



# 2007 Minerals Yearbook

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**RWANDA [ADVANCE RELEASE]**

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# THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF RWANDA

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In 2007, Rwanda's share of the world's tantalum mine production amounted to about 4%. Rwanda was not a globally significant consumer of minerals. In 2007, the mining and quarrying sector accounted for less than 0.8% of the gross domestic product (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2008, p. 25-26; Papp, 2008).

## Production

In 2007, tungsten mine production increased by 87%, tantalum, 32%; niobium (columbium), 29%; and tin, 19%. Cement output was nearly unchanged in 2007. The production of natural gas and refined tin ceased in 2006 (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2008, p. 31, 33).

## Structure of the Mineral Industry

The state-owned Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI) produced columbite-tantalite, cassiterite (tin ore), and wolframite (tungsten ore); privately owned companies and artisanal miners also produced these mineral commodities. The privately owned Cimenterie du Rwanda (Cimerwa) was the country's only cement producer.

## Commodity Review

### Metals

**Gold.**—TransAfrika Resources Ltd. of South Africa held concessions near Byumba in north central Rwanda and in the southwest near Cyangugu. The company planned to conduct drilling at its properties between June and October 2009 (TransAfrika Resources Ltd., 2008).

**Niobium (Columbium), Tantalum, Tin, and Tungsten.**—Rwanda's exports of niobium (columbium), tantalum, tin, and tungsten increased in early 2007 because of higher prices. Tin exports were \$6.76 million in the first four months of 2007 compared with \$3.39 million in 2006. During the same period, tungsten exports increased to \$7.66 million from \$2.27 million. The Government planned to promote smelting cassiterite (tin ore), columbite-tantalite, and wolframite (tungsten ore) prior to export. Production of these minerals was inhibited by a lack of modern mining equipment and skilled workers (Majyambere, 2007).

### Industrial Minerals

**Cement.**—Rwanda experienced cement shortages in mid-2007. Domestic cement demand amounted to about 200,000 metric tons per year (t/yr), which was twice as much as Cimerwa's annual production. Cimerwa planned to build a new plant with a capacity of about 450,000 t/yr in 2008 (Mutesi, 2007).

### Mineral Fuels

**Natural Gas.**—Rwanda's production of natural gas at Cape Rubona on the shore of Lake Kivu shut down in 2006 because of aging equipment. W+S Beteiligungs AG of Germany and Rwanda Investment Group (RIG) planned to build new power stations that would use natural gas from Lake Kivu. The former company planned an initial plant with a capacity of 10 megawatts (MW); capacity was expected to reach 60 MW by 2011. RIG planned an initial capacity of 4 MW with an expansion to 50 MW (Muliisa, 2007).

**Petroleum.**—In November 2007, Vangold Resources Ltd. of Canada announced plans to explore for crude petroleum in the East Kivu Graben Basin. The initial airborne survey was expected to be completed in 18 months (Vangold Resources Ltd., 2007).

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

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity <sup>2</sup>		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Cement		105,105 <sup>r</sup>	104,288	101,128 <sup>r</sup>	102,589 <sup>r</sup>	103,034
Columbite-tantalite, ore and concentrate:						
Gross weight	kilograms	187,000	220,000	276,000	188,000 <sup>r</sup>	242,000
Nb content	do.	61,000 <sup>r</sup>	72,000 <sup>r</sup>	91,000 <sup>r</sup>	62,000 <sup>r</sup>	80,000
Ta content	do.	38,000 <sup>r</sup>	45,000 <sup>r</sup>	57,000 <sup>r</sup>	38,000 <sup>r</sup>	50,000
Gold, mine output, Au content	do.	2	-- <sup>e</sup>	-- <sup>e</sup>	-- <sup>e</sup>	-- <sup>e</sup>
Natural gas, gross	thousand cubic meters	300	140	170	-- <sup>r</sup>	--
Tin:						
Mine output:						
Gross weight		1,458	3,554	4,532	3,835	4,566
Sn content		990 <sup>r</sup>	2,400 <sup>r</sup>	3,100 <sup>r</sup>	2,600 <sup>r</sup>	3,100
Refined <sup>e</sup>		200	200	200 <sup>r</sup>	50 <sup>r</sup>	--
Tungsten, mine output:						
Gross weight		120	157	557	1,436 <sup>r</sup>	2,686
W content		69 <sup>r</sup>	90 <sup>r</sup>	318 <sup>r</sup>	820 <sup>r</sup>	1,534

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

<sup>1</sup>Includes data available through October 6, 2008.

<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 2007

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Cement	Cimenterie du Rwanda (Cimerwa)	Plant at Cyangugu	115,000.
Niobium (columbium) and tantalum	Metal Processing Association, 51%, and Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI), 49%	Concentrator at Gatumba	20 Nb <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> and Ta <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> in concentrate. <sup>e</sup>
Sapphire	Artisanal miners	Mines at Cyangugu	NA.
Tin	Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI)	Concentrator at Rutongo	370 in concentrate. <sup>e</sup>
Do.	Metal Processing Association	Concentrator at Gisenyi	NA.
Do.	do.	Smelter at Gisnyi	200.
Tungsten	Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI)	Concentrator at Nyakabingo	170 in concentrate. <sup>e</sup>

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. Do., do. Ditto. 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.