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Minerals critical to our future

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The recently announced “Queensland Critical Mineral Strategy” highlights the opportunity for this state in developing our critical minerals. These are minerals such as cobalt, copper, graphite and silica, which are essential in building the wind and solar farms and batteries needed for renewable energy.

Queensland’s mining industry provides \$95bn a year to the state economy, supporting one in six jobs and generating \$9bn in royalties that helps fund hospitals, roads and schools. Ensuring this industry continues to thrive requires collaboration across all sectors.

As an indicator of the world’s energy transition, the International Energy Agency has projected that global investment in clean energy will reach US\$1.7 trillion in 2023. Solar power is a star performer, with more than US\$1bn per day to be invested this year, eclipsing spending on upstream oil.

Fortunately, Queensland is in an ideal position to capitalise on this green energy revolution. Far North Queensland boasts some of the

world’s highest purity silica sand, an essential ingredient in solar panels. Around 70 per cent by weight of every solar panel is made from this material, yet high purity silica sand is in increasingly short supply. Located near Cape Flattery, Diatreme’s silica sand projects have the potential to become a major source of supply for this boom industry.

Every 1 million tonnes of high quality, low iron silica sand mined from Diatreme’s projects could be used to produce 103 million solar panels, providing the equivalent emissions savings from taking 4.25 million cars off the road.

Diatreme is working closely with key stakeholders to develop these projects. Engagement is critical and First Nations and other local community members have been at the heart of this.

The Cape Flattery area has been identified by the Queensland government as a potential critical minerals hub for silica sand production, a hugely significant initiative.

It is projects such as these that will deliver transformational benefits for regional Queensland.

By working together, we can ensure Queensland has an extremely bright future as a critical minerals powerhouse, creating new opportunities

and wealth for generations to come.

Neil McIntyre is the chief executive of Diatreme Resources