

**CONVENTION  
ON THE PROTECTION OF THE  
MARINE ENVIRONMENT  
OF THE BALTIC SEA AREA**

THE STATES PARTIES TO THIS CONVENTION,

CONSCIOUS of the indispensable economic, social and cultural values of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area and its living resources for the peoples of the Contracting Parties;

BEARING in mind the exceptional hydrographic and ecological characteristics of the Baltic Sea Area and the sensitivity of its living resources to changes in the environment;

NOTING the rapid development of human activities at the Baltic Sea Area, the considerable population living within its catchment area and the highly urbanized and industrialized state of the Contracting Parties as well as their intensive agriculture and forestry;

NOTING with deep concern the increasing pollution of the Baltic Sea Area, originating from many sources such as discharges through rivers, estuaries, outfalls and pipelines, dumping and normal operations of vessels as well as through airborne pollutants;

CONSCIOUS of the responsibility of the Contracting Parties to protect and enhance the values of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area for the benefit of their peoples;

RECOGNIZING that the protection and enhancement of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area are tasks that cannot effectively be accomplished by national efforts only but that also close regional co-operation and other appropriate international measures aiming at fulfilling these tasks are urgently needed;

NOTING that the relevant recent international conventions even after having entered into force for the respective Contracting Parties do not cover all special requirements to protect and enhance the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area;

NOTING the importance of scientific and technological co-operation in the protection and enhancement of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area, particularly between the Contracting Parties;

DESIRING to develop further regional co-operation in the Baltic Sea Area, the possibilities and requirements of which were confirmed by the signing of the Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources in the Baltic Sea and the Belts, Gdansk 1973;

CONSCIOUS of the importance of regional intergovernmental co-operation in the protection of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area as an integral part of the peaceful co-operation and mutual understanding between all European States;

HAVE AGREED as follows:

Article 1

*Convention Area*

For the purposes of the present Convention "the Baltic Sea Area" shall be the Baltic Sea proper with the Gulf of Bothnia, the Gulf of Finland and the entrance to the Baltic Sea bounded by the parallel of the Skaw in the Skagerrak at 57° 44' 8" N. It does not include internal waters of the Contracting Parties.

Article 2

*Definitions*

For the purposes of the present Convention:

1. "Pollution" means introduction by man, directly or indirectly, of substances or energy into the marine environment, including estuaries, resulting in such deleterious effects as hazard to human health, harm to living resources and marine life, hindrance to legitimate uses of the sea including fishing, impairment of the quality for use of sea water, and reduction of amenities;

2. "Land-based pollution" means pollution of the sea caused by discharges from land reaching the sea waterborne, airborne or directly from the coast, including outfalls from pipelines;

3. a) "Dumping" means:

- (i) any deliberate disposal at sea of wastes or other matter from vessels, aircraft, platforms or other man-made structures at sea;
- (ii) any deliberate disposal at sea of vessels, aircraft, platforms or other man-made structures at sea;

b) "Dumping" does not include:

- (i) the disposal at sea of wastes or other matter incidental to, or derived from the normal operations of vessels, aircraft, platforms or other man-made structures at sea and their equipment, other than wastes or other matter transported by or to vessels, aircraft, platforms or other man-made structures at sea, operating for the purpose of disposal of such matter or derived from the treatment of such wastes or other matter on such vessels, aircraft, platforms or structures;
- (ii) placement of matter for a purpose other than the mere disposal thereof, provided that such placement is not contrary to the aims of the present Convention;

4. "Vessels and aircraft" means waterborne or airborne craft of any type whatsoever. This expression includes hydrofoil boats, air-cushion vehicles, submersibles, floating craft whether self-propelled or not, and fixed or floating platforms;

5. "Oil" means petroleum in any form including crude oil, fuel oil, sludge, oil refuse and refined products;

6. "Harmful substance" means any hazardous, noxious, or other substance, which, if introduced into the sea, is liable to cause pollution;

7. "Incident" means an event involving the actual or probable discharge into the sea of a harmful substance, or effluents containing such a substance.

Article 3

*Fundamental principles and obligations*

1. The Contracting Parties shall individually or jointly take all appropriate legislative, administrative or other relevant measures in order to prevent and abate pollution and to protect and enhance the marine environment of the Baltic Sea Area.

2. The Contracting Parties shall use their best endeavours to ensure that the implementation of the present Convention