

# NUCLEAR MONITOR

March 20, 2026 | Issue #936

A PUBLICATION OF WORLD INFORMATION SERVICE ON ENERGY (WISE)  
AND THE NUCLEAR INFORMATION & RESOURCE SERVICE (NIRS)

## WISE/NIRS

### Nuclear Monitor

The World Information Service on Energy (WISE) was founded in 1978 and is based in the Netherlands.

The Nuclear Information & Resource Service (NIRS) was founded in the same year and is based in the U.S. WISE and NIRS joined forces in the year 2000 to produce Nuclear Monitor.

Nuclear Monitor is published in English, 10 times a year, in electronic (PDF) format only. Back issues are published on the WISE website two months after being sent to subscribers ([www.wiseinternational.org/nuclear-monitor](http://www.wiseinternational.org/nuclear-monitor)).

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

10 issues

NGOs / individuals 67,50 Euros

Institutions / Industry 235 Euros

US and Canada: Contact NIRS for details ([nirs@nirs.org](mailto:nirs@nirs.org))

All other countries: Subscribe via the WISE website

[www.wiseinternational.org](http://www.wiseinternational.org)

ISSN: 2542-5439

#### CONTACTS

WISE

[info@wiseinternational.org](mailto:info@wiseinternational.org)

[www.wiseinternational.org](http://www.wiseinternational.org)

NIRS

[nirs@nirs.org](mailto:nirs@nirs.org)

[www.nirs.org](http://www.nirs.org)

Nuclear Monitor

[monitor@wiseinternational.org](mailto:monitor@wiseinternational.org)

[www.wiseinternational.org/nuclear-monitor](http://www.wiseinternational.org/nuclear-monitor)

### Monitored this issue:

- 'NO TO NUCLEAR – Why nuclear power destroys lives, derails climate progress and provokes war'** 2  
Jan Haverkamp reviews Linda Pentz Gunter new book
- Greenpeace activists block Russian uranium import in French harbour** 4  
Jan van Evert, reporter WISE-Netherlands
- Phasing out nuclear power: between pressure from pro-nuclear advocates and a resurgence of the anti-nuclear movement** 5  
Philippe de Rougemont and Louiselle Debiez
- CNIC Statement: 15 Years since the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Severe Nuclear Accident at Fukushima Daiichi** 7  
Citizens' Nuclear Information Center
- Nuclear News** 9
- World Nuclear Power Status

**NIRS**  
Nuclear Information & Resource Service

**wise**  
World Information Service on Energy  
founded in 1978

## Jan Haverkamp reviews Linda Pentz Gunter new book; 'NO TO NUCLEAR – Why nuclear power destroys lives, derails climate progress and provokes war'

Many pleading for urgent climate action are baffled by the stream of disinformation about the role of nuclear power that disturbs the debate and the implementation of effective climate measures. Not many have an overview of the realities behind this surge in nuclear propaganda, because it requires technical as well as economic, sociological, psychological and geopolitical insights.

Based on her life-long experiences with critical nuclear activism, Linda Pentz Gunter has written this attempt to give exactly such an overview. And we need to thank the scholar M.V. Ramana for convincing her to do so. Pentz Gunter does not write a book with scenarios, numbers and graphs. It is a rough brush overview of the dynamics that nuclear technology introduces in climate policies, human rights and the geopolitics of wars – but illustrated with pearls of personal experiences with people that face the direct consequences: indigenous people suffering under the environmental impacts of uranium mining in the US and Niger, but also the dancing protesters stopping mining on the Orkney Islands. Pentz reminds us of the uranium tailings dam breach at the Navajo territory near Church Rock just before the nuclear accident at Three Miles Island in 1979, and the consequences for those who lived around it. She links the colonialist exploitation of uranium in Congo to the nuclear weapons race of the Cold war and focuses in on the impacts for the people directly involved. She talks about the dogs left in the Chernobyl closed zone after the 1986 accident. But also about the resistance in Jobourg in Western France against the nuclear

reprocessing facility in la Hague. With her, we travel the entire voyage from the first nuclear bomb test at Trinity test site in New Mexico, to the Trump administration's active undermining of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) that under the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS) is supposed to be an independent nuclear regulatory body overseeing nuclear safety. The book ends with an appendix listing ten reasons to reject nuclear power.

I have to admit, that I found the preface and introduction difficult to get through. The picture painted here is so bleak and hopeless. That does not match with my 45 years of experiences in the same field, where I have seen that the nuclear industry is its own worst enemy and where many people prevent it from taking the position it wants to take with its repeated attempts to a "nuclear renaissance". But once the reader gets to chapter 1, the speed picks up. Now, this is not a book for those already into the depth of nuclear policies. For them, the brush strokes may feel too rough – although it contains many moments of recognition and reminders of issues that sometimes have moved a bit beyond sight.

But this is exactly the book for those that encounter the nuclear industry entering their personal space, but who are not so familiar with all the dynamics of nuclear technology. For municipal councillors that are confronted with aggressive plans for SMRs, for farmers that see plans for new nuclear power stations threatening to evict them, for those who live around proposed nuclear waste sites, for voters who think "hang on, this all sounds interesting, but what was the history?".

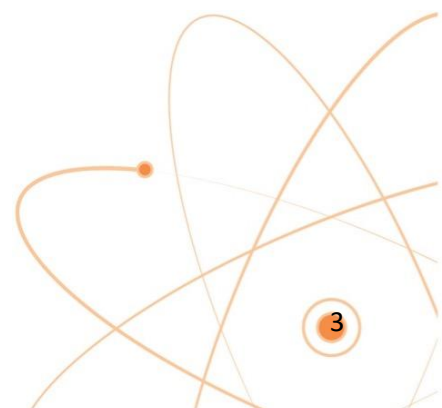
While reading, you will inevitably encounter some less strong stories. Diving into references will enable you to clear that up. Stories around the health effects of Chernobyl would need a lot more detail to convince those submitted to industry propaganda. Reading the referenced *Manual for Survival: A Chernobyl Guide to the Future* by Kate Brown will repair that for you. What misses is maybe a bit more insight into the nuclear propaganda and trolling machine that was built up over the last decade by the likes of Patrick Moore, Michael Shellenberger, Bjorn Lomborg and their offspring, which is where much of the disinformation from the industry got a form that sounds convincing to a more populist oriented public. And, as a European, I was reminded many times of parallel developments, like those around

uranium mining at Jachymov in the Czech Republic, at Wismut in East Germany, the steppes of Kazakhstan and many others. This is a book written in the US, and readers from elsewhere may have to link it to parallel experiences in their part of the world to use it to enter their debates. Linda Pentz Gunter is one of the longer serving experts in the anti-nuclear movement – and an incredible source of experience, knowledge and wisdom. I hope this book may motivate others that have spent their lives struggling with the nuclear Moloch to share their experiences as well, before this wisdom disappears into oblivion.

If you want to be reminded what this nuclear stuff was all about, pick up this book and read it.



<https://www.plutobooks.com/product/no-to-nuclear/>



# Greenpeace activists block Russian uranium import in French harbour

Jan van Evert

The French police arrested four Greenpeace activists on March 2<sup>nd</sup> who tried to prevent a Russian ship from unloading its cargo in the harbour of Dunkirk in the north of France. The Mikhail Dudin is a ship sailing under the Panamanian flag and owned by a company registered in Hong Kong. Greenpeace claims it has "on numerous occasions" observed the ship unloading Russian natural and enriched uranium in France.

About twenty activists participated in the action carrying signs reading "Stop toxic contracts" and "Solidarity with Ukrainians". Greenpeace has repeatedly accused France of maintaining ties with Russia's state-owned energy company, Rosatom, despite the war in Ukraine. The protesters tried to stop the ship with a large banner stretching across the lock reading "Uranium: EDF loves Putin". Greenpeace France also observed that the Russian ship made several stops at the port of Rotterdam before arriving in Dunkirk, or sometimes when departing from there.

In 2018, France's state owned company EDF signed a € 600 million deal with a Rosatom subsidiary, Tenex, for reprocessed uranium from French nuclear power plants to be sent to Russia to be converted and re-enriched to be reused in nuclear power plants. In 2025 France

imported at least 112 tonnes of enriched uranium and its compounds from Russia, a quarter of its total purchases by volume. Rosatom has the only facility in the world that is capable of carrying out key parts of the conversion of reprocessed uranium to enriched reprocessed uranium.

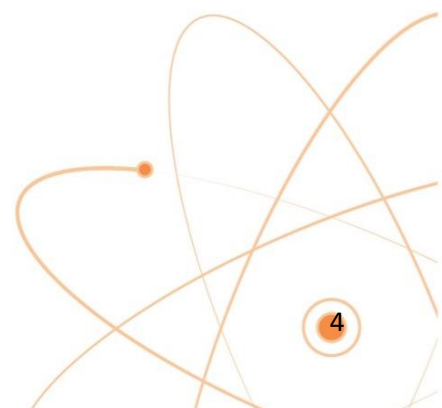
In 2022, France ordered EDF to stop its uranium trade with Rosatom when Greenpeace first revealed the contracts in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. But in March 2024, Jean-Michel Quilichini, head of the nuclear fuel division at EDF, said his company planned to continue to "honour" its 2018 contract.

In March 2024 France said it was "seriously" looking at the possibility of building its own conversion facility to produce enriched reprocessed uranium.

Sources:

<https://cdn.greenpeace.fr/site/uploads/2026/02/Greenpeace-investigation-France-Russia-radioactive-trafficking-continues-2026-EN.pdf>

<https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20260302-france-arrests-activists-blocking-ship-over-alleged-russia-uranium-links-ukraine-war>



# Phasing out nuclear power: between pressure from pro-nuclear advocates and a resurgence of the anti-nuclear movement

Philippe de Rougemont and Louiselle Debiez

What do Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy have in common? These countries have all decided to phase out nuclear power. While some have kept their commitment, others are now showing signs of hesitation. In both cases, the nuclear lobby is pushing for a reversal, extending the life of reactors that are long past retirement age, or even simply reviving the nuclear industry. But the anti-nuclear movement has not said its last word. On the contrary, the movement is experiencing a revival, transcending borders to forge links with neighboring struggles. Ironically, opponents of nuclear power can count on the nuclear industry itself in their fight: the industrial and financial failure of the EPR in France and the United Kingdom serves as a counterexample for Italy, Switzerland, and all countries that are hesitant to reopen the nuclear chapter.

## *Italy: EDF lying in wait*

In 1987, Italy voted in a referendum to phase out nuclear power, with 80.6% of the vote. At that time, Italy had four nuclear power plants and two under construction. In 1990, the last reactor was shut down. In 2011, Silvio Berlusconi signed an agreement with Nicolas Sarkozy to purchase four EPR reactors. A referendum held that same year put a stop to the project, with a resounding 93% voting against it.

Since 1990, the share of fossil fuels has not increased, but solar energy has taken a significant share of the Italian electricity mix, which today consists of 55% fossil fuels and 45% renewables. Before the election of Giorgia Meloni, President of the Council of Ministers

since 2022, the goal was to achieve 70% renewable electricity by 2030 and continue towards 100%.

Today, the Meloni government wants SMR nuclear reactors, but has not found any investors. That is why EDF did what it did in England with British Energy and bought Edison, a major electricity company in Italy. Edison then signed a "congenital" partnership with EDF to develop a Nuward SMR.

"The debate on nuclear power is a diversionary tactic to keep the public's attention focused on maintaining the gas industry," says Giuseppe Onufrio of Greenpeace Italy. The Italian NGO network "100% Renewable Network" has published a study [1] carried out by 25 academics demonstrating the scenario of a 100% renewable Italian energy supply. In October 2025, the network will hold a conference on this study, which reinforces the activities carried out by its member associations.

## *Switzerland: Trump supporters at the helm*

In 2017, Swiss voters decided by a 58% majority to ban new nuclear reactors. This did not mean closing existing reactors, as in Italy, but rather allowing the five reactors to continue their countdown to closure, without a set timetable. It was an experiment in industrial geriatrics, with neighboring countries becoming guinea pigs.

Since then, the Mühleberg nuclear power plant has closed, as renovation work was deemed too expensive. Its 5% contribution to the Swiss electricity mix has been largely replaced by the

exponential growth of solar power, which now accounts for 10% of the electricity mix.

Today, Switzerland's electricity mix is 35% nuclear and 65% renewable. The import/export balance is zero. Switzerland is therefore moving towards a dangerously slow phase-out of nuclear power. The election of Albert Rösti, a Trumpian conservative who is nostalgic for the nuclear era, as head of the energy department, puts this phase-out at risk. This year, he will attempt to get parliament to approve the construction of a new reactor. While the general assemblies of the Green Party and the Socialist Party were unanimous in their opposition, all eyes are on the position of the Center Party. If it swings towards Mr. Rösti, nuclear power could once again become an option in Switzerland.

The Federal Alliance to Exit Nuclear Power brings together NGOs, political parties, the Association of Doctors for the Environment, and the Swiss Solar Energy Society. If parliament votes in favor of nuclear power, the alliance and its members will collect 50,000 signatures to submit the parliamentary decision to a public vote.

#### *Belgium: Taking a step back to better phase out nuclear power*

The shutdown of Belgium's last reactors, scheduled for the end of 2025, should have marked the country's exit from nuclear power, in accordance with the law enacted in 2003. This will not be the case. A new law, passed on May 15, 2025, removes all mention of phasing out nuclear power in 2025. While two of the four reactors have already been authorized to operate until 2035 (Tihange 3, and Doel 4), this bill could also open the door to extending the operation of the other two (Tihange 1 and Doel 2). Adopted by a large majority of Belgian MPs (102 votes in favor, 8 against, 31 abstentions, etc.), the text also lifts the ban on building new nuclear reactors.

However, these projects are still a long way from becoming reality. Engie, which operates the reactors still in service, has ruled out any possibility of extending Tihange 1 and Doel 2. Although the operator has committed to operating the Tihange 3 and Doel 4 reactors until 2035, it has already made it clear that it would be unrealistic to extend their operating life beyond that date.

For the Belgian anti-nuclear movement, this is not a time for discouragement but for regrouping! "We have recreated a united front between twelve anti-nuclear, climate and peace organizations to counter the propaganda and demagoguery of the nuclear lobby and the pro-nuclear right-wing government," explains Marc Alexander of the association VAKS, Verenigde Actie Kern Stop (United Action Nuclear Stop). To strengthen the anti-nuclear struggle, this coalition plans to carry out symbolic actions but also to expand its ranks: "We need not only broader Belgian anti-nuclear fronts, but also international cooperation against this lobby." The call has been made.

#### *Germany: Allying with neighboring countries*

On April 15, 2023, 21 years after the decision to phase out nuclear power, Germany shut down its last nuclear reactors. In early 2025, during the election campaign, the Christian Democrats pushed for the plants to be brought back online. Faced with strong public opposition (150,000 signatures collected in a few days), the advanced state of dismantling, and the firm position of the Social Democrats, who did not want to backtrack, this attempt ultimately failed.

While several battles are still being fought on German soil, notably opposition to the Framatome-Rosatom fuel plant project in Lingen and to Castor transports, the bulk of the action is now taking place beyond the country's borders.

Armin Simon, from the German anti-nuclear movement .ausgestrahlt, is concerned about Germany abandoning its anti-nuclear stance at the European level. Like Marc Alexander in Belgium, he is calling for stronger ties between anti-nuclear associations in neighboring countries. "The Belgian government's announcement that it would scrap its nuclear phase-out immediately sparked protests [in Germany]," the activist points out. Anti-nuclear groups in the border region are joining forces with Belgian and Dutch groups to prevent Belgium's aging nuclear power plants from being extended.

.augestrahlt also plans to launch a study on the danger that Swiss power plants pose to Germany. "If it works well, it could increase pressure on Swiss politicians and help Swiss anti-nuclear activists," Armin enthuses.

Published in Sortir du nucléaire No. 106, Summer 2025. Posted online on June 11, 2025, modified on February 11, 2026. The article is published in French and translated using DEEPL.

#### Notes

[1] Towards climate neutrality with 100% renewable electricity, 100% renewable network, 11/03/2025

## CNIC Statement: 15 Years since the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Severe Nuclear Accident at Fukushima Daiichi

[Citizens' Nuclear Information Center](#)

By the late 1960s, the plate tectonics theory had been widely accepted in the field of geoscience. Meanwhile, on the Japanese archipelago, the number of nuclear power plants began to increase rapidly, as if it had nothing to do with the theory.

The Japanese archipelago exists under completely different natural conditions to those of Europe and America. It is located in a tectonically active zone where four tectonic plates push up against one another and constant disaster measures against earthquakes, crustal movements, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions are required. Despite this, the number of nuclear power plants has been increasing.

At the time, pro-nuclear scientists advocated the idea that although the world's population is growing exponentially, once fast breeder

reactors and fusion reactors are realized, there would no longer be any need to worry about energy. In a sense, the nation entrusted its dreams to nuclear power.

Yet, an accident occurred that completely shattered that dream. It was the severe accident at the Tokyo Electric Power Company's (TEPCO's) Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, triggered by the Tohoku Pacific Offshore Earthquake (M9.0) on March 11, 2011. The devastation caused by the accident was so severe that, even now, 15 years later, the nation remains under the Nuclear Emergency Declaration. Three reactors suffered core meltdowns, but how the process leading to hydrogen explosions of the plants developed is yet to be elucidated. The high radiation levels at the site that prevent further investigation is one of the reasons for this. Nevertheless, the

government and TEPCO persist in presenting a roadmap to complete “decommissioning” by 2051 – all the while, continuing to contaminate the air, the land, and the ocean with radioactive substances.

The National Diet of Japan Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission Report (2012) stated that the accident was clearly a “man-made disaster.” It argued that the root cause “dates back to the time of Japan’s high economic growth. As Japan pushed nuclear power generation as a national policy, with the political, bureaucratic, and business circles in perfect coordination, an intricate form of ‘regulatory capture’ was created,” leading to “a distinct organizational structure of both the bureaucratic and business sectors, and the ‘mindset’ of the Japanese people that took these for granted.” As a result, they “pursued the critical mission of abiding by precedent and defending the interests of their organization” and “assigned a higher priority to this mission than that of protecting the lives of the people. Hence, while being aware of the global trends in safety control, Japan buried its head in the sand and put off implementing necessary safety measures.”

Observing the decision-making process of the government’s return to a nuclear energy policy, it becomes clear that this “regulatory capture” persists – as ever, the situation where the regulated side is capturing the regulator remains.

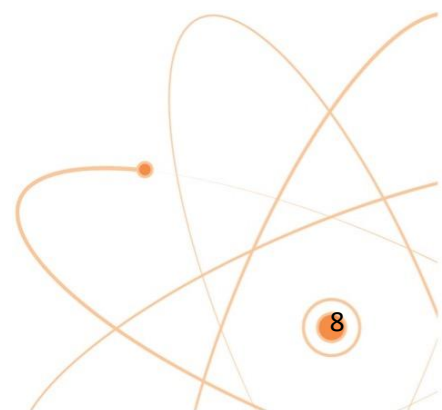
While successive chairs of the Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA) have maintained that “the NRA is not an agency that guarantees safety,” the government states that “the public and the private sectors work together to accelerate the restart of reactors whose safety has been confirmed by the NRA.”

Recently, the NRA decided to revise the regulations after multiple operators failed to meet the deadlines for the installation of Specific Safety Facilities (SSF), despite the granting of a five-year grace period.

Fabrication of basic ground earthquake motion data was found at Chubu Electric Power’s Hamaoka Nuclear Power Station. This was reported by a whistleblower. The NRA failed to detect this fabrication. Or rather, they lacked the ability to detect it.

Currently, there is no authority capable of regulating nuclear power in this country. If that is so, then even if it is for civil use, should we not move away from nuclear energy? Perpetuating a system that demands sacrifices across generations is a fundamental mistake. If we truly wish to achieve a sustainable society, is there any other way than to correct the mistakes made by the government, bureaucracy, business, and academia, and power our society with renewable energy?

The statement is published on March 11, 2026 on <https://cnic.jp/english/?p=8983>



# NUCLEAR NEWS



## World Nuclear Power Status



**Number of Reactors**  
(as of March 2026)

