

12th DECC/NGO Forum - 12 June 2014 - Minutes of meeting

Co-chairs welcomed the group to the 12th DECC/NGO Forum.

Liz Keenaghan-Clark, co-chair, introduced Rachel Solomon Williams to the forum as joint co-chair. Liz and Rachel (DECC) proposed to share the role of co-chair depending on agenda items. Forum members were happy with this proposal.

Prof. Andy Blowers, NGO co-chair, read out apologies from:

- Ruth Balogh
- Barry Turner
- David Lowry
- Dave Watson
- Lydia Meryll
- Jean McSorley
- Janine Allis-Smith

Liz Keenaghan-Clark presented government's position on the following policies and issues: nuclear new build plans, Hinkley Point C, Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), Waste Management, Plutonium Disposition and Fast Reactors, Security and Public Support.

NGOs raised a range of concerns around:

- Public support and whether people surveyed in the DECC Public Attitudes Tracker knew all the facts about nuclear power, results of the DECC Public Attitudes Tracker would heavily rely on the exact wording of the questions.
- Plutonium Disposition and immobilisation.
- Heads of Terms of the agreement with EdF and Government for the Hinkley Point C project and whether labour costs were factored into the deal.

DECC's response was:

- It would be impossible to fully brief all people answering the questions in the DECC Public Attitudes Tracker.
- If we immobilised all of the UK's Plutonium stocks we would end up with a volume 10 times as much as we currently have and we would therefore need to build more storage facilities. Re-use is our best option and the NDA are doing analysis work into this currently.
- Negotiations regarding Hinkley Point C are still taking place and full details will be published when these are fully agreed.

Action DECC: Circulate link to the DECC Public Attitudes Tracker.

Neil Crumpton, NGO, presented his paper to the Forum looking at various scenarios of future capacity of nuclear new build including waste and waste management, radioactivity, uranium availability, sites, security and public acceptability.

Baroness Verma commented that Government is committed to Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS). Stating that £1 billion has been put forward to ensure CCS is considered as a serious option and the two current projects are looking very successful.

Liz Keenaghan-Clark commented that the UK's future energy landscape is still very much unknown and there are only plans for 16GW of new nuclear at present.

Questions and comments were then taken from the NGOs remarking on:

- Consequences for international security and proliferation from the UK being a global leader.
- The need to define what consultation means and issues of public acceptability.
- Whether there was an energy efficiency policy in DECC.
- New Nuclear's role as part of the energy mix beyond the 2020s.
- Hinkley Point C consultations had not been adequate. Public involvement needs to come at an early stage right at the initial discussion of policy development.
- Consequences for radioactive waste management of a large nuclear programme.
- Finding suitable sites for new nuclear power stations.

Baroness Verma and DECC officials then commented:

- Many countries have nuclear in their energy mix, those countries who don't usually lack the infrastructure to support nuclear production. The issue is how to engage with these countries and sharing knowledge ensuring regulators are independent and have a clear role.
- OND are consulting with a broad range of stakeholders.
- DECC do have energy efficiency policies, one being the smart meters programme which is now in its delivery phase.

It was suggested that a small group from the NGOs be convened to draw together the range of issues, consequences and questions concerning a large nuclear programme. In particular the group should consider those matters which need to be anticipated at an early stage before embarking on a major programme of nuclear development. This would include issues of engagement and public support/acceptability. A position paper will be presented to a future meeting in order that DECC can coordinate comprehensive and detailed responses from all the relevant officials. This was agreed by all Forum members and a position paper will be developed by NGOs then sent to DECC prior to the next meeting.

Baroness Verma presented a letter to Forum members from the Secretary of State, Edward Davey, indicating his support for the Forum and possibility of his future attendance at a Forum meeting.

Action NGOs: To establish a small group develop a position paper on issues concerning an expanded nuclear programme for the next Forum meeting.

DECC gave Forum members an update on OND policy areas. These included; Hinkley Point C State aid case, EDF investment, Hinkley community benefits deal, Moorside, Sellafield Ltd and TEPCO and Magnox contract.

Action DECC: To send out details of the 'Hinkley deal' to Forum members.

NGOs raised some concerns around the Moorside site being in close proximity to Sellafield.

DECC responded stating that the Moorside site was included in the Nuclear National Policy Statement (NPS) as potentially suitable for new build and the work on any mitigating actions that may be required under the s106 agreement on infrastructure was still to be done.

Update from the Environment Agency (EA) on:

- UK Advanced Boiling Water Reactor (ABWR) scheduled to complete stage 2 of Generic design Assessment (GDA) process in August 2014.
- Hitachi have opened a public comments channel to help the EA and the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) with the GDA process. This is open throughout the GDA process.
- EA will publish a quarterly report shortly.
- AP1000 reactor type to restart GDA shortly – 51 GDA issues outstanding.
- EA will also be publishing an engagement paper shortly

Action DECC: To send round the EA weblink to their strategy for engaging stakeholders during the GDA process.

Action DECC: DECC to write an answer to NGO Forum members as to whether radiation effects of uranium mining were taken into account during the justification process of the first two UK reactors.

Update on actions from previous meeting:

- An update was given on the health effects of radiation where DECC had a meeting with Public Health England (PHE) and David MacKay.

Action DECC: To establish how David MacKay and PHE became involved in the Sir John Beddington report.

Action DECC: To investigate ways that NGOs can engage directly with this work on the Beddington report.

DECC gave an update regarding CoRWM meetings stating that they have both public meetings and open plenary meetings, both of which NGOs are welcome to attend.

Action DECC: Circulate dates of upcoming CoRWM meetings.

Action DECC: Circulate members of the Nuclear Innovation and Research Advisory Board (NIRAB)

DECC gave an update to the Forum on the Basic Safety Standards Directive.

Action DECC: circulate a web link to further details on this.

DECC gave a verbal update on emergency planning. It was agreed the update on nuclear security would be discussed with Dr. David Lowry with a view to developing arrangements for NGO involvement, as agreed at the previous meeting of the Forum. It was agreed these topics could be further covered in a future meeting with the presence of the relevant team in DECC. Prof Andy Blowers also referred to some communication from Dr. David Lowry in his absence, the main concern being the lack of progress on the matter of NGO involvement in security issues.

DECC introduced the idea of refreshing the NGO Forum including; the Terms of Reference, membership, location of meetings and future ways of working.

Action DECC: Where possible, develop arrangements for NGO involvement with regards to nuclear security issues.

Action Co-chairs: Review and refresh Terms of Reference, membership, location of meetings and future ways of working.

Summary of actions:

Action DECC: Circulate to Forum members the link to the DECC Public Attitudes Tracker.

Action NGOs: To establish a small group develop a position paper on issues concerning an expanded nuclear programme for the next Forum meeting.

Action DECC: To send out details of the 'Hinkley deal' to Forum members.

Action DECC: To send round the EA web link to their strategy for engaging stakeholders during the GDA process.

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Action DECC: DECC to write an answer to NGO Forum members as to whether radiation effects of uranium mining were taken into account during the justification process of the 2 first UK reactors.

Action DECC: To establish how David MacKay and PHE became involved in the Sir John Beddington report.

Action DECC: To investigate ways to bring forward this work.

Action DECC: Circulate dates of upcoming CoRWM meetings.

Action DECC: Circulate members of the Nuclear Innovation and Research Advisory Board (NIRAB)

Action DECC: circulate a web link to further details on this.

Action DECC: Where possible, develop arrangements for NGO involvement with regards to nuclear security issues.

Action Co-chairs: Review and refresh Terms of Reference, membership, location of meetings and future ways of working.

Attendees:

Baroness Verma, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, DECC
Liz Keenaghan – Clark (joint co-chair) Office for Nuclear Development (OND), DECC
Rachel Solomon Williams (joint co-chair) Office for Nuclear Development (OND), DECC
Professor Andy Blowers (co-chair) Blackwater Against New Nuclear Group (BANNG)

Neil Crumpton
Jo Brown, Parents Concerned About Hinkley (PCAH)
Ian Ralls, Friends of the Earth
Geoff Betsworth, Cumbria Trust
Sean Morris, Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA)
Rita Holmes, Ayrshire Radiation Monitoring Group (ARM)
Phil Davies, NWAA
Richard Bramhall, LLRC
Pete Wilkinson, Communities Against Nuclear Expansion
Val Mainwood, Bradwell for Renewable Energy (BRARE)
Frank Boulton,
Doug Parr, Greenpeace
Sue Aubrey, Stop Hinkley
Alan McGoff, (EA)
Annabelle Lillycrop (EA)
Bill Hamilton (NDA)

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Robert Middleton, Office for Nuclear Development (OND), DECC
Charlotte Williams, Office for Nuclear Development (OND), DECC
Jane Cantwell, Office for Nuclear Development (OND), DECC
Nasrine Fielding, Office for Nuclear Development (OND), DECC