

**ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE NWMO**  
c/o NWMO, 22 St. Clair Avenue East, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M4T 2S3

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson  
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Canada  
580 Booth Street, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor, Room: C7-1  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0E4

April 25, 2024

Dear Minister Wilkinson,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Advisory Council to the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) to provide an update on our activities throughout 2023.

The NWMO has made commendable progress in implementing Canada's plan for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel, known as Adaptive Phased Management. We are pleased to report that from our perspective, Canada's plan remains on track, with the overall goal of selecting a site in late 2024 and obtaining a construction license by 2032.

Throughout 2023, the Advisory Council continued to provide advice on the NWMO's site selection process, focusing particularly on community willingness and safety, including social safety and water protection. The Advisory Council provided advice on the NWMO's Water Statement, which has since been released. The Advisory Council commends the NWMO on its commitment to water protection.

The Advisory Council has had the opportunity to hear the NWMO's plans to develop Hosting Agreements with communities in the site selection process, and early this year the first of those – with the Township of Ignace – was completed. Throughout the year, we also closely monitored the organization's efforts to advance their site selection process, prepare for the regulatory decision-making process, and seek certainty about the application of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.


In December 2023, the Advisory Council met with NRCan Deputy Minister Michael Vandergrift and NRCan Assistant Deputy Minister Debbie Scharf to discuss the NWMO's progress and government engagement related to its work, including discussions on small modular reactors and Indigenous relations. We were gratified by their messages of support for the process leading to the site selection decision. We also discussed the importance of clarity and coherence of government policy and regulatory expectations, particularly with respect to the Impact Assessment process that will follow site selection. In addition, we raised concerns related to the lack of clarity available about consultation requirements for infrastructure proponents with respect to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Looking ahead, the Advisory Council is increasingly focused on the future beyond site selection, including preparations for regulatory decision-making processes. Given the evolving and uncertain regulatory landscape, we emphasized the importance of early and thorough preparation by the NWMO in this regard. We would also urge the federal government to take all efforts to ensure the NWMO has the necessary information to enter the regulatory decision-making process effectively. It remains our belief that the success of Canada's plan for used nuclear fuel relies on the continuing and steadfast commitment of the Government of Canada to the approach the NWMO is implementing.

In conclusion, the Advisory Council remains committed to supporting the NWMO's endeavours into 2024 and beyond, ensuring the safe and responsible management of Canada's used nuclear fuel.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely, on behalf of the members of the Advisory Council,

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David R. Cameron  
Chair, Advisory Council to the NWMO

Enclosure (1)

Copy: NWMO Advisory Council:

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