
Radioactive Waste Management and Environmental Safety

Objective

To support Member States in improving the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management, including geologic repositories for high level waste, decommissioning, remediation and environmental releases, through the development of safety standards and providing for their application. To support Member States in improving the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management, including geologic repositories for high level waste, decommissioning, remediation and environmental releases through peer reviews and advisory services, and to assist their adherence to, and facilitating implementation of, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. To support Member States in capacity building through education and training, and encouraging the exchange of information and experience.

Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management

On the basis of lessons identified from the first combined mission of the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) and the Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management, Decommissioning and Remediation (ARTEMIS), the Agency finalized guidance to support efficient implementation of future IRRS–ARTEMIS combined missions. The Agency also held a virtual technical meeting to assess the Self-Assessment of Regulatory Infrastructure for Safety (SARIS) on-line system.

Decommissioning and Remediation Safety

The Agency continued to support the activities of the Coordinated Group for Uranium Legacy Sites (CGULS) (Fig. 1). The group's annual meeting was held virtually and focused on information exchange and remediation project updates. The Agency is currently updating the Strategic Master Plan for Environmental Remediation of Uranium Legacy Sites in Central Asia. Member States in Central Asia and international organizations participating in CGULS are being consulted and have provided up to date information on the commencement of remediation of the uranium legacy sites in Kyrgyzstan and on progress towards establishing the necessary mechanisms to remediate the legacy sites in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The Agency held the Second Technical Meeting of the International Project on Decommissioning of Small Facilities (MIRDEC) and the Third Technical Meeting of the International Project on Completion of Decommissioning (COMDEC). The MIRDEC meeting resulted in further collection, review and exchange of experiences, knowledge and lessons on decommissioning of small medical industrial and research facilities. COMDEC furthered knowledge sharing and lessons regarding completion of decommissioning; that is,



FIG. 1. German, Kyrgyz and Uzbek experts perform joint laboratory analysis of environmental samples collected at a uranium legacy site as part of the CGULS capacity building activities in Central Asia. (Photograph courtesy of C. Kunze, IAF-Radioökologie GmbH.)

the actions taken to prepare sites for reuse and for termination of regulatory authorization. Both meetings resulted in contributions to the respective project reports.

Joint Convention

Preparations for the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management (Joint Convention) were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The President of the Seventh Review Meeting of the Joint Convention sent a letter to the Contracting Parties proposing the postponement of the Seventh Review Meeting because of the COVID-19 restrictions, and the Contracting Parties decided by consensus to hold the Seventh Review Meeting in 2022. The Organizational Meeting for the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention was held as a virtual meeting in September–October 2020.