

NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR SOME NON-METALLIC MINERAL RESOURCES ON THE BORDER OF THE PANTANAL PLAIN, BRAZIL

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The Quaternary Pantanal Plain is bordered by three plateaus that concentrate non-metallic mineral resources in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul. The Bodoquena Plateau is formed by Precambrian carbonate rocks of the Corumbá Group, whereas the others, namely the Maracaju - Campo Grande and the Taquari - Itiquira plateaus, are supported by Paleozoic to Mesozoic sedimentary and volcanic rocks of the Paraná Basin. In the Bodoquena Plateau, carbonate rocks are exploited for cement industry, while powdery tufa limestone is mined in Bonito for agricultural use where phosphatic rocks also occur. Clay, the most important mineral resource in the state, is concentrated in the Rio Verde de Mato Grosso - Coxim and Bela Vista - Jardim regions. These deposits are mainly employed for structural ceramics, despite the potential use of some deposits in the manufacture of floor and wall tiles as well as semi-refractory clays. The exploitation of industrial minerals in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul is still not intensive. Nevertheless, new economic perspectives together with improving transportation system to the neighboring State of São Paulo, mainly through the Tietê - Paraná riverway, favour future investments and economic growth. In particular, the ceramic industry shows good perspectives of development to become an important production and even an exportation center in the near future.