



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
3-2015

Helsinki, Finland, 9-13 November, 2015

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| Document title | Draft HELCOM Recommendation on using autonomous devices for monitoring |
| Code | 2MA-10 |
| Category | CMNT |
| Agenda Item | 2MA – Revision of HELCOM monitoring |
| Submission date | 4.11.2015 |
| Submitted by | Secretariat |

Background

State and Conservation 2-2015 considered the draft HELCOM Recommendation on using autonomous devices for monitoring and recognized that there are no regulations for the use of autonomous devices in the Baltic Sea. The meeting concluded that national consultations with relevant authorities, e.g. transport and defense, are needed before the further development of the Recommendation. The meeting agreed to revisit the draft Recommendation on autonomous devices at the next meeting of the Working Group and requested Contracting Parties to consult their national authorities on the draft Recommendation and inform the Secretariat (ullali.zweifel@helcom.fi) 30 days in advance of STATE & CONSERVATION 3-2015.

No input to the draft Recommendation has been received from Contracting Parties. This document contains the draft Recommendation as submitted to State and Conservation 2-2015.

Action required

The Meeting is invited to discuss, amend and propose further steps with the view of adopting the new recommendation by HELCOM in 2017.

Draft HELCOM Recommendation on autonomous devices

HELCOM RECOMMENDATION XX/YY

**Adopted X March XXXX,
having regard to Article 20 (1), Paragraph b)
of the Helsinki Convention**

PROCEDURES OF NOTIFYING ABOUT AUTONOMOUS MONITORING DEVICES IN THE BALTIC SEA

THE COMMISSION,

RECALLING Articles 4 and 24 of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, 1992 (Helsinki Convention), concerning the application of the Convention and scientific and technological co-operation,

APPRECIATING the achievements in environmental protection within the framework of the Helsinki Convention as well as successful implementation of coordinated monitoring programmes to provide basis for decision making, such as HELCOM BMP, COMBINE, MORS, PLC, COASTAL FISH and SEALS,

RECALLING ALSO HELCOM Ministerial Declaration, 2013 paragraph X and chapter on marine knowledge, monitoring and assessment, concerning the intensified efforts to improve data and information quality and availability as well as coordinated monitoring practices,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the HELCOM Monitoring and Assessment Strategy, 2013, Attachment 1, stating the need for co-operation and coordination of monitoring efforts especially for the open sea areas as well as urging to use autonomous measuring devices to complement ship cruise data and thereby enhance data coverage and production of shared data products,

NOTING that certain Contracting Parties have successfully applied “ships-of-opportunity” based monitoring methods in the Baltic Sea covering most of the HELCOM sub-basins,

NOTING ALSO that profiling floats, moored profilers and gliders have been tested and are in use for environmental monitoring and scientific research in the Baltic,

REFERRING to IOC Assembly Resolution XX-6 and IOC Resolution EC-XLI.4 „Guidelines for the implementation of Resolution XX-6 of the IOC assembly regarding the deployment of profiling floats in the high seas within the framework of the ARGO programme”,

(Tentative paragraph: EXPRESSING concern that regionally agreed procedures (guidelines) of notifying about autonomous monitoring devices are missing in the Baltic Sea area although such devices might intentionally or unintentionally (by drifting with currents) enter the waters under jurisdiction of other coastal states,)

CONVINCED that concerned coastal states must be informed in advance, through appropriate channels, of all deployments of profiling floats and other autonomous devices which are planned to use in or might drift into waters under their jurisdiction, indicating the exact locations of such deployments,

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

- a) to report to HELCOM about the procedures to notify about autonomous devices that are planned to be deployed or might drift into waters under their jurisdiction,
- b) to agree on development and use of an on-line platform (at HELCOM web site) to share information on planned deployments of autonomous devices to be used for environmental monitoring and scientific research in the Baltic,
- c) to support co-operation in development and application of such autonomous systems for the Baltic Sea coordinated monitoring programme,
- d) to support activities in regard of joint service and accidental recovery of autonomous monitoring devices where and when necessary.