

Valcambi celebrates and visits LIMATA, Peru



April 1st was a big day in Juliaca, Peru, for Coopertiva Minera Limata Ltda (LIMATA), Valcambi, Fairtrade, Swarovski, and government Representatives of the Puno region.

The reason?

The belated celebration of LIMATA, a Peruvian artisanal mine, accessing international market. Through a value chain put in place by Fairtrade in 2018, Valcambi buys and refines the artisanal gold and Swarovski in turn purchases the precious metal from us to make exquisite high-end jewellery pieces.

For LIMATA, and all the partners, it is a big deal deserving dancing, singing, and telling the world.



Located at 4600m above sea-level in the Ananea district of Puno, South Peru, lies concession AFC 12 of the Cooperativa Minera Limata Ltda (LIMATA). Owned and developed by the LIMATA community, the mine started operating in 2012. Its members worked hard to formalise their operations which culminated in LIMATA becoming one of the first small mining cooperatives to be formalised in Peru, in 2013. But the 31 working members of the cooperative had further ambition for their activity. When Fairtrade approached them to discuss

its ASM standard, they took on as their mission to become Fairtrade certified. Hard work supported by the Fairtrade team followed suit and paid off in 2018 when the cooperative reached the internationally recognized Fairtrade certification.

As the mine was on the way to certification, Fairtrade introduced Valcambi to LIMATA, and facilitated the set-up of the entire value chain up to Swarovski.

Fully aligned with Valcambi's Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) strategy, for us it was a great opportunity to be part of a supply chain that would position LIMATA on the international scene.

"You really have to visit LIMATA to see first-hand what it is like producing gold at 4600m above sea-level; You have to feel the altitude and the toughness of the environment and climate; And you have to talk to the people of LIMATA whose principal livelihood relied for decades on breeding alpacas." Comments Christian Sieber, Valcambi representative in South America. "Only then you can fully appreciate the amount of work these people have put to be where they are today, operating their mine to the highest standards. It really is impressive and you cannot help thinking 'hats off'."



This did deserve indeed a proper celebration.

Praising the LIMATA members and workers for their remarkable work in reaching certification, Christian addressed the 80 participants to the celebration events "We look forward to a long and successful partnership with LIMATA."

"The purchase of LIMATA gold helps us to further improve our production process. We want to grow, but for doing so we need your support." Commented Walter Luque Mamani, newly elected president of LIMATA, and also secretary of the community.

On 2nd of April, Valcambi visited the LIMATA mine. As we walked around the operations and the mining site, the management team was proud to show us how they have used the Fairtrade premium, investing in

machinery including front-loader and trucks to improve production, improving the workers' restaurant facility and building new toilets.

“As a member of the LIMATA Fairtrade premium committee, I learned a lot about how to build consensus around premium projects”, says Javier Mamani Condori, supervisor of Operations at LIMATA. “Sometimes it was difficult to jointly define premium projects that were supported by all members of the cooperative. But through constructive discussions, we managed to agree and select good projects that have improved our working conditions.”



They are also rehabilitating the exploited sections of the mining ground with high ecological consciousness as their animals will feed again on these areas.

Our visit successfully concluded with the signature of our 2nd long-term supplier agreement with LIMATA.

LIMATA is a great example of collaboration between the public-private sector, in this case the Government of Peru; Fairtrade; Valcambi, and the jewellery industry, all joining forces to positively impact the ASM sector.

