



MEDIA RELEASE

## TRADITIONAL OWNERS BACK GALALAR PROJECT

**HOPEVALE, September 2, 2020:** Traditional owner representative body, Hope Vale Congress (RNTBC) announced today their strong support for the emerging Galalar Silica Project (Project) in North Queensland, with its jobs and investment set to deliver long-term economic benefits for the Hopevale/Cooktown region.

Under a partnership with Diatreme Resources (the Project developer), Hope Vale Congress (Congress) on behalf of affected native title holders will hold a 12.5% stake in the project, ensuring that the economic benefits flow directly to the region's Traditional Owners for their long-term benefit.

In addition the Thiithaarr Clan, Traditional Owners of the Cape Bedford area of the Hope Vale region, along with Congress have been working with Diatreme for around four years to ensure the feasibility of establishing a silica sand mine on its traditional country.

"The aim is to utilise a small part of our country to create a real economy that reduces welfare dependency for our people and the wider community of Hope Vale," said senior Thiithaarr Clan representative Mr Eddie Deemal.

"This will also create inter-generational wealth that gives young people the opportunity to build a strong future that ensures they have the resources and skills to care for the country."

Hope Vale Congress of Clans, the Registered Native Title Body Corporation for the area, has been key in advancing negotiations between Diatreme and the Traditional Owners.

Congress Chair Wilfred Gordon said: "This partnership provides an equity share for Congress traditional owners in the mining operation, with a subsequent long-term share of profits. These profits will be reinvested into economic, social, health and cultural initiatives for not only the clan groups, but for the wider Hope Vale community. This project will create around 60 plus jobs in the region for at least 20 plus years."

He added: "We have also been in the driving seat to oversee the potential environmental and cultural impacts of the mine and are convinced that these potential impacts are minor and can be effectively managed."

The Traditional Owners have engaged collegially with Hope Vale Shire Council and Cook Shire Council and are confident of their support for the Galalar project, which is targeting production of premium-quality silica for the fast-growing Asian solar PV industry and other high-tech applications.

### Local applications

Importantly, there could be local applications for the product, according to Hope Vale Congress.



“We are now collaborating with the Queensland Government, the Commonwealth Government, James Cook University and the Townsville Regional Council to investigate options for secondary treatment of the product in Townsville using by-products from other industries, together with potentially new investment in additional tertiary treatment to produce high end products in Australia,” Mr Gordon said.

“This could create significant numbers of new jobs and decrease Australia’s dependency for renewable energy infrastructure on overseas suppliers.”

### **Logistical solution**

Diatreme’s preferred transport solution is for the silica product to be shipped to export markets via a new purpose-built barge ramp close to Nob Point, with transshipping occurring within the Cape Flattery designated port area.

This option is strongly backed by Hopevale Congress, since it would reduce community impacts compared to the alternative option of trucking the product to Cooktown for transshipment from Cooktown port.

“Our strong preference is shipment close to Nob Point. Trucking the sand to Cooktown and shipping it out from Endeavour River is not a preferred option for safety, environmental and social potential impacts,” Mr Gordon said.

“We understand Diatreme are seeking support for their preferred transport solution from the Queensland Government and we back this stance 100%.”

Commenting on the project, Eddie Deemal, senior elder of the Thiithaarr Clan said:

“We have been working on this great project for years. This gives us the opportunity to create long-term real jobs for our young people.

“The mine site, which is less than 1 per cent of our country, will be carefully monitored and maintained and will be a drive-in/drive-out operation, allowing the workers to go home each day to look after their families and become great role models for the kids.

“Our peoples’ long-term aspiration is ensuring our children are not caught in the welfare dependency trap and can create real wealth for their families and own their own homes.”

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For more information regarding Hope Vale Congress, contact:  
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