

Increasing the societal process for the programme for B&C waste

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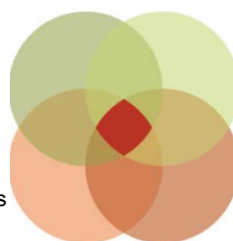
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Objective of the Waste Plan

- The Waste Plan must provide all necessary elements for the government to take a decision in principle concerning the future direction with respect to the long-term management of highly active and long-lived waste
- The Waste Plan adopts the vision that a durable solution incorporates these four dimensions

Technical and scientific aspects

Security and environmental aspects



Financial and economic aspects

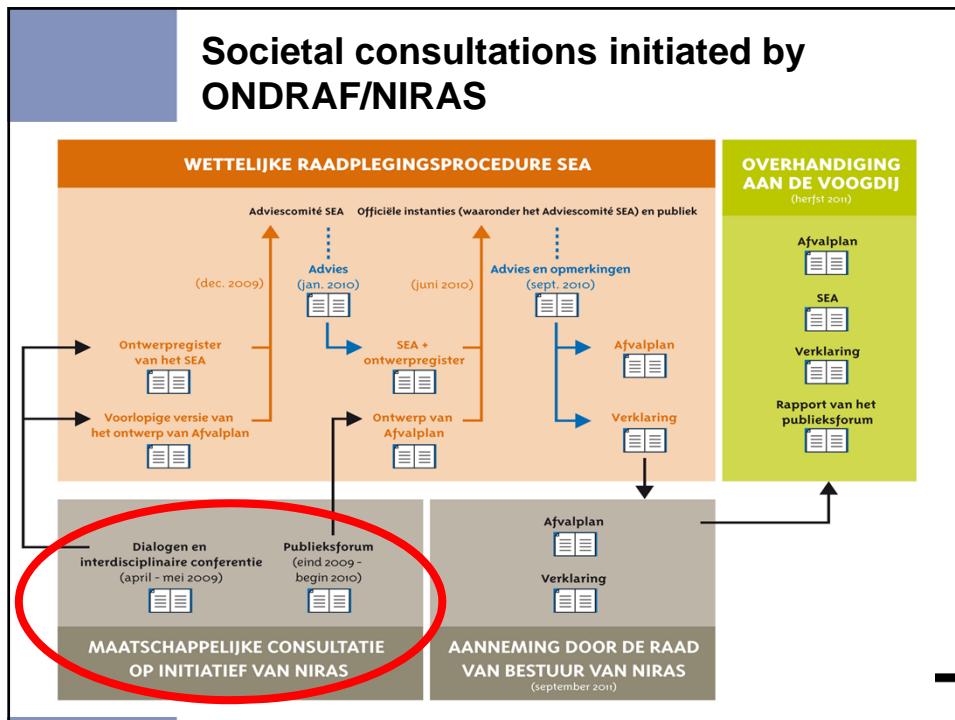
Societal and ethical aspects



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Societal consultations initiated by ONDRAF/NIRAS



Why ONDRAF/NIRAS organised societal consultations?

- To involve the population proactively in the decision-making process
 - the population can exert influence
 - on the direction in which must be worked in the future and
 - how this must happen
- To complete the Waste Plan and SEA with recommendations and conditions of the population



Step by step, participative process



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The societal consultations

- www.niras-afvalplan.be (2009-2011)
 - clear information on all aspects on the Internet site
 - population
- ONDRAF/NIRAS-Dialogues (April-May 2009)
 - involve population proactively
 - acquire insight in the questions and the concerns that live within society
- Interdisciplinary Conference (April 2009)
 - professional experts from several scientific and industrial disciplines
 - in-depth discussion of criteria so as to be able to assess the different management options



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5

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The societal consultations cont'd

- Citizens' Conference organised by the King Baudouin Foundation (2009-2010)
 - entirely independent process
 - external evaluation
 - focus on
 - decision-making process
 - conditions to enable a decision in principle
 - recommendations for a decision process for the step by step implementation of a long-term management option
 - group of participants that was representative for the diversity in society
 - three weekends



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6

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Citizens' Conference: methodology

- Method of participatory technology assessment
- Danish Board of Technology, applied in many countries
- 32 randomly selected citizens, representing the diversity of the population
- Deliberations during 3 weekends (November 2009 – January 2010)
- Strictly formatted, but open-ended
- Citizens in the driving seat: selection of topics to discuss, experts to be invited, recommendations
- Consensus driven, but allowing minority views



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Topic

“Which values, standards, arguments and considerations do you feel are important when taking a policy decision on the long-term management of high-level and long-lived radioactive waste?”



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Citizens' Conference: conclusions

- The Citizens' Conference provided tangible and substantial results
- The citizens integrated the ethical, technological, economic and environment aspects
→ support for geological disposal in clay
- ONDRAF/NIRAS has taken into account the recommendations expressed by the citizens as to a need for
 - retrievability
 - control mechanism
 - transfer of knowledge
 - ...
- Geological disposal: very sensitive topic. retrievability required for acceptance by public?
- Societal consultation necessary
→ Report handed over to our ministers

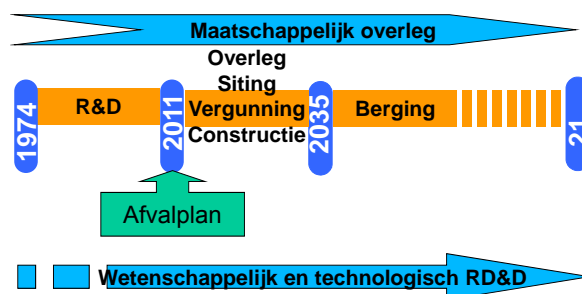


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10

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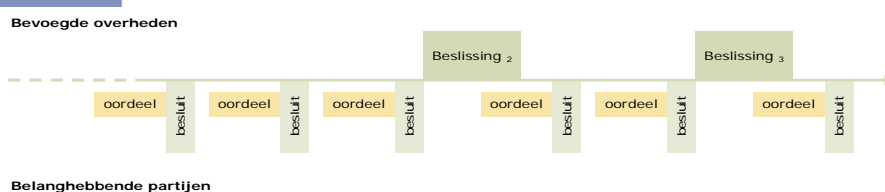
Technical timeframe for reference solution



What is the timeline necessary for societal decision-making process?



Further development of the societal decision-making process



Information, opinion and decision

- concerned/interested parties
- competent authorities



Learning curve

- Lessons learnt from cAt-project:
 - No long-term management solution without societal acceptance
 - Partnerships are limited in time
- Waste Plan
 - Legal obligation of ONDRAF/NIRAS
 - Long timeframe
 - Need for continuity during a period of several decades
 - Political
 - Societal acceptance
 - Technical and safety requirements
 - Necessity of balanced decision-making



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13

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Further development of the societal decision-making process

- Inventory of the main decisions to be taken
- Definition of the respective tasks, roles and responsibilities
- Identification of the interested parties in the different phases of the decision-making process
 - Who will decide about what?
 - When?
 - Based on what?
 - How?
- Desktop study UAntwerpen – ULiège
 - Management of relationships at and between distinct levels: federal → local
- Complemented by other studies



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14

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Further development of the societal decision-making process

- Sounding board
- Independent follow-up commission
- Clarify conditions voiced in societal consultation
 - retrievability
 - control mechanism
 - transfer of knowledge



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Where to go from here?

- Three concrete conditions from Waste Plan & Citizens' Conference
 - retrievability
 - Control mechanism
 - Transfer of knowledge



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16

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Where to go from here? Cont'd

- Mapping of existing studies, research, results, conclusion. Completion with benchmark data.
- Identification of challenges and opportunities.
- Identification and installation of the sounding board, follow-up commission.
- Definition of roles and responsibilities.
- Requirements for societal acceptance of research and technical interventions in the future siting process
- Methodologies and assessment parameters
- Consultancy and discussion platforms and processes
- Planning, timelines, milestones for assessment
- Communication requirements at all levels
- Roles and responsibilities of ONDRAF/NIRAS, of the stakeholders.



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17

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Conclusions

- No long-term management solution without societal acceptance
- Challenge of the long-term timeframe: need for continuity
- Need for balanced decision-making both long-term and short-term
- Need for periodical assessment, reporting of argumentation for transfer of knowledge
- Need for attention to transboundary conditions and interaction
- Need for national and international peer review



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