

Do you know?

You can always tell if a rock contains copper because then the rock looks blue in colour.



DISTRIBUTION OF MINERALS

Minerals occur in different types of rocks. Some are found in igneous rocks, some in metamorphic rocks while others occur in sedimentary rocks. Generally, metallic minerals are found in igneous and metamorphic rock formations that form large plateaus. Iron-ore in north Sweden, copper and nickel deposits in Ontario, Canada, iron, nickel, chromites and platinum in South Africa are examples of minerals found in igneous and metamorphic rocks. Sedimentary rock formations of plains and young fold mountains contain non-metallic minerals like limestone. Limestone deposits of Caucasus region of France, manganese deposits of Georgia and Ukraine and phosphate beds of Algeria are some examples. Mineral fuels such as coal and petroleum are also found in the sedimentary strata.

ASIA

China and India have large iron ore deposits. The continent produces more than half of the world's tin.

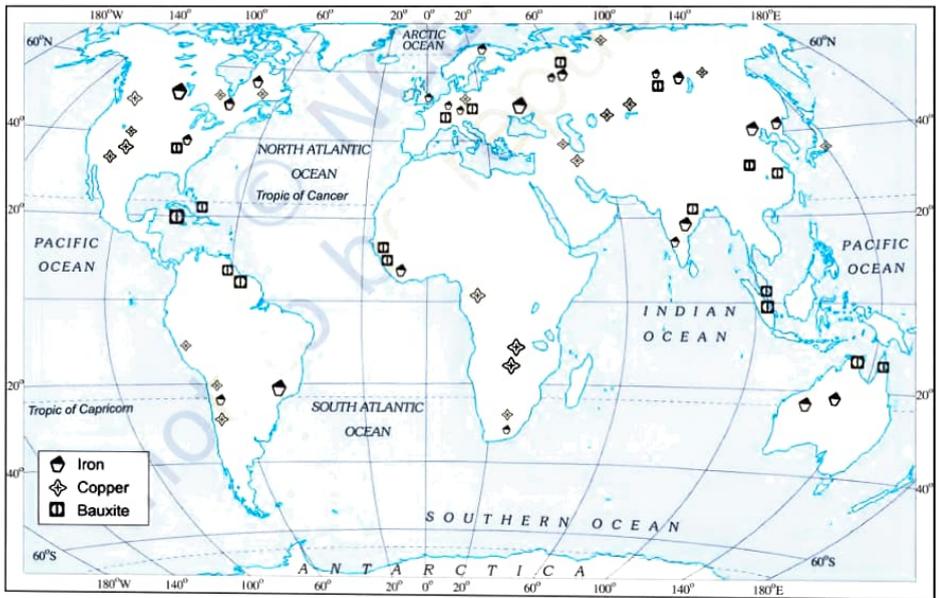


Fig. 3.5: World: Distribution of Iron, Copper and Bauxite

China, Malaysia and Indonesia are among the world's leading tin producers. China also leads in production of lead, antimony and tungsten. Asia also has deposits of manganese, bauxite, nickel, zinc and copper.

EUROPE

Europe is the leading producer of iron-ore in the world. The countries with large deposits of iron ore are Russia, Ukraine, Sweden and France. Minerals deposits of copper, lead, zinc, manganese and nickel are found in eastern Europe and European Russia.

NORTH AMERICA

The mineral deposits in North America are located in three zones: the Canadian region north of the Great Lakes, the Appalachian region and the mountain ranges of the west. Iron ore, nickel, gold, uranium and copper are mined in the Canadian Shield Region, coal in the Appalachians region. Western Cordilleras have vast deposits of copper, lead, zinc, gold and silver.

Do you know?

Switzerland has no known mineral deposit in it.



Let's do

Identify the Canadian Shield, the Appalachians, Western Cordilleras and Lake Superior with the help of an atlas.



SOUTH AMERICA

Brazil is the largest producer of high grade iron-ore in the world. Chile and Peru are leading producers of copper. Brazil and Bolivia are among the world's largest producers of tin. South America also has large deposits of gold, silver, zinc, chromium, manganese, bauxite, mica, platinum, asbestos and diamond. Mineral oil is found in Venezuela, Argentina, Chile, Peru and Columbia.

AFRICA

Africa is rich in mineral resources. It is the world's largest producer of diamonds, gold and platinum. South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zaire produce a large portion of the world's gold. The other minerals found in Africa are copper, iron ore, chromium, uranium, cobalt and bauxite. Oil is found in Nigeria, Libya and Angola.

AUSTRALIA

Australia is the largest producer of bauxite in the world. It is a leading producer of gold, diamond, iron ore, tin and nickel. It is also rich in copper, lead, zinc and manganese. Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie areas of western Australia have the largest deposits of gold.

ANTARCTICA

The geology of Antarctica is sufficiently well known to predict the existence of a variety of mineral deposits, some probably large. Significant size of deposits of coal in the Transantarctic Mountains and iron near the Prince Charles Mountains of East Antarctica is forecasted. Iron ore, gold, silver and oil are also present in commercial quantities.

USES OF MINERALS

Minerals are used in many industries. Minerals which are used for gems are usually hard. These are then set in various styles for jewellery. Copper is another metal used in everything from coins to pipes. Silicon, used in the computer industry is obtained from quartz. Aluminum obtained from its ore bauxite is used in automobiles and airplanes, bottling industry, buildings and even in kitchen cookware.