

The Embassy cautions U.S. investors that importing gold from Mali is a high-risk activity. Following the steps outlined below does not significantly reduce that risk. The Embassy knows of numerous cases where gold was “switched out” just prior to being loaded onto an airplane, or where Malian transporters absconded with advance fees paid by the U.S. client. Please be advised that there is essentially no recourse for recovering money as a result of a gold scam.

Recently many individuals have been involved in gold scams originating from several countries in Africa, particularly from Nigeria, Liberia and Sierra Leone, however Mali is also involved.

Victims are often convinced of the authenticity of the scam by the use of forged or false documents bearing the appearance of official government letterhead, seals, as well as false official letters. The perpetrator may attempt to establish credibility by arranging a meeting between the victim and “government officials” in what may appear to be government offices.

Please note that the United States Government cannot act as an attorney or other legal advisor for US citizens or companies abroad. If you get involved in a dispute you will need to work through the Malian legal system with a privately-retained lawyer. The U.S. Embassy in Bamako maintains a list of attorneys willing to work with U.S. citizens to resolve legal matters in Mali, please click here for access to this list.

In order to prevent yourself from becoming a victim of these scams, please review the following *procedures which was provided by the Director of Gold Exports, Direction Nationale du Commerce et de la Concurrence*:

- 1 – Upon arrival in Mali, it is recommended that you visit the “guichet unique”, or one-stop shop, of the DNCC where you will receive all relevant information about procedures and fees.
- 2 – After the purchase of gold from a licensed gold exporter, you will need to have the gold assayed (titré). This can be done either at by the Direction Nationale de Geologie et Mines (DNGM) or by a licensed private assayer.
- 3 – The assayer will then bring paperwork declaring the intention to export to the DNCC.
- 4 – The assayer, or someone commissioned by the assayer, goes to the Direction Generale des Impôts (DGI) to pay the export taxes.

According to the DNCC, if well organized, this could be done in a single day. It should also be possible for a U.S. company representative to remain with the gold during all of these steps.

The DNCC keeps a list of licensed exporters, or *comptoirs*. There is a good deal of turnover in this sector, however, and for this reason it is important to request a current list from DNCC. The DNCC offered a word of caution, stating that, even if licensed, an exporter may not be reputable. DNCC can indicate which are the more reliable of the exporters.

***Please note that it is illegal to export gold dust from Mali.
Gold can only be exported in the form of bars.***

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For additional information, please see the Department of State website on [International Financial Scams](#).

If you have been victimized please contact the [Consular Section](#). You may also find some important resources for [Victims of International Financial Scams](#).