

## Geological Disposal

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Brief overview of NGO involvement in the radioactive waste management process in eleven overseas countries

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**July 2010**



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## **Abstract**

This Technical Note gives an outline of the level of participation and engagement of environmental non governmental organisations (NGOs) with the process of siting facilities for radioactive waste in eleven overseas countries. The countries included in this summary are:

- Belgium
- Czech Republic
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- Lithuania
- Romania
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland

This Technical Note was prepared in response to a request from the West Cumbria MRWS<sup>1</sup> Partnership and was based on information collated in May and June 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> Managing Radioactive Waste Safely



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## 1 Introduction

This briefing paper was prepared in response to a request from the West Cumbria MRWS<sup>2</sup> Partnership for information about overseas waste management organisations (WMO) involvement with non governmental organisations (NGOs). Information for this overview was collated in May and June 2010. The overview looks at the experiences of how eleven countries have engaged with NGOs in radioactive waste management and the siting of a final disposal facility for radioactive waste.

The experience of each of the countries recorded here comes from a series of conversations (both by telephone and email) with overseas contacts, notes made by NDA<sup>3</sup> in presentations and relevant reports. Although the summary for each country has been checked for factual accuracy with the organisations concerned it cannot be considered as a definitive analysis of the interaction between waste implementer, Government, community and NGO. It serves only as an indicator of some of the existing approaches.

The amount of information and level of detail varies from country to country and within the headings used to order the information. Information on Community Representation has been included as a reference point for participation in general.

The countries that contributed to this overview were as follows:

- Belgium
- Czech Republic
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- Lithuania
- Romania
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland

Many of the people who contributed to this overview stressed that the political and governance structures in their country were different, or very different, from that in the UK and that this should be borne in mind when seeking to identify good practice or potential approaches.

<sup>1</sup> Non governmental organisations, generally those focusing on environmental issues

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<sup>2</sup> Managing Radioactive Waste Safely

<sup>3</sup> Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

## **2 Belgium**

### **2.1 Implementer / WMO**

ONDRAF/NIRAS is the national radioactive waste management organisation.

### **2.2 Stage in the siting process<sup>4</sup>**

Belgium is not yet in the siting process for high-level and/or long-lived radioactive waste but awaiting a strategic decision (decision-in-principle) regarding the long term management of HLW/SF<sup>5</sup> and long-lived waste.

Although deep disposal in stable geological layers is considered to be an appropriate solution for the long-term management of radioactive waste in Belgium, research will continue for several years before a concrete decision will be taken on the way and the place where the waste will be actually disposed of. Besides the technical research, a social dialogue will be started on the way Belgium intends to manage its category C waste<sup>6</sup> in the long-term. In accordance with its legal duties, ONDRAF/NIRAS is preparing a Waste Plan that focuses on the long term management of high-level and/or long-lived radioactive waste. According to the Law of 13 February 2006 on the assessment of the consequences for the environment of certain plans and programmes and on public participation in drawing up these plans and programmes, ONDRAF/NIRAS must accompany its Waste Plan by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (including a comparison of the alternatives).

### **2.3 Community representation**

Only local people were admitted as members and allowed to participate to the work of the local partnerships of Dessel, Mol and Fleurus-Farciennes. However, some of them belonged to NGO's thus enabling their participation, as local residents rather than as representatives of organisations.

The three local partnerships focused their work on the surface disposal of low and intermediate short-lived waste. Since the decision of the Belgian Government ( on 23.06.2006) to dispose of LILSLW7 on surface in Dessel, on the base of the concept developed by the partnership STOLA, this project is now a reality, proving the efficiency of the partnership approach used by ONDRAF.

### **2.4 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

Some NGO's are represented in one of the advisory bodies (i.e. the Federal Council for Sustainable Development) that must legally provide an advice on the Waste Plan and SEA8. A key domain of the radioactive waste management where NGO's show interest in Belgium is the Waste Plan on the long term management solution for MLW and HLW. The consultation of the public of the Waste Plan of ONDRAF/NIRAS runs from 7 June till 6 September 2010. NGO's can express their concerns and remarks which will be taken into consideration in the finalization of the document.

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<sup>4</sup> Does not include surface disposal concept for low and intermediate level short-lived radioactive waste (LILW-SL) at Dessel

<sup>5</sup> High-level waste/Spent fuel

<sup>6</sup> High-level short or long-lived waste

<sup>7</sup> Low and Intermediate Level Short Lived Waste

<sup>8</sup> Strategic Environmental Assessment

Members of Greenpeace were also regularly invited to give a talk to the local population, presenting their own vision on the project. In fact Greenpeace (Jan Van de Putte) made several talks to the different partnerships. NGO's as such were not allowed to participate to the work of the local partnerships of Dessel, Mol and Fleurus-Farciennes. However, they were indirectly "present" taking into account the fact that some local partners were, on personal base, members of those NGO's.

## **2.5 NGOs' view**

Not available for this briefing.

## **2.6 Implementer's view**

Complementary with, and preceding, the legal procedure of the Waste Plan, ONDRAF/NIRAS has undertaken initiatives to involve the public. One such initiative was a citizens' conference organized by the King Baudouin Foundation (a neutral, non profit organization whose aim is to bridge the gap between expert and citizens and who is specialized in participative methods). Greenpeace was invited by the Foundation to become a member of the accompanying committee, but declined although Greenpeace and Wise were among the experts speaking during the Citizens' conference.

## **3 Czech Republic**

### **3.1 Implementer / WMO**

The Radioactive Waste Repository Authority in the Czech Republic is RAWRA

### **3.2 Stage in the siting process**

There are three LILW repositories in operation in the Czech Republic. These facilities were established during the communist regime without any potential for public involvement in the decision.

Concerning the siting process for a deep geological repository, a five year moratorium on geological work at the various selected sites has just expired. Starting geological research work at the sites will require the permission of the Ministry of the Environment. Before applications are made for permission to commence exploration work RAWRA intends to seek the consent of the respective communities.

### **3.3 Community representation**

According to the Atomic Act, RAWRA has a (supervisory) board with the participation of four representatives of the public (three made up of communities with repositories in operation and one Member of Parliament). The board contains no representatives from potential repository sites.

The density of villages in the Czech Republic is quite high; the typical area of a site will include several (5-7) communities. RAWRA maintains contact with local representatives, with mayors (chairmen of the local elected council) in particular. RAWRA organises events for local inhabitants (meetings, excursions to nuclear sites in the Czech Republic and even abroad) and operates three small information centres in villages that are interested in co-operation with RAWRA

In 2009 the European project Argona was completed. As part of this project a reference group using the RISC9 methodology was established bringing, for the first time, all repository stakeholders together regularly with the aim of sharing views on relevant topics seen from different perspectives.

This group achieved considerable success and in November a conference (Deliberation-the path to a repository) was organised with the participation of many communities. It has been decided to continue this approach and to establish a working commission with the participation of representatives of all stakeholders to design further stages of the siting process which will be seen as transparent, open and fair with clearly defined roles for the various stakeholders.

### **3.4 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

In 2009 a public hearing was held to start an open and meaningful discussion of questions concerning the selection of a location for a deep geological repository with around 70 representatives, including NGOs. NGOs were also invited (with others from the community) to participate in the RISC9<sup>10</sup> reference Group.

There are both national and local NGOs involved. Local organisations have been established often with the aim of opposing a repository in their neighbourhood. NGOs often attend meetings organised at the sites and are involved in discussion. There have also been special meetings of NGOs and state representatives. An NGO representative was involved in the above mentioned Argona project and NGOs presented their views and experience at the above mentioned conference. The participation of two NGO representatives is being considered in the 21 member working commission also mentioned above.

NGOs have had their own strategy on involvement in the siting process from the very beginning. They contacted all communities offering legal assistance and advice. It was probably their idea to organise local referenda. The outcomes of local referenda are binding for local representatives only.

*RAWRA comment* - The most important NGO association in the nuclear field is Calla. They seem to receive donations, payments for consultation and work in different commissions etc.

The possibility of funding of the RISC9 Reference and Working Groups was under discussion in late 2009. No decision was available at the time of writing this paper.

### **3.5 NGOs' view**

Not available for this briefing.

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<sup>9</sup> The project represents a major effort to promote the development of a "European approach" to public participation and trustworthy decision processes in the area of nuclear waste management.

<sup>10</sup> The RISC9 model is based on an approach comprising three basic elements: 1) Technical / scientific issues can be clarified with scientific methods. They relate to questions like "Is this true?" or "Are we doing things right? 2) Normative issues reflect what is considered fair and acceptable in society, what is legitimate ("Are we doing the right things?") 3) Authenticity builds trust; it has to do with consistency between the actions of a person (or an organization) and who the person (or organization) is, or the role in the decision-making context.

*Comment from RISCOM<sup>11</sup> report* - In the early days of the reference group the general public and NGOs were fairly disinterested in the involvement. NGOs also felt that the process was not transparent. Agreement in principle was reached on the need to build a geological repository in the territory of the Czech Republic; however it has been raised that some members of the Reference and Working Groups were not given the opportunity to voice their opinions or raise objections. This raises the issue that the role of the NGOs has been to contribute but not influence.

### **3.6 Implementer's view**

At the conference Deliberation - Way to the Deep Geological Repository held in November 2009 a representative of Calla presented her experience from her participation in the Argona project. She said that the range of topics discussed was too restricted (not included: absence of the right of veto for a nuclear facility in legislation, compensation for the repository, etc.). She mentioned a lack of political willingness to solve the problem and criticized the fact that only local inhabitants are involved as a repository is not only of local importance.

RAWRA feels that a transparent and fair process with the balanced participation of all stakeholders, i.e. with the balanced involvement of NGOs in its design might be one of the decisive factors in the way forward. According to our experience it is the communities who are sometimes more critical of NGO involvement, saying that they do not provide constructive and responsible solutions. NGOs in the Czech Republic have repeatedly expressed the necessity for repository construction. Their priority is to obtain the right of veto for all nuclear facilities and they try to recruit supporters for their attempts in the communities connected with the repository siting process.

## **4 France**

### **4.1 Implementer / WMO**

The National Radioactive Waste Management Agency in France is Andra.

### **4.2 Stage in the siting process**

Advanced, Andra has identified a region in NE France and set up an underground research laboratory in the relevant geology to investigate the potential for geological disposal. Andra has defined a 30 km<sup>2</sup> area from which 15 km<sup>2</sup> will finally be selected, in 2012-13

### **4.3 Community representation**

The community is involved through a local committee of information and oversight, the CLIS<sup>12</sup>. Last year the CLIS set up several Working Groups among which one about final siting. Discussion was organized with Andra in order to locate the underground facility and to study possibilities for surface facilities.

### **4.4 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

A Local Committee of Information and Monitoring (CLIS) is a requirement in the law and includes a range of stakeholders from elected members to representatives of associations, including associations of opponents to the underground laboratory and Andra. The funding includes the ability to access independent advice. The CLIS is fully funded but there is no separate funding for NGOs.

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<sup>11</sup> Written by Karita Research

<sup>12</sup> Local Information Commissions

NGOs are able to participate through the CLIS. They have a position defined by law and decrees in these local committees. Involvement by NGOs is not very high as sometimes they prefer not to hold their position.

#### **4.5 NGOs' view**

Not available for this briefing.

#### **4.6 Implementer's view**

The role of NGOs is to be vigilant, but they also have a position of systematic opposition which leads to them potentially feeling frustrated at not being involved in everything at all stages. Consequently they research things which would have been hidden and they try to find issues to develop a wider opposition.

In our Aube site, they take part in the local committee for information and oversight. In 2007 after having several times accused ANDRA not complying with regulations, when they demanded a set of sampling and analyses (which they thought would be contradictory, the local committee accepted and funded this additional set of sampling and analyses. The results found were similar to the ones published twice a year by Andra, showing that there were no releases to the environment.

In Andra we take care of delivering the right level of information in order not to let develop any misunderstanding. Therefore there is a continual concern regarding any uncontrolled expression from the NGOs.

## **5 Germany**

### **5.1 Implementer / WMO**

The German Service Company for the Construction and Operation of Waste Repositories is DBE

### **5.2 Stage in the siting process**

The German situation is that they already selected a site in the 1970s. During the time of selection there were no interactions with NGOs because "*things were simply not done in this way nearly 40 yrs ago*".

### **5.3 Community representation (consideration of future procedures)**

There does exist ideas about how the public (though not specifically NGOs) might be involved in case a new site selection procedure might be started, but these are just ideas compiled by the so-called AKEnd group in 2002 that developed a concept for a site selection procedure. However, this concept has never been implemented in some kind of legislation.

Recommendations of the AkEnd -Committee on a selection procedure for repository sites include dialogue with the general public in which the general public has to be fully involved. The suggestion for a public participation procedure was to include dialogue with representatives of social stakeholders and a negotiation group, to include such parties as, the Länder, communities, churches, trade unions, industry, science, environmental and nature conservation associations and the participation of the general public.

No further headings appropriate at this stage of the German process.



## **6 Hungary<sup>13</sup>**

### **6.1 Implementer / WMO**

The Hungarian national waste management agency is PURAM

### **6.2 Stage in the siting process**

The most suitable host rock for HLW in Hungary has been found (clay-stone), its location and extension is defined and preliminary examinations were executed. The area covers about 200-300 km<sup>2</sup> and 9 communities. The site (which will be selected later) should cover some 10 km<sup>2</sup>.

### **6.3 Community representation**

The involved municipalities formed a so-called "Information Association". The local information association works with the implementer (PURAM) to inform the public also by the means of inviting independent professionals and scientists to support their capacity for decision making, e.g. the Hungarian Academy of Sciences delegated an advisory consultation group to help the local public.

### **6.4 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

Hungary's HLW program is in its initial stages. One NGO, (Zsongorkő) which has its central office situated in the target area has so far expressed an interest in getting involved in the siting of the repository and in the related communication. PURAM and the local information association regularly contact them in order to arrange the exchange of information.

There is no formal mechanism for NGO involvement. NGOs attended the public hearings during the siting phase for the LILW repository in Bataapáti, so PURAM expect them to do so in the case of the HLW disposal site as soon as the site exploration works start. These are nationwide organizations, not local NGOs, like Greenpeace.

NGOs are funded absolutely independently from the RWM organizations (regulator, implementer). The funding of NGOs is via donations and central taxes. The government decided to give the tax paying citizens the option of giving 1 percent of their personal tax to a chosen NGO. So that the civil sphere can be a bit more active at the beginning of the 1990s', and so it stayed until now.

### **6.5 NGOs' view**

Not available for this briefing.

### **6.6 Implementer's view**

Since we have not yet reached the status of a constructive cooperation with the NGOs, polite information exchange is the current activity with them. Beyond having access to any information they require, NGOs tend to seek more influence on decision making.

Roundtable discussions are under way with the participation of the following parties:

- Hungarian Ombudsman for Future Generations,
- representatives of several NGOs,
- the Nuclear Authority,
- the NPP,

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<sup>13</sup> Related only to the management of High Level Waste and Spent Nuclear Fuel

- the RWM organization
- and the Nuclear Science.

The aim of the roundtable discussions are:

- improving the mandate of NGOs in the decision making process (NGOs have full access to environmental and financial information on RWM according to the Hungarian implementation of the Aarhus Convention, and Transparency related legislation. They are campaigning for more influence on decision making, including a possible veto right, even if it is conflicting the local peoples' decision.) That is why a roundtable discussion with a really wide range of stakeholders was launched this May. This issue is more related to the national level NGOs and not to the local NGOs.
- to build up a cooperative communication.

## **7 Lithuania**

### **7.1 Implementer / WMO**

Lithuania's national Radioactive Waste Management Agency is RATA

### **7.2 Stage in the siting process**

In Lithuania several methods of final disposal of spent nuclear fuel and long-lived radioactive waste are being examined:

Final disposal of spent nuclear fuel in Lithuania's deep geological repository.

Final disposal of spent nuclear fuel in a regional<sup>14</sup> deep geological repository. To construct such a repository, cooperation among several countries is required.

Making use of technical possibilities provided by other countries.

Strategic decisions on further management of spent nuclear fuel and other long-lived waste will be made after considering natural, social and economic conditions as well as taking into account political factors.

### **7.3 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

NGOs are not strong in Lithuania. In Lithuania local communities and NGO organizations are involved in the Environmental Impact Assessment process. Usually the EIA takes place during the final stages of site selection. The NGO's are invited to participate in the public hearing of the EIA results and can provide questions, comments and motivated opinion. The motivated comments are taken into consideration during finalization of the EIA Report.

### **7.4 Implementer's view**

The Greenpeace organisation does support construction of waste disposal facilities (at least for low level waste).

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<sup>14</sup> A region in the countries taking part

## **8 Romania**

### **8.1 Implementer / WMO**

Romanian Nuclear Agency is ANDRAD

### **8.2 Stage in the siting process**

At present, the organization is focused on the siting process for a near-surface LILW<sup>15</sup> repository. The site under investigations is Saligny, a village near the Cernavoda NPP.

### **8.3 Community representation**

The current situation is that there is no formal community representation just communication activities aimed to inform the community's representatives about the intention to build a repository on their territory, with some characteristics of the radioactive waste and with general presentation of the repository's concept.

ANDRAD is examining the possibility of some sort of representation such as a Partnership but the financing issues make this difficult because it is felt that paying for their activity would lead to a lost in their credibility towards the general public.

### **8.4 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

No NGO acts in this little village. However, there has been an information request from NGO's acting in Cernavoda town and at national level.

### **8.5 NGOs' view**

Not available for this briefing.

### **8.6 Implementer's View**

Romania is in a very early stage with these activities. Therefore, we are also looking for models of good practice in this field.

## **9 Slovenia**

### **9.1 Implementer / WMO**

The WMO is the Slovenian Agency for Radwaste Management (ARAO) – The Krško NPP is jointly owned by Croatia and is supervised by the Slovenian Nuclear Safety Administration (SNSA),

### **9.2 Stage in the siting process**

In the two municipalities which bid for the location of the repository (Krško and Brežice) a local partnership was set up in 2006. This was a form of a contractual cooperation between the municipality and ARAO, but its ultimate goal was to involve the local public in the siting process. The local partnership had an advisory and not a decision-making role. A site at Krško has now been identified for near surface disposal for LILW but once the site was confirmed the local partnership was ended.

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<sup>15</sup> Low and Intermediate Level Waste

### **9.3 Community representation**

Public participation is required by the Aarhus convention and Slovenian legislation on spatial, environmental and nuclear issues. Prior to the issuing of partial or final decisions, several spatial public conferences have to be organized as part of the public participation official administrative procedure in order to enable the stakeholders to submit their opinions and to obtain public support.

It is considered that an essential component of the siting process is full recognition of public participation and local communities' involvement in the decision-making process. The participation of local communities in the process is based on their free decision. The decision for participation can be stimulated but not forced, and the volunteer approach should be respected throughout the whole procedure.

### **9.4 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

Generic workshops, working groups/committees have been initiated by ARAO. There is an annual workshop which covers a range of different areas and topics related to managing radioactive waste. The annual workshops take place over two days and reflect the stage reached in site selection. Around 20 to 30 people attend, including NGOs.

Payments are made to those attending the workshops either through expenses (with a Government allowance of €15 for travel and subsistence) or payment made for presentations.

### **9.5 NGOs' view**

Not available for this briefing.

### **9.6 Implementer's view**

The NGOs have the opportunity to contribute an alternative point of view in RWM and in some associated non nuclear issues. NGOs reported that they were suspicious about being involved at first but trust has been built as a result of using independent mediators to contact the NGOs and to run the meetings. There are reported to be "still some ups and downs" but NGOs have commented that they think it is a relatively fair process.

## **10 Spain**

### **10.1 Implementer / WMO**

ENRESA is the government agency responsible for managing all radioactive waste generated in Spain.

### **10.2 Community representation**

Currently there is no Partnership organised as such but it might happen that in the future once the site is decided, the local community might create one together with others from the surrounding areas.

The conditions settled in the call of December 2009, required that a formal decision of the city council was taken before presenting the application as candidate community.

Following the procedure established in the call, communities that were accepted as pre-candidates, had later on to present the exact area of the site where the CSF<sup>16</sup> would be installed. The final decision is to be taken by the government.

### **10.3 Stage in the siting process**

Spain is in a process of siting for a Centralised Storage Facility (CSF) for SF and HLW and *is not undertaking any siting activity on disposal of SF&HLW.*

14 communities have presented their application, and as of today 8 are being considered. The inter-ministerial commission is in the process of evaluating each one of the 8 actual candidates. The commission should give to the Secretary of State for Energy its proposal for a decision to be taken by the Cabinet.

### **10.4 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

The City Councils are composed of elected people; consequently NGOs are not part of the councils. During the last months, when asked by the councils or other local organisations (for instance local associations) ENRESA has made presentations of the project and informed the communities in meetings. NGOs could participate in such meetings but tend not to.

Some environmental or antinuclear groups have created local commissions against the project, promoting allegations by the residents and giving their own information.

ENRESA does not know how NGOs are funded, and does not provide any funds to them. Research by University of Valladolid<sup>17</sup> indicated that funds that Spanish NGOs receive depend on such public-sector institutions as the European Union, Spain's "autonomous communities," and the AECL, Spain's international agency for developmental aid.

### **10.5 NGOs' view**

Not available for this briefing.

### **10.6 Implementer view**

NGO involvement is not regulated in the siting process. Any how, they play a role of creating a social climate that enhances the local opinion for or against the CSF, and so they create interest in ENRESA's activities that become better known. They are also aware of the administrative procedure that makes them to be followed scrupulously by the Government and City Councils.

NGOs consider the CSF a way to maintain nuclear electricity generation in Spain. Their involvement against the facility is part of a strategy to shut-down all NPPs.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Centralised Storage Facility

<sup>17</sup> The university carried out research on 42 Spanish NGOs in 2006.

<http://www.wharton.universia.net/index.cfm?fa=viewfeature&id=1152&language=english>

<sup>18</sup> Nuclear Power Plants

## **11 Sweden**

### **11.1 Implementer / WMO**

SKB is the waste management organisation and is responsible for managing the siting process.

### **11.2 Stage in the siting process**

A final site has been found which is currently being investigated in terms of suitability for a geological disposal facility.

### **11.3 Community representation**

In Sweden the municipalities interested in hosting the final repository each have access to the funds from the Swedish Waste Fund. In applying for such funds they put forward their own proposal on how they will organise themselves and the funds needed to support their involvement. How they organise themselves varies between municipalities, but typically they have formed several groups dealing with different issues.

Main decisions, such as allowing a site investigation, are always taken in the municipality board. The municipality organisation works independent of SKB but often SKB is invited to their meetings to inform and to answer questions.

### **11.4 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

In Sweden, any NGO of a certain size can apply for funds from the Swedish Waste Fund to monitor and become interested in the final repository project. Receiving money from the funds then requires that they attend consultation meetings that are held according to the Environmental Code. Also, local NGO's can apply for funds from the municipalities to participate in the local groups regarding the possible siting of the repository. The costs for the municipality involvement (including the participation of local NGO's) are paid by the waste fund.

The NGOs operate at local and national level. Local environmental groups get involved with the municipalities and become part of the reference group. At a national level NGOs are involved through the mechanism of applying for funds for their involvement as described above. SKB must demonstrate that NGOs have been consulted and the SKB submission under the Environmental Code must demonstrate that their questions, comment and issues have been gathered, are documented and addressed. The adequacy of this will be judged along with other issues by the Environmental Court who will consider the submission.

*MKG (NGO) comment* - NGOs are indirectly subsidised by the Swedish power industry - to be eligible for funding the NGO had to fulfil a set of criteria relating to size and longevity which prevented many from participating, coalitions were then allowed to apply which solved this. Today 3 NGO coalitions have met the criteria above and share an annual fund of 3 million Swedish crowns (€320,000 or £ 277,980). The funding ends before Sweden's Environmental Court procedure takes place.

The aim with the NGO-funding is to improve possibilities for national and non-commercial NGO:s to participate in and follow the consultations due to the Environmental Code and the Nuclear Activities Act for the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel. To get funding the NGO must:

- Have a board that is elected annually by the members in democratic manners,

- Have adequate organization, economy, rules and targets,
- Be non-commercial and not conduct any business activities,
- Have at least 1000 members (changed in 2008, earlier at least 2000 members)
- Apply and get approval from the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority annually,
- Verify that they do participate in the consultations
- Use the funding only for issues concerning final disposal of spent nuclear fuel

### **11.5 NGOs' view**

*MKG (NGO) comment* - NGOs have reported that they have the opportunity to raise issues and alternative approaches although they do not feel their participation necessarily equates with influencing and it feels that they are only welcome if they "toe the line". There is recognition within the NGOs that their involvement gives them access to information and documentation they would not otherwise have. They cite barriers to involvement as including:

- Reluctance or rules against taking funding from the waste fund
- Other competing issues to address e.g. chemicals, renewables, etc. therefore is difficult for NGOs to prioritise this work
- Lack of influence

### **11.6 Implementer's view**

NGO involvement helps with the transparency and communication of the issues surrounding the project and SKB feels that NGO involvement is a necessary part of the process.

NGOs are engaged with the process at both the local and national level. They make their views known frequently, both in formal and in in-formal situations as well as through media to express their views. They are really involved in the process but do often insist that more or other possibilities for involvement are needed. Opportunities and processes for NGO involvement are made available and openly communicated. The onus is on the NGOs to take up such opportunities.

## **12 Switzerland**

### **12.1 Implementer / WMO**

The Swiss radioactive waste management agency is Nagra.

### **12.2 Community representation**

The Swiss government has implemented a sectoral plan, in which participation is guaranteed for the local communities. In three steps up to the year 2020, this sectoral plan has the duty to find a site. The Swiss Federal Office of Energy (SFOE) coordinates the involvement of the relevant authorities of the affected cantons and neighbouring countries in the process and ensures that the public in the siting regions can participate in the decision-making process. The cantons work closely with the involved federal offices and are responsible for the formal implementation of the public participation process.

The criteria are primarily safety (geology), but there are also many other criteria like socio-economical questions or the placement of facilities on the surface in discussions. Swiss people will vote on the site at the end; however safety comes first in the whole process.

### **12.3 Stage in the siting process**

We have central interim storage in Switzerland which works well. A sectoral plan approach has been adopted to provide a fair and transparent selection process in finding suitable sites for deep geological repositories which, once the conceptual part has been approved, will lead in a single procedure to identification of one site each for construction of a repository for high-level waste (HLW) and low- and intermediate-level waste (L / ILW). If one site fulfils the requirements for HLW and L / ILW, the outcome of the selection procedure could be a single site for all categories of waste. A repository for HLW will be required from 2040 and one for L / ILW from 2030.. It is intended to have general licence for the site more or less in the year 2018.

### **12.4 Mechanism for NGO involvement**

NGO's are represented in several commissions. They are also always invited to official information events in the regions by the SFOE. The cantonal commissions consist of representatives of the siting cantons, affected neighbouring cantons and countries.

NGO's do not have the right to decide for or against the process. They are NGO's and do not have a stronger role. Decisions to the siting process are made by the Federal Government, the cantons and the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications. NGO's are involved in Commissions and Government is listening to them closely they are also listening to the Swiss public who will vote on the topic. All important steps are surveyed by the independent safety authority of Switzerland.

NGO's are funded by donation and contribution. If a NGO's is officially involved in a commission, they get paid for there expenses by the state.

### **12.5 NGOs' view**

Not available for this briefing.

### **12.6 Implementer's view**

Nagra's view of NGO involvement is positive as long as the discussion is fair and the facts are discussed. In Switzerland, direct democracy is very strong and we like that way in every case. We are aware that NGO's have a role and we think that we also can learn some things from them. But it becomes difficult, if NGO's in some cases enforce the publics' fears with "wrong facts" about the repositories or when they fight the siting process directly – only not having the repository and to force others to take it instead of themselves.

NGO's claim that the region can not vote directly and alone (not on national level, but a regional level NGO's somehow feel small and little compared with Nagra or the official political commissions. el) on the repository site. They are mostly very critical and don't trust implementers. They also claim not to have the big know-how of Nagra.





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