

May, 21st 2013:
NERIS General Assembly,
Universidad Politécnica
de Madrid

May, 22nd 2013:
NERIS Topical Workshop
on Contaminated Goods,
CIEMAT, Madrid

News

EDITORIAL ■

TOWARDS A JOINT PROGRAMMING OF THE EUROPEAN R&D IN RADIATION PROTECTION

According to the vision of Horizon 2020 (name of the next R&D Framework Programme of EU) the European Commission is looking for one umbrella organisation or association in the area of radiation research and development in Europe to take care of coordination and some administrative tasks in the Euratom research programme. At the moment three independent European research platforms exist in the radiation protection area (MELODI, Radioecology Alliance and NERIS) in addition to other networks acting in this area. All these three platforms have worked hard in recent years to structure European research in their respective fields. These three platforms, although they have had cooperation, are working independently from each other and none of them has implemented procedures allowing them to manage future calls for research projects in the field of radiation protection on behalf of the European Commission. Last autumn MELODI Platform took an initiative in establishing one umbrella association in radiation research area in Europe, and invited NERIS and Radioecology Alliance to participate to a project proposal OPERRA (Open Project for the European Radiation Research Area) submitted to the Euratom Call of 2013. MELODI, Alliance and NERIS will work together in the project, but they also rely on other stakeholders having a role in the definition of future research lines in radiation protection, e.g. HERCA and EURADOS. The final goal is to build up an umbrella coordination structure that has capacity in a legal and logistical sense to administer future calls for research and training in radiation protection as a whole (including low-dose risk, radioecology, nuclear emergency management and recovery, and also research activities related to the medical uses of ionizing radiation) on behalf of the European Commission.

Raimo Mustonen

President of the NERIS Platform



Neris R&D Committee discusses Strategic Research Agenda

The NERIS R&D Committee, that was formally created during the General Assembly meeting in Glasgow in May 2012 has met for the first time in October in Brussels. Some major outcome has been achieved:

- An exchange was held with the radioecology community, grouped under the European Radioecology Alliance association (ALLIANCE). The Strategic Research Agenda developed under the framework of STAR (7FP) has been presented by J.C. Gariel, IRSN, as well as the COMET proposal (still under development at the time of the meeting) by H. Vandenhove, SCK•CEN. As a main outcome, some common points of interest were identified, notably for better addressing uncertainty in radioecological issues and better understanding how radiation effects combine in a broader ecological context at higher levels of biological organisation (population dynamics, trophic interactions, indirect effects at the community level, and consequences for ecosystem functioning). If the COMET project is approved according to the expectations, a call for joint work between the ALLIANCE members and the NERIS R&D community will be launched.

- The Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) of NERIS has been presented and discussed with the participants. As a conclusion, it was decided that the Logic Framework Matrix approach is confirmed, and that the SRA key lines are suitable. To make the SRA a more living document suitable for daily management, a deployment plan will be developed. Both documents, the updated SRA and the deployment plan, will be available on the NERIS website for discussion at the next General Assembly, scheduled in Madrid on 21 May.

- After presentations of all participants, the conclusion was that the expertise gathered in the R&D committee covers sufficiently the domain of interest of the NERIS Platform, though extra expertise in the field of stakeholder processes is welcome. Yet, if an organisation still would like to join the R&D committee, it is welcome. ■

Frank Hardeman, Chair of the R&D Committee, and Johan Camps, Raimo Mustonen and Thierry Schneider (co-organising the meeting)

Collaboration with FAIRDO Project in Japan

Collaboration has been initiated between NERIS Local Preparedness Working Group (through NERIS-TP WP3 partners) and FAIRDO project (Fukushima Action Research on Effective Decontamination Operation). The FAIRDO project is led by the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) and funded by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan. It was officially launched on 1 July 2012.

A field trip to Fukushima by a mixed team from FAIRDO and NERIS experts took place from 19 to 24 July 2012. Through these activities, the participating team obtained important information on various aspects of the current status and issues in Fukushima such as: the severe reality of the triple disasters caused by the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident; the efforts made by the national, prefectural and municipal governments and local communities to deal with radioactive contamination; and the challenges of communication on not only decontamination but also other issues such as anxiety about and expectations for compensation and reconstruction among the various stakeholders. In addition, it was a great opportunity to exchange opinions regarding the efforts made since the Chernobyl nuclear accident and their implication to Fukushima. Some conclusions are extracted from the collaboration after observing the Japanese situation:

- It is essential to build consensus on future direction of rehabilitation through dialogue among local residents, municipalities, national government, scientists and experts. Existing experiences show that this is possible.
- Messages from Japanese government concentrate mainly on decontamination and compensation. However, in practice, total decontamination (reaching zero contamination levels) is not feasible and people will deal with the residual contamination.
- Using narrow reference criteria as a limit between safe/unsafe (in terms of contamination levels) for relocation, food restriction and compensation can cause a serious discrimination among inhabitants of the affected areas.
- It is important to provide people opportunity to have an independent control.
- Being aware of limitations, proper tools are necessary and can be distributed to the local levels, since they can help addressing many relevant questions. For instance,

the European rehabilitation handbooks can be used and simulation models can be adapted to Japanese conditions; training courses should be organized to teach users how to use the tools. Farmers need training to learn how to deal with contaminated land. Also, there is a need for experiments to determine parameters for models according to local conditions.

Eduardo Gallego - UPM, Wolfgang Raskob - KIT, Gilles Hériard Dubreuil - Mutadis

Meeting of the NERIS Working Group on Emergency Preparedness and Stakeholder Participation, 26th - 27th November 2012, Oslo.

The meeting was attended by 29 participants and divided into three main sessions: the first on European national stakeholder processes, including presentations of experience from activities in Belarus, Spain, Norway, France and Slovakia; and the second on Fukushima experience, including presentations on the FAIRDO project, local stakeholder participation processes, ICRP co-expertise dialogues on "rehabilitation of living conditions after Fukushima accident", and the effectiveness of decontamination processes. Both presentations and the following discussions highlighted the complexity of the situation, and that radiation issues were only one part of a much broader challenge. The final part of the meeting was dedicated to creating a knowledge database of stakeholder participation and involvement processes. After a few short presentations to introduce the rationale of such a database and possible content, the participants split into breakout groups to discuss further the structure and criteria: specifically: I) Why and how to preserve the knowledge base of stakeholder engagement; II) What elements need to be shared? What is meaningful? What is useful? III) What is the goal; and IV) Who is the audience? All groups supported the initiative and there was a consensus on the need to get started, and to provide a template and examples. The final product should be available for presentation at the NERIS Workshop in Oslo, 2014.

The presentations and meeting summaries are available on NERIS website <http://www.eu-neris.net/>. This also includes the summary of the stakeholder knowledge database and the way forward with this work. ■

Deborah Oughton - UMB, Astrid Liland - NRPA

(...)

(...)

First meeting of the Contaminated Goods Working Group, 25th -26th October 2012, Paris.

During the third NERIS Platform General Assembly, a topical Working Group was created for addressing the management of 'contaminated goods' after an accident. This so called "ConGoo" working group met for the first time on 25-26 October 2012, in Paris.

17 participants from eight countries (Belgium, France, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, United Kingdom) and the Nuclear Agency of the OECD attended to the meeting.

Topical presentations covered the national approaches for managing both contaminated foodstuff (e.g. in Norway, and Switzerland) and other commodities (e.g. in France, the Netherlands and the UK) after major nuclear accidents such as Chernobyl and Fukushima, as well as during other food crises (e.g. dioxin crisis in Ireland, heavy metal in Norwegian salmon).

At this occasion, the OECD-NEA (CRPPH Group on Trade in Commodities and Food) and the French IRSN 'working group on foodstuff' presented their proposals for developing new strategies and methodologies in case of a future accident with international consequences. All participants recognised the need to engage a reflection at the European level to build a comprehensive system for managing contaminated goods. This should be thought in coherence with the recent ICRP recommendations, HERCA statement, the future European (EC) and International (IAEA) Basic Safety Standards as well as the possible evolution of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius.

The issue of public attitudes toward risk, notably in case of traces of radioactivity in food or other consumer goods, was also debated during the meeting focussing on the difficulties for the authorities to respond adequately to these concerns. It was mentioned that the general behaviour of the public could lead to a sustainable boycott of the products coming from an affected area regardless the actual consumer's level of exposure to the substance (i.e. below or above regulatory Maximum Permissible Levels).

The management of contaminated goods is a complex and very sensitive issue that cannot be solved without taking into account different viewpoints both at national and international levels, and without a strong involvement of stakeholders (consumers, producers, processing and retail industries representatives, health and radiological safety authorities, RP experts) both during preparedness and response phases. In this context, the

creation of national stakeholder panels for debating this specific topic within the EC FP7 PREPARE is a challenging and promising issue. ■

Sylvie Charron - IRSN, Pascal Crouail - CEPN

NERIS Platform association creation

The NERIS Platform has been registered on the 28th of August 2012 as legal European Association under the French Law. At present NERIS Platform counts 49 member organizations coming from 24 countries (22 from European Union, Norway, Switzerland, Taiwan and Ukraine). To ensure the sustainability of the NERIS Platform, a call is now open to the NERIS members for becoming financial supporting organizations ([more information on the website](#)). ■

NERIS Secretary - CEPN

PREPARE Research project

The research project PREPARE with 45 Partners from more than 20 European countries, part of the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme, EURATOM for Nuclear Research and Training Activities, started first of February 2013. This project aims to close gaps that have been identified in nuclear and radiological preparedness following the first evaluation of the Fukushima disaster. Among others, the project will address the review of existing operational procedures for dealing with long lasting releases, cross border problems in monitoring and food safety and further develop missing functionalities in decision support systems ranging from improved source term estimation and dispersion modelling to the inclusion of hydrological pathways for European water bodies. In addition, as the management of the Fukushima event in Europe was far from optimal, a so called Analytical Platform will be developed exploring the scientific and operational means to improve information collection, information exchange and the evaluation of such types of disasters. This will be achieved through a collaboration of industry, research and governmental organisations in Europe taking into account the networking activities carried out under the NERIS-TP project. Furthermore, the NERIS Platform member organisations (so far 45 partners) will be actively involved in the development of the new tools. ■

Wolfgang Raskob - KIT

(...)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NERIS-TP Training Course: "Preparedness for Nuclear and Radiological Emergency Response and Recovery", October 21-25, 2013 Trnava, Slovak Republic

The Training Course "Preparedness for Nuclear and Radiological Emergency Response and Recovery: Usage of the new products for supporting the management team" will be organised between October 21st and 25th 2013 in Trnava (Slovak Republic). This Training Course is organised by VUJE - the Slovak institute for nuclear power plants applied research and operational support in cooperation with contractors of the NERIS-TP Project of the Euratom FP7 (GA 269718) partly funded by the European Commission. The course aims to wide spread the usage of the new tools developed and integrated to the Decision Support Systems, such as RODOS and ARGOS. The course deals specifically with the new products integrated within the JRODOS Decision Support System (DSS), such as tool for automated assessment of doses and potential consequences initiated by a message from the Unified System for Information Exchange in Incidents and Emergencies (USIE), tools for operation of the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) modelling system, ICRP 103 screening tool, ERMIN, AgriCP and scenario preparation tool. The main objective is to train the participants (trainees) to use the new tools for the purpose of further

active participation in technical exercises and use of the end products in the community. This course pays special attention to practical exercises; therefore experienced users of the JRODOS DSS are highly welcomed. A particular attention is given to "stakeholder involvement" approaches to enhance off-site nuclear emergency preparedness and response arrangements and to enhance recovery preparedness process. The course is based on tools and methods developed within the NERIS-TP Project (WP2, WP3 and WP4). It is made of lectures, practical working sessions and discussions. The Registration form is a part of the First Announcement which is available on the NERIS Website. Please do not hesitate to contact Tatiana Duranova – Tatiana.Duranova@vuje.sk – or the NERIS Secretary – sec@eu-neris.net – if you need further information.

In addition to the Training Courses, testing activities and exercises are foreseen between the 11th and 13th of November 2013 .

More information on the [NERIS website](#).

Tatiana Duranova - VUJE

Dissemination workshop of the NERIS-TP, January 2014: Block the dates!

On 22-24 January 2014, the dissemination workshop of the NERIS-TP project will be organized in Oslo, Norway. Preliminary programme:

Strengthening the post-accident emergency preparedness at national, regional and local level using new tools and methods

- presentation of tools and methods
- stakeholder experiences from Europe
- experience and views from Japan and international organisations
- demonstration exercise
- discussion sessions on implementation and cooperation between national, regional and local levels.

Actors in post-accident preparedness and management from all levels and sectors are encouraged to participate to the event.

Local stakeholders may apply for a travel grant. The workshop language is English, with simultaneous translations into French, Spanish, and Russian.

The venue is Hotel Bristol (<http://www.thonhotels.com/hotels/countrys/norway/oslo/thon-hotel-bristol1/>) located in the heart of Oslo city centre (<http://www.visitoslo.com/en/>). The world's winter capital offers great choices for outdoor fun!

You can find the Pre-registration form here. The detailed programme will follow in the next newsletter and also be published on the NERIS web page. For any questions, please contact Sandra Biguenet : sec@eu-neris.net or Astrid.Liland@nrpa.no.