

## THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF

# THE GAMBIA

By Philip M. Mobbs

The Gambian economy was dominated by agriculture and tourism. The mineral industry was a minor component of the national economy, with production of clays for brick, laterite, sand and gravel, and silica sand.

In 1997, Interbulk of Switzerland, a subsidiary of the Italcementi Group of Italy, completed a cement import terminal in Banjul. In 1998, the Government received the results of a Chinese mineral survey that documented a deposit of 40 million metric tons of silica sand, in addition to known resources of 660,700 metric tons (t) of ilmenite and 135,200 t of zircon, at a 1% cutoff grade (Carnegie Minerals NL, April 7, 1999, Large licence, measured resources plus exploration potential in The Gambia, accessed April 21, 1999, at URL [http://www.ozemail.com.au/~harburn/ann07\\_04.htm](http://www.ozemail.com.au/~harburn/ann07_04.htm)).

During 1998, West Oil NL of Australia and Fusion Investments Ltd. of the United Kingdom signed a technical cooperation agreement to evaluate The Gambia's offshore

prospects. In June, the joint venture of Planet Oil Holdings Ltd. of the United Kingdom (90%) and Balmain Resources Pty. Ltd. of Australia (10%) acquired a 1-year production-sharing contract for offshore block PPL-98E. Planet Oil was subsequently acquired by Hardman Resources NL of Australia.

For more extensive coverage of the mineral industry of The Gambia, see the 1991 Minerals Yearbook, Volume III, Mineral Industries of Africa, page 227.

### Major Source of Information

The Geological Unit  
Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources  
7 Kairaba Ave.  
K S M D  
Banjul  
The Gambia

TABLE 1  
THE GAMBIA: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES 1/ 2/

(Metric tons)

Commodity	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Clay	1,000 e/	1,000 e/	1,000	1,200	1,200
Silica sand	450,000 e/	450,000 e/	452,400	302,600	269,773

e/ Estimated.

1/ Includes data available through August 3, 1999.

2/ In addition to the commodities listed, a variety of construction materials (laterite, sand, and shell) are produced; but information is inadequate to make estimates of output.