

LATIN AMERICA DOWNUNDER

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MEDIA ALERT

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WA Minister for Mines & Petroleum Bill Johnston talks up growing battery materials sector

Kicking off the second session at Paydirt's Latin America Down Under Conference in Perth earlier today, Western Australian Minister for Mines and Petroleum Bill Johnston highlighted the growing opportunities coming out of the emerging battery materials sector for both Western Australia and South America.

Addressing a crowd of about 300 delegates, Mr Johnston said there was a genuine opportunity for WA to reap the rewards of the growing scale of the battery materials industry.

"We have the resources in the ground, we have the capacities and the technologies, and we believe with careful partnership between government and investors we can get a genuine long-term processing industry," he told the conference.

"And indeed, given those in the successful industries in Argentina and Chile and elsewhere, there's many things we can learn from our friends in Latin America so that we are all successful in this new industry."

Mr Johnston said one particular advantage Australia, and WA especially, had was the greater expectations that society as a whole was putting on supply chains.

"The fact that we have very high standards in WA is now a competitive advantage for operators in this State," he said.

"We can go to end users of materials and make the point that we can guarantee the environmental impact and social impact of projects in WA that may not be able to be

done in other jurisdictions.

“It is our relationships with indigenous people, our high environmental standards, our health and safety standards, and our work and labour standards. These are all now competitive advantages in these types of supply chains.”

Mr Johnston said with the likes of Tianqi Lithium, Kidman Resources, SQM and Albemarle all either investing heavily or looking to invest in their operations within the State, the relationship between WA and Latin America was evident.

The Minister also stressed the point that governments needed to provide a stable environment to allow the private sector to make those necessary and pivotal investments, as well as reap the rewards for those investments.



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