

**Advice received from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 29th
September 2020, in response to the Federal Nuclear Control Agency (FANC)
EIA screening report**

Please see EPA's response below:

The Doel nuclear power plant near Antwerp in Belgium is owned and operated by ENGIE Electrabel. Units 1 and 2 at Doel began operation in 1975. In December 2015, the Belgian Federal Agency for Nuclear Control (FANC) granted a 10-year extension of the operating licence for these two reactors, provided that a set of safety conditions was fulfilled every year.

One of the conditions of the 2015 licence extension was that a SALTO (Safety Aspects of Long Term Operation) review mission be requested from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This review mission was carried out by an IAEA team of experts in February 2017 and the team noted that, although good practices and performances were identified, there were also several areas for further improvement and 13 issues were raised ([https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/documents/review-missions/30 doel salto executive summary.pdf](https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/documents/review-missions/30_doel_salto_executive_summary.pdf)). A follow-up IAEA SALTO review mission was performed in June 2019 to assess the operator's response to recommendations and suggestions made during the initial SALTO mission. The IAEA expert team noted that, although improvements had been made, that further work was still required ([https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/documents/review-missions/30 doel salto fu executive summary.pdf](https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/documents/review-missions/30_doel_salto_fu_executive_summary.pdf)).

The Doel nuclear power plant is situated approximately 840 km, as the crow flies, from the east coast of Ireland. This is beyond the recommended maximum IAEA Ingestion and commodities planning distance (ICPD) of 300 km for reactors with a thermal output in excess of 1,000 MW (the nominal thermal power of units 1 and 2 in the Doel power plant is 1,300 MW). Within the ICPD, arrangements are required to take response actions for protecting the food chain, water supply and other commodities from contamination and for protecting the public from the ingestion of food, milk and drinking water and from the use of commodities other than food with possible contamination following a significant radioactive release. Although Ireland falls outside the ICPD for Doel, it is within the 1,000 km distance that the IAEA uses to designate States as falling into Zone 1 for emergency response purposes. Zone 1 States are considered more likely to be affected and so direct liaison is established by IAEA with these States in the event of an emergency and information on monitoring results and protective actions planned/taken in those Zone 1 States may be requested.

Although, there is not likely to be any significant adverse environmental impacts on the environment in Ireland from the lifetime extension of Doel 1 and 2, the EPA recommends, given the proximity of Doel to Ireland, that Ireland takes part in the transboundary consultation process once the full information about the Environmental Impact Assessment is available.