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WMU in the News

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WMU students in Leningrad

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HELCOM under Way

The regular 8th session of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission was attended by representatives from all Baltic countries, including the USSR.

The session observed that, owing to preventive measures, pollution of the Baltic Sea waters by harmful substances has significantly decreased in recent years.

Contributing factors were that the Baltic Sea has been declared a "special area" as defined in the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 (MARPOL 73/78), and that the HELCOM Rule 5 entered into force governing matters relating to pollution prevention when noxious liquid substances are carried in bulk, as well as that all the Parties to the HELCOM Convention have entered the MARPOL 73/78.

The Commission adopted several amendments to the HELCOM Convention, to be circulated to shipowners.

The Commission expressed its concern at continuing pollution

from permanent sources like cities, industrial enterprises, agricultural facilities, etc., and passed the necessary Recommendations. A meeting at the level of member-country Ministers was planned for February 1988, primarily to elaborate a joint declaration aimed at combatting pollution from land.

Much attention was paid to matters concerning the organization and technology of combatting accidental spills of noxious substances, oil, and particularly in ice situations.

The USSR always comes out in favour of resolutions adopted and implemented within the framework of the Helsinki Convention, aimed at preserving and increasing the natural riches of the Baltic Sea, and utilising them with care and consideration. Soviet ships are now all fitted to comply with the requirements posed by HELCOM Rule 4 (Annex I to MARPOL 73/78), and intensive work is being carried out to make the ships conform to the provisions of HELCOM Rule 5 (Annex II to MARPOL 73/78).

Soviet shipowners fully adhere to HELCOM Recommendations.

Soviet ports in the Baltic Sea operate reception facilities for polluted water and waste from ships. Furthermore, bilge waters

and garbage are received free of charge from transport ships (except passenger vessels) at the ports of Leningrad, Vyborg, Kaliningrad, Riga, Ventspils and Klaipeda. The port of Ventspils has arranged for reception of slops containing chemical residues, in line with the list of chemical cargoes handled at the port.

Discharge of untreated industrial and municipal sewage and effluents has been brought down to practically zero in Soviet cities and towns on the Baltic Sea coast.

Special divisions have been set up in the ports of Ventspils and Klaipeda, to deal with accidental spills. At present these divisions are being supplied with modern facilities and equipment for spill collection and localisation and expert personnel is being trained.

Work will continue in future but we should bear in mind that all pollution results from human activities and that the human factor is the main and decisive instrument in the cause of pollution prevention and preservation of a clean natural environment. Even the most up-to-date equipment is incapable of preventing a disaster if responsible officials keep violating accepted standards and regulations and continue being negligent and complacent.

This is why all environment protection activities should be based on extensive explanatory and educational work.

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Last June, the 3rd meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Combatting Spillages of Harmful Substances Other Than Oil of the Baltic Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM) took place in Turku, Finland.

At the opening session, Timo Viitanen, Secretary-General of the Provincial Government of Turku, emphasised that matters of pollution prevention in the coastal area were of high priority and played a very important role in the Province's economy.

The main agenda items discussed at the session were as follows:

- the inventory of chemical cargoes carried in the Baltic Sea
- classification of chemicals shipped in bulk, assessment of sea pollution risks in the carriage of bulk chemicals
- a draft of the Baltic Supplement to the IMO Anti-Pollution Manual on Spillages Other Than Oil.

The next 4th session of the Group is planned for Copenhagen on June 6-8, 1988.

WMU Students in Leningrad

In April, a group of students taking a two-year course at the World Maritime University, Malmö, Sweden, visited Leningrad. The University was set up in 1983, with the direct involvement of the IMO. Its aims are to train national cadres for developing countries.

This was not the first time that students from this University came to the Soviet Union, be-



cause our country played an active part both in its establishment and in the implementation of training programs. This time,

once again, experts from various countries, with considerable experience of practical work behind them, arrived at the city on the

Neva River in order to gain new knowledge in the course of seminars in marine navigation and engineering offered by the Leningrad Higher Engineering Marine School.

The group of the University's students studied methods employed in the USSR for the training of mariners and paid a visit to the training-cargo vessel *Professor Shchyogolev*. The navigators and engineers from the WMU also did some practice with simulator training equipment.

The guests had interesting tours of Leningrad, visited the famous Hermitage, went to the ballet and the Circus and to see a hockey game.