

Session 24
Panel Session - Global Perspectives

Mark Matthews, USDOE
John Mathieson, UK Nirex Ltd.

A lively panel discussion on nuclear waste disposal issues took place at the Global Perspectives (I) Session. Panel members were: Yves Le Bars, Chairman of the Board of ANDRA of France; Juergen Lempert, President of DBE of Germany; Peter Nygard, President of SKB of Sweden; Ines Triay, Manager of USDOE's Carlsbad Area Office; and Mary Kruger, Director of Federal Regulations of USEPA. Facilitators were: John Mathieson, UKNirex; Wendell Weart, SNL; and Mark Matthews, USDOE/CAO.

The panel members, who are leaders of nuclear waste management organizations, engaged in free-wheeling discussions on nuclear waste management issues, concerns, and solutions.

Topics included:

- (1) Public Interactions: the panel members felt "positive public involvement" was a better term than "public acceptance," and listening first to the people to understand their concerns needed to be done before an effort is made to inform them of an organization's plans.
- (2) Regulatory Issues: it was agreed that the regulatory bodies needed to be both independent, cooperative, and preferably not adversarial.
- (3) Retrievability: there are many aspects of this issue, namely, safety (both short term for the workers and long term for the public), possible availability of a future resource (Plutonium), nuclear safeguards and prevention of diversion of fissile material for terrorist activities and obtaining public confidence for an organizations decisions.
- (4) Transmutation and Partitioning: panel members felt research in this area should continue, but it is not necessarily cheaper and many of the same issues still may not be resolved.
- (5) International or regional repositories: the panel members agreed that this would only be possible many years from now. There was considerable positive response by the session attendees.