

Japan Mining Report 2012

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Abstracts

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We expect the Japanese mining industry to reach US\$9.99bn in value by 2016, an annual average growth rate of only slightly more than 1.0% from 2011 levels. The country has practically little to no mineral resources, hence our view of slow growth for the industry. That said, the country has some production potential in industrial minerals, such as dolomite, silica sands, silica stone and limestone. Of note is the country's 40.4 billion tonnes (bnt) of limestone reserves.

Japan is also a very minor gold producer (2011 production of 279,000 ounces). In line with Japan's mineral policy to secure its long-term supply of raw materials, the Japanese government, through Japan Oil, Gas, and Metals Corporation (JOGMEC), continues to search for exploration and developmental mining assets around the world. Despite the country's small mining industry, Japanese companies will remain important and dominant players in the international mining scene due to their significant investments in mining, metal, and commodity trading firms outside Japan. The lack of mining resources inland pushed Japanese companies and the Japanese government to consider seabed mining. The government has assumed a leading role in developing robotic deep-sea mining technology research and can be a key growth area in the long term.

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