



From waste into resource

Baltic-wide cooperation for
advanced manure standards



Why manure standards?

Efficient manure management is one of the most important ways to reduce nutrient loading to the Baltic Sea. Treating manure not as waste but as a resource means that the valuable nutrients contained in manure are fully considered when fertilizing crops.

Nutrient bookkeeping is an excellent tool to assure effective nutrient management. The lack of advanced manure standards has been identified as one of the main obstacles in introducing farm-level nutrient bookkeeping in the Baltic Sea region. That is why advancing of national standards for nutrient content in manure is a priority for HELCOM.



Why regional activity?

Despite the fact that all the Baltic Sea countries already have systems of manure standards in place, many of them require further advancing for being of use in effective nutrient bookkeeping.

- Regional guidelines will improve the transparency of the national systems, allowing the countries to learn from each other, and guarantee a level playing field in manure related issues;
- Creating regional guidelines for measuring and modelling manure nutrient content taking into account different types of agricultural practices will help national authorities improve national systems of manure standards;
- The joint effort helps the region's countries meet the commitment made at the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting 2013: to develop by 2016 national standards for nutrient content in manure and to develop by 2018 regional recommendation, or guidelines, on the use of such standards.

Who will benefit?

The regional joint activity on manure standards would particularly benefit

- **Farmers and agricultural advisory services**
More developed manure standards are a tool for more precise planning of manure fertilization. Improved standards will also be an important part of farm-level nutrient bookkeeping, helping to make the most of nutrients contained in manure.
- **Administration**
Advanced manure standards are a tool to govern national manure use with policy instruments.

What's next?

Improving national systems of nutrient content in manure is the initial step towards effective nutrient management in agriculture. The further development requires ensuring the use of manure standards in agricultural production. This is to be achieved through elaboration of a HELCOM Recommendation and/or guideline on the use of national manure standards.

HELCOM Ministerial Declaration 2013 also obligates the region's countries to promote nutrient recycling. Full utilization of nutrients from manure will substantially help in replacing mineral fertilizers in agricultural practices. This is an important step towards fully-fledged recycling of nutrients.



HELCOM Agri Group

HELCOM Group on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (Agri Group) provides a platform for the joint discussion of agricultural effects on the marine environment, namely nutrient inputs and emissions, as well as for regional agri-environmental policy measures and instruments. The Agri Group includes representatives from agriculture and environmental authorities of the Baltic Sea countries, as well as EU and HELCOM Observers.

Working to safeguard the marine environment from pollution and ensure safe navigation in the Baltic Sea, HELCOM acts as the governing body of the 1974 Helsinki Convention. HELCOM's official name is the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission.