Source: ICSG



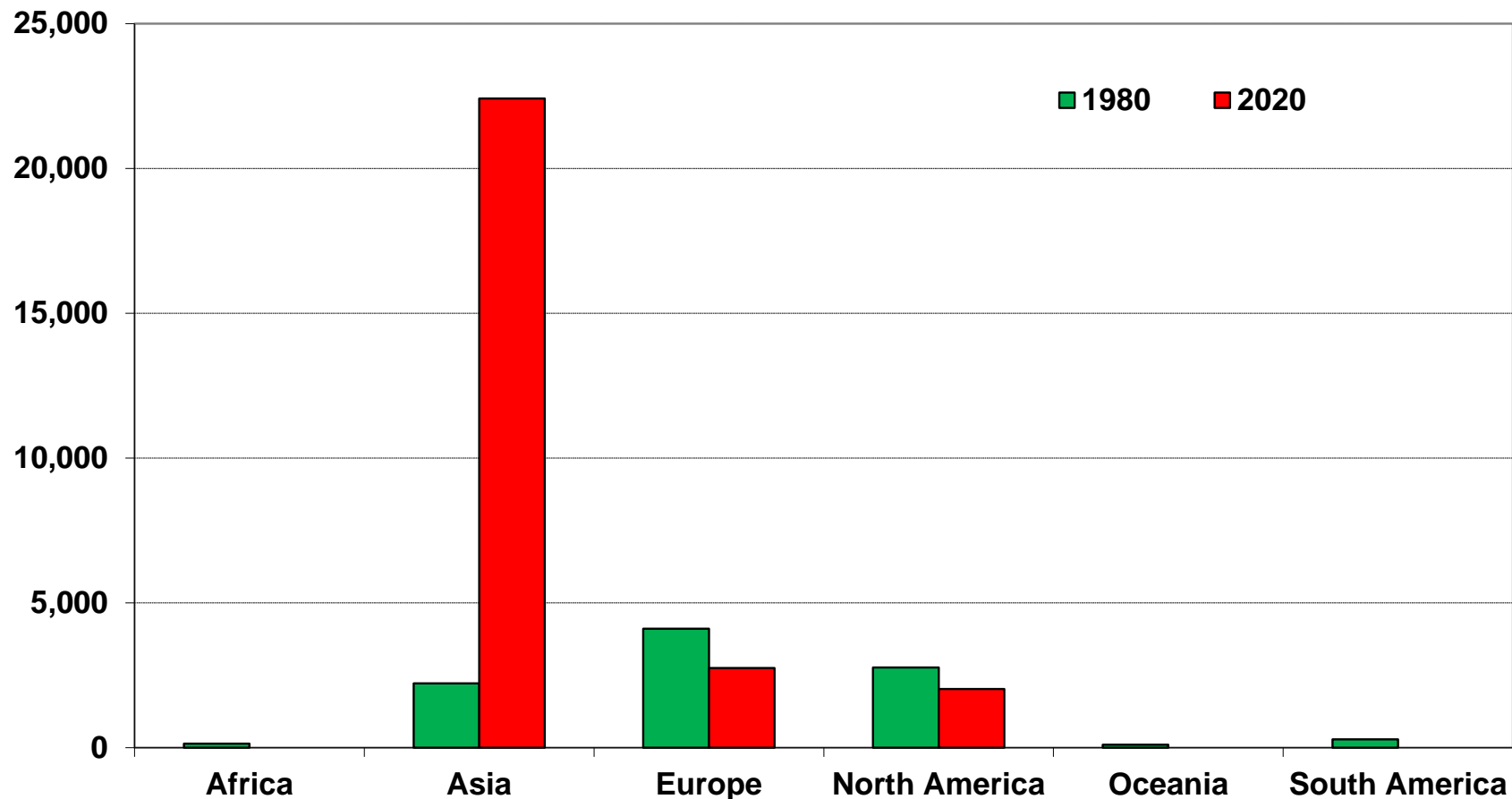
**Semis fabricators** process refinery shapes such as cathodes, wire bar, ingot, billet slab and cake into semi-finished copper and copper alloy products using both unwrought copper materials and direct melt scrap as raw material feed. Semis fabricators are considered to be the “first users” of refined copper and include wire rod plants and brass mills.

P / Preliminary. Data for some countries still incomplete

### Copper and Copper Alloy Semis Production by Region, 1980 & 2020<sup>P</sup>

Thousand metric tonnes gross weight

Source: ICSG



Asia accounted for over 80% (or 22.4 million metric tonnes) of semis output in 2020, compared to 23% in 1980.

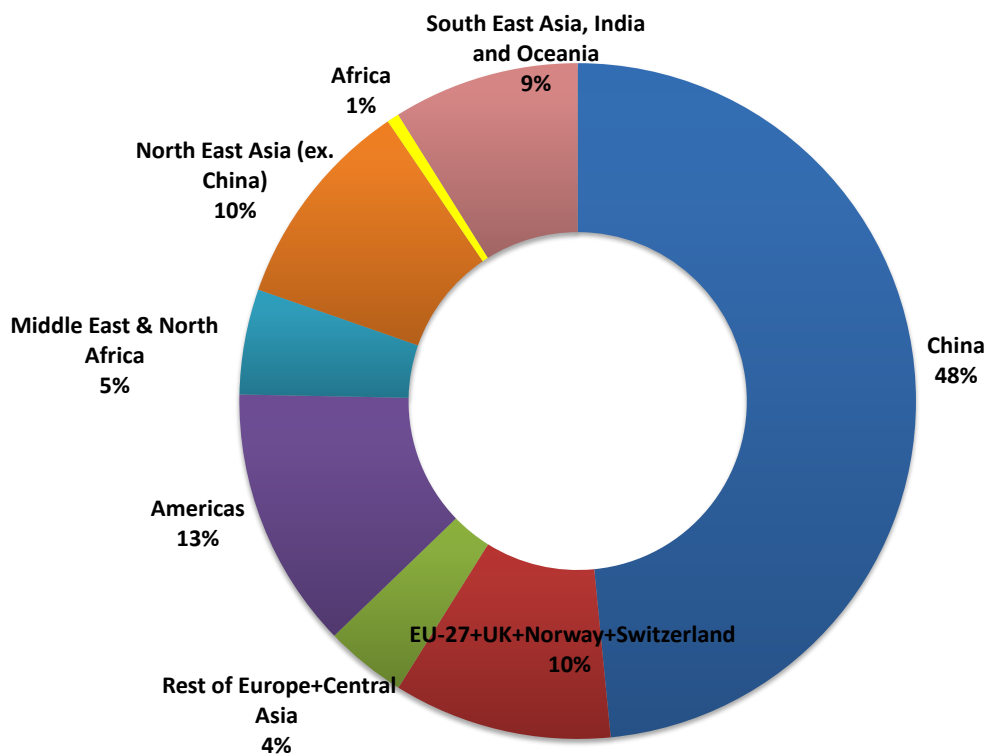
P / Preliminary. Data for some countries still incomplete

## Copper & Copper Alloy Semis Production Capacity by Region & Product

Source: ICSG Directory of Copper and Copper Alloy Fabricators 2021

Semis Production Capacity by Region, 2021 (%)

Source: ICSG

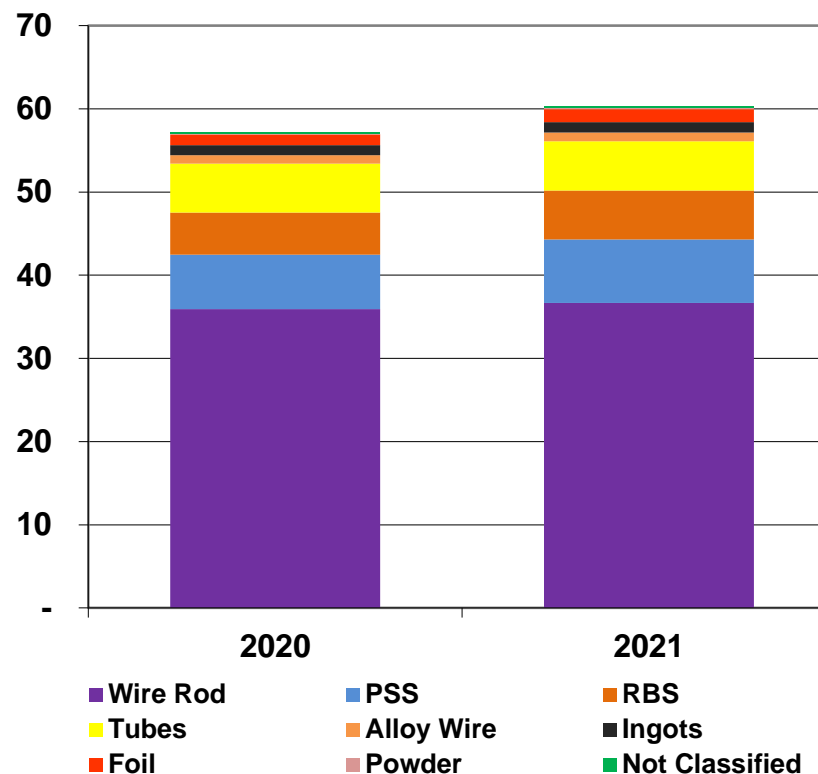


In 2021, **China** will account for the lion's share of world semis production capacity (48%).

*Note: Capacity data reflects production capabilities not necessarily production forecasts*

Semis Production Capacity by Product, 2020 vs 2021 (million tonnes gross weight)

Source: ICSG

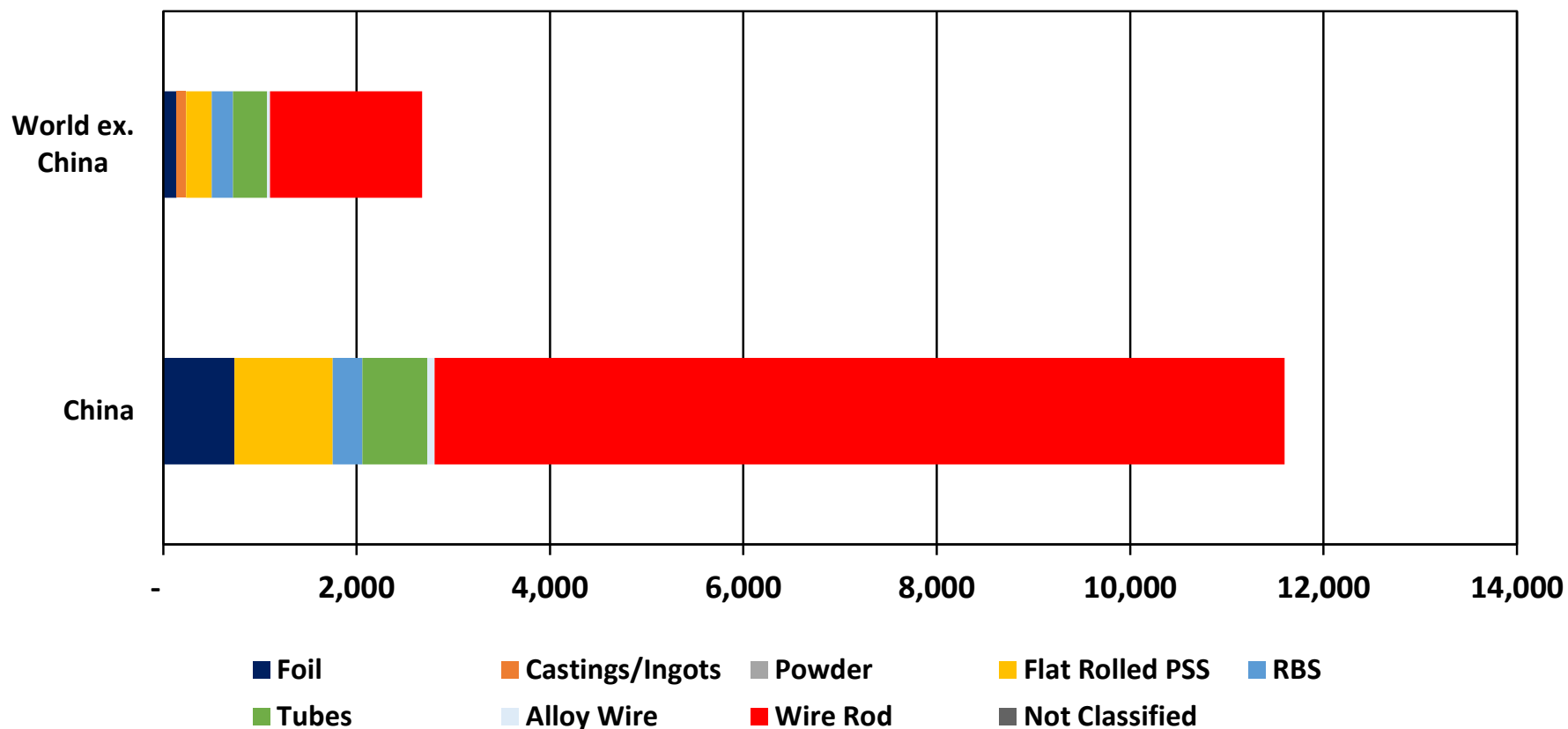




## Copper and Copper Alloy Semis Production Capacity Additions By Product, 2016-2021

Thousand metric tonnes gross weight

Source: ICSG Directory of Copper and Copper Alloy Fabricators 2021



*Note: Capacity data reflects production capabilities not necessarily production forecasts*

## Chapter 8: Copper Recycling

Copper is among the few materials that do not degrade or lose their chemical or physical properties in the recycling process. Considering this, the existing copper reservoir in use can well be considered a legitimate part of world copper reserves. In the recent decades, an increasing emphasis has been placed on the sustainability of material uses in which the concept of reuse and recycling of metals plays an important role in the material choice and acceptance of products. If appropriately managed, recycling has the potential to extend the use of resources, and to minimize energy use, some emissions, and waste disposal.



Closing metal loops through increased reuse and recycling enhances the overall resource productivity and therefore represents one of the key elements of society's transition towards more sustainable production and consumption patterns. It is widely recognized that recycling is not in opposition to primary metal production, but is a necessary and beneficial complement.

In 2019, ICSG estimates that 30% of global copper use came from recycled copper. Some countries' copper requirements greatly depend on recycled copper to meet internal demands. However, recycled copper alone cannot meet society's needs, so we also rely on copper produced from the processing of mineral ores.



Images courtesy of the European Copper Institute.

### Copper Recycling Rate Definitions

The recycling performance of copper-bearing products can be measured and demonstrated in various ways – depending, among other things, on objectives, scope, data availability and target audience. The three International Non-Ferrous Metal Study Groups in conjunction with various metal industry associations agreed on the common definitions of the three following metal recycling rates:

- The **Recycling Input Rate (RIR)** measures the proportion of metal and metal products that are produced from scrap and other metal-bearing low-grade residues. The RIR is mainly a statistical measurement for raw material availability and supply rather than an indicator of recycling efficiency of processes or products. The RIR has been in use in the metals industry for a long time and is widely available from statistical sources. Major target audiences for this type of “metallurgical” indicator are the metal industry, metal traders and resource policy makers. However, given structural and process variables, it may have limited use as a policy tool.
- The **Overall Recycling Efficiency Rate** indicates the efficiency with which end of life (EOL) scrap, new scrap, and other metal-bearing residues are collected and recycled by a network of collectors, processors, and metal recyclers. The key target audiences of this particular indicator are metal industry, scrap processors and scrap generators.
- The **EOL Recycling Rate** indicates the efficiency with which EOL scrap from obsolete products is recycled. This measure focuses on end-of-life management performance of products and provides important information to target audiences such as metal and recycling industries, product designers, life cycle analysts, and environmental policy makers.

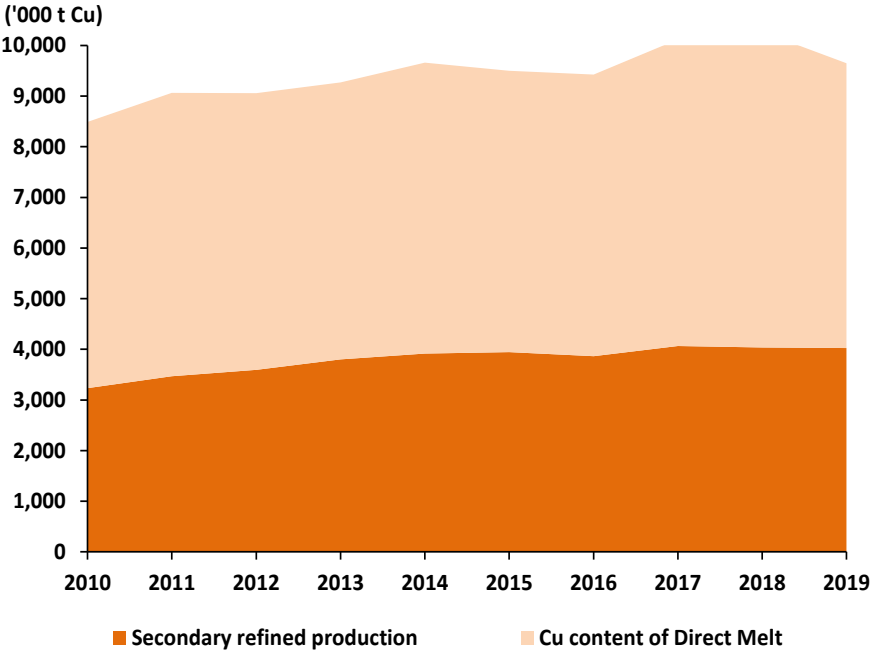


## ICSG Global Copper Use (incl. Recycling), 2010-2019

Source: ICSG Recyclables Survey April 2021

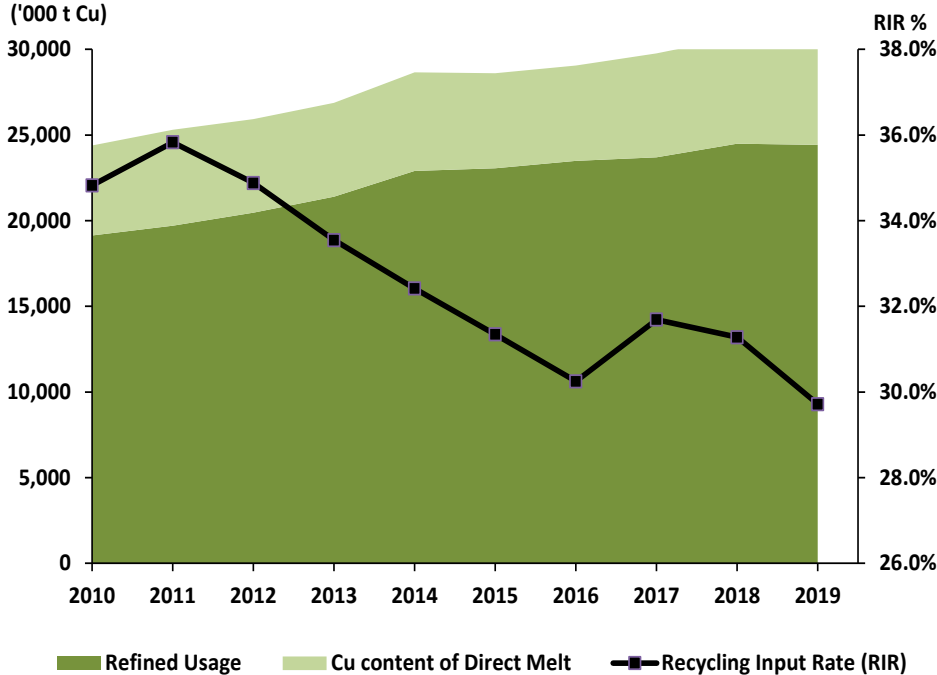
### Global Scrap Use

(incl. secondary refined production and scrap direct melt)



### Global Copper Use and Recycling Input Rate

(incl. refined usage and scrap direct melt)



### ICSG Global Copper Scrap Research Project and recent scrap reports

Based on interest expressed by member countries, ICSG launched the copper scrap market project in 2007 in order to provide greater transparency on an increasingly vital component of the world copper market at a time when globalization is reshaping the copper scrap and copper alloy recycling business. The final report of the project was published in August 2010. In addition, ICSG has completed a number of new detailed reports on NAFTA, European, Middle Eastern and Chinese scrap recovery and scrap supply in recent years. For more information about ICSG work related to copper scrap, please contact the ICSG Secretariat at [mail@icsg.org](mailto:mail@icsg.org)

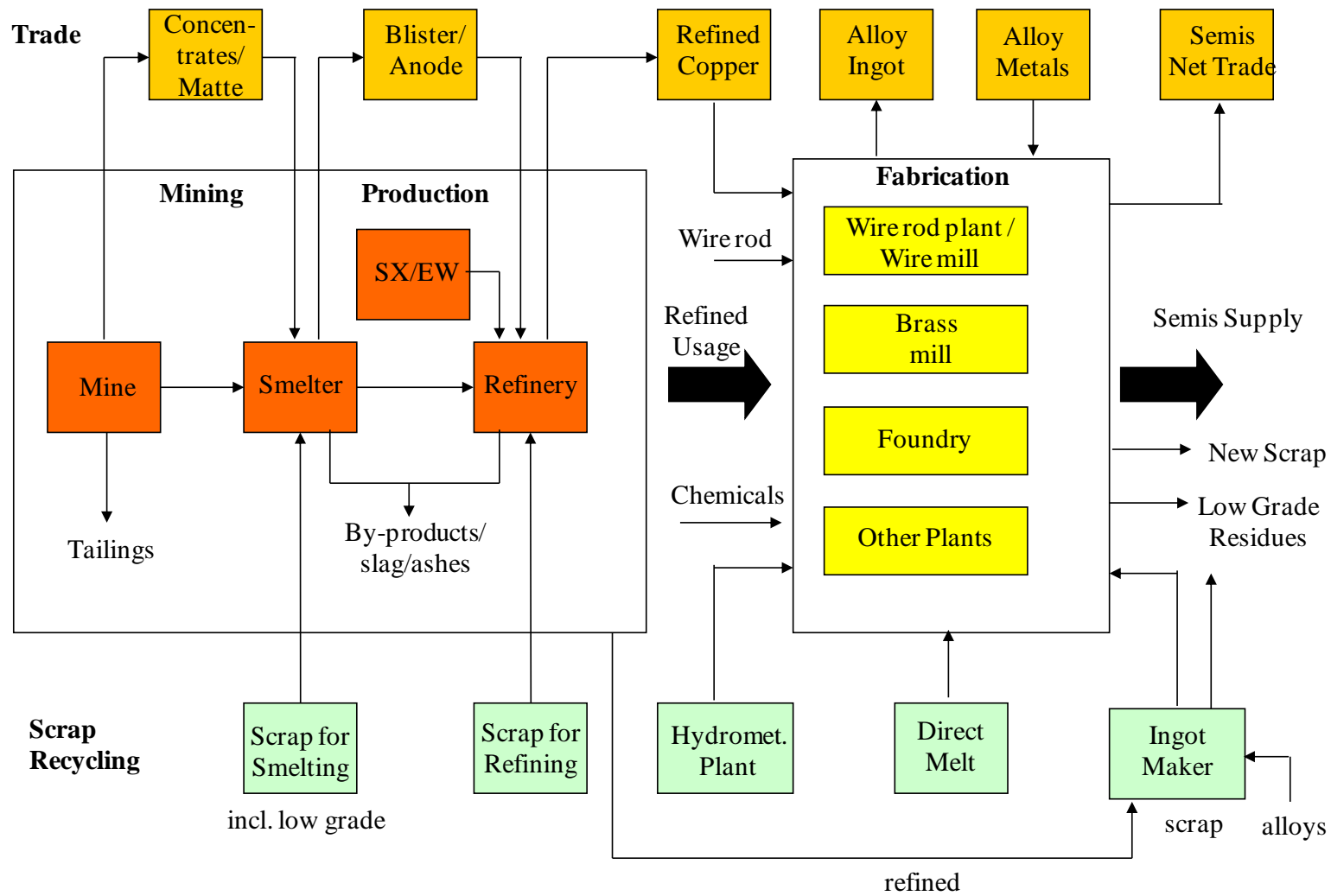
#### Key Drivers of the Global Copper Scrap Market

- Expanding Copper Mine Production and Refined Copper Substitution
- Industrialization and Economic Growth
- Prices
  - Copper Scrap Prices and Spreads
  - Refined Copper Prices and the Demand for Scrap
- Chinese scrap market developments
- The Shift in Regional Scrap Processing Capacity
- Regulations on Recycling and Trade
- Technology

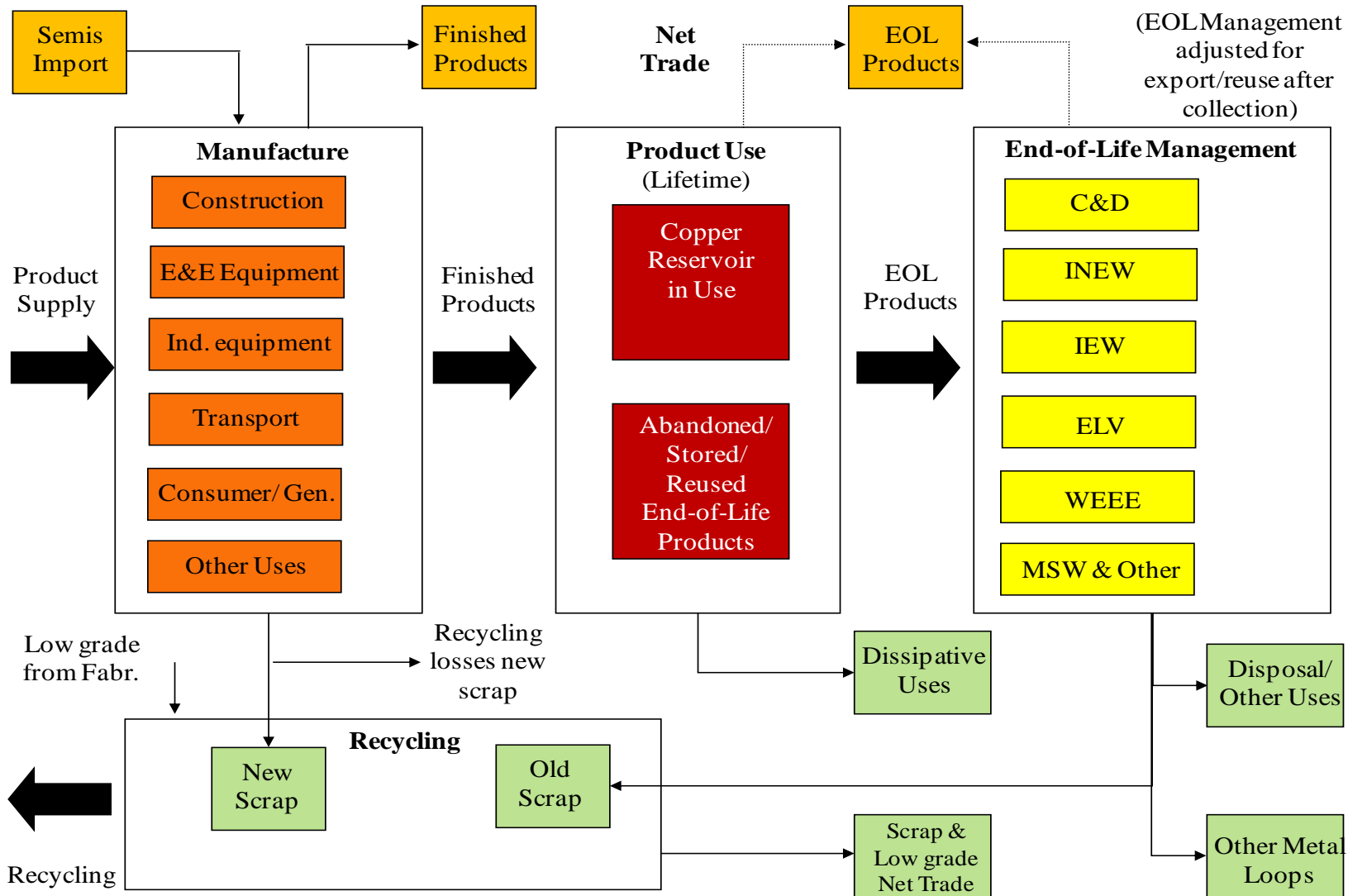
#### ICSG Global Copper Scrap Project Reports

- European Semi Manufactured Copper Products Capacity (2019)
- Copper Use in Fabrication in Japan, Korea, Taiwan (China) and Vietnam (2018)
- Industrial Use of Refined Copper and Scrap in Fabrication in China (2017)
- Manufacture and Use of Semi-fabricated copper in Latin America/Canada (2017)
- Fabrication and Copper Use in Indian Subcontinent, ASEAN and Oceania (2015)
- Survey of Brass Mills, Copper Products and Foundries in China (2014)
- Middle East and North Africa Copper Use Study (2014)
- Copper and Copper Alloy Scrap Supply Survey in EU-27 (2013)

## The Flow of Copper

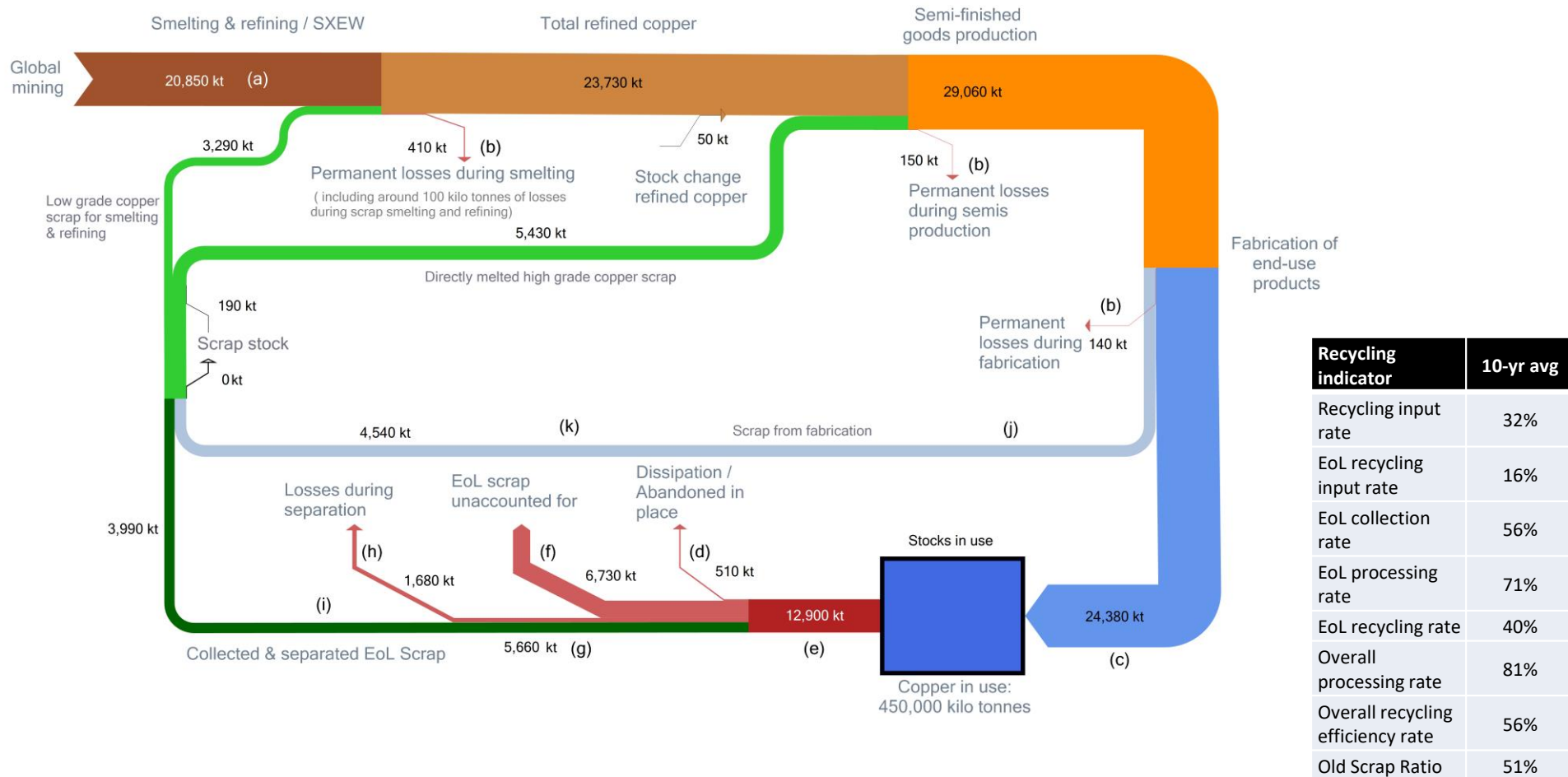


The Flow of Copper (cont.)



## Industry Global Flows of Copper (2018) and Derived Recycling Rates

Figures produced for the International Copper Association by Fraunhofer ISI based on Environ. Sci. Technol. **47** (12), pp. 6564–6572 (freely available under <http://dx.doi.org/10.1021/es400069b>).



**Note:** As of 2020, the global flow model and the recycling indicators will be updated periodically by the ICA and Fraunhofer



**ANNEX**

**World Copper Production and Refined Usage, 1960-2020**

Thousand Metric Tonnes Copper

Source: ICSG

	Mine Production	Refined Production	Refined Usage		Mine Production	Refined Production	Refined Usage		Mine Production	Refined Production	Refined Usage
<b>1960</b>	3,924	4,998	4,738	<b>1980</b>	7,227	9,261	9,396	<b>2000</b>	13,199	14,793	15,122
<b>1961</b>	4,081	5,127	5,050	<b>1981</b>	7,721	9,573	9,522	<b>2001</b>	13,636	15,638	14,938
<b>1962</b>	4,216	5,296	5,048	<b>1982</b>	7,745	9,319	9,090	<b>2002</b>	13,487	15,354	15,133
<b>1963</b>	4,286	5,400	5,500	<b>1983</b>	7,824	9,541	9,510	<b>2003</b>	13,699	15,272	15,641
<b>1964</b>	4,443	5,739	5,995	<b>1984</b>	8,135	9,440	9,930	<b>2004</b>	14,594	15,918	16,743
<b>1965</b>	4,769	6,059	6,193	<b>1985</b>	8,314	9,616	9,798	<b>2005</b>	14,927	16,572	16,552
<b>1966</b>	4,987	6,324	6,445	<b>1986</b>	8,295	9,920	10,112	<b>2006</b>	14,983	17,288	16,917
<b>1967</b>	4,743	6,004	6,195	<b>1987</b>	8,620	10,148	10,293	<b>2007</b>	15,508	17,895	18,026
<b>1968</b>	5,010	6,653	6,523	<b>1988</b>	8,773	10,512	10,668	<b>2008</b>	15,532	18,191	17,877
<b>1969</b>	5,682	7,212	7,137	<b>1989</b>	9,086	10,908	11,081	<b>2009</b>	15,941	18,234	17,889
<b>1970</b>	5,900	7,592	7,291	<b>1990</b>	9,227	10,805	10,886	<b>2010</b>	15,987	18,981	19,130
<b>1971</b>	5,941	7,404	7,296	<b>1991</b>	9,373	10,686	10,563	<b>2011</b>	15,960	19,601	19,704
<b>1972</b>	6,541	8,100	7,942	<b>1992</b>	9,497	11,042	10,866	<b>2012</b>	16,687	20,194	20,468
<b>1973</b>	6,915	8,544	8,740	<b>1993</b>	9,571	11,274	10,992	<b>2013</b>	18,185	21,058	21,401
<b>1974</b>	7,097	8,759	8,310	<b>1994</b>	9,539	11,118	11,560	<b>2014</b>	18,422	22,490	22,908
<b>1975</b>	6,735	8,187	7,445	<b>1995</b>	10,070	11,817	12,043	<b>2015</b>	19,153	22,838	23,057
<b>1976</b>	7,289	8,632	8,539	<b>1996</b>	11,084	12,628	12,489	<b>2016</b>	20,395	23,356	23,487
<b>1977</b>	7,444	8,884	9,057	<b>1997</b>	11,514	13,425	13,082	<b>2017</b>	20,067	23,557	23,705
<b>1978</b>	7,306	9,030	9,527	<b>1998</b>	12,228	14,032	13,440	<b>2018</b>	20,579	24,075	24,484
<b>1979</b>	7,372	9,200	9,848	<b>1999</b>	12,767	14,576	14,223	<b>2019</b>	20,571	24,028	24,429
								<b>2020/p</b>	20,575	24,454	24,987

p/ preliminary

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