

# OPPORTUNITIES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Government of Western Australia  
Department of State Development  
Western Australian Global Network



# Mineral Exploration

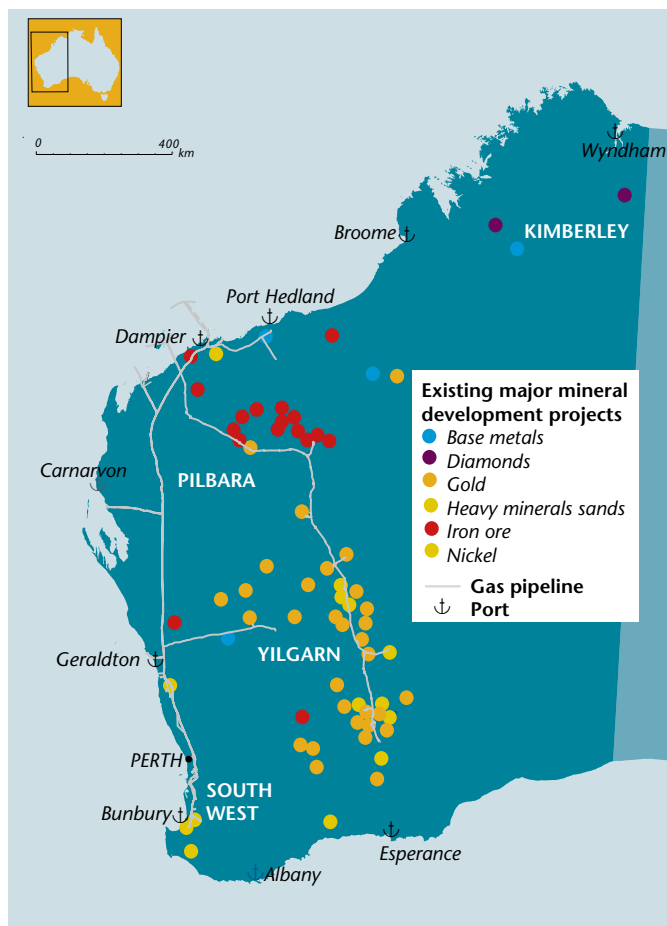
To discover world-class deposits of metalliferous and industrial minerals in a positive investment setting.

## INTRODUCTION

Western Australia is already one of the world's most productive and diversified mineral regions. The State hosts over 1000 operating mine sites (open pit, underground mines and quarries) plus 200 processing plants and some 50 different commodities in commercial production. Collectively, these operations generate around US\$30 billion worth of production annually.

Yet, Western Australia is still largely under-explored because much of the State's 2.5 million square kilometre land mass is covered by soil or other regolith, which provides scope for many new and significant mineral discoveries to be made.

Other major selling points for Western Australia include its pro-development government policies, low sovereign risk and the availability of a wealth of pre-competitive, geo-scientific data.



## WORLD-CLASS PRODUCTION

Western Australia's mineral production record is quite impressive. From just US\$9.4 million in 1964, the value of mineral output has increased exponentially over the years, reaching around A\$37 billion in 2007-2008. Today, the State continues to build on its mineral endowment with new discoveries still being made.

## PROPORTION OF WORLD TRADE

Western Australia ranks highly in the supply of many mineral commodities to world markets including diamonds, rutile, tantalum, zircon, ilmenite, alumina, nickel, iron ore and gold.

WA share of world production for 2007-08

Tantalum	60%
Zircon	27%
Rutile	17%
Diamonds	10%
Ilmenite	16%
Alumina	15%
Nickel	13%
Iron ore	18%
Gold	6%
LNG	7%
Salt	4%

## VARIETY OF MINERALS

The range of minerals found in Western Australia is quite amazing. At least 50 different commodities are currently in commercial production in various parts of the State. There are four principal mineral regions in Western Australia spread across an area about 2500 km long and about 1500 km wide: Kimberley, Pilbara, Yilgarn (including the Eastern Goldfields) and the South West.

## PROSPECTIVITY

While many world-class mineral discoveries have been made since the colonisation of Western Australia in 1829, geoscientists remain confident that many mineral deposits are waiting to be found as large areas of Western Australia remain under-explored. Even in established mineral-rich areas such as the Eastern Goldfields, the potential for new discoveries, is considerable, particularly at depths greater than 300 metres.



## **GEOLOGICAL INFORMATION**

The Geological Survey of Western Australia (GSWA), a division of the Department of Mines and Petroleum, has a vast amount of geological and geophysical information available for explorers. Much of this information can be accessed by contacting specialists within GSWA or through the Department's website—[www.dmp.wa.gov.au](http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au)

## **LEADING-EDGE RESEARCH**

In addition to the extensive map coverage and geological records held by GSWA, energetic groups of research professionals also operate at several cooperative research centres (CRCs) in Perth. Such programs involve considerable input from Government, industry and academic organisations, with the work of specialist CRC geoscientists covering topics such as tectonic analysis and predictive geology for deeply soil-covered areas.

## **RANGE OF EXISTING EXPLORERS**

Most of the world's leading resource companies are involved in mineral exploration in Western Australia, including BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto, Barrick Gold, Newmont, Alcoa and AngloGold. There are also many mid-sized and junior exploration and mining companies and a strong contingent of individual prospectors.

## **INDUSTRY GROUPS**

Western Australia hosts a wide range of industry groups that support the interests of mineral explorers. These include the Perth-based Association of Mining and Exploration Companies, the Western Australian Chamber of Minerals and Energy, the Amalgamated Prospectors and Leaseholders Association and the Australian Drilling Industry Association.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Western Australia has excellent infrastructure to service the mineral exploration industry. It has many drilling contractors, analytical laboratories and geophysical survey specialists, as well as dozens of well-serviced towns, water supplies, large gas pipeline systems, airports, railways and shipping outlets available.

## **COMMUNITY**

Western Australian people are excellent supporters of the resources industry. In fact, the exploration/mining industry accounts for direct and indirect employment of approximately 216 000 jobs — 20 per cent of WA's total labour force.

## **MANY GOOD REASONS TO INVEST IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

- World-class mineral resources
- A wealth of information available for explorers (maps, drill core and geological, geochemical and geophysical data available via the website)
- Unrivalled potential for major new discoveries
- A proven track record in successful resources development
- Proximity to expanding mineral markets in Asia and a shared time zone
- Low sovereign risk
- A world-competitive investment environment.

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