

Mineral Industry Surveys

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BAUXITE AND ALUMINA IN THE FOURTH QUARTER 2023

Imports of crude and dried bauxite in the fourth quarter of 2023 were 380,000 metric tons (t), 41% less than those in the third quarter of 2023, 50% and 52% less than those in the fourth quarters of 2022 and 2021, respectively. Jamaica (79%) and Turkey (20%) were the leading sources of crude and dried bauxite imports in the fourth quarter of 2023. Total imports of crude and dried bauxite in 2023 were 2.22 million metric tons (Mt), 21% and 28% less than those in 2022 and 2021, respectively. Jamaica (83%) and Turkey (16%) were the leading sources of bauxite in 2023 (fig. 1, table 1).

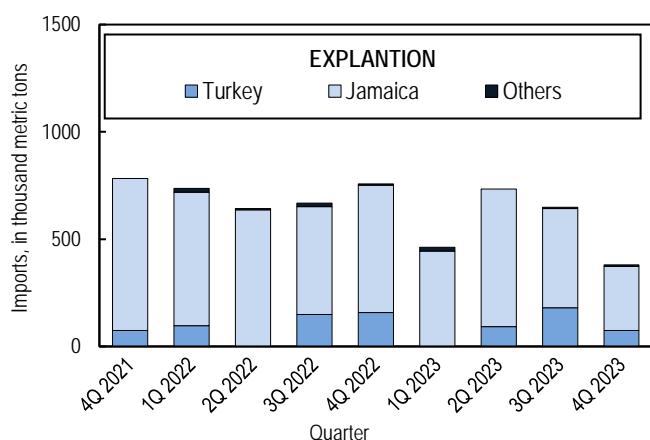


Figure 1. Quarterly imports of crude and dried bauxite from the fourth quarter of 2021 through the fourth quarter of 2023. Sources: Jamaica Bauxite Institute and U.S. Census Bureau.

Imports of alumina during the fourth quarter of 2023 were 359,000 t, 4% more than those in the third quarter of 2023, 29% and 13% less than those in the fourth quarters of 2022 and 2021, respectively. The leading sources of imported alumina in the fourth quarter of 2023 were Brazil (85%) and Canada (5%). Total imports of alumina for consumption in 2023 were 1.36 Mt, 28% and 12% less than those in 2022 and 2021, respectively. The leading sources of alumina imports for consumption in 2023 were Brazil (83%) and Canada (6%) (fig. 2, table 3).

Exports of alumina during the fourth quarter of 2023 were 33,600 t, 7% less than those in the third quarter of 2023, 30% and 20% less than those in the fourth quarters of 2022 and 2021,

respectively. The leading destinations for alumina exported in the fourth quarter of 2023 were Mexico (26%), Canada (17%), and China (14%). Total exports of alumina in 2023 were 139,000 t, 20% and 23% less than those in 2022 and 2021, respectively. Mexico (26%), Canada (20%), and China (13%) were the leading destinations for alumina exports in 2023 (fig. 2, table 3).

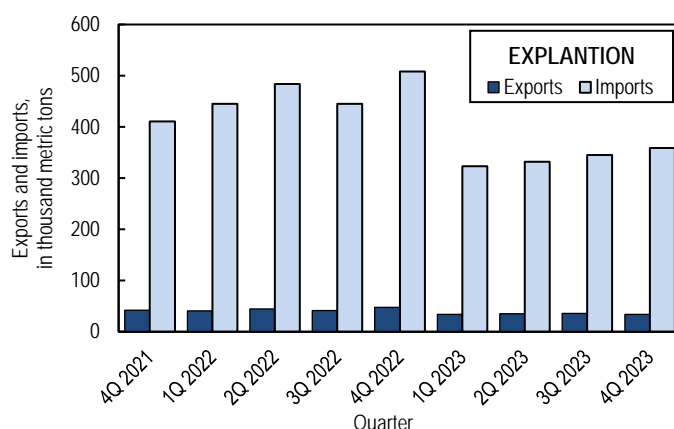


Figure 2. Alumina exports and imports from the fourth quarter of 2021 through the fourth quarter of 2023. Sources: Jamaica Bauxite Institute and U.S. Census Bureau.

Updates

On December 1, Glencore plc (Switzerland) acquired a 45% stake in Mineracão Rio do Norte S.A. and a 30% stake in Alunorte S.A. from Norsk Hydro ASA (Norway) for \$1.11 billion. Glencore joined the Alunorte joint venture with Hydro and other minority shareholders, while the Mineracão Rio do Norte joint venture included South32 Ltd. (Australia) and Rio Tinto Group (United Kingdom). Mineracão Rio do Norte produced bauxite from a 12.5-million-metric-ton-per-year (Mt/yr) mine in Trombetas, Brazil. Alunorte operated a 6.3-Mt/yr alumina refinery in Barcarena, Brazil (Glencore plc, 2023a, b).

On January 8, Alcoa Corp. announced plans to cease alumina production at its Kwinana refinery in 2024, starting in the second quarter. The plant has been operating at 80% capacity since January 2023. Located in Western Australia, the facility

had a full production capacity of 2.2 Mt/yr. Alcoa’s port facilities located near the refinery would continue to operate, and the company’s refineries located at Pinjarra and Wagerup would not be affected (Alcoa Corp., 2024).

On February 1, Mytilineos S.A. (Greece) acquired Imerys Bauxites Greece Single Member S.A., a bauxite miner situated in the Fokida region of Greece. With this purchase, the company was set to become Europe’s largest producer of bauxite, increasing its annual production capacity to 12 Mt/yr. Going forward, the newly acquired company would operate under the name European Bauxites (Mytilineos S.A., 2023, 2024).

References Cited

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TABLE 1
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF CRUDE AND DRIED BAUXITE, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	2022	2023				
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter
Imports for consumption:						
Brazil	845	55	--	--	819	874
Jamaica ²	2,360,000	445,000	642,000	462,000	298,000	1,850,000
Turkey	403,000	--	91,700	180,000	74,800	347,000
Other	44,900	16,900	--	5,770	5,970	28,700
Total	2,800,000	462,000	733,000	648,000	380,000	2,220,000
Exports:						
Canada	1,250	151	1,670	271	290	2,390
Other	1,080	191	220	--	105	516
Total	2,320	342	1,890	271	395	2,900

--Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Source: Jamaica Bauxite Institute.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; data adjusted by the U.S. Geological Survey.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF CALCINED BAUXITE, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	2023											
	2022		1st quarter		2d quarter		3d quarter		4th quarter		1st quarter– 4th quarter	
	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other
Imports for consumption:												
Australia	--	81,500	--	49,500	--	51,900	--	54,900	--	49,500	--	206,000
Brazil	442	43,500	--	56,300	--	803	--	186	--	2,180	--	59,500
China	39,100	17,500	16,800	410	9,480	2,990	15,200	38	19,200	1,640	60,600	5,070
Guyana	67,500	137,000	15,700	5,290	18,700	5,640	6,000	17,000	13,300	26,300	53,700	54,200
Other	1,250	91,700	1,010	56 ^r	342	--	112	12	272	10	1,740	78
Total	108,000	371,000	33,500	112,000	28,500	61,300	21,300	72,100	32,700	79,600	116,000	325,000
Exports:												
Canada	547	--	769	--	1,240	--	140	--	334	--	2,480	--
China	34	107	--	36	--	--	--	--	51	--	51	36
Mexico	3,440	55	1,350	205	145	--	155	--	1,700	--	3,350	205
Other	367	155	82	--	60	3	62	--	66	20	270	23
Total	4,390	317	2,200	241	1,440	3	357	--	2,150	20	6,150	264

^rRevised. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; data adjusted by the U.S. Geological Survey.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF ALUMINA, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

(Metric tons, calcined equivalent)

Country or locality	2023					1st quarter– 4th quarter
	2022	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	
Imports for consumption: ²						
Australia	248,000	--	16	66	(3)	83
Brazil	1,170,000	269,000	285,000	276,000	305,000	1,130,000
Canada	80,600	22,300	19,200	19,500	18,100	79,100
Jamaica ⁴	40,900	13,000	5,990	17,300	10,500	46,900
Spain	85,800	44	--	91	102	237
Other	252,000	18,900	22,600	32,100	25,500	99,100
Total	1,880,000	323,000	332,000	345,000	359,000	1,360,000
Exports: ⁵						
Belgium	4,660	311	696	565	566	2,140
Canada	23,500	7,270	8,330	6,740	5,590	27,900
China ⁶	13,500	4,010	3,580	5,330	4,720	17,600
France	7,690	1,920	1,430	1,110	1,530	5,990
Germany	6,090	1,220	1,500	1,660	1,650	6,020
Korea, Republic of	5,940	1,460	1,390	1,150	1,340	5,340
Mexico	64,400	7,630	9,400	9,810	8,730	35,600
Netherlands	3,830	255	617	359	412	1,640
United Arab Emirates	3,530	763	1,070	519	700	3,060
Other	41,100	8,750	7,400	8,710	8,330	33,200
Total	174,000	33,600	35,400	35,900	33,600	139,000

--Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes imports of aluminum hydroxide reported in calcined equivalent. As shipped, aluminum hydroxide: 546,000 metric tons (t) in 2022; 78,600 t in the first quarter of 2023; 69,400 t in the second quarter of 2023; 92,500 t in the third quarter of 2023; 99,200 t in the fourth quarter of 2023, and 340,000 metric tons (t) in 2023.

³Less than ½ unit.

⁴Source: Jamaica Bauxite Institute.

⁵Includes exports of aluminum hydroxide reported in calcined equivalent. As shipped, aluminum hydroxide: 129,000 t in 2022; 19,800 t in the first quarter of 2023; 23,000 in the second quarter of 2023; 22,800 t in the third quarter of 2023; 22,100 t in the fourth quarter of 2023, and 87,700 metric tons (t) in 2023.

⁶Includes Hong Kong.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; data adjusted by the U.S. Geological Survey.