

Report on the Sixth Meeting on 1 and 2 February 2023

The Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management (“**Advisory Board**” for short) met for its sixth meeting on 1 and 2 February 2023. The goals of this meeting were the development of recommendations on the legal framework and safety criteria as well as the presentation and discussion of the long-term behaviour of a final repository. In addition, the current status of the participation concept as well as information on the timetable and roadmap were to be presented and the recommendations coordinated accordingly.

Background

Based on “The National Programme for the Management of Radioactive Waste” (2018), the Advisory Board **develops a basis for decisions and recommendations for the Federal Government regarding the safe disposal of low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste** accumulated in Austria. Radioactive waste is generated in Austria through applications in medicine, research, industry and through the dismantling of facilities that are no longer required (decommissioning).

The mandate of the Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management defines its tasks. It is valid for three years and ends in June 2024. The four tasks according to the mandate are:

1. **Radioactive Waste in Austria: Survey of the Status Quo**

The aim is to survey and collect information and data on radioactive waste management, to discuss the inventory of radioactive waste in Austria as well as to evaluate the studies on the Federal Government’s previous activities with respect to final disposal. As part of this, plans are to provide a tangible overview of the existing situation. The data collected in this survey describes the starting point in detail and provides the basis for the work of the Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management.

2. **Analysis of the Options for Final Disposal**

The aim is to provide an overview of all possible options for the final disposal of radioactive waste in the form of a single document. It should include the option of cooperation with other

countries and outline the requirements, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and risks, as well as an initial cost estimate for each option.

3. Framework for Public Participation

The aim is to develop a framework for the public to participate (including cross-border measures) during the process of establishing a final repository for radioactive waste in Austria. The concept should consider technical, economic, and social aspects. Moreover, it should contain recommendations on how and when the public should be informed, involved, and included in the decision-making process.

4. Development of a Timetable for the Disposal of Radioactive Waste

The aim is to define a timetable and roadmap for the disposal of radioactive waste accumulated in Austria. This draft should include, where possible, relevant intermediate stages ("milestones"), key performance indicators and precise timelines for reaching these stages.

The recommendations worked out by the Advisory Board on the individual mandate items are forwarded to the Federal Government and serve as a basis for decisions on future steps.

The Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management includes representatives of the Federal States and Governments, scientists, NGOs, and from the public. The Advisory Board is chaired by Silvia Benda-Kahri from the Environment Agency Austria. The members of the Advisory Board may change in the context of future mandates depending on the tasks at hand when the current mandate ends in June 2024.

Review

Nuclear Engineering Seibersdorf GmbH prepared a report on the inventory of radioactive waste in Austria for the Advisory Board and made some additions based on the discussion of the fourth meeting. These were presented and discussed at the fifth meeting. In addition, based on this, the Committee developed recommendations for mandate item 1 and the Advisory Board added to the recommendations as well.

The Advisory Board agreed that the preliminary recommendations would be documented and the Committee would continue. The Committee will continue to monitor the issue of the quantity of radioactive waste in Austria and will work on recommendations for next year's final report.

During the third meeting, the need for further studies and reports was established. The Advisory Board proposes to start with the following studies:

- Legal framework for the disposal of radioactive waste
- Methods for estimating the long-term behaviour and dispersion of radionuclides in the vicinity of a possible disposal site
- Comparison of final repository options
- Proposal for safety criteria and accident scenarios

The study on the location criteria will be delayed until the interim results of the other studies and the study for mandate item 3 are available.

The preparation of the study on the legal framework was started. The interim results were presented and discussed by representatives of the Johannes Kepler University Linz at the fifth meeting. The results of the study on the legal framework will be completed by the sixth meeting and merged with the timetable and roadmap.

At the fifth meeting, the Committee on the "Framework for Public Participation" presented the current status of the participation concept.

In addition, the Environment Agency Austria presented the research design for the study on the level of knowledge and understanding of the public. It was agreed to further develop the participation concept considering the timetable and roadmap as well as the results of the study on the legal framework and the study on the level of knowledge and understanding of the public.

At its fifth meeting, the Advisory Board welcomed the fact that civil society representatives are organizing a first meeting with NGOs. The results of this meeting will be presented to the Advisory Board.

The Secretariat has prepared a draft timetable and roadmap, which was presented and discussed at the fifth meeting.

The Advisory Board agreed to establish a committee on the "Timetable and Roadmap". The tasks of the Committee include the evaluation of ongoing additions, suggestions, and unresolved issues for the Advisory Board, as well as the development of recommendations.

The Advisory Board specified the following next steps: the discussion results from the fifth meeting would be incorporated into the timetable and roadmap. The results of the study on

the legal framework would be considered as far as possible and in coordination with the relevant Committee. In addition, the open points of the timetable and roadmap would be worked out by the Committee on the "Timetable and Roadmap" for the next Advisory Board meeting.

Results of the Sixth Meeting

The results of the sixth meeting of the Advisory Board are presented on the basis of the mandate items.

Mandate Item 1: Radioactive Waste in Austria: Survey of the Status Quo

The previous work on mandate item 1 serves as the basis for the other mandate items and recommendations.

Mandate Item 2: Analysis of the Options for the Final Disposal

A report on the "Legal Framework" was prepared for the Advisory Board. The results were presented and discussed at the sixth meeting.

The report on the safety criteria was presented. The Committee on the "Pathway to the Evaluation of Options for Final Disposal" discussed this and derived initial recommendations that will be presented to the Advisory Board.

The report on the "Long-term Behaviour of a Repository" was presented.

Information is provided on the issues that the study on "Location Criteria" shall address.

Results

The Advisory Board agreed on the following course of action:

Feedback on the report on the "Legal Framework" will be sent to the Secretariat by the end of February, after which the report will be finalised. Based on the discussion and the final report, the Committee on the „Pathway to the Evaluation of Options for Final

Disposal" will work on the open points and recommendations and the results will be presented at the next meeting.

The report on the "Safety Criteria" will include a few additional points from the discussion. The Committee on the "Pathway to the Evaluation of Options for Final Disposal" will add to the recommendations. The coordination with the Advisory Board will take place in the seventh meeting.

The Advisory Board takes note of the report on "Long-term Behaviour of a Repository" and the findings from it shall be included in the recommendations on the site criteria for a final repository.

The study on site criteria has been commissioned and an interim report will be presented at the eighth Advisory Board meeting.

Mandate Item 3: Framework for Public Participation

The Committee on the "Framework for Public Participation" provides information on the status of the work on the preparation of the participation concept.

Results

The Committee continues to work on the further development and formulation of the participation concept for the recommendations. This work is undertaken in close coordination with the other committees.

The results of the study on the level of knowledge of the public will be presented and discussed at the seventh meeting.

Mandate Item 4: Development of a Timetable for the Disposal of Radioactive Waste

The draft of the timetable and roadmap was revised on the basis of the report on the "Legal Framework". The Committee on the "Timetable and Roadmap" presents the next steps and first recommendations.

Results

The Advisory Board agrees that the Committee's recommendations will be documented. The current timetable and roadmap will be further developed with regard to legal aspects. Proposals for initial key performance indicators will be developed and put up for discussion at the seventh Advisory Board meeting.

The next meeting of the Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management will take place on 11 and 12 May 2023

Participants

Advisory Board

Roman Beyerknecht (Nuclear Engineering Seibersdorf)

Philipp Bohatschek (Federal Ministry of Finance)

Ulrike Felt (University of Vienna, Department of Science and Technology Studies)

Bernhard Haubenberger (Association of Austrian Municipalities)

Günter Liebel (Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management)

Patricia Lorenz (Global 2000)

Frank Melcher (Montanuniversität Leoben, Chair of Geology and Economic Geology, Applied Geosciences and Geophysics)

Gabriele Mraz (Austrian Institute for Ecology)

Nikolaus Müllner (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Institute of Safety and Risk Sciences)

Ewald Plantosar (Styria, Representation of the Federal States)

Christina Raith (Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection)

Horst Reicher (Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology)

David Reinberger (Ombuds Office for Environmental Protection Austria)

Ursula Rosenbichler (Federal Ministry of Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport)

Sabine Schneeberger (Federal Chancellery)

Gerhard Seifritz (Lower Austria, Representative of the Federal States)

Sigrid Sperker (Upper Austria, Representation of the Federal States)

Angelika Spieth-Achtnich (Ökologie-Institut e. V., Institute for Applied Ecology)

Johannes Sterba (Technical University of Vienna, Atomic and Subatomic Physics)

Erik Tajalli (Federal Chancellery)

Charlotte Vogl (Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management)

Hannelore Weck-Hannemann (University of Innsbruck, Department of Public Finance, Faculty of Economics and Statistics)

Other Participants

Silvia Benda-Kahri (Environment Agency Austria) Chair

Sabine Kranzl (Environment Agency Austria) Co-Chair

Claudia Ackerl (Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation

and Technology)

Roman Zöchling (Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology)

Rudolf Engelbrecht (Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety GmbH)

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