



2007 Minerals Yearbook

BURUNDI [ADVANCE RELEASE]

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF BURUNDI

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In 2007, Burundi's production of niobium (columbium) and tantalum ore and concentrate, gold, limestone, peat, sand and gravel, tin ore, and tungsten ore was not significant in global terms. Burundi was not a globally significant consumer of minerals. Manufacturing, mining, and energy accounted for 10% of Burundi's gross domestic product in 2006 (the latest year for which data were available) (Banque de la République du Burundi, 2007, p. 2).

Production

Gold accounted for 94% of the reported value of mineral production. In 2007, tin production declined by 96%; gold, 44%; and tungsten, 39%. Tantalum output increased by 219%, and niobium (columbium), by 213% (Damien Riragonya, Director General of Mines and Geology, Burundi Ministry of Energy and Mines, written commun., July 16, 2008).

Structure of the Mineral Industry

Privately owned Comptoir Minier des Exploitations du Burundi S.A. (COMEBU) and artisanal miners produced Burundi's niobium (columbium), tantalum, tin, and tungsten. State-owned Office National de la Tourbe (ONATOUR) was the country's only producer of peat.

Commodity Review

Metals

Cobalt, Copper, and Nickel.—In early 2007, Argosy Minerals Inc. of Australia initiated discussions with potential joint-venture partners to develop the Musongati nickel deposit in southeast Burundi. Resources at Musongati were nearly 185 million metric tons (Mt) that graded 1.31% nickel and 0.08% cobalt. In June, the Government cancelled Argosy's license for Musongati. The company filed complaints with the International Court of Arbitration in France in attempt to regain control of the deposit (Freed, 2007).

In February 2007, Dwyka Resources Ltd. of Australia signed an agreement with BHP Billiton Ltd. of Australia to explore at Dwyka's Muremera Nickel project in northeast Burundi. BHP Billiton could earn 50% interest in the project if it spent \$5.2 million on exploration at Muremera (Dwyka Resources Ltd., undated).

Gold.—International Gold Exploration AB (IGE) of Sweden was conducting a prefeasibility study of mining at the Butara gold deposit in western Burundi. IGE planned to complete the study in 2009 and hoped to identify resources of at least 31,000 kilograms of contained gold (International Gold Exploration AB, 2008, p. 35-37).

Niobium (Columbium) and Tantalum.—The Kabarore Mine produced niobium (columbium) and tantalum on an artisanal scale. In 2007, IGE entered into an option agreement to acquire 50% of the mining concession from COMEBU and to start large-scale mining. Resources at Kabarore were estimated to be between 1,400 and 2,700 metric tons (t) of contained tantalum pentoxide (Ta₂O₅). IGE was conducting a prefeasibility study of increasing production to about 110,000 kilograms per year of contained Ta₂O₅ starting in 2008 (International Gold Exploration AB, 2008, p. 37).

Vanadium.—IGE initiated a prefeasibility study of mining the Mukanda vanadium deposit in 2007. The company was expected to reach a decision about investment in a new mine in 2009. Resources at Mukanda amounted to 17 Mt that graded 0.64% vanadium; IGE hoped to identify additional contained vanadium resources of nearly 100,000 t. Based on favorable results from the study, the new open pit mine could produce 10,000 metric tons per year of vanadium pentoxide over a mine life of at least 20 years (International Gold Exploration AB, 2008, p. 35-36).

Mineral Fuels

Peat.—ONATOUR produced peat at Buyongwe, Gisozi, Gitanga, and Matana. The company's production doubled in 2006 because of upgrades to equipment (Banque de la République du Burundi, 2007, p. 24).

References Cited

- Banque de la République du Burundi, 2007, Evolution économique et financière du pays, in Rapport Annuel 2006: Bujumbura, Burundi, Banque de la République du Burundi, 30 p.
- Dwyka Resources Ltd., [undated], Adding value through diversification: West Perth, Australia, Dwyka Resources Ltd., 4 p.
- Freed, Jamie, 2007, Burundi moves in on nickel project: Business Day [Johannesburg, South Africa], June 22, 2 p.
- International Gold Exploration AB, 2008, Annual report 2007: Stockholm, Sweden, International Gold Exploration AB, 99 p.

TABLE 1
BURUNDI: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Gold, mine output, Au content	kilograms	2,855	3,229	3,905	4,313	2,423
Niobium (columbium) and tantalum, ore and concentrate:						
Gross weight	do.	24,382	23,356	42,592	16,177	51,550
Nb content	do.	4,300	4,598	8,384	3,200	10,000
Ta content	do.	5,769	5,038	9,188	2,868	9,140
Peat		4,580	4,643	4,871	9,762 ^r	9,800 ^c
Tin, mine output, Sn content		5	9	4	46	2
Tungsten, mine output, W content		13	8	94	238	144

^cEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. ^rRevised. do. Ditto.

¹Includes data available through July 16, 2008.

TABLE 2
BURUNDI: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2007

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Cement	Burundi Cement Plant ¹	Bujumbura	20,000.
Gold	Machanga Ltd.	NA	NA.
Do.	Burundi Mining Corp.	Masaka	18,300 ore processing.
Do.	kilograms do.	do.	33 gold.
Niobium (columbium) and tantalum	Comptoir Minier des Exploitations du Burundi S.A. (COMEBU) and artisanal miners	Kayanza and Kirundo Provinces	NA.
Peat	Office Nationale de la Tourbe (ONATOIR)	Buyongwe, Gisozi, Gitanga, and Matana	20,000.
Tin	Comptoir Minier des Exploitations du Burundi S.A. (COMEBU) and artisanal miners	Kayanza and Kirundo Provinces	NA.
Tungsten	do.	do.	NA.

Do., do. Ditto. NA Not available.

¹Has not operated since 1996.