

DECISION MAKING FOR RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES, ACTION GOALS, CONFIDENCE FACTORS



In decision making it is difficult to embody all the societal values that people find to be important. For instance, one path forward may be compatible with achieving technical efficiency, but the same path may fail to attain community support, yet both are important goals. In long-term projects, the dominant values may even change over time. This flyer explains what the Forum on Stakeholder Confidence (FSC) has learned about decision making processes that do what is possible to accommodate the competing values and obtain broad societal approval and support. The FSC presents principles and components of an inclusive decision-making approach and highlights action goals that are specific to radioactive waste management. Confidence factors identified in dialogue in diverse national settings are also summarised.



What are the requirements for applying a stepwise approach?

§ Decision making should be performed through visible, iterative processes, providing the flexibility to adapt to contextual changes, e.g. by implementing a stepwise approach that provides sufficient time for developing both competence and fairness.

§ Collective learning should be facilitated, e.g. by

promoting interactions between various stakeholders and experts.

§ Public involvement in decision making processes should be facilitated, e.g. by promoting constructive and high-quality communication between individuals with different knowledge, beliefs, interests, values, and worldviews.

Three ELEMENTS ARE PARAMOUNT to any decision making

§ **Process** Procedures and plans for making decisions should be designed to be visible, iterative, flexible and facilitating collective involvement and learning.

§ **Structure** Clear roles and responsibilities must be assigned to involved actors, and their interdependencies made visible. There should be an organisation or body who is responsible for the decision making process to keep things moving forward.

§ **Behaviour** Individuals and institutions must demonstrate core values. Those involved in waste management need to be: respectful of each other's roles; competent and rigorous in their field of expertise; open, transparent and willing to involve others; pro-active in initiating dialogue; willing to listen to, and respond to, a broad variety of stakeholder concerns.

Eight ACTION GOALS should be pursued in order to identify waste management solutions widely regarded as legitimate

§ To have an open debate on the national policy regarding energy production and the future of nuclear energy, including the aspect of waste management;

§ To reach a common understanding that the status quo is unacceptable and that an important problem needs to be solved;

§ To define clearly the actors and goals of the waste management program, including the source, type and volume of waste to be handled;

§ To define an iterative approach to match a suitable waste management method with a technically acceptable site;

§ To agree and apply a fair and open methodology to identify one or more site(s) that are both technically and politically acceptable;

§ To provide forums to enable communities to express their issues and concerns with the development so that they can be addressed;

§ To negotiate tailor-made benefits packages and community oversight schemes with both host and neighbouring communities to enhance their well-being and socio-economic situation, and to design facilities so that they will bring added value to the community;

§ To fully respect agreements when implementing decisions.

These FACTORS OF CONFIDENCE between stakeholders and in decisions were identified in FSC national workshops

§ FINLAND (2001)

A stepwise decision-making approach with stakeholder involvement; a voluntary site selection process; a win/win arrangement negotiated with the host community; local liaison groups facilitating public information, education and consultation; clear goals of the program and clear roles of the institutional actors, trust in the national regulatory body; familiarity of the host community with the nuclear industry; host community veto power.

§ CANADA (2002)

On a local level: The engagement by local players in developing solutions; the determination of local and federal players to come to a mutually agreed resolution; negotiating a win/win solution with local communities; a clear framework for the role of players; right given to municipalities not to proceed; control by municipality over planning and implementation; familiarity of the hosts with the nuclear industry. On a national (legislative) level: A combined technical and societal focus; participation of the public as early as possible in the process; ethical considerations concerning future generations; financial burden on those who produce the waste.

§ BELGIUM (2003)

A bottom-up, community-based methodology combining analysis and deliberation; development of an integrated project proposal that includes both a repository design and a local project that seeks to add value to the community in socio-economic and other terms; mutual learning between diverse stakeholders and experts; a voluntary site selection process; host communities' familiarity with the nuclear industry.

§ GERMANY (2004)

Taking into account and empowering the full range of stakeholders (government, industry, public); universal agreement on the disposal option; stakeholders agreeing to assume their responsibilities; cooperative efforts to rebuild trust between key players when there has been conflict; third-party facilitation when communication has broken down.

§ SPAIN (2005)

Giving appropriate attention to the potential socio-economic impacts on surrounding municipalities as well as to health, safety and environmental concerns; an active role for the municipalities in developing and overseeing their own solutions with significant assistance from authorities and industry proponents. On a national level: Empowering potential host, neighbouring and transit municipalities in the site selection process for any development of a centralized radioactive waste management facility; the driving role played by communities that find themselves the *de facto* hosts of radioactive wastes.

§ HUNGARY (2006)

The regular provision of information to the affected population by local associations; dialogue across local communities through federated associations; technical training for citizens to participate directly in monitoring radioactive waste management; regional development plans with local, regional, industry and national support; the prospect of community members working in facilities and construction sites; long-established dialogue between local decision-makers and national agency managers; improved standard of living observed in the host community; the prospect of tourism and better connections with other regions and the capital.

