



2017–2018 Minerals Yearbook

LESOTHO [ADVANCE RELEASE]

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 2017 and 2018, the country ranked seventh among the world's leading producers of diamond in terms of value and tenth in terms of volume (Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, 2019). 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, 2019, Annual global summary—2018 production, imports, exports, and KPC counts: Kimberley Process Rough Diamond Statistics, June 25, 1 p. (Accessed August 15, 2019, at https://kimberleyprocessstatistics.org/static/pdfs/public_statistics/2018/2018GlobalSummary.pdf.)

TABLE 1
LESOTHO: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

Commodity ²	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
INDUSTRIAL MINERALS					
Diamond, gem, unspecified					
carats	346,017	304,232	342,014	1,126,409	1,294,283

¹Table includes data available through August 19, 2019. All data are reported unless otherwise noted.

²In addition to the commodities listed, aggregate, fire 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 2018

(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, 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	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, about 120 kilometers east-northeast of Maseru	800,000 ^c
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 ^c
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

^cEstimated. Do., do. Ditto. NA Not available.