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Statement on the Environment Agency Report on the Enriched Uranium at Hinkley Point 29th March 2011

We have briefly examined the new report on the issue of uranium contamination at Hinkley Point and will study it more closely over the next few weeks.

1. The issue is essentially one of trust and we feel it is unacceptable under the circumstances that the Environment Agency has carried out a survey and taken samples without representatives from Green Audit or the local Stop Hinkley Group being present as observers and being able to take samples from the same position for duplicate analyses by their own laboratories. Under these circumstances it could be argued that the Environment Agency procedure is legally flawed and their results cannot therefore be used to reassure anyone. Samples should have been collected by separate groups, split and blinded, the procedure developed in the UK Depleted Uranium Oversight Board. This is an issue which was raised with the Environment Agency beforehand by members of the SAFEGROUNDS organization but which was ignored by the EA.
2. There are immediate concerns about the EA results as follows:
3. It is unscientific in a report of this kind to not list the calibration data or the accuracy and precision limits of the instrument employed. We note that at least one sample, HPC1, showed presence of Depleted Uranium with an isotope ratio of 145. Either this is real (in which case it is of concern since there must be man-made material there) or else it is an error, which raises questions about the accuracy or precision of the instrumental techniques. 145 is 7 ratio units away from the natural value of 137.88. If this is an error then it is possible that the results are between 131 and 145, values that include the assertions by Green Audit that there was enrichment at a level of about 132.
4. It is unscientific and sloppy to not list the GPS coordinate positions of the samples.
5. We note that the total uranium levels at the site are significantly higher than are expected on the basis of the EA's and the BGS predictions, a matter which the EA has addressed but not adequately dealt with.
6. We further note that the mean total uranium levels on site are higher than those at the farm locations some 5km inland.
7. We note that the mean uranium levels for the three identifiable and previously surveyed sites are higher than the mean levels from the new positions. This leaves the question as to why the EA did not choose to take samples from the same places that

they had previous sample results from in the AMEC tables analysed by Green Audit. This is a curious way of attempting to reassure and leaves open the question of what results would have been obtained if the same sample locations had been examined rather than new ones for which the location points are not given.

8. Green Audit carried out its own gamma survey at the site in February and discovered that gamma radiation over the site was significantly higher than values given in the AMEC report for the site. These measurements were made with two separate instruments and with GPS coordinate equipment. Results were photographed and video footage was obtained. These measurements give further cause for concern.
9. We are pleased that in response to these concerns over the evidence of contamination at the EdF site, Environment Agency representative Juliet Long has agreed to meet with Green Audit, members of SAFEGROUNDS and members of the local groups to discuss the issue. It is unfortunate that this meeting did not occur before the EA study.

(Prof) Chris Busby