



Technical Meeting on Establishing Site Selection Criteria and their Application in the Siting Process for a Deep Geological Disposal Facility

IAEA Headquarters, Vienna, Austria
and virtual participation via Cisco Webex

10–14 November 2025

Ref. No.: EVT2404411

Information Sheet

Introduction

The aim of a deep geological disposal facility (GDF) siting process is to select a suitable site for hosting a GDF and to obtain the necessary authorisations to construct a GDF. This process starts with the decision to search for potential regions and sites for further investigation. Siting terminates when the suitability of a site has been confirmed, an authorization has been provided by a regulatory body for the construction of a repository and a final decision is taken to construct the facility at the chosen site. Experience from both successful and failed attempts to select sites demonstrates that the siting process is a long-term project, often complex, and requires close attention to communication and stakeholder needs.

Effective site selection criteria are essential for the successful implementation of GDF programme. These criteria facilitate early screening and comparative assessments throughout various stages of site selection. Initially, they assist in determining whether sites possess the potential to safely host a GDF or if they should be excluded from further consideration. In subsequent stages, these criteria provide a foundation for evaluating and selecting suitable sites for further characterisation, necessary to support a license application.

Establishing site selection criteria and using them as a guidance during the siting process provides a systematic and transparent justification based on the link between those criteria, their application, and the safety, legal, social and stakeholder requirements driving the repository programme. At early stages, these criteria support selection between regions or areas that may or may not hold the potential for hosting a safe

geological disposal facility. At successive stages of screening, it provides a basis against which to assess and inform the further selection of favourable sites and ultimately site confirmation.

The development of robust site selection criteria is particularly critical for national programmes in their initial phases. Understanding and incorporating global best practices in defining and utilizing these criteria can significantly benefit such national programmes. However, site selection criteria do not stand alone in the process of identification of the most suitable sites.

Over the years, considerable experience has been gained in siting geological disposal facilities. Since 2023, the IAEA has been actively compiling experiences, based on 12 national programmes that have either completed or are currently undergoing GDF site selection. Through three consultancy meetings and one technical meeting, a draft publication has been developed. This publication, with preliminary title “*Siting process for geological disposal contribution of site selection criteria*”, aims to provide guidance on developing and applying site selection criteria based on different types of requirements, as well as to present how wider considerations and more in-depth assessments, e.g. safety assessments, environmental assessments, stakeholder requirements, or political considerations, inform site selection decisions.

Objectives

The purpose of the event is to share insights into site selection criteria and to review the draft publication on site selection criteria for deep geological disposal.

The main objective of the event is to induce a discussion on best practise on site selection criteria development and vice versa on needs and expectations of early stage countries, that would be reflected in the progress of the publication “*Siting process for geological disposal contribution of site selection criteria*”. The publication aims to cover siting process, site selection criteria development, their implementation in the siting process, aspects, that influence siting and lessons learnt, based on the advanced programmes, and will be prepared for publication after this meeting.

Lessons learnt, based on the disposal programmes that either already sited GDF or the process is progressing, will be presented to the broad audience, included member states (MS) with small inventories or starting nuclear programme.

Workshop, based on the diverse audience feedback, will launch a discussion on the publication content and to which extent it provides effective support for initiating programmes. The feedback would provide the response that would be crucial for final document revision and advanced text development.

The generic guidance will be illustrated by examples taken from advanced programmes that either succeeded on selecting the GDF site (France, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada) or are in various stages of the selection process (Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, UK etc.).

Target Audience

The meeting is targeted to the broad audience of Member States with agreed sites as well as those with on-going or planned programmes specific to siting a deep geologic disposal, including countries still in early stages of planning their future nuclear programme.

Working Language(s)

The working language of the event will be English. Interpretation will not be provided. All communications, reviews and discussion papers must be submitted in English.

Expected Outputs

Specific desired outputs include:

- Well-structured transfer of knowledge on site selection criteria development, reflecting both current good practises established in advance programmes, and the needs of early stages programmes; supported by presentations and discussion.
- Record of the site selection criteria workshop, in particular the feedback obtained on the draft publications.
- Work and time plan to providing further inputs and developing an advanced draft document.

Structure

The meeting will be conducted in person/hybrid at the IAEA Headquarters (room C-CR1), Vienna, as scheduled below:

- Monday, 10 November 2025, from 9:30 to 17:00
- Tuesday, 11 November 2025, from 9:00 to 17:00
- Wednesday, 12 November 2025, from 9:00 to 17:00
- Thursday, 13 November 2025, from 9:00 to 17:00
- Friday, 14 November 2025, from 9:00 to 13:00

Topics

1. Siting process: Best practise gained - advanced countries update

The Member States with advanced siting programmes are encouraged to present the updates on the progress of the siting programme. The time will be dedicated to the good practise and lessons learnt on development of site selection criteria set and their use in site selection process.

Selection of the contributions is of full responsibility of the Scientific secretary, based on the abstract provided (see Papers and Presentations section), if not the presentation is invited. The ppt presentation has to be sent to Scientific secretary Ms Vaclava Havlova (Va.Havlova@iaea.org) 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Presentation will be limited to 20 minutes.

2. Support needed for site selection criteria development: Presentation of the early-stage programmes.

Dedicated number of early stages programme presentations will be scheduled. The Member States are encouraged to clarify their needs and expectations toward IAEA guidance for site selection criteria development. A more general update on the national programmes context can be included with this presentation, however limited to 3 slides. Presentation will be limited to 15 minutes.

Selection of the presentations is of full responsibility of the Scientific secretary, based on the abstract provided (see Papers and Presentations section). The ppt presentation has to be sent to Scientific Secretary Ms Vaclava Havlova (Va.Havlova@iaea.org) 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

3. Workshop on site selection criteria: Discussion framed by the IAEA publication under the preparation.

Workshop will be dedicated to the process of site selection criteria development, exploiting the feedback of the TM participants to the IAEA publication “*Siting process for geological disposal contribution of site selection criteria*“. The document will be introduced in the form of overarching introductory presentation. Then the breakout groups will focus on individual chapters, resulting in final wrap up, based on the rapports form the groups.

In case Member States representative with interesting topical contributions shows interest, it will be afforded extra time for a presentation on the topic, included in the publication. In such a case please contact the Scientific Secretary Vaclava Havlova (Va.Havlova@iaea.org) and provide the abstract of the contribution (see Papers and Presentations section).

The draft of the publication will be available for the TM participants before the meeting. The feedback in the form of edited document (in track change mode) or any other form (presentation, word document) has to be sent to the Scientific Secretary Vaclava Havlova (Va.Havlova@iaea.org) till **October 10, 2025**.

Participation and Registration

All persons wishing to participate in the event have to be designated by an IAEA Member State or should be members of organizations that have been invited to attend.

In order to be designated by an IAEA Member State or invited organization, participants are requested to submit their application via the InTouch+ platform (<https://intouchplus.iaea.org>) to the competent national authority (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Permanent Mission to the IAEA or National Atomic Energy Authority) or organization for onward transmission to the IAEA by **30 June 2025**, following the registration procedure in InTouch+:

1. Access the InTouch+ platform (<https://intouchplus.iaea.org>):
 - Persons with an existing NUCLEUS account can sign in to the platform with their username and password;
 - Persons without an existing NUCLEUS account can register [here](#).
2. Once signed in, prospective participants can use the InTouch+ platform to:
 - Complete or update their personal details under ‘Complete Profile’ and upload the relevant supporting documents;
 - Search for the relevant event under the ‘My Eligible Events’ tab;
 - Select the Member State or invited organization they want to represent from the drop-down menu entitled ‘Designating Authority’ (if an invited organization is not listed, please contact InTouchPlus.Contact-Point@iaea.org);
 - If applicable, indicate whether financial support is requested and complete the relevant information (this is not applicable to participants from invited organizations);
 - Based on the data input, the InTouch+ platform will automatically generate the Participation Form (Form A) and/or the Grant Application Form (Form C);
 - Submit their application.

Once submitted through the InTouch+ platform, the application, together with the auto-generated form(s), will be transmitted automatically to the required authority for approval. If approved, the application, together with the applicable form(s), will automatically be sent to the IAEA through the online platform.

NOTE: The application for financial support should be made, together with the submission of the application, by **30 June 2025**.

For additional information on how to apply for an event, please refer to the [InTouch+ Help](#) page. Any other issues or queries related to InTouch+ can be sent to InTouchPlus.Contact-Point@iaea.org.

Selected participants will be informed in due course on the procedures to be followed with regard to administrative and financial matters.

Participants are hereby informed that the personal data they submit will be processed in line with the [Agency’s Personal Data and Privacy Policy](#) and is collected solely for the purpose(s) of reviewing and assessing the application and to complete logistical arrangements where required. The IAEA may also use the contact details of Applicants to inform them of the IAEA’s scientific and technical publications, or the latest employment opportunities and current open vacancies at the IAEA. These secondary purposes are consistent with the IAEA’s mandate. Further information can be found in the [Data Processing Notice](#) concerning IAEA InTouch+ platform.

Papers and Presentations

The IAEA encourages participants to give presentations on the work of their respective institutions that falls under the topics listed above.

Participants who wish to give presentations are requested to submit an abstract of their work. The abstract will be reviewed as part of the selection process for presentations. The abstract should be in A4 page format, should extend to no more than 2 pages (including figures and tables) and should not exceed 1200 words. It should be sent electronically to Ms Vaclava Havlova, the Scientific Secretary of the event (see contact details below), not later than **30 June 2025**. Authors will be notified of the acceptance of their proposed presentations by **15 August 2025**.

In addition to the registration already submitted through the InTouch+ platform, participants have to submit the abstract, together with the Form for Submission of a Paper (Form B), to the competent national authority (e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Permanent Mission to the IAEA or National Atomic Energy Authority) or organization for onward transmission to the IAEA not later than **30 June 2025**.

Expenditures and Grants

No registration fee is charged to participants.

The IAEA is generally not in a position to bear the travel and other costs of participants in the event. The IAEA has, however, limited funds at its disposal to help meet the cost of attendance of certain participants. Upon specific request, such assistance may be offered to normally one participant per country, provided that, in the IAEA's view, the participant will make an important contribution to the event.

The application for financial support should be made, together with the submission of the application, by **30 June 2025**.

Venue

The event will be held at the Vienna International Centre (VIC), where the IAEA's Headquarters are located. Participants must make their own travel and accommodation arrangements.

General information on the VIC and other practical details, such as a list of hotels offering a reduced rate for IAEA participants, are listed on the following IAEA web page:

www.iaea.org/events.

Participants are advised to arrive at Checkpoint 1/Gate 1 of the VIC one hour before the start of the event on the first day in order to allow for timely registration. Participants will need to present an official photo identification document in order to be admitted to the VIC premises.

Visas

Participants who require a visa to enter Austria should submit the necessary application to the nearest diplomatic or consular representative of Austria at least four weeks before they travel to Austria. Since Austria is a Schengen State, persons requiring a visa will have to apply for a Schengen visa. In States where Austria has no diplomatic mission, visas can be obtained from the consular authority of a Schengen Partner State representing Austria in the country in question.

IAEA Contacts

Scientific Secretary:

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Subsequent correspondence on scientific matters should be sent to the Scientific Secretary/Secretaries and correspondence on other matters related to the event to the Administrative Secretary.

Event Web Page

Please visit the following IAEA web page regularly for new information regarding this event:

www.iaea.org/events/EVT2404411

Enclosure: Form for Submission of a Paper (Form B)