

Sogin and IAEA promote first international discussion on circular economy in nuclear decommissioning

Sogin collects the opinion of international experts on its circular economy strategy

Rome, July 1, 2019 - Sogin hosted, from 18 to 21 June, the first international workshop on the circular economy in nuclear decommissioning, organized by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Entitled "Application of Sustainability Principles and Circular Economy to Nuclear Decommissioning", the event was a moment of discussion with the experts of the Agency and the operators of the industry – from France, Germany, Japan, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom and Italy - on best practices and innovation in circular economy. At the same time, Sogin presented a document with an analysis of its circular economy strategy, on which it received observations by the experts.

The workshop consisted in technical sessions, including a site visit to the Latina nuclear power plant, and a plenary session. The latter took place on June 20 in Rome at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni and was attended, among others, by the Director of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle and Waste Technology Division, Christophe Xerri, the President of the Superior Institute for Protection and Environmental Research, Stefano Laporta, the Director of the National Inspectorate for Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection, Maurizio Pernice, and Sogin top management, President Marco Ricotti and Chief Executive Officer Luca Desiata.

During the various sessions, the European and national regulatory framework on circular economy, also referring to public procurement, was examined in depth and different approaches to the management of recyclable materials coming from nuclear decommissioning activities have been analysed, identifying opportunities and possible criticalities.

For the experts who participated in the meeting, the application of the circular economy principles contributes to making decommissioning a sustainable process, helping the development of the area even after the site has reached the greenfield state.

In particular, Sogin presented its circular economy strategy, which reinforces its ever-present commitment towards the minimization of the waste produced and maximization of the volume of recovered materials. This strategy is based on three main drivers: recycling of the dismantled materials; reuse of structures, systems and components during dismantling; reducing the environmental impact at every stage of the activities. The full implementation of these three drivers is achievable through green engineering and green public procurement policies.

During the workshop, Sogin's constant commitment towards the adoption of sustainability and circular economy principles, also through the promotion of this first international workshop organized by the IAEA, was recognized. Sogin's applied solutions and innovative approach to sustainability, aimed at making its activities more and more sustainable, were highlighted also.

The workshop was an opportunity to present Sogin Academy, the new Sogin Group center dedicated to education, innovation and development, which is based on eight pillars: the Radwaste Management School, the provision of international training, circular economy, the training and development of the talents who are already working in Sogin, the collaboration with Universities, the Blockchain technology for a better radioactive waste traceability, the instruments and innovative methodologies for project management.

“We are very satisfied – said Luca Desiata, CEO of Sogin - to continue the collaboration with IAEA that started in 2017. The topic of this year, Circular Economy, is one of the pillars of Sogin Academy, which aims to become a reference centre for training and development in the nuclear decommissioning industry.”