

HELSINKI COMMISSION

Baltic Marine Environment
Protection Commission



HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 24/5 *)

Adopted 25 June 2003
having regard to Article 20, Paragraph 1 b)
of the Helsinki Convention

PROPER HANDLING OF WASTE/LANDFILLING

THE COMMISSION,

RECALLING Article 3, para 1 of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, 1992 (Helsinki Convention), in which the Contracting Parties shall individually or jointly take all appropriate legislative, administrative or other relevant measures to prevent and eliminate pollution in order to promote the ecological restoration of the Baltic Sea Area and the preservation of its ecological balance,

RECALLING Article 5 of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, 1992 (Helsinki Convention), in which the Contracting Parties undertake to prevent and eliminate pollution of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area caused by harmful substances from all sources,

RECALLING that the 1988 Ministerial Declaration called for a considerable reduction of land based pollution,

RECALLING FURTHER a need for harmonised requirements on proper handling of inert, non hazardous and hazardous waste, introducing of modern landfill techniques and phasing out improper dumping sites, and noting the EU Council Directive 1999/31/EC of 26 April 1999 on the landfill of waste,

DESIRING to prevent pollution of the Baltic Sea from discharges originating from landfills and dumping sites,

RECOMMENDS that the Governments of all the Contracting Parties not later than 16 July 2009 for existing landfills within the Baltic Sea catchment areas, except for small landfills located in some of the coming EU countries for which the deadline of 1 July 2012 has been agreed with the European Commission, take measures as follows:

- a) existing landfills not fulfilling the criteria of proper landfilling practices required for obtaining a permit should be closed, or restored in accordance with the national legislation;
- b) existing landfills which have been nationally granted a permit and do not implement proper handling of waste should be brought in line with the requirements of national legislation or closed down as soon as possible,

RECOMMENDS FURTHER that the Governments of all the Contracting Parties from 1 January 2004 take measures as follows:

*) Superseding HELCOM Recommendation 22/4

- a) the amount of waste to be landfilled should be minimised and its hazard level to the environment and human health should be decreased through introduction and wide implementation of waste separation, pre-treatment and recycling;
- b) national legislation should be upgraded and enforced in order to reach proper handling of waste and proper landfilling practices and to prevent illegal waste dumping as defined in EC Council Directive 1999/31/EC;
- c) proper landfilling should be implemented with regard to location, design, construction of new landfills and their operation, closure and aftercare phases;
- d) the environmental risk of already closed landfills should be assessed and pollution prevention measures should be implemented. Both the procedures must be in accordance with national legislation and in proportion to the possible environmental threat,

RECOMMENDS FURTHER that the Contracting Parties should report to the HELCOM Commission on implementation of this Recommendation in 2006 and every three years thereafter.

DEFINITIONS

UNDERSTANDING under

- a) "proper handling of waste" and "proper landfilling" operational techniques and waste management practices which are on the level of the respective EU Council Directive 1999/31/EC regulations;
- b) "risk" a potential hazard for the Baltic Sea area caused by direct and indirect pollution of surface water and groundwater contaminated by landfills;
- c) "hazardous waste" is any waste defined as hazardous by national legislation;
- d) "landfill" means a waste disposal site for the deposit of the waste on to or into land (i.e. underground), including internal waste disposal sites (i.e. landfill where a producer of waste is carrying out its own waste disposal at the place of production) or permanent site (i.e. more than one year) which is used for temporary storage of waste, but excluding facilities where waste is unloaded in order to permit its preparation for further transport for recovery, treatment or disposal elsewhere, and storage of waste prior to recovery or treatment for a period less than three years as a general rule or storage of waste prior to disposal for a period less than one year.