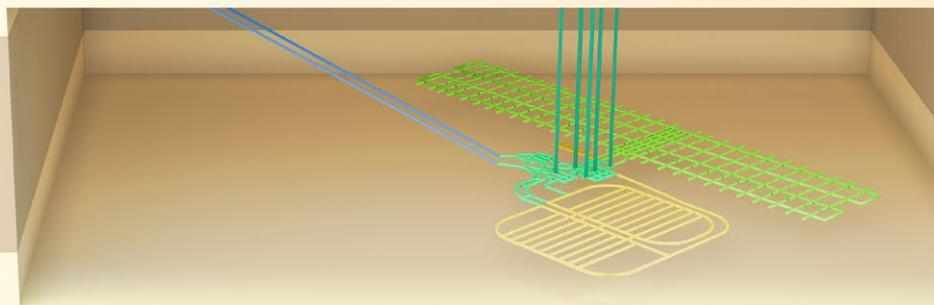


FEBRUARY 2026

# Update on Cigéo, the French Deep Geological Repository Project



# 1 The responsible and sustainable management of radioactive waste in France

Radioactive waste presents potential risks to people and the environment and must be managed in accordance with its level of radioactivity and half-life.

France’s radioactive waste management policy is robust and internationally recognised. It is based on the following principles:

- strong planning, through the National Plan for the Management of Radioactive Materials and Waste (PNGMDR);
- institutions such as the French National Agency for Radioactive Waste Management (Andra), a commission of experts tasked with the evaluation of research and studies relating to the management of radioactive materials and waste, whose annual reports are submitted to the Parliament (CNE2), and the French Authority for Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection (ASNR);
- financing provided by radioactive waste producers, in line with the ‘polluter-pays’ principle enshrined in law.

## 1.1 Andra, the French National Agency for Radioactive Waste Management

The long-term management of radioactive waste has been entrusted to Andra. Created in 1979 as part of the French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission (CEA), Andra became independent from radioactive waste producers through a law passed in 1991. Its responsibilities were further strengthened by two new laws passed in 2006 and 2016.

Andra is an independent public body operating under the supervision of the ministers responsible for Energy, Research and the Environment.

Andra fulfils a public-interest mission, entrusted to it by the French government: to manage the radioactive waste produced by past and present generations and, concerning future generations, to ensure its safe containment. Andra has three core missions: R&D, the design of disposal facilities, and their operation.

## 1.2 Categories of radioactive waste and their respective management methods

According to the French Environmental Code, radioactive waste refers to substances that cannot be reused or reprocessed and must be managed in a specific way. They come from a wide variety of sources, including the maintenance and operation of nuclear facilities, their dismantling, the reprocessing of spent fuel from nuclear power plants, the remediation of former sites contaminated by radioactivity, research activities, industrial processes or medical examinations and treatment.

In France, radioactive waste is classified according to two criteria: the level of radioactivity and the half-life of the radionuclides it contains. Each type of waste has specific characteristics and therefore requires management solutions tailored to its level of radioactivity, volume and half-life.

Radioactive half-life* Activity**	Very short-lived (VSL) (half-life < 100 days)	Mainly short-lived (SL) (Half-lives 31 years)	Mainly long-lived (LL) (half-life > 31 years)
Very low-level waste (VLLW) < 100 Bq/g	VSL Management through radioactive decay	VLLW Surface disposal (Industrial facility for grouping, storage and disposal)	LLW-LL Management methods under study
Low-level waste (LLW) between a few hundred Bq/g and one million Bq/g		LILW-SL Surface disposal (Aube and Manche disposal facilities)	
Intermediate-level waste (ILW) in the range of one million to one billion Bq/g	Not applicable	HLW Deep geological disposal facility under study (Cigéo Project)	
High-level waste (HLW) on the order of several billion Bq/g			

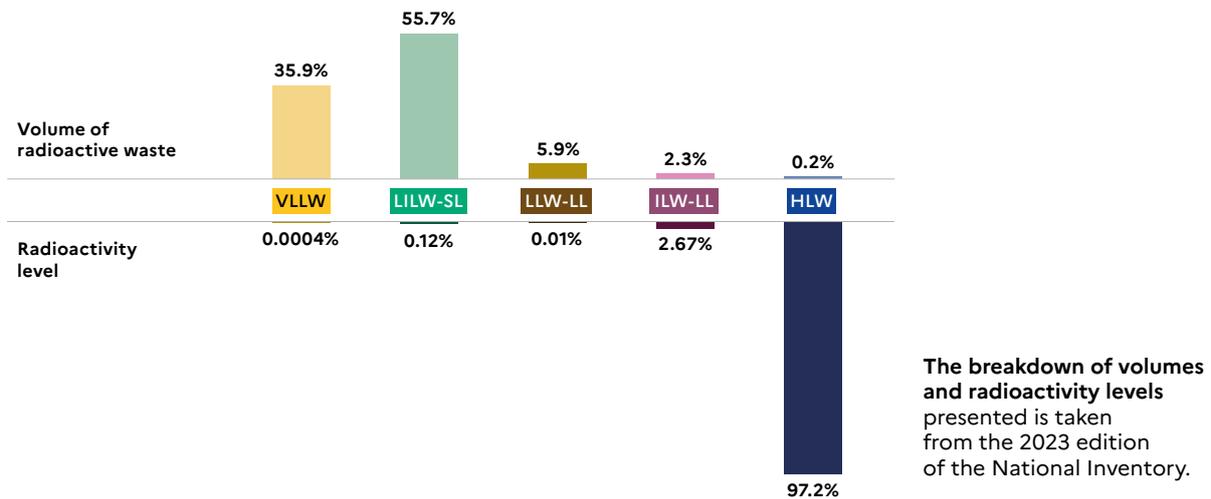
\*Half-life of the radioactive elements (radionuclides) contained in the waste.

\*\*Level of radioactive waste activity.

Waste may sometimes be classified in a particular category but managed using an alternative management solution due to other characteristics, such as its chemical composition or physical properties.

The vast majority of waste is disposed in surface facilities. This includes very low-level and low and intermediate level waste, short-lived, which accounts for over 90% of the total volume but only a very small share of overall radioactivity.

Conversely, and intermediate-level long-lived waste and high-level waste, which is generated by the reprocessing of spent fuel and the operation of nuclear power plants, accounts for only a very small volume but represents 99% of total radioactivity. Such waste cannot be managed in surface facilities. It is intended to be disposed of in Cigéo, the deep geological disposal facility project for which Andra has applied for a construction licence in early 2023. The full application is available online on the Andra website (in French).



### 1.3 Waste destined to be disposed in Cigéo

The waste destined for Cigéo has a very long half-life and is highly radioactive. It is generated in France, mainly by the nuclear power industry and as a result of spent fuel reprocessing.

More than half of this radioactive waste has already been produced.

The Cigéo design proposed in the creation licence application is based on a «reference inventory» that includes all high-level waste (HLW) and long-lived intermediate-level waste (ILW-LL) that has already been produced and that will be produced by existing nuclear facilities (nuclear power plants, research centres, the Flamanville nuclear power plant), as well as the waste that will be produced by nuclear facilities authorised at the end of 2016 (ITER, the Jules Horowitz Nuclear Research Reactor), assuming an average reactor operating lifespan of 50 years. The waste packages to be disposed of represent a volume of approximately 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> for HLW and 73,000 m<sup>3</sup> for ILW-LL, for a total of approximately 83,000 m<sup>3</sup>.

Andra must also demonstrate that Cigéo can adapt to changes in energy policy, and to different scenarios, including a nuclear power phase-out, the extension of the operating lifetime of existing power plants or either a shutdown or a continuation of spent fuel reprocessing. The waste resulting from these potential developments is included in a «reserve inventory», which has been the subject of so-called adaptability studies to ensure that it would be technically feasible to dispose of it safely. These studies are part of the creation licence application.

Pending the commissioning of Cigéo, HLW and ILW-LL packages are temporarily stored at their production sites, mainly the Orano site at La Hague (Manche), the CEA sites at Marcoule (Gard) and Cadarache (Bouches-du-Rhône), the EDF Iceda site at Bugey (Ain). A limited volume is also stored at the CEA site at Valduc (Côte-d'Or).

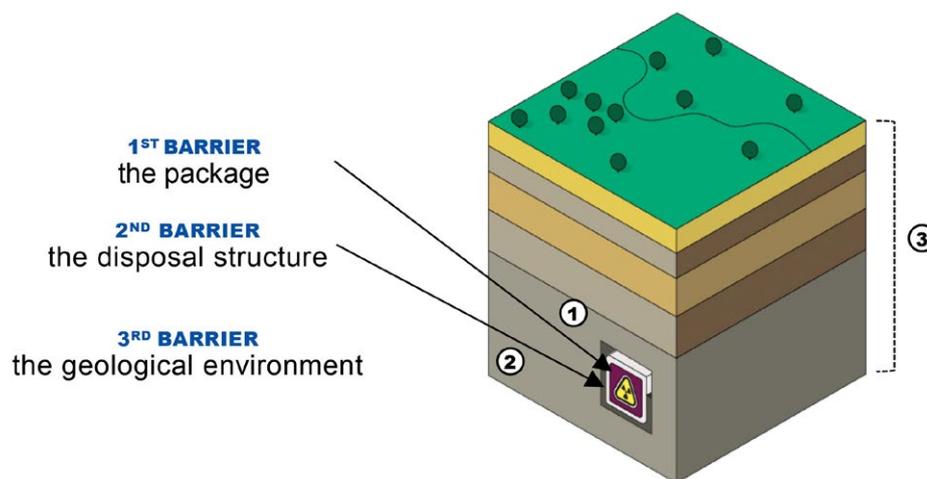
If Cigéo is approved, the waste packages will be transferred to the disposal facility as and when it becomes operational. Certain types of waste, in particular HLW that releases heat, will still have to be stored for several decades in these storage areas to allow it to cool before it can be permanently disposed in Cigéo.

## 1.4 The principle of deep geological disposal

Given their highly hazardous nature and long half-life, high-level and intermediate-level waste (HLW and ILW-LL) must be managed in a way that ensures the continuous protection of people and the environment over the very long-term, without relying on ongoing societal management or institutional oversight, as these cannot be guaranteed over such an extensive timeframe of up to several hundreds of thousands of years.

Geological disposal involves placing radioactive waste packages in structures built deep underground, taking advantage of the natural properties of the rock to contain the radioactive elements and significantly slow down their migration over the very long term. The few most mobile radioactive elements will thus be contained in the rock for several hundreds of thousands of years, until they no longer present a danger.

The safety of the disposal relies on three elements: the packages that hold the waste, the disposal structures in which the packages are placed, and the geology of the site, which forms a natural long-term barrier.



## 2 The Cigéo project

The aim of Cigéo is to safely dispose of long-lived intermediate-level radioactive waste (ILW-LL) and high-level radioactive waste (HLW) in order to protect people and the environment in the long term. Cigéo is the result of more than 30 years of progressive development, regularly assessed and supported by research conducted in an underground laboratory that has been operating for 25 years.

Framed by three laws (1991, 2006 and 2016), Cigéo has incorporated public opinion through several public debates and regular consultations with local residents.

### 2.1 Choosing a site for the disposal facility

If approved, Cigéo will be located in eastern France, on the border of the Meuse and Haute-Marne departments. The geology of the site has been the subject of in-depth studies for over 25 years, mainly carried out at Andra's underground laboratory.

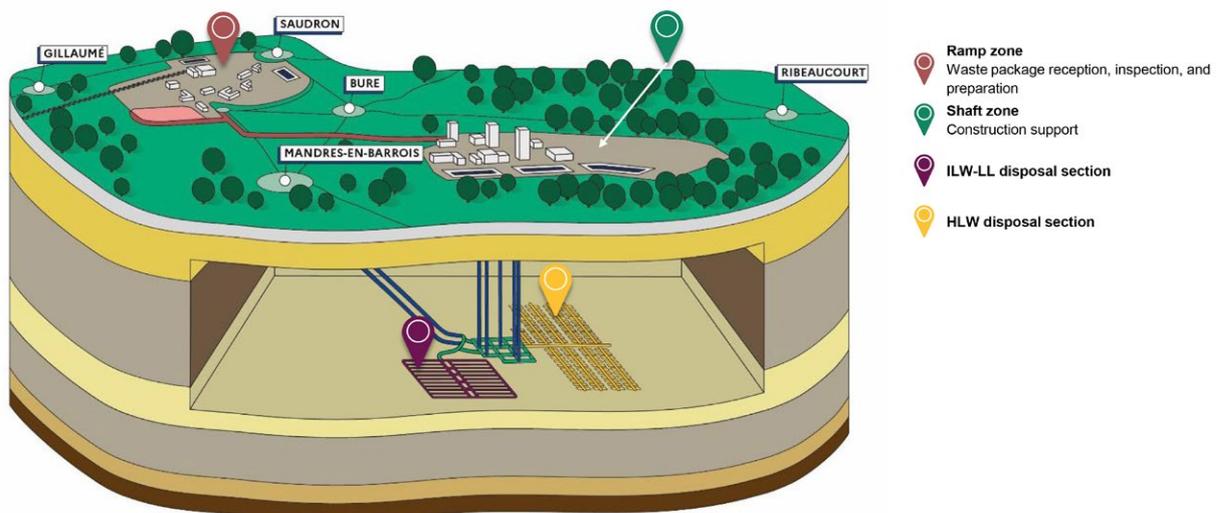
Thanks to its depth, design and location in geologically stable, impermeable clay rock, Cigéo will be able to isolate waste from human activity and natural surface events, such as erosion, over a very long period of time.

The geological layer selected for the disposal facility is known as the Callovo-Oxfordian clay formation and is located in the Paris Basin, a highly stable geological zone. This layer was formed 160 million years ago. In the area where the disposal facility is to be built, the layer lies at a depth of approximately 500 metres and is approximately 150 metres thick. Its hydraulic properties, in particular its very low permeability, limit water circulation. Its physico-chemical properties ensure the retention and low solubility of the majority of radionuclides and toxic chemical substances, and more generally, ensure

that their migration over time, predominantly by diffusion, is limited. The layer's slightly sloping layout, substantial thickness and homogenous properties, particularly in terms of retention, water flow and diffusion, across at least several tens of square kilometres, make it a suitable site for disposal structures and for preserving significant layers of rock of at least 50 metres both above and below the repository. These thick layers of rock help delay, limit and mitigate the quantity of radionuclides and toxic chemical substances released by the waste packages over the long term, which could potentially migrate from the disposal site in the Callovo-Oxfordian layer towards the surface.

Following the review of the 2016 Safety Options File, the French Nuclear Safety Authority considered that "Andra has acquired detailed knowledge of the Meuse/Haute-Marne site, enabling it to confirm that the area selected for disposal is appropriate for this purpose."

## 2.2 Description of Cigéo facilities



Cigéo comprises both surface and underground facilities:

- a surface ramp area, primarily dedicated to receiving radioactive waste packages, inspecting them and preparing them for disposal prior to their transfer to the underground disposal facility. This area covers approximately 300 hectares.

Radioactive waste packages will be transported mainly by rail to the ramp zone. They will be received in the nuclear surface building, where they will be removed from their transport packaging and inspected for contamination and dose rate. Most waste packages will then be placed in disposal containers. For radioprotection, the packages will then be placed in transfer casks. The casks will be loaded onto a funicular that will transport them down a 4 km-long inclined ramp to the underground facilities.





Full-scale model of the funicular designed for Cigéo

- a surface shaft zone, dedicated to support facilities for the activities carried out in the underground facility, in particular excavation works. This area covers approximately 200 hectares.

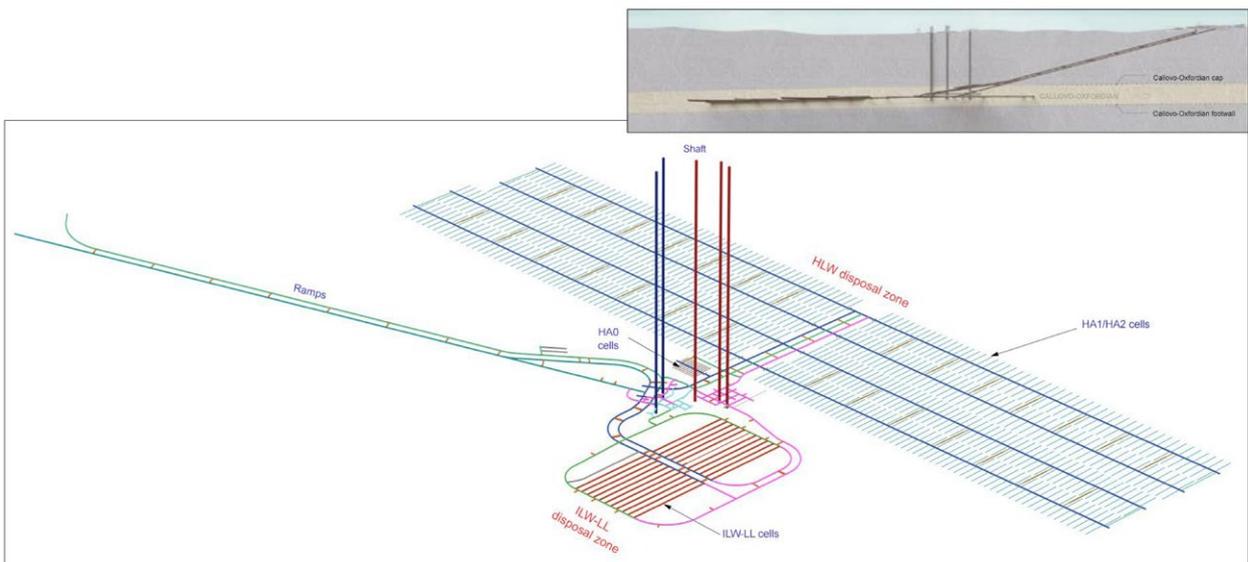
No waste packages will pass through the shaft zone. The five shafts will be used for ventilation, transferring materials and personnel and removing excavated rock, which will be stored on the surface as muck piles. Approximately 40% of the excavated rock will then be reused to close up Cigéo.



- Muck pile: Disposal sites for excavation materials (phase 1)
- Construction zone
- Construction shaft  
Personnel + Fresh air ventilation
- Operations shaft  
Personnel + Fresh air ventilation
- Construction shaft  
Equipment / Materials
- Construction shaft  
Stale air ventilation
- Operations shaft  
Stale air ventilation
- Administrative zone

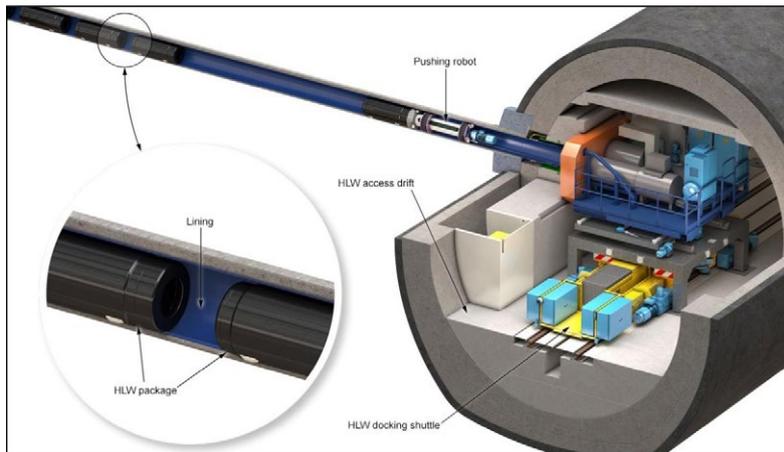
About  
200 ha

- an underground zone comprising two disposal areas: one for HLW packages, the other for ILW-LL packages, logistical support areas and access routes from the surface.

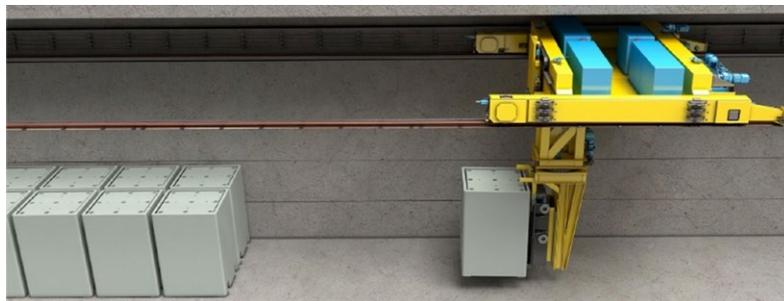


The waste will be disposed using robotic systems in horizontal tunnels called cells, dug into the core of the clay layer. Handling robots are designed to ensure that the waste packages can be retrieved for 100 years while the disposal facility still is in operation.

The repository is designed to enable disposal areas to be built progressively as more radioactive waste packages arrive. Construction areas will be strictly separated from operational disposal areas.



HLW will be disposed in cells lined with metal casings approximately 80 cm in diameter and 150 m long. The area will be operational by 2080.



LW-LL will be disposed in cells approximately 10 m in diameter and several hundred meters long (up to 500 m). Disposal of ILW-LL could begin around 2050.

### 2.3 Reversible disposal

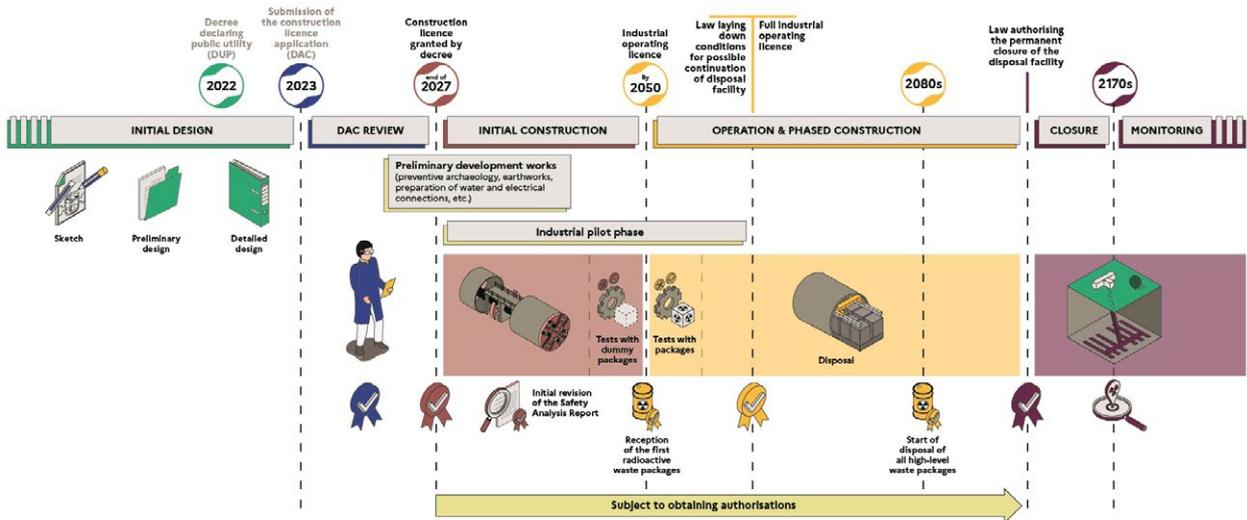
Cigéo aims to provide future generations with a long-term solution for managing the most radioactive waste, while leaving options open to future generations. The disposal facility is therefore designed to be reversible throughout its operation and for at least 100 years.

Article L. 542-10-1 of the French Environmental Code states that “reversibility is the ability of successive generations either to continue construction and operation of the successive disposal units, or to reassess previously defined choices and develop management solutions.”

Reversibility is based on an industrial concept that ensures that disposal remains flexible and adaptable, and that it can develop and accommodate changes in energy policy, scientific and technological advances and operational feedback from the facility.



## 2.4 Project timeline



Once the decree authorising the construction of the disposal facility has been issued, the project will begin with a pilot industrial phase intended to confirm its safety, operability and the ability to retrieve radioactive waste packages, as provided for in the reversibility plan. The principle of an industrial pilot phase was adopted by Andra following a 2013 public debate on the project, which called for the introduction of a gradual, cautious phase of construction, testing and start-up of the industrial activity. This phase could begin as soon as the construction licence decree is issued and end after a few years of operation. It was enshrined in the law of 25 July 2016, which sets out the terms and conditions for the creation of Cigéo.



## 3 Creation licence application

To begin the initial construction of Cigéo, Andra must first obtain a construction licence. As with all nuclear facilities, this licence is granted by decree, following a review phase and consultations with various institutions, such as the Environmental Authority, local authorities and the public (via a public inquiry).

The creation licence application was submitted by Andra on Monday, 16 January 2023, to the French Minister for the Energy Transition in charge of nuclear safety. Following the technical review and the public inquiry, and after obtaining the opinion of the French *Conseil d'État*, the decree could be issued around 2027.

If granted, the decree will authorise the first Cigéo construction phase to begin. In particular, it will enable the contractual arrangements for the construction work to be finalised. However, the decree will not authorize the disposal of radioactive waste packages. Such disposal may only take place once a commissioning license has been issued by the French Nuclear Safety and Radioprotection Authority.

### 3.1 Supporting file for the creation licence application

The creation licence application is supported by a file submitted to the French Minister for the Energy transition, who is in charge of nuclear safety. The composition of the supporting file is set out in the French Environment Code. It must include, among others, a detailed description of the facility and its operation, a preliminary safety report detailing the operator's safety demonstration and an environmental impact assessment.

The Cigéo application comprises 23 documents, including three documents specifically related to Cigéo, and two documents added by Andra to make it easier to read and understand by the public.

Focus on selected documents:

- The master operating plan provides an overview of the project, its governance and deployment prospects. It describes some of the main features of Cigéo, including the waste inventory, the industrial pilot phase, reversibility, costs, memory, etc. It will be updated every five years as required by the French Environment Code, which states that "the master operating plan is a practical public information and monitoring tool." The plan covers all the major issues, particularly in relation to governance and the pilot industrial phase. It is therefore the primary instrument that will be used by Andra to engage with stakeholders and the public.
- The preliminary safety report: this document contains the nuclear safety demonstration showing that Cigéo facilities are designed to control risks and limit the negative impact on people and the environment. Like all basic nuclear facilities, the preliminary safety report sets out the provisions for the facility's operational safety. It also has two special features:
  - the first, common to all radioactive waste disposal facilities, is to guarantee safety in the long-term post-closure phase, in addition to the operating phase;
  - the second, specific to Cigéo, is to describe and explain the measures that will be implemented in order to ensure the reversible nature of the disposal facility, including progressive construction, flexible operation, adaptability of the nuclear facility and waste package retrievability.

The preliminary safety report shows that, given the current state of technical knowledge, current practices and the facility's environment, the Cigéo project can achieve a level of risk that is as low as reasonably possible under economically acceptable conditions. This evidence is commonly referred to as the nuclear safety demonstration.

- The risk management study and its non-technical summary is based on the elements provided in the preliminary safety report and details the risks identified for Cigéo. It sets out the risk analysis and the measures implemented to prevent and control these risks. It also describes the measures that will be implemented in order to respond to potential accidents, with the aim of protecting personnel, the public and the environment.
- The Cigéo environmental impact study presents the current state of the environment and the expected environmental impact of the project in terms of atmosphere, soil, subsoil, water, natural environment, etc. It identifies and assesses the environmental impact of Cigéo and of all the operations carried out by Andra and other contracting authorities, including associated activities, facilities, structures, works and developments. The report sets out the impact over the entire lifecycle of the Cigéo project, from construction through operation to post-closure. It is based on the "avoid-reduce-compensate" principle, which calls for the implementation of measures designed, in accordance with the French Environmental Code, to avoid "a significant negative impact on the environment or human health, and to reduce any impact that could not be avoided", as well as to compensate for any impact that could be "neither avoided nor sufficiently reduced". The initial environmental impact study for the Cigéo project was initially produced as part of a 2020 declaration of public utility and obtained in 2022. The version of the environmental impact study included in the supporting file constitutes a first update. This version has been expanded, notably with elements relating to safety studies, and will be updated on a regular basis.

### 3.2 Demonstrating Cigéo's safety: the core of the creation licence application

The sole aim of Cigéo is to protect people and the environment from the dangers posed by this very radioactive waste. Given the high level of hazard and the very long period over which it remains radioactive, this waste cannot be sustainably disposed on or near the surface in a permanent and passive manner.

Like with any industrial facility, particularly a nuclear one, the construction of Cigéo involves risks that may arise during its construction, operation and after its closure. The aim of this safety demonstration, which is included in the supporting file submitted with the creation licence application, is to show that the disposal facility is able to control these risks thanks to its design, operating and closure measures taken by Andra.

The safety demonstration is the result of more than 30 years of study and research, regularly reviewed since 2005 by the French Nuclear Safety Authority and its technical support body (the former Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Institute - IRSN ) and international experts.

#### → Demonstrating safety during Cigéo's operation: protecting personnel and local residents

Cigéo's purpose is to dispose already-conditioned radioactive waste packages, some of which have spent several years or even decades at temporary storage sites.

The operational safety demonstration included in the creation licence application is based on a detailed assessment of the various risks that could arise, particularly during the receipt and disposal of the waste packages. These include the risk of fire and falling packages, as well as natural risks and risks outside of Cigéo's control, such as flooding and aircraft crashes.

Drawing on this risk analysis, the safety approach consists in integrating protective measures for the installation and operation of the disposal facility from the design phase. The goal is to ensure that each identified risk is subject to a measure designed to avoid or limit the negative impact.

The Cigéo safety approach is based on the defence-in-depth principle, which consists in implementing several lines of defence against the same risk. This involves multiple protective measures that are independent of one another. In practical terms, this involves:

- Firstly, designing and operating Cigéo in such a way as to prevent incidents or accidents, including falling waste packages, fires, flooding, etc.
- Secondly, implementing measures to detect malfunctions and providing the resources required to intervene in order to maintain safety conditions.

Andra has adopted a prudent approach, meaning that : despite all the measures in place mean that a malfunction is highly unlikely, Andra nevertheless considers that an incident or accident may occur and incorporates this possibility in its approach. Andra has therefore implemented measures to minimise their consequences as far as possible and assesses their impact to ensure that they remain acceptable.

During the operation phase, Cigéo's radiological impact is assessed at 0.001 millisievert (mSv) per year, i.e. 1,000 times lower than the limit set by regulations for any nuclear activity (1 mSv/year for the public).

#### → Demonstrating safety after the closure of the disposal facility: the central role of geology

The long-term passive safety of Cigéo is based on the closure of the underground facility and the ability of the host geological layer to contain and limit the migration of radioactivity towards the surface. The main goal of the post-closure safety assessment is to demonstrate that the geological layer effectively fulfils this protective role over time.

The post-closure safety approach is based not only on risk analysis, but also on a prudent framework based on conservative assumptions, designed to ensure the robustness of the demonstration, given the very long timescale over which projections must be made. The post-closure risks that have been taken into account over the long term include possible disturbances to the geological layer due to the presence of the disposal facility, such as damage to the rock near the excavation of underground

structures, natural events, such as earthquakes, failure of the waste packages or disposal facility closure devices, including a failure of all underground sealing structures, especially shafts and ramps and failure of the host layer, such as an undetected fracture due to the effects of unintentional human activity, such as drilling, in the event of people forgetting where the facility is located.

On the basis of the risk analysis and the scientific and technological knowledge acquired at this stage of the studies, Andra has assessed the way in which the radioactivity contained in the waste could reach the surface and therefore humans. Its goal is to verify the capacity of the disposal facility and of the geological environment in order to guarantee the protection of people and the environment over the long term, both under normal operation conditions and in the event of malfunctions.

As a result, Andra has produced, firstly, a normal development scenario representing the expected evolution of the disposal facility in time and space; and, in addition, scenarios that study the consequences of potential malfunctions or unintentional human intrusion involving drilling that lead to a deviation from the expected evolution of the disposal facility.

The post-closure safety assessment of all the scenarios that have been examined confirms the robustness of the safety approach and highlights the following:

- the central role of the geological layer, thanks in particular to its many favourable features and properties, including its depth, thickness, low permeability, high radionuclide retention capacity and low radionuclide migration, among others. The assessment shows that regardless of the scenario, the vast majority of the radioactivity remains within or in the vicinity of the disposal facility, within the geological layer;
- the complementary function provided by the disposal facility and its design, and more specifically by the measures designed to protect the geological layer from the effects of the disposal, such as limiting temperature rises to below 100°C, for example, or by the measures designed to close off underground installations (sealing).

This assessment shows that, based on the expected behaviour of the disposal facility, the maximum radiological impact of Cigéo after closure would occur only after several hundreds of thousands of years, and would be around 0.0015 mSv/year. This impact is well below the reference value of 0.25 mSv/year estimated by the French Nuclear Safety and Radioprotection Authority (ASNR) in the safety guide for the deep geological disposal of radioactive waste published in 2008. To assess robustness, both envelope scenarios (upper bound estimates of individual exposure) and malfunction scenarios are being examined. The results of these scenario assessments are, for the most part, and even in the most severe of cases, of the same order of magnitude as the reference value of 0.25 mSv/year, set as a target by the French Authority for Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection (ASNR).

### **3.3 Conclusions of the ASNR's technical review of the creation licence application**

On Thursday, 4 December 2025, the French Authority for Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection (ASNR) published its opinion on Andra's creation licence application to build Cigéo, which it had submitted in January 2023.

This opinion sets out the main conclusions of the technical review carried out by the ASNR with the support of the permanent group of experts that reports to it, as well as the commitments made by Andra, all of which were deemed satisfactory.

The ASNR stated that "The safety case presented in the creation license application for Cigéo, for both the operating phase and the post-closure phase, has reached an overall maturity consistent with expectations for the creation licence application of a geological disposal facility."

This opinion validates the measures taken by Andra in Cigéo's safety demonstration to achieve its ultimate objective: protecting people and the environment over the very long term from the hazards posed by intermediate- and high-level long-lived waste.

The ASNR also requested additional information, which is a normal part of the authorisation process for nuclear facilities of this kind. The ASNR has therefore set out a schedule for the provision of information and additional studies required for the next stages in the development of Cigéo, particularly between now and its commissioning in 2050.

The ASNR concluded that Andra's creation licence application could give rise to a public inquiry scheduled for the second half of 2026. The review now continues with regulatory consultations and the updating of the supporting file for the public inquiry. The Cigéo construction licence decree could be issued by the end of 2027.

### 3.4 Initial feedback from regulatory consultations held prior to the public inquiry

Following the technical review conducted by the French Authority for Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection (ASN) on the Cigéo creation licence application, a phase of regulatory consultations was conducted in order to gather the opinions of stakeholders such as:

- The French Environmental Authority of the General Inspectorate for the Environment and Sustainable Development (AE)

The Environmental Authority is an independent body that issues opinions on the environmental assessment of projects, plans and programmes in order to inform public decision-making.

In December 2025, the Environmental Authority published its opinion on the Cigéo creation licence application and, in particular, on the project's impact assessment. In its opinion, the Authority emphasized that "The application reflects considerable work, the result of studies and research undertaken over the last 25 years and which will continue until the nuclear installation is commissioned and throughout its operation, with a view to the continuous improvement of knowledge, equipment, processes and procedures." It also issues recommendations aimed at improving an already satisfactory application and informing the public. Andra will provide the answers in a memorandum that will be attached to the public inquiry file.

- The National Evaluation Commission (CNE2).

The National Evaluation Commission (CNE2) is an independent commission responsible for assessing research and studies carried out in France on the management of radioactive materials and waste.

On 4 December 2025, the CNE2 issued a report assessing the scientific and technical quality of the work conducted by Andra and presented it to the French Parliamentary Office for the Evaluation of Scientific and Technical Choices (OPECST) at a public hearing. OPECST is a body of the French Parliament tasked with informing members of parliament about scientific and technological issues to help them make political decisions.

In its report, the CNE2 praised the quality of the safety studies, the overall coherence of the project and the thoroughness of the analyses presented in the creation licence application. It confirmed that the information provided by Andra demonstrated the feasibility of deep geological disposal of high-level and intermediate-level long-lived waste. "The Commission considers that the research carried out by Andra, as described in the application, has led to the development of a reliable project for the deep geological disposal of long-lived radioactive waste. The choice of site and all the design provisions are such as to isolate the waste from surface phenomena and human activities and to limit the transfer of radionuclides and toxic chemical substances contained in the waste to the biosphere, in response to the two main safety requirements imposed on Cigéo." While underlining the robustness of the application, the CNE2 made a number of recommendations, in particular inviting Andra to examine certain points more in detail, such as further studies on the behaviour of materials and the monitoring and surveillance strategy.

In turn, the French Parliamentary Office for the Evaluation of Scientific and Technological Choices (OPECST) has been asked by the minister in charge of nuclear safety to evaluate and report on its work to the relevant committees of the National Assembly and Senate before the end of March 2026.

- Opinions of local authorities

At the request of the Prefect of the Meuse department, the coordinator of the Cigéo project, 74 local authorities, including 56 communes and the local information committee (CLIS), were also

asked to provide their opinion on Andra's application, if they so wished. Local authorities were invited to express an opinion on the project by 6 December and to address it to the prefecture by 22 December 2025 at latest. The Meuse Prefecture then makes these available to the public as soon as they are received, and those opinions will be attached to the application submitted to the public inquiry. 27 communities have issued positive opinions, seven neutral ones and seven unfavourable opinions.

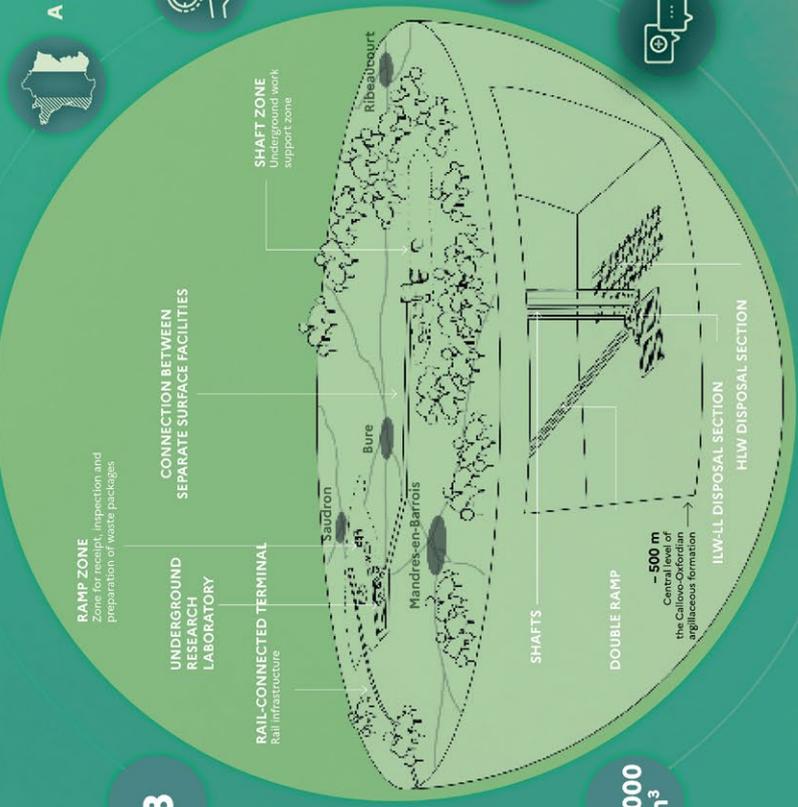
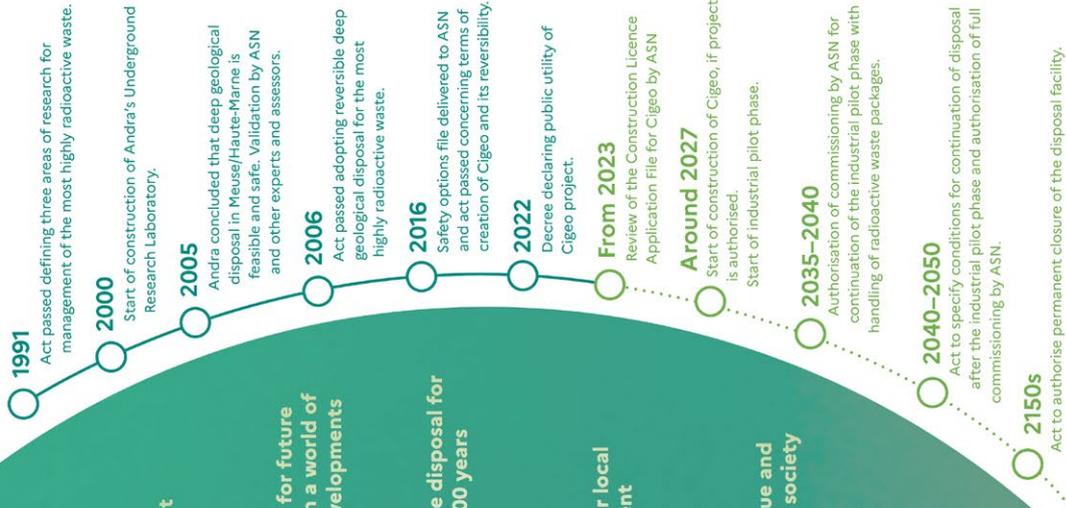
### 3.5 Next steps

The public inquiry, scheduled for the second half of 2026, will provide the public with an opportunity to obtain information and express views on the Cigéo creation licence application, based on the various opinions issued during the review process, as well as on the responses provided by Andra.

The Prefect will forward the inquiry commission's report and conclusions, together with its opinion and the results of local consultations, to the minister responsible for nuclear safety and to the ASNR. At the conclusion of this process, and following the opinion of the French Conseil d'Etat, the decree authorizing the construction of the facility could be published in late 2027 or early 2028.

# CIGEO DISPOSAL FACILITY

## MAJOR STAGES OF PROJECT



**3** Number of acts passed (1991, 2006 and 2016) and number of public debates organised (2005, 2013 and 2019), about or linked with Cigeo

**30** Number of years of research for Cigeo, evaluated at regular intervals

**83,000 m<sup>3</sup>** Volume of high-level (HLW) and long-lived intermediate-level radioactive waste (ILW-LL) to be stored in Cigeo

Watch the video on storage stages



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