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## **THE FLOODING OF THE HOLLE POTASH MINE (REPUBLIC OF CONGO)**

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**ABSTRACT** – On June 18, 1977, a small water inflow appeared during the excavation of a reconnaissance gallery in the Saint Paul Potash Mine (Holle potash deposit, Republic of Congo), operated by Compagnie des Potasses du Congo, a subsidiary of Mines de Potasse d'Alsace (MDPA). In spite of the work undertaken to counter the emergency, this water inflow rapidly increased and could not be controlled. The mine was evacuated on June 22 and had to be abandoned. The flooding was accompanied by the appearance of three sinkholes, of which the largest was 150 m wide, at large distances from one another.

This paper briefly presents the geological context of the Holle Mine, the mine itself and, based upon the MDPAs archives, it describes the succession of events which led to the loss of the mine and discusses the hypotheses put forward to explain the accident.

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