

POLICY Paper

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Canada needs policies to fill the gap in its nuclear fuel cycle

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January 2025

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Context

- Federal government has identified a geological site for nuclear waste storage
- Saskatchewan has among the world's richest deposits of uranium
- Canada sells Candu nuclear reactors to the international market
- Canada only mines and exports uranium to nations using nuclear power
- Mining and disposal represent the first and end stages of the nuclear cycle
- Canada has not engaged in processing and enrichment

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Considerations

- Northern Saskatchewan is site of five major uranium mines
- Three other mines are proposed and under review
- For decades Canada has opposed commercial reprocessing of nuclear fuel
- Based on fear it could lead to proliferation of nuclear weapons
- Nuclear power critical to achieving global climate targets
- The growing demand for nuclear power presents opportunities for Canada
- The current policy framework has gaps preventing industry expansion

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Questions

- Do you believe Canada should review its nuclear energy policy?
- If yes, what factors need to be taken into consideration?
- If no, what are the determining factors against the review?
- Do the economic benefits outweigh the moral concerns?
- Discuss the moral issues:
 - Nuclear proliferation
 - Safety
 - Challenge of climate change
 - Canada already mines and exports uranium