

Record of the First U.S.-U.S.S.R. Joint Coordinating Committee for Environmental Restoration and Waste Management

The first meeting of the U.S. - U.S.S.R. Joint Coordinating Committee on Environmental Restoration and Waste Management (JCCEM) was held in Moscow at the Ministry of Atomic Power and Industry (MAPI) during the week of November 12-16, 1990.

BACKGROUND

The Memorandum of Cooperation between the U.S. and Soviet Union in the Fields of Environmental Restoration and Waste Management (MOC) was signed in Vienna September 18, 1990. As discussed during the meeting between DOE Deputy Secretary W. Henson Moore and Soviet MAPI Minister Vitaly Konovalov at the IAEA General Conference in Vienna on that date, a team of U.S. Department of Energy specialists would visit the U.S.S.R. to hold the first JCCEM meeting specified in the MOC. As a result, Mr. Clyde W. Frank, DOE Associate Director, Office of Environmental Restoration and Waste Management, led the U.S. Delegation (Attachment 1) to MAPI on November 12-16, 1990.

PLENARY PRESENTATIONS

On November 12, Mr. Yevgeniy Mikerin, Director of the Department of Nuclear Fuel Cycle of MAPI, Head of Soviet Delegation, opened the initial plenary meeting at MAPI Offices, by welcoming the U.S. Delegation to Moscow and introduced the Soviet delegation (Attachment 2). Mr. Mikerin summarized the Soviet objectives of the first JCCEM meeting. In particular, he encouraged the JCCEM to begin the necessary dialogue to establish workshops on waste vitrification, waste partitioning, and environmental modeling and data exchange on migration of radionuclides and other contaminants.

Mr. Clyde Frank responded for the U.S. Delegation, expressed DOE's appreciation for the opportunity to work cooperatively through the JCCEM and encouraged technical exchange which will help accelerate the pace, improve the quality and reduce the cost of the very substantial environmental restoration and waste management program confronting the Department of Energy.

Both parties reviewed the agenda (Attachment 3). U.S. and Soviet sides agreed that the recommendations developed for cooperative activities will be reviewed by the Parties' respective Governments, and subsequent to approval, steps will be taken to initiate the agreed upon activities.

ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The first recommendation by the Soviet side centered on the establishment of the Joint Coordinating Committee to serve as the managing body for the recently signed Memorandum of Cooperation on Environmental Restoration and Waste Management (EM). It was suggested that 10 representatives be appointed by each party to serve on the governing body. Representatives will be selected on the basis of expertise in EM fields and their association with participating ministries and related institutions. The U.S. side agreed to consider the recommendation.

DISCUSSION OF THE FIELDS OF COOPERATION FOR THE JOINT COMMITTEE FOR 1991.

U.S. and Soviet presentations and proposals (Attachment 4) were made on the following topics, each of which would be the subject of fact-finding workshops in the respective countries:

Vitrification:

To technically review and evaluate experimental and operational U.S./U.S.S.R. data associated with vitrification with emphasis on glass disposal.

Partitioning:

To evaluate applicability and suitability of separation technologies to selective extraction of long-lived and short lived isotopes, TRU materials and hazardous waste.

Storage and Disposal of High-Level Wastes:

To exchange information on safely storing, transporting, and disposing of waste.

Environmental Restoration (ER):

To share technologies, methods, and engineering processes for state-of-the-art ER application.

Additional topics of interest to both parties were

Regulatory controls which directly affect methods of decontamination, environmental restoration, and disposal;

Public awareness and influence over decommissioning, decontamination, and restoration, and

Information and data exchange in support of each of the above areas, including radioactive and toxic waste.

The Soviet side requested DOE cooperation in responding to the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident by assisting in the monitoring of radionuclide migration. DOE will take the request under consideration and respond within 60 days.

Two workshops on waste vitrification were discussed and recommended for 1991, one in the U.S. and one in the U.S.S.R. Each workshop would require about one week of time and will be designed to identify resolution of future technical problems through evaluation of existing experimental and operational data. The workshops would be located at the site in each country where full-scale activities are carried out or nearly ready to be carried out, to allow the visiting team members to see the facilities first-hand. A tour by the visiting team to a second facility that has major vitrification facilities in the host country may be appropriate. In the U.S., the host site would be at Savannah River, South Carolina where the first DOE production facility is approaching start-up conditions. If appropriate, a one-day visit to the West Valley, New York vitrification facility may be considered as a part of the exchange.

Two workshops in waste separations/partitioning were also discussed and recommended for 1991, with participants, host locations, and site visits similar to those for vitrification, but appropriate for this subject. The workshops would focus on advanced separations as playing a role in minimization of all types of wastes (i.e., low- and intermediate-level radioactive wastes, alpha-bearing radioactive wastes), chemically hazardous, and mixed radioactive and chemically hazardous wastes, and high-level radioactive wastes.

Two workshop/seminars on modeling and actual data on environmental migration of radionuclides and other contaminants were discussed and recommended for 1991. One workshop would take place at an appropriate location in the U.S.S.R., such as Chelyabinsk. The second workshop would take place at an appropriate U.S. site.

Both sides agreed that to the extent possible, workshops should be held on dates allowing the visiting partys' participation at major meetings related to topics being explored, for example, "Waste Management '91," in Tucson, Arizona, and the Soviet suggestion of a meeting in coordination with their Nuclear Society Conference in June 1991.

In addition, both sides noted that the exchanges of post-baccalaureate students would be extremely vital in facilitating future cooperation and long term benefits in overcoming the problems of environmental restoration and waste management. Coordinators for the exchange program will be Frank Parker, of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and for MAPI, Aleksandr S. Nikiforov, Director, All Union Science Research Institute of Inorganic Materials.

ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK AND FINANCIAL ISSUES.

The third major topic to be discussed was the operating framework for the JCC and financial support in the conduct of workshops and technical exchanges. After brief consideration the U.S. side passed to the Soviet co-chairman the proposed "Administrative Framework of the Joint Coordinating Committee" (Attachment 5). Guidance was derived from the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy Agreement signed June 1990, and other MOCs currently in place under the Agreement.

The Soviet side requested that the U.S. give specific consideration to adopting a "Reduced Currency Exchange Basis" in supporting participation in future workshops, technical and student exchanges. This policy would provide for in-country transportation and per diem paid by host country to the visiting party, also known as "Receiving side pays." Both sides agreed to consider this request at the earliest possible date. Both sides agreed to future exchange of correspondence in finalizing the administrative framework and financial issues.

On November 13-14, the U.S. Delegation visited the Khlopin Radium Institute at Leningrad and the Khlopin Institute at Gatchina. Discussions ensued on mixed waste processing and partitioning, with a visit to lab facilities demonstrating this process. The U.S. delegation was hosted by Alexandre Kazelin, Institute Director, Leningrad Radium Institute and received briefings by institute experts. The meeting included discussion of possible partitioning workshops and program to compare the extraction of short and long-lived fission products by the respective parties. The U.S. side agreed to consider the Soviet recommendation and respond once the appropriate review process has been completed.

On November 15, 1990, the U.S. Delegation returned to MAPI to continue to discuss the above topics. The U.S. Delegation described its site visit to the Klopın Radium Institute and its Klopın facility outside Leningrad.

Also discussed were establishing a communication link between the countries, and the joint-publication of a Progress Report on Soviet American Technology Exchanges in Environmental Restoration and Waste Management.

Both sides reviewed the administrative framework for the management of the JCC and agreed to continue to discuss its various provisions through future exchange of correspondence.

A brief review was made of the workshops discussed during the first plenary session on November 12, 1990.

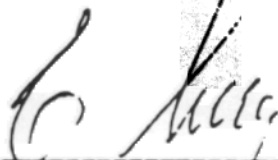
Both sides agreed that the Joint Coordinating Committee members would hold its second meeting in Washington D.C., in October, 1991.

On November 16, U.S. and Soviet representatives met to summarize the visit and sign the record of the meeting. Both sides believe that the first JCCEM has contributed significantly to the possibilities for bilateral cooperation and joint activities during 1991, in the fields of Environmental Restoration and Waste Management, and in furthering the world's scientific knowledge in meeting the concerns of nuclear and toxic wastes. The Co-Chairmen agreed to expedite their respective government review processes and further define program through a future exchange of correspondence.

Done in Moscow on November 16, 1990, in duplicate in the English and Russian languages, both texts being equally authentic.



FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF ENERGY



FOR THE U.S.S.R. MINISTRY
OF ATOMIC POWER AND INDUSTRY