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[Press release](#) | 18.05.2011

ITER/France

The EU must turn the page on nuclear fusion and put its weight behind renewables

The Green MEPs **Bart Staes**, **Isabelle Durant** and **Michèle Rivasi** were in the delegation of MEPs that visited Cadarache, France from 16 to 18 May 2011 to evaluate the progress of the ITER project of an experimental nuclear fusion reactor. A visit which comes at a time of financial tension, the cost having tripled since 2006 from €5,9 to €16bn, and at a time of renewed questioning of nuclear power.

The MEPs described the illusory nature of the ITER project and its financial costs:

"The ITER nuclear fusion project is a real "hold up" on the European taxpayer and future generations. Whilst no-one knows whether this technology will ever produce any electricity, the cost has already tripled. And for good reason, we're promised the sun's energy packaged in a box but nobody really knows how to produce this box!"

"For Europe, the additional cost for the two next years alone is €2bn. Commercial production is forecast for 2080 at the earliest. Who really believes that the costs won't increase even further between now and then? Paying the bill today involves dragging us into ever increasing costs because ITER is a financial drain."

"Today, we are faced with two urgent issues: global warming and the draining of fossil fuel reserves. And all this at a time of extreme budgetary restraint. If ITER is ever completed, it will arrive, regardless, too late to be able to deal with any of these issues. It's an illusory solution to a real problem."

"ITER is the symbol of fading nuclear energy. Extremely expensive, hard to control and dangerous, nuclear power gets in the way of moving towards a system of energy efficiency and renewable energy. But there's still time to stop ITER and massively reorient European investment to energy efficiency and renewable energy. [1]"

[1] European funds for research on nuclear power are 4.5 times greater than those granted to research on energy efficiency and renewable energy."

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Responsible MEPs



Michèle Rivasi

Member



Bart Staes

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