

# PRESS RELEASE

## Clean energy, hi-tech sectors drive demand for high-quality silica

*15 March 2018: The race to develop more effective and efficient solar panels has resulted in an increased demand for relatively rare raw materials such as high-grade quartz silica. To meet this demand, Suricate Minerals is fast-tracking its development of high-quality quartz deposits in Mauritania.*

The mining and exploration company is positioning itself strategically to supply raw materials of exceptional quality for the clean-energy boom, which is spurring innovation in everything from solar panels to electric cars. "In order to play our role in contributing to a better world for all, we focus on the raw-material requirements of these new industries, which require complementary mining development in order to be able to advance," Suricate Minerals Executive Director **Ahmed Hertani** comments.

"The competition between the major innovators in this space not only relies on improved processes, but also on ready access to essential raw materials," Hertani adds. One of Suricate Minerals' most promising prospects is in Tasiast in north-west Mauritania, about 200 km from the Port of Nouadhibou.

The tenement possesses high-purity quartz, with around 99.99% pure silicon, which is a sufficiently pure metallurgical grade for solar-cell production, in particular, a highly-competitive renewable-energy sector. In addition, such high-grade silica is prevalent in other hi-tech advances from touch screens to high-end optic products.

It is also ideal for glass and dry graded silica sand, used extensively in water purification, filtration and separation systems. Silica sand can be used as a filter media to remove solids to a level of between 30 and 40 microns in water purification, where solids removal is essential. Moreover, it constitutes the major raw material for engineering panels, another niche market with an exponential growth rate.

Silica aids in the efficiency of biomass production by improving heat transfer and controlling temperatures, as well as limiting nitrogen oxide emissions and reducing corrosion. Silica also maximises energy conversion in solar panels, thereby supporting one of the world's cleanest and cheapest available energy sources. Furthermore, silica is an essential component in the fibreglass used to manufacture wind-turbine panels due to its excellent strength-to-weight ratio.

"Our long-term vision is not only to produce raw silica and quartz materials, but to have some level of further production undertaken in-country, to facilitate the creation of downstream job opportunities," Hertani adds.

While still in the early stages of developing its prospects in Mauritania, Suricate Minerals has conducted considerable geophysical and geochemistry testing at various sites to date, with positive results verified by German materials testing and analysis company Dorfner Anzaplan.

"We continue to receive significant interest from investors and project developers in collaborating on our prospects, which include quartz, barite, lithium, copper, and gold. With the support of financiers and proven project partners, we could have operational quartz mines within the next year," Hertani comments.

In addition to the extraction of silica, Suricate Minerals hopes to produce both quartz lumps and sands. Mauritania has an established quartz mining and product manufacturing sector, with companies producing high-quality white crystalline, semi-crystalline and milky quartz grit, sand,

lumps and white and coloured quartz blocks. Other products include quartz tiles, mosaic slabs, kitchen countertops, backsplashes, wall cladding, tables, sinks, and bathtubs.

***Ends***

**Notes to the Editor**

To download hi-res images for this release, please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the Suricate Minerals link to view the company's press office.

**About Suricate Minerals**

Suricate Minerals is a Mauritanian-owned group specialising in natural-resource exploration and development. The group's tenements cover a broad range of strategic mineral commodities, including gold, iron ore, barite, lithium, copper, and high-purity quartz. Suricate Minerals' strategy is to explore for critical minerals in some of the most under-explored regions of Mauritania. The group's directors have been involved in the consolidation and exploration of key projects for a number of years, giving them an important understanding of the potential of these mineral-rich tenements and the requirements for future exploration.

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