

Transport – Stowaway: Container / bulk

Species introduced as accidental stowaways on containers, bulk freight, air freight, rail freight etc. (e.g., in shipping containers, other cargo in boxes)

The transportation of freight (bulk cargo, merchandize and commodities) is handled by ships, boats, barges, airplanes, trains, vans and trucks. Accidental stowaways (including insects, reptiles, mammals and even birds) hidden in or on shipping containers can be transported between locations and countries by land, sea or air and introduced to new environments.

Similar or related pathways

- Hitchhikers in or on airplane
- Hitchhikers on ship / boat
- Stowaway on other means of transport



Species example

The yellow crazy ant (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*) can form supercolonies that have devastating affects on native species and ecosystems. They are introduced via movement of goods, machinery, and packaging materials within containers (© John Tann CC by 2.0).

How can we manage these pathways?

National level

- ✓ Application of IPPC sea container cleanliness guidance recommended actions at key interchange points for imports and exports (e.g. [CPM Recommendation 6](#) and the [Sea Container Surveys for National Plant Protection Organizations guide](#)).
- ✓ Strengthen inspection and quarantine capacity across customs and port authorities.
- ✓ Undertake risk-based assessment to focus inspection effort on high-risk imports.
- ✓ Enact legislation requiring containers being imported to meet cleanliness standards.
- ✓ Undertake monitoring at ports and adjacent areas to detect new introductions and rapidly eradicate before they can establish and spread.
- ✓ Establish agreements between customs and scientific institutions to support identification and response.

Regional level

- ✓ Support the implementation of IPPC sea container cleanliness recommended actions prior to export, i.e. at the container depot, packing location, and export terminal.
- ✓ Sharing of information and data on new IAS introductions, joint capacity building and training
- ✓ Engagement with the shipping industry for awareness raising and capacity building, promote best practices
- ✓ Engagement with key exporting countries to the region on the adoption of standards and protocols to reduce the risk of stowaways

Data source: IUCN. 2018. Guidance for interpretation of the CBD categories of pathways for the introduction of invasive alien species.

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International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) resources on reducing the spread of invasive pests by sea containers:

