



**MINISTÈRE
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THE 2019 PUBLIC DEBATE ON RAD WASTE MANAGEMENT

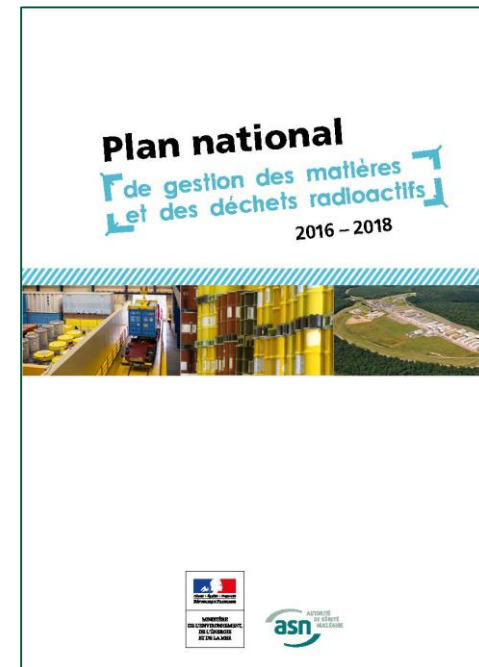
**Aurélien LOUIS, Head of Nuclear Industry Department, Ministry for Ecological
Transition**

2021 ACN ROUNDTABLE

Videoconference, January 14th 2021

The context: why did France engage in a public debate on radwaste management in 2019

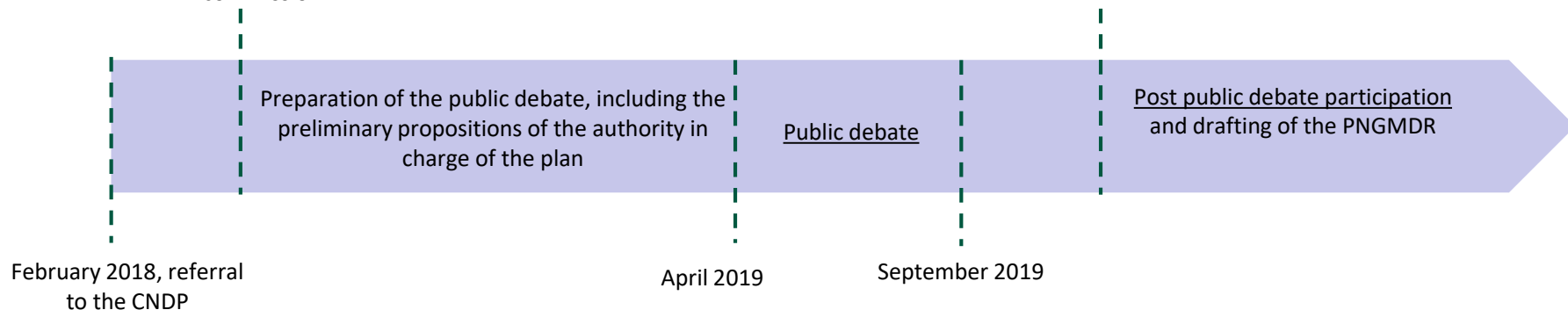
- In accordance with the 2011 radwaste directive, France publishes every 3 years its national program for radwaste management (the “PNGMDR”) - [link to the 2016-2018 edition](#)
- Since 2016, plans and programs established by public authorities which are subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment might be submitted to a process of preliminary participation of the public to its elaboration
- An independent commission (“Commission nationale du débat public” - CNDP) decides whether or not such a process is necessary and the way it must be conducted ; one option is to conduct a public debate under the direction of a special independent commission put in place by the CNDP
- The Government submitted its intention to update its national program to the CNDP in 2018



Timeline of the public debate and the drafting of the next PNGMDR

April-may 2018, the CNDP decides the organization of a public debate and appoints members for the special commission

February 2020, decision of the authority following the public debate on the content of the PNGMDR



- The public debate was conducted based on several inputs, especially the preliminary propositions of the Government and the ASN, but also independent documentation, such as the results of an exercise to clarify technical controversies led by the special commission
- The public debate in numbers: 68 250 information documents, 28 820 visits of the website of the debate, 12 101 downloaded files, 652 press releases and 22 meetings across France
- A large participation : more than 3400 participants to public meetings, 443 published opinions, 86 questions, 62 « cahiers d'acteurs », 3043 messages.

Main lessons learned

Here are some findings of the public debate from the Government perspective :

- Expectations on the strengthening of the strategic governance of the radioactive waste management plan, with the aim to better take into account the local impacts of national strategic plans,
 - Questions concerning the perspectives of use of some radioactive materials and the need to reinforce the control of these perspectives,
 - On the very low level wastes, great sensitivity of the public to possible regulatory changes, and the need for any changes to be well controlled and transparent,
 - On the high-level wastes, expectations for clarification of the main important issues for the implementation of deep geological disposal, such as reversibility, safety guarantees or the design of the industrial pilot phase,
 - The need to better take into account transverse issues : issues related to waste transport, health, economy and the territorial impacts of waste management choices.
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