

On the basis of an intergovernmental EIA process, today the Ministry of the Environment issued an affirmative statement on environmental impact assessment for implementation of the project of a “New nuclear source at the Temelín site, including power to the Kočín distribution point“

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On the basis of an intergovernmental EIA process, today, 18 January 2013, the Ministry of the Environment issued an affirmative statement on environmental impact assessment for implementation of the project of a “New nuclear source at the Temelín site, including power to the Kočín distribution point“ (i.e. an EIA statement), where 90 conditions were stipulated as necessary for environmental protection, under which the project is acceptable from the viewpoint of impacts on the environment and the public health. The Ministry of the Environment thus completed one of the most demanding and professionally complicated EIA processes in history. During the entire EIA process, thousands pages of expert studies were prepared, together with analyses, expert reports and other documents, with participation by dozens of experts from the Czech Republic and abroad.

The project of the "New nuclear source at the Temelín site, including power to the Kočín distribution point" represents construction of a new nuclear source, including related structures and technological facilities. In terms of the original concept of the Temelín nuclear power plant, this represents the construction of two new blocks of a modern type (reactors of generation III+), including addition of electric power lines to the Kočín distribution point and a potential increase in the capacity of the input of raw water into the power plant from the Hněvkovice pumping station. The project will be implemented using blocks with power of up to 1,700 MWe with reactors of the PWR type of generation III+. The overall net installed capacity for the two planned blocks is thus 3,400 MWe.

The EIA process was accompanied by substantial participation by nongovernmental organizations and the public, where the vast majority of the comments of these entities were sent from neighbouring countries, specifically the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria. During the EIA process, NGOs and the public submitted more than 60,000 opinions, of which the vast majority consisted in fears connected with the operation of nuclear power sources. All the delivered opinions were also included in basic documents for the EIA statement, where all the comments mentioned in the opinions received by the MoE during the EIA process were thoroughly evaluated and settled. The relevant comments were then incorporated into the above-mentioned 90 conditions in the affirmative EIA statement. The response to the comments delivered for the opponent report constitutes an annex to the EIA statement and is an integral part thereof.

The conditions of the EIA statement are concerned with preventing and minimizing the impact of the project on all the components of the environment and public health; primarily conditions relating to nuclear safety, protection of water and protection of the air can be considered important. The Ministry of the Environment considers essential especially the requirement of further regular consideration of any new requirements of the legislation, including further recommendations and international practice in the sphere of nuclear energy, radiation protection and emergency preparations. This condition ensures that further design preparation of the project will reflect current developments in the area of nuclear energy without relation the contractor.

The Ministry of the Environment provided for the EIA process so that all representatives of the public in the Czech Republic and abroad had sufficient scope for submitting comments and participation in the EIA process and to ensure compliance with international conventions (the Espoo and Aarhus Conventions) binding the Czech Republic. Consequently, in addition to a public hearing in České Budějovice (on 22 June 2012), which followed from the requirements of the Czech Act on Environmental Impact Assessment, public discussions were also held in the Federal Republic of Germany (in Passau on 12 June 2012) and in Austria (in Vienna on 30 May 2012) as a higher standard and outside the framework of the environmental impact assessment process. All the documents forming the basis for issuing the EIA statement were also translated into German and translation into German was also provided at the public hearing. The Ministry of the Environment points out that provision was made to the maximum degree for the participation of foreign civic associations and the public.

The EIA statement was issued in accordance with the EIA Act on the basis of documents on the environmental impact assessment, reports on the environmental impact of the project, public discussions and all the opinions delivered to the Ministry of the Environment. The EIA statement is an expert document forming the basis for issuing decisions or measures according to the special legal regulations (e.g. for issuing planning permits and construction permits) and is thus not a decision on implementation or non-implementation of the project. The conditions mentioned in the EIA statement must be included in these decisions; otherwise, reasons must be given for why this was not done or was done only partly. This decision may not be issued without an EIA statement.

The full wording of the EIA statement, including response to comments on the expert report, can be found in the EIA information system at <http://www.mzp.cz/eia> under project code MZP230.

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