



## **Nuclear Power is a Very Good Solution for the Climate**

### **Should France Do Without It Because of the Waste Issue?**

“What is to be done with the most dangerous nuclear waste, given they will remain dangerous over several thousands of years? Despite sixty years of nuclear energy operation, there is still no lasting and safe solution for nuclear waste management.” These are the recurring statements of nuclear power opponents.

How do things stand in fact?

Any human activity generates waste, whether tied to household, daily, economic, industrial, commercial, etc. activities.

For nuclear power, the issue is not whether or not to produce waste, the real issue is to:

- Produce as little waste as possible, thanks in particular to circular economy.
- Properly manage the waste produced (ultimate materials) so that they do not impact our environment.

From the very beginning, the French nuclear power industry has taken great care in its management of the radioactive waste produced. In particular, it has decided to exercise its responsibilities as nuclear power operator by reprocessing the spent fuel and recovering both the uranium and the plutonium as nuclear fuels (nuclear materials). This reduces the high-level long-lived waste (HL-LL) waste to the fission products and minor actinides, plus the metallic structure holding the fissile product rods of the fuel assemblies, the “skeleton”. The management of the radioactive waste and of all the disposal facilities provides for the containment of the waste whatever their characteristics long enough to ensure that they do not pose a risk to present and, above all, future generations.

With more than 50 years of nuclear power generation, more than 2100 reactor-years of pressurized water reactor operation and 6.1 billion metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided compared to combined cycle gas turbines, neither the waste nor the power plants themselves have caused any harm to the environment or to man. Few industrial sectors can boast such a track record.

In short, we can strongly assert that there is no radioactive waste problem. There is, for each category, a suitable and perennial solution.