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Selecting the Site: the Final Disposal at Olkiluoto

Preparations for the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel in Finland began at the same time as the commissioning of the first nuclear power plants in the late 1970s. The schedule for the final disposal was set in 1983, when the Government decided on the objectives and programme for nuclear waste management.

A Finnish Alternative Was Prepared for Early on

The original intention was to dispose of the spent nuclear fuel "abroad" and "in an irreversible manner". In spite of this aim, the purpose of the research, studies and planning associated with nuclear waste management was defined to be provision for the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel in Finland. The final disposal site was to be selected in 2000 and the final disposal should be able to begin in 2022.

Teollisuuden Voima carried out some research related to the final disposal in the 1980s and early 1990s, but Imatran Voima (currently, Fortum) transported its spent

Chapters in the History of Site Selection

- The original intention was to dispose of the spent nuclear fuel "abroad" and "in an irreversible manner".
- In spite of the original intention, the Finnish alternative was taken into consideration.
- In 1999, Posiva decided to propose Olkiluoto as the site for the repository.
- In 2001, the Parliament ratified the Government's positive decision-in-principle by 159 votes to 3.

nuclear fuel to the Soviet Union or Russia. In 1994, the Nuclear Energy Act entered into force, according to which all nuclear waste must be treated, stored and disposed of in Finland, and no nuclear waste from other countries shall be imported into Finland. After this, Imatran Voima and Teollisuuden Voima established Posiva Oy to take care of the implementation of the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel and the associated research.

Research associated with the final disposal proceeded as follows:

- 1983 to 1985: **Screening study** of the entire area of Finland
- 1986 to 1992: **Preliminary site investigations**
- 1993 to 2000: **Detailed site investigations** and an [environmental impact assessment procedure](#) was carried out for four sites: Romuvaara in Kuhmo, Kivetty in Äänekoski, Olkiluoto in Eurajoki, and Hästholmen in Loviisa.

Olkiluoto Selected in Compliance with the Application for Decision-in-Principle

According to the site investigations and safety analyses, as well as the environmental impact assessment procedure, all the investigated sites would have been suitable for the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel. The local consent was highest in Eurajoki and Loviisa. Of these two, the Olkiluoto island in Eurajoki had a larger area reserved for the repository. Furthermore, the larger portion of the spent nuclear fuel was already on the island.

An application for a decision-in-principle from the Government was submitted by Posiva in 1999. In this application, Posiva proposed Olkiluoto in Eurajoki as the site for the repository and KBS-3 as the chosen method for executing the final disposal.

For the decision, the Government requested statements from the municipality of Eurajoki (which had a right of veto in the question) and from the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority. The municipal council of Eurajoki approved Olkiluoto as the site for the repository by 20 votes to 7. After having received these statements, the



Government saw no obstacle to a positive decision-in-principle, which was made in December 2000. The proposal was further discussed by the Parliament , which, in May 2001, ratified the Government's positive decision-in-principle by 159 votes to 3.

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