

CALL TO ACTION: OPPOSE THE PROPOSED KOEBERG PLANT LIFE EXTENSION



INTRODUCTION

We are concerned that government leaders once again are proceeding with processes to:

- Potentially include 2500MW new nuclear power to South Africa's future electricity generation mix
- Extend the plant life of Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant.

EXTENDING KOEBERG'S PLANT LIFE

Government recently released draft regulations to allow the extension of the life of Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant - which was meant to close in 2024 - for another 20 years.

The plant's two units started operating commercially in 1984 and 1985, respectively. Eskom intends to extend the operation of both units to 2044.



OVERVIEW

Draft regulations on the Long-Term Operation of Nuclear Installations

The Draft regulations on the Long-Term Operation of Nuclear Installations set out the requirements for licence holders (such as the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station) to apply to operate beyond the original licence period.

The application, which is made to the National Nuclear Regulator (NNR), must include the time period being applied for as well as the safety case to support the safe extension of operations.

The NNR Act allows any person, who may be directly affected by the extension, to present their case.

These presentations can relate to health, safety and environmental issues connected with the application. The NNR board can arrange for further public debate, as necessary.

STAND AGAINST COSTLY, UNSAFE NUCLEAR ENERGY

The NNR must take a number of factors into consideration when evaluating the application:

- Safety-related programmes
- The effectiveness of Eskom's ageing management programme
- Revalidated ageing analyses (are structures, systems or components acceptable?)
- Must provide safety reviews (is it safe to operate beyond the initial lifespan?)

The draft regulations also set out the licence requirements for long-term operation and give details of what the safety case must contain.

It is up to the NNR to decide the timeframe for the licence when they evaluate the application. This may lead to subsequent licensing stages, which might include extended shutdown or decommissioning if the safety requirements are not met.



TAKE ACTION

Make a submission to the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. Let them know why you oppose the draft regulations for the long-term operation of nuclear installations or ask for a time extension if you cannot do so by the deadline.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Who to email:

Attention: Deputy Director General:
Nuclear

Email: nuclearpolicy@dmre.gov.za

Who to copy in:

National Nuclear Regulator

Email: enquiry@nnr.co.za

Parliament's Portfolio Committee
on Mineral Resources and Energy
Committee Secretaries:

Ayanda Boss:

Email: aboss@parliament.gov.za

Arico Kotze:

Email: akotze@parliament.gov.za

Regulations:

<https://pmg.org.za/policy-document/1197/>

**Deadline for submissions: 18
August 2020**

REASONS TO STAND AGAINST NUCLEAR ENERGY

IT IS COSTLY

Costs of final disposal of high-level radioactive nuclear waste are unknown

The final disposal solution for the high-level radioactive nuclear waste from Koeberg has been anticipated, since 1986.

The issue repeatedly gets delayed because if it were to be costed, it would become apparent that nuclear energy is more costly than pro-nuclear experts claim.

Secrecy surrounds the costs of nuclear projects

Government's ongoing secrecy around the costs of large electricity infrastructure projects, means that taxpayers - who ultimately fund Eskom - are not clear what it will cost to extend the plant life of Koeberg.

SAFETY RISKS

Koeberg produces about 30 tons of high-level radioactive waste per year – all of it currently stored in used fuel pools and in casks on-site (over 1000 tons).

This waste can pose serious risks to humans and the environment. It can melt or 'go critical', and could result in a nuclear explosion.

The storage was designed for Koeberg's current plant life and is therefore nearing full capacity.

There is no permanent solution for this highly toxic waste!

RIGHTS IMPACTS

Eskom has received billions of rands in bailouts – largely to meet loan repayments (to build the Medupi and Kusile Coal-Powered Plants, etc.).

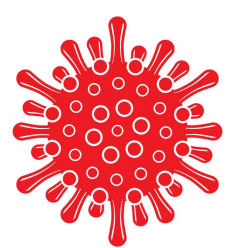
This continually results in monies – that could have been spent on education, health, clean energy or other areas of spending – being diverted.



REASONS TO STAND AGAINST NUCLEAR ENERGY

SAFETY DURING COVID-19

The Covid-19 pandemic creates a risk for the operations of nuclear plants all over the world, but the safety case for Koeberg may be less viable. When key people, with very specific expertise, are off sick, their skills cannot be replaced in a short amount of time.



COVID-19
CORONAVIRUS

Travel restrictions also limit availability of overseas experts. If Koeberg had a nuclear incident that required evacuation, it would be catastrophic and simply not worth the risk - with over a hundred thousand people at risk of being affected.



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EVACUATION CONSIDERATIONS

At least 100,000 people would be impacted by a nuclear incident

South Africa has set its Urgent Protective Action Zone at a 16km radius around Koeberg - this would probably affect 60-100 000 people depending on the current populations of Atlantis, Parklands, Du Noon and Melkbos.

Evacuation is not short-term

A nuclear disaster (like Chernobyl) could permanently displace entire communities.

Consider Fukushima – the furthest area for mandatory evacuation was 42 km, and in 2018, 28 000 people were still looking for homes.

Vulnerable and disadvantaged communities in the Koeberg fall out zone would be severely affected. Residents of Atlantis and Du Noon would be particularly vulnerable if they suddenly had to permanently evacuate.

JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN

#NUKEFREESA #JUSTCLEANENERGY

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Join the conversation

Facebook: @StopSecretNukeDeal
And Twitter: @SAFCEI

Hashtags: #JustCleanEnergy
#NukeFreeSA #NukeFreeFuture

Write an opinion piece or letter

Share your concerns on any nuclear or energy issues being reported in the media. Write a letter to your local (or even national newspapers), and send through to info@safcei.org.za so that we can also share it.

Get a conversation going

Start a conversation with your friends, family and colleagues and spread the word as far as possible.



YES TO JUST CLEAN ENERGY

As people of faith, we believe that sustainable renewable energy sources (that South Africa has in abundance), together with increased energy efficiency, provides an approach that will ensure greater equity in access to energy services for all citizens.



We believe that humans have a responsibility to protect all life and nature as God's creation. We must strive to pass on a safer and more secure environment to future generations.