

PAKS NPP LIFETIME EXTENSION

Fact sheet

FACTS:

- Paks Nuclear Power Plant has four units of VVER-440/213 type reactors.
- Original lifetime was planned for 30 years, they will expire between 2012 (first unit) and 2017 (fourth unit).
- Operation is planned to be extended by another 20 years.
- Three different licences are needed for continued operation: environmental, water and operational.
- Responsible authority for giving operational license is the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority (HAEA; www.oah.hu). Authority for environmental license is the Environmental Inspectorate (Alsó-Duna-völgyi Környezetvédelmi Felügyelőség: ADUKÖFE; www.adukofe.hu), for water license it is the Directorate of Water (Alsó-duna-völgyi Környezetvédelmi és Vízügyi Igazgatóság: ADUKÖVIZIG; www.adukovizig.hu)
- Operational license for the lifetime extension has to be acquired for each reactor, 4 years before the original lifetime of each reactor expires (in 2008 for unit 1, in 2013 for unit 4). This is only a “theoretical license”. It means that continued operation is theoretically permitted, but the actual operational license has to be renewed at the date of expiration (2012 – first unit, 2017 – fourth unit).

WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

- The licensing process started in 2002. The environmental license process is in a middle stage, it is still possible for countries to interfere (see below). The NPP is working on its appeal for operational license, documents are being made.

Environmental license:

- Environmental license has to be acquired first. For this, Paks NPP has to prepare a preliminary environmental study, then a detailed environmental impact assessment (EIA).
- Paks NPP submitted the preliminary environmental assessment study to the environmental authority (ADUKÖFE) in December, 2004.
- Energy Club has registered at the authority as a client, received the study for evaluation and submitted its comments on the preliminary environmental study to the authorities in March (see document on our webpage).
- ADUKÖFE reached a decision in May. It ordered the creation of a detailed EIA study, which has to be fulfilled by June 2007. Now Paks is preparing the detailed study and probably will submit it early 2007.
- *In the study, Paks states that lifetime extension has and will have no transboundary impacts. With reference to this, Hungary has not notified its neighbouring countries about the EIA.*
- The resolution leaves open the question of cross-border impacts, and states that the Authority will make amendments, when the consultations, initiated by any country, require it.
- Austria is the only country who reported to Hungary to be included in the EIA process. Austrian citizens could make their comments till 11/09/05, which will then be sent to Hungary, Paks. The Umweltbundesamt made its report to the Austrian Government, which will be part of the statement sent to the Hungarian Government (together with the comments of Austrian NGOs and citizens, if any). As far as we know, up till now (17/10/2005) the Austrian Government has not submitted its statement to Hungary.
- 11 neighbouring municipalities reported to Paks to be affected by the project, they got the study, but none of them made any reflections. 1 association in Paks, called ‘For Our City, For Our Future’, registered at the authority also as a client, but in January, one month after the submission of the study to the authority, it withdrew its registration...

Operational license:

- Energy Club only knows that the NPP is preparing documents for the license. We asked for the criteria from the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority, which have to be fulfilled and explained in the licensing documents, and we got them.
- Although it is not in the Hungarian regulations that PLEX can only happen when the Parliament makes a decision about it, the nuclear lobby seems to force out a statement from the Parliament. In these days Energy Club is working hard to ask MPs not to vote for this project. We are going to committee meetings and present our views, writing letters to the MPs and we are even going to the Parliament in early November.

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

- Licenses needed for lifetime extension:
 - × environmental license, after completing the detailed EIA study (2007),
 - × license from the Directorate of Water (2006),
 - × theoretical license for further operation from HAEA (2008 – unit 1),
 - × renewed operational license for further operation (2012 – unit 1).

WHAT CAN AND SHOULD BE DONE?

- *Energy Club* is following and participating in the process. We provide information to decision-makers, journalists and present our views, knowledge and experiences on every forum we can.
- *Neighbouring countries* should, in accordance with the Espoo Convention, indicate their intentions to participate in the EIA process to the Hungarian Ministry of Environment. *NGOs* should raise this issue to their governments, to take the relevant steps in this issue. **It is still not late, as the submission of the detailed EIA study will happen in 2007**, so there is still one year to go!!!
- In the meantime Energy Club will put pressure on the Parliament, talk to municipalities, etc.