

Information Circular

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Communication dated 24 March 2010 received from the Resident Representative of Belgium to the Agency concerning a document “Information concerning the decision of the Belgian Government to Postpone the Phase-out of Nuclear Energy”

The Director General has received a letter dated 24 March 2010 from the Resident Representative of Belgium to the Agency attaching a document containing information concerning the decision of the Belgian Government to postpone the phase-out of nuclear energy.

As requested therein, the document is herewith circulated for the attention of Member States.

Information concerning the decision of the Belgian government to postpone the phase-out of nuclear energy

The expert group GEMIX, created by the Belgian Government in 2008, charged with a study of the ideal energy mix in Belgium for the medium and long term, has submitted its report in October 2009. On the basis of this report, the Belgian Government has taken the following decisions:

- The first phase of the phase-out of nuclear energy (the original phase-out law foresees the closure of all Belgian nuclear reactors after 40 years of commercial operation) has been postponed for 10 years. This means that the life span of the nuclear reactors Doel 1, Doel 2 and Tihange 1 has been prolonged with 10 years. When this decision will have been incorporated in the law, the closing dates of the Belgian nuclear power plants will be as follows:
 - Doel 3 (1006,0 MWe) : 1 October 2022
 - Tihange 2 (1008,0 MWe) : 1 February 2023
 - Doel 1 (392,5 MWe) : 15 February 2025
 - Doel 4 (1008,0 MWe) : 1 July 2025
 - Tihange 3 (1015,0 MWe) : 1 September 2025
 - Tihange 1 (962,0 MWe) : 1 October 2025
 - Doel 2 (433,0 MWe) : 1 December 2025
- The government will closely monitor the absolute fulfilment of the safety conditions and will charge the safety authorities with this mission.
- A structural and permanent monitoring committee will be created. This committee will have to evaluate each year, until the total phase-out of nuclear energy, the evolution of the nuclear production costs and the market prices.
- The nuclear electricity producers have to contribute to the federal budget an amount between 215 and 245 MEUR (the exact amount to be determined by the monitoring committee).
- The nuclear electricity producers have to contribute 500 MEUR to the financing of projects in renewable energy sources and in reduction of energy consumption.
- Certain conditions are imposed with respect to employment, investments in research on carbon capture and storage, on management of radioactive waste and safe operation of nuclear power plants.