

HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 28E/14

Adopted 15 November 2007
having regard to Article 20, Paragraph 1 b)
of the Helsinki Convention

DEVELOPMENT OF HARMONISED PRINCIPLES FOR QUANTIFYING DIFFUSE LOSSES THROUGHOUT THE BALTIC SEA CATCHMENT AREA

THE COMMISSION,

RECOGNISING that a goal of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan is to achieve good ecological status of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea, and the need to quantify the future inputs of nutrients to the whole Baltic Sea and its sub-regions in order to achieve the HELCOM Ecological Objectives under the goal “Baltic Sea unaffected by eutrophication”,

RECALLING that existing methods and catchment models are able to describe and assess different loss processes and pathways. However, it is difficult to quantify losses from diffuse sources accurately and to consider the various natural and anthropogenic components of the discharges/losses regime of nitrogen and phosphorus in the river systems,

BEING AWARE that

- currently no common methodology has been agreed to quantify diffuse sources or delivery pathways;
- there is a clear need to improve these issues for future HELCOM Pollution Load Compilations;
- any common methodology must be designed for application in catchment areas with different physical characteristics,
- the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan also requires an estimate as exact as possible on diffuse sources entering into the Baltic Sea;
- the existing information and results from ongoing projects in HELCOM and OSPAR areas (e.g. the outcome of the EU-funded EUROHARP Project and the OSPAR HARP-NUT Guideline 6 on diffuse sources) should be taken into account,

ACKNOWLEDGING the need of harmonized principles for quantifying diffuse losses throughout the Baltic Sea catchment area in order to obtain comparable and reliable estimates on the waterborne inputs from both point sources and diffuse sources entering into the Baltic Sea. The information is required to enable better assessments whether HELCOM reduction targets are met and as well to improve the possibilities to assess the effectiveness of different measures taken,

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION that the implementation of this HELCOM Recommendation will result in improved knowledge and more reliable results of inputs from especially diffuse sources for future Pollution Load Compilation assessments and as basis for decisions to be taken for the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan,

RECOMMENDS the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention:

1. to support the development and use of harmonised principles for quantifying losses and inputs from diffuse sources;

2. to monitor, calculate and report complete data sets on point and diffuse source nutrient loads, so the total loads entering the Baltic Sea can be estimated with reasonable accuracy bearing in mind the requirements of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

- in developing targets for good ecological status;
- in estimating future allowable nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea and its sub-regions without jeopardize achieving the good ecological status;

3. to support further division of total diffuse losses between different sources (e.g. agriculture, managed forests, natural background) as well as to estimate the retention rates nitrogen and phosphorus in the catchment;

4. to include the loads coming from upstream countries in a more comprehensive way when quantifying losses from diffuse (as well as from point) sources,

REQUESTS FURTHER HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Group to follow the implementation of this Recommendation in accordance with Article 16, Paragraph 1 of the Helsinki Convention,

AUTHORISES the HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Group to adopt technical guidelines for the implementation of this Recommendation.