Chernobyl’s Impacts and Nuclear Decommissioning and Nuclear Waste Storage in Germany

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Je nach Region bis heute belastet: Pilze
(Quelle: www.colourbox.com (1); Public Domain (1); Montage: Frietsch)

Auch Wildschweine sind noch heute zu hoch belastet (Quelle: www.colourbox.com (1); Public Domain (1); Montage: Frietsch)
Decommissioning Nuclear Power plants

- Dismantling
- Decontamination
- Restoration

- No action
- Long term or “safe” storage
- Immediate dismantling
Decommissioning

• Requires environmental impact assessment
• Requires public access to information (stipulated by Aarhus Convention)

Public Participation

• Must take place in early stage of decommissioning (in screening and scoping stages)
• Where public participation is earlier, less controversy and opposition
• Public participation must be inclusive (wide range of stakeholders)
• Must be two-way communication
• Access of information, provision of key information
Nuclear Decommissioning

Nuclear phase out decision made at federal level but

Management of decommissioning is responsibility of individual German states (Länder)

Decommissioning in eastern Germany

• Decommissioning of Soviet-era nuclear power plants in eastern Germany is managed by the firm, EWN.

• Greifswald, five nuclear reactors under decommissioning

• Interim Store North (for storage of spent fuel and waste)
Three Phases to Dismantling

• 1) post-operational phase (safe storage and removal of fuel elements, decontamination.
• 2) Dismantling
• 3) Site restoration

Responsibilities

• The interim storage of radioactive waste (but not spent nuclear fuel is a Länder responsibility.
• The interim storage and disposal of spent nuclear fuel, is responsibility of the Federal Office for Radiation Protection (BfS)
Public Consultation

• Major concerns jobs, health, environment, next-generation

• In Greifswald, application for dismantling led to creation of Nuclear Engineering Group (13 members, including NGOs, social groups, and local officials). Role was to advise on whether the dismantling was following Environmental Impact assessment criteria

Greifswald

• Opted for dismantling
• Public participation was limited. Subsequent legal changes require greater opportunities for public participation related to the environmental impact assessment of decommissioning
Nuclear Storage

• Still no long-term high-level nuclear disposal reactor site.

• Gorleben saltdome functions as a medium-term disposal site.

After decommissioning....
Long-term high level Radioactive Waste Storage

• Need for public debate
• Need to consider how to make decision
• Need to understand people’s concerns, options they consider acceptable

• No decision is not desirable