

Referee's comment on the project GEMMA-III

(Investigation of neutrino properties

with the low-background germanium spectrometer GEMMA-III, 2019-2021)

goal of the GEMMA-III project is to study the fundamental parameters of neutrino. In the initial formulation of the Standard Model neutrinos are massless particles. However, now it is known that the Standard Model should be extended to some more general theory because of neutrinos which are the only particles exhibiting experimentally well-defined properties beyond the Standard Model. In many extensions of the Standard Model which include neutrino masses and mixings neutrinos acquire nontrivial electromagnetic properties which allow the direct electromagnetic interactions of neutrinos with electromagnetic fields and particles or with particles which have magnetic moments. Unfortunately, in the easiest extension of the Standard Model a tiny value for the neutrino magnetic moment is predicted at the level less than $\sim 10^{-19}$ Bohr magneton. In addition, in spite of reasonable efforts in studies of electromagnetic properties, up to now there is no experimental confirmation, neither from laboratory studies nor from astrophysical observations in favor of non vanishing neutrino magnetic characteristics. However many experimenters and theoreticians really believe that neutrinos have much greater magnetic moment values and are eagerly searching for it. Therefore, if neutrino magnetic moments, once being experimentally confirmed, will open a window to new physics beyond the easiest extension of the Standard Model.

The primary result of the GEMMA-I phase of the project the best world terrestrial upper limit on the neutrino effective magnetic moment has been obtained as 2.9×10^{-11} Bohr magneton. The discussed next phase of the GEMMA project (GEMMA-III) is aimed for the increase of sensitivity to the neutrino magnetic moment and will reach the level of about $\sim 10^{-12}$ Bohr magneton. This seems quite a reasonable and attainable goal for the GEMMA project. The claimed limit on the neutrino magnetic moment will be reached because of improvements in characteristics of the GEMMA-II experimental setup in respect to GEMMA-I. The most important, in particular, are the following:

1. increasing by factor 2 in the total neutrino flux at the detector because of much closer position of the detector to the reactor core;
2. increasing by factor 3.7 in the total mass of the detector;
3. decreasing of the energy threshold from 2.8 keV to 200 eV.

Furthermore, the experimental setup will be located in the new position (room) with much lower (in order of magnitude) γ -background conditions and will be installed on a moveable platform. This later gives an opportunity to vary on-line the neutrino flux and thus suppress systematic errors.

Due to new low-threshold germanium detectors it will become possible to study the another effect – coherent elastic neutrino-nucleus scattering (CENNS). This process is predicted by Standard Model and recently was observed in accelerator by COHERENT collaboration. It was never observed for the reactor neutrinos, so it would be interesting to compare the obtained results. Due to very high resolution of new detectors (production of CANBERRA) it will be possible to decrease energy threshold till 200 eV which makes such detection possible. It is expected to have about 10 events per day from CENNS, so GEMMA-III project can investigate this process with a high precision and put a limit on non-standard neutrino interactions. Some other interesting investigations including sterile neutrino search or reactor monitoring are possible within this project.

The JINR team of the GEMMA-II project has an ample experience in carrying out the first experiments in physics of low-energy weak interactions and there is no doubt that the proposed project can be successfully implemented and thus deserves all possible support.

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