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# 2002 in Perspective

Reflecting developments in OECD countries in the nuclear energy field, the year 2002 was a very productive one for the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA), putting to test its capabilities to adjust quickly to a changing environment and to pool member countries' resources to bolster new concepts, new analyses and new projects in a variety of areas, where the need for multilateral co-operation was felt by the membership.

Common denominators influencing these efforts included energy market deregulation, environmental policies to limit greenhouse gas emissions and the commitment to develop future reactor and nuclear fuel cycle technologies.

This annual report highlights the main directions pursued in the NEA programme of work, and the most significant results achieved during the year. It may be mentioned that one of the challenges confronting the NEA in establishing and carrying out its programme of work is to maintain a careful balance among the different areas in which it is active in order to best meet the wishes and needs of a diversified membership, which includes countries with nuclear power programmes, and others without such programmes or in the process of phasing them out.

The following highlights of the Agency's 2002 activities help demonstrate the point:

- The analysis by the NEA of the role of nuclear energy in the context of sustainable development, which was tabled at the OECD Ministerial Meeting and the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, paving the way to the Rio +10 meeting in Johannesburg where the NEA presented its report on *Nuclear Energy and the Kyoto Protocol*. Further work was carried out in 2002, notably on indicators of sustainable development.





- The Agency's technical support to the Generation IV International Forum, which concerns the development of innovative reactors and associated fuel cycles for commissioning by 2030.
- NEA activities regarding the analysis, prevention and management of accidents to limit their occurrence and reduce their potential consequences, including in particular the creation and continued operation of joint nuclear safety R&D projects.
- Work on how to maintain regulatory effectiveness and adequate capability in regulatory research.
- The support provided by the Agency to the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP) in modernising the latter's radiological protection recommendations, and the investigation of solutions for better integrating radiological protection within current concepts of and approaches to risk governance.
- NEA efforts concerning radioactive waste management, including ways to improve technical experts' and civil society's confidence in geological disposal of long-lived high-level waste, and an international peer review of a United States Department of Energy study regarding the recommendation process for the Yucca Mountain spent fuel and high-level waste disposal site.
- The organisation of the second session of the International School of Nuclear Law, in France, to enhance the training of young lawyers across NEA membership and beyond, in the multifaceted aspects of nuclear legislation and regulation.

These few examples testify to the diversity and versatility of the role that the Nuclear Energy Agency continued to play in 2002, putting to good use the resources of international co-operation for the benefit of all its members.

