

The real impact of the Chernobyl accident

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The impact of the Chernobyl nuclear accident has been seriously overestimated, while unfounded statements presented as scientific facts have been used to strangle the nuclear industry, according to Russian researchers. Writing in the *International Journal of Low Radiation*, Sergei Jargin of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia in Moscow, suggests that the health effects of food contamination in particular have been distorted in anti-industry propaganda.

Jargin has analyzed the scientific research literature and after the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident, and has investigated the motives and mechanisms of the overestimation of [medical risks](#) in an attempt to finally clarify the issues surrounding the Chernobyl legacy. He points out that there are examples in the literature that he considers inaccurate. Moreover, many of these publications cite what Jargin refers to as "numerous references to mass media, websites of unclear affiliation and commercial editions, used to corroborate scientific views," as opposed to properly referenced, peer-reviewed scientific publications.

"Today, there are no alternatives to nuclear power: [fossil fuels](#) will become increasingly expensive, contributing to excessive population growth in fuel-producing countries and poverty elsewhere," the Jargin says. He adds that, "Natural sources of power generation like wind, solar, geothermal, hydroelectric power and electricity from combustible renewables and waste will make a contribution, but their share in the global energy balance is too small." It is likely that at some point in the future nuclear fusion reactors will become a viable replacement for the fission reactors we have today, but for the time being, "nuclear energy

should be managed and supervised by a powerful international executive," concludes Jargin. Robust due diligence with regard to sociopolitical, geographic, geologic, and other pre-conditions would also help prevent future accidents.

More information: "Food contamination after the Chernobyl accident: dose assessments and health effects" in *Int. J. Low Radiation*, 2013, 9, 23-29.

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