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## **Environmentalists for Nuclear Energy**

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### **1 Environmentalists for Nuclear Energy (EFN): an outline**

It is a paradox that today many environmental groups are opposed to nuclear energy because, in fact, nuclear energy is the only clean form of energy available on a massive scale and able to meet the growing energy needs of the world's population.

Nuclear energy is a very clean energy if it is well designed, well-built, well operated, and well managed:

- it has no atmospheric emissions or pollution (or close to none);
- it is very compact;
- it produces very little waste, and this is confined and self-degradable;
- it avoids increasing the greenhouse effect.

In 1996, shortly after the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chernobyl accident, I created the Association of Environmentalists For Nuclear Energy (EFN) to inform the public in a comprehensive and honest way about energy sources and their environmental impacts.

EFN is an international association of citizens in favour of clean nuclear energy. EFN's actions are based on solid scientific facts, and, unlike many anti-nuclear groups, not on ideological considerations.

EFN is composed of different member categories:

- supporting members
- sympathising members
- active members
- donating members
- national and local correspondents

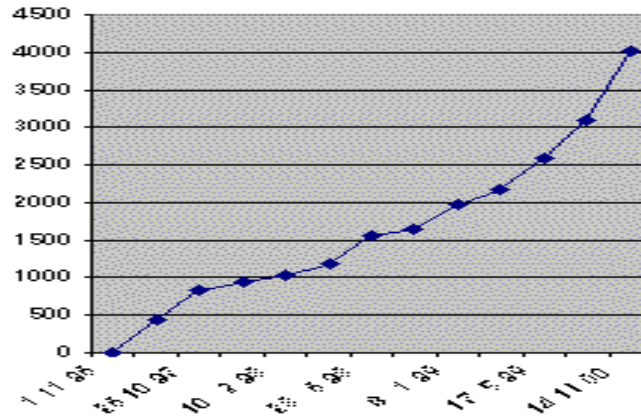
and also has a Scientific and Medical Committee as well as a Honorary Committee composed of important personalities that support its actions.

For example, Professor James Lovelock, FRS, who is often considered as one of the main founders and leaders (if not the main one) of the development of environmental awareness since the 1960's, has agreed to support our point of view, and has written an introduction to the book "Environmentalists For Nuclear Energy".

EFN has high quality contacts both in the area of environmental science and in the energy sector (specialists on nuclear energy, radiation and safety, fossil and renewable energies, etc).

The spontaneous growth of the Association since its creation has been extremely rapid, much more so than was initially expected.

Our members come from all social groups and all parts of the world. EFN now has more than 5000 members and supporters in over 30 countries on all five continents.



EFN considers that nuclear energy is a clean, safe, reliable and competitive energy source. Its waste is safely confined and the used fuel can be reprocessed, while the volume of nuclear waste for each kWh produced is very small.

To combat the greenhouse effect, nuclear energy is the only energy that can replace a significant part of the fossil-fired generation (coal, oil and gas) without polluting the atmosphere and the planet.

Nuclear energy should therefore in the coming years replace fossil energy whenever possible; used nuclear fuel should be reprocessed (for environmental reasons, if not for economic ones); and, at the same time, the more efficient use of energy and self-sustainable life styles should be promoted, while renewable energies should not be excluded.

Environmental opposition to nuclear energy is among the greatest mistakes of our times.

## 2 Information on nuclear energy

Information is a condition of democracy. It must be:

- comprehensive
- transparent
- true.

In a democracy, although many people and some journalists and politicians do not have the scientific background that is necessary to understand all the facts, nuclear power still has to be debated in public.

Without honest information, the public, journalists and politicians cannot understand the true situation, and will therefore vote against nuclear energy.

Since the end of World War II and the development of the nuclear industry, nuclear communication has gone through three historical periods:

### ***1 Official communication***

Communication was the responsibility of government officials and technical information about nuclear energy was at that time largely considered as a “military secret” (“Military non-communication”). Subsequently, the first nuclear power plants were built for electricity production.

### ***2 Industrial communication***

Quite naturally, the nuclear reactor constructors, the nuclear fuel producers and the electricity companies operating the nuclear power plants communicated with the public progressively more and more as years went by. The purpose of this communication was imply to the industry’ s own interests.

### ***3 Social communication, made by third parties***

Various groups other than the nuclear industries and governments now communicate with the public about nuclear energy. Until now, this “social” communication has been done mostly by anti-nuclear groups, without much scientific background, often on the basis of ideological or political views, and sometimes with an underlying culture far removed from the scientific truth. This anti-nuclear communication is often exploited by pressure groups or by individuals for unstated reasons (for instance, for political or economical reasons).

Third party social communication is a fact: the population wants to have varied independent sources of information, and not only information given by officials or by industry. Today the third parties communicating about nuclear energy are mostly anti-nuclear, and their arguments are mainly environmental: nuclear energy is unclean, radioactivity pollutes the planet, it is unsafe, nuclear waste have no solution, etc.

These arguments, when carefully considered, are often wrong and emotional rather than based on scientific facts, but the public believes these arguments because the industry’ s communication is thought to be oriented towards serving its own interests, and because no independent third party denies the anti-nuclear statements or gives a clearly pro-nuclear point of view.

Therefore, there is a need for a pro-nuclear movement that is independent of the nuclear industry, which is involved in public information and the various forms of ‘ social communication’ . To be efficient, this group should preferably be a group of ‘ environmentalists’ .

By definition, this “social communication”, which is demanded and believed by the public, cannot be done by the industry itself, but can be done only by an independent third party.

It is very difficult to inform some parts of the public, such as environmentalists (the core of the anti-nuclear movement), but also an increasing number of journalists, by the usual methods of governmental or industrial communication.

By speaking to environmentalists in their own language, and because it is independent, EFN helps to inform the public, and especially the environmentalists, in a way that the industrial companies cannot do so effectively.

Our experience is that many environmentalists, but also the general public, politicians, the media, the press and journalists all react favourably to the information given, and are very interested in this new approach. For example, in France, Brice Lalonde, Head of *Generation Ecologie* and some Greens, have become pro-nuclear after receiving information from EFN.

- EFN speaks to environmentalists in their own language

- EFN speaks to the public in simple terms
- EFN shows that many environmentalists are pro-nuclear
- EFN changes the deeply rooted impressions among the public, causing them to accept that “nuclear is clean”.

Having many supporters is essential in a democracy, therefore EFN gathers as many citizens as possible from various countries that are in favor of clean nuclear energy.

### 3 EFN's activities

EFN brings together supporters of nuclear energy and individuals that consider that nuclear energy can be clean and respectful of the environment.

EFN has established an international network of supporters and local correspondents that help to translate documents, to publish articles, and to organize local actions in their country or vicinity.

EFN has developed a web site for public information: <http://www.ecolo.org> . This web site provides information and documents on energy and the environment in 10 languages.

The book "Environmentalists For Nuclear Energy" initially published in 1995 (French edition) is now available also in English and in Romanian editions. Translations of the book are in preparation or envisaged in Russian, German, Italian, Japanese, Czech, Slovak and Slovenian (expected to be published in 2002). The different editions of this book can be ordered on the internet.

- EFN participates in radio and TV programs on energy and the environment.
- EFN has several mailing lists (in French, English, etc) distributing information by e-mail.
- EFN develops documents and texts for the general public, and about various subjects on energy.
- EFN provides information to politicians.
- EFN provides information to journalists, and reacts to their articles by congratulating them or by giving the real facts.
- EFN organizes lectures open to all types of audience (150 lectures have been given in the past three years)

EFN organizes visits to nuclear installations for its members, in order to inform them, with about four visits per year. These have included, for example, visits to the Mol laboratory for an underground repository in Belgium, visits to the Civaux nuclear power plant, to Superphenix and to the La Hague nuclear waste reprocessing plant in France; visits to the Angra nuclear power plant in Brazil, to AECL's Chalk River Laboratories and to a natural uranium Candu reactor in Canada; and, in the UK, visits to the Calder Hall graphite moderated reactor, and to the visitor's centre, the reprocessing facility and nuclear waste installations at Sellafield.

EFN also participates in public exhibitions, such as environmental exhibitions. For example, last year EFN had direct contact with one million visitors to these expositions.

EFN undertakes legal action when necessary (examples : EFN has criticised before the High Court of Justice the French government's arbitrary, unilateral, strictly political and, in this case, illegal decision to close the clean 1300 MW fast neutron reactor Superphenix in 1997). In another case, at a public exhibition in 1999, some anti-nuclear 'commandos' assaulted EFN's booth, and publicly insulted EFN's volunteers. EFN brought the case to court and won against the anti-nuclear opponents (For more details, see the 'Judiciary' section of EFN's website).

The members of EFN write and publish dozens of papers and articles each year in different types of magazines and newspapers ranging from highly technical journals to the most popular magazines.

Generally speaking, the actions of EFN are firmly based on a 'network' system, with affiliated correspondents in various parts of the world. Anything done in one area or country can be duplicated in another country : the web network, mailing lists and web-technologies have been widely used as the core of the Association's actions ever since its creation in 1996.

#### **4 International evolution**

The existing EFN Association has a worldwide basis. Activities have been organized and information is already available in English, French, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Czech, Romanian, Slovenian, German, Dutch, Finnish and Spanish.

It is expected that EFN national associations will be created in various geographical zones. The creation of the following affiliated associations is currently in preparation:

- EFN North America
- EFN Finland

#### **5 EFN's future challenges**

The two main challenges for EFN's future are:

- to continue its international expansion
- to remain independent of industry and governments

EFN has developed an efficient international network in more than 30 countries, but needs local support in various countries, for example, help in translating documents, in finding adequate contacts, and in organizing local activities.

In order to achieve its goals, EFN also needs to be encouraged morally and financially.

EFN is an independent association:

- Members of industry and of governments are not represented on EFN's Board of Directors.
- The membership of EFN is open to everyone with the two conditions that they be both in favour of the protection of the environment and in favour of clean nuclear energy
- Financial support is accepted by EFN from sources having similar views.

For more information : [www.ecolo.org](http://www.ecolo.org)

E-mail : [EFN@ecolo.org](mailto:EFN@ecolo.org)

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