

HELCOM Ministerial Declaration

on the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

20 May 2010, Moscow



Helsinki Commission
Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

We the Ministers of the Environment of the Baltic Coastal Countries and the High Level EU Representative

RECALLING

- the adoption of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan at the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in Krakow, on 15 November 2007, and the commitments made by the Contracting Parties to take decisive actions to achieve the Baltic Sea in a good ecological and environmental status by 2021;
- in particular the commitments to diminish nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea to the maximum allowable level, and not later than 2016 to take actions to reduce the nutrient load from waterborne and airborne inputs;
- the success of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan which has received global recognition bringing new and innovative approaches in regional marine environment management; and
- that this has led to expectations for the Baltic Sea cooperation to serve as a model for regional cooperation, through the implementation by the countries of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan;

STRESSING

- that HELCOM's work has led to significant environmental improvements in many areas, but that a large number of problems have yet to be fully addressed and that major threats still persist which are hindering restoration, protection and sustainable utilisation of the marine goods and services provided by the Baltic Sea;
- that the efforts to restore the good environmental status of the Baltic Sea require forceful national and international actions that exceed the capacity of any individual country and therefore the restoration also demands a common line of actions and the support of a wide range of stakeholders;
- the need for concrete actions, and for the countries to work based on common principles designed to ensure the reaching of good environmental status as defined in the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan; and
- the value of the HELCOM work and in particular of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan as a regional contribution to achieving good environmental status according to the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive for those countries being also EU Member States;

WELCOMING

- the Baltic Sea Action Summit, on 10 February 2010 with participation of the Heads of States' and Governments' of the Baltic Region countries, a high level representative of the European Commission, business communities and Non-Governmental Organizations;

WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO national legislation, international agreements and legislation of the European Community;

DO HEREBY ADOPT this HELCOM Moscow Ministerial Declaration.

I Progress since the adoption of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

WELCOME

- the significant work undertaken by the Contracting Parties in implementing the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and, in particular, the work to put in place National Implementation Programmes for the eutrophication and hazardous substances segments of the HELCOM

Baltic Sea Action Plan, constituting the foundation for the national work of implementing the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan;

AGREE

- at a high-level segment during HELCOM 32/2011 in cooperation with the International Financing Institutions and other stakeholders taking into account available funding programmes to make an assessment of the National Implementation Programmes, with the aim to identify, facilitate and speed up the preparation of bankable projects;

ALSO WELCOME

- the HELCOM Initial Holistic Assessment of the ecosystem health of the Baltic Sea 2003-2007 and the supporting thematic assessments which give extensive information on the current environmental status of the Baltic Sea, the predominant pressures and impacts, as well as an economic analysis of the costs and benefits of the protection of the marine environment;
- the work which has been initiated by regional and local stakeholders and private sector groups in line with the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, and encourage further regional and local initiatives in developing concrete plans, project proposals and measures to improve the status of the Baltic Sea;
- that the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan concepts and approaches have been used in several other international processes including the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and that this strengthens synergies and improves possibilities for the integration of policies for the protection of the marine environment;
- the significant progress achieved in the remediation of the HELCOM hot spots under the Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme (JCP) with the help of funding provided from consolidated national and external sources and amongst them – the breakthrough with the completion of the South-West and Central Waste Water Treatment Plants in the City of St. Petersburg, utilizing an innovative phosphorus-removal technique, contributing to the improvement of the environmental conditions of the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea in general;
- the implementation by the Government of Poland of the National Wastewater Treatment Programme (NWWTP) which is the largest with regard to investment and most costly from among all the tasks resulting from the implementation of the EU directives in the field of environmental protection in Poland. The NWWTP, requiring in the period until 2015 over 8 billion Euro, foresees construction of 30 thousand km of collecting systems, construction of 177 wastewater treatment plants, modernization and expansion of 569 wastewater treatment plants, amongst them:
 - Czajka wastewater treatment plant in Warsaw which is one of the largest investments in Europe with a value of 650 million Euro. It will handle over 1.5 million residents in 2012 and ensure a high level of purification in accordance with EU standards;
 - the Pomorzany wastewater treatment plant in Szczecin with the cost of 282 million Euro, handling about 340 thousand residents, reducing pollutant loads in wastewater by 84.6% for nitrogen and 90% for phosphorus and enabling the deletion of Szczecin from the “Hot Spots” list;
 - Płaszów wastewater treatment plant in Cracow, handling now about 560 thousand residents, reducing pollutant loads in wastewater by 88.8% of nitrogen and 96.1% of phosphorus including the scheduled thermal utilization of sewage sludge station allowing to nearly 9-fold reduction in the amount of waste generated in the process wastewater treatment.
- the adoption by the Government of the Russian Federation on August 27, 2009 (No. 1235-p) of the Water Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period till 2020, which identifies the key actions for the development of water resources management and sustainable use,

protection of water bodies, *inter alia* transboundary water courses. The Strategy is based on the principles of providing the state policy concerning the use and protection of water bodies, the adoption and implementation of management decisions on the conservation of aquatic ecosystems for the social and economic effects and effective cooperation between the partners in the field;

and in this respect specifically

ACKNOWLEDGE

- the developments and initiatives under international frameworks that will contribute to the improvement of the environmental state of the Baltic Sea, including:
 - Decision 15 of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; the Copenhagen Accord;
 - the inclusion of new hazardous substances under the scope of the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants and the 1998 Aarhus Protocol on persistent organic pollutants under the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution;
 - the work of UNEP to establish a global mercury convention and a synergy platform between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions;
 - the work of International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) especially in providing advice on fisheries;
 - the activity of the International Maritime Organization in the field of marine environment protection and enhancing safety of navigation, including the adoption of the more stringent global regulations for discharge of ship-generated wastes and air emissions from shipping;
 - the EU processes calling for intensified cooperation among the coastal countries and the need to take into account Baltic Sea specific characteristics;
 - the Countdown 2010 network of partners that was enacted by IUCN in order to halt the global loss of biodiversity by 2010, and that therefore the UN declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity;
 - the work of VASAB jointly with HELCOM in coordinating maritime spatial planning processes in the Baltic Sea Region;
- that the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan is a key contribution to fulfil the commitments of the Contracting Parties under several international agreements, including:
 - the 1973 International Convention for Prevention of Pollution from Ships, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto;
 - the 1990 International Convention on Oil Pollution, Preparedness, Response and Co-operation;
 - the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity and Decisions by the Conference of the Parties: II/10 on conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity, and V/6 on ecosystem approach; and
 - the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the commitments to apply by 2010 the ecosystem approach;

EMPHASIZE

- the need for close cooperation with other regional marine organisations/commissions, sharing best practices and, where appropriate, aiming at harmonising decisions;

AGREE

- for those Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention being also parties to the other Regional Seas Conventions to further strengthen the co-operation with those commissions; in particular, with a view to achieve our common goals of a healthy marine environment.

II The Implementation Phase

DECIDE

- to further develop the role of HELCOM as the main driving force of the implementation of the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities in the Baltic Sea marine area also taking into account the role of other organisations; and
- to establish, for those HELCOM Contracting States being also EU-Member States, the role of HELCOM as the coordinating platform for the regional implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (EU MSFD) in the Baltic Sea¹ including striving for harmonised national marine strategies for achieving good environmental status according to the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and the EU MSFD; and

- that this work shall continue to be based on the following common principles:

- a shared scientific understanding of the current status of the marine environment, and the predominant pressures on the status and impacts, building on the HELCOM Initial Holistic Assessment of the ecosystem health and the supporting thematic assessments on eutrophication, biodiversity, hazardous substances and maritime activities;
- a common understanding of the good environmental status of the Baltic Sea that we want to achieve by 2021, based on the agreed visions, goals and ecological objectives, and jointly constructed quantitative targets and associated indicators as initiated with the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan;

both the shared scientific understanding and the quantification of the good environmental status are to be used in policy making at the international, regional and national levels, in order to ensure that adequate decisions and necessary measures pursuing the good environmental status of the Baltic Sea are taken;

- joint coordinated monitoring providing the necessary data for regular assessment of the status of the Baltic Sea and of pressures and impacts affecting the status, adapted to support the assessing of progress towards the achievement of the environmental objectives and targets, using indicators developed under the Baltic Sea Action Plan, enabling the assessment and evaluation of the implementation of the jointly agreed measures;
- a coherent and coordinated approach to developing own recommendations, recommendations providing for harmonized implementation of the measures imposed by other international organizations as well as proposals to other international organizations necessary to achieve good environmental status, ensuring full cooperation of the HELCOM Contracting Parties;

ALSO DECIDE, as a practical implementation of the above common principles

¹ As described in the Report "Implementation of the EU-Marine Strategy Framework Directive in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea – Role of the Marine Conventions HELCOM and OSPAR" referred to in Annex 2

- to use the HELCOM Initial Holistic and thematic assessments of the Baltic Sea to support and facilitate the reporting under other international legislative frameworks and processes, including the regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment as decided at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) and for those HELCOM Contracting States being also EU Member States, for the initial assessments under the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive as well as for reporting under other Directives;
- that newly applied tools and methods for the assessment of the environmental status and ecosystem health of the Baltic Sea, such as those used in the HELCOM Initial Holistic Assessment are further developed and updated by 2013 according to improved data availability and scientific knowledge;
- that core set of indicators with quantitative targets shall be developed for each of the segments of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, while ensuring that the indicators can also be used for the other international monitoring and reporting requirements *inter alia* the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and that a full indicator-based follow-up system for the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan be further developed and placed on the HELCOM website by 2013;²
- that the already initiated revision of the HELCOM monitoring programmes be finalized by 2013 and that it results in cost-effective joint monitoring, which fully supports the indicator-based assessment approach and monitoring of the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, and is in line with other international monitoring and reporting requirements;
- to investigate the further role of HELCOM in supporting the implementation phase of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, including providing assistance to Contracting States by:
 - identifying bottlenecks, needs and possible measures, taking into account the need for cost-effective solutions and potential financing options
 - developing partner networks and cooperation arrangements for implementing joint initiatives.

AGREE

- to by 2011 elaborate National Implementation Plans/Programmes/Strategies for the remaining Segments of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, the Biodiversity, Maritime Activities and Capacity and Awareness Raising Segments;
- on the below specific actions to enhance the implementation of the Eutrophication, Hazardous Substances, Biodiversity and Nature Conservation, Maritime Activities, and Financing Segments of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan;

II.a Eutrophication

CONCERNED

- that despite the substantial reductions in the loads of nutrients to the Baltic Sea since the 1980s, the latest HELCOM assessments still show a Baltic Sea affected by eutrophication in almost all assessed open water areas and almost all of the assessed coastal areas;
- that excessive inputs of nutrients remain one of the key threats to the Baltic Sea ecosystems causing eutrophication and resulting in negative impacts on biodiversity;

² A core set of indicators with targets is under development for eutrophication, biodiversity and hazardous substances in the HELCOM TARGREV (partly funded by Nordic Council of Ministers) and HELCOM CORESET projects and preliminary indicators and targets will be ready in August 2011 and hence available for national processes of the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive by June 2012.

Municipal waste water treatment plants

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT

- that municipal waste water treatment plants accounts for 30% of the point source nitrogen loads and 90% of the point source phosphorus loads to the Baltic Sea;

STRESS

- the nutrient reduction potential of implementing HELCOM Recommendations 28E/5 “Municipal Wastewater Treatment” and 28E/6 “On improvement of on-site wastewater treatment of single-family homes, small businesses and settlements up to 300 p.e.”; and

AGREE

- to exchange information on best available treatment techniques and link this work to the ongoing initiatives including the EU Baltic Sea Region Programme funded PURE Project and the “Cleaner waste water” Flagship Project under the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, including showcasing of best examples (“List of Green Baltic Spots”);

ENCOURAGE

- educational cooperation and exchange of best practices and experiences of solving the problem of municipal sewage in smaller municipalities and scattered settlements (e.g. recycling of treated sewage and sludge utilisation);

Agriculture

FURTHER TAKING INTO ACCOUNT

- that about a half of the total nitrogen and phosphorus loads arrive to the sea as diffuse waterborne load and agriculture accounts for 79% of the diffuse waterborne nitrogen load and 78% of the diffuse waterborne phosphorus load to the Baltic Sea, in addition agriculture is the major contributor to total nitrogen deposition in most of the sub-basins of the Baltic Sea;

RECONFIRM

- the need to establish the List of Agricultural Hot Spots represented by installations for intensive rearing of cattle, poultry and pigs not in compliance with part 2, Annex III of the Helsinki Convention;

AGREE

- to further review, the existing List of Agricultural Hot Spots under the Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme;
- to take measures to bring all installations for the intensive rearing of cattle, poultry and pigs as well as other agricultural activities in compliance with part 2, Annex III of the Helsinki Convention and thus make possible to finally remove all agricultural hot spots, including those from the List of Hot Spots under the Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme;

AGREE

- to continue the work to identify agricultural areas that are critical for nutrient pollution of the Baltic Sea and performing risk assessments of nutrient leaching from large animal farms for optimal targeting of measures and investments to most polluting installations/areas with biggest environmental potential benefit to the Baltic Sea;
- to exchange national experiences concerning best practices and case studies, including risk assessments, nutrient balanced farming, manure handling and processing, application of fertilisers as well as restoration of natural and construction of artificial wetlands and establishing of buffer zones to trap nutrients from reaching the Baltic Sea;

- that this requires a forum in which agricultural and environmental authorities have the possibility to meet, discuss and jointly take forward actions, based on gathered information and assessment of progress (or outstanding difficulties) towards reaching the targets in the HELCOM BSAP; and therefore

DECIDE

- to establish a HELCOM Agricultural/Environmental Forum by 2010, in this way also enabling coordination and integration of the actions and projects implemented within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and its action plan so that these reflect and address the goals and targets of the Baltic Sea Action Plan;

Atmospheric emissions of nitrogen

FURTHERMORE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT

- that transportation, combustion and agriculture are the three major sources of atmospheric emissions of nitrogen that end up being deposited to the Baltic Sea;

AGREE

- to address the need for additional measures within these sectors with the aim to ensure a Baltic-wide application of uniform standards;
- to make a joint input to the ongoing parallel revision process of the Gothenburg Protocol under the UN ECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) and the revision of the EU National Emissions Ceilings Directive (NEC Directive 2001/81/EC) to ensure that the health of the marine environment, especially the nutrient load reduction targets designated to reduce eutrophication of the Baltic Sea, will be continuously taken into account in the elaboration and implementation of new regulations;

Phosphorous-free detergents

FURTHERMORE AGREE

- to target the elimination of phosphorus³ in laundry detergents for consumer use as soon as possible but not later than by 2015 and to encourage voluntary use of P-free dishwasher detergents also in the light of the forthcoming EU impact assessment covering i.e. environmental and market aspects of such measures;

Transboundary pollution

RECOGNIZE

- the input of phosphorus and nitrogen from Belarus, in the form of transboundary waterborne pollution, and welcome the intensification of the Belarusian participation in the HELCOM work expressed via [the designation of List of priority installations in the field of waste water treatment and agriculture in the Republic of Belarus contributing to transboundary pollution of the Baltic Sea as contained in **Annex 2**;
- the importance of cooperation in the integrated management of transboundary rivers flowing into the Baltic involving all the countries in the catchment area and the European Union, taking into account the work under the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

³ The elimination means the introduction of a maximum limit for total phosphorus content with a hurdle of 0.2% to 0.5% of phosphorus by weight (as in HELCOM Recommendation 28E /7).

II.b Hazardous substances

CONCERNED

- that even though there are encouraging signs of decreasing trends of certain hazardous substances used mainly in the past and improving health status of some top predators, the latest HELCOM assessments still show a *Baltic Sea with life disturbed by hazardous substances* in nearly all assessed open sea and coastal areas;

RECALL

- that although annual doses are below safety limits, the Baltic Sea still has the highest concentrations of ¹³⁷Cs of any regional sea around the world due to radioactive fallout from the Chernobyl accident, and that the Baltic Sea ranks third in the world with respect to ⁹⁰Sr in seawater, with only the Irish Sea and the Black Sea showing higher concentrations;

RECONFIRM

- to continue monitoring programmes on radioactive substances in the Baltic Sea and to keep under observation trends of the export of radionuclides from the Baltic Sea to the North Sea and vice versa, especially the inflows of radioactivity from Sellafield to the Baltic Sea and the outflow of Chernobyl radioactivity from the Baltic Sea to the Skagerrak;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT

- that the occurrence of hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea ecosystem is due to their current use or unintentional production in industrial or smaller scale processes or households within and outside the catchment area, as well as their use or unintentional production in sea-based industries at the sea, as well as the use or unintentional production of certain hazardous substances and inputs that primarily took place decades ago;
- the specific hydrographic situation of the Baltic Sea with a slow water exchange leading to a slowed down decrease of nutrients and hazardous substances and that more effort is needed to reduce the stress by anthropogenic compounds compared to other, more open sea areas;

STRESS

- the need to address the priority hazardous substances listed in the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to decrease their inputs to the Baltic Sea;

AGREE

- taking account of the outcome on load estimates and substance-flow analyses of the Project for Control of Hazardous Substances in the Baltic Sea Region (COHIBA) in 2010, to look into the need for general prohibitions, additional restrictions, substitutions and enhanced pollution reduction measures of certain hazardous substances;
- to strengthen the control of imported consumer products and articles, following indications of applications of e.g. organotins and brominated diphenyl ether compounds used as biocides and flame retardants for textiles, respectively, as well as traces of perfluoralkylated substances in waste water discharges, in order to reduce the input of these substances to the Baltic Sea area;
- to investigate, with the aim to make a prioritisation of, waste and contaminated areas such as landfills or industrial areas for optimal targeting of measures and investments to most polluting areas with biggest environmental benefit to the Baltic Sea;
- welcoming the preparations being exerted to develop a global mercury convention by 2013, and as part of this process, to start checking by 2011/12 the feasibility of reducing and avoiding the use of mercury in products and from processes as well as further reducing mercury emissions, e.g. from large combustion sources;

- to take into account the need to strictly control the dredging and disposal of sediments when revising the HELCOM Guidelines for disposal of dredged spoils, to avoid that substantial amounts of hazardous substances are re-suspended from bottom sediments (containing organotin, mercury and cadmium compounds, as well as other heavy metals and poly-aromatic compounds);

RECONFIRM

- the decision in the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to develop specific efficiency requirements and Emission Limit Values for small-scale combustion plants appliances to complement HELCOM Recommendation 28E/8 taking into account upcoming European legislation to improve the effectiveness of Community industrial emissions legislation including intensive agricultural installations and measures to tackle smaller scale industrial combustion sources;

ADOPT

- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/1, "Implementing HELCOM's objective for hazardous substances";
- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/2 "Batteries and waste batteries containing mercury, cadmium or lead";
- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/3 "Cadmium in fertilizers"; and
- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/4 "Proper handling of waste / landfilling"

as contained in **Annex 1**.

II.c Protection of biodiversity and nature conservation

CONCERNED

- that biodiversity is in an unfavourable conservation status in most of the Baltic Sea marine area and all levels of Baltic biodiversity have been negatively affected by human activities and also the structure of the ecosystem has been severely disturbed;
- that eutrophication, the negative impacts of fisheries activities, including unsustainable fishing practices, inputs of hazardous substances, as well as numerous small-scale activities causing physical disturbance put a continuous pressure on the Baltic biodiversity;

WELCOME

- the HELCOM assessment of the status of the Baltic Sea Protected Area (BSPA) network and that the number of BSPAs has increased from 78 to 159 since 2003 and currently cover a marine area of 42,823 km² (10.3% of the Baltic Sea marine area) compared to 16,022 km² in 2004 (3.9% of the Baltic Sea marine area);
- in particular and with great satisfaction the reaching of the 10% target for the area conserved in the Baltic marine area as has been set for regional seas by the UN CBD COP7;

BEING AWARE

- that despite the designation of many new BSPAs, an ecologically coherent network has not been reached so far;
- that not all relevant Natura 2000 sites and only few offshore sites beyond territorial waters were designated as BSPAs; and
- that a number of important species, habitats, marine landscapes and ecological processes are thus still not receiving sufficient spatial protection;

NOTE the need to develop proper management in those designated BSPAs where it is lacking

AGREE

- to secure the establishment of a network of BSPAs that fulfils the criteria of ecological coherence (representativeness, replication, adequacy and connectivity) and thereby contributes to the protection of the entire ecosystem;
- that where appropriate, the Contracting States identify additional BSPAs at the latest by the end of 2011 taking into account respective proposals for potential BSPAs to be elaborated by HELCOM HABITAT and using the information provided by the actual assessment of HELCOM, including the results of the site-selection analysis, and to designate the identified sites finally at HELCOM HABITAT 14/2012;
- in doing so, to focus on:
 - the needs for providing protection to species and habitats identified in HELCOM as being threatened or declining, and for the EU Member States taking into account the obligations stemming from the Birds and Habitats Directives and their Annexes as well as the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and especially;
 - including off-shore areas also in the Exclusive Economic Zone with the aim that BSPAs not only cover a total of at least 10% of the Baltic Sea Area as a whole, but also when scientifically justified, at least 10% of all its sub-basins,⁴ following the COP 7 10%-decisions;
- to develop and apply by 2015, management plans and/or measures⁵ for already existing BSPAs; and
- that every new BSPA designation should within five years be followed by the establishment of a management plan and/or measures;

WE ALSO AGREE

- that Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), using as an overarching principle the ecosystem approach, should be developed for the different Baltic Sea areas in close transboundary cooperation with the aim of having long-term sustainable management and planning for the whole Baltic Sea;

AGREE

- to establish a joint, co-chaired HELCOM-VASAB Working Group on Maritime Spatial Planning which will develop and adopt its terms of references by 2010, in this way also enabling coordination and integration of the MSP related actions and projects implemented within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and its Action Plan so that these reflect and address the goals and targets of the Baltic Sea Action Plan;

ASK

- the joint HELCOM-VASAB Working Group to finalise, for adoption by HELCOM and VASAB in 2010, a set of joint HELCOM-VASAB broad-scale transboundary Maritime Spatial Planning principles based on the document on Maritime Spatial Planning;

AGREE

- to test, apply and evaluate the use of these joint principles when developing national Maritime Spatial Planning initiatives, as well as regionally;

ACKNOWLEDGE

- that with the activities and programmes of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Fisheries and Environmental Forum, HELCOM took a step towards the implementation of an ecosystem-

⁴ As specified in the HELCOM Red List of marine and coastal biotopes and biotope complexes of the Baltic Sea, Belt Sea and Kattegat (BSEP No: 75).

⁵ As defined in the HELCOM publication on Planning and management of Baltic Sea Protected Areas: guidelines and tools from 2006 (BSEP No: 105).

based approach allowing for improved coordination and cooperation between fisheries and marine environment protection authorities, and insofar has begun to develop the Baltic Sea as a model of good management of human activities;

- the ambitious on-going work to produce red lists on species and habitats;
- that HELCOM is implementing the action of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to prepare a classification and inventory of rivers with salmon and sea trout populations in the Baltic Sea rivers, including the status of their habitats, which will provide an important basis for the implementation of the commitments of conserving threatened wild salmon populations and developing restoration plans for migratory fish species.

II.d Maritime activities

CONCERNED

- that even though there have been no major accidental spills of oil or hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea during recent years, the remarkable growth of maritime traffic in the Baltic Sea results in increasing risks of such potential major pollution accidents;
- that even though a maritime transport is an environmentally friendly means of transportation, the maritime activities in the Baltic Sea have negative impacts on the marine environment, and also contribute to eutrophication, chemical pollution and unfavourable status of Baltic biodiversity, as shown in the latest HELCOM assessments;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT

- the role of the International Maritime Organization in regulating global shipping.

Navigation safety

STRESS

- the need of jointly developing and implementing further measures to increase safety of navigation in the Baltic Sea, and to this end;

AGREE

- to seek for cooperation in the field of information exchange between HELCOM and the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control;
- while recognizing the need for the exchange of technical expertise in the field of maritime safety, especially in risk assessment to avoid shipping accidents in the Baltic Sea, and taking into account the work of the IMO, to identify the possible areas for strengthening regional cooperation in maritime safety in the framework of the HELCOM Maritime Group and consider the appropriate forms for this cooperation;
- to extend the scope of the 2001 HELCOM Copenhagen Declaration to cover all routes and other areas used for navigation according to the revised Baltic re-survey scheme to be developed based on the 2009 Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission Vision for the re-survey as contained in **Annex 2**;
- to present their national re-survey plans preferably by 2013, but not later than 2015, including time schedule estimations;
- to undertake necessary measures to ensure that sufficient funding, including external funding, will be available for re-surveys;
- to undertake measures to improve mariners' abilities to assess and interpret hydrographic content in nautical charts and publications either in printed or digital form, especially in the Electronic Chart Display and Information System;

AGREE

- to consider the possibility to apply for an extension phase for the project *Sub-regional assessment of risk of spill of oil and hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea* (BRISK) complemented by the activities in the Russian Federation within the on-going project financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers, in order to obtain additional financing to implement jointly planned investments in response capacities, and thus ensuring adequate emergency and response capacities in all sub-regions of the Baltic Sea;
- to investigate the outcomes of the project "Efficient, Safe and Sustainable Traffic at Sea" (EfficienSea) within the frame of HELCOM MARITIME, dealing with tools to improve safety of navigation, through the following four priority areas: recruitment and competences at sea and ashore; e-Navigation as a means to reduce information complexity; quality enhancement of vessel traffic data and maritime planning; and the improved maritime traffic control through dynamic risk management;

ADOPT

- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/5 "Mutual plan for places of refuge in the Baltic Sea area," contained in **Annex 1**.

Environmental impact of maritime activities

ADOPT

- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/6 "Wildlife Response Planning in the Baltic Sea Area," contained in **Annex 1**;
- the Guidance to distinguish between unacceptable high risk scenarios and acceptable low risk scenarios – a risk of the spread of alien species by ships on Intra-Baltic voyages, to be followed when applying for, or granting, exemptions to the requirements of ballast water management of the Ballast Water Management Convention to ships operating within the Baltic Sea (see **Annex 2**);

AGREE

- to the Roadmap for upgrading port reception facilities for sewage in passenger ports in the Baltic Sea area to be implemented as soon as possible, preferably by 2013, and at the latest by 2015 as contained in **Annex 2**, taking into account the joint submission by the Baltic Sea countries to the IMO considered at the 60th session of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee held in March 2010 proposing to amend Annex IV to MARPOL 73/78 and to designate the Baltic Sea as a Special Area for discharges of sewage from passenger ships;
- to work towards submitting, preferably by 2011, a joint proposal by the Baltic Sea countries to the IMO applying for a NOx Emission Control Area (NECA) status for the Baltic Sea, taking into account the results of the study by HELCOM on economic impacts of a Baltic Sea NECA and to welcome and support the idea of a NOx Emission Control Area in other sea areas, in particular with regard to the North Sea;

DECIDE

- to update the Action Plan for the protection of the environment from offshore platforms, to put into practice the "zero-discharge"⁶ principle in respect of all chemicals and substances used and produced during the operation of offshore platforms by 2013, welcoming the enforcement as of 1 January 2010 of the "zero-discharge" principle for discharges of

⁶ The "zero-discharge" principle means a general approach to ensure the proper treatment of all kinds of offshore platform-generated wastes, including processing and consumption wastes, on land or on the offshore platforms according to Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices and MARPOL 73/78, with the aim of avoiding discharges to the marine environment.

“black” and “red” chemicals, oil-containing water and solid wastes from offshore platforms in the Baltic Sea.

II.e Financing

RECONFIRM

- the Governments’ commitment to the implementation phase of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action plan by endeavouring to provide a solid national ground/platform, including core funding for implementing the actions as described in the National Implementation Programmes;

WELCOME

- the NIB/NEFCO Baltic Sea Action Plan Trust Fund as a project development facility to jumpstart the work to prepare investment projects and develop financing strategies;

DECIDE

- to pursue the objective of the alignment of national and regional funding with the actions in the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, including in the context of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the High Level Group set up for its follow-up, keeping in mind the availability of a wide range of financial instruments (such as EU Structural and Cohesion Funds, including the EU Rural Development Funds and the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership, International Financial Institutions, the Nordic Council of Ministers) for both the enhancement of science-based decision making as well as concrete environmental investments in the Baltic Sea region;
- to undertake necessary steps for alignment of funding, also bearing in mind the environmental remediation of the HELCOM hot spots under the Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme (JCP) to be accomplished by 2012 and to this end;
- to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environmental Action Programme to be accomplished by 2012 and the need for its prolongation, including also the extension of the List of HELCOM Hot Spots, at the 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting.

III. The status and trends of the marine environment and the importance of a healthy marine environment for our economy

WELCOME

- the positive trend in the reduction of nutrient load to the Baltic Sea shown by the HELCOM reports as follows: In the time period 1990-2006 the total waterborne nutrient load to the Baltic was reduced with 45% for phosphorus and with 30% for nitrogen. In addition, atmospheric deposition of nitrogen has declined since 1980 by about a third;
- other recent positive developments of the Baltic Sea environment, including encouraging signs of decreasing trends of certain hazardous substances like DDT, PCBs, dioxins and TBT, decreasing trends of concentrations of man-made radioactivity in fish and improving health status of some top predators, growing populations of for example seals as well as the signs of recovery of cod populations;

AGREE

- to carry out a review of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan environmental targets for eutrophication, the maximum allowable inputs and the nutrient reduction targets, as well as

the country-wise nutrient reduction targets including updated information on the atmospheric nitrogen deposition by 2012;⁷

- based on the result of the review, to evaluate the need for additional measures at the 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting;
- that principles for fair burden sharing of the country-wise reduction needs for atmospheric nitrogen deposition inputs be developed for inclusion in the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan nutrient reduction requirement system;

STRESS

- that the environmental status of the Baltic Sea is generally impaired, human activities cover the entire sea area, putting the most pressure on the coastal areas, as well as the western-, southern- and easternmost bays and gulfs;
- that the environmental status of the Baltic Sea continues to be under continuous pressure from anthropogenic loads of nitrogen, phosphorus and hazardous substances, as well as from the negative impacts of fisheries activities, including unsustainable fishing practices. The release of oil, *inter alia* through deliberate or accidental maritime incidents, is also of concern. There are numerous kinds of physical disturbances like construction or dredging activities that take place at a smaller scale and mainly affect biodiversity in the coastal areas;
- the economic and social value of marine ecosystem goods and services provided by the Baltic Sea for many sectors of society, and that the cost of no action in ensuring the provision of these goods and services is substantial;
- the societal benefits stemming from the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and that environmental measures have the potential to promote simultaneously the environmental, social and economic components of sustainable development and create numerous situations where environmental investments pay off;
- the need to fully integrate the economic value of ecosystem services in economic systems, in national accounting, policy assessments as well as in strategies for sustainable development, and make full use of the contribution of ecosystem services to an eco-efficient economy;

AGREE

- to support cooperative, well-integrated research programmes for the Baltic Sea, such as the BONUS+ and its further development into a BONUS-169 programme;
- to take further steps to be able to carry out national and coordinated monitoring of marine litter and identify sources of litter;
- to further investigate the potential harmful impacts to wildlife from microscopic plastic particles, an ingestion of which could lead to the transfer of toxic chemicals to the food chain;
- to develop common methodologies and appropriate indicators, to facilitate national and coordinated monitoring of noise and identification of sources of noise;
- to further investigate the potential harmful impacts to wildlife from noise.

⁷ The review of the environmental targets for eutrophication to be carried out within the HELCOM TARGREV project partly funded by Nordic Council of Ministers and running until the end of August 2011. Scientific work by BNI and HELCOM to provide the basis for reviewing the maximum allowable inputs and the area-wise nutrient reduction targets, as well as the country-wise nutrient reduction targets, including updated information on the atmospheric nitrogen deposition will be finished by the end of 2011/ beginning of 2012.

IV Enforced actions and new challenges

AGREE

- on the need to fully implement the measures included to the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan; and to reinforce our actions to this end;
- on the need for supplementary actions; and specifically taking into account that climate change may have profound consequences both for the environmental status of the Baltic Sea as well as for the scope of the measures adopted by the Contracting Parties until now
- following the outcomes of recent HELCOM assessments:
 - to further assess the environmentally negative impacts of fishing activities including unsustainable fishing practices with the aim as a first step to consider the exclusion of the use of certain techniques in marine protected areas to achieve their conservation objectives;
 - to further assess the environmentally negative impacts of pharmaceuticals and other substances that are not monitored regularly, with the aim as a first step to assess in a coordinated manner their occurrence in the Baltic Sea and evaluate their impacts on the Baltic biota; and
 - to establish a network of experts where pharmaceutical and environmental authorities will have possibility to discuss, meet and jointly consider e.g. an introduction of an environmental classification system and propose targets and measures, having among other issues specifically in mind endocrine disrupters, including possible cumulative effects with other chemicals, and microbial resistance;
 - to further assess in cooperation with the BALTEX community, the current and predicted effects of climate change on the pressures affecting the marine ecosystem;
 - taking into account existing studies, to further assess the economic and social consequences of the use of the Baltic Sea, including the costs of degradation of the Baltic marine environment;
- in order to ensure that pressures from human activities is compatible with the goal to achieve a good environmental status of the Baltic Sea, to integrate the impacts of human activities on the marine environment in all policies and programmes implemented in the Baltic Sea Region;
- to increase our scientific knowledge by making use of the information gathered in connection with environmental impact assessments for large scale economic and infrastructure developments in the Baltic Sea;
- that since 1995, new technical and scientific developments as well as new information, on dumped chemical munitions have become available, through other organisations/companies and as well as from reported incidents; and therefore
- to establish an *ad hoc* HELCOM Expert Group to update and review the existing information on dumped chemical munitions in the Baltic Sea;

ENCOURAGE

- the promotion of green technologies that can support the development of more environmentally friendly and competitive solutions in all sectors by research, development and innovation initiatives; and especially
- the development of measures to reduce odours and emission of greenhouse gasses and ammonia from livestock production and livestock manure, to reduce the use of pesticides, and the losses of nutrients, and to increase the retention of nutrients in the agricultural land or in wetlands;

- the development of measures to avoid the use or unintentional production of hazardous substances in industrial processes, smaller scale processes and households;
- the development of fishing gears and techniques to avoid negative impacts on the marine environment as well as by-catches of undersized fish and non-target species.

ANNEX 1

ADOPTED HELCOM RECOMMENDATIONS

- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/1 “Implementing HELCOM’s objective for hazardous substances”
- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/2 “Batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators containing mercury, cadmium or lead”
- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/3 “Cadmium in fertilizers”
- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/4 “Proper handling of waste/landfilling”
- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/5 “Mutual plan for places of refuge in the Baltic Sea area”
- HELCOM Recommendation 31E/6 “Wildlife Response Planning in the Baltic Sea area”

ANNEX 2

REFERENCES TO SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- *Ecosystem Health of the Baltic Sea 2003-2007 - HELCOM Initial Holistic Assessment*
- *Eutrophication in the Baltic Sea - An Integrated Thematic Assessment of the effects of nutrient enrichment in the Baltic Sea region*
- *Biodiversity in the Baltic Sea – An Integrated Thematic Assessment on biodiversity and nature conservation in the Baltic Sea*
- *Hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea - An Integrated Thematic Assessment of hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea*
- *An Integrated Thematic Assessment on Maritime Activities and Response to Pollution at Sea in the Baltic Sea Region*
- *Report “Implementation of the EU-Marine Strategy Framework Directive in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea – Role of the Marine Conventions HELCOM and OSPAR”.*
- *Towards the Joint Target of HELCOM and OSPAR to complete by 2010 an Ecologically Coherent Network of Well Managed Marine Protected Areas – Executive Summary of the Implementation Report on Status and Ecological Coherence of the HELCOM BSPA Network as of February 2010*
- *Vision for the Revised BSHC/HELCOM Re-survey Scheme*
- *Background information on revision of the 2001 Copenhagen Declaration regarding BSHC/HELCOM Re-survey Scheme and ECDIS training*
- *the Guidance to distinguish between unacceptable high risk scenarios and acceptable low risk scenarios – a risk of spreading of alien species by ships on Intra-Baltic voyages, to be followed when applying for, or granting, exemptions to requirements of ballast water management of the Ballast Water Management Convention to ships operating within the Baltic Sea.*
- *Roadmap for upgrading port reception facilities for sewage in passenger ports in the Baltic Sea Area.*
- *List of priority installations in the field of waste water treatment and agriculture in the Republic of Belarus contributing to transboundary pollution of the Baltic Sea*
- *The extended summary of the main results of the Fifth Pollution Load Compilation (PLC-5)*