



*Supplement of*

## **Preserving awareness for oversight – towards a resilient system at social level over centuries and millennia**

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Federal Office  
for the Safety of  
Nuclear Waste Management

# Preserving Awareness for Oversight:

## Towards a Resilient System at Social Level over Centuries and Millennia

Panel session, moderated/organised by Stephan Hotzel & Benjamin Offen

Federal Office for the Safety of Nuclear Waste Management (BASE)

Interdisciplinary Research Symposium on the Safety of Nuclear Disposal Practices safe<sup>ND</sup>

13-15 September 2023

### Panellists:

- Prof. Dr. Werner Rühm
- Prof. Dr. Miranda Schreurs
- Claudio Pescatore (PhD)

# Oversight, a concept promoted by ICRP & NEA

- **Oversight:** “Watchful care” of the repository – society “keeping an eye” on the technical system and the actual implementation of plans and decisions.
- **Direct oversight:** When waste is accessible (operational phase)
- **Indirect oversight:** When waste is no longer readily accessible (post-closure phase)
- **No oversight:** No “watchful care” anymore / memory lost (in the long-term)

Typical oversight measures:

- **Direct oversight:** Regulatory supervision (control and inspection)
- **Indirect oversight:** Monitoring, preservation of records, land use controls, societal memory keeping, reporting under international conventions
- **No oversight:** -

## Oversight, some key aspects (1/3)

- “The level of oversight affects the capability to control the source [...] and to avoid or reduce potential exposures.” (ICRP, 2013)
- “The disposal facility is ... to be seen as a functional [nuclear] facility.” (ICRP, 2013)
- ← Can we walk away from a functional facility?

## Oversight, some key aspects (2/3)

- “There is no intention to abandon repositories for geological disposal of radioactive waste, either before or after closure. The RWMC accepts and adopts the ICRP-122 position on the relevance of maintaining oversight over the geological disposal of radioactive waste for as long as practicable.” (NEA, 2014)
- ← For as long as practicable? How long is that?

## Oversight, some key aspects (3/3)

- “Maintaining RK&M for a radioactive waste repository after its closure will allow future members of society to take informed decisions regarding the repository and its contents and to prevent inadvertent human intrusion.” (NEA, 2014)
- “Enabling future members of society to make informed decisions is part of responsible, ethically sound, sustainable radioactive waste management, and is in line with a prudent approach regarding safety.” (NEA, 2014)
- ← Wouldn't it be better to forget?

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**Thank you for discussing with us!**



**Interdisciplinary research symposium**  
on the safety of nuclear disposal practices