



# 2010 Minerals Yearbook

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**DJIBOUTI [ADVANCE RELEASE]**

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# THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF DJIBOUTI

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In 2010, the small East African country of Djibouti was a producer of perlite, 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 by an estimated 14% in 2010. Perlite mining started in 2009.

## Structure of the Mineral Industry

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

## Commodity Review

### *Metals*

**Gold.**—In October 2010, Stratex International plc signed an agreement with Thani Ashanti Alliance Ltd. [a joint venture of AngloGold Ashanti Ltd. of South Africa (50%) and Thani Dubai Mining Ltd. of the United Arab Emirates (50%)] to explore for gold at the Afar project in Djibouti and eastern Ethiopia. Stratex held six exclusive exploration licenses in western Djibouti that were part of the Afar project (Stratex International plc, 2010).

### *Industrial Minerals*

**Salt.**—Djibouti's salt production was limited by reliance on the Ethiopian market, the absence of reliable water and energy

supplies, and the regulatory framework. Other constraints included poor working conditions and a lack of iodization machinery (Geographic Environmental Solutions, 2008, p. 12).

Société d'Exploitation du Lac Assal's salt mining operation on the shore of Lake Assal had a capacity of 86,000 metric tons per year. Salt Investment SAZF [a joint venture of Emerging Capital Partners LLC (ECP) of the United States, Hardtechnologies Group S.L. of Spain, and Société d'Exploitation du Lac Assal] had planned to complete a new salt mining operation and processing plant at Lake Assal with a capacity of 4 million metric tons per year by June 2010 (Geographic Environmental Solutions, 2008, p. 12; Feytis, 2009). In October, however, the project was 6 months behind schedule and construction was on hold because the salt lacked the consistent chemical composition necessary for large-scale mining. Salt Investment suspended work on the project indefinitely in December (Feytis, 2010).

## References Cited

- Feytis, Alexandra, 2009, Djibouti's salt emergence: *Industrial Minerals*, no. 504, September, p. 15.
- Feytis, Alexandra, 2010, Salt investment puts 4m. tpa salt project on hold in Djibouti: *Industrial Minerals*, December 8. (Accessed December 8, 2010, at <http://www.indmin.com/2728772/salt-investment-puts-4m-tpa-salt-project-on-hold-in-Djibouti.html>.)
- Geographic Environmental Solutions, 2008, Salt Investment SAZF—Lake Assal salt project, Djibouti—Environmental impact statement: Johannesburg, South Africa, Geographic Environmental Solutions, 108 p.
- Stratex International plc, 2010, Joint venture with Thani Ashanti on Afar epithermal project and private placement at premium: London, United Kingdom, Stratex International plc press release, October 12, 6 p.

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

(Metric tons)

Commodity <sup>2</sup>	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 <sup>e</sup>
Salt:					
Industrial production	NA <sup>r</sup>	NA <sup>r</sup>	NA <sup>r</sup>	NA <sup>r</sup>	NA
Artisanal production	NA <sup>r</sup>	NA <sup>r</sup>	NA <sup>r</sup>	NA <sup>r</sup>	NA
Total	70,000 <sup>r</sup>	80,000 <sup>r</sup>	90,000 <sup>r</sup>	70,000 <sup>r</sup>	80,000

<sup>e</sup>Estimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown. <sup>r</sup>Revised. NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Table includes data available through August 24, 2011.

<sup>2</sup>In addition to the commodity listed, perlite and crude construction materials, including basalt, are produced, but available information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

TABLE 2  
DJIBOUTI: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2010

(Metric tons)

Commodity	Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity <sup>e, 1</sup>
Perlite	JB Mining Djibouti Ltd.	Mine at Ageralayta	NA
Salt	Société d'Exploitation du Lac Assal	Mines at Lake Assal	86,000
do.	Société Sel de Djibouti	do.	52,000
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

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. do. Ditto. NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Capacity estimate based on maximum production in 1 year between 1999 and 2004 for all producers except Société d'Exploitation du Lac Assal and artisanal miners.