

## [SIIA Programmes](#)

[About the SIIA's Programmes](#)  
[Environment Focus Programme](#)  
[Public Education Programme:](#)  
[Global Citizens: ASEAN](#)

## [Research Foci](#)

[Credit Crunch Crisis: Asia](#)  
[Hazewatch](#)  
[Human Rights](#)  
[Regionalisms](#)  
[US-Asia Relations](#)  
[Timelines](#)  
[H1N1: Swine Flu Timeline](#)  
[Myanmar: Cyclone Nargis Timeline](#)  
[Nuclear Power in Southeast Asia](#)

## France to invest €1 billion in nuclear power, Japan starts confidence campaign and cleanup

*Updated on: Tuesday, Jun 28, 2011*

France is investing €1 billion (S\$1.77 billion) in nuclear power, bucking the anti-nuclear trend following Japan's Fukushima disaster.



Despite growing worldwide concern about the safety of nuclear plants, French President Nicolas Sarkozy said abandoning the development and building of new reactors "makes no sense".

"There is no alternative to nuclear energy today," he told a news conference.

The French investment will include research into fourth-generation nuclear technology. Sarkozy also promised "substantial resources" to strengthen nuclear safety.

Sarkozy stressed his government is still investing "massively" in renewable energy. He announced a further €1.35 billion (S\$2.39 billion) of investment for that sector.

France currently has 58 nuclear reactors, supplying 74 percent of the country's electricity. It is the world's largest net exporter of electricity from nuclear sources.

Despite the French government's strong commitment to nuclear energy, there are still domestic concerns regarding the safety of reactors. On Sunday, thousands of demonstrators formed a human chain outside France's oldest nuclear power plant, demanding its closure.

The plant at Fessenheim in Alsace, on France's border with Germany, has been in operation since 1977. Protestors claim it is vulnerable to flooding and earthquakes.

At the end of May, Germany announced plans to shut all 17 of its nuclear power stations by 2022. This month, Switzerland also decided not to replace its four nuclear power plants, with the last expected to end production by 2034.

Report: [Nicolas Sarkozy makes €1bn commitment to nuclear power](#) [Guardian, 27 June 2011]

Report: [France's Sarkozy announces \\$1.43-billion nuclear investment](#) [Los Angeles Times, 28 June 2011]

In Japan, the government has begun a campaign to convince communities hosting nuclear reactors to let operations resume. As of earlier this month, 37 of Japan's 54 reactors were idle. After the crisis at Fukushima, many reactors have been kept offline, with local officials blocking their reopening over safety concerns.

On Sunday, the central government held a dialogue with selected local representatives at Saga prefecture, where two reactors at the Genkai power plant were shut down for safety checks after the earthquake and tsunami.

Report: [Japan begins nuclear charm offensive](#) [AFP, 27 June 2011]

Analysis: [As Japan's Towns Scrutinize Reactors, Tokyo Sweats](#) [Wall Street Journal, 24 June 2011]

Yesterday, Tokyo Electric (Tepco) started running a new cooling system at the crippled Fukushima plant, which removes radioactive materials from contaminated water and recycles it as a coolant for reactors.

Goshi Hosono, an adviser to Prime Minister Naoto Kan, praised the move as "a giant step forward". Tepco aims to start cutting radiation leaks by mid-July, and bring the reactor to "cold shutdown" by January.

But the new system is still suffering from some glitches. Yesterday, the equipment had to be shut down just an hour and a half after beginning work, due to leaking hoses.

Report: **Japan trips in key effort to cool nuclear reactors** [Reuters, 27 June 2011]

**Author:** Administrator

-----

Link to this article:

**[France to invest €1 billion in nuclear power, Japan starts confidence campaign and cleanup](#)**

*Photographs and images used on this website are obtained from publicly-accessible resources. No copyright infringement is intended.*

 **Printer-friendly version**

---

### Related Articles

**Energy a hot topic in East and West**

**UPDATE: IAEA draws new plans for post-Fukushima nuclear safety**

**IAEA ministerial conference discusses international nuclear safety after Fukushima**

© Singapore Institute of International Affairs. All rights reserved.  
2 Nassim Road, Singapore 258370. Tel: (+65) 6734-9600 Fax: (+65) 6733-6217

