
Submission on the Draft Minerals Strategy for New Zealand to 2040

To: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)

Subject: Inclusion of gold in the draft minerals critical list for New Zealand (A draft Minerals Strategy for New Zealand to 2040)

Date: 10 October 2024

From: Damian Spring, CEO of Santana Minerals Limited and Matakanui Gold Limited

Introduction

I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft critical minerals list for New Zealand. The strategy outlines a comprehensive vision for the future of New Zealand's minerals sector, focusing on economic growth, clean energy transition, innovation, and environmental responsibility. However, I believe that the inclusion of gold as a strategic mineral could further enhance the strategy's objectives given the central role gold increasingly has as a key component to several drivers of New Zealand's economic growth. This submission is on behalf of Matakanui Gold Limited, a fully-owned subsidiary of Santana Minerals Limited, a key player in the gold mining sector in New Zealand.

Economic Contribution

Gold mining has historically been a significant contributor to New Zealand's economy. Including gold in the strategy could:

1. **Boost Export Revenue:** Gold is a valuable export commodity. Enhancing gold mining operations could significantly increase export revenues, contributing to the goal of doubling the sector's export value by 2035.
2. **Job Creation:** Expanding gold mining activities would create numerous job opportunities, supporting local communities and contributing to regional development.
3. **Investment Attraction:** Highlighting gold as a strategic mineral could attract both domestic and international investments, fostering economic growth and technological advancements in the sector.

Support for Clean Energy Transition

Gold plays a crucial role in various clean energy technologies that play an increasing role in New Zealand's economy and climate change response. It is used in the manufacturing of solar panels and other renewable energy systems. Including gold in the strategy would:

1. **Enhance Clean Energy Technologies:** By supporting the mining and processing of gold, New Zealand can contribute to the domestic and global supply chain for clean energy technologies.
2. **Promote Sustainable Practices:** Emphasising environmentally responsible gold mining practices can set a benchmark for sustainability in the minerals sector.

Innovation and Technological Advancements

Gold mining and flow on economic activity can benefit from and contribute to technological innovations. Including gold in the strategy would:

1. **Encourage Technological Innovation:** Investment in gold mining can drive advancements in mining technologies, improving efficiency and reducing environmental impact.
2. **Foster Research and Development:** Supporting R&D in gold mining can lead to new discoveries and more sustainable mining practices.

Environmental and Social Responsibility

Gold mining, when conducted responsibly, can align with the strategy's environmental and social goals. Including gold in the strategy would:

1. **Promote Best Practices:** Establishing guidelines for responsible gold mining can ensure that environmental and social impacts are minimized.
2. **Community Engagement:** Involving local communities in gold mining projects can enhance social license to operate and ensure that benefits are shared.

Advocacy from Santana Minerals Limited

Santana Minerals Limited, a leading gold exploration and development company, strongly supports the inclusion of gold in the Minerals Strategy. [Santana Minerals is committed to developing the Bendigo-Ophir project into a world-class, environmentally sustainable mining operation that will bring inter-generational employment and prosperity to the Central Otago region¹](#). The company's vision aligns with the strategy's goals of economic growth, innovation, and environmental responsibility. Gold mined by Santana Minerals and others will play an increasingly important role in the growth of New Zealand's domestic and export economy and provide resilience to critical supply chains both domestically and internationally.



Conclusion

Incorporating gold into the Minerals Strategy for New Zealand to 2040 would provide significant economic, technological, and environmental benefits. It would support the strategy's overarching goals of enhancing prosperity, demonstrating the sector's value, and delivering minerals for a clean energy transition. I urge the Ministry to consider the inclusion of gold as a strategic mineral in the final version of the strategy.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Sincerely,

Damian Spring
CEO
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Privacy of natural persons