



Environmental Impact Assessment for Visaginas Nuclear Power Plant (VAE) in Lithuania

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Strategic projects

The strategic projects defined in the National Energy Strategy approved by the Parliament:

- new nuclear power plant (VAE)
- power transmission interconnection with Poland
- power transmission interconnection with Sweden



Legal framework

EU Directive 85/337/EC, 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC

Law on EIA (1996; 2000; 2005; 2008)

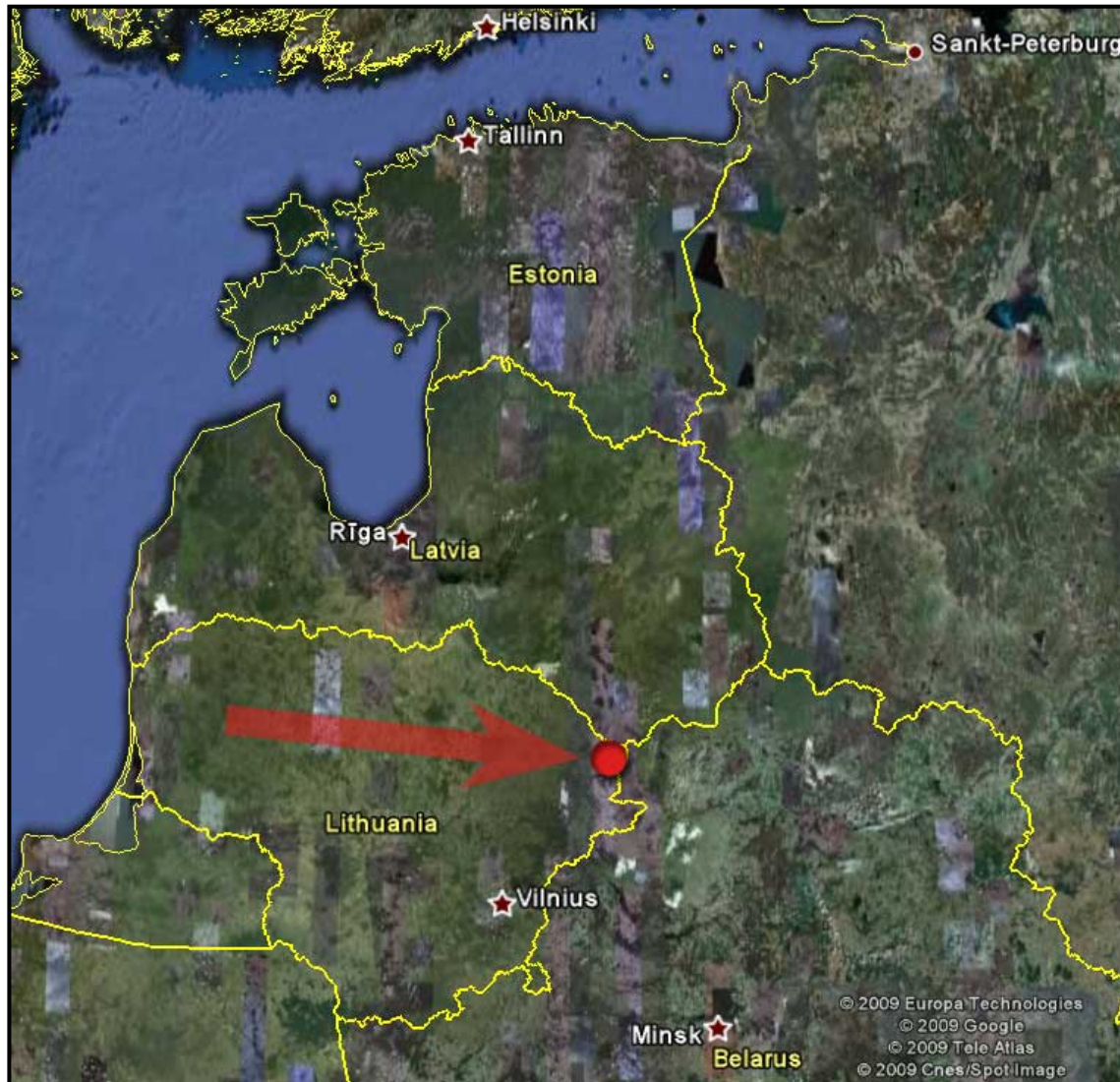
UN 1991 Convention on EIA in Transboundary Context (Espoo)

- Lithuania ratified Espoo Convention in 2001
- Agreement on Espoo Convention implementation between Government of Lithuania and Government of Poland (signed)

UN Aarhus Convention



Map of the region





The main objectives of EIA

- to assess potential environmental effects of a project and ensure that environmental matters are taken into account before development consent is given;
- to provide information on the project for all EIA participants;
- to optimize project design and planning by identifying those aspects of location, chosen technical solutions, construction and operation that may cause adverse environmental effects;
- to identify and evaluate reasonable alternatives of the project, enabling to choose the most attractive one;
- determine if the proposed economic activity by virtue of its nature and environmental impacts, may be carried out in the chosen site;
- to foresee measures for avoiding, minimizing or compensating negative impacts.

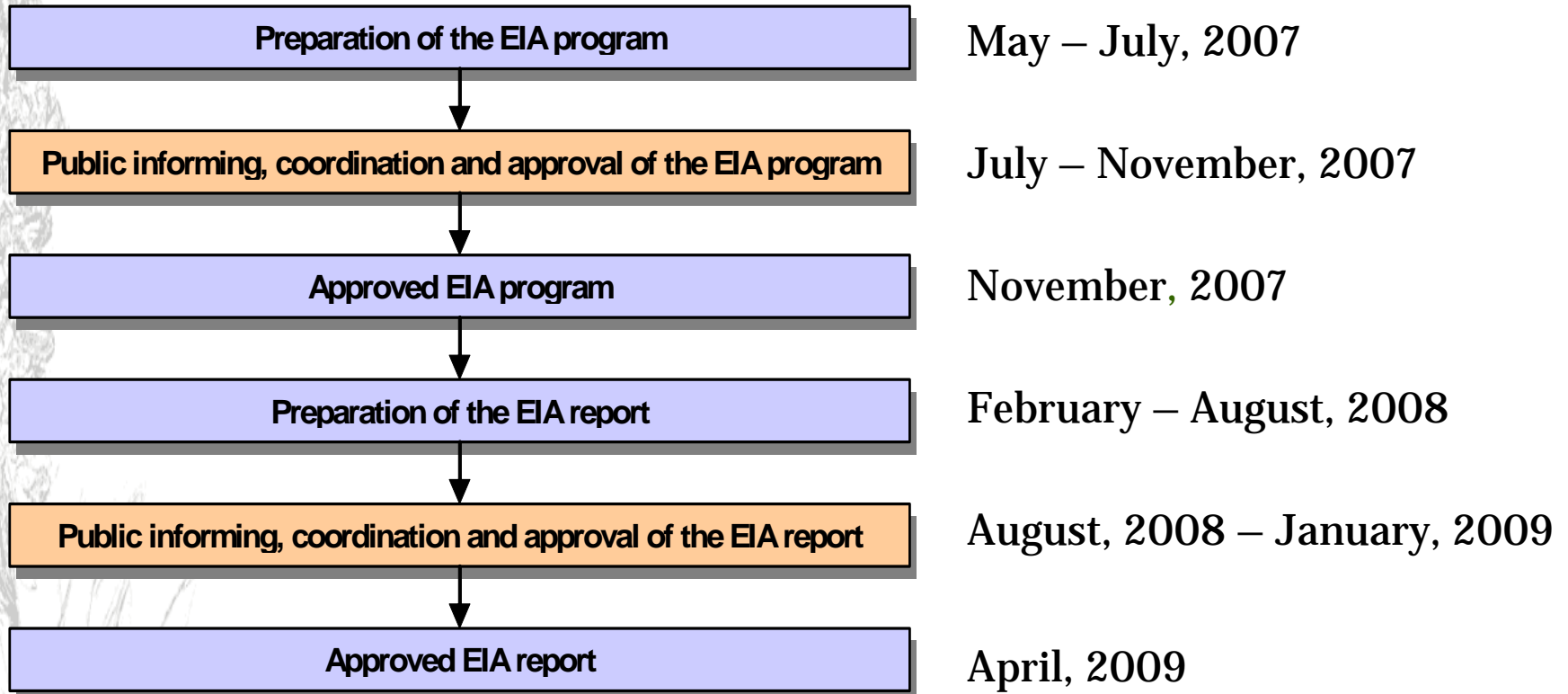


Facts about EIA study

- The EIA Report was prepared by an independent international consortium consisting of Pöyry Energy (Finland) and Lithuanian Energy Institute (Lithuania).
- More than 40 experts worked on the EIA report, additionally other experts and scientists worked on several background studies for the EIA report.



VAE EIA procedure





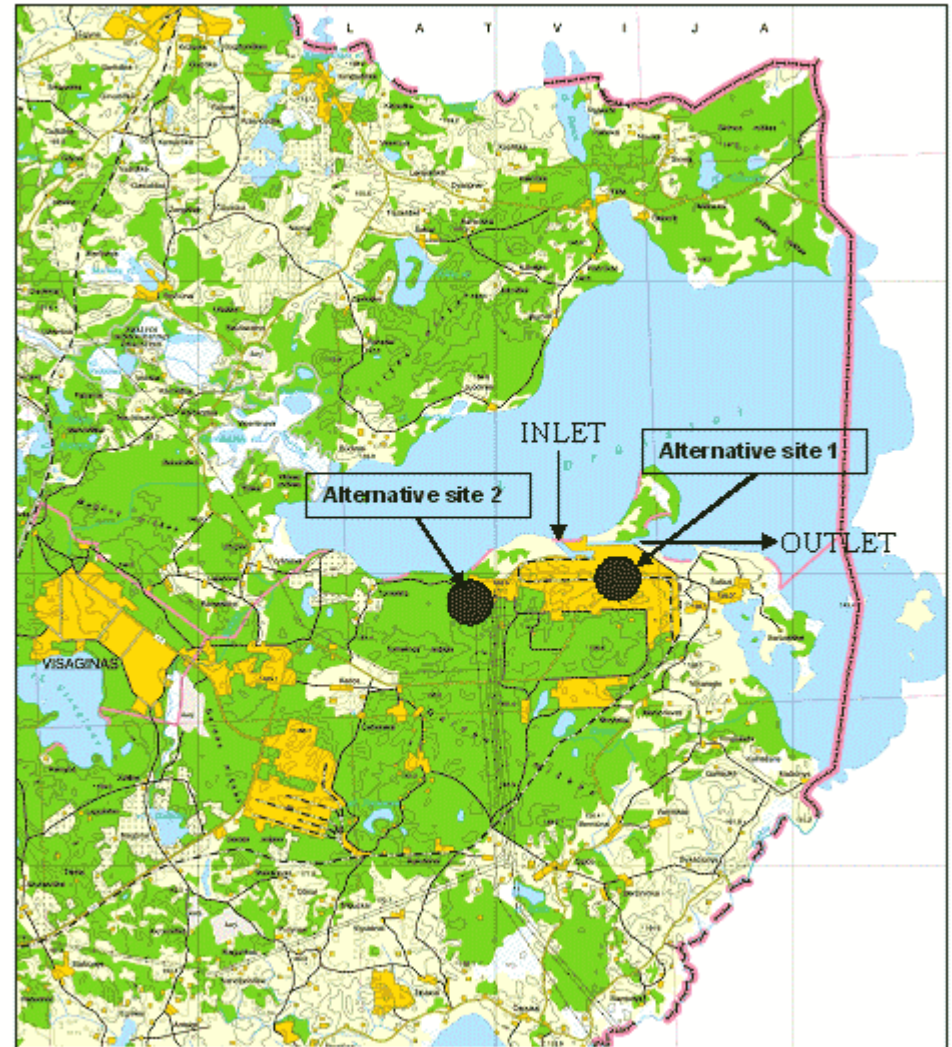
The planned project

In the EIA the impacts of the new NPP of at most 3400 MW were evaluated.

Two alternative locations within the territory of the current Ignalina NPP were assessed.

All commercially available and technically feasible plant types were taken into consideration.

Three alternatives of cooling water inlet points were analyzed along with two alternatives for water discharge. Direct cooling will not be sufficient for the power plant of 3400 MWe capacity, therefore a system of indirect cooling will be also installed.





Main components of EIA study

- Cooling water impact modelling,
- Dispersion and transportation modelling of accident releases,
- Complex assessment of radiological impacts,
- Complex assessment of impacts on lake Druksiai ecosystem,
- Assessment of impacts on public health,
- Assessment of social-economic impacts,
- “Natura 2000” assessment,
- Comparison of engineering geological conditions,
- Other.



Aerial view of the site





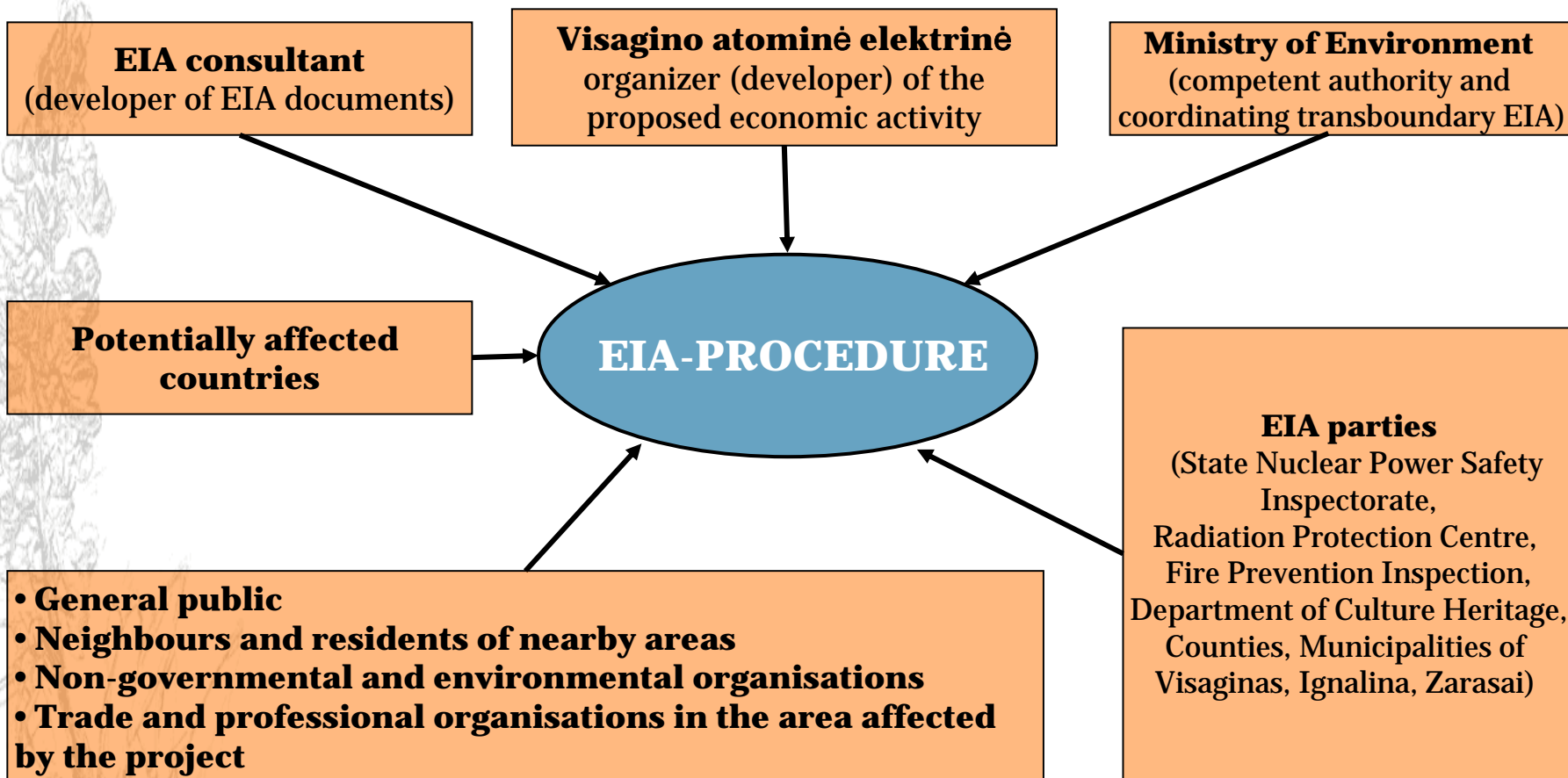
Visaginas NPP (photomontage)



New nuclear power plant
Site 1
2 units with cooling towers



EIA stakeholders





International consultation process

Notified countries (27 July 2007):
Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Latvia,
Poland, Russia, Sweden.

With notifications the EIA program
(scoping document) in English and
Russian and general information about
project in official languages of
potentially affected countries were sent

Responses to the notification with
comments were received from:
Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Sweden,
Latvia and Poland.

Austria participated on their own
initiative and submitted detailed
expert review of the EIA program.





International consultation process

- **Information on EIA report was provided to potentially affected countries (27 August 2008)**

Main languages of EIA report: Lithuanian, English, Russian

Languages of summaries of EIA reports: official languages of the affected parties

- **Poland, Belarus, Latvia, Austria requested additional consultations**

Consultation meetings:

- November-December 2008 (Austria, Poland, Belarus)
- February 2009 (Latvia)

Consultations took place in the premises of Ministry of Environment of Lithuania



Public hearings

- Notices in the newspapers (national newspapers, local municipality newspaper, 2 surrounded municipalities newspapers) well before the approval of EIA program and well before the open public meetings regarding EIA report.
- EIA report was placed in the local municipalities premises, local public libraries, VAE office.
- EIA report in all main languages (LT, EN, RU) was placed on VAE website www.vae.lt .



Public hearings

Internationally (open public meetings on EIA program):

- Ryga (Latvia), in the premises of the Ministry of Environment
- Tallinn (Estonia), in the premises of the Ministry of Environment

Nationally (open public meetings on EIA report):

- Visaginas, in the premises of local municipality
- Vilnius, in the VAE premises

Internationally (open public meetings on EIA report):

- Tallinn (Estonia), in the premises of the Ministry of Environment
- Braslav (Belarus), in the premises of Local municipality
- Daugavpils (Latvia), in the premises of local municipality
- Ryga (Latvia), in the premises of the Ministry of Environment



IAEA mission

- On January 26-30, 2009 a **special expert mission of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** was held in Vilnius, it was organised by the Ministry of the Environment, State Nuclear Power Safety Inspectorate (VATESI) and the Radiation Protection Centre.
- The mission revised the procedures of the EIA of the planned Visaginas NPP, evaluated its compliance with the best international practice and procedures. Main focus was on the radiological impacts included in the EIA Report, although general aspects and other environmental impacts were considered where possible.
- **Main conclusion of the Mission:** EIA report provides enough information, analysis and conclusions for a project at this stage, to make an appropriate decision in order to proceed to the subsequent steps in the process to build a new NPP in Lithuania.



Decision on EIA

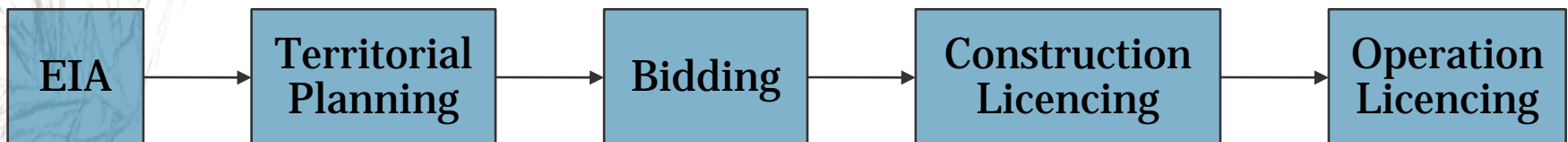
Before MoE takes decision on EIA, MoE shall again announce that final EIA report is ready and invite public to present last comments. Information was placed on MoE website www.am.lt

Before the adoption of the decision, MoE organized last meeting with Lithuanian green movement representatives regarding their comments

MoE after consideration of all consultation results (nationally and internationally) and after supervision of the last version of EIA report made positive decision on EIA

The decision on feasibility of the Visagino NPP (VAE) allow to finish:

- Preparation of bid invitation specification (BIS);
- Preparation of territorial (land use) planning documents.





Appeal of decision (1)

In June this year, Greenpeace, CEE Bankwatch Network, Lithuanian and Latvian green movements appealed the EIA decision to the Administrative Court of Vilnius

Main motives:

- Issue of storage and final disposal of radioactive waste was not evaluated in the EIA
- Incomplete spectrum of analyzed alternatives
- Insufficient public informing
- Methodology of the assessment of the severe accident
- Form and content of EIA decision doesn't satisfy legal requirements



Appeal of decision (2)

- Ministry of Environment on 18 June responded to the Administrative Court.
- In the process as third parties also participated the developer of the proposed activity and the EIA consultant (Pöyry Energy , Finland).
- The judgement was rendered on 12 of October. **Appeal was rejected.**
- Further step – Appeal against judgement to the highest administrative court?



Thank you

More information on EIA in Lithuania
www.am.lt

