



COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Eleventh Session

Rome, 4-8 April 2016

Special Topics Session on Sea Containers

Agenda item 14

Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat

1. The tenth session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) in March 2015¹ noted there would be a special topics session held at CPM-11 (2016) to hear Contracting Parties' (CPs) views on sea containers, and that the development of a draft standard on the topic *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001) would be delayed pending the outcome of the special topics session.

2. The aim of this paper is to provide information to contracting parties (CPs) on the tentative programme for the special topics session and on the work that has been accomplished so far regarding the issue of sea containers, as well as to propose decisions for consideration by the CPM.

I. Tentative programme for CPM-11 (2016) special topics session on sea containers

3. The special topic session is planned for Thursday 7 April 2016 afternoon 15:00-18:00. According to the decisions that were made by the CPM Bureau, the tentative programme is as follows:

- i) Introductory key-note speech
- ii) Presentation on the risks associated with the movement of sea containers (pathway risk analysis)
- iii) Presentation on the logistics of movement of sea containers

¹ CPM-10 (2015) final report, section 8.7.1

- iv) Presentations on experiences from two National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) on checking or inspection of sea containers (i.e. practical aspects)
- v) Plenary questions and discussion
- vi) Conclusions and decisions of the CPM on a way forward with this topic

4. More information on the programme and summaries of presentations will be provided in advance as a CPM information (INF) document to allow CPs to prepare for the session. CPs are also invited to submit their views to the IPPC Secretariat (ippc@fao.org) by 11 March 2016 so they can be posted on the IPP.

II. Background information on the work accomplished so far regarding sea containers²

A. Development of an International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) on the topic Minimizing pest movement by sea containers (2008-001)

5. CPM-3 (2008) had added the topic to the *List of Topics for IPPC Standards*, with a high priority (which was changed to priority 1 by CPM-7 (2012)). A specification³ was approved by the Standards Committee (SC) in November 2009. A Steering Committee on sea containers⁴ met in November 2011 in Rome, followed by an Expert Working Group (EWG) meeting which took place in May 2012 in Malaysia⁵. A draft ISPM on *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001) was developed as a result of these meetings.

6. The SC, at its May 2013 meeting, reviewed and revised the draft standard and decided to submit a preliminary version⁶ of the draft ISPM to the IPPC member consultation from 1 July to 1 December 2013 to get general conceptual comments.

7. In November 2014, the SC agreed to the Terms of Reference (TORs)⁷ for the next EWG meeting on the topic, whose first task would be to analyze the conceptual member comments which were collected during the 2013 member consultation⁸. Then, the EWG should produce a revised draft standard or recommend to the SC how to proceed. In order to fulfil better the needs for expertise, the SC selected additional EWG members and experts to be invited to the new EWG meeting⁹. These experts were also invited to attend the special topic session at CPM-11 (2016) to hear CPM members' views. Pending the outcome of the special topics session, the new EWG on sea containers is tentatively planned on 11-15 July 2016, in Long Beach, Los Angeles, California, USA.

8. It is to be noted that, despite the important work accomplished so far on the topic, different opinions about how to progress with the development of a draft standard have been expressed by CPs during CPM meetings¹⁰ as well as during the 2013 member consultation: some CPM members had stressed that the topic was important and that a comprehensive standard was needed to help NPPOs address all issues regarding sea containers, whereas others felt that the issue was too vast to be covered in one standard. The same diverging views had also been stated by SC members in the May 2014 SC meeting¹¹ and many SC members had expressed concern that the draft was still unclear on how the

² Detailed information on this topic is available on the Sea Containers page on the IPPC website.

³ See Specification 51

⁴ See Report of the sea containers Steering Committee

⁵ See May 2012 EWG meeting report

⁶ See Preliminary draft ISPM and May 2013 SC meeting report

⁷ See Appendix 16 of the November 2014 SC meeting report

⁸ See Compiled member comments from the 2013 member consultation

⁹ See current Sea containers membership list

¹⁰ See meeting reports of CPM-8 (2013), section 8.1.4; CPM-9 (2014), section 9.4.3; and CPM-10 (2015), section 8.7.

¹¹ See May 2014 SC meeting report, section 3.2.

standard would be implemented in practice. These differences in opinions had led to the proposal made at CPM-10 (2015) to hold a special topics session during CPM-11 (2016) to highlight the risks and to enhance understanding of the complex issues related to the topic, with the purpose of guiding the CPM to determine the way forward.

9. As regards to the possible development of a standard on *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001) and its future implementation, the following proposals had been made and need to be considered further by contracting parties:

- Although containers moved to a packing location could be contaminated with pests when they are loaded, it was proposed as a compromise to have empty sea containers checked, and if necessary cleaned, in depots before loading rather than at import or export. Containers that are transported empty to another country (repositioning) will not go through a depot in the country of departure but may go through a depot in the country of arrival. The reasons for this compromise were that it would be less disruptive to the movement of sea containers (safety checks and interior cleaning are already done in depots) and that, for safety reasons, loaded containers cannot be easily checked.
- The EWG had suggested that shipping companies should be responsible for the cleanliness of sea containers because they already provide oversight to the depots and audit them, and NPPOs may not have enough resources to certify all depots. What auditing by NPPOs would then be necessary is still to be discussed.
- The implementation of *the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code)* revised in 2014 by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) (refer also to section 2.2) should lead to increased phytosanitary examination and cleaning of containers in depots by shipping companies. Thus it could be considered whether an ISPM on sea containers should only focus on establishing the criteria for clean sea containers.
- Shipping companies will need to be engaged in the implementation. If sea containers are checked, cleaned if necessary, and documentary verification is provided to attest their compliance, it should also be considered how shipping companies would benefit from this compliance.

B. Acknowledgement of the work done on the IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code)

10. With the support from the IPPC EWG on Sea Containers, several elements of phytosanitary relevance (e.g. information on pests and other contamination which may be associated with cargo transport units, as well as very useful practical guidelines for cleanliness, cleaning, packing and handling) have been incorporated into the revision of *the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code)* undertaken by IMO, ILO and UNECE¹².

11. CPM-9 (2014)¹³ expressed its recognition and appreciation for the IMO/ILO/UNECE joint initiative of revising the *CTU Code*, and welcomed the adoption of the *CTU Code*. The CPM emphasized that the careful implementation of the revised *CTU Code* by all operators responsible for and involved in the packing and handling of sea containers is crucial for preventing the spread of pests and invasive alien species.

¹² The *CTU Code* was endorsed by the IMO Maritime Safety Committee, the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and the ILO Governing Body in 2014. It is available through this link. The specific parts of interest for phytosanitary aspects are chapter 3, chapter 4, chapter 8 (sections 8.2.4.4, 8.3.2.4 and 8.3.2.5), annex 6, annex 7 and annex 9.

¹³ See April 2014 CPM-9 report, section 9.4.3

12. As decided by the CPM, the IPPC Secretariat had written to the heads of IMO, ILO and UNECE to express appreciation for the work done and continued to liaise with these organizations to raise awareness amongst their members of the risks arising from the international movement of sea containers and the benefit of ensuring that sea containers are clean. The CPM had also encouraged contracting parties to liaise with national counterparts who had been involved in that work.

C. Adoption of a CPM Recommendation on Sea Containers

13. CPM-10 (2015) adopted *Recommendation CPM 10/2015_01 on Sea Containers*¹⁴. By this recommendation, the CPM encourages NPPOs to:

- recognize the risk of pests and regulated articles that can be moved with sea containers,
- communicate to those involved in packing of sea containers or in the movement of sea containers in and out of their country information about the risk of pest movement with sea containers,
- support the implementation of the relevant parts of the IMO/ILO/UNECE *CTU Code*,
- gather information on pest movement via the sea containers themselves, rather than with the cargo moved within sea containers and to share such information, when and if, serious trends arise, and
- analyse the possible pest risk and, where justified and practical, take proportionate action to mitigate risk.

14. As requested by the CPM, the IPPC Secretariat had written to the Secretariats to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) requesting they endorse the CPM *Recommendation on Sea Containers* with the aim of minimizing the movement of pests with sea containers and to consider developing, in parallel, their own recommendations regarding organisms of their concern with similar involvement of their members and industry.

III. Recommendations

15. The CPM is invited to:

1) Consider the following three options:

- a) **Option 1:** the information available indicates that the risks related to the movement of pests by sea containers are high and the development of a standard is needed to help NPPOs address issues regarding cleanliness of sea containers. The CPM agrees that the draft ISPM on *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001) should be urgently progressed according to the CPM allocated priority 1.
- b) **Option 2:** although the CPM recognises the risks related to the movement of pests by sea containers, harmonization of requirements through the development of a draft ISPM on *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001) is currently considered as complex to achieve. It is believed that the implementation of the IMO/ILO/UNECE *CTU Code* and of *Recommendation CPM 10/2015_01 on Sea Containers* will help address contamination risks posed by sea containers. The CPM agrees that the status of the topic on *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001) should be changed to pending and reconsidered by the CPM in five years to allow for the implementation of the *CTU Code* and *Recommendation CPM 10/2015_01* and an analysis of their impact on reducing pest movement by sea containers to determine if a standard would still be needed.
- c) **Option 3:** given the available information, the development of a draft ISPM on *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001) is not considered anymore as a

¹⁴ Recommendation CPM 10/2015_01 Sea Containers

priority and as an appropriate tool to deal with risks related to the movement of pests by sea containers. It is believed that the implementation of the IMO/ILO/UNECE *CTU Code* and of *Recommendation CPM 10/2015_01 on Sea Containers* will suffice to help address efficiently contamination risks posed by sea containers. The CPM agrees that the topic on *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001) should be deleted from the *List of topics for IPPC standards*.

- 2) Decide on which option and/or other action to be taken regarding the topic *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001).