

Sales Decline at De Beers' First Sight of 2023



De Beers saw a slowdown in rough sales at its January sight, as clients were hesitant to buy at the start of the year.

The miner brought in \$450 million at its first sales cycle of 2023, a decline of 32% compared with the same period of 2022, it reported Wednesday. Proceeds rose 8% compared with December's revised total of \$417 million.

“As expected, given the macroeconomic outlook at the time, sightholders took a cautious approach in late 2022 in planning their 2023 allocation schedule, with a greater weighting of goods to be purchased as the year progresses,” said De Beers CEO Bruce Cleaver.

De Beers [reduced prices](#) of 0.75-carat and larger stones, reflecting weakness in that category, while prices for in-demand smaller stones increased, market insiders told *Rapaport News*.

The diamond industry is showing mixed signs, with several data providers reporting a [year-on-year drop](#) in jewelry sales for the recent US holiday season amid inflation, rising interest rates and a shift toward spending on travel and experiences. Retail “performed well” during that period, Cleaver insisted. Meanwhile, a rebound in consumer sentiment on the Chinese mainland following the country’s Covid-19 wave has given the diamond industry a boost.

“While there is still some uncertainty over the macroeconomic environment, we see cautious optimism for demand to increase as China continues to reopen and inflation rates start to decrease in many major economies,” the executive added.

The figures include the sight, which took place in Botswana from January 16 to 20, as well as auction sales. De Beers’ next sight is scheduled to run from February 20 to 24. The company is set to release its 2022 production report on Thursday and its full financial results on February 23.

Image: An employee in South Africa holding a rough diamond. (Ben Perry/Armoury Films/De Beers)