

Annex 6

Third Meeting

Helsinki 16 - 19 February 1982

HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 3/3

adopted 17 February 1982, having regard to
Articles 6 and 13 of the Helsinki Convention

RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING PROTECTION OF SEALS IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA

THE COMMISSION,

DEEPLY CONCERNED of the critical situation of the seals which has grown alarming as pointed out by many expert meetings and organizations, e.g. the Seal Expert Symposium in Warsaw, 1980, the Nordic Council of Ministers, 1981, the Committee for the Gulf of Bothnia, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea,

CONVINCED that the survival of these species can be guaranteed only by urgent active measures taken by all the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention,

RECOGNIZING that according to the document "Assessment of the Effects of Pollution on the Natural Resources of the Baltic Sea, 1980" there are strong indications that PCB substances primarily are responsible for the serious decrease in the reproductive rate of ringed seals, harbour seals and grey seals of the Baltic Sea Area,

RECOGNIZING FURTHER the importance and urgency of implementing the Recommendation on the Limitation of the Use of PCB's (HELCOM Recommendation 3/1),

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

a) through their national instruments ban all hunting of grey seals and harbour seals and ban or strictly regulate hunting of ringed seals both in national and international waters until the natural reproductive rate can be scientifically shown to be sufficient enough to safeguard the survival of these species in the Baltic Sea Area; and

b) make efforts to establish seal sanctuaries and, when appropriate, organize seal breeding in order to save the genetical individuality of the declining Baltic seal stocks,

INVITES the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea continuously to assess the condition of the seal populations of the Baltic Sea.