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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR ENERGY

DIRECTORATE D - Nuclear Energy
Radiation Protection

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ECURIE information message

Subject: Ships and ship containers from Japan

At the meeting of the Group of Experts established under Article 31 of the Euratom Treaty on 8-9 June 2011 the Experts issued opinions on both the import controls for food and the screening of ships and containers arriving from Japan in European harbours. These opinions can be found on the website of the Directorate-General for Energy (http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/radiation_protection/doc/art31/2011_06_09_opinion_fukushima_nonfood.pdf)

Further to the ECURIE information messages, issued on 15 April 2011, on the checks on ships and ship containers, the Experts confirmed the adequacy of the screening thresholds proposed by the European Commission. The Experts are of the opinion that such screening may need to be continued for as long as ships on a long journey, which having left Japan during March, have still not been checked in a European harbour.

The checks in European harbours have to date not shown any significant contamination. All observed dose-rates have been lower than, or just above, the defined threshold. Since the time at which controls on ships leaving Japan were instigated, as stated in the ECURIE information message of 28 April 2011, there has been a further downward trend in the frequency of observed contamination. For nearly one month no contamination has been reported.

The Commission is therefore of the opinion that there is no longer a need for systematic screening of ships and containers. This statement is in line with the position of the International Maritime Organisation that was referred to in the previous message. The Commission nevertheless requests that Member States notify, by means of an ECURIE message, any future significant contamination found to require remedial action.

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