

2017–2018 Minerals Yearbook

SIERRA LEONE

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF SIERRA LEONE

By Alberto Alexander Perez

In 2017 and 2018, the production of mineral commodities—notably bauxite, diamond, gold, iron ore, titanium, and zirconium—represented at least 20% of Sierra Leone’s gross domestic product (GDP), with the industrial sector representing about 10% of the GDP (Bank of Sierra Leone, 2019, p. 2). The legislative framework for the mineral sector in Sierra Leone is provided by the Mines and Minerals Act of 2009 and 2012 and the Petroleum Regulatory Act (2014). 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 Sierra Leone can be found in previous editions of the

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

Reference Cited

Bank of Sierra Leone, 2019, Monthly economic review, July 2019: Freetown, Sierra Leone, Bank of Sierra Leone, v. 21, no. 7, July, 13 p. (Accessed December 9, 2019, at <http://www.bsl.gov.sl/MER%20July%202019-Final.pdf>.)

TABLE 1
SIERRA LEONE: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Commodity ²		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
METALS						
Bauxite	thousand metric tons	1,161	1,334	1,369 ^r	1,788	2,000 ^e
Gold, mine, Au content	kilograms	43	107 ^r	188	140	446
Iron ore, mine:						
Gross weight	thousand metric tons	20,946 ^{r, 3}	18,000 ^r	4,108 ^r	6,985	923
Fe content	do.	12,100 ^r	10,400 ^r	2,380 ^r	4,050	535
Titanium mineral concentrates:						
Ilmenite and leucxene		35,838	37,633	50,000 ^r	58,000	54,500
Rutile		114,163	126,022	143,000	168,000	121,500
Zirconium mineral concentrate		2,357	1,326	1,500 ^e	3,000	11,400
INDUSTRIAL MINERALS						
Cement, hydraulic		336,300	324,110	320,000 ^{r, e}	324,000 ^e	325,000 ^e
Diamond, gem and industrial	carats	620,181	500,000	549,086	289,141	741,586

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. do. Ditto.

¹Table includes data available through October 10, 2019. All data are reported unless otherwise noted. Estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²In addition to the commodities listed, lignite may have been produced, but available information was inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

³Source: Bank of Sierra Leone.

TABLE 2
SIERRA LEONE: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2018

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Bauxite	Sierra Mineral Holdings I Ltd. (Vimetco N.V., 100%)	Sierra Minerals Mine, 150 kilometers southeast of Freetown	2,000
Cement	Sierra Leone Cement Corp. Ltd. (HeidelbergCement AG, 100%)	Leocem cement plant, Freetown	600
Diamond thousand carats	OCTEA Diamond Group (BSG Resources Ltd., 100%)	Two kimberlite pipes, 2 kilometers from the district capital of Koidu	540
Gold kilograms	Artisanal miners	Various locations throughout the country	NA
Iron ore	Tonkolili Iron Ore (SL) Ltd. (African Minerals Ltd., 75%, and Shandong Iron and Steel Group Co. Ltd., 25%)	Tonkolili Mine, ¹ 190 kilometers northeast of Freetown	20,000
Do.	Timis Corp.	Marampa Mine, ¹ 150 kilometers northeast of Freetown	5,400
Titanium, ilmenite concentrate	Sierra Rutile Ltd. (Iluka Resources Ltd., 100%)	Lanti Dry and Gagama Mines., Moyamba and Bonthe districts	41
Titanium, rutile concentrate	do.	do.	200
Zirconium, zircon concentrate	do.	do.	10

Do., do. Ditto. NA Not available.

¹On care-and-maintenance status.