

**PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT: A
PANACEA TO ALL LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT ILLS?**

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SUMMARY

It is anticipated that the occurrence and intensity of disasters will increase globally and in South Africa where typical disasters include droughts, floods, extreme hailstorms, gales, fires and earthquakes, as well as sinkholes arising from mining activity in dolomitic areas. Disasters such as these result in human suffering and damage to the resources and infrastructure on which South Africans rely for their survival and the maintenance of their quality of life. Section 24 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* affords to everyone the right to an environment that is not harmful to his or her health and well-being. It may be argued that a person's sense of environmental security in relation to the potential risks and dangers of disaster falls within the scope of the protection provided by section 24. The responsibility to intervene for the protection of the interests inherent in the constitutional environmental right lies with the government of South Africa. Disaster management specifically is a functional area of competence of national and provincial government, but practice has shown that the actual implementation of and planning for disaster management happens in the local government sphere. Against the backdrop of these introductory discussions and, given the fact that several municipalities in South Africa are under-resourced, this article very specifically aims to critically discuss and describe from a legal perspective the potential and function of public-private partnerships (PPPs) between local government (municipalities) and the private sector (such as industries) in fulfilling the legally entrenched disaster management mandate of municipalities. Through a critical evaluation of some existing PPPs, this article illustrates that the private sector has a key role to play in assisting municipalities to fulfil their legally entrenched disaster management mandate.

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