



French and Canadian Nuclear Waste Organizations Resign a Multi-Year Cooperation Agreement on Long-Term Management of Radioactive Waste and Used Nuclear Fuel

April 24, 2023

OTTAWA, ON - Yesterday, in the presence during her visit to Canada of Mrs. Sylvie Retailleau, French Minister for Higher Education and Research, Canadian Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry François-Philippe Champagne, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's (NWMO) President and CEO Laurie Swami and the French Ambassador to Canada, His Excellency Mr Michel Miraillet, acting on behalf of Andra CEO Pierre-Marie Abadie, signed a five-year extension of the Cooperation Agreement on long-term management of radioactive waste and used nuclear fuel.

Both France and Canada recognize that the safe, long-term management of radioactive waste and used nuclear fuel is of the utmost priority and that both countries have significant expertise and experiences they can share to make sure that both people and the environment are protected for the very long-term.

Over the past decade, information sharing between the NWMO and Andra on communications and dialogue with the public, safety approaches, research and development progress, and innovative technologies have been of significant importance in the achievement of key milestones in both the Canadian and French radioactive waste and used fuel management programs. The NWMO and Andra are proud of their cooperation and look forward to continued partnership and international excellence, based on mutual confidence, understanding and respect of their cultural specificities.

Les Organisations Françaises et Canadiennes de Gestion des Déchets Radioactifs Signent une Extension de leur Accord Pluriannuel de Coopération

24 avril 2023

OTTAWA (Ontario) – En présence de Mme Sylvie Retailleau, Ministre Française de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche, M. François-Philippe Champagne, Ministre Canadien de l'Innovation, des Sciences et de l'Industrie ; Laurie Swami, présidente-directrice générale de la Société de gestion des déchets nucléaires (SGDN), et son Excellence l'ambassadeur de France au Canada, M. Michel Miraillet, agissant au nom du Directeur Général de l'Andra, M. Pierre-Marie Abadie, ont signé une prolongation de cinq ans de leur accord de coopération sur la gestion à long terme des déchets radioactifs et du combustible nucléaire usé.

La France et le Canada reconnaissent que la gestion sûre des déchets radioactifs et du combustible usé est une priorité absolue et que les deux pays disposent d'une expertise et d'expériences importantes qu'ils peuvent partager pour assurer la protection des personnes et de l'environnement à très long terme. Au cours de la dernière décennie, le partage d'informations entre la SGDN et l'Andra sur les communications et le dialogue avec le public, les approches de sûreté, les progrès de la recherche et développement et les technologies innovantes ont été d'une importance significative au franchissement d'étapes clés dans leurs programmes de gestion des déchets radioactifs canadien et français. La SGDN et l'Andra sont fières de leur coopération et se réjouissent à la perspective de poursuivre leur partenariat fondé sur la confiance, la compréhension et le respect de leurs spécificités culturelles.

Quotes

Mr. Michel Miraillet, Ambassador of France in Canada

“France and Canada, who rank among the leading countries in the field of civil nuclear energy, are both fully committed to using nuclear power to address environmental as well as energy security concerns. They share long-standing cooperation ties in the main areas of civil nuclear energy, including waste management. Both their agencies in charge of managing their waste, ANDRA and NWMO, are fully engaged in collaborative actions, which greatly help resolving the fuel cycle back-end issues. The renewal of their cooperation agreement witnessed by Minister Retailleau and her Canadian counterpart Minister Champagne clearly highlights the importance of NWMO’s and ANDRA’s contribution to the sustainability of nuclear energy.”

Laurie Swami, President and CEO, Nuclear Waste Management Organization

“Canada and France are world leaders in nuclear waste management, and this Collaboration Agreement signals our commitment to sharing, learning, and collaborating between our respective countries. We’re seeing significant progress, not just in Canada and in France, but across the globe as more and more countries approve and ultimately begin building deep geological repositories to safely dispose-of High Level radioactive Waste or used nuclear fuel. I am delighted that Minister Sylvie Retailleau was able to support and highlight the importance of international collaboration on protecting people and the environment.”

The Honorable Jonathan Wilkinson, Canada’s Minister of Natural Resources

“Canada is a Tier-1 nuclear nation, and the safe management of radioactive waste is the government’s top priority when it comes to nuclear energy. Through agreements such as this one and partnerships with like-minded allies, we will reach our net-zero targets. We look forward to the continued collaboration between the NWMO and Andra, both of which have been leading the charge on the advancement of deep geological repositories for the safe long-term management of nuclear fuel waste.”

--

About the NWMO

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) is a not-for-profit organization tasked with the safe, long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel inside a deep geological repository, in a manner that protects people and the environment for generations to come.

Founded in 2002, the NWMO has been guided for more than 20 years by a dedicated team of world-class scientists, engineers and Indigenous Knowledge Holders that are developing innovative and collaborative solutions for nuclear waste management. Canada's plan will only proceed in an area with informed and willing hosts, where the municipality, First Nation and Métis communities, and others in the area are working together to implement it. The NWMO plans to select a site in 2024, and two areas remain in our site selection process: the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation-Ignace area in northwestern Ontario and the Saugeen Ojibway Nation-South Bruce area in southern Ontario.

About Andra

Andra, the French National Radioactive Waste Management Agency, is a publicly-owned industrial and commercial enterprise created by the French Act of 30 December 1991. Its role was expanded by the Planning Act of 28 June 2006 relating to the long-term management of radioactive materials and waste.

Andra is independent of radioactive waste producers and operates under the supervision of the ministries responsible for energy, the environment and research.

Andra's expertise serves the State by identifying, implementing and ensuring safe management solutions for all French radioactive waste for the protection of present and future generations from the risks inherent in these substances.

Media Contacts:

NWMO -Nuclear Waste Management Organization

Russell Baker (He/Him)

Manager, Public and Media Relations

E: rbaker@nwmo.ca

C: 647-278-2538

Andra – Agence nationale pour la gestion des déchets radioactifs

Paola Vilarino Salinas (Her/She)

International cooperation manager

E: paola.vilarino-salinas@andra.fr

French Embassy in Canada

Aude-Line Ferrand (Her/She)

Press and Communication Advisor

aude-line.ferrand@diplomatie.gouv.fr – 613-408-7097

[@franceaucanada](https://www.instagram.com/franceaucanada)