

STILL-MISSING ON FUSION TO THE UK ENERGY POLICY REVIEW

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There are some obvious questions which the Review Team in the UK may wish to look at. In particular:

1. How will the UK meet its own environmental targets and indeed how will other countries meet pressing environmental targets and needs longer term without the introduction of commercial fusion power?
2. At a time when the environmental issues are so pressing, why is the European Commission proposing cuts which will demolish the European fusion sector?
3. What is the UK government policy towards fusion?
4. Is there the political will, in the UK and in Europe generally to "fast track" fusion, so that, for instance, commercial fusion power can be available within 25 years?

If renewables can not provide base load electricity and also if it is increasingly recognised that fossil fuels have fundamental environmental flaws, how will the energy gap be filled?

6. Why did the UK not prepare itself to bid for the ITER project, the world's next generation of fusion reactor, which will demonstrate that large scale power generation is possible . particularly given the procurement and economic generation benefits attached to ITER in terms of the country offering it a site?
7. Why is it assumed that the politics of funding fusion are so difficult because of the very long lead times, when there are many other examples of political decisions being made for projects with similar time frames – 25 to 50 years?

Is there a case for a programme informing decision-makers about fusion followed by a public education campaign drawing attention to the role played by scientists in Britain which is of genuine world class standard?

Given that the UK contributes only 2% of CO₂ emissions, even a 60% reduction in the UK by 2050 will not, of itself, be significant in global terms. If a UK reduction were to be achieved by the introduction of very significant innovations in energy production, such as by fusion, a

- multiplier effect would operate.

There seems a strong case for a very serious examination of the potential of fusion.

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6. Progress Through Partnership, a report by the Technology Foresight Panel on Energy.
7. Fusion Business; Issue 8, November 1999. UKNEA Culham Division.
8. Fusion Business; Issue 10, May 2000. UKAEA Culham Division.
9. Institute of Physics response to the DETR consultation on UK Climate Change programme (15 February 1999).