



Towards the Gulf of Finland Year 2014

K. Myrberg and L. Vesikko

Finnish Environment Institute, Marine Research Centre, Finland (kai.myrberg@ymparisto.fi)

The trilateral co-operation between Russia, Estonia and Finland was initiated in 1992 to protect the marine environment of the GoF. In 1996 the first Gulf of Finland Year was organized with the support of the responsible ministries in all three countries. At present the joint activity aims at supporting the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to the Management of the Human Activities, more specifically HELCOM BSAP as a “sub-regional” activity. Currently, the second Gulf of Finland Year is planned to be held in 2014 and the preparations are under way.

It is crucial that the best available scientific information is provided into the environmental decision making process to guarantee the sound decision-making. Thus, we need up-to-date information concerning the pressures on and state of the marine ecosystem of the GoF and how to focus optimally our resources for the protection and restoration of the sea in the future. The organizing of the second Gulf of Finland Year originates from the scientific community which finds, taking into account the specific and vulnerable nature of the sea, the GoF Year 2014 to give additional value for the protection and restoration of its environment in terms of the enhanced political presence, as well as through the communication and interaction with private sector, environmental decision-makers, politicians and ordinary citizens.

The GoF Year 2014 brings scientists together to make extensive process-oriented studies leading to high-quality data sets, which will produce new and topical data and information in more detail than ever before by using e.g. modern observation techniques and ecosystem modeling as examples of advanced tool. The trilateral co-operation between Estonia, Finland and Russia ensures the new achievements in marine research will be translated to reach the environmental decision-making efficiently. Consequently, a Gulf of Finland declaration is given in 2014 where the necessary actions to improve state the marine environment of the GoF will be outlined —keeping in mind that there are 12 million people living the catchment area of the GoF.