

The role of international sustainable development law principles in enabling effective renewable energy policy – a South African perspective.

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SUMMARY

It is universally accepted that renewable energy is an important contributing factor towards the promotion of sustainable development. The implementation of renewable energy needs to be regulated in an effective manner which in turn necessitates the formulation of law and policy geared towards sustainable development.

Recent policy developments in South Africa propose to facilitate the promotion of sustainable development through the implementation of renewable energy, among others. In terms of existing energy policy in South-Africa, the interconnectivity of renewable energy and sustainable development is evident. Most notably, the *White Paper on Renewable Energy* of 2003 promotes increased access to affordable renewable energy in order to contribute to sustainable development. Moreover, the 2008 first review of the *National Energy Efficiency Strategy of the Republic of South-Africa* of 2005 states that in order for the country's renewable energy policy to be considered sustainable, it needs to facilitate development in the social, economic and environmental spheres. Notwithstanding, attaining the goal of sustainable development depends on whether all its effecting principles are catered for in the policy developments. Accordingly, in order to ascertain whether South-African law and policy can successfully facilitate/enable sustainable development via the implementation of renewable energy, a specific methodology is proposed.

In terms of the *New Delhi Declaration* of 2002 there are 7 principles of international law effecting sustainable development. These principles will be used as criteria in a principled assessment of South-African renewable energy law and policy in order to

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establish whether the goal of promoting sustainable development would be effected through the national policy developments.

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