

Stakeholders and Radiation Protection: Lessons from Chernobyl 20 Years Later

*A Report by the Committee
on Radiation Protection and Public Health*

Stakeholders and Radiological Protection

- Goal of the report: Analysis of the experience from Stakeholder Involvement in international Chernobyl recovery programmes
- The NEA report is based on experience from the
 - ETHOS project in Belarus (1996-2001): A EC project exploring a new strategy to directly involve local populations in radiological management
 - The international CORE project (CO-operation for Rehabilitation of Living Conditions in Chernobyl Affected Areas of Belarus)
 - Post Chernobyl radiological management experience in Norway and the UK
 - NEA Villigen Workshops on Stakeholder Involvement in radiological decision-making
 - NEA International Emergency Management Exercises

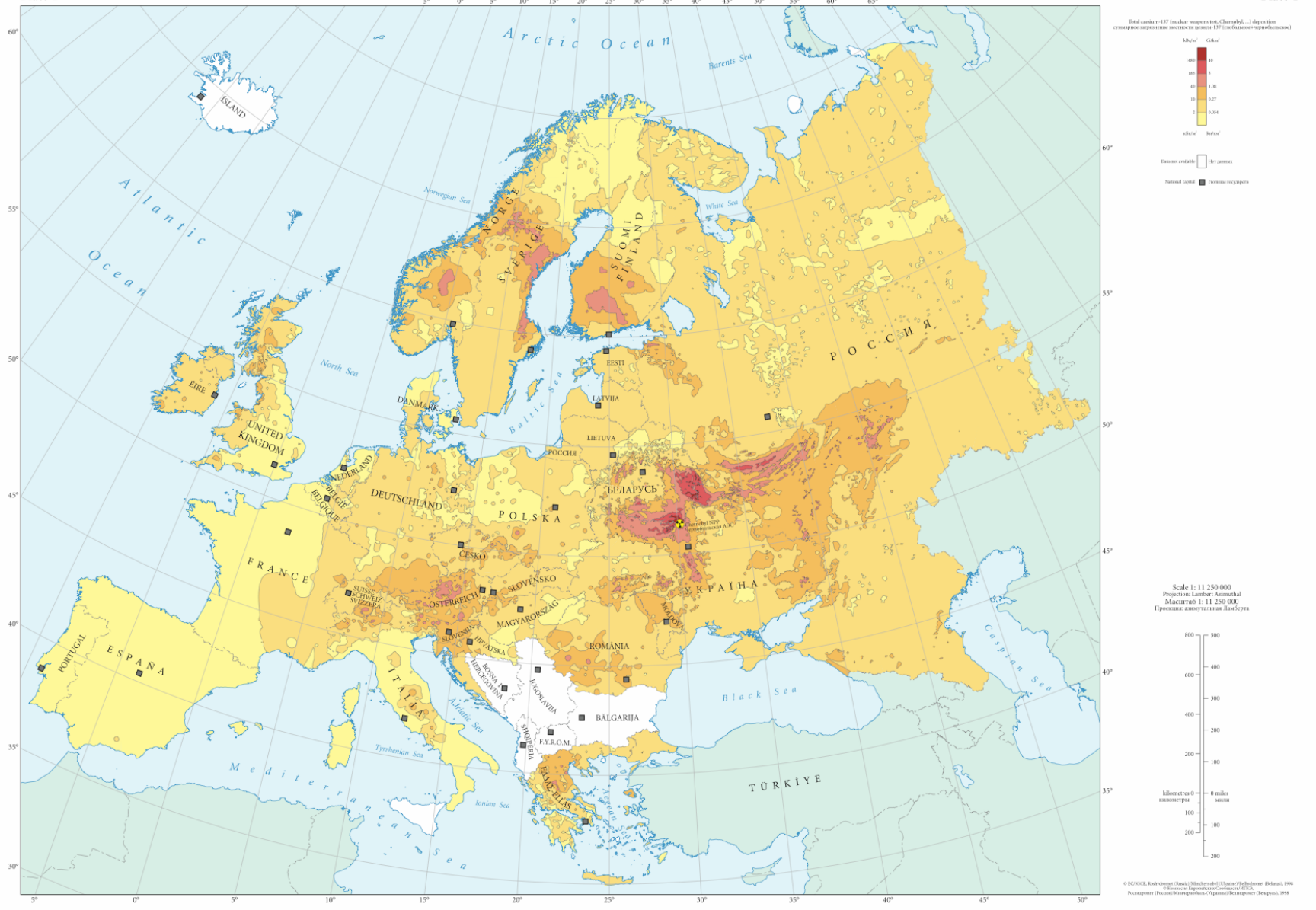
Contents of the Report

- Impact of the Chernobyl accident in the CIS, UK and Norway
- Experience from Chernobyl rehabilitation: From top-down management to stakeholder involvement
- How stakeholder involvement changed the living conditions
- Lessons learnt for the radiation protection community

Ceasium 137 contamination in Europe

Plate 1 European map of caesium-137 deposition - Европейская карта загрязнения цезием-137

Европейская карта загрязнения цезием-137 - European map of caesium-137 deposition Plate 1



Top-down approach in the early 90s in the CIS

- Success in the early phase
- Problems of top-down in the later phase
 - Durable loss of quality of foodstuffs, commodities and assets
 - Strong concern about the presence of contamination and its potential health consequences
 - Loss of confidence in experts and authorities
 - General feeling among the population of loss of control on daily life, exclusion and abandonment
- The rehabilitation strategy put in place in 1991 and based on a classical “top-down” and “segmented” administrative approach failed to take into account the complexity of the situation

The Bottom-up Approach: Stakeholder Involvement in Rehabilitation

A 5 steps process:

- listening to and learning from the villagers about their concerns and priorities
- setting-up working groups on specific practical projects to respond to the concerns
- developing a common expertise and re-qualification of the radiological situation with voluntary stakeholders (measurements, analysis of local habits,...)
- Identifying together actions to improve the radiological quality of foodstuffs and the protection of the inhabitants
- implementing actions with the support of local professionals and authorities and if necessary national authorities

Stakeholder Involvement: Improvement of Living Conditions

- Significant improvement of the radiological quality of milk
- Reduction of about 1/3 of the internal contamination of young children
- Re-establishment of the marketing of milk and meat produced in the village
- Successful testing of a new technique for the production of good quality potatoes by private farmers

Stakeholder Involvement: Empowerment of Civil Society

- The direct involvement of the population in the day to day management of a contaminated territory is feasible and also necessary to break the downward trend of loss of control and exclusion
- Recovery of self confidence and initiative among the inhabitants and restoration of public confidence and social trust
- To be effective and sustainable, stakeholder must rely on:
 - the social and economic development of the territories
 - practical radiation protection culture (radiation monitoring, health surveillance and education at school)
 - a local, national and international co-operation

Conclusion

- The implication of stakeholders in radiological protection management decision processes was a turning point in the rehabilitation policy in the CIS, Norway and the UK to:
 - reduce radiation exposure of the affected population
 - improve the socio-economical living conditions of the inhabitants

- The lessons learnt have been recognised by the international community, and have been integrated into rehabilitation strategy preparedness in Europe

- The applicability of these lessons to other situations, such as preparedness for future large-scale contamination events, or for radiological terrorist acts, is leading to their broad integration in emergency preparedness and management within the OECD