

CHEMICAL & MINING CO OF CHILE INC
Form 6-K
March 02, 2017

UNITED STATES

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

Form 6-K

REPORT OF FOREIGN PRIVATE ISSUER PURSUANT TO RULE 13a-16 OR 15d-16 UNDER THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the month of March, 2017.

Commission File Number 33-65728

CHEMICAL AND MINING COMPANY OF CHILE INC.

(Translation of registrant's name into English)

El Trovador 4285, Santiago, Chile (562) 2425-2000

(Address of principal executive office)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F.

Form 20-F: Form 40-F:

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(1):

Note: Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(1) only permits the submission in paper of a Form 6-K if submitted solely to provide an attached annual report to security holders.

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(7): "

Note: Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(7) only permits the submission in paper of a Form 6-K if submitted to furnish a report or other document that the registrant foreign private issuer must furnish and make public under the laws of the jurisdiction in which the registrant is incorporated, domiciled or legally organized (the registrant's "home country"), or under the rules of the home country exchange on which the registrant's securities are traded, as long as the report or other document is not a press release, is not required to be and has not been distributed to the registrant's security holders, and, if discussing a material event, has already been the subject of a Form 6-K submission or other Commission filing on EDGAR.

SQM

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Santiago, Chile. March 2, 2017.- Sociedad Química y Minera de Chile S.A. (SQM) (NYSE: SQM; Santiago Stock Exchange: SQM-B, SQM-A) held a conference call to discuss the fourth quarter 2016 results, which were published on March 1, 2016. The following items were discussed by executive management as part of the conference call:

we posted our results for the year; our net income reached US\$278.3 million, an increase of 30% when compared to the last year. For the fourth quarter 2016, we reported earnings of over US\$80 million.

The main highlights of the results were: reporting the highest iodine sales volumes since 2012, reaching solar salt sales volumes of almost 60,000 MT, and seeing record sales volumes and record average prices of lithium. We are also cautiously optimistic that prices for potassium chloride may be stabilizing, as we saw higher prices in the fourth quarter when compared to the third quarter 2016. In the first few months of this year, we have seen this trend continue.

We look forward to beginning 2017 with the momentum from 2016, and will remain focused on developing our five core business lines as we see appropriate. We maintain our objective of expanding our reach in the potassium nitrate market, given that we see the water soluble market showing healthy growth. We continue to move forward with our potassium nitrate expansion, and look forward to strengthening our position as a market leader in this business.

We are confident solar salts sales volumes in 2017 will exceed ones reported in 2016, reaching 70-75k MT. In the iodine market, the strong volumes seen in 2016 may even increase in 2017. We believe sales volumes in the potassium chloride business line could fall 200-250k MT in 2017 when compared to 2016.

Our continued commitment to the lithium market and our joint venture in Argentina is strong. We will be completing the feasibility study and expect to break ground in the coming months. We have over 100 people currently working on the project, and expect to invest approximately US\$100 million this year. We should be operating in 2019, with a cost that will be at the low end of the cost curve. We are working on more than doubling our lithium hydroxide capacity in Chile; this project will have a total investment of about US\$30 million, and it should be in operation by the end of year.

Along with our robust earnings, we are also proud of the strong balance sheet with which we finished the year. During 2016, we paid approximately US\$400 million in dividends. At the same time, we were able to reduce the NFD/EBITDA ratio to 0.6 from 0.74, and still reported over US\$800 million in cash and cash equivalents.

We have a great team in place, and would not be where we are today without the commitment of the almost 5,000 employees that we have in Chile and abroad. I look forward to 2017, and to tackle the challenges and opportunities

that we have set out for ourselves.

About SQM

SQM is an integrated producer and distributor of specialty plant nutrients, iodine, lithium, potassium-related fertilizers and industrial chemicals. Its products are based on the development of high quality natural resources that allow the Company to be a leader in costs, supported by a specialized international network with sales in over 110 countries. SQM's development strategy aims to maintain and strengthen the Company's position in each of its businesses.

The leadership strategy is based on the Company's competitive advantages and on the sustainable growth of the different markets in which it participates. SQM's main competitive advantages in its different businesses include:

- Low production costs based on vast and high quality natural resources;
- Know-how and its own technological developments in its various production processes;
- Logistics infrastructure and high production levels that allow SQM to have low distribution costs;
- High market share in all its core products;
- International sales network with offices in 20 countries and sales in over 110 countries;
- Synergies from the production of multiple products that are obtained from the same two natural resources;
- Continuous new product development according to the specific needs of its different customers;
- Conservative and solid financial position.

For further information, contact:

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Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This news release contains “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements can be identified by words such as: “anticipate,” “plan,” “believe,” “estimate,” “expect,” “strategy,” “should,” “will” and similar references to future periods. Examples of forward-looking statements include, among others, statements we make concerning the Company’s business outlook, future economic performance, anticipated profitability, revenues, expenses, or other financial items, anticipated cost synergies and product or service line growth.

Forward-looking statements are neither historical facts nor assurances of future performance. Instead, they are estimates that reflect the best judgment of SQM management based on currently available information. Because forward-looking statements relate to the future, they involve a number of risks, uncertainties and other factors that are outside of our control and could cause actual results to differ materially from those stated in such statements. Therefore, you should not rely on any of these forward-looking statements. Readers are referred to the documents filed by SQM with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission, specifically the most recent annual report on Form 20-F, which identifies important risk factors that could cause actual results to differ from those contained in the forward-looking statements. All forward-looking statements are based on information available to SQM on the date hereof and SQM assumes no obligation to update such statements, whether as a result of new information, future developments or otherwise.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

CHEMICAL AND MINING COMPANY OF CHILE INC.
(Registrant)

Date: March 2, 2017 /s/ Ricardo Ramos
By: Ricardo Ramos
CFO & Vice-President of Development

Persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained SEC 1815 (04-09) in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays currently valid OMB control number.