

Intervention in the Conference Nuclear energy: Opportunities and Risks – Views of European Civil Society and Stakeholders

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As you may remember, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and Sortir du Nucleaire left the European Energy Forum last May because the Forum had degraded to a platform for disinformation and spin for the nuclear industry.

One of the points where this became obvious was the creation of a so-called Strengths and Weaknesses paper that was to put forward the competitiveness of nuclear power – (the competitiveness itself was not under discussion – that was a foregone conclusion). During the discussions about that paper, we, Greenpeace and Sortir du Nucleaire, have tried to keep the spin included in that paper in perspective – within our very limited capacity. Statements from the industry or from the nuclear lobby within the European Institutions were presented as “objective scientific findings” – though often based on non-transparent sources. Our transparent, peer-reviewed, academic and independent scientific submissions were presented as “opinions from the NGOs” – if they were taken up at all. You will not be surprised that we cannot endorse such a paper.

Conclusions reached after intensive discussion were during a next meeting already 'forgotten' – for instance the fact that in modern grid-planning we do not talk any longer about 'base-load' and 'peak-load', but about dynamic grid management – in the next session, nuclear was presented as the 'cheapest base-load provider'...

What I have read and heard happening since our departure has not given us reason to reconsider our boycott. ENEF is a failed attempt to dialogue and I sincerely hope that the EESC is capable of sifting fact from spin within the ENEF.

I want to try to avoid the words “low carbon”, because that term has been hijacked by the nuclear lobby, and it is about more than “low carbon” alone!

As far as competitiveness of nuclear power is concerned: In the development towards a modern, climate saving, secure, stable and affordable energy infrastructure, the nuclear industry has over the last year made it clear enough itself that it has priced itself out of the market. (And don't tell me, we didn't warn you!)

Two recent examples from the many in my daily practice:

1. NPP Belene, Bulgaria. The new Bulgarian government found out that the costs will be 10 Billion instead of 4 Billion €. And the German utility RWE drew its conclusions: with €5000/kWe upfront costs, Belene stops being competitive. It is unlikely that Atomstroyexport will be able to deliver something considerably cheaper to CEZ...
2. Olkiluoto 3... I don't have to say a word more, I suppose.

Let me illustrate the situation today with a short video-clip:

BBC interview with Lord Hunt (3'21")

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