

HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 19/6

Adopted 26 March 1998,
having regard to Article 13, Paragraph b)
of the Helsinki Convention

AMENDMENTS TO ANNEX III OF THE HELSINKI CONVENTION CONCERNING REGULATIONS ON PREVENTION OF POLLUTION FROM AGRICULTURE

THE COMMISSION,

RECALLING Article 2, paragraphs 1, 2, 6 and 7, Article 3, paragraph 1, Article 5 and Article 6, paragraphs 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8 of the 1974 Helsinki Convention,

RECALLING ALSO Article 2, paragraphs 1, 2, 7 and 8, Article 3, paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6, Article 5 and Article 6, paragraphs 1, 2, 4 and Article 15 of the 1992 Helsinki Convention,

RECALLING FURTHER the Presidency Declaration of the Baltic Sea Summit, 1996, and the Action Programme for the Baltic Sea States Co-operation calling for urgent elaboration and adoption of the agricultural annex to the Helsinki Convention,

CONSCIOUS that agricultural activities within the Baltic Sea catchment are responsible, *inter alia*, for pollution of water and air by nitrogen, phosphorus and plant protection products, causing negative effects on the Baltic Sea ecosystem including eutrophication, oxygen depletion and reduced biological diversity,

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the amendment procedure for the annexes of the Helsinki Convention as contained in Article 24 of the 1974 Helsinki Convention and Article 32 of the 1992 Helsinki Convention,

NOTING Article 19, paragraph 2 of the 1992 Helsinki Convention according to which the Baltic Marine Environment Commission established pursuant to the 1974 Helsinki Convention is the Commission under the 1992 Helsinki Convention,

TAKING ALSO INTO CONSIDERATION Article 36, paragraph 1 of the 1992 Helsinki Convention,

RESOLVES:

- a) to adopt amendments to Annex III of the Helsinki Convention appearing in the Attachment to this Recommendation,
- b) to ask the Depository Government to communicate amendments to the Contracting Parties with the Commission's recommendation for acceptance,
- c) to determine that amendments shall be deemed to have been accepted unless prior to 1 January 1999 any of the Contracting Parties has objected to the amendments, and
- d) to determine that the accepted amendments shall enter into force on 1 January 2000,

RESOLVES also to amend accordingly Annex III to the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, 1992 at the date of entry into force of the accepted amendments, if this Convention entered into force prior to these amendments,

URGES that:

- a) the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Germany and Sweden shall develop programmes for the implementation of measures referred to in Part II of Annex III by 1 January 2000 and implement them by 1 January 2002,
- b) the Governments of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russia shall develop programmes for the implementation of measures referred to in Part II of Annex III and implement them as soon as possible but not later than 1 January 2002 and 1 January 2011, respectively,

REQUESTS the Governments of the Contracting Parties to report on the progress of implementation in accordance with the agreed deadlines.

Attachment to HELCOM Recommendation 19/6 concerning Amendments to Annex III

After the general title of Annex III the words "Part I; Prevention of Pollution from Industry and Municipalities" are inserted.

After Part I new regulations are inserted as follows:

Part II; Prevention of Pollution from Agriculture

Regulation 1; General provisions

In accordance with the relevant parts of this Convention the Contracting Parties shall apply the measures described below and take into account Best Environment Practice (BEP) and Best Available Technology (BAT) to reduce the pollution from agricultural activities. The Contracting Parties shall elaborate Guidelines containing elements specified below and report to the Commission.

Regulation 2; Plant nutrients

The Contracting Parties shall integrate the following basic principles into national legislation or guidelines and adapt to the prevailing conditions within the country to reduce the adverse environmental effects of agriculture. Specified requirements levels shall be considered to be a minimum base for national legislation.

1. Animal density

To ensure that manure is not produced in excess in comparison to the amount of arable land, there must be a balance between the amount of animals on the farm and the amount of land available for spreading manure, expressed as animal density. The maximum amount of animals should be precised with consideration taken to the amount of phosphorus and nitrogen in manure and the crops requirements of plant nutrients.

2. Manure storage

Manure storage must be of such a quality that prevents losses. The storage capacity shall be sufficiently large, to ensure that manure only will be spread when the plants can utilize nutrients. The minimum level to be required should be 6 months storage capacity. Urine and slurry stores should be covered or handled by a method that efficiently reduces ammonia emissions.

3. Agricultural waste water and silage effluents

Waste water from animal housings should either be stored in urine or slurry stores or else be treated in some suitable manner to prevent pollution. Effluents from the preparation and storage of silage should be collected and directed to storages for urine or liquid manure.

4. Application of organic manures

Organic manures (slurry, solid manure, urine, sewage sludge, composts, etc) shall be spread in a way that minimizes the risk for loss of plant nutrients and should not be spread on soils that are frozen*, water saturated or are covered with snow. Organic manures should be incorporated as soon as possible after application on bare soils. Periods shall be defined when no application is accepted.

5. Application rates for nutrients

Application rates for nutrients should not exceed the crops nutrient requirements. National guidelines should be developed with fertilizing recommendations and they should take reference to:

- a) soil conditions, soil nutrient content, soil type and slope;
- b) climatic conditions and irrigation;

- c) land use and agricultural practices, including crop rotation systems;
- d) all external potential nutrient sources.

6. Winter crop cover

In relevant regions the cultivated area should be sufficiently covered by crops in winter and autumn to effectively reduce the loss of plant nutrients

7. Water protection measures and nutrient reduction areas

- a) Surface water
Buffer zones, riparian zones or sedimentation ponds should be established, if necessary.
- b) Ground water
Ground water protection zones should be established if necessary. Appropriate measures such as reduced fertilization rates, zones where manure spreading is prohibited and permanent grass land areas should be established.
- c) Nutrient reduction areas
Wetland areas should be retained and where possible restored, to be able to reduce plant nutrient losses and to retain biological diversity.

Regulation 3; Plant protection products

Plant protection products shall only be handled and used according to a national risk reduction strategy which shall be based on Best Environmental Practice (BEP). The strategy should be based on an inventory of the existing problems and define suitable goals. It shall include measures such as:

1. Registration and approval

Plant protection products shall not be sold, imported or applied until registration and approval for such purposes has been granted by the national authorities.

2. Storage and handling

Storage and handling of plant protection products shall be carried out so that the risks of spillage or leakage are prevented. Some crucial areas are transportation and filling and cleaning of equipment. Other dispersal of plant protection products outside the treated agricultural land area shall be prevented. Waste of plant protection products shall be disposed of according to national legislation.

3. Licence

A licence shall be required for commercial use of plant protection products. To obtain a licence suitable education and training on how to handle plant protection products with a minimum of impact on health and the environment shall be required. The users' knowledge regarding the handling and usage of plant protection products shall be updated regularly.

4. Application technology

Application technology and practice should be designed to prevent unintentional drift or run-off of plant protection products. Establishment of protection zones along surface waters should be encouraged. Application by aircraft shall be forbidden; exceptional cases require authorization.

5. Testing of spraying equipment

Testing of spraying equipment at regular intervals shall be promoted to ensure a reliable result when spraying with plant protection products.

6. Alternative methods of control

Development of alternative methods for plant protection control should be encouraged.

Regulation 4; Environmental permits

Farms with livestock production above certain size should require approval with regard to environmental aspects and impacts of the farms.

Regulation 5; Environmental monitoring

The Contracting Parties shall develop projects to assess the effects of measures and the impacts of the agricultural sector on the environment.

Regulation 6; Education, information and extension service

The Contracting parties shall promote systems for education, information and extension (advisory service) on environmental issues in the agricultural sector.

*) To be defined by national legislation depending on the regional climate and weather conditions