IAEA
International Atomic Energy Agency
*Atoms for Peace and Development*

# Technical Meeting on Approaches to Strengthening Cooperation and Partnership on the Back End of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle

**IAEA Headquarters**
**Vienna, Austria**
and virtual participation via Cisco Webex

**14-18 December 2026**

**Ref. No.: EVT2503837**

# Information Sheet

## Introduction

Achieving sustainability at regional and global levels requires effective cooperation along the entire nuclear fuel cycle, particularly in the back end of the fuel cycle. In the early years, various concepts of international cooperation were proposed; for example, the joint creation of reprocessing capacity. Currently the two industrial options for managing spent nuclear fuel (SNF) from nuclear power plants, after its storage, are: (1) SNF mono-recycling through reprocessing with the return of recovered uranium and plutonium back into the fuel cycle and the management of the generated high level waste stream with the same safety considerations as SNF; (2) SNF disposal. The choice amongst these two final approaches is often constrained by limited technological capabilities, cost considerations, socio-politic factors, etc. and it is especially crucial for countries with small SNF inventories.

Public perception of nuclear energy is often negatively affected by the accumulation of SNF that does not have visible long-term solutions. Regional cooperation, technology-sharing arrangements, and cost-optimized approaches can help align Member State interests. For technology holders, cooperation can reduce costs and strengthen the industry as a whole; for embarking countries, it can facilitate public acceptance and confidence in nuclear energy development.

Given the optimistic global projections for nuclear energy, the industry must demonstrate practical and credible solutions for the back end of the fuel cycle. Building on previous IAEA studies on cooperative back end services, including potential regional high level waste (HLW) and SNF disposal facilities—this meeting will explore the potential role of international service providers, and at the same time, the forms of strengthening such international cooperation, partnership approaches, enablers, impediments, etc.

At its 34th meeting in October 2025, the INPRO Steering Committee endorsed the convening of a Technical Meeting to assess Member State interest and explore the scope of a new collaborative project; and this activity is included in the INPRO Subprogramme Plan for 2026–2027. Additionally, the Technical Working Group on Nuclear Fuel Cycle Options and Spent Fuel Management (TWG-NFCO) in its 24th meeting in April 2026 recommended the IAEA to launch an activity in conjunction with INPRO and Waste Technology Section on shared infrastructures in different nuclear fuel cycles to address the range of possible sharing options and identifying enablers and impediments. In May 2026 meeting, the Working Group on Radioactive Waste Management and Technologies (TWG-WATEC) expressed interest in further capacity-building activities on the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle, including the use of historical experience and lessons learned to inform future approaches.

# Objectives

The purpose of the event is to explore opportunities for enhanced cooperation on the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle and to identify future IAEA activities that could support Member States in pursuing such approaches.

The objectives of the technical meeting are to:

- Summarize and discuss past relevant IAEA and international activities in the back end of the fuel cycle and identify existing gaps.
- Review international experiences of collaborative approaches and organisational schemes from the front end of the nuclear fuel cycle and assess their applicability to the back end.
- Identify potential types of partnerships and approaches on sharing infrastructures in the back end of the fuel cycle.
- Discuss factors influencing the practical implementation of international cooperation on SNF management; for example: economics and market expectations, technology readiness, options for fully closing the fuel cycle, legal aspects and associated impediments, impact of integrating new spent fuels from advanced reactors.
- Identify Member States with relevant technical expertise or interest in participating in related IAEA activities.

# Target Audience

The target audience includes regional or national experts working in the areas of nuclear power and nuclear energy system analysis and assessment, officers of MS authorities, responsible for strategic nuclear energy system planning and SNF and radioactive waste management, specialists in nuclear law and industrial international cooperation.

The meeting also aims to develop collaboration with international initiatives from different professional communities (Generation IV, International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation (IFNEC), Sustainable Nuclear Energy Technology Platform (SNETP), World Nuclear Association (WNA), European Commission (EC), and others) for mutually beneficial practical decisions in the back end of the fuel cycle for current and advanced nuclear fuel cycles.

# Working Language(s)

English.

# Expected Outputs

The meeting is expected to identify potential future IAEA activities in supporting Member States to investigate cooperation on the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle.

# Structure

The meeting will consist of plenary sessions, thematic sessions, group discussions, and a concluding session to identify key issues and elements for potential new IAEA activities on international collaborations in the back end of the fuel cycle. Presentations by participants will be based on submitted abstracts.

# Presentations

The IAEA encourages participants to give presentations on the work of their respective institutions related to strengthening cooperation on the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle and the topics listed above.

Participants wishing to give a presentation are requested to submit an abstract of their proposed presentation. The abstract should provide sufficient information to enable evaluation as part of the presentation selection process.

The extended abstract should be written in English, prepared in A4 format, and include:

— the title of the abstract;
— the name(s) and affiliation(s) of the contributing author(s);
— a clear summary of the content of the proposed presentation;
— a length of one to two pages, including key figures and tables; and
— provide sufficient information on the contents of the proposed presentation for evaluation

Extended abstracts should be prepared using the MS Word template, available at the INDICO website and uploaded to the same website not later than **30 September 2026**. The following is the link to the INDICO website: **https://conferences.iaea.org/event/490/overview**

Authors will be notified of the acceptance of their presentations by **16 October 2026**.

# Venue

The event will be held at the Vienna International Centre (VIC). Participants are responsible for their own travel and accommodation arrangements. A Webex link will be provided for virtual participation.

General information on the VIC and other practical details, such as a list of hotels offering a reduced rate for IAEA participants, are listed on the following IAEA web page: www.iaea.org/events.

Participants are advised to arrive at Checkpoint 1/Gate 1 of the VIC one hour before the start of the event on the first day to allow for timely registration. Participants will need to present an official photo identification document to be admitted to the VIC premises.

# 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 **30 September 2026**, 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 **30 September 2026**.

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.

# 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 **30 September 2026**.

# Visas

Participants who require a visa to enter Austria should submit the necessary application to the nearest diplomatic or consular representative of Austria at least four weeks before they travel to Austria. Since Austria is a Schengen State, persons requiring a visa will have to apply for a Schengen visa. In States where

Austria has no diplomatic mission, visas can be obtained from the consular authority of a Schengen Partner State representing Austria in the country in question.

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