

Did you know?

Despite the claims made by interested parties such as Minister Mahlobo, here are some facts:

Nuclear plants are bad for our health

- Since the late 1950s we have known that radiation exposures can result in increased leukemias. Studies show an increase in cancer in babies and children living near nuclear installations.
- Some workers in other parts of the nuclear fuel cycle - especially uranium mining –have had elevated rates of cancer.
- In the nuclear fuel cycle, iodine-131 is released. This can be inhaled or ingested through contaminated fruits, vegetables, milk, and groundwater.

Nuclear plants require lots and lots of water

- The nuclear power cycle uses water to extract and process uranium fuel, to produce electricity, and to control wastes and risks.
- Nuclear power plants use the heat from a nuclear fission reaction to boil water. The steaming water then turns a turbine that generates electricity.
- Water is also used to cool nuclear power plants.
- In a warming world (climate change) the water cooling systems require even more water. *Hot summers or heat waves* create stress: nuclear power plants operate less efficiently and this when there is increased electricity demand from air conditioning use! *Droughts* can have a similar effect as heat waves, limiting the amount of water available for cooling.
If water cannot be cooled, it can neither be recirculated nor returned to the river, lake or ocean without threatening aquatic life.
When cooling systems cannot operate, power plants are forced to shut down or reduce output.

Nuclear plants are not ‘clean’ – they pollute land, air and water

- Nuclear plants use uranium as fuel. The mining and milling of uranium present significant dangers to the environment.
- Many stages of the nuclear fuel chain— mining, milling, transport, fuel fabrication, enrichment, reactor construction, decommissioning and waste management — use fossil fuels. This involves changes to land use, and emits carbon dioxide.
- Power plant cooling water intake systems indiscriminately destroy aquatic life, sucking in eggs and larvae, trapping adult fish and wildlife on intake screens. They also spew spewing heated, lifeless, chemical-laden water back into the water source, such as rivers or the sea.
- Nuclear plants have stressed and depleted our waters, disrupted the food chain and undermined ecological integrity.

Nuclear plants are extremely risky, as past accidents have shown

- The worst accidents at nuclear power plants have resulted in severe environmental contamination. For example, the Chernobyl disaster causes the radioactive contamination of soil, livestock and agricultural products.
- Other risks include attacks on nuclear sites, nuclear terrorism.
- There is no generally accepted solution for the disposal of radioactive waste. It is dangerous, expensive, time-consuming and hazardous to the environment. Waste sites need to be heavily guarded for hundreds of thousands of years.