

HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 19/3

Adopted 26 March 1998,
having regard to Article 13, Paragraph b)
of the Helsinki Convention

THE MANUAL FOR THE MARINE MONITORING IN THE COMBINE PROGRAMME OF HELCOM

THE COMMISSION,

RECALLING the provisions of Articles 4 and 16 of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, 1974, (Helsinki Convention), concerning the application of the Convention and scientific and technological cooperation,

NOTING the concern on the state of the Baltic Sea, due to discharges of pollutants from various sources, especially from land-based sources, in spite of comprehensive measures taken by the Contracting Parties to reduce the discharges,

RECALLING the previous decisions to use a joint programme in monitoring, and to have the monitoring work of the Commission under one organizational framework (Cooperative Monitoring in the Baltic Marine Environment, COMBINE),

BEARING IN MIND the provisions included in Article 4 of the 1992 Helsinki Convention, in which the Contracting Parties undertake to ensure that the purposes of the Convention will be obtained also in internal waters, and Article 15 of the 1992 Helsinki Convention concerning nature conservation and biodiversity,

BEING MINDFUL of the need of reliable physical, chemical and biological data, necessary for assessments as needed of the state of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea,

RECALLING the previous decision by the Commission of adopting the Quality Assurance Policy and the decision according to which the participation in quality assurance exercises is mandatory for all laboratories providing monitoring data;

RECALLING ALSO the decision made by the Commission to elaborate an integrated monitoring programme for coastal areas of the Baltic Sea, and to harmonize it with the existing monitoring programme for the open Baltic Sea,

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

- a) the monitoring of the state of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea should be performed from 1 January 1998 onwards in accordance with the Manual for the Marine Monitoring in the COMBINE Programme of HELCOM adopted by the Environment Committee of HELCOM;
- b) the Manual should be applied also for monitoring the coastal waters covering also aspects of biodiversity, as soon as finalized;
- c) the annual monitoring data, as committed by the Contracting Parties in the Manual, should be made available for the Commission by 1 May of the following year for hydrographic and hydrochemical data and by 1 September of the following year for biological data and harmful substances; and
- d) the national data reports and other relevant additional information concerning monitoring and quality assurance should be submitted annually together with the data submission.