

Report on the Preparatory Meeting of the Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management on 23 March 2021

On 23 March 2021, the 20 members of the newly established Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management - Advisory Board - met virtually for a preparatory meeting to discuss the objectives, tasks and working methods and to get to know each other. Federal Minister Leonore Gewessler opened the meeting and thanked the members for their commitment.

The Advisory Board develops a **basis for decisions and recommendations for the Federal Government on the safe disposal of radioactive waste** produced in Austria. It includes representatives from the Federal and State Governments, scientists, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and civil society.

After a greeting and first introduction to the topic by the Minister for Climate Action, Leonore Gewessler, the members of the Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management were introduced. In addition, the tasks and working methods of the Advisory Board, determined in the mandate and adopted in the Council of Ministers on 10 March 2021, were presented. Moreover, the first preliminary work items, such as the documentation of already existing repository studies, the work schedule for the next three years, the dialogue design as well as the new website www.entsorgungsbeirat.gv.at, were introduced.

The 20 members of the Advisory Board are tasked with developing a foundation for the decision-making process and compiling recommendations for the Federal Government regarding the final disposal of radioactive waste and how to include the public in this process.

The constitutive meeting of the Advisory Board will take place on June 16 and 17 2021.

Background:

Austria is known as a country of advanced medicine, innovative product development and internationally recognised scientific research. These activities may produce low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste, such as components from small scientific reactors or work gloves worn by medical staff. This waste is currently stored professionally in the interim storage facility in Seibersdorf. A solution for the disposal of the radioactive waste has to be found by 2045. With the establishment of the Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management this process has now been started.

For the final disposal of radioactive waste Austria has compiled “The National Programme for the Management of Radioactive Waste”. To implement this programme, the Federal Government established the Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management („Advisory Board“ for short) in March 2021. The Advisory Board develops recommendations for the Austrian Federal Government. It will produce a report on the inventory of the low- and intermediate-level radioactive material located in Austria, clarify technical issues, and propose a participation concept as well as the next steps. The working method of the Advisory Board is evidence-based and transparent. These recommendations form the basis for further decisions on the final disposal of radioactive waste.

The Advisory Board includes representatives from the Federal and State Governments, stakeholders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Ombuds Office for Environmental Protection, and Association of Municipalities. In addition, the Federal Minister for Climate Action, Leonore Gewessler, nominated six independent experts.

The members of the Advisory Board serve to fulfil the objectives of the mandate, which is limited to three years, and may change within the framework of future mandates.

Members entitled to vote (in Alphabetical Order):

Roman Beyerknecht (Nuclear Engineering Seibersdorf)

Manfred Ditto (Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection)

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

Bernhard Haubenberger (Association of Austrian Municipalities)

Isabel Lamprecht-Pühra (Federal Ministry of Finance)

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)

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

David Reinberger (Ombuds Office for Environmental Protection Austria)

Wolfgang Renneberg (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, , Institute of Safety and Risk Sciences)

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

Sabine Schneeberger (Federal Chancellery)

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

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

Christoph Urbanek (Lower Austria, Representation of the Federal States)

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

Silvia Benda-Kahri (Environment Agency Austria), who is a trained mediator and art-of-hosting expert, accompanies the Advisory Board as a chairperson to help it fulfil its objectives.

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Untere Donaustraße 11, 1020 Vienna

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Phone: +43 1 71100 61 4195

E-Mail: v8@bmk.gv.at

Created by

Austrian Board for Radioactive Waste Management

Secretariat

Henriette Herzog

Telefon: +43 1 123 45-123456

E-Mail: kontakt@entsorgungsbeirat.gv.at

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