



Technical Meeting of the Underground Research Facilities Network for Geological Disposal on Research and Development for Geological Disposal Programmes

Hosted by
Kingdom of Sweden

through the
Swedish Nuclear Fuel and Waste Management Company (SKB)
: and virtual participation via Microsoft Teams

24–28 June 2024

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Information Sheet

Introduction

Geological disposal facilities for high level and intermediate level radioactive waste continue to progress worldwide with several Member States in the more advanced stages of building one. Key to progress in this area is research and development (R&D). Most legacy nuclear countries have already done a great deal of R&D which provide a sound technical basis for a DGR. Research in underground research laboratories for example has led to a greater understanding of the behaviour and evolution of the disposal system environment, including the host rock, waste packages, buffer, backfill, and seals. Necessarily, R&D will need to continue after the construction licence is granted in part to further reduce uncertainties in the post-closure safety assessment of the final repository, and to support the continued development and optimization of the facility.

Those States worldwide that have advanced and refined their R&D programme over several decades to support a DGR project have as a result gained significant experience and lessons to be shared with the broader community. A significant amount of this R&D has already been documented by the IAEA, such as experiments at underground research laboratories and in siting guidelines. Notwithstanding that, there is currently no IAEA publication that supports R&D planning in this area. Inevitably some pure and applied generic research may still be needed and will certainly be needed in the case of some specific applications. Member States at the start of a DGR programme would benefit from experiences and lessons learned about developing such a research and development programme. Consequently, IAEA is holding a Technical Meeting with the community of technical experts currently working in this area to document the state-of-the-art knowledge on this subject.

This technical meeting is part of an ongoing series of activities organised by the Underground Research Facilities Network to support Member States in their implementation of a geological disposal programme for high and intermediate level radioactive waste.

Objectives

The purpose of the event is to share information and experiences, with a view to providing input for a proposed technical guidance document on research and development for geological disposal programmes.

Target Audience

The meeting is targeted to representatives of organizations substantially involved with the subject of R&D supporting geological repository programmes. This meeting may be particularly beneficial to professionals in the process of developing research initiatives and or plans supporting geological repository programmes.

The meeting would also be relevant to project managers responsible for the implementation of these R&D programmes.

Working Language(s)

The working language of the event will be English.

Expected Outputs

A comprehensive proceedings document that captures experiences and lessons learned from Member States about developing and implementing a R&D programme for geological disposal. The proceedings will form the basis of an IAEA publication on the subject.

Structure

This meeting will take place at the Äspö Hard Rock Laboratory site located outside Oskarshamn in Kalmar County, Sweden, for 5 working days from the period of 24 June to 28 June, 2024. The meeting will include a technical visit to the Äspö Hard Rock Laboratory.

Participation and Registration

All persons wishing to participate in the event have to be designated by an IAEA Member State or should be members of organizations that have been invited to attend.

In order to be designated by an IAEA Member State or invited organization, participants are requested to submit their application via the InTouch+ platform (<https://intouchplus.iaea.org>) to the competent national authority (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Permanent Mission to the IAEA or National Atomic Energy Authority) or organization for onward transmission to the IAEA by **15 April 2024**, following the registration procedure in InTouch+:

1. Access the InTouch+ platform (<https://intouchplus.iaea.org>):
 - Persons with an existing NUCLEUS account can sign in to the platform with their username and password;
 - Persons without an existing NUCLEUS account can register [here](#).
2. Once signed in, prospective participants can use the InTouch+ platform to:
 - Complete or update their personal details under ‘Complete Profile’ and upload the relevant supporting documents;
 - Search for the relevant event under the ‘My Eligible Events’ tab;
 - Select the Member State or invited organization they want to represent from the drop-down menu entitled ‘Designating Authority’ (if an invited organization is not listed, please contact InTouchPlus.Contact-Point@iaea.org);
 - If applicable, indicate whether financial support is requested and complete the relevant information (this is not applicable to participants from invited organizations);
 - Based on the data input, the InTouch+ platform will automatically generate the Participation Form (Form A) and/or the Grant Application Form (Form C);
 - Submit their application.

Once submitted through the InTouch+ platform, the application, together with the auto-generated form(s), will be transmitted automatically to the required authority for approval. If approved, the application, together with the applicable form(s), will automatically be sent to the IAEA through the online platform.

NOTE: The application for financial support should be made, together with the submission of the application, by **15 April 2024**.

For additional information on how to apply for an event, please refer to the [InTouch+ Help](#) page. Any other issues or queries related to InTouch+ can be sent to InTouchPlus.Contact-Point@iaea.org.

Selected participants will be informed in due course on the procedures to be followed with regard to administrative and financial matters.

Participants are hereby informed that the personal data they submit will be processed in line with the [Agency's Personal Data and Privacy Policy](#) and is collected solely for the purpose(s) of reviewing and assessing the application and to complete logistical arrangements where required. The IAEA may also use the contact details of Applicants to inform them of the IAEA's scientific and technical publications, or the latest employment opportunities and current open vacancies at the IAEA. These secondary purposes are consistent with the IAEA's mandate. Further information can be found in the [Data Processing Notice](#) concerning IAEA InTouch+ platform.

Papers and presentations

The IAEA encourages participants to give presentations on the work of their respective institutions that falls under the topics listed above.

Participants who wish to give presentations are requested to submit an abstract of their work. The abstract will be reviewed as part of the selection process for presentations. The abstract should be in A4 page format, should extend to no more than 2 pages (including figures and tables) and should not exceed 500 words. It should be sent electronically to Karina Lange, the Scientific Secretary of the event (see contact details below), not later than **15 April 2024**. Authors will be notified of the acceptance of their proposed presentations by **30 April 2024**.

In addition to the registration already submitted through the InTouch+ platform, participants have to submit the abstract, together with the Form for Submission of a Paper (Form B), to the competent national authority (e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Permanent Mission to the IAEA or National Atomic Energy Authority) or organization for onward transmission to the IAEA not later than **15 April 2024**.

Expenditures and Grants

No registration fee is charged to participants.

The IAEA is generally not in a position to bear the travel and other costs of participants in the event. The IAEA has, however, limited funds at its disposal to help meet the cost of attendance of certain participants. Upon specific request, such assistance may be offered to normally one participant per country, provided that, in the IAEA's view, the participant will make an important contribution to the event.

The application for financial support should be made, together with the submission of the application, by **15 April 2024**.

Venue

The event will be hosted by the Swedish Nuclear Fuel and Waste Management Company (SKB), Sweden.

Visas

Participants who require a visa to enter Sweden should submit the necessary application as soon as possible to the nearest diplomatic or consular representative of Sweden.

IAEA Contacts

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Subsequent correspondence on scientific matters should be sent to the Scientific Secretary/Secretaries and correspondence on other matters related to the event to the Administrative Secretary.