



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Revised HELCOM Recommendation 15/1

Adopted 8 March 1994 and amended 5 March 2018,
having regard to Article 13, Paragraph b)
of the Helsinki Convention

PROTECTION OF THE COASTAL STRIP

THE COMMISSION,

RECALLING Article 13 g of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea, 1974 Helsinki Convention,

NOTING Article 15 of the 1992 Helsinki Convention,

BEARING IN MIND the effort and activities of HELCOM in nature conservation, inter alia, with the establishment of the HELCOM Coastal and Marine Baltic Sea Protected Areas (HELCOM MPA) network the United Nations Convention of Biological Diversity (UN CBD) Aichi 11 target of at least 10 % spatial coverage has already been achieved,

RECALLING the UN CBD and its Programme of Work on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity, including relevant tools and guidelines developed in this context, such as the voluntary guidelines for the consideration of biodiversity in environmental impact assessments in marine and coastal areas,

RECALLING ALSO HELCOM Recommendation 24/10 on implementation of integrated marine and coastal management of human activities in the Baltic Sea Area and to promote integrated management of human activities having impacts on the marine environment, HELCOM Recommendation 28E/9 on Development of Broad-Scale Marine Spatial Planning Principles in the Baltic sea Area and HELCOM Recommendation 35/1 on System of costal and marine Baltic Sea protected areas (HELCOM MPAs),

RECALLING FURTHER legislation of the European Union in the field of environment and coastal protection, including Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC), Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (2002/413/EC), Floods Directive (2007/60/EC), Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (2014/89/EU) as well as INSPIRE Directive (2007/2/EC),

RECALLING ALSO the Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation to the year 2020 and the Green Paper on a Future Maritime Policy for the European Union (Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European vision for the oceans and seas),

BEING AWARE that natural coastal areas where land and sea meet are in a constant dynamic relation to each other and

- are systems of great biological richness, variety and productivity;
- form habitats of highly specialized and often endangered species of wild fauna and flora as well as large populations of breeding and migratory birds;
- are landscapes of great natural beauty;
- are highly important for public recreation;
- are a natural resource which is becoming more and more scarce,

BEING DEEPLY CONCERNED about the increasing pressure for commercial exploitation of the remaining natural coast and about the consequences this might have for the coastal environment and the biological diversity of the whole Baltic Sea area,

APPRECIATING the measures already taken by several Baltic Sea States in order to protect the coastal strip,

BEING CONSCIOUS that urgent measures are required to stop further degradation of the natural coasts,

RECOMMENDS to the Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention:

- a) that the Contracting Parties take all appropriate measures to ensure the protection of biodiversity and nature (biology and geology) as well as recreational values of the coastal strip;
- b) that a generally protected coastal strip therefore be established outside urban areas and existing settlements, the width of which shall be determined by the nature and landscape values of the coast, extending at least 100 to 300 meters from the mean water line landwards and seawards;
- c) that in this protected coastal strip:
 - activities which would permanently change the nature and landscape such as extraction of soil and minerals, construction of buildings (except for buildings necessary for existing farming or fishing and saunas in connection with existing buildings), marinas, roads, camping grounds etc. not be allowed except when proved to be in overwhelming public interest including responsibilities of public administration with regard to coastal and flood protection and when it is proved that no less sensitive site can be found;
 - intensive forestry and intensive farming including drainage be restricted;
- d) that exceptions can be made from the provisions in points b) and c) by a land use plan approved and sanctioned by a competent authority;
- e) that a zone of at least 3 kilometres landwards from the mean water line should be established as a coastal planning zone where major building development and other major permanent changes in nature and landscape be preceded by an appropriate land use plan, and/or an environmental impact assessment,

RECOMMENDS ALSO that actions be taken by the Contracting Parties as soon as possible and be reported to the Commission every 6 years and that the HELCOM working group in charge stays in contact with the Contracting Parties for information and cooperation in this matter.