



# 2006 Minerals Yearbook

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RWANDA

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# THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF RWANDA

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In 2006, Rwanda's share of the world's tantalum mine production amounted to nearly 4%. The country also reexported ores of niobium (columbium) and tantalum, tin (cassiterite), and tungsten (wolframite) produced in Congo (Kinshasa). Rwanda was not a globally significant consumer of minerals. In 2005 (the latest year for which data were available), the mining and quarrying sector accounted for less than 1% of the gross domestic product (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2006, p. 16-17; Magyar, 2007).

## Production

In 2005, the production of tungsten increased by 255%; niobium (columbium) and tantalum, by 25%; and natural gas, by 21%. Cement production declined by 3% in 2005 compared with that of 2004; output increased by 43% from 2000 to 2005 (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2006, p. 26). Mineral production was estimated to have remained nearly unchanged in 2006 (table 1).

## Structure of the Mineral Industry

The state-owned Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI) produced cassiterite, columbite-tantalite, and wolframite; privately owned companies and artisanal miners also produced these mineral commodities. Cimenterie du Rwanda (Cimerwa), which was the country's only cement producer, was a joint venture between the Government and Chinese investors. In July 2006, the Government reportedly took full control of Cimerwa; the company was subsequently privatized in December (Office of the Prime Minister, 2006b; Mutesi, 2007).

## Commodity Review

### Metals

**Niobium (Columbium) and Tantalum.**—REDEMI operated columbite-tantalite processing facilities at Gatumba. In January 2006, the Cabinet authorized the drafting of a joint-venture agreement between REDEMI and Tantalite Ore Trading Company in the Rutongo Quarry Area (Office of the Prime Minister, 2006a).

**Tin.**—Metal Processing Association (MPA) and REDEMI operated cassiterite-processing facilities at Gisenyi and Rutongo, respectively. MPA also operated a tin smelter in Gisenyi, which was shut down in April 2006 because of the lack of a continuous power supply. Rwanda's exports of cassiterite were 3,835 metric tons (t) at a value of about \$15.6 million in 2006. Cassiterite accounted for 11% of total exports in 2006 compared with 14% in 2004 and 1% in 2001 (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2007; Kivu Resources Ltd., 2007).

**Tungsten.**—REDEMI operated a wolframite-processing facility at Nyakabingo. Exports of wolframite (tungsten ore) amounted to 1,436 t at a value of about \$9.39 million in 2006, or nearly 7% of total exports. From 2001 to 2004, wolframite accounted for less than 1% of national exports (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2007).

### Mineral Fuels

**Natural Gas.**—Rwanda produced small amounts of natural gas at Cape Rubona on the shore of Lake Kivu. The Government had a joint-venture agreement with Dane Associates Ltd. to build a new 35-megawatt power station that would use natural gas extracted from Lake Kivu. Dane expected to start producing natural gas in mid-2007; the project was estimated to cost \$78 million (Kakimba and Kigali, 2006).

## References Cited

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TABLE 1  
RWANDA: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity <sup>2</sup>		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006 <sup>c</sup>
Cement		100,568	110,104 <sup>r</sup>	104,288 <sup>r</sup>	101,127 <sup>r</sup>	100,000
Columbite-tantalite, ore and concentrate:						
Gross weight	kilograms	277,000 <sup>r</sup>	187,000 <sup>r</sup>	220,000 <sup>r</sup>	276,000 <sup>r</sup>	280,000
Nb content	do.	87,000 <sup>r</sup>	59,000 <sup>r</sup>	69,000 <sup>r</sup>	86,000 <sup>r</sup>	88,000
Ta content	do.	61,000 <sup>r</sup>	41,000 <sup>r</sup>	49,000 <sup>r</sup>	61,000 <sup>r</sup>	62,000
Gold, mine output, Au content	do.	10 <sup>e</sup>	2	-- <sup>e</sup>	-- <sup>e</sup>	--
Natural gas, gross	thousand cubic meters	900 <sup>r</sup>	300 <sup>r</sup>	140 <sup>r</sup>	170 <sup>r</sup>	170
Tin:						
Mine output, Sn content		197	192	550 <sup>r, e</sup>	700 <sup>e</sup>	700
Refined <sup>e</sup>		40	200	200	200	--
Tungsten, mine output, W content		234 <sup>r</sup>	86 <sup>r</sup>	113 <sup>r</sup>	401 <sup>r</sup>	400

<sup>c</sup>Estimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. <sup>r</sup>Revised. -- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Table includes data available through August 16, 2007.

<sup>2</sup>In addition to the commodities listed, sapphire and pozzolanic materials are also known to be produced, but information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

TABLE 2  
RWANDA: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2006

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity <sup>1</sup>
Cement	Cimenterie du Rwanda (Cimerwa)	Plant at Cyangugu	115,000.
Niobium (columbium) and tantalum	Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI)	Concentrator at Gatumba	20 Nb <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> and Ta <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> in concentrate. <sup>c</sup>
Sapphire	do.	Mines at Cyangugu	NA.
Tin	Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI)	Concentrator at Rutongo	370 in concentrate. <sup>c</sup>
Do.	Metal Processing Association	Concentrator at Gisenyi	NA.
Do.	do.	Smelter at Gisenyi	200.
Tungsten	Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI)	Concentrator at Nyakabingo	170 in concentrate. <sup>c</sup>

<sup>c</sup>Estimated. NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Abbreviations used in this table for commodities include the following: Nb<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>--niobium (columbium) oxide, and Ta<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>--tantalum oxide.