Corrigé DS 3 - MP -Synthèse - durée: 3 h 8 JANVIER 2024

Can nuclear power save the planet?

As climate deadlines loom, governments are struggling to find clean, reliable sources of energy to meet growing needs. Could nuclear power be the silver bullet? The question is raised by four documents published in 2021: an article from *The Independent*, a pro-nuclear column from *The Guardian,* a *Conversation* piece opposing it and a cartoon by Martin Ferran on the impact of the Fukushima disaster. Nuclear power is making a comeback. For some, it is the best solution to curb climate change, but for others, it remains a technology that could cause more harm than good.

Ten years after Fukushima, governments are realising they need nuclear energy to achieve a net-zeo world by 2050. Countries like Germany, phasing out for health and safety reasons, are struggling without it. To meet their transitional electricity needs, they have had to reopen coal plants, sending carbon emissions soaring (document2). Meanwhile, other countries are going nuclear. After announcing the end of ICE cars by 2030, *The Independent* explains that Britain plans a complete switch to renewable energy by 2035, with fossil energy gradually replaced by wind, solar and nuclear.

When it comes to facing the climate challenge, nuclear power does have many advantages. Not only can nuclear power, according to Boris Johnson quoted in document1, make a country independent from foreign oil and gas and their fluctuating prices, but the column also points out that its output does not vary with the elements -unlike solar and wind energy. The same journalist claims past fears are unjustified: The cold war is over and technology has made Chernobyl-like disasters impossible. Through recycling, nuclear waste has plummeted, while nuclear production, according to document2, generates no more destructive mining or more polluting waste than renewables do.

Yet nuclear enthusiasts have failed to convince environmentalists, who are still wary of the technology. They, as pointed out in document1, deplore its reliance on costly large-scale reactors when the future lies in flexible, decentralised storage solutions. More worryingly, some, as in the *Conversation* opinion piece, sound the alarm bell on new climate-related safety issues. Indeed, with sea levels rising and more extreme weather, many plants are at risk of serious incidents and likely to be closed temporarily or permanently to prevent disasters that could affect millions of people. It is a sobering prospect, as the three-eyed or two-legged Fukushima fish from the cartoon remind us nobody knows the long-term consequences of nuclear disasters on ecosystems, let alone on humans.

There is no silver bullet against climate change. People pushing for/ advocate nuclear energy need to be aware that heavy costs and safety concerns are still the issue. **440 words**

Remarques lexicales: Tous les mots et expressions ci-dessous sont très utiles

To loom: se profilent à l'horizon (en général, suggère une menace)
To curb : ici, *to mitigate*
To phase out: sortir progressivement, supprimer progressivement. (*phasing out nuclear energy:* sortir progressivement du nucléaire). Le contraire serait: *to phase in*
To send sth soaring: faire monter en flèche qq chose
Output: *production*
To be wary of: se méfier de
To sound the alarm bell: tirer la sonnette d'alarme
It is a sobering prospect: cela donne à réfléchir (au sens de : c'est inquiétant)

Remarque grammaticale : *Three-eyed, two-legged :* adjectif composé d'un nom qualifié lui-même d'un adjectif ; le nom devenu adjectif prend un « -d ». L'adjectif n'est pas forcément un chiffre : a blue-eyed boy (un garçon aux yeux bleus)