

JAEA to Cooperate with Belgium on Research

On November 23, the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA) concluded a cooperation agreement with Studiecentrum voor Kernenergie - Centre d'étude de l'Energie Nucléaire (SCK-CEN) – the Belgian Nuclear Research Centre – on an extensive program of nuclear research.

JAEA President Yuichi Tonozuka and SCK-CEN's Chairman Frank Deconinck signed the agreement at the Centre's headquarters in Brussels.

Areas of cooperation are to include accelerator-driven systems (ADS), decommissioning and dismantling, reactor structural materials and disposal of high-level radioactive waste (HLW). The parties will immediately begin specific cooperation toward R&D on ADS, as well as decommissioning and dismantling.



In the area of ADS, the parties will review designs and testing facilities, which they have been doing independently until now, and will jointly develop technology for lead-bismuth (Pb-Bi) alloys that are promising candidates both for spallation targets and as reactor coolants. In the area of decommissioning and dismantling, the parties will work toward the effective decommissioning of reactor facilities by sharing know-how and information on technology to reduce the volume of waste to be generated by dismantling testing facilities and other concurrent work. In other areas, cooperation will commence when groups in both parties complete their implementation plans. The period for cooperation between SCK-CEN and JAEA is set at five years.

JAEA and the Centre have already exchanged researchers. In June 2005, when Crown Prince Philip of Belgium visited EXPO Aichi, a memorandum was signed on concluding the cooperation agreement after JAEA's inauguration.

Established in 1952, SCK-CEN is engaged in the following activities: (1) safety research for current generation reactors, (2) the establishment of the fuel cycle by transmutation, using liquid metal-cooled ADS, (3) nuclear fusion, (4) geological disposal, (5) decommissioning and (6) medical applications of radiation. Its annual operating funds are approximately 80 million euros, and it staffed by some 600 researchers.

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