

# BOLIVIA

## PANDO DEPARTMENT

GENERAL DATA - DESCRIPTION - ECONOMY.

### **GENERAL DATA OF PANDO DEPARTMENT**

**Capital:** City of Cobija (Nicolás Suárez province), founded on September 29, 1945, by Lt. Col. Germán Buch. Height: 280 meters above sea level.

**Area:** 63,827 km<sup>2</sup> (5.8% the total territory of Bolivia).

**Population:** 110,436 inhabitants (Census 2012).

**Population density (inhabitants / km<sup>2</sup>):** 1.73 (Census 2012).

**Average annual growth rate of population (2001-2012):** 6.63% (Census 2012).

**Geographical coordinates:** 11° 05' S - 68° 52' O.

**Languages:** Spanish.



## DEPARTMENT OF PANDO IS DIVIDED INTO 5 PROVINCES

Nº	Province	Capital	Area	Population
1	Abuná	Santa Rosa de Abuná	7,468 km <sup>2</sup> (11.70%)	3.1%
2	Federico Román	Fortaleza	13,200 km <sup>2</sup> (20.68%)	4.5%
3	Madre de Dios	Puerto Gonzalo Moreno	10,879 km <sup>2</sup> (17.04%)	16.8%
4	Manuripi	Puerto Rico	22,461 km <sup>2</sup> (35.19%)	14.2%
5	Nicolás Suárez	Cobija	9,819 km <sup>2</sup> (15.38%)	61.4%



## **DESCRIPTION OF PANDO DEPARTMENT**

Although Pando is rich in natural resources, the poverty level of its inhabitants is high, due largely to a lack of roads effectively linking the province to the rest of the country and the presence of tropical diseases typical of life in the Amazonian rain forest. The main economic activities are agriculture, timber and cattle.

At an altitude of 280 meters above sea level in the northwestern jungle region, Pando is located in the rainiest part of Bolivia. Pando also has a hot climate, with temperatures commonly above 26 degrees Celsius.

Pando is the least populous department in Bolivia, the most tropical (lying closest to the Equator in the Amazonian Basin), and the most isolated, due to an absence of effective roads linking it to the rest of the country. It was organized at the beginning of the 20th century from what was left of the Acre Territory, lost to Brazil as a result of the so-called Acre War (1903). Its capital city of Cobija (the smallest of all the Bolivian departmental capitals) was named after the much-lamented Bolivian port of the same name on the Pacific Ocean, part of an area lost to Chile following the War of the Pacific.

Although backward and remote, Pando is densely forested and close to navigable waterways leading to the Amazon River and from there on to the Atlantic Ocean. For that reason, the department underwent a "rubber" boom in the late 1800s and early 1900s, along with the northern part of nearby Beni department. The "boom," however, turned into a collapse of the rubber industry when synthetic rubber was discovered, and Pando returned to a state of benign neglect thereafter.

Culturally, the Pandinos are considered part of the so-called Camba culture of the Bolivian lowlands. That is, in habits, attitudes, and speech, they are similar to the people of the country's other two tropical departments, Beni and Santa Cruz. Indeed, many of Pando's original settlers moved there from nearby Beni. It has been remarked that the Camba dialect, as well as the customs of the inhabitants of Bolivia's tropical lowlands, are almost purely Andalusian.

Despite their poverty, Pandinos share (along with Beni and Santa Cruz) a certain mistrust, and often contempt, of Andean culture, considering themselves to be lighter and more purely Spanish than the Quechua and Aymara-speaking populations of the highlands. Considerable resentment exists against the central government, which allegedly did very little to build roads or integrate Pando into the economy and political life of the country.

## ***ECONOMY OF PANDO DEPARTMENT***

Economy of Pando depends heavily on gold mining and collection and processing of almonds (Brazil nuts) most of which is sold to Brazil.

**Mining.** It has established the presence of gold, lithium, cinnabar, ilmenite, bauxite, columbite, precious and semiprecious stones.

**Agriculture.** In Pando department grow corn, cacao, coffee, cassava or manioc, rice, tropical fruits and vegetables.

**Livestock.** Livestock is an important activity for the inhabitants of region.

**Fisheries.** Pando's rivers are home to a variety of fish such as pacú, surubí, dorado, palometa, sábalo, bagre y blanquillo.

**Wood.** The forests of Pando department have many different types of trees such as chestnut tree (the tallest tree in the Amazonian flora), siringa or látex, matamatas, ochoó...

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