

ENVIRONMENT north

Box 10307
Thunder Bay, Ontario
P7B 6T8
www.environmentnorth.ca



January 6, 2011

Andrea Stoiko
Policy Coordinator
Ministry of Energy
Regulatory Affairs and Strategic Policy
880 Bay Street
Toronto Ontario
M7A 2C1

Re EBR: 011-1701 Draft Supply Mix Directive

Dear Ms Stoiko:

Environment North is a non-profit charitable organisation formed in 1972 and based in Thunder Bay, Ontario. We strive to improve and protect the ecological sustainability and socio-economic well being of Northwestern Ontario. Our actions and activities revolve around respect and shared responsibility for air, water and land, the essentials of all life.

We sincerely congratulate the Ontario government on their progress in three key areas of electricity supply: phasing out coal, improved conservation measures and increases in renewable energy sources. This will greatly help to improve human and ecosystem health, reduce greenhouse gases that contribute to dangerous climate change and assist the green energy economy.

We do have a concern regarding the Draft Supply Mix Directive in regards to nuclear generation. Nuclear energy produces many toxic emissions, especially during the mining stages and produces toxic waste fuel. The radioactive waste needs to be kept isolated from the environment for 250,000 years. As in the 70's, there are potential plans for a geologic storage facility in Northwestern Ontario. As in the 70's, Environment North and many northern citizens will oppose this plan. Currently the safest method of storage is on-site, using a "rolling stewardship", each generation accepts the responsibility for safeguarding the waste.

Environment North is aware of the advantages of nuclear energy – a stable, baseload power source with significantly less greenhouse gas production. Nuclear energy produces significantly less greenhouse gases than coal, oil or natural gas in a complete fuel cycle greenhouse gas analysis. Note that renewable energy sources generally produce even less greenhouse gases than nuclear energy and no radioactive waste.

Most of the greenhouse gas production in the nuclear energy fuel cycle occurs during mining, power plant construction and decommissioning, and waste storage. Likely, refurbishment of existing plants is necessary and will "buy us time" where climate change is concerned. However, building new plants will result in a "carbon debt" for many years and more nuclear waste.

There are many potential scenarios for electricity supply in Ontario that do not require nuclear energy, including a plan developed by the Ontario Clean Energy Alliance. It is possible to gradually phase out nuclear as the baseload power source.

Environment North believes that the Draft Supply Mix Directive should not include the construction of new nuclear energy plants. The long term plan should not include nuclear energy. We thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments.

Sincerely,

Graham Saunders,
President, Environment North

P.O. Box 10307
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6T8
environmentnorth.ca