THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF

BENIN

By Philip M. Mobbs

The production of mineral commodities represented a minor part of the economy of Benin, a nation of almost 6 million people. Agriculture, commerce, and trade accounted for more than 80% of the country’s gross domestic product, which was estimated to be about $2.3 billion in 19981 (the last year for which data are available) (World Bank, [undated]. Benin, accessed April 28, 2000, via URL http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2000/index.htm).


The mineral sector included artisanal mining of gold and construction materials and production of cement. Formal gold exploration was concentrated in two areas—the Natitingou-Perma and the Djougou/Aléđjo-Koura, which is in the Atacora gold zone in northwestern Benin. Companies that produced cement in Benin included the Société des Ciments d’Onigbolo and the clinker-grinders Cimenterie du Bénin S.A. and Société des Ciments du Bénin. They had a nameplate production capacity of about 875,000 metric tons per year (t/yr), which was nominally sufficient to fulfill domestic demand that was estimated to be more than 500,000 t/yr (Hargreaves and others, 1998, 310 p.).

In the offshore petroleum sector, Abacan Resource Corp. of Canada acquired seismic data on block 4 and, in August 1999, released block 1. The Government was investigating options for removing the surface facilities of the abandoned Sémé Field.

Reference Cited


Major Publication


1Where necessary, values have been converted from Communauté Financière Africaine francs (CFAf) to U.S. dollars at the average 1998 rate of CFAf588.6=US$1.00.
### Table 1
BENIN: ESTIMATED PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES 1/ 2/

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cement, hydraulic</td>
<td>578,827</td>
<td>360,000</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>520,000</td>
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<td>Gold</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petroleum, crude</td>
<td>654 3/</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>200</td>
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</table>

1/ Includes data available through May 1, 2000.
2/ In addition to the commodities listed, a variety of industrial minerals and construction materials (clays, gypsum, sand and gravel, and stone) are produced; but information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.
3/ Reported figure.