

IPPC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Division I/1



Mr. Ing. Filip Novosád
Ministry for Regional Development
Staroměstské náměstí 6
110 15 Praha 1
Czech Republic

Vienna, 01.10.2014

Your Reference/Your File Number
Your letter dtd.

Our File Number
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Official-in-charge/Ext.

Dear Ing. Novosád,

Austria has asked for notification according to Art. 7 SEA Directive and Art. 10 SEA Protocol regarding the update No 1 of the Spatial Development Policy for the Czech Republic on 9 July 2014.

The Czech Republic has sent the notification, including a CD, with relevant documents which arrived on 25 July 2014.

Austria has taken part in the transboundary SEA procedure since significant adverse effects on Austria's environment by the implementation of the update of the Spatial Development Policy cannot be excluded. The Czech Republic has been informed about Austria's participation on 19 August 2014.

Hence, a public participation procedure regarding the relevant documents has been carried out at federal and provincial level by the concerned authorities. The Austrian public and the authorities had the possibility to comment on the documents from 26 August until 24 September 2014. The comments received are attached.

The Czech Republic has made a proposal to hold bilateral consultations according Art. 7 SEA Directive and Art. 10 SEA Protocol on 6 October 2014. This letter was received on 10 September 2014. Unfortunately the date proposed is not feasible for Austria, due to international obligations. Respecting time constraints regarding the Czech process of updating the National Spatial Development Policy Austria files the following statement, instead of having bilateral oral consultations:

Austria does not consider nuclear power as compatible with the concept of sustainable development. In the Austrian view, reliance on nuclear power is neither a viable nor a cost efficient option to combat the greenhouse effect, either. However, Austria does



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respect national sovereignty as well as European and international law regarding national energy policies.

Analysing the information and documents regarding the first update of the Spatial Development Policy 2014 provided by the Czech Republic a number of modifications compared to the Spatial Development Policy 2008 were identified with regard to nuclear issues, notably paras (142) E4a and (143) E4b (chapter Energetics (electricity)) as well as paras (169) Sk1 and (169a) Sk2 (chapter waste disposal management).

Concerning potential sites for new nuclear power plants Blahuovice is mentioned again but the time frame for dealing with spatial development issues for that location has been changed from 2011 to 2018. For the existing NPP Dukovany an update was made regarding the placement of the water reservoir, to ensure long-term operation. In terms of the waste disposal management, the area of Skalka is mentioned for the first time as a suitable area for a central waste deposit (interim storage) of spent nuclear fuel. Finally, for the selection of two candidate sites for the construction of a geological repository now the year 2020 is foreseen, and 2025 for the selection of the final location.

With regard to nuclear installations Austria will use all legal means to ensure the protection of its population and environment if such installations or plans, programmes, and policies regarding nuclear installations could have adverse impacts. However, Austria is convinced that highest standards of nuclear safety are also in the interest of the Czech Republic. In that context the principles of transparency and participation are of great importance for Austria.

Against this background Austria expects to get actively notified by the Czech Republic regarding relevant strategic environmental assessments, and especially regarding environmental impact assessment procedures for specific projects (see para 142, E4a Dukovany site, para 143, E4b Blahuovice site and para 169, Sk1 repository sites and 169a, Sk2 interim storage for spent nuclear fuel Skalka).

In this context it should be noted that Austria also takes part in the transboundary strategic environmental impact assessment procedure currently carried out for the update of the National Energy Policy of the Czech Republic.

In previous phases of exploring a suitable site for a geological repository for high level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel areas close to the border to Austria were not considered. In view of that fact Austria strongly recommends to exclude sites for deep geological repositories that are close to the Austrian border in the first update of the Spatial Development Policy 2014.

Austria also expects that the principles of the Aarhus convention are duly taken into consideration for the exploration of a suitable site for a geological repository for high level radioactive waste and spent fuel.

Austria requests the Czech Republic according to Art. 11 SEA Protocol and Art. 8 SEA Directive on the decision making to take into account the results of the transboundary consultations (the statement as presented above as well as the comments attached) during the preparation of the update of the National Spatial Development Policy and before its adoption.


Regarding Art. 11 SEA Protocol and Art. 9 SEA Directive Austria asks the Czech Republic to submit the adopted update of the National Spatial Development Policy, the summarising statement on how the results of the SEA have been taken into account and the information on future monitoring measures.

Austria would like to express her thanks for the cooperation during recent months.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the Minister:
Dr Ursula Platzler-Schneider

Electronically signed.

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