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Call for Papers

Managing Radioactive Waste Problems and Challenges in a Globalizing World

15-17 December 2009

CEFOS- Centre for Public Sector Research
University of Gothenburg, SWEDEN

Keynote addresses by:

Jane Dawson
Connecticut College

Frans Berkhout
VU University Amsterdam

Frank von Hippel
Princeton University

Ortwin Renn
University of Stuttgart

Abstract Deadline
April 15th, 2009



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www.cefos.gu.se/forskning/radwaste/conference



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Conference Statement and Objective

Dear Colleague,

We have the pleasure of inviting you to an inter-disciplinary research conference focusing on the management of spent fuel and high-level nuclear waste (HLW).

Many countries are at a crossroads in terms of maintaining their energy supply. The use of fossil fuels has reached a point when the existing resources appear to be dwindling, while combustion is contributing to rapidly accelerating climate change and global warming. Several national governments and energy companies regard nuclear power as one piece in the design of future sustainability, energy security, and economic prosperity. There are, however, grave downsides to a nuclear power renaissance. Besides the inevitable problems of nuclear weapons proliferation, the fact that no country has established a final waste repository for spent nuclear fuel and HLW throws fundamental doubt on nuclear energy expansion. Such an expansion would increase the total amount of waste, spread it over a growing number of countries, and postpone the final date for generating additional waste into the remote future. To that must be added that the processes of globalization have transformed the nuclear industry in the direction of increased privatization, concentration, and internationalization. This leads to uncertainties regarding to who will assume responsibility and meet the challenges for developing safe and secure nuclear waste management.

In these circumstances is it of greatest importance that researchers from different disciplines and countries meet to share experiences. This conference will have the general objective of producing knowledge about the challenges caused by global developmental trends, and what the management of nuclear waste implies for contemporary and future social development.

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Conference themes – invitation to submit abstracts

The conference is molded by the complex character of the spent fuel and HLW problem, which calls for an inter-disciplinary understanding revolving around the following five themes. The organizers encourage you to propose research papers, panels, or sessions as well as posters with relevance to these themes.

1. Towards a problem definition of nuclear waste management

What’s the problem, whom does it belong to, what’s at stake, and why not postpone management into the distant future? What should a responsible technical handling of wastes be based on: best accessible geology, best available technology, best (ready and willing) locality, or on the only existing global community – e.g., IAEA?

2. On the role of science in radioactive waste management

HLW management is knowledge-intensive and dependent upon the best science and engineering. Technocratic arguments could, however, clash with democratic ones in controversial HLW policy processes. What is the role of science and engineering in managing HLW? How could a fruitful dialogue between scientists, policy-makers and laymen be created?

3. Influences and responsibilities in the organization of knowledge production, technology development, policy advising and interest representation

Knowledge production in HLW management is becoming all the more internationalized, concentrated, and also privatized. International organisations bring experiences and resources together and contribute to growth of knowledge. On the other hand since they posit considerable resources, they tend to have a great influence on policy-making at arm’s length from both national parliaments and ordinary citizens. How can an internationalized and expert-led organization of HLW knowledge production be harmoniously interlaced with democratic accountability and scholarly integrity?

4. Institutions, responsibilities, and legitimacy

Each nation-state must take title to the spent fuel and HLW that has been produced within its territory. The handling of radioactive materials is also regulated by international agreements and multilateral organizations such as the EU, IAEA and the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Furthermore, the owners of radioactive materials, the nuclear industries, are growing in size and scope. Could HLW management be institutionalized on multitude sources of legitimacy or are those sources irreconcilable with one another? These include the industry and polluter-pays-principle, representative democracy and the principle of national responsibility, local communities and principles of equity of burdens, global governance and sustainable democratic development, best available or good enough geology, and/or technology?

5. Long-term risk, ethics, equity, social sustainability, and the acceptance of radioactive waste

The extremely long planning and implementation horizon, and the costliness of HLW management bring matters around ethics, equity, risks, and sustainability, to a head. The dangers of radioactivity pose great demands on the capacity for managing long-term risks. On what grounds could we expect that one could accept any HLW management programme?





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Submission Guidelines and Conference Arrangements

Researchers wishing to contribute to the conference in the form of a paper, a session, a panel or a poster are requested to **submit an abstract no later than April 15th 2009**. The abstracts should be sent electronically to the organizer at radwasteconference@cefos.gu.se and must include title of contribution, name(s) of author(s) and their affiliation(s), for corresponding scholar: full address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail address, relevance of the contribution to the approach and themes of the conference and a text of 250 words. In addition, scholars wishing to propose a session or a panel are asked to send an abstract that include the title of the session, a summary of its relevance to the themes of the conference, the names of the organizer(s), the chair (if known) and secured participants. The conference organizer will acknowledge the receipt of any submission by sending an e-mail to the corresponding scholar. Abstracts will be reviewed by the organizers. Notification on acceptance of the abstracts will be e-mailed to corresponding author by May 15th 2009. Proceedings containing all papers presented will be available at the web site and at the start of the conference. Please direct any questions to the organizers at radwasteconference@cefos.gu.se

Important Dates

Deadline for abstract submission: April 15th 2009
Notification of acceptance: May 15th 2009
Conference registration and payment: June 15^h 2009
Deadline for submission of full papers: November 25th 2009
Conference: 15-17 December 2009

Location

The conference is hosted by the School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg.

Further information and Practicalities

Further information on practicalities and about the conference including registration and fee will be announced and continuously updated on the conference website at www.cefos.gu.se/forskning/radwaste/conference

We kindly request that you share this call with your colleagues



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