

France, Germany 'agree to disagree' on nuclear power

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France and Germany are at odds over nuclear power.

Germany and France have "agreed to disagree" on the EU's move to label nuclear energy as green, German European Minister Anna Luehrmann said Friday, denying any conflict between the two European

giants on the issue.

The European Commission has issued a draft proposal to label [nuclear energy](#), along with [natural gas](#), as "green" sources eligible for investment under rules for promoting a carbon-neutral future.

France has led the charge for [nuclear power](#)—its main energy source—to be included on the list, while Germany, which is in the process of shutting all its [nuclear plants](#), remains fiercely opposed to the move.

"We know what the French position is on nuclear power and the French side knows very well what the German position is," Luehrmann told AFP in an interview.

"So we can say we agree to disagree on the issue and then turn to the issues where we want to move forward... from [climate protection](#) to sustainable investments, to the issue of European strategic sovereignty."

The green energy list, known as the EU's "taxonomy", was meant to have landed before the end of 2021, but deep divisions between member states have held it up.

The European Commission quietly distributed a draft text of its plans on New Year's Eve and said it had started consulting with member states on the proposal.

If a majority of member states back it, it will become EU law, coming into effect from 2023.

France, which gets about 70 percent of its power from nuclear, signed a statement supporting nuclear power with nine other EU states in October, including Poland and the Czech Republic.

'Not the majority'

But Germany's Environment Minister Steffi Lemke has said it would be "absolutely wrong" to include nuclear energy on the list, arguing that atomic power "can lead to devastating environmental catastrophes".

Germany shut down three of its six remaining [nuclear power plants](#) late last year and will close the others by the end of 2022, following Angela Merkel's timetable for phasing out atomic energy.

"We have made it very clear as the entire federal government that we are against the inclusion of nuclear as a sustainable financial product," Luehrmann said.

"We have to go in a different direction for climate reasons, but also for reasons of political independence, and I see that as an argument against both gas and nuclear energy. Because the uranium has to come from somewhere," she said.

However, Luehrmann conceded that "we also know that we are not the majority in Europe" on the issue.

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