



2013 Minerals Yearbook

BURUNDI

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF BURUNDI

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In 2013, Burundi was the world's seventh-ranked producer of tantalum; its share of global tantalum output was about 1%. The country also mined small amounts of gold, limestone, niobium (columbium), peat, sand and gravel, tin, and tungsten. Burundi was not a globally significant consumer of minerals. The manufacturing industry accounted for 11% of the gross domestic product in 2013, and the mining and quarrying industry, 0.6% (African Development Bank Group, 2014; Papp, 2015).

In October 2013, the Government passed the Mining Code of Burundi (Law No. 1/21 of October 15, 2013), which partially replaced the Mining and Petroleum Act of 1976 (Decree-Law No. 1/138 of July 17, 1976). The exploration for and mining of minerals and mineral fuels other than petroleum and natural gas were governed by the Mining Code of Burundi. At yearend, the natural gas and petroleum subsector still was governed by the Mining and Petroleum Act of 1976 (Karerwa, 2013).

The Mining Code set ad valorem royalty rates on mining companies with exploitation licenses at 7% for gemstones, 5% for precious metals, 4% for basic metals, and 2% for other minerals. Ad valorem royalty rates on quarries, artisanal miners, and authorized mineral traders were set at 3% for base metals, 2% for precious metals, 2% for gemstones, and 1.5% for other minerals (Karerwa, 2013).

The Mining Code required a simplified environmental impact study to be conducted for prospecting, exploration, artisanal mining, and quarrying licenses to be awarded and a full environmental impact study for exploitation licenses to be awarded. Companies holding exploitation licenses were also required to allow the Government to hold at least 10% ownership in their Burundian operations (Karerwa, 2013).

The Government attempted to formalize the artisanal mining sector by mandating in the Mining Code that all artisanal miners obtain a mining license. In March 2013, the Government also imposed a 2-month artisanal mining ban in an attempt to formalize the artisanal mining sector (United Nations Group of Experts, 2013, p. 35; U.S. Embassy, Bujumbura, Burundi, 2014).

In 2013, the Government was engaged in a pilot program to implement a system established by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to certify and trace domestically mined cassiterite, columbite-tantalite, gold, and wolframite because of the reported use of minerals that were mined in the Democratic Republic of the Congo [Congo (Kinshasa)] and transited through Burundi to fund military operations. Congolese armed groups reportedly engaged in the illegal taxation of artisanal miners to fund their operations in Congo (Kinshasa) (Levin and Cook, 2013, p. 18).

Production

In 2013, cement production increased by an estimated 42%. The production of tin decreased by an estimated 98% in 2013; tungsten, by an estimated 79%; niobium (columbium), by an estimated 73%; and tantalum, by an estimated 72%

(table 1; Ulrika Joyce, Economics Officer, U.S. Embassy, Bujumbura, Burundi, written commun., June 26, 2014).

Structure of the Mineral Industry

Employment in industrial minerals mining was estimated to be about 10,000 workers in 2009 (the latest year for which data were available); gold, 4,000 workers; niobium, tantalum, and tin combined, 2,000 workers; and tungsten, 1,600 workers. Muyinga Province accounted for about 33% of the artisanal miners employed in mining metals; Kayanza Province, 27%; Cibitoke Province, 24%; Kirundo Province, 10%; Ruyigi Province, 5%; and Bubanza Province, 1%. Privately owned African Mining Metallurgical Group of Russia and Comptoir Minier des Exploitations du Burundi S.A. (COMEBU) mined niobium and tantalum. State-owned Office Nationale de la Tourbe (ONATOUR) was Burundi's only peat producer (Midende, 2010, p. 51; World Bank, The, 2011, p. 48).

Commodity Review

Metals

Cobalt, Copper, and Nickel.—Resources at the undeveloped Musongati nickel-cobalt-copper deposits were estimated to be about 150 million metric tons (Mt) grading 1.31% nickel, 0.21% copper, and 0.09% cobalt. Burundi Mining Metallurgy International Ltd. (BMM) (a subsidiary of Kermas Group of the United Kingdom) could start mining at Musongati in 2014; nickel production could reach nearly 24,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) by 2019. The project was estimated to require power consumption of between 100 and 150 megawatts (MW) of capacity (Africa Mining Intelligence, 2011; Burundi Mining Metallurgy International Ltd., 2011, p. 68–69; Metal Bulletin, 2013).

In early 2013, the Government granted BMM approval to build a new hydroelectric power station to supply Musongati. Approval of the exploitation license to start construction of the mine was on hold until the Government completed its new mining code. At yearend, the exploitation license had not been issued; the extent of the delay to BMM's production plans was unclear (Metal Bulletin, 2013; Nkurunziza, 2014).

In August 2013, the Government granted World Sports Alliance Intergovernmental Organization (WAISO) research licenses for the Nyabikere and the Waga nickel laterite deposits. The Government subsequently issued exploitation licenses to WAISO for Nyabikere and Waga in October. Resources at Nyabikere were estimated to be 46 Mt at a grade of 1.45% nickel, and at Waga, 35 Mt at a grade of 1.38% nickel (Ruffini, 1998; Nkurunziza, 2013).

Gold.—Burundi's gold exports were 2,832 kilograms (kg) in 2013 compared with 2,046 kg in 2012. The majority of gold exports reportedly were re-exports from Congo (Kinshasa).

Artisanal miners produced gold in Bubanza, Cibitoke, Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga and Ruyigi Provinces. Recovery rates from artisanal gold mining operations were estimated to be about 30% (African Development Bank Group, 2014; U.S. Embassy, Bujumbura, Burundi, 2014).

In early 2013, the Government granted Etablissement Jean Jbeili of Lebanon exclusive rights to refine all the gold produced in Burundi. The refinery, which was located in Bujumbura, was expected to start production in February 2014. Etablissement Jean Jbeili was also granted the right to process tailings from artisanal gold mining operations (U.S. Embassy, Bujumbura, Burundi, 2014).

Niobium (Columbium), Tantalum, Tin, and Tungsten.—Artisanal miners produced tin in cassiterite, niobium and tantalum in columbite-tantalite, and tungsten in wolframite from numerous mines in Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga, and Ngozi Provinces. In 2013, cassiterite production decreased to 3 metric tons (t) from 117 t in 2012; columbite-tantalite, to 74 t from 259 t; and wolframite, to 115 t from 565 t. Lower production may have been attributable to the 2-month mining ban imposed by the Government and decreased demand because of concerns about purchasing conflict minerals from Congo (Kinshasa) (Midende, 2010, p. 48; U.S. Embassy, Bujumbura, Burundi, 2014; Ulrika Joyce, Economics Officer, U.S. Embassy, Bujumbura, Burundi, written commun., June 26, 2014).

Industrial Minerals

Cement, Clay and Shale, and Gypsum.—In 2012, Burundi Cement Co. (BUCECO) produced 70,500 t of cement at its plant in Cibitoke Province compared with 34,500 t in 2011. BUCECO planned to produce at the plant's full capacity of 100,000 t/yr in 2013; the company was considering an increase in capacity to 200,000 t/yr. As of the end of 2013, it was unclear when the expansion would take place. The company quarried clay domestically and imported clinker and gypsum for use in cement production. All Burundi's cement requirements were imported before BUCECO started production in 2011; imports decreased to 112,515 t in 2012 from 142,364 t in 2011 (Burundi Cement Co., 2013; Banque de la Republique du Burundi, [undated], p. 88).

Mineral Fuels

Peat.—ONATOUR produced peat at Buyongwe, Gisozi, Gitanga, and Matana. In 2012, production increased to 20,335 t from 7,982 t in 2011 because of new mining equipment. In 2013, the company was producing peat at the rate of about 19,000 t/yr. Peat was consumed mostly by the Burundian military in spite of ONATOUR's relatively high production costs because of shortages of cheaper firewood and charcoal. The Government planned to complete a new peat-fired

power station with a capacity of 200 MW by 2015 (East African Community Secretariat, 2012, p. 46; Madirisha, 2014; Banque de la Republique du Burundi, [undated], p. 13–14).

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TABLE 1
BURUNDI: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity ²		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 ^e
Cement		--	--	34,500	70,500	100,000
Gold, mine output, Au content ^e	kilograms	500	300	300	400 ^r	400
Niobium (columbium) and tantalum, ore and concentrate:						
Gross weight	do.	44,207	67,365	158,782 ^r	258,578 ^r	73,518 ³
Nb content ^e	do.	8,700	13,000 ^r	31,000 ^r	51,000 ^r	14,000
Ta content ^e	do.	8,600	13,000 ^r	31,000 ^r	50,000 ^r	14,000
Peat		11,352	13,111	7,982 ^r	20,335 ^r	19,000
Tin, mine output:						
Gross weight		20 ^r	29	52	117 ^r	3 ³
Sn content ^e		9 ^r	12	22	50 ^r	1
Tungsten, mine output:						
Gross weight		333	328	505 ^r	565 ^r	115 ³
W content ^e		110 ^r	100 ^r	160 ^r	180 ^r	37

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

¹Table includes data available through October 27, 2014.

²In addition to the commodities listed, brick clay, limestone, and sand and gravel were produced, but available information was inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

³Reported figure.

TABLE 2
BURUNDI: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2013

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity		Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Cement		Burundi Cement Co. (BUCECO)	Plant in Cibitoke Province	100,000
Gold	kilograms	Artisanal miners	At least 35 sites in Bubanza, Cibitoke, Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga, and Ruyigi Provinces	400 ^e
Niobium (columbium) and tantalum, columbite-tantalite ore and concentrate		Comptoir Minier des Exploitations du Burundi S.A. (COMEBU)	Kabarore in Kayanza Province	6 ^e
Do.		African Mining Metallurgical Group	Mine in Marangara Commune	NA
Do.		Artisanal miners	Various sites in Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga, and Ngozi Provinces	250 ^e
Peat		Office Nationale de la Tourbe (ONATOOUR)	Buyongwe, Gisozi, Gitanga, and Matana	20,000
Tin, cassiterite ore and concentrate		Comptoir Minier des Exploitations du Burundi S.A. (COMEBU) and artisanal miners	Various sites in Cibitoke, Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga, and Ngozi Provinces	100 ^e
Tungsten, wolframite ore and concentrate		Artisanal miners	At least 10 sites in Kirundo and Muyinga Provinces	600 ^e

^eEstimated. Do. Ditto. NA Not available.