

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 approaching to its end. 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.
- *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 was then sent to Hungary, Paks. The Umweltbundesamt made its report to the Austrian Government, which was part of the statement sent to the Hungarian Government (together with the comments of Austrian NGOs and citizens, if any).
- Romania and Croatia requested only information on the process, but they do not want to participate. Romania is still considering.
- Paks submitted the detailed environmental study on 14th March, 2006. Public hearing will be held on 28th April.
- Austria got the answers for their statement in March. There will be a separate public hearing for them. The position of Paks is that the PLEX will not have any cross-border impacts. The environmental study does not deal with beyond design base accidents, which could cause impacts outside of Hungary. They basically say that there were no accidents in the past 20 years, so there won't be any in the next 30.

- Environmental license will be given to Paks after the two public hearings took place. The authority (ADUKÖFE) has to consider everything that was mentioned at the public hearings and has to take them into account before it reaches a decision.

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.

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

- Licenses needed for lifetime extension:

- × environmental license, after completing the detailed EIA study (2006),
- × 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.

Energy Club, 11.04.2006