

Cradle to grave control of radioactive sources in the Mediterranean region: an interregional approach

The challenge...

Radioactive sources are widely used throughout the world in many key development sectors, including industry, construction, medicine, agriculture and research. However, accidents involving radioactive sources have raised concerns about the safety and security risks associated with radioactive sources that are outside effective control. The Mediterranean region is characterized by an intense maritime trade, using the sea as a highway to facilitate the movement of persons and goods between coastal countries to landlocked countries. As part of this traffic, occurrences at borders and inland have been reported of trade accidentally involving radioactive sources or contaminated materials. Cradle-to-grave control of radioactive source is essential for reducing the likelihood of such events, and for ensuring that they can be properly addressed if they do occur.

The project...

This project was designed to help countries in the Mediterranean to set appropriate policies and strategies for establishing and maintaining cradle-to-grave control of radioactive sources. It is also aimed at reinforcing regulatory and management capabilities and fostering cooperation among the countries of the region to address matters of common concern regarding the use of the Mediterranean sea as a transport highway. Where possible, the project aimed to define and establish harmonized policies and approaches to the control and movement of radioactive sources.

The project was designed in close consultation with the European Commission and has received financial support from the European Union through its Instrument on Nuclear Safety Cooperation. The USA, through the Peaceful Uses Initiative, and the Spanish Consejo de Seguridad Nuclear have also contributed to the project.

The impact...

The project, which will run until the end of 2015, has already produced important and tangible results. Using workshops, one-on-one training with experts, and demonstrations using real sources, the IAEA has helped participating countries to develop and implement policies and strategies for the control of sealed sources from distribution to installation, use, disuse, and through to disposal. This is referred to as cradle-to-grave management. It has also contributed to the upgrade of the capabilities of regulatory bodies and waste operators by providing them with reference materials and tools to facilitate their work. The successful results obtained so far have been presented to different audiences at a number of international events and conferences, including a special event devoted to the project, at the 2014 annual meeting of the Institute of Nuclear Materials Management in Atlanta, USA.



Participants at the interregional workshop on the management options for disused sealed radioactive sources in Morocco.