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Australia's biggest diamond on display

Resource Development Minister Paul Henderson is encouraging Darwin residents to take the opportunity to see Australia's largest diamond, on display at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory from this weekend.

"The 104.73 carat diamond was discovered at the Merlin Diamond Mine near Borroloola in March 2002, and is a great example of the mining potential right here in the Northern Territory," Mr Henderson said.

"The Martin Government has opened up 376,000 square kilometres for mineral exploration in the past two years, and has granted 600 exploration licences.

"More than half of exploration licences granted in the last two years have been to companies – including Rio Tinto - looking to uncover more diamond deposits in the Territory."

The Northern Territory sits right across what is known as the North Australian Craton and is considered one of the most prospective regions for diamond exploration in the world.

"New mines can not be developed until new mineral deposits are found, and the Government will continue to work closely with the mining industry, Land Councils and other stakeholders to develop the potential of our natural resource assets."

The diamond will be on display for two weeks from 1pm tomorrow afternoon.

"This diamond is something of a Territory mining icon, and I encourage all Darwin residents to go along and have a look."