

BENIN

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The production of mineral commodities represented a minor part of the economy of Benin, a nation of almost 6 million people. Agriculture, commerce, and trade accounted for more than 80% of the country's gross domestic product, which was estimated to be about \$2.3 billion in 1998¹ (the last year for which data are available) (World Bank, [undated], Benin, accessed April 28, 2000, via URL <http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2000/index.htm>).

Regulation of mineral extraction industries rests with the Ministère des Mines, de l'Énergie, et de l'Hydraulique. Act No. 83-003 of May 1983 is the Benin Mining Code, Decree 89-296 implements the Code's regulations, and Act No. 83-004 addresses fiscal policy that affects mineral development. Law No. 98-030 of February 1999 covers national environmental responsibilities. The Office Béninois de Recherches Géologiques et Minières is responsible for mineral development administration duties.

The mineral sector included artisanal mining of gold and construction materials and production of cement. Formal gold exploration was concentrated in two areas—the Natitingou-Perma and the Djougou/Alédjo-Koura, which is in the Atacora

¹Where necessary, values have been converted from Communauté Financière Africaine francs (CFAf) to U.S. dollars at the average 1998 rate of CFAf588.6=US\$1.00.

gold zone in northwestern Benin. Companies that produced cement in Benin included the Société des Ciments d'Onigbolo and the clinker-grinders Cimentierie du Bénin S.A. and Société des Ciments du Bénin. They had a nameplate production capacity of about 875,000 metric tons per year (t/yr), which was nominally sufficient to fulfill domestic demand that was estimated to be more than 500,000 t/yr (Hargreaves and others, 1998, 310 p.).

In the offshore petroleum sector, Abacan Resource Corp. of Canada acquired seismic data on block 4 and, in August 1999, released block 1. The Government was investigating options for removing the surface facilities of the abandoned Sèmè Field.

Reference Cited

Hargreaves, D., Billing, A., Howse, B., Bal, M., and Amboldt, L., eds., 1998, Global cement report—Benin: Dorking, United Kingdom, International Cement Review, 310 p.

Major Publication

Ministry of Energy, Mining, and Hydraulics, 1992, Benin mining resources: Cotonou, Benin, Ministry of Energy, Mining, and Hydraulics, 23 p.

TABLE 1
 BENIN: ESTIMATED PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES 1/ 2/

Commodity		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Cement, hydraulic	metric tons	578,827 3/	360,000	450,000	520,000	450,000
Gold	kilograms	300	300	500	500	500
Petroleum, crude	thousand 42-gallon barrels	654 3/	600	400	200	--

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1/ Includes data available through May 1, 2000.

2/ In addition to the commodities listed, a variety of industrial minerals and construction materials (clays, gypsum, sand and gravel, and stone) are produced; but information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

3/ Reported figure.