



# Recalling the proud past of HELCOM

The most remarkable milestones passed and achievements reached by HELCOM in its 50 years



## The seventies: ESTABLISHING HELCOM

- 1974: Helsinki Convention is signed
- 1974: Interim Commission established
- 1978: Start of periodic assessments
- 1979: Launch of Baltic Monitoring Programme (BMP)



# “It is an honour to have worked for the benefit of the Baltic Sea”

## 1970s:

- Stockholm Conference in 1972
- In the early years of HELCOM, Finland had a leading role under the heavy iron curtain cast in the region
  - hosting of HELCOM, coordination and financing, diplomatic consultations etc.

## 1980s:

- HELCOM playing an important role in having **all** the countries on board: all active, all treated equal, all decision unanimous.
- Many Recommendations passed – and that was hard work!



**Terttu Melvasalo**

HELCOM Professional Secretary 1984 – 1994

## The eighties: LEARNING TO WALK

- 1980: HC entry into force; HELCOM Secretariat established
- 1981: HELCOM granted observer status to several international organizations: UNEP, ECE, IMCO, WHO, ICES, IBSFC
- 1980s: Adoption of the first HELCOM recommendations
- 1987: The first Pollution Load Compilation published (1987)
- 1988: Ministerial Meeting Helsinki: Agreement to reduce 50% of nutrient discharges by 1995

## The nineties: THE NEW ERA

- 1990: Ministerial Meeting in Rønneby: The Baltic Sea Declaration, establishing of the Joint Comprehensive Programme (JCP)
- 1992: Revised Helsinki Convention was adopted
- 1993: The First Assessment of the State of the Coastal Waters of the Baltic Sea
- 1993: Gdansk Declaration: mobilizing resources for implementing the JCP
- 1994: First HELCOM Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) established (former BSPAs)

## The 2000s: EMBRACING THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

- 2000: The Helsinki Convention of 1992 enters into force
- 2003: OSPAR/HELCOM Ministerial meeting in Bremen
- 2003: A ten-year review of the Baltic Sea JCP
- 2005–2006: Baltic Sea becomes SECA (Special Area for Sulphur) and Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) area under IMO
- 2007: The Baltic Sea Action Plan is adopted at HELCOM's Ministerial Meeting in Krakow
- 2010: Ministerial Meeting in Moscow: The National Implementation Plans presented

## The 2010s: SEEKING THE WHOLENESS

- 2010: The first HOLAS issued
- 2010: HELCOM and VASAB agreed to jointly initiate the development of coherent Maritime Spatial Planning in the Baltic Sea area
- 2010: Baltic Sea becomes the first region in the world to reach 10% marine spatial protection target
- 2013: Baltic Sea becomes Special Sewage Area under IMO
- 2015: Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter
- 2016: HOLAS II
- 2019: Baltic Sea becomes NECA (Special Area for Nitrogen) under IMO

## The 2020s: RESILIENCE

- 2021: Lübeck Ministerial Meeting
- 2021: Updated BSAP
- 2021: Regional Action Plan on Underwater Noise
- 2023: Launch of HOLA53
- 2024: Ministerial Meeting in Riga

