



News

Fusion to get bulk of proposed EC research funding

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Proposals for the 7th research framework programme (FP7) for 2007-2013 and the Euratom framework programme for 2007-2011 are set to be debated by the European Union ahead of adoption next year.

The budget for research into nuclear energy to 2011 is €4.75 billion, compared to €1.35 billion for the previous programme. However, fusion will receive the lion's share of this budget with €2.167 billion, significantly more than the previous programme's €824 million. The budget for research into fission has also nearly doubled, from €528 million to €936 million.

Meanwhile, the total budget proposed by the EC for research into non-nuclear energy in the FP7 is €2.75 billion, more than double the previous programme's annual €180 million.

The Euratom programme has two specific parts, one of which covers fusion, fission and radiation protection research, including the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (Iter) project. The fission programme focuses on practical measures for safer management of radioactive waste and research on partitioning and transmutation. The second part covers the Joint Research Centre's nuclear activities which will focus on managing nuclear waste, reactor safety and security.

The budget proposals will be examined by the European Parliament and the Council of EU ministers over the next year.

- EU research commissioner Janez Potocnik has been negotiating hard to persuade Japan to withdraw Rokkasho as an Iter candidate site and agree on France's Cadarache in July. The EU is determined to host the project.

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