OSPAR COMMISSION

Protecting and conserving the North-East Atlantic and its resources

Source: OSPAR 00/20/01, Annex 14

OSPAR Decision 2000/01 on Substantial Reductions and Elimination of Discharges, Emissions and Losses of Radioactive Substances, with Special Emphasis on Nuclear Reprocessing[1]

HAVING REGARD to Article 2.1(a) of the OSPAR Convention, whereby the Contracting Parties have the legal obligation to "take all possible steps to prevent and eliminate pollution and to take the necessary measures to protect the maritime area against the adverse effects of human activities so as to safeguard human health and to conserve marine ecosystems and, when practicable, restore marine areas which have been adversely affected";

MINDFUL of the OSPAR Strategy with regard to Radioactive Substances, adopted at the Ministerial Meeting of the OSPAR Commission in Sintra in July 1998, whereby "the objective of the Commission with regard to radioactive substances, including waste, is to prevent pollution of the maritime area from ionising radiation through progressive and substantial reductions of discharges, emissions and losses of radioactive substances, with the ultimate aim of concentrations in the environment near background values for naturally occurring radioactive substances and close to zero for artificial radioactive substances";

TAKING ACCOUNT of the need to act in compliance with the time frame, laid down in Paragraphs 4.1.(a) and (b) of the OSPAR Strategy with regard to Radioactive Substances, whereby the Commission by the year 2000 for the whole maritime area, will work towards achieving further substantial reductions or elimination of discharges, emissions and losses of radioactive substances;

NOTING the national reports on the implementation of the OSPAR Strategy with regard to Radioactive Substances submitted to OSPAR 2000;

TAKING ACCOUNT of PARCOM Recommendation 94/9 Concerning the Management of Spent Nuclear Fuel, whereby Contracting Parties agreed that they have a legitimate international interest in assessing the alternative options for spent fuel management, in relation to their effect on the reduction or elimination of discharges of radioactive substances;

NOTING that a study of the alternative nuclear fuel cycles has now been carried out by the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);

NOTING FURTHER that the NEA-study has demonstrated that implementing the non-reprocessing option (dry storage) for spent fuel would eliminate the discharges and emissions of radioactive substances that currently arise from reprocessing it;

NOTING FURTHER that discharges from nuclear reprocessing facilities can be traced through the Irish Sea, the North Sea, along the Norwegian coast into the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans giving rise to elevated levels in biota;

---

[1] France and the United Kingdom abstained from voting. Luxembourg was not present at this vote, but the delegation of Luxembourg informed the Secretariat after the meeting that Luxembourg could accept this OSPAR Decision.

RECOGNISING that the reduction of discharges and emissions of radioactive substances from nuclear reprocessing facilities would be beneficial for the legitimate uses of the sea, technically feasible, and would diminish the radiological impacts of radioactive substances on man and biota;

CONCERNED that nuclear reprocessing facilities in the North-East Atlantic area are the dominant sources of discharges, emissions and losses of radioactive substances and that implementing the non-reprocessing option for spent nuclear fuel would, therefore, produce substantial reductions of discharges, emissions and losses of radioactive substances into the North-East Atlantic;

ENCOURAGING relevant Contracting Parties to immediately begin negotiations with regard to all existing contracts for the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, with the aim of implementing the non-reprocessing option for spent nuclear fuel;

ENCOURAGING Contracting Parties not to authorise new nuclear reprocessing facilities or substantial increases of capacity of existing nuclear reprocessing facilities.

THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE OSPAR CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE NORTH-EAST ATLANTIC DECIDE:

1. Programmes and Measures

1.1 The current authorisations for discharges or releases of radioactive substances from nuclear reprocessing facilities shall be reviewed as a matter of priority by their competent national authorities, with a view to, *inter alia:*

- implementing the non-reprocessing option (for example dry storage) for spent nuclear fuel management at appropriate facilities;
- taking preventive measures to minimise the risk of pollution by accidents.

2. Entry into Force

2.1 This Decision enters into force on 16 January 2001.

3. Implementation Reports

3.1 Reports on implementation of this Decision shall be submitted to the appropriate OSPAR subsidiary body in accordance with OSPAR's Standard Implementation and Assessment Procedure. This reporting shall commence in the intersessional period 2002/2003.

3.2 When reporting on implementation, the format at Appendix 1 shall apply.

Appendix 1

Implementation Report Format on Compliance

The format for implementation reports concerning OSPAR Decision 2000/1 on Substantial Reductions and Elimination of Discharges, Emissions and Losses of Radioactive Substances with Special Emphasis on Nuclear Reprocessing as set out below should be used to the extent possible.

Country:	
Reservation applies	yes/no *
Is measure applicable in your country?	yes/no *

If not applicable, then state why not (e.g. no relevant installation or activity)

.....

.....

.....

Means of Implementation:	by legislation	by administrative action	by negotiated agreement
	yes/no*	yes/no*	yes/no*

Please provide information on:

a. specific measures taken to give effect to this measure;

b. any special difficulties encountered, such as practical or legal problems, in the implementation of this measure;

c. the reasons for not having fully implemented this measure should be spelt out clearly and plans for full implementation should be reported;

d. if appropriate, progress towards being able to lift the reservation.

.....

.....

.....

.....

* Delete whichever is not appropriate