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A Global Disposal Site? Perspectives on Radioactive and Spent Nuclear Fuel Management in Russia

Governing Nuclear Waste. Conflicts, Participation and Acceptability

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Outline

Goal: To describe the changing environment in which conflicts take place

- 1) Modernising Russia's Economy**
- 2) The Reorganisation of Russia's Nuclear Complex**
- 3) Nuclear Waste Governance in Russia**

Modernising Russia's Economy

1. High Dependency on Natural Resources:

- Share of non-renewable energy sources (oil, gas and coal) in total exports almost 70 %, Russland-Analysen 2014)
- Increased since dissolution of Soviet Union
- Depleting traditional oil and gas deposits

2. Modernisation Agenda: Reindustrialising Russia (Sanctions, Peripheral Development)

- „National-industrial champions“ (aircraft, arms industry, nuclear industry): Export-orientation

The Reorganisation of Russia's Nuclear Complex

Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation (Rosatom)

- Former Ministry of Atomic Energy (Minatom) → Assumes and performs state functions
- Non-transparent structure (accountable only to the President;
- Unites civil and military sector
- Global player satisfying every stage of the nuclear circle: mining and enrichment of uranium ore, construction and maintenance of NPPs, radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel management



Nuclear Waste Governance in Russia

Rosatom's international Expansion impacts on Nuclear Waste Governance in Russia:

- Rosatom = Producer of radioactive waste and responsible for its disposal
- Guiding principle: “cost-effective radioactive waste management” (Rosatom 2014: 20)
- Radio active waste = material and substances for which no future use is foreseen
- Spent nuclear fuel = useful for reprocessing



Nuclear Waste Governance in Russia

Participation:

Citizens and public associations have the right to receive and request informations concerning "the safety of planned, designed, constructed, operated and decommissioned nuclear installations, radiation sources and storage facilities (Russian Federation 1995)."

But: Does not include classified informations defined by the state

→ formalised procedure of public participation at different stages of radioactive waste management?



Conclusion

- **Ambivalent Outcome**
 - regulatory base established
 - development of necessary infrastructure
 - registration of radioactive waste in Russia: Amount becomes public

 - New interlock between state and Rosatom: Weak democratic control of the nuclear complex
 - socio-ecological standards?

Bibliography

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