



## Shetland Islands Council

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Plutonium Consultation  
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Department of Energy and Climate Change  
3 Whitehall Place  
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John Mouat

Direct Dial:

Date: 10 May 2011

Our Ref:  
Your Ref:

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Consultation on Management of the UK's plutonium stocks**

The Council wishes to be associated with the submissions to the attached consultation from the Nuclear Free Local Authorities.

In addition the Council would wish to make the following points. A small part of the UK's plutonium stock is held at Dounreay as part of the site's legacy inventory. The Council believes this plutonium should remain safely in long-term storage at Dounreay and not transported to Sellafield for either storage or 're-use' as MOX fuel. Moving the plutonium to Sellafield would involve an unnecessary hazardous transport.

Finally, the Unit 3 reactor at Fukushima in Japan, which exploded on 14th March 2011 contained MOX fuel in six per cent of its fuel rods.

The implications of the accident at Fukushima have yet to be fully analysed. The Convention on Nuclear Safety, which has 72 national signatories, will not meet until August 2012 to review the breakdown of safety systems at Fukushima. These national nuclear regulators have decided that the delay is necessary because any lessons cannot be fully understood until there has been a full analysis and all relevant information has been considered.

It would surely be unwise for the UK Government to make any decisions regarding the long-term management of its plutonium stock until the fully implications and lessons of the Fukushima disaster are understood. The Council would therefore request that this consultation of halted and re-launched at a later date.

It is quite possible the future use of MOX fuel in Japan and elsewhere will be re-considered once this analysis has been carried out. Surely the UK Government cannot consider building a new MOX fuel production plant at Sellafield when any potential market might be greatly reduced.

Yours sincerely,



John Mouat  
Environmental Liaison Officer  
Shetland Islands Council

Dear Sirs, It is my view that this consultation should be suspended until a review of the implications surrounding the nuclear crisis in Japan is undertaken. Also in view of the disastrous economic performance of the MOX reprocessing plant at Sellafield the use of plutonium as a possible fuel for future reactors cannot be justified. Plutonium should be reclassified as a waste and be treated and safely stored.

Yours faithfully

Councillor Rick Nickerson

Shetland Islands Council