



# A NEXT STEP

WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

WHAT WE HEARD FROM A DELIBERATIVE SURVEY  
OF CANADIANS

A presentation by Hill+Knowlton Strategies

# WHAT WE LEARNED



**Significant  
common  
ground**  
around potential  
principles, priorities &  
considerations

**Views can  
differ about  
potential strategy  
approaches**

**Pragmatism  
and  
coherence** in  
the weighing of pros &  
cons and trade-offs

**Expectation** that  
**experience, expertise  
and science** will **guide** us

Desire to see an **optimal  
division of labour**  
among the players

OBJECTIVE



## WHAT

First step in the NWMO's efforts to engage Canadians on the development of an integrated long-term strategy for managing Canada's radioactive waste

## WHY

The research was designed to:

- Begin to identify principles, priorities and considerations the public believes should guide the development of Canada's ISRW
- Shape the design of subsequent engagement efforts

## WHEN

January 18 - February 5, 2021

## WHO

Random sample of n=1,625 adult residents of Canada

## HOW

Self-administered online survey

A person wearing a dark hooded jacket and a large, crumpled green backpack is seen from behind, looking out over a calm lake. In the background, there are misty, mountainous hills under a grey, overcast sky. The word "APPROACH" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

APPROACH



**PROBABILITY PANEL:** H+K Strategies & EKOS Research (Probit)

**SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE:** Deliberative

**INFORMATION PROVIDED:**

- Different levels of radioactive waste
- Current management approaches
- International approaches
- Options for development of a strategy

**MARGIN OF ERROR:**  $\pm 2.4\%$ , 19 times out of 20



# KEY FINDINGS



A woman with dark skin and her hair wrapped in a leopard print headwrap is shown from the chest up. She is looking upwards and to the right with a thoughtful expression, her hand resting on her chin. The background is a plain, light grey wall. Overlaid on the image is large, white, sans-serif text that reads "QUESTIONS, PRINCIPLES & PRIORITIES".

QUESTIONS,  
PRINCIPLES &  
PRIORITIES

## SAFETY

“How safe actually are the sites now in use? What impact have these sites had on the environment? What guarantees are in place to ensure that future sites will be monitored and kept safe?”

## TRANSPORTATION

“Will transport of waste be secured? How? In barrels or special containers? I don't want to see a cloud of radioactive dust billowing from a transport truck.”

## ALTERNATIVES

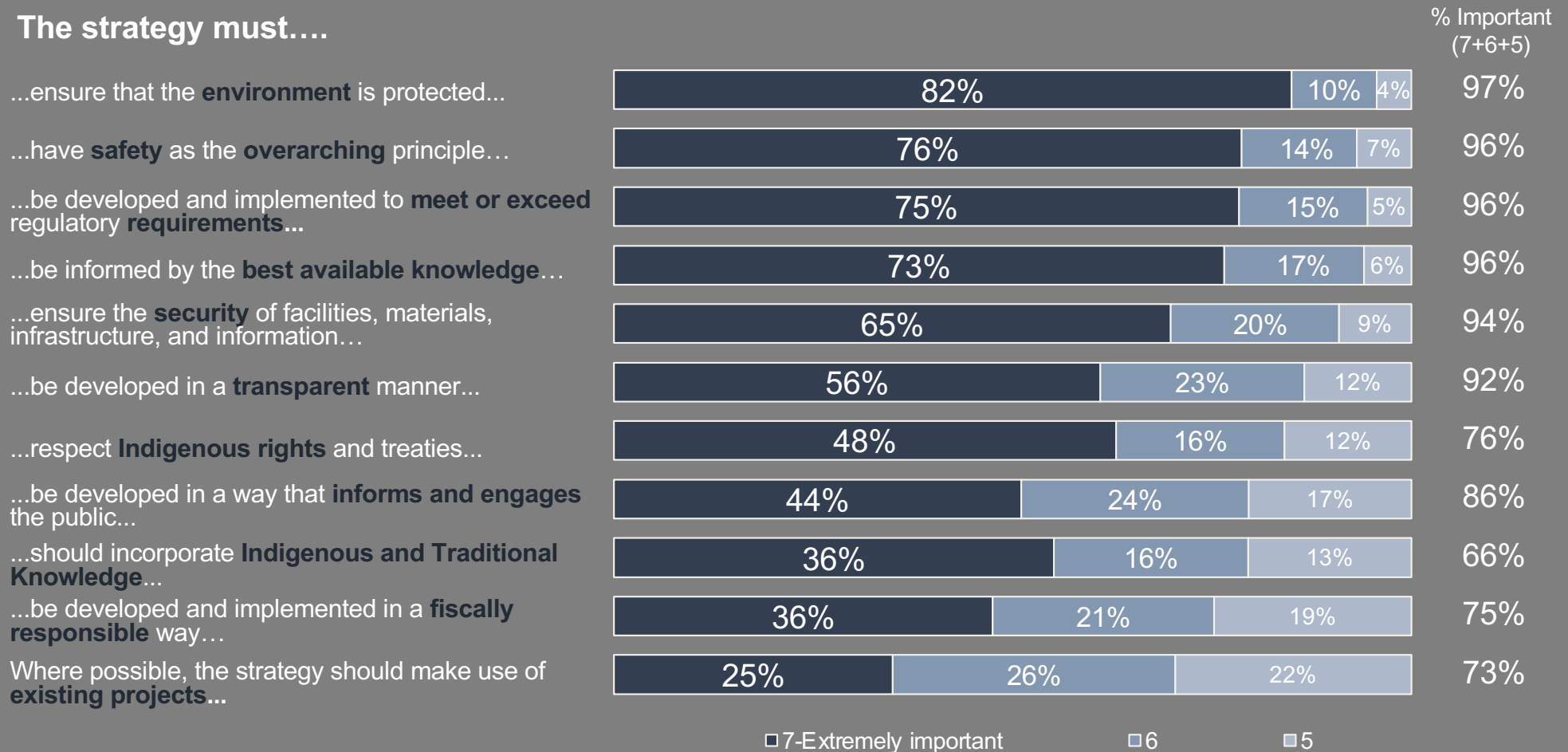
“Can Radioactive waste be repurposed?”

## USE OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY

“Are we planning on building more nuclear reactors in the near future? Is that why you ask this question at this point in time? How big will the waste pile get?”

# IMPORTANCE OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## The strategy must....



# PRIORITIES (FORCED CHOICE PAIRED TRADE-OFFS)



A close-up photograph of a person's hands working on a circuit board. The person is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt. The background is blurred, showing a laboratory or workshop environment with various electronic components and equipment. The text "POTENTIAL STRATEGY PARAMETERS" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

# POTENTIAL STRATEGY PARAMETERS

# APPROACHES TO RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT

**1**

**Status Quo vs. Permanent Disposal**

**2**

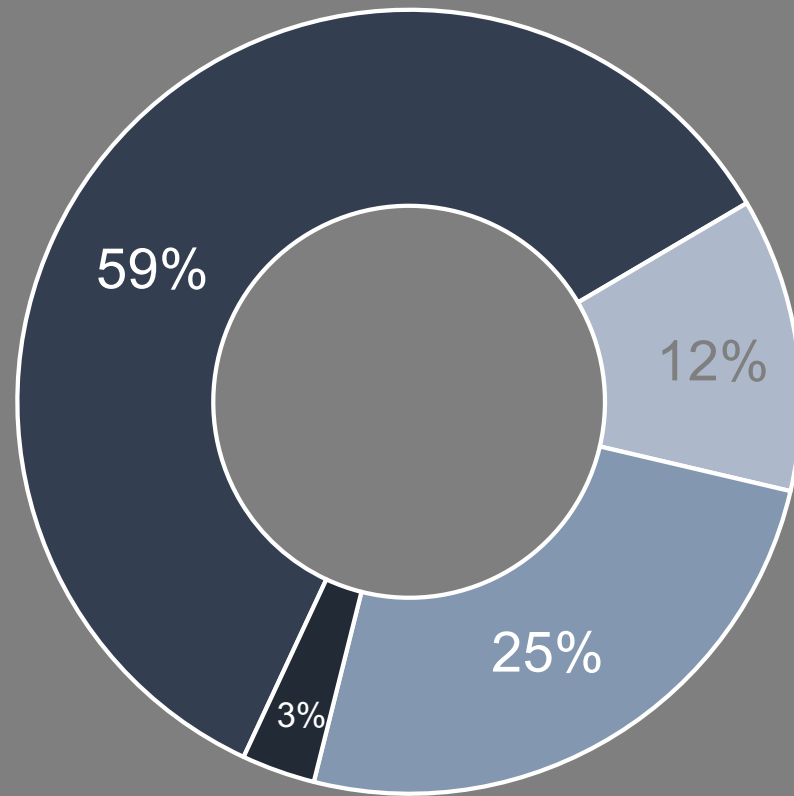
**Single/Centralized Facility vs. Multiple/Decentralized Facilities**

**3**

**Model for Strategy Implementation**

# RELATIVE CONCERN WITH THE HAZARDS OF LLW AND ILW

I am just as concerned about the hazards of low-level radioactive waste as I am of intermediate-level radioactive waste



Agree (7+6+5)

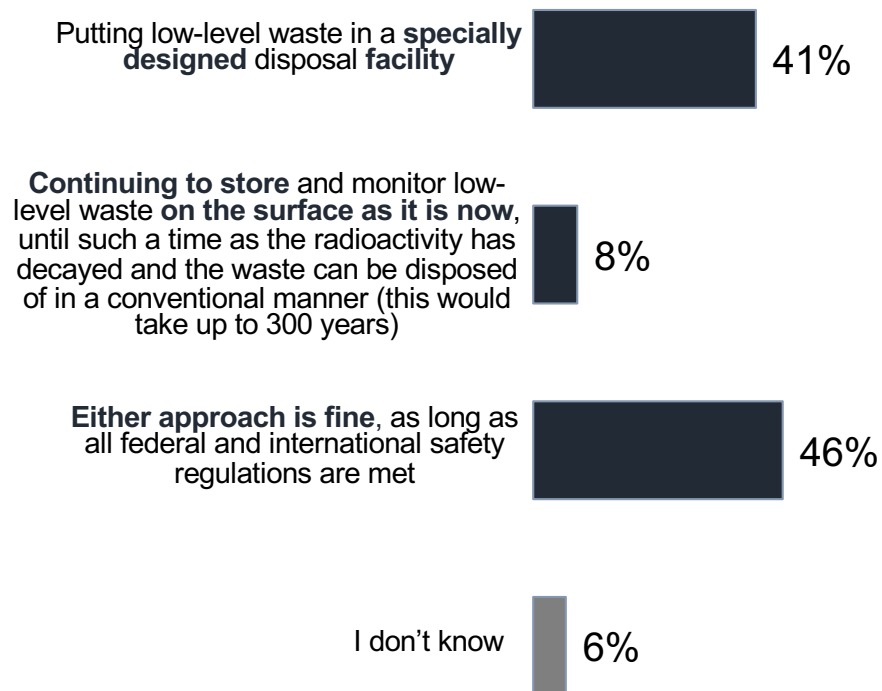
Neutral (4)

Disagree (3+2+1)

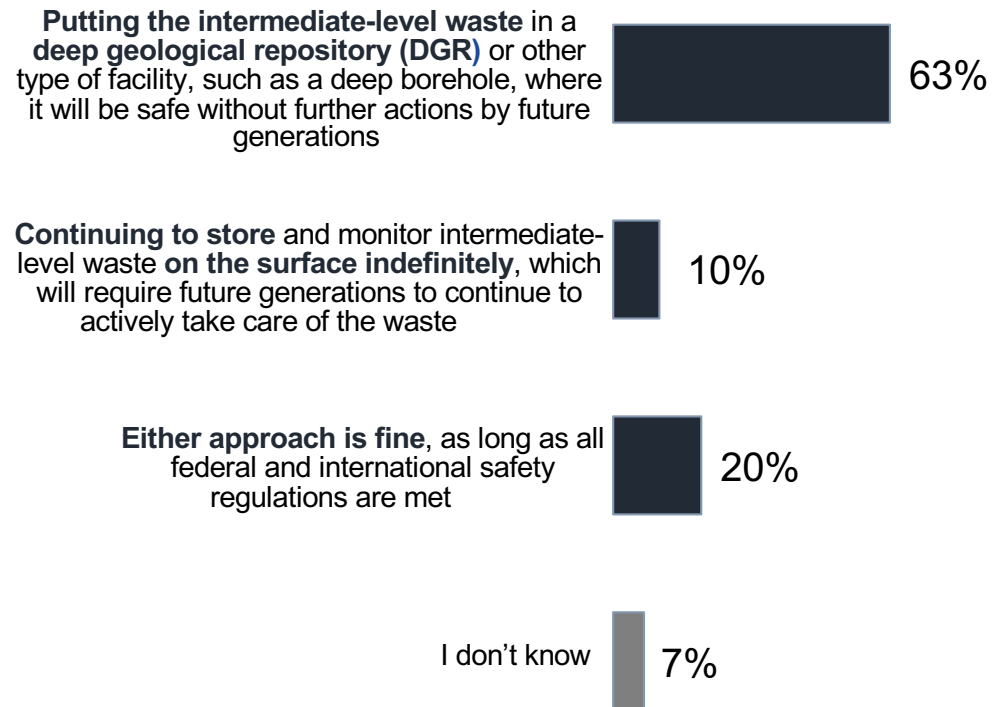
Don't know

# CONTINUED SURFACE STORAGE VS. USE OF SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FACILITIES FOR LLW AND ILW

## Low-Level Radioactive Waste




## Intermediate-Level Radioactive Waste








# CENTRALIZED VS. A DECENTRALIZED APPROACH TO THE LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT OF LLW AND ILW

## Low-Level Radioactive Waste


Building **several** low-level waste disposal **facilities**, each located **close to** where a significant amount of this **waste** is being produced and stored  43%


Putting **all** similar low-level **waste** into **one disposal facility** to be shared by the owners, and transport the waste from various locations to this facility  20%


**Either approach is fine**, as long as all federal and international safety regulations are met  32%

I don't know  6%

## Intermediate-Level Radioactive Waste

Building **separate** long-term management **facilities**, at **different locations**, for used fuel and for intermediate-level waste  34%

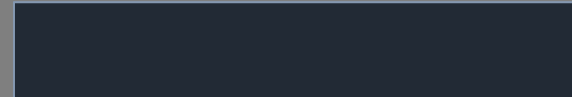
Building **only one** long-term management **facility for all of Canada**, combining used fuel and the intermediate-level waste into a single facility at one location  25%

**Either approach is fine**, as long as all federal and international safety regulations are met  33%

I don't know  9%

# CREATING A SEPARATE ORGANIZATION TO IMPLEMENT CANADA'S STRATEGY VS. ALLOWING EACH WASTE OWNER TO IMPLEMENT IT

Creating a **separate organization** to implement Canada's strategy for the long-term management of the country's low-level and intermediate-level waste



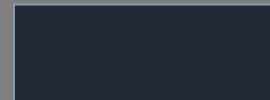
56%

Allowing **each owner** of low-level waste and intermediate-level waste to **implement Canada's strategy** for the long-term management of the country's low- and intermediate-level waste



9%

**Either approach is fine**, as long as all federal and international safety regulations are met



26%

I don't know



8%

A photograph of a road with yellow double lines leading towards a horizon under a cloudy sky. The text "CONSIDERATIONS FOR STRATEGY DESIGN" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR STRATEGY DESIGN

## THE LENS

- Minimize impacts on the environment
- Reduce/eliminate potential for “leakage” into soil and water
- Keep the facility/facilities away from population centres

## KEY TRADE-OFFS

- Reduce need for transportation
- Allow for design/building the safest & most secure facility (or facilities)
- Reduce vulnerability to weather, natural disasters, human error, and security threats
- Facilitate response/mitigation to accidents/incidents

## VIGILANCE

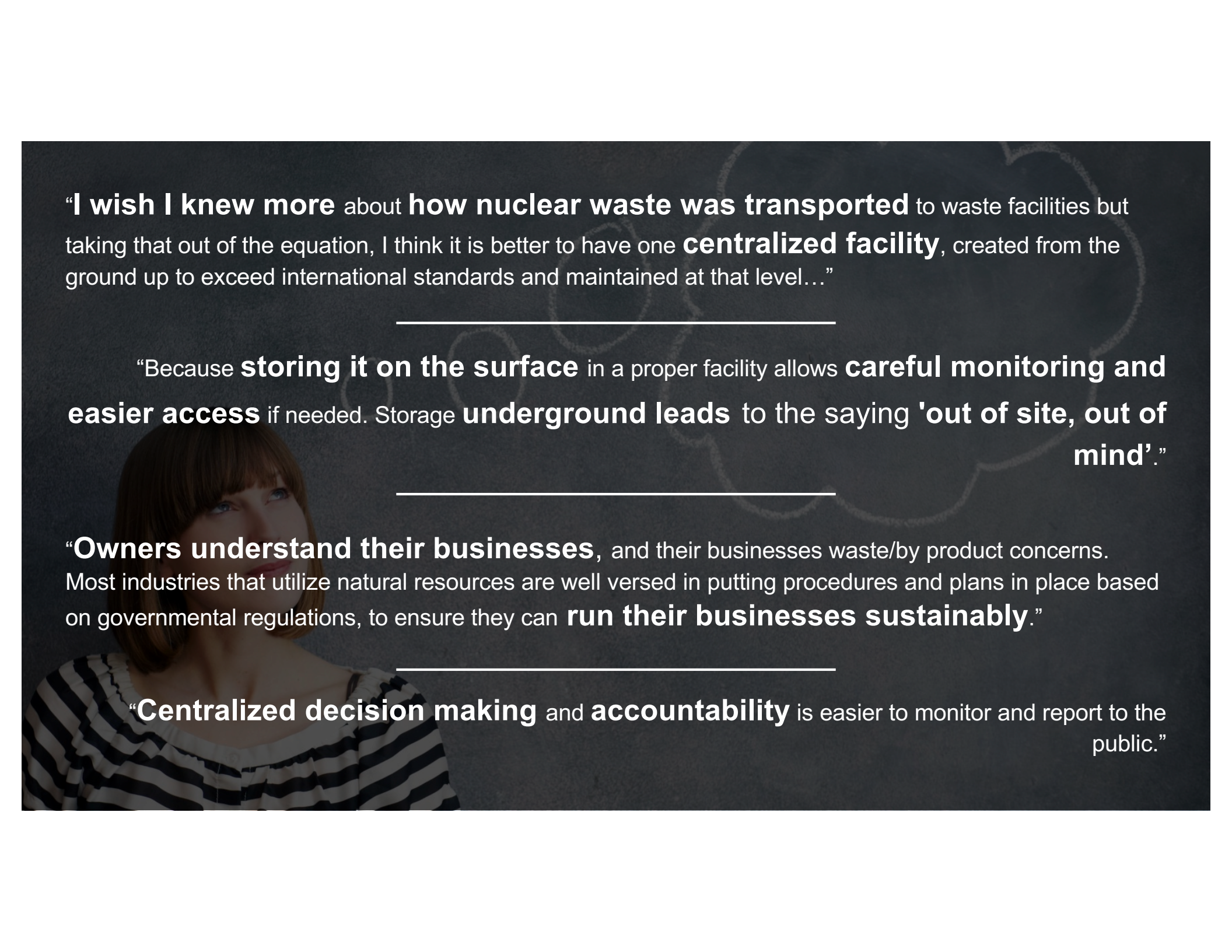
- Encourage vigilance and ease & effectiveness of monitoring
- Promote transparency and accountability

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Reduce impacts on future generations (i.e., moral responsibility and capacity)
- Facilitate adaptation and incorporation of new technologies
- Make use of proven approaches
- Cost less (minor)



# VERBATIM QUOTES



“**I wish I knew more** about **how nuclear waste was transported** to waste facilities but taking that out of the equation, I think it is better to have one **centralized facility**, created from the ground up to exceed international standards and maintained at that level...”

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“Because **storing it on the surface** in a proper facility allows **careful monitoring and easier access** if needed. Storage **underground leads** to the saying 'out of site, out of mind’.”

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“**Owners understand their businesses**, and their businesses waste/by product concerns. Most industries that utilize natural resources are well versed in putting procedures and plans in place based on governmental regulations, to ensure they can **run their businesses sustainably**.”

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“**Centralized decision making** and **accountability** is easier to monitor and report to the public.”

A blurred crowd of people, likely at a public event or protest, with many hands raised in the air. The image has a dark, moody color palette with some highlights. The text is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

# IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A large crowd of people, mostly men, with their hands raised in the air, suggesting a group activity or meeting. The image is dark and has a motion blur effect, giving it a sense of energy and movement. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# POTENTIAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES CAN SERVE AS FOUNDATION

Moving forward:

- Merge
- Add
- Refine
- Understand





## ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS

- What is the future of nuclear?
- Might alternatives emerge and can we adapt?
- What will transportation look like?
- How will siting work?



## COMMUNICATING WHO THE PLAYERS ARE WITHIN A COMPLEX REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Ultimately, faith and trust will lead to acceptance (or not).

Government and private sector are seen as having complementary strengths.

Challenges:

- There is a bewildering array of terms and relationships.
- The [diffuse] regulatory framework is hard to grasp.



# Thank you

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