

## Japan to host international nuclear fusion research center: report

*Quid pro quo in research*

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Japan will host a new \$800 million nuclear energy research center after losing a bid to France earlier this year to become the site of a prestigious experimental fusion reactor, a government spokesman said on Wednesday.

The new facility will be constructed at Rokkasho in Aomori in northern Japan, at a cost of 92 billion yen (US\$800million), according to Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology spokesman Takahiro Hayashi.

The city of Rokkasho had been in fierce competition with Cadarache, in southern France, to win the right to host the experimental reactor.

But the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor, or ITER – a six-partner consortium comprising the United States, the European Union, China, Russia, Japan and South Korea – chose the French site in June.

Scientists hope the ITER will produce a clean, safe and endless energy resource and help phase out polluting fossil fuels.

The consortium reached an agreement to build the fusion research center in Japan in exchange for the country's giving up its bid to host the reactor, Kyodo News agency said.

Hayashi would not comment further on the news report, but said Japan and France would continue to cooperate on nuclear energy.