

**Input to SG report on oceans and the law of the sea the role of seafood in global food security**

Executive Summary



*Coastal Pollution and Seafood Safety*

### *Marine radioactivity and its impact on global seafood supplies*

In 2013 the IAEA has prepared updates of two technical reports related to seafood safety with respect to the presence of radioactive materials in the oceans:

The report “Determining the Suitability of Materials for Disposal at Sea Under the London Convention and London Protocol: A Radiological Assessment Procedure” contains a radiological assessment procedure to determine, if materials that are candidate for dumping at sea, contain radionuclide levels which can be considered de minimis, e.g. that the radiological impact to humans and the environment due to the input of these materials in the ocean waters can be considered negligible. The radiological assessment includes the consideration of seafood in the human food-chain as well as the impact to representative organisms of marine flora and fauna, using for this purpose the concepts and criteria defined by the International Commission of Radiation Protection (ICRP) and included the IAEA related Safety Standards. This work by the IAEA was done at the request of the Contracting Parties of the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by dumping of wastes and Other Matter (the London Convention 1972). The updated procedure was endorsed in October 2013 by the Contracting Parties of this Convention. This report is currently in the process of publication by the IAEA and will be included in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Guidelines on the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter.

The second report prepared by the IAEA in cooperation with IMO is an update of the inventory of radioactive materials at sea resulting from historical marine dumping activities, accidents and losses at sea. The process of updating this inventory concluded in December 2013; a report titled “Inventory of Waste Disposals, Accidents and Losses at Sea Involving Radioactive Materials” is in the publication process by the IAEA. This report, prepared at the request of the Contracting Parties of the London Convention 1972, is intended to be used as an information base to assess the impact of radionuclide sources in the marine environment.

To enable Member States in the region to evaluate the extent and the possible impact of the releases of radioactivity from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant into the marine environment and make scientific assessments of the data, the IAEA is carrying out a regional technical cooperation project together with Asian and Pacific countries with the title “Marine benchmark study on the possible impact of the Fukushima radioactive releases in the Asia-Pacific Region”. This project will enhance regional mechanisms and competency of the Member States in the monitoring and assessment of the possible impact and consequences of uncontrolled releases of radioactivity into the marine environment following a nuclear event.

Further information: <http://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/2012/radioactiverelease.html>

<http://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/2011/tcmarine.html>

[http://www.iaea.org/technicalcooperation/Regions/Asia-and-the-Pacific/News/09102013\\_Palau\\_postFukushima.html](http://www.iaea.org/technicalcooperation/Regions/Asia-and-the-Pacific/News/09102013_Palau_postFukushima.html)

In November 2013, the IAEA, through its Environment Laboratories started collaboration with Japanese authorities on sea area monitoring. The IAEA will assist Japanese laboratories to improve their performance in analysing marine samples including marine food by means of Proficiency Tests and sample exchange by interlaboratory comparisons, thus increasing the reliability and the level of confidence of the Japanese monitoring results in a transparent manner to ensure safety of marine food in relation to radioactive substances.