

HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 12/8 *)

Adopted 20 February 1991 having regard to Article 13, Paragraph b) of the Helsinki Convention

AIRBORNE SURVEILLANCE WITH REMOTE SENSING EQUIPMENT IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA

THE COMMISSION,

RECALLING Regulation 3 of Annex VI of the Helsinki Convention according to which the Contracting Parties shall develop and apply, individually or in co-operation, surveillance activities covering the Baltic Sea Area, in order to spot and monitor oil and other harmful substances released into the sea,

BEING CONVINCED that airborne surveillance with remote sensing capabilities provides a greatly enhanced capability for improving the response to major oil releases of the shipping casualty type,

ALSO BEING CONVINCED that airborne surveillance with remote sensing capabilities provides a potential improvement in the ability to collect evidence for prosecution purposes in cases of illegal operational discharges from ships,

FURTHER BEING CONVINCED that regular airborne surveillance has a deterrent effect on potential offenders of the discharge regulations of the relevant conventions,

CONSCIOUS that the surveillance can only be efficient if remote sensing equipment, that can function also at night and in bad weather, is used,

NOTING that joint action by the Parties on aerial surveillance has started in accordance with a special HELCOM plan,

RECALLING that the Ministerial Declaration of the ninth meeting of the Helsinki Commission calls for the development and establishment of airborne surveillance with adequate sensor systems,

RECALLING FURTHER that the Baltic Sea Declaration by Heads of Governments and Ministers assembled in Ronneby, Sweden, in September 1990, stressed the need to encourage considerably intensified cooperation regarding airborne surveillance between the respective competent authorities,

RECOMMENDS that the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention should introduce airborne surveillance with remote sensing equipment in their surveillance of the Baltic Sea Area as soon as possible but not later than by the end of 1994,

RECOMMENDS ALSO that the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention take action to

- a) intensify their endeavour to cover by individual/and joint action the whole of the Baltic Sea Area with regular and efficient airborne surveillance;
- b) develop and improve the existing remote sensing systems so that they can function efficiently also at night and in bad weather conditions; and

- c) improve the possibility to use the information given by the surveillance as evidence to court for the prosecution of offenders of oil discharge regulations,

RECOMMENDS FURTHER that the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention, bilaterally or multilaterally, undertake to co-ordinate such surveillance activities which take place outside territorial waters, as appropriate.

*) This Recommendation supersedes HELCOM Recommendation 7/11.