



Nuclear Plants in Europe Are Delayed

Log in to
are sha
Privacy

What'

In Ohio
Work I
the Mic



Ralph Orlowski/Reuters

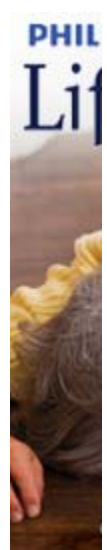
Traders watched TV news about Japan on the trading floor at Frankfurt's stock exchange on Monday when European shares fell on to their lowest level in three months.

By JUDY DEMPSEY
Published: March 14, 2011

BERLIN — With the crisis in [Japan](#) raising fears about nuclear power, Germany and Switzerland said on Monday that they would reassess the safety of their own reactors and possibly reduce their reliance on them.

Doris Leuthard, the Swiss energy minister, said [Switzerland](#) would suspend plans to build and replace nuclear plants. She said no new ones would be permitted until experts had reviewed safety standards

- RECOMMEND
- TWITTER
- SIGN IN TO E-MAIL
- PRINT
- REPRINTS
- SHARE



and reported back. Their conclusions will apply to existing plants as well as planned sites, she added. Swiss authorities recently approved three sites for new nuclear power stations.



1. [Chá Ene](#)
2. [N.R](#)

Germany will suspend “the recently decided extension of the running times of German nuclear power plants,” Chancellor [Angela Merkel](#) told reporters in Berlin. “This is a moratorium and this moratorium will run for three months.” She said the suspension would allow for a thorough examination of the safety standards of the country’s 17 nuclear power plants.

3. [Dis](#)

Log in to
based on

[Log In](#)

“There will be no taboos,” Mrs. Merkel said.

Even when the three months is over, Mrs. Merkel warned, there would be no going back to the situation before the moratorium.

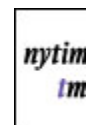
Across Europe, officials worried about the Continent’s use of nuclear power as [cooling systems failed](#) at a third nuclear reactor in Japan and officials in that country struggled to regain control.



The
ALSO I
Color
A lan

nyti

ADVER



The [European Union](#) called for a meeting on Tuesday of nuclear safety authorities and operators to assess Europe’s preparedness. Austria’s environment minister, Nikolaus Berlakovich, called for a European Union-wide stress test “to see if our nuclear power stations are earthquake-proof.”

In Germany, with Mrs. Merkel’s center-right coalition facing important regional elections this month, the move was apparently in part an effort to placate the influential antinuclear lobby and give her coalition some breathing space before making a final decision about nuclear energy.

The foreign minister, [Guido Westerwelle](#), called for a new risk analysis of the country’s nuclear plants, particularly regarding their cooling systems. He is the leader of the pro-business Free Democratic Party, which strongly supports nuclear power.

A previous government, led by the Social Democrats and Greens, pushed through legislation in 2001 to close all of the country’s nuclear plants by 2021. But Mrs. Merkel’s center-right government reversed that decision last year and voted to extend the lives of the plants by an average of 12 years.



Nuclear energy provides about 11 percent of Germany’s energy supply but its contribution to electricity output is about 26 percent.

In Switzerland, the suspension of plans to build and replace plants will affect all “blanket authorization for nuclear replacement until safety standards have been carefully reviewed and if necessary adapted,” Ms. Leuthard, the energy minister, said in a statement.

Switzerland has five nuclear reactors, which produce about 40 percent of the country's energy needs.

INSIDE I

Ms. Leuthard said she had already asked the Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate to analyze the exact cause of the problems in Japan and draw up new or tougher safety standards "particularly in terms of seismic safety and cooling."

In Russia, Prime Minister [Vladimir V. Putin](#) said his government would not revise its ambitious program of building nuclear reactors but would "draw conclusions from what's going on in Japan," Russian news agencies reported. Nuclear power currently accounts for 16 percent of Russia's electricity generation.

SIGN IN TO E-MAIL

PRINT

REPRINTS



The Times & the Bay Area - now at 50% off when you subscribe for the convenience of home delivery.

Get Free E-mail Alerts on These Topics

Switzerland

Nuclear Energy

Accidents and Safety

Japan

BOOKS »



Author Earns Her Stripes on First Try

OPINION »



Op-Ed: Memories, Washed Away

N.Y. / REGION »



Hoping a Canal Cleanup Turns Up Old Treasures

U.S. »



For Honolulu's Homeless, an Eviction Notice

OPII

H
Sa
A F
for
ric
Mi
mo

