

Recommendation Group 5 - Final Conclusions

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Tasks

- ⇒ Local democracy
- ⇒ Influence of local actors on the national nuclear waste management framework

Local Democracy

Within a national process

Local democracy operates most effectively where the national process is also operating effectively.

- There must be no single European solution - no country should be expected to take others' waste
- Artificial time constraints cannot be applied - each country must be able to spend time reaching such important decisions
- There can be no uniform solutions because each nation has its own laws, national and local government structures and culture
- Imposition of uniformity can harm the existing and ongoing process to such an extent that solutions become impossible and unattainable

National differences - general rules

- National and local players must work together to take responsibility for their own waste.
- Local democracy requires a defined democratic process to work within at National level.
- National, regional and local levels must work together
- It must be clear from the start who takes the final decision, and on what basis

National Debate

Local Democracy can work better within the context of full and open debate at national level :

- Local democracy is vital but can never be a substitute for national debate. The national government must accept political responsibility and stimulate real, wide-ranging national debate
- If national debate doesn't run in parallel with local democracy there is likely to be conflict between national and local levels which will form an impediment to action

National debate should play the main part in determining :

- Levels of acceptable risk
- Overall waste management policy
- Siting process for nuclear waste facilities

Partnership working

- There should be the opportunity for all to take part
- interest should be the only criterion for involvement
- BUT final decision making must rest with the elected representatives at either local or national level

Resource for partnership working :

- The process is not there to collect opinions but to allow people to discuss and establish their interest
- Resources must be provided to allow full and realistic involvement in the decision making process
- Resources must be managed by an independent fund-holder

Allowing time for a step-wise approach

- Step-wise approach is very important - each step must follow from the previous one
- Time must be allowed to enable local communities to be comfortable in taking the next step
- Time is one of the main tools for building trust and confidence

Influence of the local actors on the national nuclear waste management framework

Long-term issues

- Long-term planning is always uncertain. Future generations desire to take their own decisions must be considered
- Each generation must take responsibility for their own decision-taking
- The right of future generations to disagree with the decisions of our generation must be provided for in terms of flexibility and provision of resources

Involvement of local actors

- If there is no involvement there is no influence
- Local actors have a responsibility to search for areas of agreement and seek to debate areas of disagreement in as productive a way as possible
- Direct communication must be carried out in as many ways as possible so that all citizens can become fully involved
- Local media are important in helping or hindering the decision making process. The media is one of the local actors and must be fully involved

Socio-economic issues

- Two guarantees form the basis for involvement of local actors
 - Safety - must be assured as far as it is possible to do so
 - Opportunities for economic development must be provided and discussed

Discussions on overarching principles

- Local actors should be part of the national debate in establishing views on risk, waste management options, and development of the siting process
- Local people must be able to negotiate constraints

Definitions of “local”

- Are not possible to make because :
 - Differences in local government structures in different countries
 - Differences in levels of interest between communities affected by nuclear waste facilities or communities affected by transport
 - Differences from time to time and issue to issue
- All interested parties should be able to be involved in the national debate