



2007 Minerals Yearbook

DJIBOUTI

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF DJIBOUTI

By Thomas R. Yager

In 2007, 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; Djibouti replaced Eritrea as Ethiopia's source of salt imports because of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Output declined sharply in 2004 because of a 53% tariff that Ethiopia imposed in October 2003 on salt imports from Djibouti. In 2005 and 2006, production recovered because of the resumption of exports to Ethiopia.

Structure of the Mineral Industry

Salt production at Lake Assal was carried out by small privately owned companies. From 1999 to 2004 (the latest year for which data were available), Société du Lac, Société Moussa Ali, Société Saline de Djibouti, and Société Sel de Djibouti accounted for 76% of semi-industrial production. At Doraleh, artisanal miners produced about 8,400 metric tons per year (t/yr) of salt (table 2; Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et de la Planification, undated).

Commodity Review

Industrial Minerals

Cement.—Star Cement LLC (a subsidiary of Eta-Ascon Star Group of the United Arab Emirates) planned to build a new

cement plant at Ali Sabieh in southern Djibouti. The company expected to complete the plant by December 2008 (Indian Ocean Newsletter, 2007).

Salt.—Domestic salt consumption amounted to between 10,000 and 12,000 t/yr; most of Djibouti's salt production was exported to Ethiopia. In July 2006, Société d'Exploitation du Lac Assal (SELAC) was awarded an exclusive 50-year concession to mine salt on the shore of Lake Assal. SELAC was negotiating with joint-venture partners to obtain financing to mine and market the salt and build related infrastructure (Indian Ocean Newsletter, 2006; Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et de la Planification, undated).

References Cited

Indian Ocean Newsletter, 2006, Assault on salt: Indian Ocean Newsletter, no. 1198, October 14, p. 2.

Indian Ocean Newsletter, 2007, Star Cement: Indian Ocean Newsletter, no. 1226, November 11, p. 2.

Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et de la Planification, [undated], Bulletin d'information économique—4ème trimestre 2004—L'extraction du sel: Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et de la Planification. (Accessed May 10, 2007, at http://www.ministere-finances.dj/EF/Economie_Finances/BIE04/sel04_4.htm.)

TABLE 1
DJIBOUTI: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Salt					
Industrial producers	128,494	17,745	70,000 ^e	130,000 ^e	130,000 ^e
Artisanal producers ^c	8,400	8,400	8,400	8,400	8,400
Total ^c	137,000	26,000	78,000	138,000	138,000

^eEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

¹Includes data available through May 30, 2008.

TABLE 2
DJIBOUTI: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2007

(Metric tons)

Commodity	Major operating companies ¹	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ^e
Salt	Société Sel de Djibouti	Mines at Lake Assal	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; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. Do., do. Ditto.

¹Capacity for producers at Lake Assal based on maximum production in 1 year between 1999 and 2004.