

# 2016 Minerals Yearbook

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## LESOTHO

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# THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF LESOTHO

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World demand for Lesotho's principal mineral export commodities, notably diamond, was a significant part of the country's economy. In 2016, the country ranked eighth among the world's leading producers of diamond in terms of value (Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, 2017). The legislative framework for the mineral sector in Lesotho is provided by Section 36 of the Lesotho Constitution, the Mines and Minerals Act 2005, the Precious Stones Order 1970, and the Mine Safety Act 1981. Data on mineral production are in table 1. Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities. More-extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Lesotho can be found in

previous editions of the U.S. Geological Survey Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Area Reports—International—Africa, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/africa-and-middle-east>.

## Reference Cited

Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, 2017, Annual global summary—2016 production, imports, exports, and KPC counts: Kimberley Process Rough Diamond Statistics, June 5, 1 p. (Accessed December 12, 2017, at [https://kimberleyprocessstatistics.org/static/pdfs/public\\_statistics/2016/2016GlobalSummary.pdf](https://kimberleyprocessstatistics.org/static/pdfs/public_statistics/2016/2016GlobalSummary.pdf).)

TABLE 1  
LESOTHO: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Commodity <sup>2</sup>	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>INDUSTRIAL MINERALS</b>					
Clay and shale, fire clay <sup>c</sup>	36,000	24,000	36,000	31,000 <sup>r</sup>	26,000
Diamond, gem, unspecified carats	478,926	414,014	346,017	304,232	342,014

<sup>c</sup>Estimated. <sup>r</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>Table includes data available through November 29, 2017. All data are reported unless otherwise noted. Estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

<sup>2</sup>In addition to the commodities listed, aggregate, semiprecious gemstones, and stone may have been produced in Lesotho, but available information was inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

TABLE 2  
LESOTHO: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2016

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity		Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Clay	thousand bricks	Loti Brick (Proprietary) Ltd.	Plant at Thetsane, south of Maseru. Quarries at Ha Motloheloa, Phoqane, and Tsikoane	13,000
Do.		Majara Bricks (Proprietary) Ltd.	Plant and quarry at Berea Hills, about 12 kilometers northeast of Maseru	NA
Diamond	carats	Storm Mountain Diamonds (Proprietary) Ltd. (Namakwa Diamonds Ltd., 62.5%; Government, 25%; Kimberlite Investments Lesotho Ltd, 12.5%)	Kao Mine, about 115 kilometers east-northeast of Maseru	220,000
Do.	do.	Letšeng Diamonds (Proprietary) Ltd. (Gem Diamonds Ltd., 70%, and Government 30%)	Letseng Mine, about 140 kilometers east-northeast of Maseru	100,000
Do.	do.	Liqhobong Mining Development Company (Proprietary) Ltd. (Firestone Diamonds plc, 75%, and Government, 25%)	Liqhobong Mine, <sup>1</sup> about 120 kilometers east-northeast of Maseru	NA
Do.	do.	Mothae Diamonds Holdings Inc. (Lucara Diamond Corp., 75%, and Government, 25%)	Mothae Mine, <sup>1</sup> about 135 kilometers east-northeast of Maseru	60,000
Stone and sand and gravel:				
Aggregate		Moradi (Proprietary) Ltd.	Tabola, about 50 kilometers northeast of Maseru	NA
Sandstone		Lesotho Smart Sandstone (Proprietary) Ltd.	Lekokaoneng, about 25 kilometers northeast of Maseru	9,600
Do.		Lesotho Stone Enterprises (Proprietary) Ltd.	do.	16,000
Do.		Seroma Sandstone Production (Proprietary) Ltd.	do.	NA

Do., do. Ditto. NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>On care-and-maintenance status since yearend 2014.