



2012 Minerals Yearbook

COMOROS, MAURITIUS, REUNION, AND SEYCHELLES

THE MINERAL INDUSTRIES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS

COMOROS, MAURITIUS, REUNION, AND SEYCHELLES

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The Indian Ocean is a body of water bounded by Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Southern Ocean. It is the third largest ocean of the world's five oceans after the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean. Four important access waterways to the Indian Ocean are the Suez Canal (Egypt), Bab el Mandeb (Djibouti-Yemen), the Strait of Hormuz (Iran-Oman), and the Strait of Malacca (Indonesia-Malaysia) (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2012b).

COMOROS

Comoros is an archipelago consisting of the islands of Anjouan (Ndzuwani), Grande Comore (N'gazidja), and Moheli (Mwali) and is located at the northern end of the Mozambique Channel. Grande Comore is the largest and youngest of the islands. The archipelago is the result of volcanic action along a fissure in the seabed running west-northwest to east-southeast. In 2012, Comoros, which was formerly a French colony, had few transportation links between its islands (U.S. Department of State, 2012).

The country had very few natural resources and did not play a significant role in the world's production or consumption of mineral resources in 2012. Mineral production data continued to be unavailable; however, mineral production was presumed to be low because no significant construction projects were reported in 2012.

In 2012, the only mineral commodities produced in Comoros continued to be small quantities of common building materials that were used for domestic consumption. The demand for cement, petroleum products, and steel was met through imports. France was Comoros's major trading partner (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2012a).

Commodity Review

Mineral Fuels

The Government of Comoros announced that it had awarded its first petroleum exploration and production license to Bahari Resources Ltd., which was a privately owned company based in Kenya, and was taking the first steps to develop its petroleum exploration strategy. The exploration area has acreage adjacent to the offshore Area 1 and offshore Area 4 of Mozambique's Rovuma Delta where Eni S.p.A of Italy and Anadarko Petroleum Corp. of the United States had made significant natural gas discoveries. Bahari Resources planned to undertake a phased seismic and drilling program within the licensed area. The Government also announced that it hoped to have a Petroleum Code in place by yearend 2013 (Obulutsa, 2012).

Outlook

The outlook for mineral commodity output is for little change in the near future owing to Comoros's very limited mineral resources and weak infrastructure. Deforestation and import dependence may encourage the development of the country's geothermal resources. Exploration for hydrocarbon resources is expected to continue.

References Cited

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MAURITIUS

The Republic of Mauritius, which is located east of Madagascar, consists of the main island of Mauritius, the smaller island of Rodrigues, and two smaller groups of islands. All the islands are of volcanic origin and are surrounded by coral reefs.

In 2012, the country had few mineral resources, and the mineral industry of Mauritius was a negligible factor in its economy. Historically, mineral output consisted of basalt for construction, coral sand, lime from coral, and solar-evaporated salt. Small organic phosphate fertilizer (guano) resources occur on the islands of Agalega, Cargados, and Rodrigues. Imported fuel oil was the main source of energy used for electricity generation (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2012). Data on mineral production are in table 1.

Mineral commodities were not significant in Mauritius's export trade, which consisted mainly of beverages, miscellaneous manufactured articles, and tobacco. Mauritius's main mineral commodity imports were lubricants and mineral fuels and related materials (United Nations Statistics Division, 2012).

Mauritius developed the Mauritius Freeport Authority as a building block towards becoming a regional distribution center. The freeport, which is located adjacent to Port Louis, is a duty-free logistics distribution and marketing hub for the region,

and it has increased trade between Mauritius and neighboring countries. Warehousing facilities located on a 50-hectare site were available for the transshipment, consolidation, storage, and processing of goods, including mineral commodities. The Freeport had a total trade volume of more than 390,000 metric tons of goods in 2012, which was a 10% increase from that of 2011 (Mauritius Freeport, 2012).

Outlook

The possibility for increased exploitation of minerals other than construction materials in the near future is negligible owing to the lack of geologic information regarding the occurrence and location of possible mineral deposits and the lack of infrastructure to support mineral exploration and development.

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- Mauritius Freeport, 2012, The Mauritius Freeport: Mauritius Freeport Portal. (Accessed June 16, 2013, at <http://www.efreeport.com/default.aspx?MRU=1>.)
- U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2012, Mauritius, *in* The world factbook: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. (Accessed April 26, 2012, at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mp.html>.)
- United Nations Statistics Division, 2012, International trade statistics—Mauritius: United Nations Statistics Division database. (Accessed September 9, 2012, at <http://comtrade.un.org/pb/countryPages.aspx?y=2011>.)

REUNION

Reunion is a volcanic island located about 200 kilometers southwest of Mauritius. Administratively, it is an overseas department of France, and, as such, is part of the euro area (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2012).

Mineral production represented only a very small part of the economy of Reunion in 2012, although quantitative information on mineral production was not available. Production of aggregates, cement, and seacoast coral sand was believed to meet local consumption needs. Reunion had no identified resources of coal or petroleum; all demand for metals, mineral fuels, and petroleum products was met through imports.

Outlook

Little change in future mineral resource activity in Reunion is anticipated.

Reference Cited

- U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2012, France, *in* The world factbook: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. (Accessed July 24, 2012, at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fr.html>.)

SEYCHELLES

The Seychelles archipelago, which comprises 74 coralline islands and the Mahe group of 41 granitic islands, lies in the western part of the Indian Ocean. Seychelles was not a globally significant mineral producer or consumer. Production of granite, gravel, and salt was limited and not reported. Other mineral production consisted mostly of unreported quantities of construction materials. Small quantities of an organic phosphate fertilizer (guano) was occasionally mined but also was not reported by the Government. Seychelles had no identified resources of coal, natural gas, or petroleum. All demand for mineral fuels and petroleum products was met by imports (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2012).

The mineral industry is regulated by the Ministry of Industry. The Mineral Ordinance, 1962, governs mineral extraction and mining. The petroleum potential of the entire Seychelles region continued to be promoted by the Government's Seychelles Petroleum Co. (Sepec). Although multinational companies have explored the waters around the islands off and on for several years, no commercial quantities of natural gas or petroleum had been found as of yearend 2012 (Afristone, 2012).

In 2012, WHL Energy Ltd. of Australia completed a comprehensive geologic and technical review of its Seychelles license. These studies indicated a potential for petroleum in WHL Energy's 21,426-square-kilometer acreage. The studies included the reprocessing of existing seismic data and rebuilding the hydrocarbon basin models (WHL Energy Ltd., 2012).

Outlook

WHL Energy is expected to continue its exploration efforts. Sepec is expected to continue to promote the petroleum potential of the entire Seychelles region.

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- Afristone, 2012, Countries—Seychelles: Afristone. (Accessed June 16, 2013, at <http://www.afristone.com/countries.asp?country=SYC>.)
- U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2012, Seychelles, *in* The world factbook: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. (Accessed July 24, 2011, at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/se.html>.)
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TABLE 1
MAURITIUS AND SEYCHELLES: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons)

Country and commodity	2008	2009	2010	2011 ^e	2012 ^e
MAURITIUS²					
Aggregates ^e	550,000	600,000	500,000	500,000	550,000
Fertilizers	--	31,014	24,326	27,000	25,000
Salt, marine	5,042	2,301	1,349	3,500	3,800
Sand	102,972	87,506	68,708	44,035 ^{r,3}	40,000
Steel, rebar ^e	60,000	31,000 ³	32,000 ³	34,000	32,000
SEYCHELLES⁴					
Aggregates	130,000	150,000 ^r	156,710 ^r	162,502 ^{r,3}	123,759 ³
Gravel and crushed stone	140,000	160,000 ^r	180,520 ^r	181,418 ^{r,3}	155,946 ³

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

¹Table includes data available through July 30, 2013. Data for Reunion were removed from the table as available information is inadequate to identify production or make reliable estimates of output of any mineral commodity.

²In addition to the commodities listed, asphalt, basalt, cement, and lime are also thought to be produced in Mauritius, but information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

³Reported figure.

⁴In addition to the commodities listed, granite is also thought to be produced in Seychelles, but information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

TABLE 2
MAURITIUS AND SEYCHELLES: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRIES IN 2012

(Metric tons)

Country and commodity	Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ^e
MAURITIUS			
Aggregates	United Basalt Products Ltd.	La Mecque	660,000
Do.	Gamma Civic Ltd.	Beau Bassin and Solitude	NA
Fertilizers	Mauritius Chemical and Fertilizer Industry Ltd.	Port Louis	100,000
Salt	Mont Calme Ltd.	Tamarin	NA
Steel, rebar	Samlo Koyenco Steel Company Ltd.	Midlands	12,000
SEYCHELLES			
Granite	Gondwana Granite Ltd.	Victoria	NA
Gravel and crushed stone	United Concrete Products (Seychelles) Ltd.	Anse des Genets	150,000
Do.	Civil Construction Company Ltd.	Brilliant	97,000

^eEstimated. Do. Ditto. NA Not available.