

Australia's mineral resources maintain world status

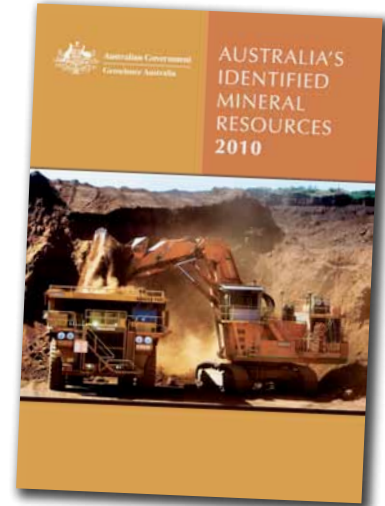
A recent assessment by Geoscience Australia concludes that Australia's mining sector continues to hold the potential to remain the most important export earning sector of the Australian economy for the foreseeable future. This trend is based on the latest annual assessment of Australia's minerals inventory—*Australia's Identified Mineral Resources 2010*.

Australia's Identified Mineral Resources 2010 includes estimates of Australia's mineral resources at the end of December 2009 for all major and several minor mineral commodities based on published and unpublished data available to Geoscience Australia. These resource estimates give a long term view of what is likely to be mined. They are compared with national totals of ore reserves for each commodity, which provides the industry view of what is likely to be mined in the short to medium term. Mine production data are based on figures from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences.

The assessment provides information on and analysis of mineral exploration expenditures in Australia in recent years and shows that Australia's Economic Demonstrated Resources (EDR)* for a number of mineral commodities increased during 2009. These include:

- Recoverable EDR of **black coal** in 2009 increased by 11.5 per cent to 43.8 gigatonnes which represents seven per cent of the world's economic recoverable black coal resources and ranks Australia as having the world's fifth largest resources. The Bowen Basin in Queensland contains 35 per cent of Australia's recoverable EDR of black coal and the Sydney Basin in New South Wales contains 31 per cent.
- Australia's EDR of **copper** rose by 2.5 million tonnes in 2009 to 80.4 million tonnes, an increase of three per cent, with most of the increase in New South Wales. South Australia has the largest EDR at 56.5 million tonnes, mainly in the Olympic Dam deposit, which is 70 per cent of the national total.
- **Gold** mining and exploration occurs in all states and the Northern Territory. Australia's EDR of gold rose by 18 per cent to 7399 tonnes in 2009, while production increased 3.5 per cent to 223 tonnes. Western Australia has 40 per cent of Australia's EDR, while South Australia has 31 per cent and New South Wales 20 per cent.

* Companies listed on the Australian Securities Exchange are required to report publicly on Ore Reserves and Mineral Resources under their control, using the Joint Ore Reserves Committee (JORC) Code. Data reported for individual deposits are compiled by Geoscience Australia and used in the preparation of national assessments of Australia's mineral resources. EDR are estimated by the addition of JORC Code figures for Proven and Probable Ore Reserves plus that part of the JORC Measured and/or Indicated Mineral Resources that are considered likely to be economic.



Collectively these three account for more than 90 per cent of national gold EDR.

- Approximately one third of Australia's gold EDR are in gold-only deposits often referred to as 'lode gold' deposits (such as the Super Pit, and Sunrise Dam deposits) whereas two thirds of gold EDR are in polymetallic deposits. These polymetallic resources are mainly copper-gold deposits (such as Cadia, Cadia East, Boddington and Telfer) and iron oxide-copper-gold deposits (such as Olympic Dam and Prominent Hill). Increases in Australia's gold EDR in 2009 was due largely to increases at eight of the larger producing deposits. This follows the trend of recent years for growth in Australian EDR being driven by new resources delineated at these deposits. Growth in EDR at all other Australian deposits has only just covered EDR lost to production. Four major polymetallic deposits have more than 50 per cent of Australia gold resources—Olympic Dam, Cadia, Boddington and Telfer.

- The EDR of **iron ore** increased by 16.7 per cent to 28 gigatonnes which is about 17 per cent of world economic resources and the world's second largest EDR. Western Australia has 98 per cent of Australia's EDR with about 81 per cent occurring in the Pilbara region.

A free download of *Australia's Identified Mineral Resources 2010* is available through the Geoscience Australia website and other fundamental data on the minerals sector can be accessed through the *Atlas of Australia's Mineral Resources, Mines and Processing Centres*.

For more information

email ausgeomail@ga.gov.au

Related articles/websites

Australia's Identified Mineral Resources 2010

https://www.ga.gov.au/products/servlet/controller?event=GEOCAT_DETAILS&catno=71584

Atlas of Australia's Mineral Resources, Mines and Processing Centres.

www.australianminesatlas.gov.au/

New Gazetteer of Australia online!

The Gazetteer of Australia is the authoritative source for the location and spelling of approved place names for Australia and its territories. The recently released 10th edition—*Gazetteer of Australia 2010*—contains more than 332 000 official and unofficial place names, with data supplied by the Australian, state and territory government agencies responsible for administering place names.

The production and distribution of the *Gazetteer of Australia 2010* was overseen by Geoscience Australia on behalf of the Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying & Mapping (ICSM). The committee, which includes representatives from each jurisdiction, has been custodian of the Gazetteer dataset for some time and provided the specifications for compilation of the data.

The *Gazetteer of Australia 2010* is the first version to be available under the *Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia* licence. This licence allows the user to copy, distribute, transmit and adapt the data for their own purposes with the only condition being that users must attribute the source of the original data.



Another feature of this version is that the data can be downloaded for free through the Geoscience Australia website, in MS Access and ASCII format. This will make the gazetteer a more convenient reference for users requiring authoritative place names across Australia.

For more information

visit https://www.ga.gov.au/products/servlet/controller?event=GEOCAT_DETAILS&catno=71110

Related articles/websites

Geoscience Australia's Place Name Search facility

www.ga.gov.au/place-name/