

The Draft FESAC Dev Path Report is Missing an Important Dual Path Strategy Need.

From FESAC Burning Plasma Strategy Findings and Recommendations

Because additional steps are needed for the approval of construction of ITER or FIRE, a strategy that allows for the possibility of either burning plasma option is appropriate.

Since ITER is at an advanced stage, has the most comprehensive science and technology program, and is supported internationally, we should now seek to join the ITER negotiations with the aim of becoming a partner in the undertaking, with technical, programmatic and timing considerations as follows:

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Since FIRE is at an advanced pre-conceptual design stage, and offers a broad scientific program, we should proceed to a physics validation review, as planned, and be prepared to initiate a conceptual design by the time of the U.S. decision on participation in ITER construction.

From FESAC Development Path Draft Report

6.0 Significant Issues that Deserve Immediate Attention

MFE Burning Plasma

The MFE portion of the plan depends fundamentally on US participation in a magnetically confined burning plasma experiment. It is time critical for the US to move forward with the burning plasma recommendations of FESAC. This is a dual-path strategy including both the ITER and FIRE options, that **begins with US participation in the ITER negotiations** with the aim of becoming a partner in the undertaking. The sooner the US joins ITER negotiations the larger will be US leverage on critical decisions. There are matters of urgent concern to the US, such as cost-control, project management, research decision-making and – of course – its own benefits and obligations.

A Proposed Statement that includes the Dual Path Nature of the FESAC Strategy

6.0 Significant Issues that Deserve Immediate Attention

MFE Burning Plasma

The MFE portion of the plan depends fundamentally on US participation in a magnetically confined burning plasma experiment. It is time critical for the US to move forward with the burning plasma recommendations of FESAC. This is a dual-path strategy with both the ITER and FIRE options, that includes:

- seeking to join the ITER negotiations with the aim of becoming a partner in the undertaking , and
- preparing to initiate a conceptual design of FIRE by the time of the U.S. decision on participation in ITER construction.

The sooner the US joins ITER negotiations the larger will be US leverage on critical decisions. There are matters of urgent concern to the US, such as cost-control, project management, research decision-making and – of course – its own benefits and obligations. It is essential that the FIRE design and R&D activities be moved forward in FY 2004 so that the US domestic burning plasma activity can be implemented expeditiously, if the ITER negotiations do not meet the US goals. This requires near term action to include a FY 2004 Budget request for a Burning Plasma Initiative to carry these Dual Path activities forward as recommended by FESAC.

This is proposed for inclusion in the final draft of the Interim Report, and in the cover letter to DOE.

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Public Comment to FESAC
November 25, 2002