



# 2019 Minerals Yearbook

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**LESOTHO [ADVANCE RELEASE]**

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# THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF LESOTHO

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The economy of Lesotho was largely dependent on world demand for the country's principal mineral export commodities, notably diamond. In 2019, the country ranked 7th among the world's leading producers of diamond in terms of value and 10th in terms of volume (Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, 2020). 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 and the Middle East, which are available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/africa-and-middle-east>.

## Reference Cited

Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, 2020, Annual global summary—2019 production, imports, exports, and KPC counts: Kimberley Process Rough Diamond Statistics, June 25, 1 p. (Accessed July 1, 2020, at [https://kimberleyprocessstatistics.org/static/pdfs/public\\_statistics/2019/2019GlobalSummary.pdf](https://kimberleyprocessstatistics.org/static/pdfs/public_statistics/2019/2019GlobalSummary.pdf).)

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

Commodity <sup>2</sup>		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>INDUSTRIAL MINERALS</b>						
Diamond, gem, unspecified	carats	304,232	342,014	1,126,409	1,294,283	1,113,526

<sup>1</sup>Table includes data available through July 7, 2020. All data are reported unless otherwise noted.

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

TABLE 2  
LESOTHO: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2019

(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, and quarries at Ha Motlohelo, Phoqoane, and Tsikoane	13,000
Do.		Majara Bricks (Proprietary) Ltd.	Plant and quarry at Berea Hills, about 12 kilometers northeast of Maseru	NA
Diamond	carats	Letšeng Diamonds (Proprietary) Ltd. (Gem Diamonds Ltd., 70%, and Government, 30%)	Letseng Mine, about 140 kilometers east-northeast of Maseru	100,000 <sup>c</sup>
Do.	do.	Liqhobong Mining Development Company (Proprietary) Ltd. (Firestone Diamonds plc, 75%, and Government, 25%)	Liqhobong Mine, about 120 kilometers east-northeast of Maseru	1,000,000
Do.	do.	Mothae Diamonds (Pty) Ltd. (Lucapa Diamond Company Ltd., 70%, and Government, 30%)	Mothae Mine, about 135 kilometers east-northeast of Maseru	43,000 <sup>c</sup>
Do.	do.	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
<b>Stone and sand and gravel:</b>				
Aggregate		Moradi (Proprietary) Ltd.	Tabola, about 50 kilometers northeast of Maseru	NA
Sandstone		Lesotho Stone Enterprises (Proprietary) Ltd.	Lekokaoneng, about 25 kilometers northeast of Maseru	16,000

<sup>c</sup>Estimated. Do., do. Ditto. NA Not available.