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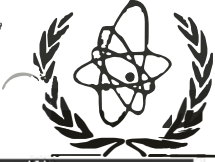
Meeting of Experts on the Protocol
for the Prevention of Pollution of the
Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships
and Aircraft

Geneva, 2-6 July 1979

NOTE ON AND TEXT OF IAEA REVISED DEFINITION
AND RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING RADIOACTIVE WASTES
AND OTHER RADIOACTIVE MATTER RELEVANT TO THE CONVENTION
ON THE PREVENTION OF MARINE POLLUTION BY DUMPING OF WASTES AND OTHER MATTER

Note by the Executive Director

The attached document, which was produced by IAEA, is submitted for the information of the participants.



INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY
AGENCE INTERNATIONALE DE L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE
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0/312-10

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Dear Dr. Keckes,

I refer to the letter dated 29 April 1977 from Mr. Peter S. Thacher, then Director of UNEP Office in Geneva, and to your telex message of 17 November 1978, requesting that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) define radioactive wastes for the purposes of Annexes I and II of the Protocol for the Prevention of Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft under the Barcelona Convention of 1976 (the Barcelona Dumping Protocol). The purpose of this letter is to set out below the IAEA's recommendations in this respect.

It may be recalled that the responsibilities assigned to the IAEA under Annexes I and II of the Barcelona Dumping Protocol were discussed extensively during the UNEP/IAEA Joint Programming meeting held in Vienna on 23 and 24 June 1977. At this meeting, the IAEA Secretariat pointed out that, in March 1977, an Advisory Group had reviewed the oceanographic basis of the IAEA Provisional Definition and Recommendations for the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (the London Dumping Convention). In that connection, the Advisory Group, inter alia, recommended that:

"Dumping should only be carried out where water depths are greater than 4000 metres at latitudes less than about 50°. Deep sea disposal sites should not be located near continental margins, in marginal and inland seas, nor should they be situated in areas where natural phenomena or other disturbances would make them unsuitable as disposal sites."

Furthermore, the IAEA Secretariat suggested that these recommendations be utilized for the Barcelona Dumping Protocol.

The foregoing recommendations of the Advisory Group were incorporated into the IAEA Revised Definition and Recommendations of 1978, which the Third Consultative Meeting of Contracting Parties to the London Dumping Convention, held in London on 9-13 October 1978, took note of for the purposes of implementing the latter Convention. The texts of the Revised Definition and Recommendations, which are set forth in IAEA document INFCIRC/205/Add.1/Rev.1, have already been sent to you in the English, French and Spanish languages in accordance with your request.

Mr. S. Keckes
Director
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The IAEA now recommends that the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, at their first meeting to be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, 5-10 February 1979, take note of the IAEA Revised Definition and Recommendations of 1978, as set forth in IAEA document INFCIRC/205/Add.1/Rev.1, for the purposes of implementing the Barcelona Dumping Protocol with respect to radioactive waste or other radioactive matter.

Special attention should be given to the provisions of Section C.2. of the said document, which lay down "Requirements for the Selection of a Dumping Site", particularly items (2), (3) and (5) of that Section which provide as follows:

"(2) Dumping shall be restricted to those areas of the oceans between latitudes 50°N and 50°S. The area shall have an average water depth greater than 4000 metres. Recognizing that variations in sea-bed topography do exist, this restriction should not be interpreted to exclude those sites within which there are localized areas with water depths of 3600 metres;

"(3) Sites should be located clear of continental margins and open sea islands, and not in marginal or inland seas. Nor should they be situated in known areas of natural phenomena, for example volcanic activity, that would make the site unsuitable for dumping;

"(5) Areas shall be avoided that have potential sea-bed resources which may be exploited directly by mining or by the harvest of marine products, or indirectly (e.g. spawning) as feeding grounds for marine organisms important to man."

The IAEA is aware of only one area of the Mediterranean Sea, between the coast of Greece and the Mediterranean Ridge, which has an average water depth exceeding 4000 metres. However, recommendations (3) and possibly (5) as quoted above would, in effect, prohibit the dumping of radioactive waste and other radioactive matter into the Mediterranean Sea. Consequently, it does not appear necessary for the IAEA to define categories of radioactive waste or other radioactive matter or to make further recommendations for the purposes of implementing the Barcelona Dumping Protocol.

Yours sincerely,



I.S. Zheludev
Deputy Director General
Department of Technical Operations