



C/2023/1511

18.12.2023

COMMISSION OPINION

of 14 December 2023

relating to the plan for the disposal of radioactive waste arising from the Olkiluoto Very Low-Level Waste near surface repository located on the Olkiluoto site in Finland

(Only the Finnish and Swedish texts are authentic)

(C/2023/1511)

The assessment below is carried out under the provisions of Article 37 of the Euratom Treaty, without prejudice to any additional assessments to be carried out under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the obligations stemming from it and from secondary legislation ⁽¹⁾.

On 4 April 2023, the European Commission received from the Government of Finland, in accordance with Article 37 of the Euratom Treaty, the General Data relating to the plan for the disposal of radioactive waste ⁽²⁾ arising from a planned near surface repository for very low-level waste on the Olkiluoto site.

On the basis of these data and additional information requested by the Commission on 24 May 2023 and provided by the Finnish authorities on 21 June 2023, and following consultation with the Group of Experts, the Commission has drawn up the following opinion:

1. The distance from the site to the nearest border of another Member State, in this case Sweden, is 200 km.
2. During the repository's operational period:
 - Radioactive waste will be emplaced without intention of retrieval.
 - Under normal operating conditions, the repository will not release liquid or gaseous effluents.
 - In the event of unplanned releases of radioactive effluents that may follow an accident of the type and magnitude considered in the plan, these releases are not liable to result in a radioactive contamination of the water, soil or airspace of another Member State which is significant from the point of view of health in compliance with the provisions of the Basic Safety Standards Directive ⁽³⁾.
3. Beyond the repository's operational period:

The measures envisaged for the final closure of the repository and the results of the long-term safety assessment performed for the post-closure period, as described in the General Data provide reliance that the conclusions under point 2 above will remain valid in the long term.

⁽¹⁾ For instance, under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, environmental aspects should be further assessed. Indicatively, the Commission would like to draw attention to the provisions of Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU; to Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, as well as to Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and to Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.

⁽²⁾ The disposal of radioactive waste in the meaning of point 1 of Commission Recommendation 2010/635/Euratom of 11 October 2010 on the application of Article 37 of the Euratom Treaty (OJ L 279, 23.10.2010, p. 36).

⁽³⁾ Council Directive 2013/59/Euratom of 5 December 2013 laying down basic safety standards for protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionising radiation, and repealing Directives 89/618/Euratom, 90/641/Euratom, 96/29/Euratom, 97/43/Euratom and 2003/122/Euratom (OJ L 13, 17.1.2014, p. 1).

In conclusion, the Commission is of the opinion that the implementation of the plan for the disposal of radioactive waste in whatever form arising from Olkiluoto Very Low-Level Waste near surface repository, located on the Olkiluoto site in Finland, during its normal operational life and after its final closure, as well as in the event of accidents of the type and magnitude considered in the General Data, is not liable to result in a radioactive contamination, significant from the point of view of health, of the water, soil or airspace of another Member State or a neighbouring country, in respect of the provisions laid down in the Basic Safety Standards.

Done at Brussels, 14 December 2023.

For the Commission
Kadri SIMSON
Member of the Commission
