

20240321 Atomic power is maintained by fake discourse

Aviel Verbruggen, University of Antwerp

On Thursday March 21, the IAEA organized a conference in Brussels nearby the ATOMIUM, symbol of the atom golden 1950s, to bolster the agency's lobbying success at COP28 in Dubai. Twenty-two countries announced that a tripling of atomic power by 2050 was needed for saving the world from climate change¹.

At the same moment and place, grassroots organizations set up the protest activity *Don't nuke the climate*. They totally reject nuclear power, for a full 100% renewable energy supply along disruptive energy savings. The action debunked IAEA's nuclear fairy tales². Many speakers from all over the world told their experiences about the deceiving stories of atomic proponents and lobbyists. Every speaker got just two minutes to tell the most essential of the message they wanted to share with colleagues and the public. The text of my 2 minutes, 184 words intervention is printed here as bold text. This article adds information about context and logical sequence of the brief statements during the short talk.

Atomic power is financially bankrupt. Its life extension hangs on lavish subsidies by governments.

No atomic power plant project can be realized without huge financial support from the public treasury. Instead of wasting billions of euros on the failing and dangerous atomic fission and fusion technology, governments should use the public money for energy sufficiency and efficiency, renewables, better social housing, public transport, health service, education, and similar needs of people.

Climate Change is now the excuse for the looting.

For the enormous subsidy drain, the atomic advocates must find a suitable façade to hide the looting. What else than abusing climate change itself can serve better the fraudulent plan? Who else than the official global institutes responsible for climate policy can serve as trusted platform to spread the deceiving atom stories?

Like fossil fuel lobbyists, IAEA sneaked into the climate COPs plus into Working Group III of IPCC.

IAEA could arrange its official presence in the yearly COP meetings via art.16§8 in the Paris Agreement (2015). Please *read* the Paris agreement, and come across art.16§8 as a blinkered singularity of concrete decision in a swamp of vagueness. The lobbyist for atomic power got so a guaranteed official seat in all future COPs.

Another pinnacle of IAEA infiltration is its scheming in IPCC, particularly observable in the 2014, 2018, and 2022 reports of Working Group III (WGIII)³. In framing the role of atomic power in the realm of climate policy, the IAEA juggles two conflicting objectives. One objective is to conceal the facts and problems associated with atomic power. For this objective IAEA strives to prevent that IPCC reports would publish an accurate representation and assessment of the literature from the entire scientist community on atomic power. The second objective is to leverage the IPCC label to portray atomic energy as a full-fledged low-carbon option. Achieving both objectives together requires quite some balancing and manoeuvring, skills that the IAEA has honed through its ambiguous role in terms of promotion and of control of atomic power.

Objective one is highly problematic for the IPCC, as it directly contradicts the IPCC's essential mission⁴. This core mission is delivering comprehensive reviews of the available knowledge, requesting the assessment of all peer-reviewed literature, and *clearly identify disparate views for which there is significant scientific or technical support, together with the relevant arguments*. The IAEA scam undermines the essence of the IPCC mission, as evident in the almost exclusive use of IAEA documents and those of related organizations, such as the OECD's Nuclear Energy Agency. From the literature,

mostly pro-nuclear energy articles are cited, with a few critical authors in the bibliography cited incorrectly⁵.

IAEA violates the *essential principles* of IPCC rules by precluding the *scientific assessment* of atomic power,

- **Skipping publications of independent scientists,**
- **Denying comments sent via the IPCC process rules,**
- **Bypassing sustainability standards,**
- **Disguising the incompatibility of atomic with sunlight and wind power in generation and in electric grids**

Comprehensive and substantiated critical comments on the IPCC draft texts about atomic power through the formal scientific review process delivered to the IPCC secretariat are not responded to⁶. This is again entirely against the IPCC working rules. IAEA employee at rest H.H. Rogner served as the author of the passages on atomic energy in the 2014 IPCC report. He participated in the report's editing as a co-opted contributing author⁷, and his appearance and manoeuvring at the April 2014 IPCC plenary meeting in Berlin were highly unusual⁸.

The 2018 and 2022 IPCC reports show the same flaws as the 2014 report concerning the nuclear texts. Extensive comments received no response. This real IPCC-gate related to Working Group III receives minimal media coverage, while a few mails between climate scientists of Working Group I, hijacked in November 2009, turned into a high-profile *climate-gate*, causing a lot of turmoil. This is the result of propaganda. It also proves that IPCC's three Working Groups are of very different quality, with WGIII being infiltrated by fossil fuel and atomic power interests. Those in power in the neoliberalist era know how to mastermind their interests.

In the following spoken sentences is mentioned *press and NGOs remain silent*. This is a summary of two observed facts. It is not intended to set press and NGOs on an equal footing. For the commercial press it is deliberate standard policy to serve the neoliberal interests. The NGOs silence is likely not intentional. Presumably it is due to deficient knowledge, hence defective alertness often resulting from familiarity with political and administrative bubbles. An example is the COP bubble, where the common interest of participants is the continuation of the yearly meetings. Regarding IPCC, all dedicated environmentalists want to preserve the important role of its fantastic assessments of scientific know-how, delivered according the IPCC principles and rules. The preservation of IPCC's role is helped more by addressing the IAEA intrigues than by staying silent about it.

Clearly: a huge IPCC *atom-climate gate* exists.

Surprisingly or not: the *press and NGOs remain silent*.

IAEA achieves its second objective by perpetuating the mantra tripod *Renewable Energy, Atomic Energy, Carbon Capture and Storage* as viable mitigation options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This tripod permeates the entire climate policy narrative, while distorting the actual reality. It puts three options on equal footing, while only the *Renewable Energy* option is sustainable. *Renewable Energy* cannot be reconciled with the *Atomic Energy* option. Additionally, the *Carbon Capture and Storage*⁹ option proves impractical even for fossil fuel companies due to its high cost.

IAEA's efforts to preserve the tripod are veiled because otherwise the first objective of concealing the facts about atomic power is jeopardised. The persistence of the tripod discourse is driven by the interests of atomic and fossil fuel industries. Furthermore, crude computer models employed by economists include atomic power without regard for the inevitable conflicts with renewable electricity from wind and sunlight currents in real power systems. This superficiality puts irreconcilable options side by side on paper, constituting scientific blunders that continue to fester and contribute to sustaining atomic propaganda¹⁰.

The secrecy protects the *fake atom discourse*, for example

1. “Renewables, Nuclear, Carbon Capture & Storage” are proposed as equivalent options, while they are incompatible.

And, only Renewables can avoid climate collapse

2. The talk is: “People’s concerns about nuclear safety impede nuclear expansion”, while the actual risks are huge, given all re-insurance companies refuse liability for atomic power

Please verify my statements by checking IPCC Working Group III reports of 2014, 2018 and 2022.

Final: the added information intends to address the incredible discursive power developed by the atomic interests. Their discourse conceals the facts and is fraudulent. However, it also molds the nearby financial flows and subsidies for the survival of a failing technology. The atomic fraudsters will again devour billions of dollars, pounds and euros.

More information on www.avielverbruggen.be

¹ On December 6, 2023, the “Declaration to Triple Nuclear Energy” has been responded by Karl Grossman in The Sentinel Newspapers: [Nuclear Power Pushing at the UN’s COP28 Climate Change Conference](#). Building on that response I added some information about IAEA lobbyism in Working Group III of IPCC, published by DeWereldMorgen, and a longer version on my website.

² Linda Pentz Gunter of beyondnuclear.org distributed “The Lying Piper of Nukeland”, and a leaflet about the IAEA’s promotion of nuclear power enables nuclear weapons production, diverse false promises on climate and puts millions at risk.

³ The IPCC WG3 reports of 2014 (AR5), 2018 (SR 1.5°C), 2022 (AR6) are freely accessible at ipcc.ch; Verbruggen, A. (2021) Pricing Carbon Emissions. Economic Reality and Utopia. Routledge Open Access, p.106-111

⁴ Principles Governing IPCC Work, Section 4.3.3, freely accessible via ipcc.ch

⁵ This was verified with the critical authors.

⁶ I have the evidence at hand, because on my thorough comments the responsible IPCC staff did not reply.

⁷ In the diversity of IPCC authorships, there are CLA (Coordinating Lead Author), LA (Lead Author), and CA (Contributing Author). The last ones are not submitted to the full screening process, but can so-to-say sneak in via lobbying the CLAs.

⁸ Verbruggen, A. (2021), p.108

⁹ Now mostly extended in the talk as *Carbon Capture, Use and Storage CCUS*. Marc Alexander commented a first draft of this text, referring to AR6 WGI, scenario SSP1-1.9, which needs the hocus-pocus of negative emissions via CCUS. Also, the today’s hydrogen mania ultimately depends on CCUS. My evaluation of both is less optimistic, since I got acquainted with CCS in 2006 (IPCC’s special report on Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage).

¹⁰ Electricity is a transient phenomenon and current is not storable. Generation of electricity should be modelled in consecutive short time-intervals (quarter hour is the maximum length for sufficient accuracy). The economists’ Integrated Assessment Models use year numbers of generated electricity, hence neglect the conflicts within the quarter-hour intervals. Power from sunlight and wind should always get priority in the merit order because their marginal cost is zero. This rule would impose idle times on atomic power plants, which are moreover little flexible in ramping their electric output up and down. This physical and economic incompatibility between renewables and atomic output, is concealed in the tripod mantra.