

Meeting: Nuleaf Steering Group
Date: 8th December 2021
Item: 6
Subject: Renewal of GMF membership
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Background

This report provides a review of Nuleaf's membership of the Group of Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities (GMF), a pan-European network that Nuleaf first affiliated to in 2017.

Recommendations

That the Steering Group agree to extend Nuleaf's membership of the GMF for a further year, after which it will again be subject to review.

1. Introduction

Over the years, Nuleaf has engaged on radioactive waste management with a range of European projects and networks. Our level of engagement has grown over time, reflecting the greater interest amongst international organisations in addressing the local and stakeholder dimensions of legacy waste and disposal. We are now an active participant in the work of the IAEA, are a member of the Civil Society Group of the EURAD programme and have Observer status at the Forum for Stakeholder Confidence (FSC) of the NEA.

GMF¹ (Group of Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities) is the main European representative body for nuclear local authorities. Nuleaf joined in 2017 following agreement by the Steering Group. In 2019 Nuleaf's Executive Director was elected a Vice-President of GMF's presidium. This appointment was renewed at the General Assembly in October 2021.

¹ <https://gmfeurope.org/>

2. Benefits and costs of membership

Involvement in the GMF has a number of advantages for Nuleaf. These include:

- The identification of international good practice in socio-economics, sustainability, engagement and planning. Our involvement has already provided examples from elsewhere that are useful in advancing Nuleaf's agenda – for example, knowledge of community benefit packages in Spain.
- The strengthening of engagement with transnational companies i.e. those with nuclear operations in a number of nations such as EDF. With EDF moving towards closure and decommissioning of its UK sites, the benefits of international connections is likely to become more significant in future.
- The development of visits and exchanges, to enable UK local authorities to learn from and share information with others that host a decommissioning site or a potential GDF. In terms of the UK GDF siting process, this could be a useful way of enabling local councils and communities to understand both the technical aspects of GDF development and the political and socio-economic challenges and opportunities.
- Engagement in GMF fora and meetings. In 2021 a seminar on Decommissioning was held involving presentations from a range of countries including the UK. Nuleaf participates in meetings of the ENWD, a forum supporting international engagement on the development of geological repositories and will be a member of a new forum that GMF has established on Decommissioning.

The maintaining of dialogue with other European countries post-Brexit is also viewed as important by the UK Government (BEIS).

The organisation has been reinvigorated in the last year with a new Co-ordinator appointed and a growing membership, with municipalities and networks from Finland, Bulgaria, Russia and France joining. The costs of membership for this year have been set at 10,000 Euros (c. £8,500) and Nuleaf's Director, as a member of the Presidium, will have his costs for meeting participation covered by GMF. As Nuleaf's future funding from RWM is influenced by our ability to engage on an international stage, membership of GMF helps support our funding discussions. The costs of membership are covered by the settlement provided by NDA/RWM, and in addition to the membership fee, there is now scope within the budget to fund a number of our members to attend future GMF meetings. Meetings in 2022 are planned to nuclear sites at Krsko (Slovenia) and Borsele (Netherlands).

The usual time commitment involved is limited to the two meetings per year plus phone conferences of the GMF group in which the Executive Director takes part.