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Deliberations Underway for Long-term Energy Outlook through 2030

On October 4, the Advisory Committee for Natural Resources and Energy's Supply and Demand Subcommittee held its fourth meeting to deliberate policies on various energy sources, with the ultimate goal of issuing a long-term energy outlook through the year 2030. With a target having been set by the New National Energy Strategy, issued in May 2006, for the share of nuclear power to reach 30-40% of total generated electricity by that year. The pressing issue is to develop new technologies for next-generation light water reactors (LWRs), fast breeder reactors (FBRs) and uranium enrichment, among others.

The outlook through 2030 will present an energy supply-and-demand picture that assumes that the target can be realized through the implementation of the energy technology strategy issued in April 2007. The bundle of technologies mentioned above will be quantitatively evaluated, based on the time of expected introduction and outlook for each.

There are about 50 items of nuclear-related technology to be considered. The subcommittee's meeting this time especially discussed the following: (1) next-generation LWRs, to be developed jointly by the public and private sectors in preparation for the expected demand for replacing existing reactors around 2030, (2) FBRs, the demonstration reactors for which will be available around 2025, and (3) new centrifugal separators, that will have sufficient reliability to be commercialized by FY2009.

After discussions to be carried out about the supply side, the subcommittee is to discuss changing social infrastructure at its next meeting. Those deliberations should be completed by the end of the current fiscal year (i.e., March 31, 2008).

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