

CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE
ENVIRONMENT OF THE BALTIC SEA AREA

BALTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION
COMMISSION - HELSINKI COMMISSION -

15 February 1988

Ninth Meeting
Helsinki 15-20 February 1988

DECLARATION ON THE PROTECTION
OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE BALTIC SEA AREA

adopted on 15 February 1988 in Helsinki
by the Ministers
responsible for the environmental protection in the
Baltic Sea States

The Ministers, responsible for the environmental protection of the Baltic Sea Area, of the Governments of

The Kingdom of Denmark
The Republic of Finland
The German Democratic Republic
The Federal Republic of Germany
The Polish People's Republic
The Kingdom of Sweden
The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,

ASSEMBLED in Helsinki on the occasion of the ninth meeting of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission in February 1988,

RECALLING the provisions of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area,

CONSCIOUS of the particular sensitivity of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area, and of the economic, social and cultural values the Baltic Sea Area and its living resources represent for the peoples of the Baltic Sea States,

AWARE of the need to protect and preserve for present and future generations this most important marine ecosystem as a source of wholesome food as well as for recreational purposes,

NOTING the valuable work done hitherto within the Helsinki Commission in adopting unanimous recommendations to the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Convention as well as taking decisions on cooperative actions,

RECOGNIZING that certain discharged harmful substances are of a durable and persistent character alien to the marine environment,

EXPRESSING concern for the present state of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area,

BEING CONVINCED that damage to the marine environment can be irreversible or remediable only in a long term perspective and at considerable expense and that, therefore, Contracting Parties to the Convention must adopt a precautionary approach and not wait for full and undisputed scientific proof of harmful effects before taking action to prevent and abate pollution,

BEING ALSO CONVINCED of the urgency to expedite the work of the Contracting Parties to the Convention and the Commission in implementing the Convention,

DO HEREBY DECLARE THEIR FIRM DETERMINATION TO

MAKE further provisions for reducing discharges from point sources, such as industrial installations and urban wastewater treatment plants, of toxic or persistent substances, nutrients, heavy metals, and hydrocarbons by construction and operation of installations and equipment in conformity with the best available technology. In this context it is noted that actions concerning non-point sources will also be needed. In order to fulfill these objectives current and new efforts on reduction of the load of pollutants should aim at a substantive reduction of the substances most harmful to the ecosystem of the Baltic Sea, especially of

- heavy metals and toxic or persistent organic substances,
and

- nutrients

for example in the order of 50 per cent of the total discharges of each of them, as soon as possible but not later than 1995,

Parties to the Convention will report on national plans and activities and results achieved to the tenth meeting of the Commission in 1989,

INTENSIFY research and development as well as exchange of information in order to improve knowledge relating to degree and character of the marine environment pollution, of methods for monitoring the state of the marine environment and the ecological system of the sea and methods for water quality improvement with the aim of applying low- and non-waste technologies,

TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTIONS, including further research, related to the assessments of the environmental status of the Baltic Sea Area,

DEVELOP methodologies and exchange data in order to further, as a matter of urgency, the reliable assessment of the pollution load of the Baltic Sea Area on a regular basis,

RESPECT the relevant recommendations of the competent international organizations, and to this end apply the best available technology to minimize or eliminate as soon as possible any pollution caused by radioactive discharge from all nuclear industries, including reprocessing plants, into the marine environment,

MINIMIZE deposition in the Baltic Sea Area of airborne pollutants emitted from land-based sources and in that respect closely cooperate with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and within the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution,

PROMOTE the exchange of environmental technologies, including preferential treatment,

INTENSIFY coordinated research and monitoring in coastal waters, including the estimate of the total charge of pollutants entering the Baltic Sea Area from the different sources,

DEVELOP, in cooperation with competent international organizations, further rules for the safe operation of tankers in the Baltic Sea Area, particularly in winter conditions,

WORK together to promote the use of shore reception facilities for residues and wastes from ships by making such facilities and services available at reasonable costs or without charging special fees to the individual ships,

COOPERATE within appropriate international bodies to promote the development of environmentally sound standards of marine fuels,

INTENSIFY research, development and cooperation in order to establish suitable and effective means and methods to combat spillages of oil and other harmful substances also under cold weather and ice conditions,

DEVELOP and establish airborne surveillance with adequate sensor systems for detection of violations of the discharge provisions, independent of visibility and for the improvement of response to marine spills,

ESTABLISH guidelines concerning measures to minimize and combat accidental spillages from offshore installations,

COOPERATE in developing models of the ecological system of the Baltic Sea in order to facilitate the choice of appropriate action to protect the marine environment.

The Ministers agree to hold the meeting of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission in 1994 at ministerial level to review the implementation of decisions taken in the framework of the Convention and to consider the need for further concerted action in view of developments affecting the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area.

Done in Helsinki
on February 15, 1988

For the
Kingdom of Denmark



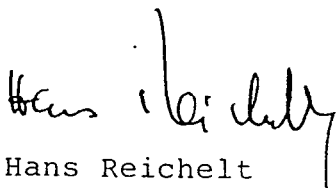
Christian Christensen

For the
Republic of Finland



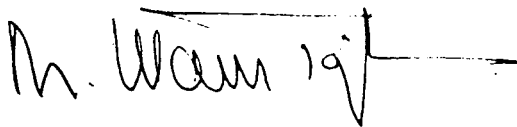
Kaj Bärlund

For the
German Democratic Republic



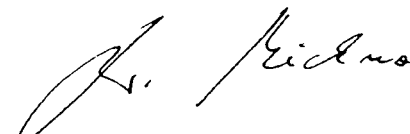
Hans Reichelt

For the
Federal Republic of Germany



Klaus Töpfer

For the
Polish People's Republic




Waldemar Michna

For the
Kingdom of Sweden



Birgitta Dahl

For the Union of
Soviet Socialist Republics



Boris G. Shtepa