

2008 Minerals Yearbook

DJIBOUTI

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF DJIBOUTI

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In 2008, the small East African country of Djibouti was a producer of salt and such construction materials as basalt (table 1). Djibouti's production and consumption of minerals were not globally significant.

Production

Salt production started on a semi-industrial scale at Lake Assal in 1998. Production increased from 2004 to 2008 because of the resumption of demand from Ethiopia. Production had nearly ceased in 2004 because of a 53% tariff that Ethiopia imposed in October 2003 on salt imports from Djibouti.

Structure of the Mineral Industry

Salt production at Lake Assal was carried out by small privately owned companies. Small amounts of salt were also produced at Doraleh by artisanal miners.

Commodity Review

Metals

Gold.—In July 2008, JB Djibouti Mining Ltd. (a subsidiary of JB Group of India) was awarded exploration licenses for four sites in the Dikhil Region in southern Djibouti. JB Djibouti Mining would have exploration rights at the Asaleyta, the Garrabayis, the Hesdaba, and the V.GPS41 properties for 3 years (Indian Ocean Newsletter, 2008a).

Industrial Minerals

Salt.—Djibouti's salt production was limited by reliance on the Ethiopian market, the absence of reliable water and energy supplies, and an inadequate regulatory framework. Other constraints included poor working conditions and a lack of iodization machinery.

In March 2008, the Government approved a plan by Salt Investment SA [a joint venture of Emerging Capital Partners LLC (ECP) of the United States, Hardtechnologies Group of Spain, and Société d'Exploitation du Lac Assal] to mine salt on the shore of Lake Assal. In July, ECP purchased a controlling share in Salt Investment. Production by Salt Investment was expected to reach 4 million metric tons by 2012 compared with less than 90,000 metric tons in 2008 (Emerging Capital Partners LLC, 2008; Indian Ocean Newsletter, 2008b).

References Cited

Emerging Capital Partners LLC, 2008, Investment in Salt Investment:
Washington, DC, Emerging Capital Partners LLC press release, July 16, 2 p.
Indian Ocean Newsletter, 2008a, Djibouti—JB Djibouti Mining: Indian Ocean Newsletter, no. 1243, July 26, p. 5.

Indian Ocean Newsletter, 2008b, Djibouti—Salt investment: Indian Ocean Newsletter, no. 1235, March 29, p. 5.

 ${\bf TABLE~1} \\ {\bf DJIBOUTI: ESTIMATED~PRODUCTION~OF~MINERAL~COMMODITIES^{1,2}} \\$

(Metric tons)

Commodity ³	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Salt:					
Industrial production	17,745 4	45,000 ^r	70,000 ^r	90,000 ^r	110,000
Artisanal production	8,400	8,400	8,400	8,400	8,400
Total	26,000	53,000 r	78,000 ^r	98,000 ^r	118,000

rRevised

DJIBOUTI—2008

¹Estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Table includes data available through August 28, 2009.

³In addition to the commodity listed, crude construction materials, including basalt, are produced, but available information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

⁴Reported figure.

 $\label{eq:table 2} \textbf{DJIBOUTI: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2008}$

(Metric tons)

	Commodity	Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ^{e, 1}
Salt		Salt Investment SA	Mines at Lake Assal	86,000
Do.		Société Sel de Djibouti	do.	52,000
Do.		Société du Lac	do.	42,000
Do.		Société Moussa Ali	do.	34,000
Do.		Société Saline de Djibouti	do.	21,000
Do.		Société Mont Goda	do.	18,000
Do.		Société Mahad	do.	13,000
Do.		Société Kalou	do.	11,000
Do.		Société Mont Garbi	do.	4,000
Do.		Artisanal miners	Mines at Doraleh	8,400

^eEstimated. Do., do. Ditto.

¹Capacity estimate based on maximum production in 1 year between 1999 and 2004 for all producers except for Salt Investments SA and artisanal miners.