

Economical Ways for Thorium-Based Fuel utilization in Light Water Reactors

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Abstract

Our analyses has shown that the homogeneous (Th+U)O₂ has not shown any economical advantage over UO₂ the fuel when current fuel management strategies are used. Thus alternative applications of homogeneous (Th+U)O₂ fuel in light water reactors (LWRs) have been investigated to enhance the economics of the thorium fuel cycle. Specifically, we have investigated 1) the recycling of U-233 as a fuel in PWRs and 2) use of homogeneous thorium-uranium fuel in small/medium sized PWRs with a 5-year cycle. The recycling method proposed here is a re-fabrication process like DUPIC, which has a special feature of compliance with the "Spent Fuel Standard" for proliferation resistance throughout the entire fuel cycle, instead of wet reprocessing. The proposed alternatives result in far better fuel economics compared to the homogeneous thorium-uranium fuel cycle. The economics of the recycled thoria-urania and homogeneous thorium-uranium fuel in long-lived cores can be better than the economics of the uranium fuel option.

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우라늄/토륨 핵연료를 이용한 APR-1400용 비균질 노심설계 A Heterogeneous Core Design with U/Th Fuel for APR-1400

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요약

핵확산저항성과 경제성을 최적화시킨 우라늄 씨드 핵연료집합체와 토륨기반 블랭킷 핵연료집합체를 채택하는 비균질 노심을 APR-1400 원자로를 대상으로 설계하였다. 씨드는 18개월 주기의 3 batch로 장전하고 블랭킷은 씨드 9주기(14.5년)동안 1 batch로 장전하는 핵주기를 적용하였다. 씨드와 블랭킷의 노심장전 비율은 1:1로 설계하였으며 노심안전성, 핵확산저항성과 경제성을 비교하였다. 노심설계 결과 APR-1400 UO₂ 노심보다 핵확산저항성과 경제성이 좋게 나타났으며 안전성인자도 높게 평가되었으나, 씨드와 블랭킷의 출력불균형 차이로 생긴 과도한 출력 침투현상을 제어할 수 없었다.