

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE)

By George J. Coakley and Philip A. Szczesniak

The economy of the Republic of Congo [Congo (Brazzaville)] continued to be based largely on crude oil. The ongoing civil war significantly damaged the economy and the land-based infrastructure. Oil exports in 1999 declined to \$0.85 billion from \$1.3 billion in 1998 and accounted for 50% of the \$1.7 billion of the country's total exports. Congo (Brazzaville) is located in equatorial central Africa between the Democratic Republic of the Congo [Congo (Kinshasa)] and Gabon and has an area of 342,000 square kilometers. The area had a population of about 2.8 million in 1999 with an annual gross domestic product per capita of \$1,530 (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2000, World factbook—Republic of the Congo, accessed February 26, 2001, at URL <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cf.html>).

Elf Aquitaine Group of France was the major operator in the petroleum sector and had a 65% share in total crude oil production. Most of the national production of around 270,000 barrels per day of oil was from offshore wells. Elf continued development of the Pointe Noire Grands Fonds and the Moho fields in the Haute Mer area in which Chevron Corp. of the United States held an interest in both fields. A more detailed discussion of the most recent developments in the Congo (Brazzaville) oil industry is available through the U.S.

Department of Energy, U.S. Energy Information Administration website at URL <http://eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/congo.html>.

The country also has major reserves of natural gas; all gas output, however, was vented or flared owing to a lack of extraction and distribution infrastructure. Minor amounts of cement, gold, and lime were also produced (table 1). Significant resources of magnesium at Kouilou were being evaluated for development by Magnesium Alloy Corp. of Canada (Magnesium Alloy Corp., [undated], Magnesium Alloy Corp., accessed December 30, 2000, via URL <http://www.magnesiumalloy.ca/project/index.html>).

For more extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Congo (Brazzaville), see the 1998 Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Mineral Industries of Africa and the Middle East.

Major Source of Information

Ministère des Hydrocarbures et des Mines
Service des Mines et de la Géologie
B.P. 2124
Brazzaville, Republic of Congo
Telephone: (242) 83 58 73
Fax: (242) 83 62 43

TABLE 1
CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE): PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES 1/ 2/

Commodity 3/		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Cement, hydraulic e/	thousand metric tons	96	50	--	10	10
Gold, mine output, Au content e/	kilograms	10	10	10	10	10
Lime e/	metric tons	390	390	390	390	390
Liquid petroleum gas e/	thousand 42-gallon barrels	--	3,650	4,380 4/	4,380	4,380
Petroleum, crude	do.	63,875	80,300	98,550	98,600 e/	98,600 e/

e/ Estimated. -- Zero.

1/ Includes data available through December 2000.

2/ Estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

3/ Natural gas is also produced, but it is vented or flared.

4/ Reported figure.