

# Guinea's Golden Decade of Bauxite Export Growth

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## **Abstract**

Over the past decade, annual bauxite exports from Guinea have increased from 18.5 million tonnes (dry) in 2013 to 111 million tonnes (dry) in 2023, representing a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 20 %. Almost all of the additional tonnes mined and exported from Guinea over the ten-year period have been destined for China, despite the enormous geographic distance between the two countries. Guinean bauxite is characterized by its high gibbsite content and low reactive silica content, which makes it highly desirable for alumina production, typically using low-temperature (LT) Bayer processing. Chinese domestic bauxite is characterized by its high diasporic bauxite content and high silica content, which requires high-temperature (HT) Bayer processing. This paper seeks to explore the drivers behind China's voracious appetite for imported bauxite, its ability to adapt existing refining capacity from HT to LT Bayer processing and how Guinea has managed to position itself as the country of choice for Chinese bauxite importers.

**Keywords:** Bauxite, Guinea, Bayer, Diaspore, Gibbsite.