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## [Mineral Resources](#)

### Details

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### Mineral Potentials

Ethiopia's mining sector is undergoing an enormous transformation with an increase in opportunities for investment. A wide variety of mineral resources are available in Ethiopia, according to recently conducted geological studies. Gold production is considered to have huge potential. Meanwhile, additional explorations have confirmed the presence of deposits of platinum, tantalite, soda ash and phosphate rock. Petroleum and other metallic, industrial and chemical minerals have also been identified. Ethiopia's mineral wealth, combined with its skilled and highly motivated workforce, provides the makings for a thriving and profitable mining sector.

### Gold Resources

Ethiopia is blessed with an abundance of natural minerals and resources. Gold is considered to possess the most potential for mining investment and the Government estimates that production could rise to 30 tons per year given sufficient income. Ethiopia produced an estimated 8,500 pounds of gold in fiscal year 2004-2005 (valued at \$90 million) compared to 7,590 pounds in fiscal year 2003-2004. One story that illustrates the Government's commitment to encouraging private investment in the mineral sector is the Legedembi primary gold mine, which was recently privatized by signing a sales contract with National Mining Corporation, a foreign-owned mining company.

### Bentonite

The Main Ethiopian Rift valley and its extension into the Afar depression in northeastern Ethiopia host extensive bentonite deposits. The widespread silicic volcanism and lacustrine environments produce the most favourable sites for the accumulation of acid volcanic ash. The alteration of these ashes is the basis for the formation of bentonite. The main occurrences are in the Ledi, Gewane, and Warssisa areas in the Afar depression. The bentonitic beds are part of a thick sequence of lacustrine sediments that consist of clays, silts, sands, calcareous grits, gravels, conglomerates

basaltic flows and ashes.

The Bentonitic beds are part of a thick sequence of lacustrine sediments, which were deposited near the western margin of the central part of the Afar depression.

### **Potash**

Musely, the largest potash deposit in the country was extensively explored during the 1960s and the Crescent deposit was discovered later. Musely has been explored less. Therefore, there is an opportunity for investors which are currently conducting exploration to better delineate the ore body and improve the outdated reserve estimates, and mining to develop the existing potash resource. The development of Dallol potash in Ethiopia will help in: obtaining foreign currency, creation of employment opportunity, development of industry, agriculture and economic development of the country, and this contribution conforms with the realization of Agricultural Lead Policy of the country.

### **Tantalum**

The presently known potential of tantalum and niobium in Ethiopia is Kenticha, in the Adola area, Southern Ethiopia. The complex Ta-Li mineralization of the Kenticha deposit is related to granite and pegmatite bodies and to lateritic mantles of weathering on the above bodies. The metal occurrence is hosted in an elongated and linear belt (the Kenticha belt). The Kenticha belt extends for over 100km, as estimated from Katarwa Mountain on the south to the left bank of the Genale River on the north and covers an area of more than 250km<sup>2</sup>.

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