

HELSINKI COMMISSION

Baltic Marine Environment
Protection Commission



26 January 2007

To: Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention
Heads of Delegation to the Helsinki Commission
Observers of HELCOM

Contact Addresses of HELCOM MONAS
Contact Addresses of HELCOM LAND
Contact Addresses of HELCOM HABITAT
Contact Addresses of HELCOM MARITIME

Nominated Members of the *ad hoc* Task Force
for the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

Re. Invitation to participate in the 2nd Stakeholder Conference on the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, 6 March 2007, Helsinki, Finland

Madam / Sir,

The Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (the Helsinki Commission, or HELCOM) is pleased to invite stakeholders from all the Baltic Sea coastal countries and regional organisations to participate in the 2nd Stakeholder Conference on the development of the environmental Baltic Sea Action Plan, which will be held on 6 March 2007 in Helsinki, Finland.

At the Conference, HELCOM will unveil the draft outline of this ambitious but realistic plan of actions to reduce pollution and reverse the degradation of the Baltic marine environment. The concept of this strategy, which is based on a specially defined set of Ecological Objectives, has already been backed by the European Union, and highlighted as a model to be followed by other regional marine conventions.

The purpose of the Conference is to discuss with all relevant stakeholders the content of the plan and in particular the proposed actions for the four top priority areas: eutrophication, pollution involving hazardous substances, maritime safety and accident response capacity, and habitat destruction and the decline in biodiversity. The financial aspects of the plan's implementation and the cost-efficiency of measures will be one of the top issues. The overall objective of this Conference is to get acceptance and commitments at local, national and regional levels as well as from the private sector to the implementation of this new environmental strategy to restore the Baltic marine environment.

The outcome of the various sessions of the Conference will serve as an input to the ongoing process to develop the Baltic Sea Action Plan. HELCOM considers this input very important and is committed to respond to any suggestion raised by major stakeholder groups in the region in order to ensure that the future Action Plan is relevant and can be effectively implemented in practice.

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This Conference will pave the way for the final stage in the development of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan. After a series of meetings to finalise the plan, the new environmental strategy will be adopted at the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting scheduled to take place on 15 November 2007 in Krakow, Poland.

If you are interested, you are kindly requested to notify the HELCOM Secretariat of your participation in the Conference by filling in the attached registration form before 28 February 2007. A tentative programme for the Conference is provided below. The final version of the Conference programme will be prepared in the coming weeks. Please check the HELCOM web site for updates at http://www.helcom.fi/BSAP/2nd/en_GB/2nd_Stakeholder_Conf/.

We look forward to seeing you at the HELCOM Conference for discussions on how to make the Baltic Sea a more environmentally sound and healthier place.

yours sincerely,

Anne Christine Brusendorff

Anne Christine Brusendorff
Executive Secretary