

CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE
ENVIRONMENT OF THE BALTIC SEA AREA

HELSINKI COMMISSION - Baltic Marine
Environment Protection Commission HELCOM 15/18
11 March 1994
15th Meeting
Helsinki, 8-11 March 1994

**REPORT OF THE 15TH MEETING OF THE HELSINKI COMMISSION
- BALTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMISSION -
held in Helsinki, from 8 to 11 March 1994**

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Agenda Item 6 DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL

6.1 The Commission, meeting at the level of Environment Ministers,

RECALLING the 1988 Declaration on the Protection of the Environment of the Baltic Sea, the 1990 Baltic Sea Declaration, the 1992 Baltic Sea Environmental Declaration and the 1993 Declaration on Resource Mobilization for the Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme;

HAVING REVIEWED the comprehensive background document on the intergovernmental activities in the framework of the Helsinki Convention during 1974-1993 (HELCOM 15/2a/1), the interim status report on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration 1988 and related HELCOM Recommendations (HELCOM 15/4/1/Rev.1) and the Annual Report of the HELCOM Programme Implementation Task Force (HELCOM 15/11/1);

TAKING NOTE of the Report on Chemical Munitions Dumped in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM 15/5/1);

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the latest maritime incidents involving oil and other harmful substances and **BEING AWARE** of the threat to the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area caused by carriage of such substances;

URGES the Contracting Parties

1. to accelerate the effective implementation of HELCOM decisions and recommendations as well as to improve timely and qualitative reporting of the results to the Commission;
2. to accelerate the implementation of national measures aimed at a 50 % reduction of emissions of toxic and/or persistent and bioaccumulating substances introduced to the marine environment of the Baltic Sea;
3. to carry out further scientific studies on toxic and/or persistent and bioaccumulating organic compounds (mainly halogenated) in the marine environment and their transfer through the food chains, especially in relation to coastal areas;
4. to make further efforts to minimize the use and emissions of toxic and/or persistent and bioaccumulating substances and to ensure a reduction of pollution to levels that are not harmful to man or

nature with the aim of their elimination by substitution by less harmful substances and/or technical installations;

5. to accelerate the implementation of measures to reduce substantially the emissions of nutrients and to this end prepare an assessment of national programmes for consideration by HELCOM 17, with a step-wise approach in limiting further the inputs of nutrients from different sources and taking into account the provisions of relevant international regulations;
6. to take further steps to strengthen the overall ability to respond to marine pollution incidents in particular by
 - providing assistance, including supportive financial arrangements when appropriate, to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in building up their national abilities to combat pollution and, in particular, in the establishment of national authorities, responsible for responding to spillages at sea, development of contingency planning, education and training of personnel and in research and development on the basis of bilateral and multilateral agreements,
 - giving due consideration to the needs of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for waiving or postponing of the costs of assistance rendered in a combatting operation, if the provisions and rules of international law and national or supra-national regulations do not provide full compensation for the costs incurred,
 - establishing as a matter of priority, adequate national legislative, organizational and material abilities to respond also to pollution incidents involving harmful substances other than oil,
 - intensifying the aerial surveillance with remote sensing equipment;

URGES ALSO

7. the Signatories of the 1992 Helsinki Convention to accelerate its ratification;
8. the Baltic Sea States to initiate the process of establishing Exclusive Economic Zones in the Baltic Sea Area;
9. all members and observers of the Programme Implementation Task Force to make every effort to further the implementation of the Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme and to this end provide resources for environmental expenditures and consider further methods for mobilization of resources to accelerate work in all key elements of the Programme;
10. all members of the Programme Implementation Task Force to make proper use of economic instruments which may serve as incentives to reduce pollution of the marine environment;
 - base user charges/tariffs for fresh and waste water on operational, maintenance and capital costs,
 - consider effective fees on point source emissions of specific harmful substances;
 - avoid subsidizing chemical fertilizers and consider, as appropriate, effective charges on these products;

11. the Contracting Parties concerned to establish an appropriate legal and institutional framework for securing investments within the Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme;
12. the Contracting Parties to take all efforts to increase public awareness of the protection needs of the Baltic Sea marine environment, of the actions taken so far and of the need for future actions;
13. the Contracting Parties and Latvia to provide HELCOM by 1995 with information and official documentation concerning chemical munitions dumped after 1947;

ENCOURAGES

14. the International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission (IBSFC) in light of the threats to the Baltic fish species (e.g. the wild Baltic salmon) to consider further action for their protection;
15. potential donors to support country- or area-wise environmental performance reviews for the Baltic Sea countries with economies in transition by allocating sufficient resources, financial and/or in kind, for this purpose; and

DECIDES that

16. in addition to the existing monitoring programme for the open Baltic Sea, and harmonized with it, an integrated monitoring programme for coastal areas of the Baltic Sea shall be elaborated and adopted;
17. regulations shall be developed in order to protect the coastal strip and sea bottom of the Baltic Sea Area by appropriate means against environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity;
18. a system of Coastal and Marine Baltic Sea Protected Areas (BSPA) shall be developed;
19. the status of endangerment of different coastal and marine biotopes and nature types in the Baltic Sea Area shall be evaluated with a view to compiling a "Red Data Book on Threatened Biotopes of the Baltic Sea Area";
20. the requirements of HELCOM Recommendations concerning limitation of land-based pollution shall be, as a rule, applied to all relevant polluters and pollutants in the whole catchment area of the Baltic Sea as envisaged by paragraph 1 of Article 6 of the 1992 Convention;
21. all relevant pollutants shall be subject to limitation, where appropriate, in a step-wise manner, in the sectors identified as substantial sources of pollution;
22. the Annexes in the Convention shall be amended by incorporating relevant provisions in the agriculture field;
23. HELCOM Recommendations aimed at the reduction of nutrient losses from agriculture, adopted in 1988-1993, shall be further developed towards Best Environmental Practice, especially by
 - establishing appropriate storage facilities,

- producing by HELCOM 18 in 1997 a concrete operational definition of balanced fertilization, an agreed methodology for assessing nitrogen and phosphorus surplus over a defined area and developing by 1997 specific reduction targets for different agricultural loss categories, taking into account the work within the Paris Commission,
 - achieving by the year 2000 balanced fertilization for nitrogen and phosphorus in agricultural production, subject to an agreement on definitions;
24. the final report on implementation of the 50% reduction part of the Ministerial Declaration 1988 shall be prepared with a view to submitting it for consideration by the Commission in 1997 but not later than 1998;
 25. the Baltic Sea Conference of Ministers of Transport shall be invited to co-operate closely with HELCOM on matters related to reduction of pollution from traffic including maritime traffic, especially with regard to lead, NOx, PAH and SOx emissions;
 26. active cooperation with the Executive Body of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its relevant subsidiary bodies shall be exercised to strengthen the efforts to reduce the loads of nitrogen, heavy metals and persistent, toxic organic pollutants to the Baltic area;
 27. the Commission shall keep itself informed about the work within the joint project "Visions and Strategies Around the Baltic Sea 2010" and inform about the HELCOM work within this project and, when relevant, cooperate with the group of Focal Points responsible for the work within "Visions and Strategies Around the Baltic Sea 2010";
 28. a Code of Conduct for measures for environmentally sound management and transport of hazardous wastes shall be developed by 1995 on the basis of the pertinent OECD decision as an interim arrangement within the Helsinki Commission, pending the entering into force of the Basel Convention in the entire Baltic Sea region;
 29. intensive co-operation with appropriate international fora in developing further legal, technical and operational measures, aimed at the prevention of pollution from shipping, shall be continued by focusing, inter alia, on
 - additional tanker safety measures,
 - safe operation of ships in the Baltic Sea Area,
 - prevention of air pollution from ships and the recognition of the Baltic Sea as a "special area" under new Annex to MARPOL 73/78 on prevention of air pollution from ships;
 - improvement of the safety of the transport of hazardous packaged goods and hazardous substances in bulk using the best available transport means with regard to the risk potential of the relevant hazardous substances;
 30. an overall strategy shall be developed to deal even more effectively with ship generated waste and to improve the use of reception facilities based on and including measures already taken;

31. intensified co-operation shall be sought in investigations regarding violations of anti-pollution regulations, in harmonization of bringing evidence to court and in providing assistance in conducting such investigations;
32. a proposal on how to deal with maritime incidents involving substances which are harmful in accordance with the Helsinki Convention but not regulated in MARPOL 73/78 or Protocol relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Case of Pollution by Substances other than oil, 1973, shall be decided by HELCOM 16 in 1995;
33. the work on dumped chemical munitions shall be continued in order to follow and implement substantial recommendations provided in the Report on Chemical Munitions Dumped in the Baltic Sea;
34. a thorough analysis of the work of the Commission shall be carried out as soon as possible in order to concentrate the joint and national resources on high priority issues in a concerted and efficient way;
35. crucial improvement of national reporting routines and activities shall be achieved during 1994 to ensure a comprehensive reporting of the 1995 input data and technical reduction measures pertinent to the goals of the Ministerial Declaration 1988.

6.2 The Commission, acting at the level of Ministers of the Environment, adopted HELCOM Recommendation 15/1 concerning protection of the coastal strip as reported in paragraphs 7.47 and 7.48 of this Report.