

2006 Minerals Yearbook

RWANDA

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF RWANDA

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In 2006, Rwanda's share of the world's tantalum mine production amounted to nearly 4%. The country also reexported ores of niobium (columbium) and tantalum, tin (cassiterite), and tungsten (wolframite) produced in Congo (Kinshasa). Rwanda was not a globally significant consumer of minerals. In 2005 (the latest year for which data were available), the mining and quarrying sector accounted for less than 1% of the gross domestic product (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2006, p. 16-17; Magyar, 2007).

Production

In 2005, the production of tungsten increased by 255%; niobium (columbium) and tantalum, by 25%; and natural gas, by 21%. Cement production declined by 3% in 2005 compared with that of 2004; output increased by 43% from 2000 to 2005 (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2006, p. 26). Mineral production was estimated to have remained nearly unchanged in 2006 (table 1).

Structure of the Mineral Industry

The state-owned Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI) produced cassiterite, columbite-tantalite, and wolframite; privately owned companies and artisanal miners also produced these mineral commodities. Cimenterie du Rwanda (Cimerwa), which was the country's only cement producer, was a joint venture between the Government and Chinese investors. In July 2006, the Government reportedly took full control of Cimerwa; the company was subsequently privatized in December (Office of the Prime Minister, 2006b; Mutesi, 2007).

Commodity Review

Metals

Niobium (Columbium) and Tantalum.—REDEMI operated columbite-tantalite processing facilities at Gatumba. In January 2006, the Cabinet authorized the drafting of a joint-venture agreement between REDEMI and Tantalite Ore Trading Company in the Rutongo Quarry Area (Office of the Prime Minister, 2006a).

Tin.—Metal Processing Association (MPA) and REDEMI operated cassiterite-processing facilites at Gisenyi and Rutongo, respectively. MPA also operated a tin smelter in Gisenyi, which was shut down in April 2006 because of the lack of a continuous power supply. Rwanda's exports of cassiterite were 3,835 metric tons (t) at a value of about \$15.6 million in 2006. Cassiterite accounted for 11% of total exports in 2006 compared with 14% in 2004 and 1% in 2001 (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2007; Kivu Resources Ltd., 2007).

Tungsten.—REDEMI operated a wolframite-processing facility at Nyakabingo. Exports of wolframite (tungsten ore) amounted to 1,436 t at a value of about \$9.39 million in 2006, or nearly 7% of total exports. From 2001 to 2004, wolframite accounted for less than 1% of national exports (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, 2007).

Mineral Fuels

Natural Gas.—Rwanda produced small amounts of natural gas at Cape Rubona on the shore of Lake Kivu. The Government had a joint-venture agreement with Dane Associates Ltd. to build a new 35-megawatt power station that would use natural gas extracted from Lake Kivu. Dane expected to start producing natural gas in mid-2007; the project was estimated to cost \$78 million (Kakimba and Kigali, 2006).

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 ${\bf TABLE~1} \\ {\bf RWANDA: PRODUCTION~OF~MINERAL~COMMODITIES}^1 \\$

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity ²		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006 ^e
Cement		100,568	110,104 ^r	104,288 ^r	101,127 ^r	100,000
Columbite-tantalite, ore and concentra	te:					
Gross weight	kilograms	277,000 ^r	187,000 ^r	220,000 ^r	276,000 r	280,000
Nb content	do.	87,000 ^r	59,000 ^r	69,000 ^r	86,000 ^r	88,000
Ta content	do.	61,000 ^r	41,000 ^r	49,000 ^r	61,000 ^r	62,000
Gold, mine output, Au content	do.	10 ^e	2	e	e	
Natural gas, gross	thousand cubic meters	900 ^r	300 ^r	140 ^r	170 ^r	170
Tin:						
Mine output, Sn content	-	197	192	550 r, e	700 ^e	700
Refined ^e		40	200	200	200	
Tungsten, mine output, W content		234 ^r	86 ^r	113 ^r	401 ^r	400

^eEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. ^rRevised. -- Zero.

 ${\it TABLE~2} \\ {\it RWANDA: STRUCTURE~OF~THE~MINERAL~INDUSTRY~IN~2006} \\$

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ¹
Cement	Cimenterie du Rwanda (Cimerwa)	Plant at Cyangugu	115,000.
Niobium (columbium) and	Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement	Concentrator at Gatumba	20 Nb ₂ O ₅ and Ta ₂ O ₅ in
tantalum	des Mines (REDEMI)		concentrate.e
Sapphire	do.	Mines at Cyangugu	NA.
Tin	do.	Concentrator at Rutongo	370 in concentrate. ^e
Do.	Metal Processing Association	Concentrator at Gisenyi	NA.
Do.	do.	Smelter at Gisenyi	200.
Tungsten	Régie d'Exploitation et de Développement des Mines (REDEMI)	Concentrator at Nyakabingo	170 in concentrate. ^e

^eEstimated. NA Not available.

¹Table includes data available through August 16, 2007.

²In 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.

¹Abbreviations used in this table for commodities include the following: Nb₂O₅--niobium (columbium) oxide, and Ta₂O₅--tantalum oxide.