



**For immediate release
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EDF Energy wants to dredge another 780,000 tonnes of contaminated sediment and dump it off the coast of Cardiff

In 2018 EdeF Energy applied for and received permission to dredge 300,000 tons of radioactively contaminated sediment from Bridgwater Bay and dump it off Cardiff. (1) The sediment contains everything that has come out of the outflow pipes over the last 50 years from the Hinkley Point A and B nuclear power stations.

EdeF now wants to deposit up to a further 780,000 tonnes of sediment. The developers have submitted a plan to Natural Resources Wales (NRW) for sampling and testing the mud, which will now be subject to a six-week consultation with specialists and the public. (2)

Stop Hinkley Spokesperson Roy Pumfrey asked:

“Why at this stage has EdeF discovered it needs to shift another 780,000 tonnes of sludge? Why weren't we warned about this in 2018? In fact, where was this mentioned in all the thousands of pages of detailed plans in the Development Consent Order for Hinkley Point C? Why has the Company only announced this now? This is what's called 'salami slicing' of plans, and it is the enemy of democratic accountability. If the full extent of HPC's impact on the environment had been known at the beginning, decision-makers might have come to a different conclusion on whether it was worth putting up with all the disruption this development has caused.”

We now know that the impact of the previous dump is not only on the Welsh side of the estuary. Data from the Government funded “Radioactivity in Food and the Environment” (RIFE) reports for 2016, 2017 and 2018 show significantly increased radioactivity levels in the environment on the Somerset side of the estuary. Dredging operations have disturbed radioactive particles from the Hinkley Point A and B nuclear power stations, which had previously been relatively contained within the sediments. (see Appendix)

EdeF now wants to dredge the seabed alongside Hinkley Point C so that the power station's water-cooling system can be installed. This involves tunnelling more than 3km into the Bristol Channel.

Roy Pumfrey continued:

“The two Hinkley C reactors will need vast amounts of cooling water for their steam power generation. The sea water intake will indiscriminately suck in huge amounts of sea life, ranging from marine mammals, crustaceans, fish, their eggs and larvae, most of which will not survive the journey through 3 km of pipework at high pressure flow rate to the condenser, and the discharge back to the sea. Do we want to sacrifice the unique fauna of our Severn Estuary to allow HPC to leave us a legacy of nuclear waste in exchange?” (3)

The Stop Hinkley campaign calls on Natural Resources Wales to reject this latest application.

Notes

- (1) BBC Wales has been told it involved 120,000 tonnes of mud, although permission was granted for 300,000. BBC Wales 5th Feb 2020 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-51375497>
- (2) Natural Resources Wales 5th Feb 2020 <https://nrw-newsroom.prgloo.com/news/new-plans-for-hinkley-point-c-sediment-disposal>
- (3) For more on the threat to sea life in the Severn Estuary See pages 20-24 here: https://www.nuclearpolicy.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Stop_Hinkley_HPC_Presentation.pdf

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Appendix

Tables produced by the Stop the Cardiff Mud Dump campaign from the RIFE reports.

Table 1: Cobalt 60 in sediments from Hinkley Point (Becquerels per kilogram)

Site	2016	2017	2018	Increase since 2016
Pipeline	<0.41	<0.56	<0.57	39% increase
Stolford	<0.55	<0.79	<1.70	209% increase
Stewart Flats	<0.52	<0.66	<0.71	36% increase
River Parrett estuary	<0.99	<0.88	<1.00	1% increase
River Parrett Bridgwater	<0.50	<0.57	<0.99	98% increase
Weston	<0.35	<0.43	<0.41	17% increase
Burnham	<0.36	<0.34	<0.34	

Table 2: Americium 241 in sediments from Hinkley Point (Becquerels per kilogram)

Site	2016	2017	2018	Increase since 2016
Pipeline	<0.50	<0.69	<0.78	56% increase
Stolford	<0.66	<0.79	<1.70	158% increase
Stewart Flats	<0.52	<0.66	<0.88	69% increase
River Parrett estuary	<1.20	<0.92	<2.00	67% increase

River Parrett Bridgwater	<0.65	<0.78	<1.60	139% increase
Weston	<0.38	<0.48	<0.47	24% increase
Burnham	<0.37	<0.45	<0.54	46% increase

Table 3: Organically Bound Tritium in shellfish at Stolford (Becquerels per kilogram)

Type	2016	2017	2018	Increase since 2016
Shrimps	<25	<34	<56	124% increase
Limpets	<25	<25	<47	88% increase

NB: not analysed for at any other sites or in any other media

Table 4: Tritium (as tritiated water) in shellfish at Stolford (Becquerels per kilogram)

Type	2016	2017	2018	Increase since 2016
Shrimps	<25	<34	<55	120% increase
Limpets	<14	<25	<47	236% increase

NB: not analysed for at any other sites or in any other media

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