



## **Li3 REPORTS LATEST signumBOX RANKINGS**

### ***Flagship Maricunga Project Maintains 2011 Year End Top Project Ranking***

SANTIAGO, CHILE—(Marketwire – January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012) – Li3 Energy, Inc., (OTCBB: LIEG – News) (“Li3”, “Li3 Energy” or the “Company”), a US-listed and South American based global exploration and development company in the lithium and minerals sector, is pleased to announce the independent findings of signumBOX. signumBOX has issued several reports regarding the use of lithium in batteries and vehicles and its prospects and trends. signumBOX is a Chilean based company with extensive experience in the lithium industry and has developed the signumBOX index ranking of more than 90 lithium projects using an objective, quantitative method. The main observations and conclusions of the December 2011 summary report are:

- As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011, according to the signumBOX Performance Index (SPI) ranking, upon achieving Chilean government permits, Li3’s Maricunga Project in its current state, is ranked amongst the top 5 undeveloped lithium projects in the world out of 52 other brine salars;
- Since the Li3 Maricunga Project is still in an early stage, and is based on the second best lithium deposit in Chile, it has further space to improve;
- The advantage Maricunga has over other Chilean salars are, its close proximity to the mining city of Copiapo, the Caldera Port and that sodium chloride and other potassium salts could be obtained as by-products. Its disadvantage is the higher elevation which, generally increases evaporation times;
- The grouping of Chilean salars that includes Maricunga has the highest lithium concentrations, extensions and lithium to potassium ratios. This grouping excludes Atacama which by far has the largest lithium deposit in Chile;
- Argentinean brine deposits have lower lithium and potassium concentrations than Chilean deposits.
- After Atacama, the Maricunga salar has the second highest quality deposit of lithium in Chile;
- It is important to note, that the Maricunga and Atacama salars are located in Chile, and current Chilean regulation does not allow the exploitation of lithium in concessions that were allocated after 1982’s mining code (such as Li3’s concessions with respect to Maricunga);
- The report further states that, out of 52 projects based in brines, Li3’s Maricunga Project was one of seven with the highest potential and higher chances to become part of the lithium supply.

Li3 cautions that the information contained in the signumBOX report was current as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 and is subject to change as the lithium landscape is constantly evolving. Like all index rankings, as other companies’ progress is reported, Li3’s rankings could change. As Li3 executes and accomplishes it’s near and midterm objectives and 2012 goals, we will

submit the data to signumBOX for verification and re-balancing of the index ranking. The signumBOX Summary Report is available through paid subscription and details for this can be found at [www.signumbox.com](http://www.signumbox.com).

Tom Currin, Li3's COO, stated: "These are very exciting times for Li3, as we are making excellent progress advancing our \$8MM Phase One Exploration and Development Plan and site work at Maricunga. We are thrilled with the latest signumBOX Index rankings and Li3 hopes to continue to improve its ranking. Achieving this ranking is testament to the dedication, commitment, and continued hard work of all our contractors, consultant's, employees, Board of Directors, and advisors."

### **About Li3 Energy, Inc.**

Li3 Energy, Inc. is an exploration and developmental stage public company in the lithium mining and energy sector. Li3 aims to acquire, develop and commercialize a significant portfolio of lithium brine deposits in the Americas. With its controlling interest in its Maricunga Project, Li3's goals are to; a) support the global implementation of clean and green energy initiatives; b) meet growing lithium market demand and; c) become a mid-tier, low cost supplier of lithium, potassium nitrate, iodine and other strategic minerals, serving global clients in the energy, fertilizer and specialty chemical industries. Additional information regarding the Company can be found in our recent filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") as well as the information maintained on our website [www.li3energy.com](http://www.li3energy.com).

### **Forward-Looking Statements**

Any statements contained herein which are not statements of historical fact may be deemed to be forward-looking statements, including, without limitation, statements identified by or containing words like "believes," "expects," "anticipates," "intends," "estimates," "projects," "potential," "target," "goal," "plans," "objective," "should", or similar expressions. The Company gives no assurances the assumptions upon which such forward-looking statements are based will prove correct. Forward-looking statements involve risks, uncertainties and assumptions, and are based on information currently available to us. Actual results may differ materially from those expressed herein due to many factors, including, without limitation: initial exploration results; satisfaction of conditions precedent to POSCAN's additional investment; the Company's ability to raise additional capital for exploration; development and commercialization of the Company's projects; future findings and economic assessment reports; issuance of necessary government consents; the Company's ability to identify appropriate corporate acquisition or joint venture opportunities in the lithium mining sector and to establish appropriate technical and managerial infrastructure; political stability in countries in which we operate; and lithium prices. For further information about risks faced by the Company, and its Maricunga Project, see the "Risk Factors" section of the Company's Form S-1/A, filed with the SEC on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The Company undertakes no obligation to update any forward-looking statement contained herein to reflect events or circumstances which arise after the date of this release.

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