

De Beers Sales Down but on the Mend at First 2024 Sight



Proceeds at De Beers' first rough-sales cycle of the year were sluggish in comparison with a year ago, but they have strengthened since the end of 2023.

The [miner](#) brought in \$370 million in January, down 19% versus the equivalent period a year ago, De Beers said Wednesday. However, it was nearly three times the \$137 million the company brought in at its final sight of 2023, which ran from November 9 to December 19.

While the total is lower than average for De Beers' first sight of the year, which generally sees post-holiday restocking, it shows a recovery following months of slow demand, oversupply in the midstream and a reluctance by retailers to buy polished.

The uptick is in large part attributable to De Beers' removal of its concessions toward

the second half of last year that allowed sightolders to refuse goods. The company also [dropped](#) its rough prices by an average of 10% to 15% at the sale.

A reasonably strong Christmas season in the US, as well as an end to the Indian manufacturing sector's freeze on rough imports, also played a part.

“Solid consumer demand for diamonds in the US over the year-end holiday season has certainly helped to stabilize the industry and we are seeing polished-diamond prices increasing again,” said De Beers CEO Al Cook. “Combined with the restart of rough-diamond imports into India, this has led to demand for rough diamonds increasing substantially in the first sales cycle of 2024.”

Nonetheless, full recovery will be slow, Cook cautioned.

“However, as the prospects for economic growth in many major economies remain uncertain, we expect that it may take some time for rough-diamond demand to fully recover,” he added.

The figures include the sight, which took place in Botswana from January 15 to 19, as well as auction sales. De Beers' next sight is [scheduled](#) to run from February 26 to March 1. The company is set to release its 2023 production report on February 8 and its full financial results on February 22.

https://youtu.be/lnU5zelqM_s

Main image: Rough diamonds at a site. (De Beers/Armoury Films/Ben Perry)