

BALTIC SEA ENVIRONMENTAL DECLARATION, 1992

Environment Ministers, and High Representatives of the Governments of

The Contracting Parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, 1974;

The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic,
The Republic of Latvia,
The Kingdom of Norway;

and the Representative of
The Commission of the European Communities

ASSEMBLED at the Diplomatic Conference on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area in Helsinki on 9 April 1992,

CONSCIOUS of the economic, social and cultural values of the Baltic Sea Area for peoples living in its catchment area,

CONSCIOUS ALSO that the ecology of the sea and of the coastal and estuarine areas is linked to environmental conditions in the catchment area of the Baltic Sea, and that airborne pollution emanates from even more distant areas,

AWARE of the political, social and economic changes taking place in countries surrounding the Baltic Sea,

REAFFIRMING their view that sustainable and environmentally sound development is dependent on profound reorientation in all sectors of society,

CONCERNED about the deterioration of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area in spite of measures taken in the Baltic Sea States to decrease the pollution load to the Baltic Sea,

CONVINCED that the Baltic Sea and its living resources can be restored to a sound ecological balance only if measures to decisively reduce harmful inputs to the atmosphere, to the catchment area and to the Baltic Sea are taken jointly and urgently,

RECALLING the provisions of the Helsinki Convention of 1974 and the Declaration on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea, adopted on 15 February 1988 by Ministers responsible for the environmental protection in the Baltic Sea States,

RECALLING ALSO the Baltic Sea Declaration of 3 September 1990, in which Heads of Governments and High Political Representatives of the Baltic Sea States, Norway and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic and the Representative of the Commission of the European Communities expressed their firm determination to assure the ecological restoration of the Baltic Sea and for that purpose to prepare urgently a Joint Comprehensive Programme in the framework of the Helsinki Commission,

AWARE that the provisions of the new Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area adopted by the Diplomatic Conference on this day will require that further measures are taken in the internal waters of the States and in the whole catchment area in order to protect and enhance the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area,

NOTING the work done by the ad hoc high level Task Force, established within the framework of the Helsinki Commission to elaborate the Joint Comprehensive Programme in accordance with the Baltic Sea Declaration,

ENDORISING the key elements of the preliminary version of the Programme, elaborated by the Task Force,

WELCOMING the decision by the Helsinki Commission to provide funding to establish a special mechanism within the framework of the Commission to co-ordinate and monitor Programme implementation and to provide a focal point for periodic updating of the Programme,

WELCOMING ALSO the expressed intention of the co-operating international financial institutions to support the implementation of this Programme,

REAFFIRMING their determination to assure the ecological restoration of the Baltic Sea as an urgent matter and in this regard to make all efforts to ensure that the key elements of the Programme are initiated by 1993 as called for in the Baltic Sea Declaration,

HAVE AGREED TO

1. **APPROVE** the strategic approach and principles reflected in the Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme (Preliminary version),
2. **TAKE ACTION** to promote implementation of the Programme in the entire catchment area of the Baltic Sea,
3. **ASSURE** that measures to implement the Programme will cause decisive reduction of the pollution load on the Baltic Sea Area also from its catchment area, ensuring the possibility of self-restoration of the marine environment and its ecological balance,
4. **APPLY** the Precautionary Principle and take all necessary steps to ensure the use of Best Environmental Practice and Best Available Technology when designing measures to eliminate pollution and improve environmental management,

5. **CO-OPERATE** bilaterally, multilaterally and in all relevant international fora in order to achieve the objectives of the Programme,
6. **REQUEST** the continued partnership of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Nordic Investment Bank and the World Bank to facilitate the implementation of the Programme,
7. **STRENGTHEN AND FURTHER DEVELOP** the legal and administrative arrangements necessary to ensure the urgent implementation and updating of the Programme,
8. **ESTABLISH** within the framework of the Helsinki Commission a special mechanism to finalize the Programme, co-ordinate, facilitate and monitor Programme implementation, and initiate periodic updating of the Programme,
9. **INTENSIFY** relevant research and exchange of information within the framework of the Helsinki Commission and among all interested parties, improve the monitoring of reductions of pollutants, increase understanding of their impact on the environment and its living resources, and develop and disseminate cost-effective environmental management technologies,
10. **MAKE ALL EFFORTS** to promptly ensure effective funding of feasibility studies for priority actions identified in the Programme, provided the investments are carried out in the near future,
11. **MOBILIZE** local, national, bilateral and international financial resources for implementation of the Programme, and to this end, request the four co-operating international financial institutions to assist in organizing a special conference in late 1992 or early 1993,
12. **MAKE ALL EFFORTS**, when necessary, to strengthen the environmental management institutions, establish sound and cost-effective environmental control policies and regulations, including implementation of the polluter-pays principle and the environmental impact assessment, as well as to increase local capacity to finance environmental measures, including the mobilization of private capital resources,
13. **RECOMMEND** that the 1994 meeting of the Helsinki Commission to be held at ministerial level reviews the progress of implementation of the Programme.