

Press Release

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IEA confirms nuclear energy is needed for clean energy transition

Brussels, 29 May 2019: The lack of further lifetime extensions of existing nuclear plants and new projects could threaten climate goals and security of energy supply, according to the latest report issued by the International Energy Agency (IEA). The report's conclusions reaffirm FORATOM's stance on the role nuclear energy has to play in responding to climate change challenges, particularly as it makes clear that a decline in nuclear could result in billions of tonnes of additional carbon emissions.

“FORATOM welcomes the latest IEA report as it confirms the fact that nuclear energy helps the EU and the world, achieve a sustainable and low-carbon future while at the same time providing people with reliable and affordable electricity”, says Yves Desbazeille, FORATOM Director General. “In the EU context, FORATOM believes that by 2050 one quarter of the electricity produced will need to come from nuclear, if the European Union wants to decarbonise its energy system while increasing security of energy supply”.

The IEA [report](#) “Nuclear Power in a Clean Energy System” assesses the current role of nuclear energy as well as its mid- and long-term future in the context of competitive electricity systems. According to the authors, a range of technologies, including nuclear power, will be needed for clean energy transitions around the world. The IEA also emphasises nuclear energy's contribution to energy security by keeping power grid stable, its ability to follow demand and supply shifts, to limit the impacts from seasonal fluctuations in output from renewables, as well as its ability to ensure energy security by reducing dependence on imported fuels. Likewise, the report underlines the importance of the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants for getting the energy transition “back on track”.

Apart from focusing on the benefits of having nuclear in the energy mix, the report warns that the tangible lack of support for nuclear power at government level in many countries has translated into a slowdown of nuclear energy's development over the last couple of years.

“The report makes it clear that without providing more support for nuclear, the clean energy transition will become much harder and more costly”, adds Yves Desbazeille. “We can observe the same approach at EU level, where even though nuclear energy has been described by the European Commission as the backbone of a 2050 carbon-free Europe together with renewables, it is often not treated on an equal footing with other low-carbon energy sources nor rewarded for the benefits it brings to the system. We hope that this report and the IEA's decisive support for nuclear will encourage policymakers in Brussels to embrace all low-carbon energy sources”.

The IEA concludes its report by listing several policy recommendations which should be implemented in order to retain nuclear energy. These include authorising lifetime extensions of existing nuclear power plants, designing an electricity market which values the system services needed to maintain electricity security, establishing a level playing field for all low-carbon energy sources, updating safety regulations, creating an attractive financing

framework, supporting new construction and innovative new reactor designs, and maintaining human capital.

About us: The European Atomic Forum (FORATOM) is the Brussels-based trade association for the nuclear energy industry in Europe. The membership of FORATOM is made up of 15 national nuclear associations. FORATOM represents nearly 3,000 European companies working in the industry, which supports around 1,100,000 jobs in the European Union.

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