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# The coalfields of south-central Africa: a current perspective

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Africa is host to coal deposits stretching from the far north to the far south and ranging in age from the Carboniferous through to the Miocene. Coal production in the north of the continent is however currently of a very limited nature compared to that in the south, where due mainly to its low cost and relative abundance, the commodity has long been the primary source of energy. Coal is also used extensively in the metallurgical (titanium, ferrochrome, ferromanganese and steel) industries. All of the main exploited coal deposits in South-Central Africa are hosted in sedimentary rocks of the Late Carboniferous to Middle Jurassic aged Karoo Supergroup and their temporal equivalents. Apart from being the host to the regions' coals, the Karoo aged rocks also contain a world class palaeontological record. This work focuses on the coal deposits of the Karoo basins of South-Central Africa and in particular those countries that are currently producing coal (including South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania) and provides an updated high level overview, focusing on the current status and historical development, general geology (including coal seam nomenclature and general coal qualities) and resource base of each of the main producing coalfields.