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PLAN TO MOVE NUCLEAR METAL CRITICISED

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PLANS to send radioactive metal from Sellafield to Sweden, via the Baltic Sea, have been criticised at a Swedish conference.

Sixty representatives from environmental groups across Europe and North America met in Stockholm at the Coping with Nuclear Waste conference.

It heard that in America there has been opposition from the public, steel and nuclear workers' unions and the metal industries to the deregulation of nuclear waste.

Nuclear weapons sites are prohibited from sending radioactive metal into commercial recycling but there is no ban on radioactive metals entering the metals markets in Sweden and Russia.

Swedish firm Studsvik has planning consent for a nuclear waste recycling facility at Lillyhall, near Workington, where it plans to take radioactive metal from the decommissioning of European nuclear power reactors and melt and dilute it with cheap metal to provide a cheap way for the nuclear industry to get rid of its waste.

Last week it was reported that the British Nuclear Group had awarded Studsvik a contract to design and build a new facility to address waste from a Sellafield waste storage facility.

The contract is one of several that BNG has recently awarded in relation to activities at Sellafield.

The early mobilisation contract is said to be worth £2 million for a three-month period pending the award of the main contract, which could be finalised next month and to be worth £14m over two years.

Under the contract, Studsvik will build a waste retrieval facility over eight shielded cells used to provide interim storage for beta/gamma waste.

Waste will be retrieved from the cells and volume reduced before being put into liners for disposal as either intermediate or low level material.