

who are very opposed to mining in any form and are unyielding in their opposition regardless of the fact that mineral resources must be exploited for national development. Mineral extraction in all forms has been banned in designated protected areas and all forest reserves. This decision has recently protected over 74 726 hectares, known as the Cockpit Country Protected Area, inclusive of hydrological and ecological features and cultural and heritage sites. The areas protected under forest reserves have also been expanded. The decision to forego the exploitation of these areas will cost the country millions of tonnes of high-grade bauxite and limestone with potential earnings of billions of US dollars.

Overall, the bauxite industry has had a positive impact on the development of Jamaica as a whole and especially, towns or villages surrounding their operations, such as Mandeville, Manchester; Santa Cruz and Junction St Elizabeth; Brown's Town, St Ann; May Pen, Clarendon and Ewarton, St Catherine. Mined-out lands have been earmarked for uses such as housing development in the expansion of these towns, for community playing fields and recreational facilities, haul roads have been converted to major roads such as the Winston Jones Highway and the Melrose bypass in Manchester and so on. Mined out pits have been used for municipal garbage disposal sites or for domestic water-storage purposes with the use of impermeable linings. The Wigton wind-turbine complex near Newport, Manchester and BMR complex in the Malvern area of St. Elizabeth are both located on bauxite lands, and are now supplying over 100 megawatts of power to the national grid, almost 10 % of our energy requirements. By facilitating these activities on mined out lands, the bauxite industry is indirectly contributing to national development.

8. References

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