

Meeting: Nuleaf Steering Group
Date: 15th December 2022
Item: 7
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.

GMF currently comprises 13 member countries and in 2023 the organisation is looking to expand its membership with the addition of Germany, Lithuania and Latvia. In November 2022 it established an alliance with its American and Canadian

¹ <https://gmfeurope.org/>

counterparts. It is hoped that this will lead to useful engagement with nuclear communities in North America.

2. Benefits and costs of membership

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

- The identification of international good practice in socio-economics, sustainability, engagement and planning. Nuleaf's involvement with GMF enabled it to link the consultants carrying out research on Nuleaf's behalf into community benefits in other countries with suitable sources of information.
- The strengthening of engagement with transnational companies i.e. those with nuclear operations in a number of nations such as EDF. With EDF having signed an agreement with NDA/Magnox on the decommissioning of its AGR stations, 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 2022, Nuleaf's Chair, Executive Director and another member attended the GMF AGM in Borsele, which included a visit to the COVRA (Dutch radioactive waste management organisation) facility at Nieuwdorp. The site contains a range of innovative storage facilities for nuclear waste. In 2023, although not yet confirmed, the GMF secretariat is considering holding meetings in France and Slovakia. Nuleaf again hopes to have funding available to enable some of our members to participate in these meetings.

The costs of membership for this year have been set at 10,000 Euros (c. £8,580) 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 NWS/NDA 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/NWS. The maintaining of dialogue with other European countries post-Brexit is also viewed as important by the UK Government (BEIS).

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