

Potential of Offshore Tin Deposits in Myanmar

Than Htun¹

¹Myanmar Geosciences Society (uthanmhtun@gmail.com)

Abstract

The tin deposits are distributed as a belt on the continents of Europe, Africa, North America and South America as both economic deposits and as occurrences tin minerals of mineralogical interest. Southeast Asian Tin Belt is also formed as a belt similar with those of other continents.

The great South-East Asian Tin Belt is one of the significance tin producers of the world and it produced 65% of the world production as much as four times relative to the size of other region. It forms a narrow arcuate belt about 540km wide and 5,000 km long, stretching from Yunnan in the north through eastern and southern Myanmar, peninsular Thailand, and Malaysia to the Indonesian Tin islands of Belitung in the south. Myanmar Tin/Tungsten Belt occupies about 40% of the South-East Asian Tin Belt.

Mining for tin and tungsten in the Tanintharyi Region was mentioned in reports dating from the Middle age. A peak production was reached in 1939 showing an output of 9,016 tons of tin/tungsten concentrate. In 2012, Tanintharyi Region has more than 480 tin/tungsten deposits whereas only nine major mines were in operation with limited scale. Prior to the Second World War, there were 8 dredges in the Tanintharyi Region with some of them working in bays and river channels quite close to the coast. In Thailand and Indonesia, extensive offshore tin deposits have been discovered and are being worked profitably for many years. The regional geology and mineralization of Thailand and southern Myanmar are quite similar and it is obviously seen that Tanintharyi offshore area is northern continuation of Thailand offshore tin deposits.