

International Symposium on Uranium Raw Material for the Nuclear Fuel Cycle: Exploration, Mining, Production, Supply and Demand, Economics and Environmental Issues - IAEA CN-216

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Exploration and uranium mining in Niger

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Niger is a Sahelian country bordered by Algeria and Libya to the north, Mali and Burkina Faso to the west, Benin and Nigeria to the south and Chad to the east. Niger has approximately 17 millions habitants in the last census 2013 and covers an area of 1.27 million km².

Niger's economy is centered on subsistence agriculture, animal husbandry and uranium production. Uranium exports accounted for 70% of the national export economy during the 1970s, but falling prices have caused the contribution from uranium to shrink substantially in recent years.

Uranium ore deposits in the Niger Republic are located in the western part of the country, west of the Aïr Mountains. The Arlit site is located 250 km north of Agadez, and 1200 km north-west of Niamey, the capital of Niger.

Niger's climate is very hot and dry (45-50°C in the hot season, 30°C in the winter), daily ranges of temperature vary from 20 to 30°C. There is a rainy season with light rain fall (40 mm) extending from June to September.

After the discovery of the first uranium occurrences in 1956, systematic exploration programmes were conducted. The rocks hosting the uranium mineralisation are commonly arenites of the Carboniferous age Guezouman and Tarat.

The main exploration companies of Uranium in the basin of Tim Mersoï (Northern Iullemeden) are:

- AREVA-Niger for the uranium-bearing prospecting permits of Imouraren, Afouday, Agebout;
- ~~U~~Cominak for the uranium-bearing prospecting permit Western Afasto;
- ~~U~~NorthWestern Mineral Ventures Inc for the uranium-bearing prospecting permits Irhazer and Ingal;
- ~~U~~North Atlantic Resources Ltd. for the uranium-bearing prospecting permit Abélajouad;
- ~~U~~CNUC for the uranium-bearing permit of Tiguida
- Goviex for uranium permit of Madaouéla;
- ~~U~~International uranium LTD for the uranium-bearing prospecting permits of Agelal I, II, III, IV and Aserka I, II, III, IV;
- ~~U~~Total Uranium Corporation for the licences of Chock Negouran I, II, III and IV;
- ~~U~~Trend Field Holding SA for the uranium-bearing prospecting permits Tagaza II and IV

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