

Minister's Statement on the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's 2012 Annual Report

I am pleased to receive the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's 2012 Annual Report entitled *Learning More Together*. This Report details the Organization's accomplishments over the past year in its work to implement a long-term plan for managing nuclear fuel waste produced in Canada.

The seeds of this plan were planted a decade ago with the passage of the 2002 *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act*, and the establishment of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) by Canada's nuclear energy corporations.

I am encouraged by the results to date of the siting process which the NWMO launched in 2010. Twenty-one Canadian communities have come forward to express an interest in hosting a national facility for nuclear waste and to learn more about the plan.

In 2012, the NWMO continued to work with these communities as part of the process to eventually locate a suitable site for a deep underground facility for the safe and secure long-term management of nuclear fuel waste.

While there is more groundwork to be done with interested communities and their neighbours, I am confident that the NWMO will continue to work in close collaboration with citizens, community leaders and different levels of government – all of whom will be critical to the success of this project.

I support the NWMO's commitment to further study, assess, and evaluate the technical and social considerations of this project in relation to potential host communities as well as neighbouring communities and those along potential transportation routes.

In 2012, the NWMO hosted the fourth International Conference of Geological Repositories which took place in Toronto, Ontario from September 30 to October 3. I congratulate the NWMO for a very successful event which enabled Canadian and international experts to share information about their experiences in nuclear waste management and interested community leaders from Canada to learn more about initiatives in other countries.

The owners of Canada's nuclear fuel waste continue to take steps to ensure that there is sufficient money set aside to pay for the management of nuclear fuel waste over the long term as required by the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act*. As of 2012, they have set aside approximately \$2.8 billion in trust to be accessed only once a construction or site licence for a waste management facility is issued by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

In Canada, the nuclear power generation sector produces about \$5 billion in annual revenues and supports 17,000 direct jobs while uranium mining accounts for over \$1 billion per year in exports and supports 5,000 direct jobs. The Government of Canada is actively addressing important issues for the nuclear sector, including: ensuring a strong regulator, restructuring Atomic Energy

of Canada Limited, facilitating international trade opportunities, and responsibly managing legacy wastes.

The Government of Canada continues to monitor the activities of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization to ensure that the organization fulfils its responsibilities under the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act*.

Canadians should take this opportunity to read the annual report and visit the NWMO website to learn more about the long-term plan for managing nuclear fuel waste in Canada.

The Honourable Joe Oliver
Minister of Natural Resources

June 25, 2013