



2007 Minerals Yearbook

LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE [ADVANCE RELEASE]

THE MINERAL INDUSTRIES OF LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE

By Omayra Bermúdez-Lugo

LIBERIA

Mineral commodities produced in Liberia were limited to cement, crushed stone, diamond, gold, and sand. The Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy was the Government agency responsible for the administration of the mining sector. In September 2007, the country was accepted as a candidate to join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which is a voluntary global compact aimed at strengthening governance by improving transparency and accountability in the extractive industry sector. Employment in the mining sector increased to 3,290 in 2007 from 918 in 2005 (Central Bank of Liberia, 2008, p. 32; Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, 2008).

In April 2007, the renegotiated mining development agreement between ArcelorMittal and the Government to mine the western iron ore deposits in Nimba County was ratified by the National Assembly. ArcelorMittal had entered into a mining development agreement with the Government in 2005 for the mining of about 1 billion metric tons of iron ore reserves in Nimba County. The contract, which was for 25 years, included the rehabilitation of Buchanan Port and the 267-kilometer rail line to the old Yekepa Mine, which was closed during the 1990s because of the civil war (Mining Journal, 2007; Reuters, 2007).

Production

Cement production increased by 16% to 157,200 metric tons (t) from a revised 135,486 t in 2006. The increase in cement output was a result of higher domestic consumption owing to an increase in construction activities that were part of the country's reconstruction efforts following 14 years of civil war. Diamond production was resumed in April 2007 after the United Nations Security Council lifted the more than 3 year-old ban on diamond imports from the country (Central Bank of Liberia, 2008, p. 29-32; United Nations Security Council, 2008). Data on mineral production are in table 1.

More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Liberia can be found in the 2005 and 2006 U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Africa and the Middle East, which are available on the World Wide Web at <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country>.

References Cited

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SIERRA LEONE

Diamond was the most significant mineral commodity to the economy of Sierra Leone. Other mineral commodities produced in the country included bauxite, cement, gold, ilmenite, and rutile. In the past, the mineral industry had generated from 15% to 18% of the country's gross domestic product and 90% of its export earnings and employed about 250,000 people before the forces of the Revolutionary United Front disrupted diamond mining operations in 1992. In 2007, the country continued to recover from years of civil unrest (U.S. Department of State, 2009).

The Ministry of Mineral Resources was responsible for the administration of the mineral industry, which included the issuance of mining licenses, field monitoring, enforcement of mining regulations, and maintenance of mining records. The Gold and Diamond Department (GDD) of the National Revenue Authority was responsible for implementing Sierra Leone's participation in and compliance with the international diamond trade control requirements of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. The GDD valued and levied export taxes on all diamond that was officially exported from Sierra Leone. The Mines Department monitored and regulated the mining and marketing of precious minerals, and the Geological Survey Division issued prospecting licenses and monitored the activities of exploration companies across the country. Both of these departments were under the Ministry of Mineral Resources.

Production

In 2007, gold production increased by 199% to 212 kilograms (kg) from 71 kg in 2006; rutile production increased by 14% to 82,810 t; ilmenite production, by 12.2% to 15,750 t; and bauxite production, by 9% to 1.17 million metric tons. The Bank of Sierra Leone attributed the increase in gold production to the incentive created by the marked increase in the world market price of gold and to the expansion of alluvial gold mining activities into new areas of the country (Bank of Sierra Leone, 2008, p. 6-10).

Structure of the Mineral Industry

Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities. More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Sierra Leone can

be found in the 2005 and 2006 U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Africa and the Middle East, which are available on the World Wide Web at <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country>.

U.S. Department of State, 2009, Sierra Leone: U.S. Department of State background note, April. (Accessed May 6, 2009, at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm>.)

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Bank of Sierra Leone, 2008, Annual report and statement of accounts for the year ended December 31, 2007: Freetown, Sierra Leone, Bank of Sierra Leone, 106 p.

TABLE 1
LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country and commodity	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
LIBERIA					
Cement, hydraulic	25,000 ^c	121,059	143,847	135,486 ^r	157,200 ^p
Diamond	40,000 ^e	10,000 ^e	NA ²	NA ²	21,700 ³
Gold ^e	20	110 ^{4,5}	27	9 ^r	311
Sand	NA	213,892 ⁵	222,274 ⁵	220,000 ^e	220,000 ^e
Stone, crushed	NA	NA	5,964 ⁵	6,000 ^e	6,000 ^e
SIERRA LEONE					
Bauxite	thousand metric tons	--	--	--	1,169
Cement		169,109	180,460	172,120	235,830
Diamond ⁶	carats	506,819 ⁷	691,757 ³	668,710 ³	604,700 ³
Gold	kilograms	6	27	53	212
Gypsum ^e		4,000	-- ⁴	-- ⁴	--
Ilmenite		--	--	--	13,819
Rutile		--	--	--	73,802
Salt		1,005	827	--	--

^cEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. ^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. NA Not available. -- Zero.

¹Table includes data available through March 31, 2009.

²Exports of diamond under United Nations Security Council sanctions.

³Source: Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

⁴Reported figure.

⁵Source: Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy of Liberia.

⁶About 60% gem quality and 40% industrial quality.

⁷Exports.

TABLE 2
SIERRA LEONE: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2007

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Bauxite	Sierra Mineral Holdings I Ltd. (Titanium Resources Group Ltd.)	SML Mine, 150 kilometers southeast of Freetown	1,200
Cement	Sierra Leone Cement Corp. Ltd.	Freetown plant	NA
Diamond	carats Koidu Holdings S.A. (Energem Resources Inc., 40%, and BSG Resources Ltd., 25%)	Two kimberlite pipes, Koidu	120
Ilmenite	Sierra Rutile Ltd. (Titanium Field Resources Ltd. and U.S. Titanium, LLC)	Sierra Rutile Mine	15
Titanium, rutile concentrate	do.	do.	100

do. Ditto. NA Not available.