



2013 Minerals Yearbook

DJIBOUTI

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF DJIBOUTI

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In 2013, the East African country of Djibouti produced basalt, brick clay, cement, salt, sand and gravel, and dimension stone (table 1). Djibouti's production and consumption of minerals were not globally significant.

Production

In 2013, salt production decreased by an estimated 88%. Cement production started in 2013. Data on the production of other minerals were not available (table 1).

Structure of the Mineral Industry

The cement plant at Ali Sabieh was Government owned, and the plant at Balbala was privately owned. Salt production at Lake Assal was carried out by artisanal miners. Crushed basalt, brick clay, and dimension stone were produced near the capital. Sand and gravel were produced from dry stream and river beds around the country (table 2).

Commodity Review

Metals

Gold.—In 2013, Stratex International plc of the United Kingdom and 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%)] explored for gold at the Oklila prospect, which is part of the Afar project. Stratex and Thani Ashanti planned to start a drilling program at the Pandora epithermal vein system in Oklila pending regulatory approval in the second half of 2014 (Stratex International plc, 2014, p. 5–6, 12).

Industrial Minerals

Cement.—In February 2013, Cimenterie d'Ali Sabieh opened a new cement plant with a capacity of about 240,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) at Ali Sabieh. The company started production at about one-third of capacity; output was likely to reach full capacity by mid-2014. Cement from the new plant was expected to be used domestically in new railways and a water pipeline. In March, Nael Cement Products of the United Arab Emirates opened a new plant at Balbala, which reportedly produced at one-half of its capacity of 220,000 t/yr (Edwards, 2013; International Cement Review, 2013; Emily Stoll, Economics Officer, U.S. Embassy, Djibouti, Djibouti, written commun., April 29, 2014, and May 5, 2014).

In 2012 (the most recent year for which data were available), Djibouti's cement consumption was estimated to be about 115,000 metric tons (t) compared with 100,000 t in 2011.

Housing accounted for about 50% of domestic cement demand; infrastructure, 25%; public works, 15%; and industry, 10% (International Cement Review, 2013).

Salt.—Until 2010, artisanal miners produced about 12,000 t/yr of salt at Lake Assal. Production was less than 10% of the levels reached in 2000 when 15 companies mined salt. Nomads produced salt to trade with Ethiopian farmers for crops and livestock. By the end of 2013, salt mining had nearly ceased because of the discovery of salt deposits in the Afar region of Ethiopia (Banque Centrale de Djibouti, undated, p. 21; Ria Novosti, 2010; Emily Stoll, Economics Officer, U.S. Embassy, Djibouti, Djibouti, written commun., April 29, 2014).

As of the end of 2013, Djibouti reportedly had no larger scale salt producers. Previous attempts to start large-scale mining were suspended because magnesium and other contaminants rendered salt from Lake Assal unsuitable for the chemicals, glass, and plastic industries without additional processing (U.S. Embassy, Djibouti, Djibouti, 2011; Emily Stoll, Economics Officer, U.S. Embassy, Djibouti, Djibouti, written commun., April 29, 2014).

Mineral Fuels

Petroleum.—As of the end of 2013, Djibouti was not a producer of crude or refined petroleum and relied on imported petroleum products. Électricité de Djibouti, which was the Government-owned utility, consumed imported diesel and fuel oil in its power stations. The Government planned to produce 100% of Djibouti's power requirements from renewable sources by 2020. In October, the Government signed an agreement with the World Bank to assess geothermal resources in Fiale Caldera near Lake Assal (World Bank Group, 2013).

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TABLE 1
DJIBOUTI: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons)

Commodity ²	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 ^e
Cement	--	--	--	--	150,000
Salt ^e	12,000	12,000	8,000 ^r	4,000 ^r	500

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

¹Table includes data available through May 14, 2014.

²In addition to the commodities listed, basalt, brick clay, sand and gravel, and dimension stone are produced, but available information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

TABLE 2
DJIBOUTI: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2013

(Metric tons)

Commodity	Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Cement	Cimenterie d'Ali Sabieh (Government owned)	Plant at Ali Sabieh	240,000
Do.	Nael Cement Products (subsidiary of Nael General Contracting Establishment)	Plant at Balbala	220,000
Salt	Artisanal miners	Mines at Lake Assal	12,000 ^e

^eEstimated. Do. Ditto.