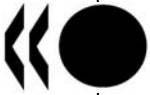


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Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Économiques
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

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English text only

**NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY
COMMITTEE FOR TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES ON NUCLEAR ENERGY
DEVELOPMENT AND FUEL CYCLE**

**NEA/NDC(2008)26
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Summary Report of the 2nd Meeting of the "Working Party on Nuclear Energy Economics" (WPNE)

**29-30 May, 2008
NEA Headquarters**

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**Working Party on Nuclear Energy Economics (WPNE)
Summary Report of the 2nd Meeting**

29-30 May, 2008, NEA Headquarters

Item 1. Welcome

1. Evelyne Bertel (NEA Secretariat) welcomed the participants, noting with appreciation that most NEA member countries were represented in the Working Party. She highlighted the importance of the WPNE for the Nuclear Development Committee (NDC) and more broadly for the NEA, indicating that she will elaborate on this point in her oral report on the outcomes from the 54th NDC meeting under Item 6 of the Agenda.

Item 2. Self introduction of participants

2. Recognizing that several experts present did not attend the first meeting of the WPNE, Evelyne Bertel invited all attendees to introduce themselves briefly, highlighting their field of work and specific interests in the field of nuclear energy economics. The list of participants is provided in *Attachment 1*.

Item 3. Nomination of the co-Chairs

3. Evelyne Bertel reminded the participants that it had been decided at the 1st meeting to postpone nomination of the WPNE co-Chairs until the 2nd meeting because the NDC final decision on the mandate and scope of work of the Working Party was not known at that time.

4. She reported that the Secretariat contacted several members of the WPNE as well as delegates from member countries in the NDC and, following those contacts, would like to propose two co-Chairs: Professor Alfred Voss (Germany) and Mr. Matthew Crozat (United States). She added that the two candidates had kindly accepted in principle to lead the WPNE, provided the proposal would be endorsed by members of the Working Party. The proposal was supported unanimously by the participants and the two co-Chairs thanked participants for their support.

Item 4. Adoption of the Agenda [NEA/NDC(2008)16]

5. Matthew Crozat introduced the proposed Agenda (see *Attachment 2*) sent in advance of the meeting and it was adopted as drafted. The Secretariat provided information on logistics including coffee and lunch breaks and likely timing of adjournment of the meeting on the second day.

Item 5. Adoption of the Mandate [NEA/NDC(2007)4/REV1]

7. Evelyne Bertel reported that the NDC finalised the mandate of the Working Party (see document NEA/NDC(2007)4/REV1). Responding to questions from participants, she stated that the NDC made only a few editorial changes in the document reviewed by the WPNE at its 1st meeting. The Working Party took note of its mandate.

Item 6. Outcomes from the 54th NDC Meeting

8. Evelyne Bertel summarised the main relevant outcomes from the last NDC meeting with emphasis on the activities related to economics of nuclear energy that the Committee decided to include in

its 2009-2010 Programme of Work. She stressed, as stated in her introductory remarks, that the WPNE is considered by the NDC as an essential body to support robust economic analysis of interest to member countries. She added that the Director General of the NEA in his opening remarks to the 54th NDC meeting highlighted the importance of economic issues in the framework of a nuclear energy renaissance and welcomed the creation of a standing body in charge of economic studies within the Agency.

9. Referring to excerpts of the NDC Programme of Work circulated to participants in advance of the meeting, Evelyne Bertel introduced the three projects in the field of economics for which the NDC is expecting contributions from the WPNE: (6.1) electricity generating costs; (6.2) methods and databases for nuclear energy economic analyses; and (6.5) economics of lifetime extension and refurbishment.

10. She indicated that activities 6.1 and 6.5 are *ad hoc* studies to be carried out during the period 2009-2010, leading to publications by the end of 2010, while 6.2 could be continuing activities of the WPNE. In this connection, she informed the participants that some members of the NDC expressed reservation on the relevance of establishing and maintaining an economic database and requested that the WPNE report to them periodically on the progress of work in that field. She added that activity 6.1 on electricity generation costs had been ranked at the highest priority by the NDC in its Programme of Work.

11. Responding to questions from participants, Evelyne Bertel explained that the NDC had been interested in many of the proposals from the WPNE (see note to the NDC sent after the 1st meeting of the WPNE) but that the workforce available in the Nuclear Development Division was a limiting factor for the number of studies that could be undertaken.

12. Commenting on the activity related to databases and models, Alfred Voss stressed that they are only tools in support to economic analyses. He highlighted the need to adapt data and methodologies to the objectives of the studies to be undertaken. The participants agreed on the need to discuss in more depth activity 6.2, taking into account presentations to be made by several members, before deciding on its scope and content.

13. Gert van Uiter (the Netherlands) noted that the OECD is an authoritative organisation in the field of economic analyses and enquired whether it would be relevant to consider cooperation with other parts of the organisation. Evelyne Bertel responded that economic studies in the energy field are mainly carried out by the IEA which is represented in the WPNE and that most other economic activities are too broad in scope to be directly relevant for the WPNE. However, she stated that the Secretariat will be attentive to the work carried out in other parts of the Organisation and seek co-operation whenever relevant.

Item 7. Presentations on economic indicator data bases

14. The co-Chairs invited participants to present their respective inputs on databases and models as a background for discussing the potential future activities of the WPNE in this field. They proposed to cover databases first and then models and to entertain questions after each set of presentations. The proposal was endorsed by the participants. The Secretariat reminded participants that all the materials presented during the meeting, including viewgraphs and reports, will be posted in due course on the WPNE restricted web site (see list of actions in *Attachment 3*).

15. Matthew Crozat presented the database on nuclear costs developed by the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) of the United States Department of Energy in the framework of the Advanced Fuel Cycle Initiative (AFCI). His presentation covered the objectives and scope of the database and the approach adopted for collecting data on unit costs and characteristics of the technologies considered and checking their consistency. He highlighted the importance of quality control and treatment of uncertainties. He provided some examples of data and the reference of the report published by INL on this data base.

16. Responding to a question from Alfred Voss, Matthew Crozat stated that the database covers costs for all steps of the fuel cycle and for the reactors. He explained that the data are contained in a paper report available on the INL web site and added that an electronic database could be developed based on the data collected so far. He confirmed that the data are not proprietary and may be accessed by all interested users within and outside the United States.

17. The discussion following the presentation of the INL database highlighted the challenges raised by establishing and maintaining an up-to-date compendium of economic indicators and ensuring quality control of the data selected. Matthew Crozat recognised that the establishment of the AFCI database had been time consuming and had required contribution from a wide range of experts. He acknowledged also that the data collected are reflecting economic conditions in the United States.

18. Several participants noted that the volatility of costs and prices makes it very difficult to ensure that a database continuously reflect current situation. Also, some participants expressed reservations on the relevance of data that could be collected in an international framework taking into account commercial sensitivity of prices and their variation from country to country as well as in time.

19. Alfred Voss presented an overview on databases available for general use, in electronic format or paper reports, and on economic indicators in the energy/electricity sector (see viewgraphs on the WPNE web site). He noted that most of the databases developed in the past (e.g., CO₂ DB at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis and IKARUS in Germany) were not updated recently owing to the lack of incentive and funding/manpower to support the work. He stressed also that, in general, the data collected were country-specific (e.g., IKARUS) and that the quality of those data varies from technology to technology, depending on the main expertise and focus of interest of the organisation in charge of the work.

20. The co-Chairs invited all participants to provide information on relevant databases that they are aware of in their respective countries. The main outcome from the interventions of participants was that most countries do not have any ongoing work in this field at the national level; when databases exist they have been developed by companies and are proprietary. It was concluded that, although some existing databases could be of interest for the WPNE, none offers the right framework and content for the purpose of the activities to be undertaken by the Working Party.

21. The participants pursued the discussion focusing on the relevance for WPNE to undertake the development of a specific database. There was a consensus on the challenges raised by establishing and maintaining a database to support economic analyses to be undertaken by NEA and/or its member countries. Many issues were discussed in this regard including the difficulties to cover all technologies and all countries of interest, the uncertainties on future costs and prices and the need to adapt data bases to computer tools and models expected to be use in economic analyses.

Item 8. Models/computer tools for cost estimation

22. The co-Chairs invited participants, including the Secretariat, to present information on models and computer tools for economic assessments and cost evaluations available in their respective countries.

23. With regard to NEA, Evelyne Bertel informed the Working Party about several computer tools, mostly based on Excel spreadsheets, that were developed to calculate nuclear fuel cycle costs and levelised costs of electricity generation by nuclear and other power plants. She noted that the cost estimates published in the 2005 update of “Projected costs of electricity generation” were calculated using one of those tools. She added that the tools are not documented, i.e., there is no users’ manual, but that they are

fairly simple and that the Secretariat could undertake the preparation of guidance for users if the Working Party would find it relevant.

24. Matthew Crozat presented the G4-ECONS software package developed by the Economic Modeling Working Group (EMWG) of Generation IV International Forum (GIF) and distributed to the public early in 2008 (see viewgraphs on the web site of the WPNE). Evelyne Bertel indicated that the NEA is in charge of the Technical Secretariat of GIF and responsible for dissemination of G4-ECONS; she noted also that she was involved in the development and implementation of G4-ECONS.

25. Participants expressed interest in G4-ECONS and indicated their willingness to test it in order to assess whether it could be relevant for future activities of the Working Party. Copies of the software package, including the Excel-based computer tool and the EMWG Guidelines for cost estimation, were provided to interested participants.

26. Alfred Voss provided an overview on models for electricity generation cost estimation covering G4-ECONS, spreadsheet-based computer tools used by his institute at Stuttgart University, and a number of other models (see viewgraphs on the web site of the WPNE). Also, he introduced the DANESS dynamic models developed recently for calculating average generation costs of an evolving fleet of thermal and fast reactors.

27. Fortunato Vettrai (Italy) presented models used in his country for economic studies on Small and Medium Reactors (SMRs) carried out in the framework of an IAEA project (see slides on the web site of the WPNE). He covered in his presentation some of the key results obtained with the models. The presentation triggered a discussion on the competitiveness of SMRs versus large size reactors, a topic of interest for most member countries which might be addressed by the WPNE at a later stage.

28. Michel Delannay (Switzerland) presented the approach and key results of the study on economics of nuclear energy in Switzerland carried out by Swissnuclear in 2006. The viewgraphs supporting the presentation, prepared by Roger Lundmark (Switzerland) who was unable to attend the meeting, are posted on the web site of the WPNE. Michel Delannay stressed that economic assessments are carried out by the Swiss nuclear operators each year according to the regulation prevailing in the country and that results are publicly available, and could therefore be used by the WPNE whenever relevant.

29. Gert Van Uiter indicated that he is using simple models for cost estimations, covering analyses of the impact of alternative fuel cycles on nuclear generation costs and comparison of levelised electricity generation costs for various power plant technologies, taking into account issues such as negative value of CO₂ emissions. He added that the model and its documentation are used by several experts in the Netherlands but are available in Dutch language only.

30. Stella Lam (Canada) informed the participants that her company, AECL, uses various cost estimation models which are proprietary and cannot be shared within an international framework. She provided information and references for two Canadian online software packages: RetScreen a tool developed by NRCAN for estimating the costs of renewable energy sources; and the Uranium Project Calculators of WISE.

31. Kee Hwan Moon (Republic of Korea) provided participants with an overview of models/computer tools used in his country for cost estimation, covering models relevant for assessments at the power plant level, e.g., G4-ECONS, at the electricity system level, e.g., WASP and at the energy system level, e.g., MARKAL. His presentation (see viewgraphs on the web site of the WPNE) covered key features of each model and the type of results obtained when using those models.

32. Lubor Zezula (Czech Republic) presented the main outcomes of the study carried out by the World Energy Council (WEC) on the costs of existing nuclear and fossil-fuelled power plants. The viewgraphs and the paper supporting his presentation are posted on the WPNE web site.

33. The participants discussed the required characteristics for models that could be used by the Working Party. It was agreed that dynamic models relevant for a mixed fleet of reactors and macro-economic models for energy system analyses are not adapted to the scope of work expected within the Working Party. On the other hand, several members indicated interest in models providing capabilities to analyse advanced fuel cycles with multi-recycling.

34. The co-Chairs thanked participants for their presentations and suggestions during the discussions. They proposed to address in more details databases and models in the framework of the Work Plan for 2008 and beyond.

Item 9. Work Plan for 2008 and beyond

35. The co-Chairs reminded participants that the Work Plan of the Working Party should reflect the activities included by the NDC in its Programme of Work and proposed to address each of the three activities falling within the expertise of the WPNE: 6.1 projected costs of generating electricity; 6.3 databases and models for economic assessments; and 6.5 economics of lifetime extension.

Activity 6.1 – Projected costs of generating electricity

36. Recognizing the important role of the IEA in project 6.1 on projected costs of generating electricity, the co-Chairs invited the representative of IEA, Ulrik Stridbaek, to present relevant ongoing and future activities of his Agency before initiating the discussion of the Working Party on working mode for the project.

37. Ulrik Stridbaek focused his presentation (see viewgraphs on the web site of the WPNE) on the recent IEA publication on investments in the power sector. He elaborated on investment risks, treatment of uncertainties and sensitivity of technology choices to financing issues. Several participants commented on uncertainties and their impact on decisions. There was a consensus on the need to tackle those issues in the new study on projected costs of generating electricity.

38. With regard to participation in the study on projected costs of generating electricity, Ulrik Stridbaek stated that the IEA would be prepared to cooperate with the NEA and to provide inputs and expertise on non-nuclear technologies. In this regard, he noted that his Agency has updated already generation cost estimates for the purpose of the World Energy Outlook.

39. The Secretariat reminded participants of the overall framework, objectives and scope of the series of studies on projected costs of generating electricity, highlighting the importance of those studies for the NEA and its member countries. The discussion on this project focused on data collection and methodology for cost estimations.

40. The participants identified a number of issues to be addressed when updating the study, including: the need to reflect recent price escalations for materials and commodities; the importance of ensuring the robustness of cost data collected in support of analyses; the relevance of sensitivity studies showing the impact of key factor variations, e.g., fuel price, capacity factor, CO₂ values and financing schemes.

41. Taking into account remarks and suggestions made by participants, the co-Chairs summarised the recommendations of the WPNE on scope, approach and working mode as follows (see *Attachment 3*, List of Actions, for details and schedule):

- The Working Party is prepared to take the leadership in carrying out the study provided member countries will nominate additional experts in the field of non-nuclear technologies. The support of IEA is expected in this regard.
- The study will focus, like previous studies in the series, on power plants under construction or planned which are expected to be commissioned within a few years, say by 2015. The data collection will be carried out through a questionnaire derived from the questionnaire used for the 2005 update but the Working Party and additional nominated experts will review thoroughly the data provided to check their consistency and robustness.
- The approach selected for the baseline estimation is the levelised lifetime cost estimation method which is well adapted to international screening estimates. However, there was a consensus on the need to address uncertainties, financing schemes and taxes more thoroughly than in previous studies.

Activity 6.2 – Databases and models for economic assessments

42. The participants recognised that, as far as they are aware, there is no existing database which would satisfy the requirements of the WPNE. They acknowledged the challenges raised by collecting data, checking their consistency and maintaining a comprehensive set of up-to-date economic indicators relevant at the international level.

43. The co-Chairs summarised the discussions and concluded that the Working Party should recommend to the NDC not to embark on the establishment of a database on economic indicators. The preferred approach would be to collect data on an *ad hoc* basis whenever needed to support economic studies to be included by the Committee in its Programme of Work. It was agreed that the Secretariat should prepare a note to the NDC in this regard, for review by the WPNE and eventual submission to the Committee (see *Attachment 3*, List of Actions, for details and schedule).

44. Regarding models and computer tools for economic assessments, the participants expressed the view that several of the tools presented during the meeting offer some interesting capabilities for future activities to be undertaken by the Working Party. In particular, G4-ECONS was recognised as a relevant software for international screening studies. It was noted also that the Excel-based spreadsheets used by the NEA Secretariat for previous studies on electricity generation costs are valuable tools in that context.

45. The participants discussed the objectives and scope of models to be considered by the Working Party and agreed to focus on tools devoted to cost estimation rather than including broad economic analysis models, i.e., MARKAL, which are beyond the mandate of the WPNE.

45. Matthew Crozat offered to summarise the outcomes from the discussions in a note to the NDC that he will draft and circulate to members of the Working Party for review and approval (see List of Actions in *Attachment 3*). Also, it was agreed that interested participants will test G4-ECONS and report on their assessment of the tool at the 3rd meeting.

Activity 6.5 – Economics of lifetime extension

46. The discussion on project 6.5 highlighted the interest of the WPNE in the topic and its willingness to contribute to the study. However, it was recognised that members of the Working Party do not have the relevant expertise to conduct the study. Therefore, the WPNE proposes to provide guidance, if needed, to the *ad hoc* Group of Experts to be assembled by the NDC for carrying out the study and to review in due course the draft report from that Group. It was agreed that the Secretariat will prepare a note to the NDC summarising those recommendations (see *Attachment 3*).

Summary of the discussions and decisions on the Work Plan and List of Actions

47. The co-Chairs invited the Secretariat to summarise the outcomes from the discussions on the Work Plan, identifying key actions, schedule and responsibilities. A draft List of Actions was established (see *Attachment 3*) and it was agreed that the Secretariat will send it to all members for their review and comments shortly after the meeting.

Item 10. Next meeting

48. The Secretariat had proposed (see note to the Agenda, *Attachment 2*) to hold the 3rd meeting of the Working Party on 3-4 November 2008 in order to review and finalise the WPNE report to the NDC to be delivered at the 55th NDC meeting early in December. The Working Party agreed on the dates.

Item 11. Any other business

49. No issue was raised under this item.

Item 12. Adjourn

50. The co-Chairs thanked the participants for their inputs and contributions to the discussion. The Secretariat thanked the co-Chairs for their efficient leadership and all participants for their cooperation and stressed the importance of respecting the deadlines agreed upon in the list of action in order to ensure a timely preparation of the WPNE report to the NDC. The co-Chairs and the Secretariat wished all participants a safe trip back home and the meeting was adjourned.

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* *sent his regrets.*

Agenda

1. Welcome (Secretariat)
2. Self introduction of members and participants (All)
3. Nomination of the co-Chairs
4. Adoption of the Agenda [NEA/NDC(2008)16]
5. Adoption of the Mandate [NEA/NDC(2007)4/REV1]
6. Relevant outcomes from the 54th NDC Meeting (Oral report by the Secretariat)
7. Data bases on economic indicators* (All)
8. Models/computer tools for cost estimation* (All)
9. Work Plan for 2008 and beyond** (Room Document 1)
10. Next meeting***
11. Any other business
12. Adjourn

* Participants are invited to send presentations of items 7 and 8 of the Agenda in advance of the meeting.

** The Secretariat will send the Document in advance of the meeting to all registered participants.

*** Tentatively **3-4 November 2008** [or in early January 2009, depending on the decisions taken regarding the Work Plan].

List of Actions

#	Deliverable	Responsibility	Due date
1	Send 2004 questionnaire for EGC study to all	Evelyne	Asap (done)
2	Send list of action	Evelyne	2 June
3	Post all document presented/discussed during the 2 nd meeting on the WP web site	Hélène	6 June
4	Send draft proposal on approach to EGC study update to all for comments	Evelyne	15 July
5	Send draft report on model/computer tools to Secretariat for circulation to all (within 1 day)	Matt	30 July
6	Send draft report on databases to all for comments	Evelyne	31 July
7	Send draft proposal on approach to lifetime extension study to all for comments	Evelyne	31 July
8	Send draft Agenda for the 3 rd meeting to the Secretariat	Co-Chairs	15 September
9	Send comments on the report on databases to the Secretariat	All	30 September
10	Send comments on the report on models to the Secretariat	All	30 September
11	Send comments on the proposal on approach to EGC study update	All	30 September
12	Send draft summary report from the 2 nd meeting to all for comments	Evelyne	30 September
13	Send to all and post on the web site draft Agenda for the 3 rd meeting	Evelyne	3 October
14	Confirm participation in the 3 rd meeting (3-4 November 2008)	All	20 October