Guyana’s economy improved in 2013; real gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 5.2% compared with that of 2012. This increase was attributed to positive economic performances in the services sector (which accounted for 65.2% of the GDP), the agricultural sector (22.1% of the GDP), and the mining sector (12.1% of the GDP). In 2013, the mining sector’s contribution to the GDP increased slightly from 11.8% in 2012 (Bank of Guyana, 2014, p. 7, 10).

The value of Guyana’s exports was estimated to be about $1.376 billion in 2013 compared with $1.416 billion in 2012. The leading mineral commodity exports in 2013 were, in order of value, gold ($648.5 million compared with $716.9 million in 2012), bauxite ($134.6 million compared with $150.8 million in 2012), and diamond ($12.2 million compared with $8.2 million in 2012). The decrease in the value of gold exports was attributed to the drop in world gold prices. The decrease in the value of bauxite shipments was attributed to an 18.5% decrease in the volume of metal-grade bauxite exports (Bank of Guyana, 2014, p. 16–18; Kitco Metals Inc., 2014).

Imports were valued at $1.847 billion in 2013 compared with $1.997 billion in 2012, and included such products as, in order of value, petroleum products (about $575 million compared with a revised $638 million in 2012) and mining equipment (about $22.6 million in 2013 compared with $38.1 million in 2012) (Bank of Guyana, 2014, p. 18).

Production

Bauxite, diamond, and gold output was exported and loam, sand, and stone were produced for domestic use. According to the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC), Guyana’s production of sand increased by about 58% in 2013 compared with that of 2012; diamond, by 37%; and stone, by 35%. Bauxite production decreased by 25% (table 1).

Structure of the Mineral Industry

In Guyana, all mineral rights are vested in the state. The Mines Division and the Petroleum Division of the GGMC regulate mineral exploration and mineral resource development activities in accordance with national legislation, which includes the Mining Act (Chapter 65:01) of 1989, the Minerals Act (Chapter 65:07) of 1971, and the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act (Chapter 65:10) of 1986. The Guyana Gold Board purchased all gold produced in Guyana (Guyana Geology and Mines Commission, 2014). Table 2 is a list of the major mineral industry facilities in Guyana.

Commodity Review

Metals

Bauxite and Alumina.—United Company RUSAL Plc of Jersey [United Kingdom] reported that its subsidiary Bauxite Company of Guyana, Inc. (BCGI) operated at an 80% capacity utilization rate in 2013. A technological change introduced in 2012 at the Nikolaev alumina refinery (NGZ) in Ukraine resulted in reduced demand by the NGZ plant for bauxite from Guyana, Jamaica, and Sierra Leone, which cost more than bauxite imported from Kindia in Guinea (United Company RUSAL Plc, 2014, p. 15, 21).

In 2013, BCGI continued work on the development of the Kurubuka-22 bauxite deposit, which is located in Aroaima. The new Kurubuka Mine was expected to open in 2014. The Bosai Minerals Group Guyana Inc., which was a subsidiary of Bosai Minerals Group Company. Ltd. of China, continued exploration and development work on its Block 37 project. Guyana Industrial Minerals Inc., which was a subsidiary of First Bauxite Corp. of Canada, held the Bonasika mining license and the Tarakulli prospecting license. In 2013, First Bauxite initiated a preliminary economic assessment of the use of Bonasika bauxite to manufacture ceramic proppants for use by the oil and gas industry in the process of the hydraulic fracturing of petroleum reservoirs (First Bauxite Corp., 2014, p. 3–6; United Company RUSAL Plc, 2014, p. 15).

Gold.—In 2013, according to the GGMC, production of gold increased to 14,694 kilograms (kg) (reported as 481,103 troy ounces) from 13,643 kg (438,645 troy ounces) in 2012. In Guyana, gold was mined by hundreds of small-scale artisanal mining operations that collectively held thousands of gold mining permits. The decrease in international gold prices during 2013, however, adversely affected the exploration activities of some of the international gold companies that were operating in Guyana (table1; Chapwanya, 2013a; Kitco Metals Inc., 2014).

In January, Guyana Goldfields Inc. (GGI) of Canada filed an updated feasibility study of the Aurora gold project. In December, GGI entered into an engineering, procurement, and construction contract to build a 5,000-metric-ton-per-day-capacity processing facility at Aurora; commercial gold production was expected to begin in mid-2015. GGI also continued preliminary exploration at the Aranka prospect and other gold projects. Work consisted primarily of soil and stream-sediment sampling and analysis (Guyana Goldfields Inc., 2014, p. 4–5, 10).

In 2011, Hunter Bay Minerals plc of the United Kingdom had acquired operating rights for 14 alluvial permits in the Mazaruni and the Puruni areas. The company discontinued operations in Guyana in late 2012 owing to metallurgical issues discovered during trial mining of the deposits (Hunter Bay Minerals plc, 2014, p. 5).
Exploration activity by local subsidiaries of Mahdia Gold Corp. of Canada reportedly were constrained by the parent company’s financial difficulties; however, in June, Mahdia and Roraima Investment and Consulting Services Inc. of Guyana agreed to begin to process an alluvial gold deposit on the formerly producing Omai property. Production was expected to begin in early 2014. Mahdia’s Tiger River and the White Creek properties were on care-and-maintenance status. Mahdia indicated that it hoped to restrict ongoing unauthorized gold mining operations on the Tiger River property (Chapwanya, 2013a, b; Mahdia Gold Corp., 2014, p. 1–6).

In 2012, Mulgravian Ventures (Guyana) Inc. (51% equity interest), which was a subsidiary of Mulgravian Ventures Corp. of Canada, completed a diamond-drilling program on the Five Star gold property for its joint venture with Romanex (Guyana) Exploration Ltd. (49% interest), which was a subsidiary of Guyana Frontier Mining Corp. of Canada. Romanex continued its exploration of the Marudi Mountain (100% interest) and the Paint Mountain (100% interest) gold projects. In July, Romanex signed an agreement that authorized Mulgravian Ventures to manage the infrastructure, logistics, mining of surficial material (including the alluvial, colluvial, and eluvial deposits), and security operations at Marudi Mountain. Guyana Frontier planned to continue its evaluation of developing the hard-rock resources at Marudi Mountain. In 2013, Guyana Frontier surrendered the Otomung property to Guyana Shield Resources Inc. (Guyana Frontier Mining Corp., 2013).

Sacre-Coeur Minerals, Ltd. of Canada (SCM) continued exploration activity on gold prospects in the Lower Puruni regional area. In late 2013, a 22-week trial mining of alluvial deposits in the Lower Puruni region produced about 13.5 kg of gold (reported as 432.78 troy ounces), and the results of six diamond-drill holes in Zone 1 of the region were evaluated. Exploration on SCM’s Northwest project was deferred in 2013 (Sacre-Coeur Minerals, Ltd., 2014, p. 4–6).

In 2013, Sandspring Resources Ltd. of Canada filed a National Instrument 43–101-compliant prefeasibility study of the Toroparu gold project. ETK, Inc. of Guyana, which was a wholly owned subsidiary of Sandspring Resources, was exploring the Toroparu project, which was located in the Upper Puruni River area.

**Mineral Fuels and Related Materials**

**Petroleum and Natural Gas.**—Several domestic and international oil company joint ventures held petroleum exploration rights to coastal and offshore blocks. Although Guyana settled its maritime border disagreement with Suriname in 2007, the maritime border between Guyana and Venezuela remained in dispute. In 2013, the Venezuelan Navy intercepted a seismic vessel at sea that was contracted to survey the seafloor for Anadarko Guyana Co., which was a subsidiary of Anadarko Petroleum Corp. of the United States. The ship subsequently was released, but Anadarko’s offshore exploration activity on the area was suspended pending a resolution of the longstanding border dispute (Guyana Times, 2013). Offshore, the joint venture of Esso Exploration and Production Guyana Ltd. (75% equity interest), which was a subsidiary of Exxon Mobil Corp. of the United States, and Shell Exploration and Production Guyana Ltd. (25% interest), which was a subsidiary of Shell International B.V. of the Netherlands, continued to evaluate its deepwater Stabroek petroleum prospecting license. Tullow Guyane B.V., which was a subsidiary of Tullow Oil plc of the United Kingdom, acquired 30% interest in the Kanuku Block from Repsol Exploracion S.A. of Spain.

Onshore, the joint venture of Canacol Energy Inc. of Guyana (90% working interest), which was a subsidiary of Canacol Energy Ltd. of Canada, and Takutu Oil and Gas Inc. of Guyana (10% working interest), which was a subsidiary of Groundstar Resources Inc. of Canada, were evaluating the Rewa Block on the Takutu Basin petroleum prospecting lease. CGX Energy Inc. of Canada was evaluating the Demerara Block. Nabi Oil and Gas Inc. of Guyana initiated preliminary exploration of the Mahaica/Mahaicony prospecting permit, and ON Energy Inc. of Guyana, in which CGX Energy held 62% equity interest, was evaluating the Berbice petroleum prospecting license.

**Uranium.**—In 2012, U3O8 Corp. of Canada completed a resource estimate on the Kurupung project. Work on the prospect was suspended in 2013 pending improvements in the availability of funding from the international equity markets and a recovery of demand for ore by the uraniam market (U3O8 Corp., 2014, p. 3, 7, 9).

**Outlook**

Bauxite, diamond, gold, sand, and stone are likely to continue to be the dominant mineral commodities produced by Guyana’s mineral industry. Offshore and onshore hydrocarbon exploration activity in Guyana may change, depending on how the exploration budgets of exploration companies respond to the volatility of the international price of crude oil.

**References Cited**


2009 2010 2011 2012 2013
Bauxite, dry equivalent, gross weight thousand metric tons 1,485 1,083 1,828 2,210 1,649
Diamond, gem carats 143,982 49,920 52,273 40,764 55,928
Gold, mine output, Au content kilograms 9,326 9,594 11,293 13,643 14,694
Sand, common 478,572 652,175 674,880 1,478,184 2,334,000
Stone, crushed 340,016 514,932 534,058 483,858 654,995

Source: Guyana Geology and Mines Commission.

<table>
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<th>Commodity</th>
<th>2009</th>
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<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<td>Bauxite, dry equivalent, gross weight thousand metric tons</td>
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<td>Gold, mine output, Au content kilograms</td>
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<td>Sand, common</td>
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Table includes data available through December 22, 2014.

In addition to the commodities listed, Guyana also produced loam.

Source: Guyana Geology and Mines Commission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Major operating companies and major equity owners</th>
<th>Location of main facilities</th>
<th>Annual capacity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bauxite</td>
<td>Bauxite Company of Guyana Inc. (BCGI) (United Company RUSAL Plc, 90%, and Government, 10%)</td>
<td>Kwakwani, East Berbice District</td>
<td>2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>Bosai Minerals Group Guyana Inc. (Bosai Minerals Group Company Ltd., 70%, and Government of Guyana, 30%)</td>
<td>Omnia bauxite mine and processing plant located near Linden on the Demerara River about 100 kilometers south of Georgetown</td>
<td>2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gold and precious stones</td>
<td>Numerous domestic artisanal operations</td>
<td>Various locations</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravel</td>
<td>Baracara Quarries (Rahaman Group)</td>
<td>Quarry near Bartica, Mazaruni-Potaro District</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silica sand</td>
<td>Minerals and Technology Ltd. [Minerals and Chemicals of Texas (United States)]</td>
<td>Sand Hills, Demerara River, West Demerara District</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stone</td>
<td>BK Quarries Inc. (BK International Inc.)</td>
<td>Mazaruni River</td>
<td>3,650</td>
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Do., Ditto. NA Not available.