

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF SENEGAL, THE GAMBIA, AND GUINEA-BISSEAU

By Philip M. Mobbs¹

Senegal

Production of phosphate rock, fertilizers, and phosphoric acid continued to dominate the mineral industry of Senegal. Minerals accounted for almost 20% of the country's export earnings and approximately 2% of the nation's gross domestic product. The lack of sufficient infrastructure and significant foreign investment continued to hamper mineral sector development.

The Government was actively promoting the development of its mineral resources as a viable international investment opportunity.² Mining legislation in Senegal consisted of the Mining Code, Law No. 88-06, adopted on August 26, 1988. The Petroleum Code was based on Law No. 86-13 of April 14, 1986, with a revision in 1988. The investment code, Law No. 87-25 of July 30, 1987, augmented the existing mining legislation. During December 1995, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau ratified the 1993 maritime border agreement, enabling offshore petroleum exploration to proceed.

An unreported amount of gold, estimated by the Government at 550 kilograms per year, was produced in Senegal by artisanal miners. The Government was reviewing a number of exploration permit applications. The development of the Sabodala gold prospect was delayed during 1995 because of ownership changes of the joint-venture partners and a subsequent dispute over development rights. The dispute between Australia's Paget Mining Ltd. and La Source Compagnie Minière over their equity interest in Société Minérale Sabodala, the company that operated the gold concession, was clouded when the Government awarded a permit to develop surface oxide gold of the Sabodala exploration permit area to Eeximore of Senegal.

The Government was an equity partner in most current mining operations. Senegal's mineral industry was dominated by four principal companies. Compagnie Sénégalaise des Phosphates de Taïba (CSPT) mined phosphate 100 kilometers north east of Dakar. Société Sénégalaise des Phosphates des Thiès, operating in an area southwest of CSPT, produced aluminum phosphate, attapulgitite, and phosphate. Industries Chimiques du Sénégal (ICS) operated the Darou Khoudoss fertilizer complex with respective

production capacities of 950,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) of sulfuric acid and 370,000 t/yr of phosphoric acid. During the year, ICS's phosphoric acid production capacity was being increased. The nation's sole refinery, near Dakar, was operated by the Société Africaine de Raffinage, which was equity owned by various foreign petroleum products distributors and the Government. La Société des Pétroles du Sénégal (Petrosen) was the parastatal delegated with petroleum development and regulation. (*See table 1.*)

The Government had identified additional deposits of phosphate rock at Matam in northeastern Senegal. However, these deposits, with estimated reserves of 40 million metric tons, were expected to remain unexploited under current phosphate market conditions. Other mineral deposits identified by the Government included clays, copper, diamond, the Tamna Lake diatomite, the Faleme iron ore, peat, silica sands, dimension stone in the southeast, titanium-bearing sands along the coast, and uranium.

Hydrocarbon production in Senegal was negligible. Petrosen had interest in the Theis offshore block as well as interest in a joint venture with Tullow Oil of Ireland on the Sebikotane block. Pecten of the United States obtained exploration rights for an area offshore Senegal.

The Gambia

The Gambian economy was dominated by agriculture and tourism; there was no internationally significant mineral industry. Clays for bricks, laterite, sand and gravel, and cockle shells were exploited for domestic construction needs. Other identified mineral resources in the Gambia included glass sand deposits and titaniferous sands.

Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau had no significant mineral industry. The country's economy was dominated by agriculture with some small-scale mining to meet domestic construction needs. Resources of bauxite and phosphate exist in the country, but are of low grade.

In the minerals fuels sector, Monument Oil and Gas Plc. of

the United Kingdom and Sociedad Internacional Petrolera S.A. of Chile obtained rights to develop offshore Block 3.

¹Text prepared Aug. 1995 by Thomas Dolley, revised Aug. 1996 by Philip M. Mobbs.

²Republic of Senegal. Ministry of Energy, Mines and Industry. Mineral Resources Development Investment Opportunities. 1995. 35 pp.

Major Sources of Information

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The Ministry of Economic Planning and

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TABLE 1
SENEGAL: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES 1/

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity 2/		1991	1992	1993	1994	1995 e/
Cement, hydraulic	metric tons	503,317	601,071	589,820	590,000 e/	590,000
Clays, fuller's earth (attapulgitic)	do.	129,403	112,336	119,000	119,000 e/	120,000
Petroleum:						
Natural gas e/	thousand cubic meters	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000
Crude oil	thousand 42-gallon barrels	4	4	4	2 r/ e/	2
Refinery products	do.	5,690	4,700 r/	6,200 r/	6,200 r/ e/	2,500
Phosphate rock and related products:						
Calcium phosphate-based fertilizers		171	169	160	160 e/	160
Crude rock:						
Aluminum phosphate 3/		92	75	29	29	40
Calcium phosphate		1,741	2,284	1,667	1,587 r/	1,500
Phosphoric acid		302	288	274	274 e/	274
Salt	metric tons	102,000	110,000	117,400	117,000 e/	120,000

e/ Estimated. r/ Revised.

1/ Includes data available through Sept. 1996.

2/ In addition to the commodities listed, Senegal produced clays, sand and gravel, and stone for local construction purposes, limestone for cement, and artisanal gold. Information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output levels.

3/ Estimated data, based on aluminum phosphate clinker numbers reported by U.S. State Department, follows, in metric tons: 1991--66,000; 1992--54,000; 1993--21,000; 1994--no reported data; 1995-- no reported data. Clinker data were formerly carried in this table as aluminum phosphate, dehydrated.