METALLIC MINERALS

The country’s rich metallic minerals are mostly concentrated in the Eastern Highland Ranges. Iron ore deposits have been found near Hpakant, Myitkyina, in Northern Shan State, the area around Taunggyi and numerous, yet hardly explored areas in Shan State. Chromium and nickel are mainly found in Rakhine Yoma and western Kachin State, manganese in western Shan State and tungsten predominantly in western Shan State and the Tanintharyi Region. Copper mines are located in central Myanmar, among them large mines such as the Letpadaung mine in Sagaing Region, and many in the Eastern Highland Ranges. Tin and tungsten are mainly mined in the southern highlands as part of the tin/tungsten belt which runs from the tin islands of Banka and Bilitung (Indonesia) via the Malayan peninsula to the area around Loikaw and south of Nay Pyi Taw, then further as far as China. Tin placers are found in eluvial, colluvial, fluviatile and lacustrine sediments and also as near-shore marine tin placers offshore of the Tanintharyi coasts (ESCAP 1996: 98).

PRECIOUS METALS AND GEMSTONES

Precious metals, most of all gold, can be found in many locations, mostly in the inner-Myanmar tertiary basin near Monywa and in the Sino-Myanmar Ranges (e.g. Kyaunkpaahto and Kyaupkazat gold projects). Among the most well-known are the Mogok and Hpakant areas. Jade is predominantly mined in and around Hpakant, amber is found mostly in Hukawng valley. Numerous mining sites are located in the surroundings of Mogok, among them Ywa Thar Yar, Chaung Gyi, Kyak Pya That and Pyaung Gaung (Keller 1983, Kane/Kammerling 1992, Lucas/Pardieu 2014, Kraas 2016c). The most valuable gemstones here are members of the corundum group (the red variety is referred to as ruby; other colours are referred to as sapphires; Harlow/Bender 2013, Hpone-Phyo Kan-Nyunt et al. 2013). In Mogok, numerous other precious and semi-precious stones and metals can be found, such as apatite, amethyst, red- and orange-coloured spinel, green peridot, lapis lazuli, garnet, moonstone, garnet, topaz, tourmaline, zircon, peridot, chrysoberyl or gem beryl, and gold. There are also several extremely rare minerals, such as the predominantly brown-dark violet painite, the black-brown hibonite, the pink pouudretteite, the predominately violet taaffeite (Thanong et al. 2014), the yellowish monazite, the black columbite, the black tantalite or the titanite.

Frauke Kraas and Nay Win Oo