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The European Union and its Northern Frontier

EUropean Geopolitics and its Arctic Context

The European Union and its Northern Frontier: EUropean Geopolitics and its Arctic Context

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PREFACE

Working on a dissertation seems like an endless process. It is a Sisyphean task that drives one to experience pure desperation creating thereby a steady state of self-consciousness and unrest – it simply and continuously but ever so effectively preys on one's mind. Moreover, this process bears many obstacles, either of individual, administrative, financial or academic nature.

In March 2015, the English rock band *Muse* released their song *Dead Inside*. Its lyrics, and particularly a short segment thereof, perfectly encapsulates the 'normal state of mind' and close relationship I have developed with the present study over the years – *I gave you everything, I can't give you anymore*. Looking back at this long process of almost five years, I realise that I am indebted to so many sources of inspiration as well as diversified, indispensable support.

First of all, I am most grateful to four friends that have read and commented on substantial parts of my dissertation and whose humour, traits of character, expertise and personality helped me to survive this piece of lunacy unscathed: Wulf Reiners, Adam Stępień, Stefan Steinicke and Andreas Østhagen. I owe you guys.

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Aside from these people a wide range of friends and colleagues has joined me on this five-year long voyage. People I have either met in one of the many places I lived and worked in, or folks that have just always been part of my life.

My time in Cologne and Edinburgh, 2011-2013, was essentially shaped by the entire community of the *The Marie Curie Initial Training Network EXACT*, notably Aline Bartenstein, Marlene Gottwald, Leonhard den Hertog, Miguel Haubrich Seco

and James Nyomakwa-Obimpeh. Yet, Cologne was so much more than only EXACT. The hometown of the fabulous 1. FC Köln is also the home of the Jean Monnet Chair of Prof. Wessels and all the people that worked there, in particular Nicole Ahler, Fulden Eskidelvan, Cyril Gläser, Andreas Hofmann, Claudia Heffler, Oliver Höing, Tobias Kunstein, Alice Oeter, Katrin Schmermund, Mirja Schröder and Funda Tekin – colleagues that became friends. Eventually, Cologne would not have been the same without Leonie Völker and her outstandingly great personality. Moreover, I am grateful to have met my Norwegian language-fellow, Tobias Gockel, and I remain deeply indebted to my relatives in Cologne and Solingen – the Middeldorf-Radtke-Sidorczuk combo. Yet, EXACT has also brought me back to Brussels, giving me the chance to meet Laura Boone, Marine Jacob, Mirte van den Berge and Laura Ventura.

From 2014 onwards, I had the good fortune to live, research and write in Oslo and Berkeley, respectively. Being twice a Guest Researcher at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute (FNI) in Oslo, funded by the E.ON Stipendienfonds, enabled me to surround myself with scholars interested in Arctic matters. Hence, I would therefore like to thank the entire FNI-crew for the fruitful and *quiz-challenging* time at Polhøgda, most notably Jan Dalsgaard Sørensen, Geir Hønneland, Tor Håkon Jackson Inderberg, Claes Lykke Ragner, Kabir Taneja and my ‘running-mate’ Svein Vigeland Rottem. Moreover, Oslo was and will always remain precious to me because it is the place of as beloved people as Kata Kvaran, Alice Bothwell, Armin Fleischer, Michaela Frank, Despina Gleitsmann, Betteke van Noort, *Admiral* Rune Stavnes, Paul Troost and Blake Wergeland.

And yet, it was my residence in the Bay Area that made a lasting impression on me. This beautiful and mind-blowing, however, ambiguous region of old and new, poor and rich, swept me off my feet in so many ways. Hence, I am deeply thankful to the Berkeley-Cologne Fund, which sponsored my research stay as Visiting Researcher at the Institute of European Studies (IES) at the University of California, Berkeley and the respective people in charge: Brit Sperber, Jeroen Dewulf and Gia White. Eventually, it was the group of people that surrounded me in Berkeley that made these six months memorable ones: Ritu Argawal, Magdalena Cadena, Joel

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Last but definitely not least, my deep and honest gratitude goes to all my friends as well as my family back home in Austria and all over Europe. In particular, to Manuel Bergmann and Alexander Planasch, who regardless of my physical location proved to be true friends throughout the entire time; to Christoph Posautz; to Philip Salzmann and Iris Stöckl; to the ‘Hawaiian’ and one and only Stefanie Suppick; to Adam Madsen and Claudia Wittwer; to the German/Swiss crew around Ursina Ammann, Bastian Gruhne and Sebastian Knab; to Gerhard Schaunig and Michael Siter; to Thomas Künster, Roman Lesjak, Roland Rössmann and Andreas Witschnigg. And chiefly to Katrin Binder, who fortunately re-entered my life, supported my last academic steps by simply being herself and being there for me, truly rocking my world ever since then. And I would also like to thank Arnulf Lagler and his indispensable financial support during my (long) life as a student.

To my mum Sigrid Raspotnik, without whom all this would not have been possible in the first place. To the best brother there is: Thomas Raspotnik. To my dad Arnold Raspotnik, the intellectually stimulating and left-wing discussions we continue to have, and his wife Eva Maria Happe. To my step-sister Raphaela and her family.

Finally, a concluding thanks goes to myself. For eventually not going insane and for finishing this seemingly never-ending process. For being – in the words of *College & Electric Youth* – *a real human being, and a real hero, back against the wall and odds, with the strength of a will and a cause.*

ABSTRACT

The present study explores European geopolitical agency in a distinct spatio-temporal context: the Arctic region of the early 21st century. Thus, it provides an in-depth analysis of the European Union's process to construct European legitimacy and credibility in its 'Northern Neighbourhood' between 2008 and 2014.

Embedded in a conceptual and methodological framework using critical geopolitics, this study assesses the strategic policy reasoning of the EU and the implicit geopolitical discourses that guide and determine a particular line of argumentation so as to claim a 'legitimate' role in the Arctic and accordingly construct a distinct 'European Arctic space'. In doing so, it establishes a clearer picture on the (narrated) regional interests of the EU and the related developed policy and concrete steps taken in order to get hold of these interests. Eventually, the analysis gets to the conceptual bottom of what exactly fashioned the EU with geopolitical agency in the circumpolar North.

As a complementary explanation, this study provides a thick description of the area under scrutiny – the Arctic region – in order to explicate the systemic context that conditioned the EU's regional demeanour and action. Elucidated along the lines of Arctic history and identity, rights, interests and responsibility, it delineates the emergence of the Arctic as a region of and for geopolitics.

The findings indicate that the *sui generis* character of the Arctic as European neighbourhood essentially determined the EU's regional performance. It explicates that the Union's 'traditional' geopolitical models of civilian or normative power got entangled in a fluid state of Arctic affairs: a distinct regional system, characterised by few strong state actors with pronounced national Arctic interests and identities, and an indefinite local context of environmental changes, economic uncertainties and social challenges.

This study applies critical geopolitics in a Political Science context and essentially contributes to a broader understanding of EU foreign policy construction and behaviour. Ultimately, it offers an interdisciplinary approach on how to analyse EU external action by explicitly taking into account the internal and external social processes that ultimately condition a certain European foreign policy performance.

ABBREVIATIONS

A5	Arctic Five
A8	Arctic Eight
AC	Arctic Council
AEPS	Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy
ATS	Antarctic Treaty System
BEAC	Barents Euro-Arctic Council
BEAR	Barents Euro-Arctic Region
bboe	Billion barrels of oil equivalents
CARA	Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy of the European Union
CLCS	Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
COP	Conference of the Parties
CS	Continental Shelf
DG	Directorate-General
DG CLIMA	Directorate-General for Climate Action
DG MARE	Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
DG RELEX	Directorate-General for External Relations
EEA	European Economic Area
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEC	European Economic Community
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EP	European Parliament
ERA	European Research Area
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESS	European Security Strategy
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
EU	European Union
EUAIC	EU Arctic Information Centre
EUMSS	European Union Maritime Security Strategy
FP5	Fifth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (1998-2002)
FP6	Sixth Framework Programme (2002-2006)
FP7	Seventh Framework Programme (2007-2013)
FPA	Fisheries Partnership Agreement (EU – Greenland)
FPZ	Fishery Protection Zone

GNSS	Global navigation satellite systems
GPS	Global Positioning System
HR	High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Conference
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IMP	Integrated Maritime Policy
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPOs	Indigenous peoples' organisations
IR	International Relations
LNG	Liquefied natural gas
LOS Convention	Law of the Sea Convention
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
NASCO	North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization
NC	Nordic Council
NCM	Nordic Council of Ministers
ND	Northern Dimension
NEAFC	North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
NEP	Northeast Passage
NM	Nautical Mile
NSR	Northern Sea Route
NWP	Northwest Passage
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories
PA	Partnership Agreement (EU – Greenland)
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
RFMO	Regional fisheries management organisations
SAO	Senior Arctic Official
SWD	Staff Working Document
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TSR	Transpolar Sea Route
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
U.S.	United States
WTO	World Trade Organization

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PART ONE

SETTING UP THE STUDY

¹ (Kuus 2014: 12)

1. Introduction: The Geopolitics of an Arctic Meltdown

During the summer of 2007, Greenland – the world’s largest island – saw a number of relatively unfamiliar visitors: politicians from the European Union (hereinafter ‘EU’ or ‘Union’) and its Member States. The President of the European Commission at that time, José Manuel Barroso visited Greenland end of June. The then Italian Prime Minister, Romano Prodi and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel experienced global warming and the melting of Greenland’s ice sheet first hand in July and August, respectively (Maxeiner 2007; SpiegelOnline 2007). After the issue of climate change rose to the top of the G8 Summit agenda in Bad Doberan/Heiligendamm (Germany) in June 2007, Greenland became the ‘Mecca of climate tourism’ (Harris 2007; Bomsdorf 2007).² Later that summer, the broader circumpolar North – the Arctic region – hit global headlines with the blurry picture of a Russian titanium flag, planted more than 4,000 m beneath the North Pole at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean. Moreover, images of an ice-free Arctic Ocean ruled the airwaves in September 2007 as the Ocean’s sea ice extent reached a record low – 38% below average (Comiso et al. 2008: 6).

The region’s (sea) ice was disappearing; and with the melting of the North Polar ice cap the ‘solid state’ of the Arctic was called into question. And yet, it was not climate change *per se* that allegedly affected the stability of the region but the very correlation of melting ice with enhanced accessibility and related (economic) opportunities for regional and non-regional actors (Dittmer et al. 2011: 205). The Arctic re-appeared as a centre of world politics (Heininen & Southcott 2010: 2) with a globally applicable, ambiguous and yet immediately recognised buzzword portraying the region’s manifold state of change and its ambivalent physical condition: *Geopolitics*.

Beyond all doubt, the summery events of 2007 brought “international geopolitical attention” back to the Arctic (Powell 2008: 827). Since then, the region emerged “as a space *of* and *for* geopolitics” and became a distinct feature in circumpolar but also international politics (Dittmer et al. 2011: 202) (*Italics in the*

² The German original of ‘mecca of climate tourism’ reads as follows: “Das Mekka der Klima-Touristen” (Bomsdorf 2007).

original). The term ‘Arctic geopolitics’ grew in popularity as a fashionable catchphrase that broadly encapsulated the fluid state of Arctic affairs, covering a plethora of opposing assumptions on the region’s (immediate and long-term) future. These postulations included but were not limited to predictions rooted in a series of historical Cold War legacies, questions on national sovereignty and regional hegemony or the economic significance of the region’s resources and its maritime opportunities that eventually lead to ‘Arctic trouble’. Contrary-minded, a shifting, opening Arctic space was perceived as an area of multilateral cooperation that promotes polar region-building; a common space of sovereign states, bound together by a shared history and mutual future challenges. The growing internationality of the Arctic as observed in the region’s integration in patterns of globalisation or the emerging regional interests of non-Arctic actors based on economic or environmental considerations have further contributed to the conceptual vagueness of the very meaning of *Arctic geopolitics* (Knecht & Keil 2013: 181–186). A term Chaturvedi defined as “a historically contingent, but on-going, political project of scripting, staging, and projection of the circumpolar northern polar region” (2005a: 724). And without the shadow of a scientific doubt, the Arctic region has been politically, economically and socially re-scripted, re-staged and re-projected over the last decade.

Up to now, these intricacies have considerable been explored by academia, with yet many unknowns still existing. One of these many Arctic unknowns and essentially one component of Arctic geopolitics is the politico-economic union of (still) 28 Member States, whose prominent representative visited Greenland back in 2007: the EU. Ever since 2007/2008, the EU has started showing interest in the region’s climate, environmental and social challenges, as well as its economic opportunities.

This study deals with the Union’s process of ‘constructing’ European legitimacy and credibility in its Northern Neighbourhood – the Arctic region. Accordingly, this dissertation does not only provide an in-depth analysis of the Union’s multidimensional Arctic presence and its Arctic (foreign) policy reasoning

but essentially also gives an insight of how the EU has actively aimed to ‘spatialise’ the circumpolar North when creating its own regional script: a EU Arctic policy. Furthermore, deconstructing the term ‘Arctic geopolitics’ and its entangled components helps to understand the historical and spatio-temporal context the Union’s current Arctic (policy) approach is embedded in. The examination at hand uses the concept of ‘critical geopolitics’ in order to understand how and in what different nuances the Arctic, its opportunities and challenges has been brought into the EU’s political orbit by narrating and creating the Arctic region as an envisaged space of European interaction and exertion of influence.³

Thus, the dissertation gives new indication on the fragmented debate regarding ‘Arctic geopolitics’ in general and the EU’s regional involvement in specific. Moreover, it sheds light on the EU-internal processes of both geopolitical ordering and the related relations between the various European institutions, as well as on geopolitical knowledge-production in the hallways of European power. In that regard, the dissertation scrutinises the Union’s geopolitical behaviour not only in a very specific, under-researched, geographical area, but essentially provides insight into the EU’s internal and external structure as a geopolitical subject in the making.

This introductory Chapter proceeds as follows: Subchapter 1.1 delves into the academic endeavour and the related dissertation’s objectives by specifying a threefold destination route. This is followed by Subchapter 1.2, which clarifies the dissertation’s line of action and further identifies the scientific and analytical modus operandi. Subsequently, Subchapter 1.3 gives an answer on the indispensable question of both the added value and limitations of the research approach. Chapter 1 eventually concludes with an outline of the dissertation (Subchapter 1.4).

³ Based on Moisiso et al., this dissertation uses the spellings ‘European’ and ‘Europe’ to “signify the complex entanglements of Europe and the EU in contemporary political practices” by simultaneously highlighting that Europe cannot be reduced to the EU only (2013: 754).

1.1. The Academic Endeavour and the Dissertation's Objectives

In March/April 2008 *Foreign Affairs* published an essay that constituted the then predominant *zeitgeist* of international debate on the Arctic region. As introduced by the essay's author: "The Arctic Ocean is melting, and it is melting fast. (...) Global warming has given birth to a new scramble for territory and resources among the five Arctic powers." (Borgerson 2008: 63) The year 2008 saw the Arctic being denoted as a "strategic area" of "vital interest" and of "rapidly rising geopolitical and geoeconomic relevance" (Cohen, Szaszdi & Dolbow 2008). The 21st century has hardly begun but the label 'geopolitics' already entered the northernmost part of the Earth. Global climate change served as the instigator of the region's political, economic, environmental and social transformation, which "catapulted the Arctic into the centre of geopolitics" (Ebinger & Zambetakis 2009: 1215). The related revival of traditional power politics was assumed to "set off a vicious circle, jeopardising the wide-ranging collaboration put in place since the end of the Cold War" (Blunden 2009: 121). The Arctic was on the move with significant implications for international relations and 'geopolitics' became the common denominator to portray the region's constituting alterations.

At the very same time, on 14 March 2008, the EU's High Representative and the European Commission issued a joint policy document that followed the same train of thoughts:

"The rapid melting of the polar ice caps, in particular, the Arctic, is opening up new waterways and international trade routes. In addition, the increased accessibility of the enormous hydrocarbon resources in the Arctic region is changing the geo-strategic dynamics of the region with potential consequences for international stability and European security interests." (2008: 8)

The Arctic seemed to have appeared on the Union's 'neighbourhood radar'. And it emerged using classic geopolitical reasoning: the availability of resources in the region, induced by global warming, alters interaction between (state) actors and consequently changes this particular region's political dynamics, with alleged consequences for European security.

It is this precise point of ‘Arctic’ time that sets the basis for the dissertation at hand. This analysis aims to ‘unpack’ *Arctic geopolitics* from a particular angle, the EUropean one.⁴ It does not only scrutinise the overstretched and poorly conceptualised term ‘geopolitics’ in a specific regional context, but essentially gives a first indication on the very ‘geopolitical’ behaviour of an international actor that is typically not referred to as a ‘geopolitical actor’.

Hence, geopolitics serves as the conceptual connector between a region (= the Arctic) and a subject (= the EU).⁵ Moreover, the dissertation – as a monograph on this topic for the very first time in European Studies – examines a region where the EU’s traditionally perceived types of power, in particular the common market or its normative influence, are considerably weaker than compared to the Union’s Eastern and Southern neighbourhood – vicinities where the EU is normally able to emerge as a more dominant actor. In that regard, Kobza referred to the Arctic’s regional system as one “with strong actors [that play] well-defined roles, which puts the Union in an extraordinary handicapped position” (2015: 5).⁶

In order to approach the EU’s ambiguous nature as a geopolitical actor from a distinctive case’s perspective only, the main purpose of this dissertation is threefold and aims to holistically comprehend the three C’s of *concept*, *context* and *content*, see Figure I (page 8).

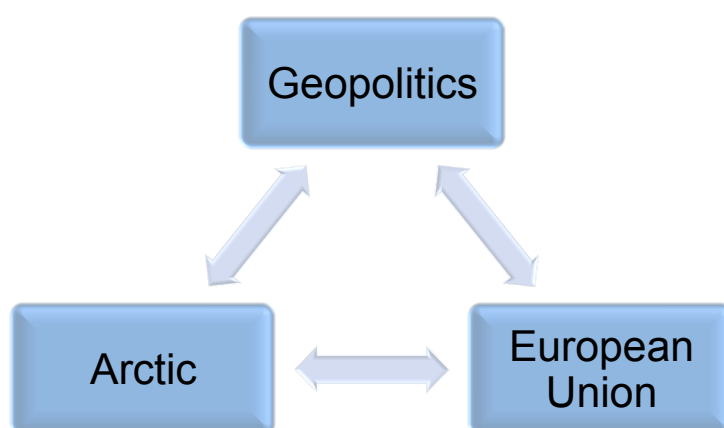
⁴ Political geographers commonly use the term ‘unpack’ to describe their work on the understanding and analysis of geographical assumptions in politics. Based on the dissertation’s practice of critical geopolitics, this study employs ‘unpacking’ according to the common linguistic usage of political geographers as a substitute for ‘understanding’.

⁵ In the course of years, the EU has achieved a lot of independent agency due to its supranational elements. However, especially its external action draws a different picture with varying competences, national/supranational interests and positions characterising agenda- and policy-making. Hence, within the study of (critical) geopolitics, Aalto (2002) argued to describe the EU as a ‘geopolitical subject’ instead of ‘agent’ or ‘actor’. Accordingly, the Union is perceived as an unfinished construction process, see also (Boedeltje & van Houtum 2011: 141).

⁶ The region’s ‘strong actors’, repeatedly labelled as ‘Arctic Eight’ (A8), are: Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark (in relation to Greenland and the Faroe Islands) (hereinafter ‘Denmark’), the Republic of Finland (‘Finland’), Iceland, the Kingdom of Norway (‘Norway’), the Russian Federation (‘Russia’), the Kingdom of Sweden (‘Sweden’) and the United States of America (‘U.S.’).

1. *Understand the Concept.* From a conceptual and methodological point of view, it deals with a persistently neglected question in the realm of Political Science and European Studies: What is the very meaning of geopolitics and how can it be used and conceptualised in the context of the EU being or not being a geopolitical subject? Hence, the analysis offers to be a display copy for an epistemic, self-contained academic community to eventually step outside its predefined theoretical and methodological box and old-school assumptions.
2. *Understand the Context.* From an explorative point of view, it performs an in-depth, thick description of the Arctic's 21st century's (re)-geopoliticisation in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the external conditions that have an effect on EU foreign policy performance in the Arctic.
3. *Understand the Content.* From an analytical point of view, it scrutinises the EU's multidimensional Arctic presence, the composition of a distinct regional policy toolkit and the various geopolitical rationales for and visions of European Arctic space that has so far caused the assembly of the Union's policy approach for the Arctic.

Figure I: The Nexus of Concept, Context and Content



Source: Own compilation

Although academically embedded in Political Science and European Studies, this dissertation builds on intellectual contributions established and developed by Political Geography, in particular the concept of *critical geopolitics*.⁷ Consequently, this interdisciplinary approach aims to broaden the academic perspective of political scientists on the external relations of the EU. Notably, it discusses EU geopolitical agency in a geographical area persistently neglected in EU-related academic discussions, both from a Political Science and a Political Geography perspective: the Arctic region. By applying critical geopolitics, this analysis investigates the related space-making practices of the Union and the interconnected internal production of geopolitical knowledge and representation, both having ramifications for a very specific regional EU foreign policy-making process. Resting upon the definition of Knecht & Keil, ‘space-making’ means a “narrative configuration of distinct ‘articulations’” (2013: 180). Adapted to the EU-Arctic context, it refers to the above-mentioned objective of ‘constructing’ European legitimacy and credibility in the Arctic region.

1.2. The Dissertation’s Line of Action: The Research Question and a Step-by-Step Approach

This dissertation aims to shed light on the process of developing a distinct European space in the Arctic through the following main guiding research question:

How and under what conditions did the EU construct European space in the Arctic between 2008 and 2014?

Accordingly, ‘space’ is not defined as physical space in a strict geographical sense – the geographical demarcation of a certain territory – but rather as socially produced space. Thus, in the present European case, ‘space’ is understood as Europe’s identity, presence and power that operates within a system of structures, processes and flows (Bachmann 2009, 2015: 685).⁸ Broadly speaking, European space is

⁷ It is not a contradiction in terms to use the adjective ‘geopolitical’ although advocating for a *critical* examination of *geopolitics* but relates to several strands of geopolitics, *inter alia* a classic one and a critical one, *see* Chapter 2.

⁸ According to Bachmann (2009, 2015), ‘identity’ derives from the Union’s integration process and its system as political-economic organisation. ‘Presence’ is the role and function that Europe exercises

determined as “regulated spaces of interaction characterised by a commitment to the rule of law, multilateralism, institution-building, democracy and universal values” (Bachmann 2009).

By answering this research question the dissertation seeks to understand on how the EU – an actor that is typically not perceived to be an Arctic one – aimed to establish its own ‘Arctic legitimacy’ or based on the preceding conception, construct ‘European Arctic space’ between 2008 and 2014.

The research question thus implies the understanding of the EU’s constructed image of the Arctic as well as the EU means by which this construction takes place. By posing this question the dissertation establishes a clearer picture on the (narrated) regional interests of the EU and the related developed policy and taken steps by its respective policymakers in order to get hold of these interests.

In order to attain the highlighted main objectives (Subchapter 1.1), this dissertation follows a three-step analysis. Extracting the structure of the dissertation along *concept*, *context* and *content* serves the purpose to define the focus and the scope of the study:

- #1. ‘Unpack’ geopolitics and its European subsidiary (= *concept*)
- #2. ‘Unpack’ Arctic geopolitics of the 21st century (= *context*)
- #3. ‘Unpack’ the geopolitical reasoning in the EU’s Arctic policy toolkit (= *content*)

#1: Understanding the *Concept*

- *The ambiguity of ‘geopolitics’ and its critical spin-off*
- *The nature of its emerging European branch*

The dissertation’s first step elaborates on the complexity and multifacetedness of the concept of geopolitics, aiming to ‘unpack’ its origins, history and development over the last century. Only on this basis, the emergence of critical geopolitics can be understood and the basic conceptual and methodological statements of this critique sufficiently be explained. Essentially, this first step discusses an academic transition from a traditional focus on the ‘geography of politics’ to an alternative one on the

within the structures of the international system. ‘Power’, again, describes the ability to influence the geopolitical system.

‘politics of geography’ (Guzzini 2012b: 13) – an ‘evolution’ that has not spared (political-geographic) discussions on the EU’s nature as a geopolitical subject in the making. Accordingly, the dissertation does not assume the EU to already be a given actor in a certain time-dependent political and geographical setting. Rather, it considers the question of what exactly fashions the Union with geopolitical agency in a distinct case/region. By this means, the dissertation gets to the bottom of the emerging, implicit and explicit, nature of European geopolitics as it illustrates the portrayal and conceptualisation of the Union’s very own ‘geo’ and ‘politics’ in its immediate and extended vicinity. In support of this objective, this first level of analysis additionally presents a brief state-of-the-art overview of the critical political-geographic work on the geopolitics/Europe nexus. Accordingly, it shows how regions and related concepts, as for instance the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) or the Northern Dimension (ND), have been analysed from a Political Geography perspective. For the present EU-Arctic case, this synopsis serves as a first step into the broader subject matter. It gives an indication on how to eventually reconstruct the EU’s territorial-political Arctic interests and the narration of explicit European ‘Arctic legitimacy’ – the spatialisation of its own Arctic space. Consequently, the dissertation goes further into the question about the very *extent* of Europe, not from a physical but essentially from an ideological perspective. To the author’s knowledge, a comprehensive reconsideration of geopolitics and its European ‘subsidiary’ – European geopolitics – has not yet been conducted in European Studies and is considered the first major output of this dissertation.

#2: Understanding the *Context*

- *A thick Arctic description*

After ‘unpacking’ the conceptual components of geopolitics, the dissertation’s second step concerns the ‘unpacking’ of geopolitics in a distinct regional case. In that regard, the Arctic’s re-appearance on the geopolitical radar almost a decade ago serves as a valuable starting point for further academic consideration.

The term ‘Arctic geopolitics’ comprehends the paradox of the region’s international re-emergence during the last decade: the regional consequences of climate change on the one hand, and its repercussion on arising political and

economic interests on the other. At its heart, global climate change constitutes not only the biggest (environmental) challenge to the region and its people, but simultaneously opens up increased economic potentials for maritime transportation and navigation, oil, gas and rare earth exploration, fishing and tourism – the moral dilemma of the Arctic paradox (Palosaari 2011: 14 and 24). Furthermore, climate change *in* the Arctic severely affects and is affected from regions *outside* the Arctic – the feedback effect of Arctic climate change. In addition to climate change, technological advancements make the Arctic more and more accessible to human activities, enabling forces of globalisation, such as global trade, financial and logistic flows, to reach the circumpolar North (Aaltola et al. 2014: 19–20).

Hence, the regional Arctic becomes a global one. However, as it is extensively scrutinised throughout this dissertation, the fuelled Arctic expectations have not (yet) lived up to its initial (economic) potentials. Questions of what is actually there and how it will eventually matter, both on a global and regional scale, still dominate political, economic, scientific and public discussions. A to-be-continued globalised Arctic is as exposed to global tendencies and developments as any other region of this world, with only Antarctica still remaining the ‘frozen’ exception to the rule. Up until now, the northern latitudes have also been academically (re-)explored with yet many unknowns still existing. In manifold ways, the EU’s (potential) regional role is one of the many Arctic unknowns.

It is anticipated that in order to truly understand the EU’s geopolitical knowledge-production and relation to a certain neighbourhood, the analysed geographical area also needs to be comprehensively discussed and understood. Thus, Part Three on the ‘geopolitical’ Arctic of the 21st century follows to some extent the anthropological approach introduced by Geertz (1973): thick description. Empirical research from that perspective is comprehended as involving an accurate description of a certain context in order to show how a specific actor behaves in that particular context, *see inter alia* (Dear 1995: 164; Woll 2004: 102). Moreover, the in-depth examination of the Arctic context follows the logic of Bachmann’s (2009) system of structures, processes and flows in which the EU aims to operate in. Yet, this structural component is conceptually adapted to a regional context (= the Arctic), aiming to expound the area’s various conditional elements and transitions that

surrounded the Union's respective (foreign) policy-making and legitimisation process.

Similarly, but analysing the centralisation of European diplomacy, Austermann stressed that a thick description type – an in-depth qualitative analysis of single cases – is not only useful but also necessary as the Union is a project in flux, due to, *inter alia*, enlargement steps, harmonisation processes or migration/immigration patterns (2014: 183–184). Moreover, this dissertation puts particular emphasis on what Keukeleire referred to as geographic and disciplinary outside-in approach: the analysis and assessment of EU foreign policy based on thorough, in-depth knowledge of the situation and problems in a certain region that incorporates analytical frameworks of other academic disciplines (2011: 2). Generally, scholars in European Studies do not pay sufficient attention on how the EU has been shaped by the systemic factors of its external environment (Jørgensen 2006: 515). However, if different 'Neighbourhood spaces' require specific policy responses (Powell 2011: 121), academic/scientific research needs to gain and provide comprehensive knowledge of each, individual space and attempt to create a nexus between the space under research and the related foreign policy behaviour of the Union. Consequently, this dissertation counteracts the popular, yet tedious academic activities of an epistemic community of EU foreign policy scholars that predominantly follows an inward-looking, EU-centric approach and only poorly understands or even ignores the Union's surrounding realities and their very internal settings (Aalto 2013: 106).

Accordingly, this dissertation works on basic assumption that the *content* (= the EU in the Arctic) can only be adequately comprehended if systematically understanding the *context* (= the Arctic). Under what conditions did the Union start to develop an interest for the geographical area under scrutiny and how did that particular region change within the period of analysis?⁹ As it was already noted, the

⁹ Only based on such an inclusive, in-depth analysis of the time and context-dependent setting, comparisons with other neighbouring regions can be drawn and wide-ranging generalisations concluded. Yet, a comparison with another (neighbouring) region of the Union is explicitly not purpose of this dissertation.

Arctic has – until now – not been matter of *any* discussion in European Studies. Hence, the empirical thick description of the ‘geopolitical’ Arctic of the 21st century is considered the second major output of this dissertation.

#3: Understanding the *Content*

- *Four European dimensions of Arctic presence*
- *A EU Arctic policy in the making*
- *A critical geopolitical analysis of the Union’s space-making practices*

From understanding the *context* follows the next step in the dissertation’s broader storyline: the comprehension of the Union’s various components of factual EU presence in the Arctic region. This EU-Arctic, Arctic-EU entanglement (= EU/Arctic nexus) comprises a geographical, legal, economic, environmental, research and regional development-related level and sets out the bases of the Union’s Arctic ‘action’. As geopolitical reasoning never occurs in a vacuum, it is necessary to understand how the Union is already interconnected with the region and *vice versa*. Moreover, given the fact of the Arctic being an explicitly under-researched, rather derided area in European Studies, it is essential to point out the Union’s various linkages with the broader circumpolar region – a task that has not yet been fulfilled by any monograph.

Based on the overview provided by these largely descriptive insights and by subsequently applying the concept of *critical geopolitics*, this dissertation provides an in-depth analysis of the EU’s Arctic (foreign) policy reasoning. Thus, it gives an insight of how the Union has actively (aimed to) ‘spatialise’ Arctic politics by creating its own regional script: a EU Arctic policy. Although (as of April 2016) in its eight year of formation, the EU Arctic policy toolkit is still in a stage of development. Heretofore, the European Commission (jointly with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy), the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament,¹⁰ have issued 7+1 policy documents, inaugurated by a Commission Communication in November 2008 and preceded in the same year by the aforementioned Arctic-related HR/Commission

¹⁰ Hereinafter the European Commission is referred to as ‘Commission’, the European Parliament as ‘EP’, the Council of the European Union as the ‘Council’ and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy as ‘HR’.

joint paper (= +1) and an EP Resolution. Hence, the period under analysis lasts from 2008 up to 2014, with the last related policy document on Arctic issues published in May 2014.¹¹

Dynamics of spatialisation refer to an Arctic social reality that is intersubjectively produced by the European institutions and its policymakers as a result of their imagination and the time and context-dependent political and economic setting they are facing (Knecht & Keil 2013: 187). Accordingly, and as extensively discussed in Subchapter 3.1, geopolitical ideas, visions, narratives and/or rationales are constructed to serve distinct material and/or normative/moral interests at a certain point in time (Ibid.: 187). Eventually, the concept of critical geopolitics helps to understand *how* Arctic policy formulation by the Union takes place and by which strategically narrated rationales it is driven. The focus lies explicitly on *how* it happens and not on the question of *what* should and will happen and *why* it did or did not happen, usually scrutinised via the more traditional forms of social science of institutional models, causal mechanism and hypotheses testing (Kuus 2011a: 425). Thus, the dissertation is more concerned with understanding (= ‘unpacking’) the foreign policy-making approach of a particular actor in a certain regional case, rather than deducing an actor’s general foreign policy-making behaviour from a certain case by drawing some kind of legitimate or illegitimate generalisation.

Moreover, using critical geopolitics helps to understand how and in what different nuances the Arctic, its challenges and opportunities has been brought into the EU’s political orbit by simultaneously highlighting the narration and creation of the Arctic as an European space for potential power influence and ‘actorness’, European economic and environmental considerations and the EU’s global self-projection in a specific case (Bialasiewicz 2011b: 2–3). Accordingly, the dissertation examines how the EU has been aiming to ‘Europeanise’ a “geopolitically undefined (...) space” (Dittmer et al. 2011: 206) that in the course of declining sea ice ‘opens

¹¹ Table II (page 198) illustrates the 7+1 documents. The Commission and the HR (2016) issued a new Joint Communication, entitled “An integrated European Union policy for the Arctic”, on 27 April 2016. The Council (2016) followed suit and published its new “Conclusions on the Arctic” on 20 June 2016. Bot policy updates are not part of this study, yet for related analyses *see* (Stępień & Raspotnik 2016; Raspotnik & Stępień 2016a, b).

up' and confronts both Arctic 'residents' and neighbours with challenges and opportunities (Knecht & Keil 2013: 180). In general, the issue of security is one of the most obvious reasons for spatialisation practices; an underlying reasoning that has already been observed in the Arctic policy-making process of (several) Arctic states (Ibid.: 188). This dissertation goes to the bottom of the Union's very own geopolitical reasoning in its Arctic approach and the set of objectives and policy measures that have been shaped and determined by such argumentation. Up to the present any academic conclusions, incorporating critical geopolitics in the EU/Arctic nexus has not yet been made and is considered the third major output of this dissertation.

1.3. Value and Limitations: A Scientific Justification

In a 2012 *New York Times* article Clarke & Primo (2012b) asked a simple, yet unanswerable question: "HOW scientific are the social sciences?" (Emphasis in the original). Implicitly the two professors of Political Science laid emphasis on the most pending questions in Social Science: who defines the scientificity of 'scientific' work? How can the respective scientific nature actually be defined, measured and vindicated? What is correct and what is wrong, especially if taking into consideration that in Social Science various distinctive and exclusive assumptions and theories aim to explain the same phenomena (Eun 2011: 764). In their article and related book *A Model Discipline*, respectively, the two authors scrutinised the limitations of the rational, hypothetico-deductive model as a proposed scientific method. In simplified terms this model requires the researcher to devise a theoretical model, deduce a testable hypothesis from it and test it against a 'real' problem. As a result the hypothesis can either be verified or falsified. In any case this approach is deemed to be scientifically valid (Clarke & Primo 2012a, b). Based on "the guiding light of causal analysis of political science and IR" (Kurki 2006: 195) – the undoubtedly influential work of King, Keohane & Verba (1994) – most researchers in IR and European studies follow the outlined suggestions on how to conduct valid causal analysis: causality is measured by the causal effect of an explanatory/independent variable on a dependent variable (Ibid.; Hansen 2006: 8–9; Kurki 2006: 195).

Causality is key to this understanding as any research project can assumingly be conceptualised in causal epistemological terms (Hansen 2006: 8).

The broad acceptances of King, Keohane & Verba's proposition has led to two main 'causal' implications for research undertaken in Social Sciences, implying an "epistemological superiority of this form of gaining knowledge": 1) causal analysis has been advocated as the widely accepted norm and 2) other methods, such as discourse analysis or interpretivism have been side-lined as they do not fit with the "empiricist regularity-driven assumptions" (Kurki 2006: 196–197).¹² "Insofar as this book became the ur text for how to do social science, it is not surprising that simplistic hypothesis testing also became more widespread." (Mearsheimer & Walt 2013: 446)¹³

However, this particular scientific method is not the answer to everything. Especially concerning questions of space and power, the postmodern pluralism of theories and approaches offers a broad and conceptually manifold basis for 'different' analyses. Instead of focusing on a universalistic grand theory, this pluralism provides an opportunity for a multifaceted examination of space and power and its distinct correlation (Reuber 2001: 78–79). One of the most prominent developed options is critical geopolitics. As explicitly illustrated in Chapters 2 and 3, critical geopolitics is deeply rooted in poststructuralism, which is commonly perceived as the "key theoretical proposition of critical geopolitics" (Müller 2008: 323). Poststructuralism originated during the 1980s as an opposition to structuralism, a philosophy and intellectual movement developed during the first half of the 20th century, prioritising "(determining) structures over agency and change" (Jørgensen 2010: 164). Poststructuralist authors, among others Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida or Jean Baudrillard, however, neglected the self-sufficiency of structures and rather emphasised the potential multiple meanings of, for instance, a given text, depending on the respective reader or recipient. In IR "(...) poststructuralism is a critical

¹² Constructivists, although still mobilising causal concepts of testing, have argued that causality is not a prerequisite for valid scientific research and explicitly allow "more scope for non-causal theory as part for a research agenda" (Hansen 2006: 8).

¹³ Mearsheimer & Walt criticised the explicit focus on simplistic hypothesis testing, yet from a U.S. perspective only. It was noted that especially in Europe epistemological variety is more widespread (2013: 430–431).

attitude, approach, or ethos that calls attention to the importance of representation, the relationship of power and knowledge, and the politics of identity in an understanding of global affairs” (Campbell 2013: 225). Poststructuralism is not an IR theory but rather a critical approach, devoting particular interest to the themes of identity, power/knowledge and representation/interpretation, emphasising language and the production of meaning (Jørgensen 2010: 165). Poststructuralist approaches aim to outline the limitation (and consequently political consequences) of certain modes of knowledge production by charting the boundaries of realms of subjection and consequently highlighting ways on how to deconstruct particular discourses in order to reveal their power. Therefore, poststructuralism stresses the limitation of a particular form of rationality (Dalby 1991: 276). It is argued that ‘proper knowledge’ is not gained by a “theory’s ability to uncover causal truths as knowledge is [always] historically and politically situated” (Hansen 2006: 9).

As this dissertation shows, both space and the narration of space undoubtedly matter. Yet, if arguing from a causality point of view, the main questions would actually not be ‘does space matter’ but rather ‘how much does space matter’. Consequently, one would first have to outline the explanatory power of space and its related discourse in opposition to material explanations and second to delineate the causal effect of space on foreign policy (Ibid.: 22). For poststructuralists this is problematic in a twofold way.

First, it is perceived that materiality, such as facts, threats or events that constitute a certain foreign policy debate and related behaviour, is *never* ‘extra-discursive’ and accordingly never simply and only ‘there’ but needs to be explicitly articulated and narrated (by humans and discursive agency) in order to appear and finally become mobilised (Ibid.: 22). This is not to say that materiality does not exist and/or is only constructed, *see* Subchapter 2.2. According to Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory, non-discursive features exist externally to thought. The essential issue is rather how a related significance is established via the used ‘language’ (1985: 108). Consequently, a region’s locality, its inhabitants, its resources, etc. certainly exist, meaning reality is a ‘fact’ and ‘out there’. It is the matter of perception – perceiving this reality – that is considered worth in-depth observation and analysis. Along the same lines, Larsen argued that certain non-discursive features constitute a

framework for policy in an almost absolute sense. It is the political discourse that mediates these material structures, as for instance geographical facts (1997: 22–23).

Second, ‘space’ in the context of space and foreign policy may not be that obvious as potentially assumed. Foreign policy is certainly influenced and caused by a certain representation of space; *however*, in order to adopt a rigid concept of causality – the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable – these two variables would need to be observed independently from each other. Due to poststructuralism’s “insistence on the ontological significance of discursive practice” this remains impossible: space is produced and reproduced during the foreign policy-making process and its discourse. Consequently, no space exists independently prior to the specific foreign policy and gets changed during the creation process (Hansen 2006: 22–23).

However, the specific focus on deconstruction has often prompted the critique that critical geopolitics does not necessarily offer an alternative, better framing of the specifically analysed social situation in a case under scrutiny (Sparke 2000). Accordingly, it has been argued that its “poor achievement in terms of societal relevance” could potentially be bypassed by a stronger commitment to area studies (Mamadouh in Jones & Sage 2010: 321).¹⁴ In the context of this dissertation, the potential stronger nexus between critical geopolitics and area studies is of particular relevance. Powell ascribed the Arctic “a peculiar relationship with area studies”, inherent to different Arctic national pre-Cold War approaches on how to understand the northern latitudes and a subsequent opposition to construct a common understanding of a circumpolar entity (2011: 105). As it is briefly highlighted in Subchapter 4.2 and more comprehensively discussed by Keskitalo (2004), the ‘international Arctic’ or the conceptualisation of the Arctic as an international region has only emerged during the last three decades. In fact, if the Arctic is by now essentially considered to be a global region with an emerging international significance it should also be re-imagined in the present configuration of area studies. By scrutinising the EU’s spatial perception concerning an ‘international’ Arctic, this dissertation contributes to the envisaged stronger commitment of both critical

¹⁴ According to Hall & Tarrow the concept of area studies is, *inter alia*, used to refer to a detail description of a nation/region without aiming to generalise beyond the specifically used case (2001: 98). This dissertation particularly relates to this notion of area studies.

geopolitics and area studies. It eventually provides a proper insight into one of still many Arctic unknowns.

Moreover, as already mentioned in Subchapter 1.2, Keukeleire opted for a dual geographic and disciplinary outside-in approach in EU foreign policy research. An approach that a) gathers a thorough knowledge of the ‘targeted’ country/region and b) incorporates analytical frameworks of other academic disciplines (2011: 2). Eventually, this dissertation applies a concept developed by geographers, elaborately discusses the multidimensional system level of a distinct spatio-temporal context (= an area) and connects this approach with a single case examination of EU foreign policy performance.

Yet, it explicitly does not measure related EU-Arctic ‘actorness’ or exercise of power within the region’s governance structures.¹⁵ Instead of evaluating the degree of the EU’s political influence, it rather scrutinises in what way the EU claims relevance and how the related discourse aims to become instrumental. Hence, the dissertation assesses the strategic (foreign) policy reasoning of the EU and the ideas and rationales that determine a particular line of argumentation so as to claim a ‘legitimate’ role in the Arctic and its governance structures.¹⁶ Within an organisation, such as the EU, these motivations do not float freely but are essentially grounded in the organisation with (internal) policy controversies being generated if the individual organisational actors articulate and advocate conflicting perceptions. Yet, this dissertation does not analyse the related matter of internal coherence regarding the EU’s foreign policy approach towards the Arctic region in the ‘classical’ European Studies approach. In general, the issue of coherence of EU policies has received broad academic attention over the last decade and has also been rather popular with regard to the EU’s Arctic endeavour. Despite an often assumed general lack of academic interest in EU-Arctic affairs, several scholars have published articles, book

¹⁵ As a matter of fact, it is assumed that scientific accuracy and measurability – whatever these two terms precisely mean – cannot be guaranteed by any scientific work. As prominently put by Nassim Nicholas Taleb, statistician and author of the book ‘The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Impossible’, “As a scientist, I can say that very little is measurable (...) and even those things that are measurable, you cannot trust the measurement beyond a certain point” (as cited in Feiler 2014).

¹⁶ In general, “governance refers to the institutions, processes and organizational structures that guide behaviour in a political system, covering both formal government and other institutions and processes” (Avango, Nilsson & Roberts 2013: 435). The institutions, regimes, processes and organisational structures that structure ‘Arctic governance’ are explained in Subchapter 4.3.

chapters and/or master theses on the EU's Arctic policy-making process and the related quest of coherence, all emphasising a certain negligence, shallowness and clumsiness in the coherence-aimed internal practices of the Union, *see inter alia* (Holdhus 2010; Østhagen 2011; Daemers 2012; Wegge 2012; Pelaudeix & Rodon 2013; Rød 2013; Śmieszek 2013; Kobza 2015; Stępień 2015; Stępień & Raspotnik 2015).

The approach of this dissertation is slightly different. In order to understand the on-going policy process on hand, it remains inevitable to not only look at what kind of decisions have been made, which interests are affecting and guiding these decisions and to what effect, but also how decisions come into being through internal processes on related visions that change through time and context. This approach essentially highlights the (geopolitical) paradoxes and ironies in the respective policy-making process (Kuus 2011b: 1142–1143). Internalising Strandsbjerg remarkably simple but all the more plausible assumption that “[w]hat is considered to be geopolitical depends on the eyes that see something as a geopolitical concern or not” (2012: 820), two interrelated factors have to be continuously kept in mind when reading and reflecting on this dissertation:

- “Distance in international relations (...) is an “illusion”” (Henrikson 2002: 441): in addition to an undoubtedly existing physical geography, distinctive mental perceptions of space form and re-form images and ideas of a physical, hard reality and accordingly influence and determine a certain policy and/or related decision. Hence, “spatial imaginaries are not bound to borders” (Knecht & Keil 2013: 180).¹⁷
- The setting is crucial: the (re)-formation of these images decisively depends on the global and/or regional environment and spatio-temporal context the respective actor is embedded in. The EU has indeed been designing its own Arctic policy; however, it has not happened in a regional vacuum with the circumpolar North being embedded in a distinct ‘geopolitical’ setting.

¹⁷ As explicitly highlighted in Subchapter 2.2 physical geographical facts exist and do matter; however, it is the respective political interpretation that matters at least as much as any determinant fact of nature. According to Siles-Brügge, it is in general the interpretation of material facts rather than the fact itself that is the underlying variable to understand human behaviour (2014: 31).

Summary

Especially with regard to King, Keohane & Verba (1994) “[c]ritics of poststructuralism and discourse analysis have often portrayed [the] absence of causal epistemology as the road to theoretical, methodological, and political anarchy” (Hansen 2006: 1). The dissertation’s author is aware of such opinions, yet, it is *not* this dissertation’s objective to join the lengthy discussions on the great debate concerning ontology (the philosophical study of the nature of being) and epistemology (the theory of knowledge) (Eun 2011: 764) nor to broadly outline the differences and discrepancies between positivism and reflectivism, structuralism and post-structuralism, *see inter alia* (Keohane 1988; Marsh & Furlong 2002). It is ensured that the dissertation stands up to scientific scrutiny and maintains all necessary academic standards. Likewise, the dissertation and the conducted research are also based on the observed belief that especially younger scholars focus too much on theoretical novelty and methodological sophistication. As most Political Science scholarship is only written to appeal to its own professional members (and supervisors), in-depth knowledge of a certain policy area or geographic region is rather neglected (Walt 2012: 38).¹⁸ Moreover, especially Political Science studies on international organisations focus too often only on formal relations of the institutions or on the testing of pre-formulated hypotheses; in-depth fieldwork and description is rather neglected (Bachmann 2013a: 412).

If theories are like maps (Mearsheimer & Walt 2013: 431) – a fitting metaphor of the very basics of (critical) geopolitics and geography – the test of a map does not lie in “arbitrarily checking random points but in whether people find it useful to get somewhere” (Clarke & Primo 2012b). The analysis and description of empirical data, such as the particular attention on one specific region (Nye 2009) can and is valuable, even in the absence of grand theoretical model as for instance the hypothetico-deductive model (Clarke & Primo 2012b). Eventually, this dissertation

¹⁸ A general related argument in opposition to single case studies and in-depth thick description approaches is the ‘lack’ of generalisation mechanism and a more explanatory account based on theory-led comparative studies. The dissertation’s author is aware of these arguments. However, a related ‘either-or-debate’ reminds of the chicken or the egg causality dilemma and is simply not answerable. The present case illustrates a specific problem that was systematically investigated in terms of *concept*, *context* and *content*. If the used approach is eventually fruitful is a different matter. Criticism is an essential, self-fulfilling part of academia and hence other pundits may arrive at a different conclusion.

extensively expounds its *what*, *how* and *why* the comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach taken is the ‘correct’ one for this particular study and the question posed.

The conducted research gives new indication on the fragmented debate regarding ‘Arctic geopolitics’ in general (= ‘unpacking’ geopolitics) and the EU’s regional involvement in particular. Moreover, this dissertation explicitly discusses the conceptual ambiguity of an overused term in international relations that also gains more and more ‘relevance’ in the EUropean debate. Besides, the Arctic region – its challenges, its opportunities, its governance framework and its actors – makes its first ‘EUropean-academic’ appearance in a monograph.

All things considered, this study tells the comprehensive story of how a *sui generis* geopolitical actor aims to be seated at the Arctic table – its *sui generis* neighbourhood.¹⁹

1.4. The Roadmap: Geopolitics, the Arctic and the European Union

The introduction – **Part One** – briefly explained the dissertation’s operational approach. Hence, it captured the academic endeavour and the related objectives by specifying a threefold destination route, clarifying the dissertation’s line of action and further identifying the scientific and analytical *modus operandi*. Moreover, it gave an answer to the questions on both the added value and the limitations of the research approach.

The ensuing **Part Two** elaborates on the theoretical and methodological embedding of the dissertation by clarifying the conceptual context, its EUropean utilisation and the methodological framework needed for the present analysis. Chapter 2 (*‘The Thought Experiment’*) illustrates the history and academic classification of *geopolitics* (Subchapter 2.1) and its critical addition, *critical geopolitics* (Subchapter 2.2). It essentially sheds lights on the dissimilarities between the two conceptual approaches and eventually traces the various forms of geopolitics. Consequently, Subchapter 2.3 focuses on a very particular form of geopolitics

¹⁹ The EU is commonly characterised as an organisation *sui generis*, a structure of its own kind (Schneider 2005; Wessels 2008: 32).

(‘*EUropean Geopolitics*’), highlighting the practice of critical geopolitics in a European context and empirically revisiting one particular space of European geopolitics: the ND. It is Chapter 3 (‘*Longer Note on Methodology*’) that finally concludes the conceptual and methodological part of the dissertation by outlining the three main methodological approaches applied in this dissertation: discourse analysis, the spatial argumentation model and the analysis of socio-material practices of geopolitical ordering of organisations. Eventually, **Part Two** provides a comprehensive answer to the dissertation’s first purpose and major output, to *understand the concept*.

Part Three and its Chapter 4 (‘*Arctic Geopolitics*’) gives an in-depth explanation about the re-geopoliticisation of the Arctic region over the last decade and how this particular area was publically and controversially depicted as a future global venue of inter-state confrontation and economic race – an emerging space of and for geopolitics. The Chapter starts by exemplifying various spatial definitions of the Arctic (Subchapter 4.1). Essentially, it gives a wide-ranging insight into the complexity and multifacetedness of the Arctic’s fluid geopolitics of the last decade by basically highlighting its *History* and related *Identity* (Subchapter 4.2), and ‘unpacking’ a sketched Arctic triangle of *Rights* (Subchapter 4.3), *Interests* (Subchapter 4.4) and *Responsibilities* (Subchapter 4.5). Accordingly, **Part Three** helps to comprehend what is claimed as the dissertation’s second purpose and major output, to *understand the context* and basically highlights why the geopolitical Arctic of the 21st century is a *sui generis* case for a *sui generis* international actor, the EU.

With the help of the information developed and assessed in the preceding Chapters, **Part Four** scrutinises the EU’s very own Arctic story of creating regional legitimacy and credibility. Hence, Chapter 5 (‘*EUropean Dimensions*’) analyses the Union’s multidimensional Arctic presence to underscore the EU’s footprint on the various circumpolar North’s physical conditions. Subsequently, Chapter 6 (‘*an Action in the Making*’) delves into nearly a decade of EU-Arctic policy-making and traces the policy steps that have so far been taken by the various EU institutions. Eventually, Chapter 7 (‘*Space-Making Practices*’) puts on critical geopolitics glasses

and identifies the Arctic-related geopolitical reasoning that has been developed in the hallways of Brussels. Thus, **Part Four** connects critical geopolitics with the EU's political Arctic steps, aiming to not only explain the EU *in* the Arctic but also eventually clarifying the multidimensional (ir)-relevance *of* the Arctic for the EU and its related internal processes that beget related geopolitical action, namely the development of a specific EU policy for the Arctic region. To that effect, **Part Four** comprehensively *understands the content* – the dissertation's third purpose and major output.

It is **Part Five** that concludes this dissertation by summarising the findings, depicting shortcomings and referring to avenues for further research based on the dissertation at hand. Eventually, it amalgamates the three broad themes of this study: *concept, context and content*.

“Game ain't about territory no more. It's about product.”²⁰

PART TWO

UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT

²⁰ Russell ‘Stringer’ Bell, *The Wire*, Season 3, Episode 1

The Roadmap for Part Two

The dissertation's first step – **Part Two** – elaborates on the complexity of the concept of geopolitics, aiming to 'unpack' its origins and century-long development. Accordingly, Chapter 2 delves into its history, its conceptual intricacy and multifacetedness and, similarly importantly for the research approach on hand, its EUropean character. Therefore and in order to *understand the concept*, the Chapter essentially addresses two main questions:

- What are the roots of geopolitics and how has its *classic* perception been *criticised*? (Subchapter 2.1 and 2.2)
- What is the nature of *EUropean geopolitics* and how can this concept be applied to the EU? (Subchapter 2.3)

Additionally, Part Two is complemented by Chapter 3, the methodological illustration of the dissertation. The applied research methodology consists of discourse analysis and the socio-material practices of geopolitical ordering of organisations, both expounded in the Subchapters 3.1 and 3.2, respectively.

2. The Thought Experiment Referred to as *Geopolitics: A Classic, a Critical and a European Approach*

The concept of geopolitics seems to be Schrödinger's cat of international politics and its related studies: *simultaneously* alive and dead.²¹ Although academically not *per se* trendy, geopolitics and geopolitical diagnoses are definitely in vogue, frequently employed by think tanks, political commentators and journalists as a quasi-science to de-code and interpret international relations (Scott 2011: 149–150). As a matter of fact, geopolitics is everywhere and appears to be more popular than ever. It is prominently applied as self-explanatory determinant to any status-quo or development in international relations and enjoys instant name recognition around the globe (Techau 2013). The term itself produces more than 5.6 million hits on the web search engine *Google*, with around 331.000 entries on its academic subsidiary *Google Books*.²²

From an international relations' point of view, even the smallest disruptions, incidents or episodes in the international political, military or economic arena are presented as being 'geopolitical' or of geopolitical relevance. Whether it is presently, *inter alia*, the Russian (military) actions at its various borders, China's maritime expansion efforts and Japan's related reactions, or Iran's alliances with Syria and Hezbollah in the Middle East (Mead 2014: 69; Marshall 2015). After Russia's military incursion in Syria in 2015, the emerging political and military situation has been described as "a geopolitical earthquake" (Norton-Taylor 2015). The eastern Mediterranean has generally been perceived as an area of "geopolitical battles" (Nerguizian 2014) with oil revenues fuelling the "geopolitical ambitions" of both Saudi Arabia and Iran in the Persian Gulf neighbourhood (Ward 2016). In fact, 'geopolitical issues and risks', such as international debt problems, separatist movements, dissolving borders or the appearance of non-state actors (e.g. the Islamic

²¹ Schrödinger's cat is a thought experiment that was proposed by the Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger in 1935. It illustrates the principle of superposition in quantum theory and, broadly speaking, demonstrates the conflict between the 'truth' according to quantum theory and the 'truth' according to humans' daily observation of reality (Schrödinger 1935).

²² The search was conducted on 11 November 2015.

State) have a “profound effect on investment strategies” and the ‘effective’ management of the global economy (Malmgren 2015: 1), with for instance the “new geopolitics of energy” creating global winners and losers (Friends of Europe 2015).

Also in Europe, geopolitics has been reassessed and attributed relevance in the light of the Ukrainian unrest of 2013/2014 and the (perceived) return of power politics at the EU’s external borders (Stadler, Puscas & Al-Rodhan 2014). The Union’s relationship with Turkey is a reoccurring arena of ‘geopolitical’ discussions (Dahlman 2004; Demiryol 2013) and the EU’s general position in the Middle East is termed as being at “geopolitical crossroads” (Youngs 2015). Similarly, *The Wall Street Journal* described the “EU’s Next Challenges [as] (...) Geopolitical”, particularly referring to the various instabilities along the EU’s borders (Nixon 2014); an issue that was also taken up by Stocchiero (2015) who discussed the “geopolitical effects” of the financial and economic crisis on the Union’s external borders. Recently, even the *Grexist*, Greece’s potential withdrawal from the Eurozone, was brought into question by using a ‘geopolitical’ lens (Carnegie Europe 2015; Kaplan 2015). And of course, the *Brexit* – the United Kingdom’s exit of the EU – will have a “geopolitical impact” and is in itself a “geopolitical question” (The Economist 2015).

The list of references could be endlessly continued, all applied to a wide range of international social, political and historical phenomena with the (simplified) aim to imply a global structure to international relations based on geographic determinism (GoGwilt 2000: 1). And indeed, geopolitics is literally everywhere. Yet, geopolitics does not equal geopolitics and basically comes in various forms. It is not just foreign and/or security policy and all matters related; nor is it sufficiently defined by the terminological relation of geography/space and power/politics or a state’s projection of political, economic or military power as a tool of statecraft. The very classification of geopolitics becomes even more contended if scrutinised from a European perspective. Scott referred to the EU as a “geopolitical actor of more than economic significance” (2005b: 90) – an opinion that has yet met little affirmative response in the world of academia and related fields of Political Science. It is

especially the term's traditional but mistakenly single-sided association with (military) power politics and security policy only, which casts widespread doubts on whether the EU can actually be perceived and understood as a geopolitical actor.

Subsequently, the Subchapters 2.1 to 2.3 clear up *geopolitical* doubts by scrutinising the concept's various forms, essentially discussing its *classic*, *critical* and *EUropean* 'verity'.

2.1. A Short Journey through Time: From *Classic*...

Although the public usage of the term 'geopolitics' is definitely in vogue, it is certainly not an innovative concept. Ideas and theories labelled as "geo-politics" have a century-long history and come with a complex related burden (Heffernan 2003: 27).

Accordingly, Ó Tuathail referred to geopolitics as a new genre of *geo-power* – acquired in the late 19th century as an intellectual effort to explain the nexus and new global conditions of space, power and technology. Eventually, it is "an imperfect name for a set of practices" that dealt with the exercise of imperial power and the related geographical implications of then-newly arising technologies of transportation, communication and warfare (2005: 12). The term 'geo-power' as such correlates geography with power and embodies the very understanding that geography is essentially about power (Ibid.: 1). When exploring the historical roots of geopolitics, it becomes evident that the notion's forefathers actually hardly used the word 'geopolitics' as such but rather wrote about the influence of geography and the organisation of space on the conduct of global (political and military) strategy (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 4; Malmgren 2015: 20). Hence, it was essentially the phenomenon of 'geo-power' that occupied early centre stage and not the term 'geopolitics' *per se*.

Subchapter 2.1 searches into the complex history of geopolitics and provides a condensed overview on the geographical assumptions and understandings that entered "into the making of world politics" (Agnew 2004: 5). Subsequently, Subchapter 2.2 gives an explanation on the emergence of a particular strand of

geopolitics that scrutinises its classical designations, discourses and practice: *critical geopolitics*.

As illustrated in Table I, the discursive application of geopolitics has been implicated in four main structures of power/knowledge throughout the 20th century (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 4).²³

Table I: Applying Geopolitics		
Geopolitical order	Geopolitical vocabulary	Key intellectuals
Classical/imperialist geopolitics (1875-1945)	<i>Lebensraum</i>	Friedrich Ratzel
	Sea power vs. land power	Alfred Mahan
	Geostrategy	Halford Mackinder,
	Heartland	Nicholas J. Spykman Karl Haushofer
Cold War geopolitics (1945-1989/90)	Containment	George F. Kennan
	West vs. East	Henry Kissinger
	Us vs. Them	Zbigniew Brzezinski
New world order geopolitics (1989/90-?)	The End of History	Francis Fukuyama
	The Clash of Civilizations	Samuel Huntington
	Geoconomics	Edward Luttwak
Environmental geopolitics (1989/90-?)	Geocology	Albert ‘Al’ Gore
	Environmental security	Robert D. Kaplan
	Sustainable development	

Source: Own compilation based on (Ibid.: 5; Albert, Reuber & Wolkersdorfer 2014: 326)

Classical Geopolitics

The classic concept constitutes the first theatre of geopolitical notion and practice (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 4). Up to the present day, its legacy persists with its advocates remaining to be known and commonly quoted.

Simply put, *classical geopolitics*, mostly associated with intellectuals working within the field of Political Geography before World War II, is the concept of superiority. It is about the assumed dominance from either a biological, ethnical, scientific or imperial perspective and deeply rooted in the intellectual climate of the *fin de siècle* epoch (Østerud 1988: 193). Classical geopolitical writers were either informed by racial and environmental determinism or politico-military induced

²³ For excellent discussions by political geographers on the concept’s roots, see (Dodds & Atkinson 2003; Ó Tuathail, Dalby & Routledge 2003; Agnew 2004).

strategic consideration of imperial rivalries and great-power projection (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a: 3). Either way, the premise remained the same: classical geopolitics was essentially about the survival of empires/states and an explicit differentiation between ‘us’ and ‘them’. It inherently included “the assumption that the view of the writers was accurate and a natural expression of the really existing world” (Dalby 1991: 273). This early form of “geopolitical power/knowledge” was concerned with promoting state expansionism and securing empires in times of competing imperial systems (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 4). Key considerations were mainly developed by the “classic line” (Dijkink 2004: 460) of imperialist thinkers and geopolitical writers: Friedrich Ratzel, Rudolf Kjellén, Alfred Mahan, Halford Mackinder, Nicholas John Spykman and Karl Haushofer.

Friedrich Ratzel ranks as influential trailblazer of classic geopolitics. He most prominently highlighted the aspect of scientific determinism by introducing the term *Lebensraum* (living space) to the field of (human) geography. Ratzel determined *Lebensraum* “as the geographical surface area required to support a living species at its current population size and mode of existence” (as cited in Smith 1980: 53). Inspired by Ratzel’s *Lebensraum* concept, it was the Swedish political scientist Rudolf Kjellén that originally coined the term ‘geopolitics’ in 1899 (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 1). Kjellén defined geopolitics as “die Lehre vom Staat als geographischem Organismus oder als Erscheinung im Raume: also der Staat als Land, Territorium, Gebiet oder (...) als Reich” (1924: 45).²⁴ In Kjellén’s definition geopolitics signified “a general concern with geography and politics (geo-politics)”, based on two elements: power (e.g. influence or politics) and space (e.g. territory) (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 1).

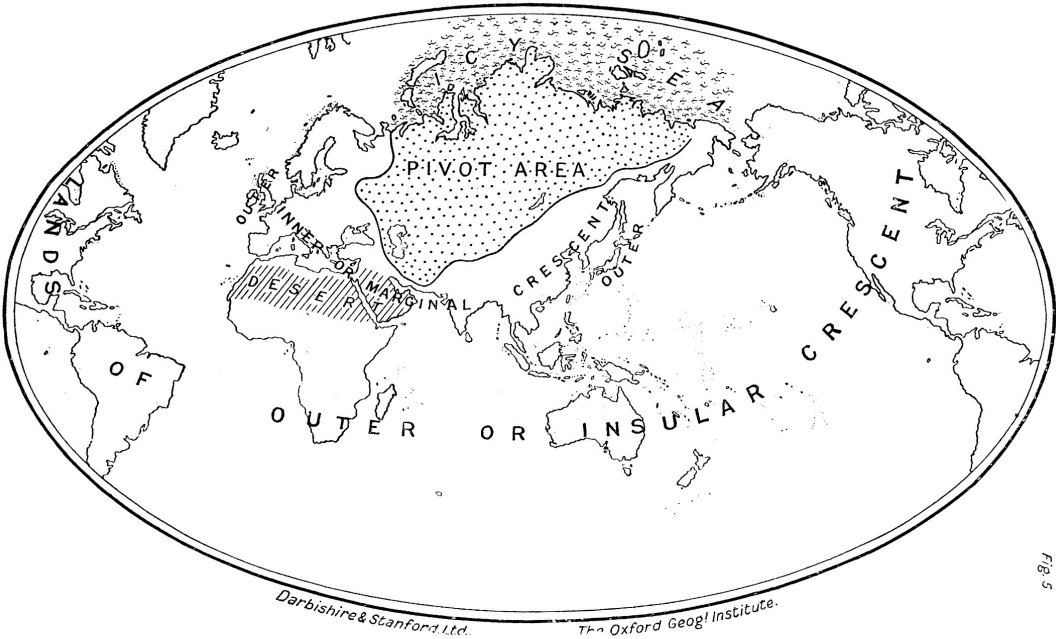
At roughly the same time, the American naval officer Alfred Mahan (1900, 1965) prominently stressed the strategic self-assertion of a state’s sea power as essential for national greatness and state expansionism. Similar to Mahan, also Nicholas John Spykman (1938a, b) highlighted a state’s geography – the effects of a state’s size, regional and global location – as essential for its respective foreign policy. He prominently stated that “the geographical area (...) is the most

²⁴ Own translation: Geopolitics is the study of the state as a geographical organism or as a phenomenon in space: the state as country, territory, area or, most significantly, as empire (Reich).

fundamentally conditioning factor in the formulation of national policy because it is the most permanent” (1938a: 29). Geography never argues – “[i]t simply is” (Spykman 1938b: 236).

With Mahan already emphasizing the strategic aspect of (maritime) geography, Halford Mackinder stressed the importance and relevance of geography and geographical knowledge for the conduct of statecraft (Kearns 2004: 340). For Mackinder geography was not only relevant but essentially also scientific as physical and human geography were kept together as cause and effect (Ibid.: 344). By emphasizing this particular geographical causation, Mackinder depicted geopolitics as “a new way of seeing international politics” (Ó Tuathail 2003b: 16) and thereby highlighted the term’s quintessence without even naming ‘geopolitics’ as such. The key geographical area for his deliberations was the vast zone of Euro-Asia, the so called pivot area of world politics (1904: 433–434), *see* Figure II.

Figure II: Mackinder’s Pivot Area



Pivot area—wholly continental. Outer crescent—wholly oceanic. Inner crescent—partly continental, partly oceanic.

Source: (Ibid.: 435)

In 1919, Mackinder set forth his idea of a strategic pivot area, the “Heartland” of the Eurasian landmass. In today’s one of the best-known contributions to the field of geopolitics, Mackinder argued “Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland:

Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island: Who rules the World-Islands commands the World” (1919: 186).

On the European continent, the German professor of Geography, Karl Haushofer prominently seized Mackinder’s strategic understanding of geography. He combined Mackinder’s perception with Ratzel’s understanding of scientific determinism (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a: 3) and the proposed need of post-World War I Germany for further *Lebensraum*. For Haushofer, the concept of *Geopolitik* was understood as an applied science for politicians to grasp the geographical relationships that govern international politics (Ó Tuathail 2003b: 20). As an “exact science”, *Geopolitik* should present the “scientific equipment of concrete facts and proven laws” to help statesmen attaining their political objectives (Haushofer 2003: 34). In the inter-war period Haushofer’s geopolitical argumentation of the German need to expand its influence and power proved to be popular by the growing fascist strands of thought in Germany (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a: 3). This narrated linkage between *Geopolitik* and (German) fascist argumentation is still considered the basis of the controversial reputation of the concept geopolitics as such (Ibid.: 3).

Cold War Geopolitics

Due to this assumed complicity and terminological association to National Socialism, geopolitics as an academic field was almost fully avoided by both geographers and political scientist in Europe as well as in the U.S. after World War II (Mamadouh & Dijkink 2006: 350; Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a: 4).

It was only with the emergence of U.S. policies on containment – the (military) strategy to prevent the spread of communism – that geopolitical analysis and interpretation found its way into U.S. foreign policy and international relations (Hepple 1986: S24). In that regard, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was not perceived as a territory *per se*, but as a constantly increasing (centre of) threat (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 5–6), with the danger of Soviet control over Mackinder’s “World Island” remaining a persistent theme (Dalby 2013: 38). The term geopolitics as such prominently re-appeared in the later years of the Cold War in order to highlight the great power rivalry between the U.S. and the USSR and related regional ramifications in the Middle East or South-East Asia (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a:

5). Famous proponents of *Cold War geopolitics* were, *inter alia*, Henry Kissinger or Zbigniew Brzezinski. The gained popularity of geopolitics, at least in the U.S. political discourse, was reasoned on the proposed comprehensive global vision, addressing the ‘big picture’ by relating regional and local dynamics to the global system (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 1).²⁵

The Cold War vision of geopolitics was one of globalisation or at least of a globalised perspective, based on strands of International Relations’ (IR) realism. The interconnectivity and complexity of today’s world, so the assumption went, lead to a potential universal state of interest for the world’s two superpowers. The importance of resources, the scepticism about international diplomacy, the contrast between land- and sea-based powers, the realism-introduced consideration of the zero-sum game and the willingness to globally intervene in case of threatened national security interests created a “particular version of geopolitics in which a global view of the world is essential” (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a: 5). Both, the Western and the USSR Cold War geopolitical discourse used geographical terminology as a description of ideological identity and related differences. Historically embedded ‘Eastern’ powers, such as Japan or South Korea, became an essential political, economic and social pillar of the Western hemisphere. Aside from that the world was divided into three ‘sub-worlds’ (First, Second and Third World) with space either belonging to ‘us’ or ‘them’, to the ‘Western’ or the ‘Eastern’ bloc, to the ‘free world’ or the ‘totalitarian world’, to the ‘capitalist and imperialist’s West’ or to the ‘people’s democracies’. The so-called and infamous ‘domino-theory’ became a discursive geopolitical catchphrase that ironically totally ignored very distinct geographical characteristics as it under- and/or overestimated the eventual strategic significance of a certain region or country, as it was for instance the case in Vietnam (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 6). Eventually, the Cold War era changed the context for the production of geopolitical power/knowledge as it shifted from geography being a conditioning

²⁵ Murphy et al. gave a short overview on the re-appearance of geopolitics in France and Germany (2004: 622–624), *see also* (Bach & Peters 2002; Claval 2003; Hepple 2003; Müller & Reuber 2008). Although post-Soviet Russia does not look back to a robust, long-standing tradition of the concept of geopolitics, *geopolitika* has strongly developed since the early 1990s, especially within conservative-nationalist circles (Murphy et al. 2004: 623–624) and is particularly obvious in the case of the Ukraine unrest since 2013/2014 (Götz 2015; Molchanov 2015; Walker 2015).

factor of foreign policy to geography being (too) closely entwined with ideology (Ibid.: 5).

New World Order Geopolitics

The end of the Cold War as a system of geopolitical control illustrates a turning point in the description of international politics with the Western complex of ideology, institutions and intellectuals continuing to exist and the Soviet one slightly disintegrating (Ó Tuathail 2003c: 103). According to Guzzini, the revival of geopolitical thought in Europe after 1989 is best understood in the context of three foreign policy identity crisis, namely “no identity, no longer the previously established identity, and no identity yet”, that foreign policy elites encountered after the dissolution of the USSR and the Cold War’s aftermath (2012a: 3).

In order to fill this now apparent ‘empty geopolitical map’ several intellectuals outlined new geopolitical visions and narratives. Pundits proclaimed, *inter alia*, “The End of History” (Fukuyama 1989, 2006), envisaged “The Clash of Civilizations” (Huntington 1993, 2003) or discussed the transformation from geopolitics to geo-economics in world politics. In this respect, economic variables such as trade balances, the gross domestic product, currency reserves, foreign investments or technological advances are considered the new conditioning factors in the assessment of power struggle of states in an era of increased economic globalisation (Luttwak 1990; Murphy et al. 2004: 631; Solberg Søilen 2012; Khanna 2012: 3). Additionally, the concept of transnational liberalism, as articulated by representatives of the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank or leaders of the G8, highlighted the conditionality of the globalisation of trade, production and markets for the future development of world affairs (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 7).

It is this particular discourse on the new, post-Cold War world order, that re-specifies geopolitics as an approach and practice (Ibid.: 6), establishing a *new world order geopolitics* (geopolitics of globalisation). Accordingly, geopolitics is not a one-side, state-centred concern for the physical control of space but rather a universe of transnational paradigms and discourses employed by both states and international organisations in order to manage political and economic globalisation (Scott 2009:

234). However, although the global political circumstances have undoubtedly changed with the collapse of the USSR, the very different interpretations of this new meaning of global politics has been widely contested (Ó Tuathail 2003c: 111), lacking any “widespread agreement on the contours of contemporary geopolitics” (Dalby 2013: 34).

Environmental Geopolitics

In addition, new visions of geopolitics appeared. Discourses addressing politics of environmental change emerged as an object of geopolitical consideration in particular over the last two decades, intertwined with discussions on transnational challenges such as sustainable development, population growth or (social) inequality. The creation of *environmental geopolitics* (geo-ecology) led to a re-negotiation of the traditional relationship between the earth and the human and offered one conceptual alternative to the perceived geopolitical blank. New institutions of governance, embedded in their own system of expertise started to share a different view of power compared to the other three geopolitical visions/discourses (Ó Tuathail 2003a: 7). The global environment became an arena of discussion where the emergence of particular environmental themes depends on how a specific debate is argued by whom and for what purpose related decisions are made (Dalby 2003: 180). In that regard, geographical knowledge and argumentation are never neutral but rather a political resource for respective arguments. Articulated or even implemented approaches to tackle climate change for instance, remain dissimilarly argued either from a ‘Northern’ or ‘Southern’ perspective (Ibid.: 180). Further, ‘environmental security’ emerged as a catchall term in academic and political circles in order to describe threats for national security matters that have a (deceptive) inherent global basis, as for instance climate change, biodiversity loss or the ozone hole. Thus, political or economic consequences are highlighted as potential sources of (military) conflicts between (international) actors (Ibid.: 182), *see* as a present example, Chapter 4 for the emerging Arctic story around 2007/2008.

Likewise, Robert D. Kaplan, a proponent of *neoclassical geopolitics*, argued that “[f]uture wars will be those of communal survival (...) caused by environmental scarcity.” (1994: 18). Megoran defined neoclassical geopolitics as a way of

geographical thinking based on the Mackinder-Haushofer-Spykman tradition but reworking it with current references to changed social, economic, environmental and cultural factors (2010: 187). In that regard neoclassical geopolitics represents a ‘genuine renaissance’ of classical geopolitics as it explicitly builds on its predecessor’s conceptual categories and models (Murphy et al. 2004: 621).

A Historical Roundup

As outlined in this Subchapter, the concept of classical geopolitics has a long-standing, yet complex and multi-faceted history. For more than a century, the concept has already been used as explanatory approach and justificatory condition in the argumentation of geopolitical writers and foreign policymakers. Consequently, it served as a facilitator of statecraft based on natural opportunities and constraints. The focus, however, shifted from a “one-sided concern for the physical/military control of space to a competitive (...) management of the forces of economic and political globalisation” (Scott 2009: 234). It still remains a popular perceived explanatory approach for the global challenges of the 21st century that retains the *zeitgeist* of its very origins more than a century ago: power and resource politics (Stadler, Puscas & Al-Rodhan 2014). Techau (2013) described it as “an old idea that continues to be en vogue, never quite loses its strange, roguish beauty, can be applied to anything, has a whiff of the excitingly illicit and dangerous, and enjoys instant name recognition around the globe”. Generally speaking, ‘geopolitics’ could be considered as having a rather straightforward meaning. It highlights geographical variables as instrumental for an actor’s foreign policy behaviour, indicating a deterministic and causal relationship between geography and (power) politics. Hence, its theoretical interests rest with the “designing and testing of simple cause-and-effect probabilities” (Kelly 2006: 26), assuming that the actors in power follow the rational logic of pursuing state interests which correspond to geographic realities. *Positivism* – the premise of applying methodologies of natural science to social science – and *modernism* – the principle of value-free, objective and neutral facts of the world’s reality – are considered the basis of (neo-)classical geopolitical assumptions (Ibid.: 32–34). It is the apparent simplicity in the line of geopolitical argumentation that remains appealing and yet perilous if used as a claim of legitimacy.

2.2. ... to *Critical Geopolitics*: A Concept through Ages

The end of the Cold War and its superpower rivalry depicted a ‘push for modernisation’ in the thinking of the spatiality of power and consequently questioned the argumentation of, yet still popular, classical and contemporary geopolitics (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a: 6). As put by Guzzini, “[s]hifts in world politics stir up geopolitical discourses” (2012b: 13).

The assigned scientific objectivity and the concept’s conventionalism eventually led to a critical strand of geopolitical analysis being developed in the early 1980s: *critical geopolitics*.²⁶ On the contrary to (neo-)classical geopolitics, critical geopolitics is a postmodernist/-structuralist reading and critical-constructivist framework that implies a new sensitivity regarding the perception of power and space in a transformed, post-Cold War era (Reuber & Wolkersdorfer 2001: 3).²⁷ According to this strand, geopolitics is understood as the “study of spatialization of international politics by core powers and hegemonic states” (Ó Tuathail & Agnew 1992: 192).²⁸ Instead of inquiring “how geography does or can influence politics, [critical geopolitics] investigates how geographical claims and assumptions function in political debates and political practices” (Kuus 2010a: 683). Hence, it does not simply accept the geopolitical categories of territory, borders and actors but rather analyses their creation and narration in a distinct foreign policy discourse (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a: 7). Moreover, it challenges the structuralist and positivistic conceptualisation of geopolitics (and IR theories in general) – the causal effects of geographical determinants on the making of a state’s foreign policy in particular or on global politics in general – and argues against a ‘natural’, predetermined, objective geography in international relations (Dodds 1993: 71). Consequently, geography and space as such become the question and a “discursive subject”

²⁶ For a comprehensive explanation on what critical geopolitics actually is, its history, its foundations, its sites and its agents, *see* (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013b).

²⁷ The ‘critical’ of critical geopolitics does not relate to a socio-critical basic attitude of scientific work but rather ‘only’ to a conceptually different way of thinking (Reuber 2012: 164).

²⁸ The broad core set of ‘critical geopolitical’ concern gives insight into the linkage between *spatiality* and *subjectivity* in global affairs. According to Agnew, “spatiality refers to how space is represented as having effects [on political-economic processes]” (1994: 55); it therefore relates to the inherent question of ‘distance’ and how close or far units (e.g. states) are within some concept of space (Starr 2005: 389). Subjectivity, however, broadens the actors under analysis from state actors to also non-state ones (Kuus 2013: 381–382).

(Murphy et al. 2004: 621), instead of being the given variable (Kuus 2014: 33). Thus, studies of critical geopolitics have shifted the research focus from a seemingly ‘objective’ domination of space to a critical analysis of the socio-political construction of geopolitical orders, and the question of how space, territory, identity and governance are re-negotiated (= re-territorialised) within the international system (Scott 2005a: 432). In that regard, geopolitics as such is not an immanently meaningful concept in itself but rather “a discursive “event” that poses questions to us whenever it is evoked or rhetorically deployed” (Ó Tuathail 2005: 14).

Geography: a Discursive Element of Power

Subjectivity instead of objectivity becomes the key premise. “It is not enough merely to insist that geography and space ‘matter’ to the political process. The real challenge (...) is to explain in meaningful detail how it matters” in a distinct historical or contemporary context (Murphy et al. 2004: 626). Thus, Sharp argued that although some geographical facts, as the relative size of continents or the distribution of human and material resources, may be agreed upon, it is the very use of geographical description that is continuously selective (1993: 492). Similarly, Dahlman emphasised that the “location, resources, population and borders of a state *do* matter but how they matter is as much a function of political interpretation and will than of any determinant fact of nature” (2009: 90) (Italics in the original). Hence, geographical contexts have to be considered as dynamic and not being immutable constant factors (Starr 2005: 400). Moreover, in a newly and continuously globalised world, proximity in a geopolitical perspective is not bound to be a geographical induced term anymore but also or even rather a structural and mental one that configures territories beyond an entities’ borders (Ó Tuathail 2002a: 16–17; Starr 2005). Facts ‘don’t speak for themselves’ (anymore) but only acquire meaning within the respective context and discourse used by the various actors involved (Kelly 2006: 40). Consequently, the meaning and significance of objects and things depends on their discursive position within particular symbolic frameworks (Howarth & Griggs 2012: 307).

Broadly defining critical geopolitics, Agnew highlighted it as a “*critical* sense” to understand that international politics is underpinned by a myriad of assumptions of geographical divisions and global images that enter into foreign policy legitimisation. These assumptions are not accepted as natural facts but perceived as socially constructed and therefore set out the basis for geopolitical rationalities (2013: 19–20) (*Italics in the original*). As Peake put it, “critical geopolitics refers to an understanding that the arenas of the geopolitical are not just ‘out there’ waiting to be discovered. Rather, they are socially constructed through human geopolitical praxis (...)” (2013: 91). In order to distinguish the critical interpretation from the classical apprehension, geopolitics should rather be conceptualised “as a form of political discourse (...) than simply a descriptive term intended to cover the study of foreign policy (...)” (Dodds 2001: 469).

Accordingly, it is the critical geopolitics’ main task to scrutinise how geography/space, power and knowledge collaborate in the daily understanding of foreign policy-making and its representatives.²⁹ This particular notion refers to all individuals that influence, comment upon and conduct foreign policy, such as state bureaucrats, leaders or foreign policy advisors (Ó Tuathail & Agnew 1992: 193). Power, according to this reading, is not understood as something independent from knowledge but rather that knowledge is power because it “enables and privileges certain forms of human practice” (Dalby 1991: 275). “Critical geopolitics approaches geographical knowledge as an essential part of the modern discourse of power” (Kuus 2010a: 686). Foucault described this conceptual nexus as follows: “The exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power” (1980: 52). Consequently, power and knowledge are not considered synonymously but rather related. Geography, then again, should not be understood as “unchanging or independent variable but rather [as] a form of power/knowledge” with the prevailing geographical order in a constant mode of recreation (Sharp 1993: 492) – geography as some sort of ‘geo-knowledge’.

²⁹ Over the last decades, this discursive triangle of ‘space/geography, power and knowledge’ (Lossau 2001: 61) has experienced increased academic attention, as noticeable in the works of *inter alia* (Dalby 1991; Ó Tuathail & Agnew 1992; Dodds 1994; Dodds & Sidaway 1994; Ó Tuathail & Dalby 2002b; Ó Tuathail, Dalby & Routledge 2003; Agnew 2004; Ó Tuathail 2005).

Thus, space and geopolitical narratives have to be perceived as being constructed, negotiable and man-made (Knecht & Keil 2013: 10). These descriptions are based on vested political and economic interests and decisively changed and influenced by a specific discourse at a given time, a certain agenda and incisive events. Constructed, perceived and narrated by (foreign) policymakers, these spatial assumptions “form an integral part of how interests and identities come into being” (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a: 6) and consequently how foreign policy is produced.

Additionally, critical geopolitics helps to unpack the rigid territorial assumptions and continued reliance on binary understandings of power and space (East vs. West, North vs. South, Orient vs. Occident, us vs. them, inside vs. outside) that still seem to prevail in geopolitical writing (Ibid.: 7). It, therefore, contributes to the studies of identity and identity building based on spatial constructions and challenges “the statist conceptions of power in the social sciences”, arguing that spatiality was and never is confined to territoriality only (Ibid.: 8).³⁰

A Critical Recap

The two preceding Subchapters gave a brief overview of the terminological and conceptual history of *classic geopolitics* over the last century and how in an era of global change *critical* voices profoundly started to scrutinise the alleged causal relation between space/geography and the conduct of power. In summary, it can be stated that geography and space undoubtedly matter to the political process and are still be considered a variable of related considerations thereof. However, from a critical geopolitics’ perspective it is not sufficient to demonstrate the mere existence or relevance of geography for politics but to clarify that the assigned significance is a constructed one for a very specific purpose. Accordingly, discourse, not (only) ‘natural’ geographic facts, is perceived as the main determinative element of geopolitics. This makes the concept a “matter of social construction” (Neumann 1997: 148) and under no circumstance politically or even morally neutral and objective. By discourse, actors construct space and a related identity, geopolitical

³⁰ In that regard critical geopolitics aims to analyse the construction of threats, which are used for internal identity building, along an inside/outside divide. As Germond put it, “the ‘inside’ is systematically represented as the ‘realm of peace and stability’ and the ‘outside’ as the ‘realm of war and insecurity’” (2013: 80).

world-views/images and a concerned reasoning – a guide to statecraft – to validate the plausibility of their interests and actions in and for a certain space/region (Klinke 2009; Albert, Reuber & Wolkersdorfer 2014: 326–327).

Text Box I: Torn between Political Geography and International Relations?³¹

The conceptual ambiguity of geopolitics and the problematic nature of its common terminological usage are to some extent also based in the dissimilarity of the two academic approaches that deal with geopolitics: Political Geography and IR.

Political Geography as such is a sub-discipline of Human Geography, broadly concerned with the “interaction between ‘politics’ – defined in its broadest sense - and ‘geography’, represented by place, territory or spatial variation” (Jones, Jones & Woods 2004: 2). Generally speaking, Political Geography deals with the impact of a geographical location on political processes and is used to describe the relationship between the physical environment and politics (Chapman 2011: 7).

According to Taylor, geopolitics’ global academic distribution is too minuscule to be considered an academic sub-discipline of its own. In fact, geopolitics is rather “the periphery of a periphery of a periphery” (2003: 375), “meaning that geopolitics is the periphery of political geography which is the periphery of geography which is the periphery of social science” (Mamadouh & Dijkink 2006: 352). It is further considered that within the academic field of geography, “geopolitics covers critical approaches to foreign policy practices and representations”; however within the field of IR “geopolitics generally refers to a conservative, realist view of international relations” (Ibid.: 350). Hence, geopolitics is torn between Political Geography and IR (Criekemans as cited in Mamadouh & Dijkink 2006: 353). Moreover, Mamadouh & Dijkink stressed that the geography’s geopolitical approach does not fit the categorical IR approach of placing geopolitics either in a realist or constructivist box, which additionally contributes to the blurriness of geopolitics in IR (Ibid.: 353).

³¹ This dissertation uses five text boxes as stylistic devices to highlight distinct elements within the respective Chapters.

2.3. EUropean Geopolitics or the Making-of a Geopolitical Subject

With the two preceding Subchapters elaborating on the conceptual complexity of geopolitics, Subchapter 2.3 seeks to put this multifacetedness in a EUropean context. Hence, it gives indication on the very scientific placing of the research on hand and how critical geopolitics can actually be contextualised from a EUropean perspective. From a conceptual stance, this Subchapter researches into the question of the very nature of EUropean geopolitics, expounding on how the field of critical geopolitics has portrayed and discussed the ‘geo’ and ‘politics’ of an international actor under construction. Accordingly, empirical research briefly revisits neighbouring EUropean spaces of interaction, namely the ENP and the ND. Finally, this Subchapter also introduces the meta-concept of *geopolitical subjectivity* – a model that was developed to capture the EU’s on-going evolution as a geopolitical ‘subject’ in progress, enabling to put the Union’s external behaviour in a comparative setting. Ultimately, this particular model is applied in the present EU-Arctic case to essentially summarise Part Four (*see* Subchapter 7.5).

How to connect Geopolitics and EUrope?

As we have seen, the concept of geopolitics is already contentious (Ibid.: 350), however with regard to the EU it is also a politically and academically delicate one. In the European Quarter of Brussels, geopolitics is perceived as a crude concept and its study deemed to be an odd activity, out-of-date and rather alluded to more troubled facets of European history (Kuus 2014: 12). Hence, specific EUropean geopolitical concepts seem to be absent in the discussions of EUropean policymakers (Ibid.: 12–31).

In the European world of academia, the concept is also only of peripheral scientific matter. This is partly because of its realist connotations, a school of IR most European academics find difficult to embrace (Techau 2013), but also because of the aforementioned analytical weaknesses and its flawed historic roots. With the Union itself remaining deeply entrenched in a post-sovereign, post-modern, post-

classical geopolitics self-image – “the EU is not a geopolitical actor”³² – Political Science and European Studies serve to circulate analogous information (Klinke 2013: 1). Accordingly, the pertinent question on ‘what kind of power’ or ‘global/international actor the EU actually is’ has been predominantly answered in this post-classical geopolitics narrative (Bretherton & Vogler 2006; Sjørusen 2006; Rogers 2009: 832).³³ Thus, an epistemic community of EU foreign policy researchers continuously, albeit mostly unintentionally, construct an “‘ideal power Europe’” through the discourse on a post-sovereign/post-modern Union or the EU as-a-model discourse (Cebeci 2012: 564).³⁴

Yet, in addition to the broad works of Political Science, the Union’s status as an international actor has also been scrutinised from a Political Geography perspective. Contrary to Political Science, this academic discipline has explored the Union as an emerging geopolitical *space* along three, partly overlapping clusters of critical geopolitics’ research (Klinke 2013; Mamadouh 2015):

- The Union’s borders and its bordering practices, *see inter alia* (Dowd, Anderson & Wilson 2003; van Houtum 2010)
- The Union’s territory and its relation to and perceptions by its neighbours, *see inter alia* (Clark & Jones 2008; Boedeltje & van Houtum 2011; Bosse 2011; Bachmann & Müller 2015)
- The production and circulation of geopolitical knowledge and discourse within the Union and its representation as an emerging geopolitical actor, *see inter alia* (Aalto 2002; Diez 2004; Bialasiewicz 2008; Jones & Clark 2011; Rovnyi & Bachmann 2012; Kuus 2014)

The EU’s evolving nature and continuous geographical expansion, especially to the east and south, have raised questions on the EU’s *finalité politique* with final borders

³² Stated by a scholar that worked in both European and Arctic Studies during a personal conversation with the dissertation’s author in October 2012.

³³ And yet, some exceptions prove the rule, *see* (Rogers 2009, 2011) and his proposed *Grand Area* of future European power (Annex I, page 352).

³⁴ Several roles have been attributed to the EU, with the Union being endlessly referred to as, *inter alia*, soft (Haine 2004; Hettne & Söderbaum 2005), transformative (Grabbe 2006; Börzel 2010), normative (Manners 2002, 2006), (green) civilian (Duchêne 1973; Bull 1982; Orbie 2006; Vanden Brande 2008; Bachmann & Sidaway 2009) or integrative (Koops 2011) power/actor.

delineating EUrope from the *other* Europe and its surroundings. In that regard, and ever since the EU's Eastern enlargement process – a process lasting from the 1990s to 2007 – scholars have started to portray the EU as a geopolitical agent or with geopolitical agency (Aalto 2002; Bachmann 2013b).³⁵ Kuus explicitly characterised the EU's Eastern enlargement as “geopolitical process[.]” (2007: 4) with similarly Diez referring to a “return of geopolitics in European identity constructions” and a move towards a more geography based, ‘conventional’ othering (2004: 319). Moreover, questions on the Union's *finalité* are closely connected to EUrope's very own identity. An identity that, according to Larsen, was *inter alia* constructed in the interplay between internal and external dangers to EUropean security (2004: 74).

From its very beginning and throughout the Cold War, threats to the European Economic Community (EEC) were predominantly fashioned as European-internal, based on Europe's World War II experience. However, with the Union's widening and deepening, internal threats were (thought to be) overcome with now external factors being perceived as principal threat determinants of EUropean stability, such as civil wars at EUrope's borders, transnational threats (e.g. terrorism, mass immigration or global warming) or the rise of China and Russia (Rogers 2009: 847; Germond 2013: 81). Accordingly, questions concerning the EU's identity acquired some kind of geographical and external security dimension where the Union's ‘outside’ was perceived as unstable and being a threat provider to the EU's (internal) stability. Hence, the ‘control’ of bordering regions/countries and maritime spaces (= projecting EUropean power beyond the Union's external boundaries) is considered vital for EUropean security and permanency with a geography-informed representation of risks classifying involved actors along an inside/outside line (Ibid.: 81) – the already touched upon ‘us’ vs. ‘them’. These referred to EUropean positions, worldviews, foreign policy paradigms and security assessments became manifest, for example, in the European Security Strategy (ESS), adopted in 2003, and its follow-up implementation report from 2008 (European Council 2003, 2008).

³⁵ For a range of different scholars that deal with the nexus ‘Eastern enlargement and the EU's geopolitical nature’, see *inter alia* (Aalto 2002; Browning & Joenniemi 2003, 2007, 2008; Diez 2004; Scott 2005a, 2009, 2011; Sidaway 2006; Joenniemi 2007; Moisio 2007; Bialasiewicz 2008; Parker 2008; Kuus 2011b). Moreover, a volume edited by Bialasiewicz (2011a) has been considered a key contribution regarding the geopolitics of EU foreign policy (Mamadouh 2015).

Accordingly, the ESS *inter alia* refers to (regional) geography as remaining matter of importance, despite an era of globalisation and global interdependencies with the EU essentially being interested in well-governed borders and neighbourhoods, and an international order based on effective multilateralism, rule-based institutions and a stronger international society as such (European Council 2003: 7 and 9). Back in 2003, the ESS denoted terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organised crime as key threats to Europe and identified only *en passant* the security implications of climate change and global warming (Ibid.: 3–4). Eventually, the ESS' implementation report dedicated slightly more space on climate change, denoting global warming as threat multiplier able to lead to disputes over trade routes, maritime zones and resources (European Council 2008: 5).

Thus, it has been argued that over the last decade the Union has steadily developed a tacit, embryonic geopolitical discourse, exhibiting certain geopolitical ambitions alongside its own conceptualisation of world order, core values, rule of law and good governance (Kuus 2011b: 1151; Germond 2013: 81 and 83).³⁶ Yet, this rather fuzzy geopolitical doctrine primarily emphasises the EU's stabilising and democratising role in the world system and its (immediate) neighbourhood through political and economic cooperation and specific politics of norm diffusion (Scott 2006: 17–18) and not necessarily via the 'classic' perspective of military presence and the external projection of related power; although Operation Atalanta – the counter-piracy military operation off the Horn of Africa – maybe be an exception to the rule. This particular European role in the international system is based on Europe's historical process of post-World War II integration and the formation of European-internal spaces of interaction. Spaces that are, *inter alia*, characterised by supranationality with European nation states ceding sovereignty, multilateralism based on the rule of law and commonly agreed on values or the irrelevance of

³⁶ Germond argued that the tacit European geopolitical discourse, as highlighted by Kuus (2011b), coexists with other discourses, such as a civilian or a normative one (2013: 81). In that regard, Hill stated that students within the field of European Studies have actually neglected geopolitics because "they could not see its relevance to a 'civilian power' or because they were uneasy with that kind of discourse for normative reasons" (2003: 98). In a similar fashion, Bachmann (2013b, 2015) identified both civilian and normative power as distinct European geopolitical discourses and constitutive elements of the EU's geopolitical role and identity.

military force within the EU and between its Member States (Bachmann 2015: 695–697). Hence, the European external character is inevitably (co-)constituted by its internal history and developed processes of cooperative and multilateral governance (Rosamond 2014: 134). According to Bachmann, “the externalisation aspect of internal preferences is essential” for the evolution of European spaces of interaction as these internal modes form the basis of global visions and scripts (2015: 698 and 700). Thus, the EU as a distinct actor cannot operate if the external regulated space is characterised by an environment of arbitrary and ad-hoc interaction or anarchy in the international system and realist power politics – a space that erodes European geopolitical agency with the Union lacking flexibility and the necessary tools to respond and/or project power (Ibid.: 698). The recent events in both Syria and Ukraine serve as prominent example. Accordingly, European geopolitical agency is at its best if the international system and/or a regional level thereof is predictable, governed by a legal framework and routinized relations between different actors (Ibid.: 698).

European Spaces of Interactions: the EU’s Various Neighbourhoods

The EU’s ENP serves as the most prominent example of a distinct European space of interaction outside the Union’s very own border – a policy framework to structure the relation between the EU and its neighbours (Scott 2009: 238). Thus, the ENP has been characterised as “a reflection of a rather fixed geopolitical vision of what the EU is about and how it aims to run and organize the broader European space” (Browning & Joenniemi 2008: 520).³⁷ Accordingly, the project of ‘Neighbourhood’ can be defined as the EU’s search for a “macro region of stability and prosperity, informed by common goals and values and hence coherent in its response to security challenges” (Scott 2011: 147). Using the example of the ENP associated Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, Jones stressed that the particular construction of a symbolical, territorial and institutional space for EU Mediterranean

³⁷ A 2007 Council report characterised the ENP as “clear geopolitical imperative to foster stability, the rule of law and human rights, better governance and economic modernization in the neighbourhood” (Council of the European Union 2007). For in-depth analyses on the ENP’s broader geopolitical character, *see inter alia* (Aalto 2002; Emerson 2002; Browning & Joenniemi 2003, 2007, 2008; Pardo 2004; Diez 2004; Lavenex 2004; Scott 2005a, 2009; Joenniemi 2007; Kuus 2007; Boedeltje & van Houtum 2011; van Houtum & Boedeltje 2011).

related action justifies the promotion of European solutions in order to govern and tackle challenges (partly) outside its very own territorial space (2011: 42). Hence, the term ‘neighbourhood’ and/or a more general “making regions for EU action” (Jones 2011) exemplifies the already referred to “geography-informed representation of risks and threats” and the specific classification and categorization of various actors along an inside/outside line. This particular geopolitical discourse of spatial demarcation is needed to ensure public acceptance of certain foreign policies aimed to guarantee European security and has subsequently practical implications in terms of the EU’s external power projection (Germond 2013: 81). Moreover, the idea of a European neighbourhood implies the inherent logic of apparently belonging without effectively belonging. It is “a sense of inclusion and belonging to a working political community (...) despite the fact that direct membership is not an immediate or probable option for several states that consider themselves very close to the EU” (Scott 2012: 89–90).

With the ENP focusing on the Union’s Eastern and Southern neighbourhood, it is the ND that constitutes the existing policy framework to cover the EU’s Northern ‘neighbourhood’. Yet, this third neighbourhood has deliberately been excluded from a common neighbourhood policy approach as the concept of European neighbourhood has been developed with an exclusive southern and eastern focus, as the northern and north-western ‘neighbourhoods’ were significantly less controversial.³⁸ As a matter of fact, the ‘Northern Neighbourhood’ does not even exist in European parlance.³⁹

The political and conceptual formulation of a European North as a distinct European political space only evolved in the mid/late 1990s and was directly linked to the Union’s Northern enlargement process and the consequent accession of Finland and Sweden in 1995 (Heininen 1998: 33; Moisio 2003: 74). Ever since then, the EU is considered an important part of Northern Europe’s broader institutional

³⁸ Stated in a 2013 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author

³⁹ As both Iceland and Norway belong to the EEA and the Faroe Islands and Greenland being part of the Danish Realm, the ‘Northern Neighbourhood’ differs significantly from the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood and the related relationship between the EU and its neighbouring countries. Hence, the geographical area north of Europe is not just ‘simply’ a neighbourhood (Interview 8), *see* also Subchapter 5.1.

framework – the *quadriga* of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), Council of the Baltic Sea States, Nordic Council (NC) and ND. The EU is not only involved in this regional institutional set-up, it is also expected to take an active regional role, especially in relation to Russia with the EU-Russia relationship being considered as the main-axis of Northern regional cooperation (Aalto 2013: 104–105).

The ND itself became a common policy of joint ownership between four equal partners – the EU, Iceland, Norway and Russia – with a rather flexible policy framework that aims to promote dialogue and cooperation especially in the sectors environment, public health and social well-being, transport and logistics, and culture (European Union et al. 2006).⁴⁰ Geographically, the ND covers a broad geographical area, from the European Arctic and Sub-Arctic areas to the southern shores of the Baltic Sea, including the countries in its vicinity and from North-West Russia in the east to Iceland and Greenland in the west” (Ibid.: 1), *see* Figure III (page 52).⁴¹ Although being one of the three regional foci of the ND, the broader Arctic region, has eventually only been of peripheral concern in related considerations with the priorities rather being focused on the Baltic Sea Region and the relationship with Russia. In that regard, the ND has even been considered the most successful cooperation policy with Russia.⁴²

⁴⁰ For a broad variety on analyses discussing the ND, its initial ideas, its development, its flaws and achievements, *see inter alia* (Arter 2000; Ojanen 2000; Catellani 2000, 2001, 2003; Heikkilä 2006; Aalto, Blakkisrud & Smith 2008; Archer & Etzold 2008; Gebhard 2013). For in-depth analyses on the ND from a European geopolitics’ perspective, *see inter alia* (Joenniemi 2002; Aalto, Dalby & Harle 2003; Browning & Joenniemi 2003, 2008; Laitinen 2003; Moisio 2003; Laine 2011)

⁴¹ Subchapter 4.1 defines the geographical term ‘European Arctic’.

⁴² Interview 8

Figure III: Northern Dimension



Source: (Delegation of the European Union to Russia 2014)

The EU as a Geopolitical Subject or the Question of Geopolitical Agency

The conceptualisation of the EU as a geopolitical actor reflects a variety of disciplinary, philosophical or critical approaches that essentially all raise questions about the territorial nature of the Union and how to eventually promote security and stability beyond its post-21st century enlargement borders (Scott 2009: 235). Accordingly, the Union is understood as a project both transcending and reconfirming state-centred, traditional geopolitics (Ibid.: 236). It is described as a “geopolitical actor with different, often conflicting agendas”, either corresponding to traditional Realpolitik and its related interests, or the promotion of self-perceived European values and norms, in particular democracy, human rights or environmental protection (Ibid.: 233).

In order to situate the Union’s evolving nature in a conceptually informed, comparative setting, Aalto (2002) introduced the meta-concept of *geopolitical subjectivity*. The developed concept aims to explain the EU’s geopolitical processes and the social institutions influencing and depicting this development (Ibid.: 145 and 169).

The notion of geopolitical subjectivity refers to the EU as rather being a geopolitical subject than an agent or actor. This meta-concept implies the explicit understanding of a subject to have both the ability to act and abstain from acting in a certain space at a given situation. Additionally, this concept allows to account for situations where the EU is recognised as a legitimate subject by other subjects but yet declines “to respond by means of any goal-oriented action, in that way reflecting a relatively weak ‘internal’ constitution of subjectivity” (Ibid.: 148). Accordingly, Aalto defined the character of geopolitical subjectivity as “goal-oriented ordering of territories and political spaces, extending from one’s own sphere of sovereign rule to broader regional contexts” (Ibid.: 148) (Original in italics).

Ordering in that regard refers to the objective to create a certain configuration of social and material relationships with a desirable design within a pre-defined political space (Ibid.: 148) = Bachmann’s (2009) regulated space of interaction. However, the extension to broader regional contexts can come in various forms of entities from non-sovereign transnational groups to semi-sovereign unions of states and does not necessarily need to entail nation states only. This definition nevertheless indicates that in order to be counted as a geopolitical subject, the particular subject has to make an impact at the respective regional level, the pre-defined political space (Aalto 2002: 149).

Thus, *goal-oriented* refers to the ability to use any kind of power, either positive or negative during the ordering process. As its name implies, while negative power refers to control, domination and usurpation, positive power concerns a less visible ability to act, cooperate and assent (Ibid.: 149–150).

Instead of only looking at the territorial effects of ordering – the classic geopolitics’ perspective – critical geopolitics rather focuses on the effects regarding the construction process of political spaces and the symbolic and material boundaries delimiting these spaces from others, the above already referred to separation between, e.g. ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Ibid.: 150). Accordingly, geopolitical space cannot be equalised anymore to a fixed territory only but essentially also focuses on structures, processes and flows. Hence, the very construction of space and consequently also the EU’s power role depends on these factors.

The constitution of a geopolitical subject as a geopolitical ordering power further depends on the intersubjective foundation processes not only within the Union and the related *recognition* by its *Member States* but also in relation with its various *neighbours* (Ibid.: 152 and 155). As a ‘space of meaning’ the EU is defining itself in a two-fold way, both externally as a potential regional-dominating and global power and internally as a political community based on a common set of values and a sense of purpose (Scott 2011: 153). Consequently, the EU’s extensive regional engagements have to be understood “as an interactive process of dialogue (...) in which the EU itself is changing [due] to enlargement and evolving relationships with its ‘new’ neighbours” (Scott 2005a: 434). Additionally, a subject also needs to *promote its interests* and particular *identity projects* for the given political space and its delimitation process (Aalto 2002: 157). Both concepts are highly connected to each other, both in a conceptual as well as empirical sense, as identity never exists without goal-oriented factors with agents often simultaneously appealing to both of them during periods of political struggles (Ibid.: 157).

The open-ended perspective of geopolitical subjectivity allows for understanding how peculiar entities, such as the EU can take part in today’s geopolitics by developing a conceptual scheme for theoretically informed and systematic comparison with other geopolitical powers. The indicated peculiarity defines the EU as unfinished business and on-going construction process with the lack of a fixed centre of power from which policies and decisions are imposed upon third parties (Ibid.: 145–146). “Instead, power and policies are imposed in a flexible framework in which the EU takes different forms” (Boedeltje & van Houtum 2011: 141). Accordingly, the EU is constantly defining itself in relation to its Member States, its neighbours, its complex bi- and multilateral relations and its internal and external changes through the relations with its neighbours. It thus remains an unfinished business. It is an unclear, growing and unshaped geopolitical subject itself, that often takes the form of a geopolitical subject, yet without (fully) subsuming that of its Member States (Aalto 2002: 155; Boedeltje & van Houtum 2011: 141).

A European Synopsis

The objective of Subchapter 2.3 was to contextualise the very nature of European geopolitics and to give a brief overview on the conceptualisation of the EU as an emerging geopolitical space. Accordingly, and in order to academically grasp European geopolitics – a scientific matter mainly dealt with from a Political Geography perspective – the Subchapter stressed the evolution of European spaces of interaction, both from a conceptual and an empirical (= neighbourhood) point of view. Thus, different visions and strategies on how to order its neighbourhood eventually create the ‘geopolitical nature’ of the EU – an internal and external structure with related policy approaches that differ depending on the envisaged neighbourhood/space to be managed.

Additionally, the Subchapter also outlined the concept of geopolitical subjectivity, a model that can be applied when examining Europe’s constitution as ordering power in its (immediate) neighbourhood.

2.4. The Remains of Geopolitics: A Summary

The dissertation’s first step provided a historical roundup, critical recap and European synopsis of the almost intangible concept of geopolitics – a geopolitical *tour d’horizon*. Accordingly, Chapter 2 gave a condensed insight into geopolitics’ very complexity and multifacetedness by basically ‘unpacking’ its roots, its history, its century-long development, the emergence of a *critical* spin-off and its application from a European point of view. Essentially, this first step discussed the transition from a traditional focus on the ‘geography of politics’ to an alternative one on the ‘politics of geography’ – from classic geopolitics to critical geopolitics. To that effect, the preceding three Subchapters helped to what is claimed as the dissertation’s first purpose and major output, to *understand the concept*.⁴³

⁴³ Chapter 3 clarifies methodological aspects of how to critically deconstruct geopolitical discourses and accordingly also contributes to the very understanding of the concept itself. However, a final reflection on classic, critical and European geopolitics at this point is considered more suitable than a related contemplation subsequent to Subchapter 3.3.

#1: Understanding the *Concept*

- *The ambiguity of 'geopolitics' and its critical spin-off*
- *The nature of its emerging European branch*

As we have seen, the concept of classical geopolitics revolves around the perceived causal linkage of and interaction between space and power. Thus, geography has been used as justificatory condition in the argumentation of foreign policymakers and geopolitical pundits for over a century. As a matter of fact, classical geopolitics still remains a popular explanatory approach for the global challenges of the 21st century, easy to comprehend and allegedly self-explanatory.

However, over the last 20 years, geopolitics 'conquered new frontiers' with a *critical* strand reassessing its conceptual simplicity. Accordingly, critical geopolitics argues that it is not sufficient to 'just' demonstrate the mere existence or relevance of geography for politics but to clarify that an assigned significance is a constructed one for a very specific purpose. Hence, geopolitics is not about the deterministic effect of geography on foreign policy but rather about the analysis and deconstruction of the deployment of geographical imaginations and arguments in related discourses (Mamadouh 2006: 5). Basically, it is by discourse that political actors construct geopolitical world-views/images and related reasoning in order to validate the plausibility of their interests and actions in and for a certain space/region (Albert, Reuber & Wolkersdorfer 2014: 326–327).

As it was comprehensively highlighted in Subchapter 2.3, the focus on the very (de)-construction of 'geopolitical writing' has eventually also reached discussions on the EU's nature as an international actor under construction – a geopolitical subject in the making. Particularly the academic discipline of Political Geography has explored the Union as an emerging geopolitical space with a developing geopolitical identity. Thus, it has been argued that over the last decade(s) the EU has developed a geopolitical discourse, exhibiting certain geopolitical ambitions alongside its own conceptualisation of world order, core values, rule of law and good governance in order to emphasises its stabilising and democratising role in the world system and (immediate) neighbourhood. Moreover, this geopolitical doctrine employs broader rhetoric of insecurity and disadvantage of the Union's 'outside' with related European 'control' being considered vital for the Union's very own security and

permanency. Accordingly, Subchapter 2.3 also briefly touched upon the Union's external approaches and empirically revisited (neighbouring) spaces of interaction.

In conclusion, the term 'geopolitics' signifies many things – it is a contested, polysemic sign that enjoys conceptual plurality with its very meaning having changed in different historical and geographical contexts (Sidaway, Mamadouh & Power 2013: 165–169). As Chapter 2 has illustrated, geopolitics is literally everywhere. Yet, geopolitics does not equal geopolitics and basically comes in various forms. Critical geopolitics essentially argues to 'unpack' these implicit, conceptual realities of global political space and deconstruct geopolitical practices, considerations, writings or images. To use a presently again popular tagline: "The Truth Is Out There" and it needs to be discovered.⁴⁴

In the present case, geopolitics is deconstructed from two, yet interconnected angles – a regional (= the Arctic as *context*) and an agent (= the EU in the Arctic as *content*) perspective. Accordingly, this dissertation does not only unpack 'geopolitics' in one specific, regional case but essentially analyses the very 'geopolitical' role of an international subject in the making in that particular context.

⁴⁴ The catchphrase is prominently used in the U.S. sci-fi horror TV show *The X-Files*.

3. A Longer Note on Methodology

Chapter 3 adds to the conceptual part of this dissertation and serves as the methodological illustration of what Reuber termed as “normative Leitlinie der Dekonstruktion”⁴⁵ – the conceptual and methodological framework used by the researcher to reconstruct the available data and information (2001: 90–91).

In order to dissect the geopolitical construction of European Arctic space it is necessary to reveal the EU’s very own Arctic mapping and the consequently related building (processes) of an Arctic storyline, narrated and constructed from a European geopolitical perspective – the Union’s framing of the Arctic region. Rather than focusing on particular sets of territories, borders or actors, it is the production of these categories and the processes behind it that are central to the research and analysis of critical geopolitics (Dodds, Kuus & Sharp 2013a: 7). Yet, critical geopolitics does not follow one “single theoretical canon or set of methods” (Ibid.: 7) which can explicitly be applied to any particular set of analytical problem. It rather encompasses “various ways of unpacking the tropes and epistemologies of dominant geographers and scriptings of political space” (Power & Campbell 2010: 244).

For the purpose of this dissertation, the applied interpretive-explanatory research methodology (Müller 2010) consists of discourse analysis (Subchapter 3.1) and the socio-material practices of geopolitical ordering of organisations (Subchapter 3.2); two methods that are subsequently explained and illustrated in detail. In addition, Toulmin’s (1969) argument model is applied in order to further expound and identify the EU’s discursive framing of a distinct EU-Arctic reality (= the Union’s construction of ‘Arctic legitimacy’) (Section 3.1.2). Subchapter 3.3 eventually concludes the Chapter and briefly indicates how and with whom research interviews were conducted, sources selected and data collected. Additionally, it has to be noted, that a brief clarification on ‘thick description’ can only be found in the introduction of Chapter 4.

⁴⁵ Own translation: “the normative principle of deconstruction”

3.1. Discourse Analysis and Critical Geopolitics

For critical geopolitics, the concept of geopolitical discourse (analysis) has been central, which can be reasoned by the post-structural grounding of the concept itself (Müller 2008: 323). Consequently, discourse analysis has been the most often used methodological approach in order to scrutinise geopolitical behaviour and reasoning of respective actors. However, the majority of discourse analysis undertaken in critical geopolitics is lacking a specific methodological underpinning for this mode of analysis (Müller 2010: 2). As there is no commonly shared understanding or explicitly established methodology of ‘doing discourse analysis’, as for example compared to content analysis, many studies in critical geopolitics do not even refer to or mention methodological literature, when proceeding with discourse analysis (Ibid.: 2–3).⁴⁶ Discourse analyses which evidently and transparently outline their conceptual and methodological foundations are rather the exception than the rule (Müller 2013: 58). Similarly, Ó Tuathail argued that a “discussion of how to formally undertake a discourse analysis of geopolitical reasoning and foreign policy practice is long overdue” (2002b: 606). However, Müller explicitly emphasised that it is not relevant, but rather counter-productive to have one single methodology for discourse analysis in critical geopolitics: “Every discourse analysis needs to be tailored to both the empirical material and the theoretical assumptions underpinning the research project” (2013: 58).

For the purpose of this dissertation a specific four-level framework, as illustrated by Ó Tuathail (2002b) and further discussed in Section 3.1.1, is applied. From the dissertation’s author point of view, it is considered to be the most adequate model to analyse the available policy documents, reports and statements issued by the various EU institutions and its related policymakers.

The essence of the analysis of geopolitical discourse is the deconstruction of its very meaning, which takes place in the functional interaction between the language used and the (con)-text applied. Poststructuralists perceive discourse as the basis of

⁴⁶ Although similarly concerned with the analysis of texts, content analysis differs quite profoundly from discourse analysis. Adopting a positivistic approach, content analysis is “the study of the text itself not of its relation to its context, the intentions of the producer of the text, or the reaction of the intended audience” (Hardy, Harley & Phillips 2004: 20).

any social structuring and consequently allow for different insights into the politics of geopolitics (Murphy et al. 2004: 634). It is considered an essential tool to prompt and answer questions on the social construction of world politics (Müller 2010: 2). For Ó Tuathail & Agnew discourse “is NOT simply speech or written statements but the rules by which verbal speech and written statements are made meaningful” (1992: 193) (Emphasis in the original). Accordingly, discourse can be sketchily understood as a “set of capabilities that allow us to organize and give meaning to the world and our actions and practices within it” (Ó Tuathail 2002b: 605). However, such a definition already indicates the lacking homogeneity in how to define and methodologically apply discourse analysis. Discourse in a broader notion “cannot be reduced to the merely linguistic element of being defined by a sum of constitutive, interrelated texts” (Müller 2008: 329), but also has to incorporate extra-linguistic phenomena. Consequently, the totality of discourse entails both *language* and *social practice* (Ibid.: 329) – its textual illustration and its practical implementation. Only the focus on both texts and practices helps to conceptualise a certain geopolitical identity and a related foreign policy (Ibid.: 331).⁴⁷

Moreover, discourse also produces preconditions for action. However, these actions are not determined by discourse(s) completely but only highlight one particular, yet essential path. As framed by Kuus, “[d]iscourses do not “cause” particular policy responses. Rather, they frame political debate in such a way as to make certain policies appear reasonable and feasible while marginalizing other policy options as unreasonable and unfeasible” (2007: 10). Hence, the objective for discourse analysis is to stress and specify the bandwidth of potential outcomes (Neumann 2009: 62) and to “lay bare the conditions of possibility for the phenomenon in question (Kuus 2007: 10). Yet, discourses develop and often provide

⁴⁷ It has been critically noted that researchers within the field of critical geopolitics have been too much focused on the construction of geopolitics and geopower as a purely discursively understood discourse only (Thrift 2003: 380). Hence, and in order to overcome the text-centred nature of critical geopolitics, a broader concept of discourse highlights the significance of analysing social practices as well and refers to discourse as both “language and practice” (Müller 2008: 329). For an excellent analysis on geopolitics as a bureaucratic practice conducted by career policy professionals, using the EU and its ENP as case study, *see* (Kuus 2011b). With regard to this dissertation, the analysis of both language and social practice can only be fulfilled to a certain degree, with a remaining stronger focus on the textual illustration (*language*) than on practical creation and implementation (*practice*), *see* Section 3.1.1. Yet, it were in particular the conducted interviews that added essential value to the understanding of the social interactions between policy makers in the respective institutions.

different readings of one fact or event. It is therefore methodologically help- and useful to analyse how (important) facts are linked with each other, manifest themselves on the political agenda and constitute (key) events (Hansen 2006: 28). Consequently, it is essential to have deep knowledge of the context on hand (= the geopolitical Arctic of the 21st century) in order to ‘unpack’ central facts and events.

Subchapter 3.1 has basically started to outline the nexus between discourse analysis and critical geopolitics. It is followed by the subsequent Section 3.1.1 that illustrates how the analysis of textual illustration can eventually be methodologically approached.

3.1.1. Texts as Key...

Texts “are at the heart of the critical geopolitics enterprise” as “texts construct geopolitics” (Müller 2013: 49). Texts are not necessarily only written or verbal statements, as for instance canonical texts, speeches, policy documents or monuments. Signs, for instance, like a semaphore, a painting or a grimace can also be analysed as text (Neumann 2009: 63). Their production and consequent dissemination is the result of perpetual geo-graphing (Dodds & Sidaway 1994: 518) – a continuous “writing of global space” (Ó Tuathail 2005).

Müller defined texts and discourse as the two “conceptual linchpins in critical geopolitics analysis” (2013: 54): “In the classic understanding of critical geopolitics and its text-based take on discourses as narratives, texts constitute the fibres in the fabric of narratives” (Müller 2008: 328).⁴⁸ As compared to classical geopolitics and its ‘objective science’ approach on how geographical variables irrevocably influence global politics, critical geopolitics places emphasis on the very construction of meaning in texts (Müller 2013: 50).

⁴⁸ Narratives can be characterised as interpretative frameworks needed to eventually make sense of a complex situation: “the result between the overlapping of various discourses which can provide a much clearer picture of the processes behind the creation of ideas and influence on political and social reality” (Nițoiu 2013: 242). Discourses, on the other hand, are the very processes through which ideas and social practices are created and institutionalised; eventually only institutionalised discourses, through political and social practice, have the potential to create widely shared narratives (Ibid.: 241–242).

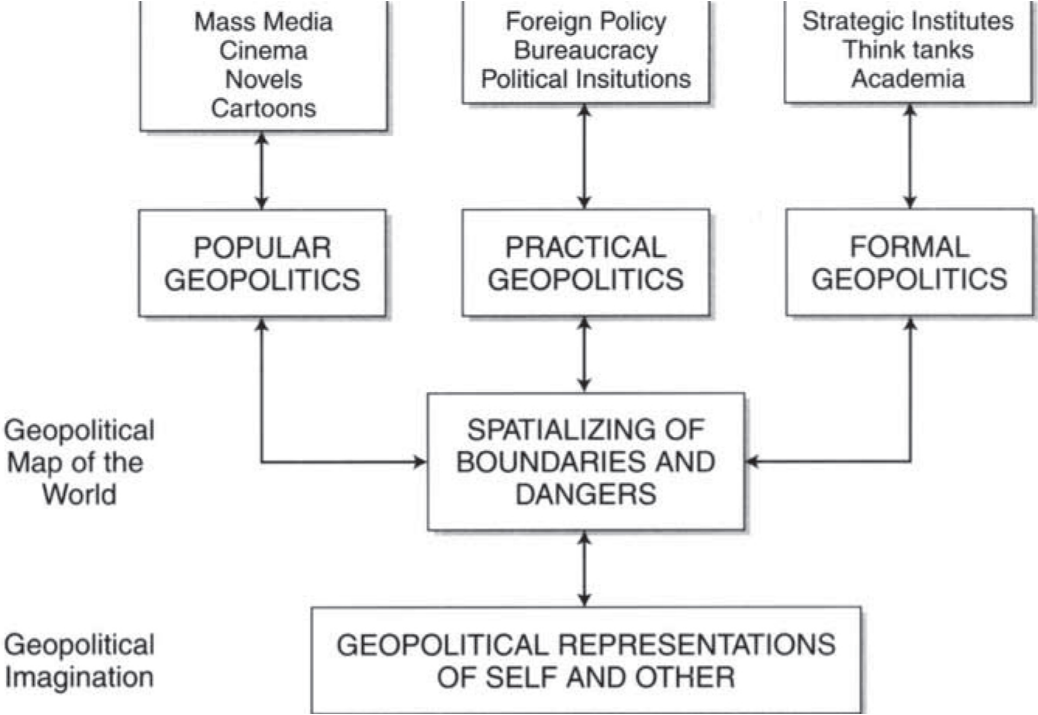
Understanding geopolitics as text allows critical geopolitics to perceive space as something (intentionally) created with its textual illustration outlining a multitude of potentially differently perceived meanings, depending on the respective context. Each of these multiple meanings every text inheres can consequently answer a specific political purpose (Ibid.: 50). In order to deconstruct a text and filter its very own different meanings – to map a text’s meaning – the ‘critical’ researcher has to be aware that “texts are polysemic” and their meanings consequently “actualised in concrete contexts and with reference to other texts” (Ibid.: 51). If texts are considered one essential variable of geopolitics, its deconstruction and spotting of alternative meanings, and the readings thereof, in order to expose the contingency of geopolitics is the very task and contribution of critical geopolitics (Ibid.: 52). Accordingly, deconstruction is understood as part of an encapsulating process to unlock a perceived natural fixation on spatial meaning in language and text. Instead of assuming a natural presupposition of using space and territory in language, it is rather a deliberate way of producing a certain objective meaning (Albert 1998).

Formal, Practical, Popular and Structural Geopolitics

Texts that construct global space can come in a multitude of forms (Müller 2013: 50). Geopolitical reasoning in that regard occurs on various levels, narrated across the realms of *formal*, *practical*, *popular* and *structural* geopolitics (Ó Tuathail 1999: 109–111; Müller 2012: 384). This four-fold typology highlights the plurality of geopolitical reasoning and helps to analyse how social institutions are involved in day-by-day geopolitical processes (Aalto 2002: 145). More precisely, it refers to the geopolitical practices of the strategic community within a state or across a group of states (*formal* geopolitics and the already outlined writings of ‘classic’ intellectuals, *see* Subchapter 2.1) or of state leaders and foreign policy bureaucracies (*practical* geopolitics, as for instance speeches, policy documents or government records). Additionally, it also concerns the artefacts of transnational, media-shaping popular culture (*popular* geopolitics, such as newspaper articles, novels, movies or larger public debates) and the contemporary geopolitical conditions, such as globalisation or the proliferation of risks across the globe (*structural* geopolitics) (Ó Tuathail

1999: 109–111; Ó Tuathail & Dalby 2002a: 4).⁴⁹ The geopolitical culture of a particular region, state or inter-state alliance is the sum of these four realms, with each form having different sites of production, distribution and consumption (Ibid.: 5), as seen in Figure IV. The result of conceptually widening the objects under research from the traditional structure of geopolitical intellect (*formal* and *practical*) across a more complex geopolitical landscape (including the *popular* and *structural*), led to the understanding that “geopolitical intellect is as much of the masses as of the elite, and as such implicates a variety of sites of practice” (Coleman 2013: 499).

Figure IV: A Critical Theory of Geopolitics as a Set of Representational Practices



Source: (Ó Tuathail & Dalby 2002a: 5)

However, the analysis of *practical* geopolitics – the voices of “a state’s privileged story tellers” (Dodds 1993: 71) – is key to the objective of this dissertation. Scrutinising official texts (in the present case, the EU’s 7+1 Arctic policy documents) helps to highlight the geopolitical visions that underpin political decision-making and the related storyline-making of political leaders and its related bureaucracies (Müller 2013: 51). Criekemans defined the study of *practical*

⁴⁹ For further readings on *popular* geopolitics and the analysis thereof see *inter alia* (Sharp 1993; Dodds 2000: 71–91; Dittmer & Dodds 2008; Adams 2013).

geopolitics as the “extent to which the aforementioned interaction [between the politically acting human and his surrounding territoriality] generates an impact on the (foreign) policy or the relevant ‘dominance’ of the political entity which one wants to analyse” (2007: 624).⁵⁰ Nonetheless, this particular analysis of historical and contemporary geopolitical reasoning remains a scientifically difficult task as researchers “need to become ethnographers of foreign policy behaviour”, yet without comprehensively receiving the necessary background information of day-to-day foreign policy-making (Ó Tuathail 2002b: 605). Consequently, this complicates the task to empirically reconstruct a policy formulation process in a scientifically coherent and correct manner. However, Ó Tuathail criticised that many analyses of foreign policy-making go astray as they tend to apply a broad interpretive approach of policy reconstruction and consequently attribute an “unjustified coherence and consistency to the policy” as such (Ibid.: 605). Accordingly, aspects of internal tensions (within the foreign policy-making apparatus) on how to classify a geopolitical crisis, challenge or opportunity tend to be neglected by the often used analytical framework (Ibid.: 605).

Unpacking Practical Geopolitics

Ó Tuathail stressed a four-level framework, as illustrated in Figure V (page 66) of how to analyse *practical* geopolitical reasoning and simultaneously also considering the influencing aspects of *popular* geopolitics as creating and conditioning factors of how (international) crises, awareness or outcries erupt and are consequently represented and covered (Ibid.: 607).⁵¹ In that regard, the power of media representation has to be understood as “an important source of both spatial and political discourse” with policymakers strongly affected by perceptions, ideas and beliefs that circulate in the realm of popular culture (Sharp 2000; Steinberg, Bruun & Medby 2014: 275).⁵² Ó Tuathail’s suggested analytical focus lies on:

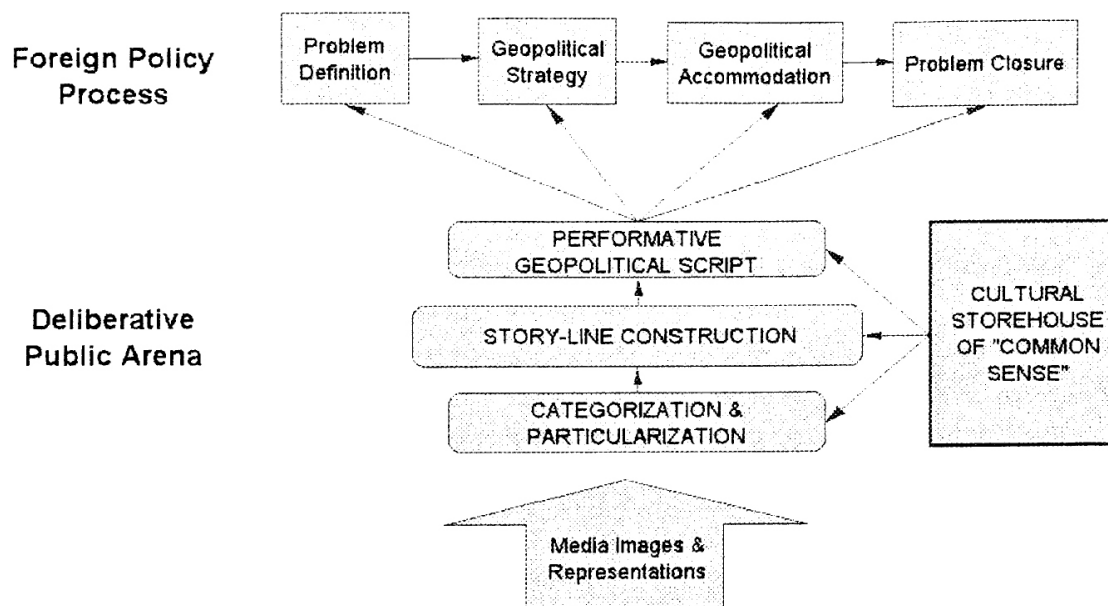
⁵⁰ Own translation of: “(...) in welke mate de eerder genoemde wisselwerking een invloed genereert op het (buitenlands) beleid of op de relatieve ‘machtspositie’ van de politieke entiteit welke men wenst te analyseren.”

⁵¹ Policymakers draw on these popular understandings of geopolitics in order to create awareness or gain acceptance for a certain policy (Müller 2013: 51).

⁵² However, the practical-popular relationship is subject to a certain reciprocity with media representations both shaping and reflecting public opinions and hence reaffirming national identities

1. The categorization and particularization of a certain geopolitical issue (“the grammar of geopolitics”)
2. The assemblage and construction of a consequent storyline
3. The used geopolitical script
4. The foreign policy process as such (2002b: 608)⁵³

Figure V: A Framework for the Analysis of Practical Geopolitical Reasoning



Source: (Ibid.: 608)

Adapted to the Arctic case on hand, this framework is used for the analysis on the production of the Union’s geopolitical Arctic storyline (see Subchapter 7.2). However, in order to scrutinise the Union’s storytelling along this framework, it is considered necessary to first trace the evolution of the EU’s Arctic policy-making process by closely putting the 7+1 policy documents under the analytical microscope. Hence, one has to work backwards to see how the Union’s Arctic story has evolved.⁵⁴ Consequently, after Subchapter 6.1 illustrating the EU’s Arctic endeavour pre-

and related established parameters by policymakers (Pinkerton 2013; Steinberg, Bruun & Medby 2014: 275).

⁵³ The final level of the proposed framework regards the geopolitical discourse as a problem-solving discourse which does not only construct and narrate certain visions of (global) space but is in itself already a problem-solving process, aiming to promote a certain normative order (Ó Tuathail 2002b: 621–622). This process is divided into four, interrelated purposes of analysis: problem definition, geopolitical strategy, geopolitical accommodation and problem closure (Ibid.: 622). With the EU’s Arctic (foreign) policy still being processed, this level of Ó Tuathail’s framework is not *per se* analysed in Subchapter 7.2 but to some extent addressed in Subchapter 7.3.

⁵⁴ Stephenson (2012) applied this framework for analysis when scrutinising the framing of the EU’s satellite navigation system *Galileo* in 24 policy documents of the Commission.

2007/2008, Subchapter 6.2 offers a close-up analysis of the in total 8 documents and seeks to identify the evolution of the main elements over time. Thus, each respective Section (*see* Sections 6.2.1 to 6.2.8) highlights the document's key discursive features, summarised in a table at the end of the each Section. These tables highlight to some extent, yet often neither sequential nor explicitly, five central characteristics running through the documents: problem, uncertainty, opportunity, choice and solution.

Based on this in-depth description and examination of each policy document, the building blocks of the Union's distinct Arctic geopolitical storyline are reconstructed. In order to do so, the processes leading to that storyline need to be classified and particularized at first. According to Ó Tuathail the final assemblage of a geopolitical storyline comprises a scalar, situational, agent-related, causal and interest-related category, delineated along the questions: Where? What? Who? Why? So what? (Ibid.: 609)

- The *scalar* categorization – “the activity of specifying location” – is central to geopolitical reasoning, with the local, the regional and the global scale inevitably interrelated to each other (Ibid.: 610). Only the designation of a certain crisis, conflict or issue as ‘geopolitical’, makes this particular local and regional matter a representation of global relevance (Ibid.: 610).
 - How has the EU designated the Arctic (= the local), its challenges and opportunities as a matter of European and/or global affair?
- The *situational* description refers to the construction of distinct scenarios in order to render a certain ‘geopolitical drama’ as meaningful (Ibid.: 612).
 - How has the Arctic been classified as ‘relevant’ and ‘important’ for the Union?

- The third process – the agent-related typification – relates to the necessity to determine the involved actors in the ‘geopolitical drama’ (Ibid.: 614).
 - Who have been the Arctic-relevant actors and how were they perceived and distinguished from a European perspective?

- The next matter of interest is the depiction of causality. In which ways do actors create a certain causality (= a causal relation) of incidents and how are particular intentions and motivations imputed to these actors? (Ibid.: 614–615)
 - Why has the Arctic been a matter of specific European consideration based on which incidents?

- The last pillar refers to the immediate importance of an incident/crisis – ‘the geopolitical drama’ – for a certain actor. This is often popularly phrased as the ‘geostrategic significance’ and based on the rather simple question: What is at stake for ‘us’? (Ibid.: 616)
 - What have been the Arctic-related interests of the Union?

These five social processes (= the elements of a policy challenge) are the core of geopolitical knowledge and “specific to the policy challenge under construction” (Ibid.: 617). Consequently and based on these categorization, the referred to ‘grammar of geopolitics’ is embedded into one or several relatively coherent and comprehensive geopolitical narratives (= higher-level storylines) (Ibid.: 617–618).⁵⁵

In addition to the geopolitical storylines, Ó Tuathail stressed the need to introduce a distinction between geopolitical scripts and storylines (Ibid.: 619). Accordingly, a performative geopolitical script refers to the “directions and manner in which foreign policy leaders perform geopolitics in public, to the political strategies of coping that leaders develop in order to navigate through certain foreign

⁵⁵ Similarly, Jones argued that in order to create the basis for a European political action, the different elements of a policy problem have to be brought together into a convincing geopolitical narrative (2011: 42).

policy challenges and crises” (Ibid.: 619). Scripts outline a certain performance, whereas storylines sketch the relevant geopolitical arguments that provide a “relatively coherent sense-making narrative for a foreign policy challenge” (Ibid.: 619). A script can include many related storylines – “a public relations briefing book” – and sets the rules of how foreign policymakers perform in a given situation. These tacit rules contain certain fixed elements but also remain flexible to approach and satisfy a different kind of audience (Ibid.: 619–620). However, the legitimacy of and support for a certain policy can only be maintained if the communicator, in the present case the foreign policymaker, performs the script in a publically and diplomatically convincing way (Ibid.: 620).

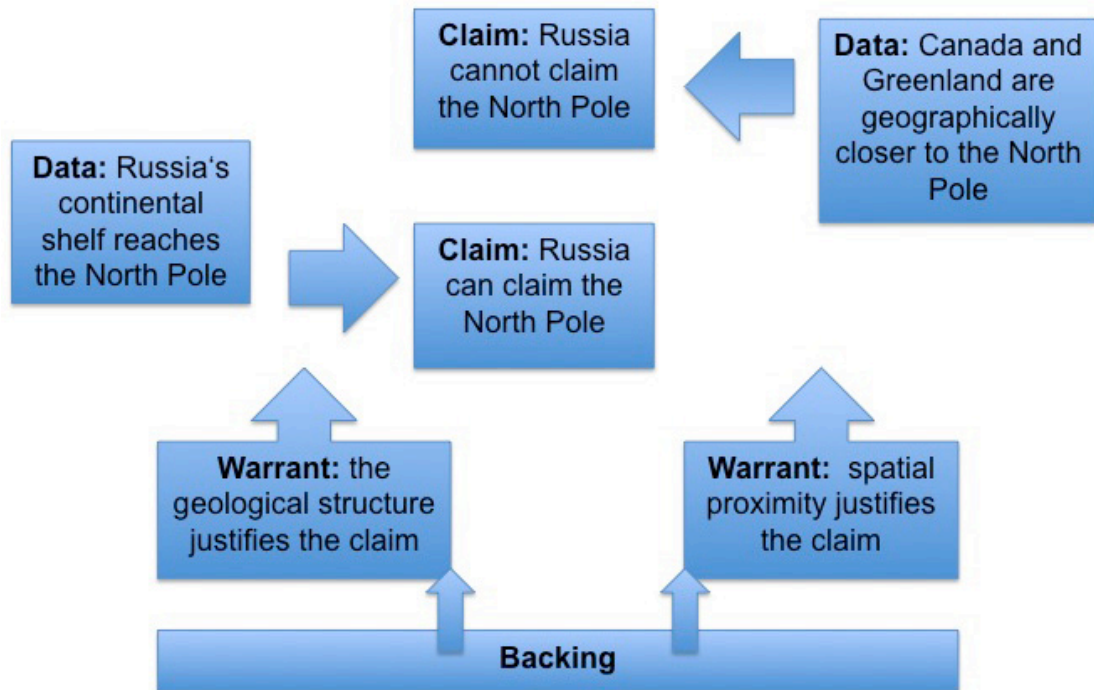
Summary

Texts, produced in the realms of *formal* and *practical* geopolitics, remain the cornerstone of critical geopolitics (Müller 2013: 63). In that regard, Müller argued that the analysis of texts requires sufficient strengthening and needs to explicitly consider the applied context a certain text is embedded in (Ibid.: 63). Discourse analysis must keep in mind the specific political and social context of geopolitical power and its ways of distributing that kind of power is embedded in. Consequently, texts can only get connected to politics via the discourse/*context* they are embedded in. These particular discourses set the rule of the (geopolitical) game and accordingly have (political) power (Ibid.: 54). Ó Tuathail & Agnew suggested that geopolitics has to be defined as a discursive practice that produces space which are characterized by particular places, peoples and dramas (1992: 192). A particular geopolitical discourse demarcates a certain spatial perception of world politics as ‘right’, meaning-full and consequently a valid aspect of knowledge (Müller 2013: 55). It encompasses all the differently used languages of statecraft, used by policy leaders and officials in order to define their very own role in current world affairs (Ó Tuathail 2002b: 607).

3.1.2. ... and the Element of Spatial Argumentation

In order to systematically scrutinise the arguments the EU and its institutional actors have used to strengthen their geopolitical presuppositions, this dissertation also draws on argumentation theory and Toulmin's (1969) argument model. However, it is not considered necessary to illustrate argumentation theory – the study on how a certain conclusion can be reached through (logical) reasoning – in detail, but to specifically demonstrate how arguments and the very act of argumentation produce explicit spaces and geographies (Felgenhauer 2009). Moreover, it is by all means not relevant to evaluate a certain argument as logical/rational or illogical/irrational but rather to understand the alleged claims and reasoning behind an explicit argument (Ibid.: 266). According to Toulmin (1969) specific elements/categories are inherent to a (persuasive) argument: a claim/conclusion, data/fact, a warrant and a support mechanism (= backing), with both the claim and the fact being the core of every argument. Whereas a claim is a statement one wants to get accepted, data aims to support that very conclusion. The warrant again links the provided facts with the claim and eventually justifies the claim as relevant. Furthermore, background knowledge supports the warrant and is classified as 'backing'. Both the warrant and the backing are mostly implicit but nevertheless essential elements of an argument (Felgenhauer 2009: 266–267). In order to visualise Toulmin's model, Felgenhauer appropriately enough chose an Arctic example and illustrated Russia's submission of an extended continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean, *see* Figure VI (page 71). As this case is particularly touched upon in the Sections 4.3.1 and 4.4.1, it is not crucial to further explain the example into detail and/or question the validity and plausibility of the used arguments. However, the illustrations and Felgenhauer's exemplification coherently demonstrates the application of the argumentation model. Thus, geography and a distinct logic of space is used to justify a political claim, as it is particularly obvious in the 'warrant' element (Ibid.: 272).

Figure VI: Argumentation Model (the North Pole Case)



Source: Own compilation based on (Ibid.: 271)

According to Felgenhauer the argumentation model is only a complementary method – a micro process – that can be used as an additional part of discourse analysis in order to explicitly scrutinise certain segments of the discourse. Hence, it aims to highlight and exemplify single passages of a certain discourse that contain an argumentative character within itself (Ibid.: 274). The argumentation model helps to extract the geographical foreknowledge of the actor under analysis and consequently visualises the implicit geographical content of spatial communication (Ibid.: 276). The model is not used when scrutinising each EU Arctic policy document but only when assessing some of the speeches given by various European policymaker, *see* Chapter 7.

3.2. Organisations from a Critical Geopolitical Perspective

With Subchapter 3.1 elaborating on how to do discourse analysis in critical geopolitics, the ensuing Subchapter 3.2 amplifies how and with which methodological tools, organisations, such as the EU, can be methodically reviewed from a critical geopolitics perspective.

Although “[o]rganizations fundamentally shape geopolitics”, the analysis of organisations as primary agents still remains an analytical black box within critical geopolitics (Müller 2012: 379) and has actually been a “long-neglected research topic in political geography” (Bachmann 2013a: 405). From an IR theoretical point of view, organisations are (too) often only studied from a functionalist approach, where (international) organisations are (mainly) treated as an agent for its relevant members, the consequently acting principal (Haas 1964). In simplified terms, interests are generated at the particular member states level and related powers to act for the agent derive only from the state level (principal-agent approach). Although, for instance, Barnett & Finnemore (1999) introduced a more constructivist approach to the studies of (international) organisations, research concerned with the organisation’s internal dynamics remains relatively rare (Bachmann 2013a: 406). Also critical geopolitics too often only assumes a certain organisation being a given actor without scrutinising “what exactly fashions them with agency” (Müller 2012: 379) and how certain, both internal and external, contexts (= social processes) condition an organisational (geopolitical) action or at least the possibility thereof (Kuus 2011a).

Hence, Müller metaphorically stated that critical geopolitics “has lifted the lid of the [conceptual black] box, but has not theorized the mechanism inside” (2012: 381). Subsequently, the following Section 3.2.1 illustrates how the very inside of an organisation can actually be methodologically tackled.

3.2.1. Looking at the Inside of an Organisation

Müller argued that by looking at an organisation's internal dynamics – the metaphorical 'black box' – scholars of critical geopolitics can conceptualise the "manifold socio-material processes of ordering" that lead to an organisation's assemblage, its consequent production of action and performance as an either coherent or non-coherent actor (Ibid.: 379–380). Socio-material processes of ordering are understood as *human* and *material* elements collaborating towards a shared mission and/or potentially shared action (Ibid.: 380). This particular importance given to both the human and the material component goes hand in hand with the discourse-related methodological approach as outlined in Subchapter 3.1 above. As organisations are in a constant state of becoming (= ordering themselves), the envisaged research-related focus is not the organisation as a constructed outcome, a consequently finished product *per se*, but rather the practise of an organisation's ordering of its internal elements (Ibid.: 382). Geopolitics emerges from that very ordering process and simultaneously both occurs in and shapes a specific social (and geographical) context (Ibid.: 386). This relates in particular to the dissertation's focus on the making and defining of a certain policy action rather than on the eventual implementation and resulting (in)-effectiveness of the action itself.

Consequently, it is understood that an organisation's action is the outcome of the internal processes of ordering, performed in an environment of messiness, irrationality, chaos and illogicality (Ibid.: 382). Müller claimed that it is only the supplementary *material* element, in addition to the *human* one that allows an organisation to extend their respective power across space (Ibid.: 386). Perceiving organisations as socio-material networks, Müller highlighted four intertwining nodes of research, as illustrated in Figure VII (page 74), as important to "unravel the multiple and heterogeneous associations through which [organisations] come to be and evolve as geopolitical actors" (Ibid.: 383):

1. The circulation of geopolitical ideas
2. The production of geopolitics
3. Governance at a distance
4. Technologies of geopolitics

strategic texts and related maps by a certain ‘authoritative’ source (Dodds & Sidaway 1994: 518). Both individuals and objects (= the socio-material network of an organisation) essentially carry these ideas, combine them to an institutional common language and further institute them across space by spreading and inscribing these ideas beyond their very own organisation (Müller 2012: 384).

- In the EU-Arctic context, it relates to the questions on how the Union’s various institutional actors initially framed what kind of internally circulating ideas for the Arctic region? It is in particular Subchapter 7.1 that examines Arctic-related ideas/rationales created in and communicated from the European institutional hallways in Brussels.

The second focus on *the production of geopolitics (= geopolitical action)* comprises the construction of certain geopolitical knowledge and related narratives, via the already mentioned realms of *popular*, *practical* and *formal* geopolitics and/or even military intervention (Ibid.: 384). The related open questions are: How do particular modes of geopolitical reasoning influence the ordering of an organisation and consequently the ‘final’ production of geopolitics?

- It is Subchapter 7.2 that attends to that matter and illustrates the various geopolitical reasoning and representation of the European Arctic discourse. In order to scrutinise the practical geopolitical reasoning of the various institutions the dissertation draws on Ó Tuathail’s four-level framework (*see* Section 3.1.1)

The third node of research, *governance at a distance*, essentially includes two main questions: 1) How to define the spatial reach of an organisation’s influence? 2) How can an organisation ensure authority at distance without being *per se* present? The entanglement of both humans and material objects – the socio-material apparatus of governance – allows organisation to pursue, successfully or unsuccessfully, to act from a distance and consequently govern a distant area. This could occur for example via the processes of harmonisation and standardisation of rules and laws as it is the case of the EU (Ibid.: 385).

- Does a spatial reach of EU action in the Arctic exist? How is the art of governing the Arctic distance basically enunciated? (*see* Subchapter 7.3)

In order to (aim to) govern the distance and make territories calculable, *technologies of ordering*, the fourth strand, are also necessary to consider. Technological devices and communication technologies, as for instance conventional and new media sources, essentially determine the production of geo-power and the consequent implementation of geopolitical action (Ibid.: 385–386).

- How is EU Arctic action eventually made visible? (*see* Subchapter 7.4)

Summary

Subchapter 3.2 clarified the conceptual framework that is applied in Chapter 7 in order to scrutinise the socio-material processes of (geopolitical) ordering within an organisation – the EU – in a particular case study: the Arctic policy-making process and the related aim to create Arctic legitimacy. As discussed, the key focus is on the circulation of geopolitical ideas, the production of geopolitical action, the approaches on how to govern from a distance and potential technologies to order the distance. As the EU’s Arctic policy is, however, still one in the making, the main analytical emphasis can only be on the first two research pillars. Yet, the spatial reach of organisational power and the technological devices a geopolitical action is contingent on are scrutinised so far as it is perceived to be possible. Müller’s framework has, at the time of writing this dissertation not yet been applied to any organisation, at least to the knowledge of the dissertation’s author. As it was already highlighted, the production of geopolitical action is reconstructed with the assistance of Ó Tuathail’s framework on practical geopolitical reasoning (*see* Section 3.1.1).

3.3. Interviews and Data Collection

To acquire necessary background information concerning the topic under research, 24 semi-structured interviews (= primary interview material) were conducted with policy professionals working with the AC and its members states, respectively, the Commission and its various Directorate-Generals (DG), the Delegation of the EU to the U.S., the European External Action Service (EEAS), the EP, the Embassies and/or Permanent Representations to the EU of Denmark, France, Iceland and the U.S., the European Space Agency, the Government of Greenland, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Federal Foreign Office Germany. With several of the interviewed officials two meetings have been arranged. As a personal research interview is not considered recoverable data, no reference to these interviews is provided in the reference lists. However, every annotation to an interview is cited in a footnote as ‘Interview xx’. The digit (1-24), allocated to each interview is consecutively numbered based on the respective date of the interview being conducted, beginning with 19 June 2012 (day/month/year). In case of two interviews being conducted with the same official, the respective footnote refers to ‘Interview xx (*day month year*)’, with the *date* changing accordingly. A list illustrating all interviews, the interviewees’ given number, the institution they work for and the location and date of the interview can be found in the Appendix (Annex II, page 353). As every interviewee was given the right to remain anonymous, the full name of the interviewee and his/her respective position within his/her workplace stays with the author. All interviews usually lasted between 45 and 80 minutes with ‘semi-structured’ referring to the method of having a set of open questions as the basis of the conversation. Statements from conferences are treated equally and quoted in a footnote as: ‘Stated by *title of profession* at *event* on *day month year*’.

EUropean Documents and Data

From March 2008 until May 2014, the three main EUropean institutions (Commission, Council and EP) published 7+1 key documents in terms of developing the EU’s Arctic policy. An overview of these documents – Table II – introduces Subchapter 6.2 (page 198). Official statements or political speeches from EUropean policymakers complement the list of primary sources used in this dissertation. Hence,

Annex VIII (page 361) provides an overview of 15 statements and speeches given by various Commissioners and the President of the European Council from 2005 to 2013. The respective statement/speech is, however, properly quoted when referred to and can consequently be found in the reference list as well.

The author has also received several EU-internal documents, which are cited in a footnote as: ‘Stated in a *year* internal *Institution type of document* that is on file with the author’. The authors of the documents are not revealed. These documents do not reflect officially authorised European opinions, as visible and accountable in the 7+1 policy documents. However, the authors work in the broader European apparatus that basically develops the Arctic policy. Hence, their voices are definitely heard; it is the degree of influence that is questionable. Accordingly, it is up to the dissertation’s author discretion to use these documents in a way that does not falsify the interpretation of the policy process.

Secondary Literature

Additionally, the dissertation draws on secondary literature both from scholarship on Arctic studies, European foreign policy, geopolitics, and critical geopolitics as well as from think tank and consultancy reports, magazines, journal articles and newspaper data. Sources found online were both saved as pdf-, docx- or jpeg-file and stored locally on a hard drive. Many of the academic documents were selected using a snowball sampling method, where references to a certain topic have been followed to other references, and so on.

Moreover, several academic articles, reports or online commentaries written or co-authored by the dissertation’s author on various (EU-)Arctic-related topics are quoted and referred to throughout this dissertation. In addition to the author’s work for a think tank focusing on Arctic matters,⁵⁶ the quoted work highlights the comprehensive knowledge on (EU)-Arctic affairs that has been developed and gained ever since 2008/2009.

⁵⁶ See The Arctic Institute: www.thearcticinstitute.org

“Have you heard the one about the disappearing ice?”⁵⁷

PART THREE

UNDERSTANDING THE ARCTIC CONTEXT

⁵⁷ (Dittmer et al. 2011)

The Roadmap for Part Three

After ‘unpacking’ the various conceptual components of geopolitics, the dissertation’s second step concerns the ‘unpacking’ of geopolitics in a distinct regional case. Hence, and in order to *understand the context*, Part Three gives an in-depth explanation about the re-geopoliticisation of the Arctic region over the last decade. Essentially, **Part Three** and its Chapter 4, respectively, tells the comprehensive story of how the circumpolar North became an emerging space of and for geopolitics.

Thus, the thick description of the geopolitical Arctic of the 21st century starts with Subchapter 4.1 and an overview on various definitions of the Arctic’s spatial scope. Subsequently, Subchapter 4.2 (*‘history and identity’*) briefly highlights the Arctic’s geopolitical roots and looks back on a century of Arctic exploration and space making. Subchapter 4.3 (*‘Arctic rights’*) comprehensively clarifies why the region cannot be referred to as a legal and institutional black hole but has to be rather characterised by the (peaceful) interaction between the A8 based on a broad variety of regimes. It is followed by Subchapter 4.4 (*‘Arctic interests’*), which fulfils the purpose to deconstruct the three major economic Arctic storylines of the past decade:

1. The Arctic as next global energy hot spot? (Section 4.4.2)
2. The Arctic as next golden silk route? (Section 4.4.3)
3. The Arctic as next global ‘protein shake’? (Section 4.4.4)

Subchapter 4.5 (*‘Arctic responsibilities’*) briefly examines questions of socio-environmental concerns of a changing Arctic. Lastly, Subchapter 4.6 encapsulates the sketched triangle of *Arctic rights, interests* and *responsibilities* by providing an executive summary of the reached findings on an ‘unpacked’ geopolitical Arctic of the 21st century. Eventually, Part Three serves as the contextual basis for the empirical-analytical part of this dissertation – Part Four – as it gives account why over the last decade an emerging *international Arctic* caught European attention as an envisaged space of necessary European action. Moreover, this detailed consideration of the Union’s ‘Northern neighbourhood’ clarifies the *sui generis* character of the Arctic region.

4. Arctic Geopolitics and the Zeitgeist of the 21st Century

During the last decade the Arctic re-appeared as a centre of world politics (Heininen & Southcott 2010: 2), experiencing a globalised reality check – a state of change, predominantly conditioned by “large-scale environmental changes associated with global warming” (Young 2009a: 424) and socio-economic occurrences, as the effects of globalisation, that both implicated a new wave of political and economic interests in the Arctic (Young 2010: 168–169). The region was delineated as “archetype of the complex, multi-dimensional global problems of the twenty-first century” with military, environmental and economic security constantly interacting (Blunden 2009: 137). “The geopolitics of Arctic melt” became a global catchphrase to, yet unreflectively, epitomise the climate-induced transformation of the region into “the centre of geopolitics, (...) [-] a maelstrom of competing commercial, national security and environmental concerns, with profound implications for the international legal and political system” (Ebinger & Zambetakis 2009: 1215).⁵⁸ The “Arctic meltdown” implicated a “new scramble for territory and resources” (Borgerson 2008: 63), caused by global warming, allegedly trapped in an environment of damaged or non-existing legal state and consequently leading to political and military anarchy. Major power competition over resources and markets was supposed to dominate the Arctic’s immediate future and changing the geostrategic dynamics in the region (Børresen 2008b: 5; Cohen, Szaszi & Dolbow 2008; Blunden 2009: 121; Chapman 2011: 56). Eventually, the term/concept of geopolitics has somehow become the buzzword to delineate and channel broad discussions on the future development of a literally opening Arctic (Ocean) that has not only (re-)attracted interests from its very inside but essentially also from stakeholders beyond the circumpolar North (Knecht & Keil 2013: 178–179).

However, oversimplifications of multidimensional issues visualized the Arctic as a region of potential conflict rather than regional and international cooperation. In a ‘new Cold War’, zero-sum game understanding and classic geopolitical narrative,

⁵⁸ A great number of, for instance, popular book publications illustrated the increased interest on the contemporary Arctic, *see inter alia* (Byers 2009; Zellen 2009; Emmerson 2010; Fairhall 2010; Englisch 2013; Hough 2013).

equating a state's geographical location with its political power, Arctic development was and is still often paraphrased, at least implicitly but too often also explicitly, as a future venue of great-power politics and potential 'geopolitical' theatre. The region's latent economic advantages and resource potentials were and to a certain extent continue to be simplistically illustrated, overestimating its actual global impact by simultaneously disregarding the complexity of the international political and economic system.

Chapter 4 gives a comprehensive, realistic and more sober overview on the history of the Arctic in international affairs and unpacks the geopolitical re-appearance of the region by scrutinising the various Arctic realities of the last decade, related decisive events, misinterpreted elaborations and an one-dimensional description of what is actually there and why it could potentially be important on a global scale.

This synopsis follows to a conceptual extent the idea of thick description – a process of looking at a phenomena (= the geopolitical Arctic of the 21st century) in depth in order to illuminate the characteristics and peculiarities of the context in question (Dawson 2010: 942). Dawson considered thick description “not an exact science” – whatever that actually means – but nevertheless an essential part in case study research of determining the particular issues, dynamics and patterns that make a case distinctive (Ibid.: 944). Moreover, the in-depth examination of the Arctic context follows the logic of Bachmann's (2009) system of structures, processes and flows in which the EU aims to operate in. Yet, this structural component is conceptually adapted to a regional context (= the Arctic), aiming to expound the area's various conditional elements and transitions that surrounded the Union's respective (foreign) policy-making and legitimisation process. According to Powell, “[i]t is impossible to understand the European Union's voice in contemporary [Arctic] discussions without considering the emergence of the notion of an *international Arctic*” (2011: 105) (Italics in the original).

4.1. A Region under Close ‘Spatial’ Scrutiny

In his introduction of his popular book ‘The Future History of the Arctic’, Emmerson held the opinion that the Arctic is perceived differently depending on the actual profession of the observer. For Emmerson, a geographer’s Arctic is a fixed spatial area north of the Arctic Circle; however, a political scientist’s Arctic is one in a constant state of flux, conditioned by the interests and ambitions of states south of the Arctic Circle that claim a regional role (2010: 3–4). Although his interpretation of a fixed geographical Arctic has to be challenged from a critical geopolitics’ perspective, Emmerson’s continuing perception of the Arctic as a mental framework, an individually descriptive idea of a “[c]old, isolated, empty, white, pristine” place somewhere beyond (Ibid.: 4), offers a valuable starting point for the broader discussion on a more critical and deliberate perception of recent Arctic developments.

But what exactly does the term ‘the Arctic’ then entail? The answer to such a question is by no means an obvious, straightforward one. In considering ‘the Arctic’, a geographical delineation is not enough, with an additional historical and/or ideational angle needed in order to truly understand what ‘the Arctic’ encapsulates (Archer 2010a: 2–3).⁵⁹ Young & Einarsson referred to the idea of treating the Arctic as a distinct region as “nothing intuitively obvious”, explicitly highlighting the problematic application of different geopolitical conventions in individual sectors across the region. For instance, although it would be reasonable to adopt 60°N as the southern limit in the Canadian Arctic, a similar approach would make little sense in Europe as such a definition would make both Oslo and Helsinki Arctic cities (2004: 17). Similarly, Steinberg et al. argued that, due to a distinct set of globally applicable Arctic images, there is no “definitive answer” concerning the *de facto* geographic scope of the Arctic (2015: 12). However, it is actually that fluidity of borders of the Arctic that has offered a fruitful venue for analysis, both for the study of Political Geography and IR (Dahl 2015: 38).

⁵⁹ The word ‘Arctic’ itself derives from the Greek *arctos*, meaning bear and refers to the stellar constellation *Ursa major*, the Great Bear (AMAP 1997: 6).

More often than not, the Arctic Circle (66°32'N) is used as regional delimitation, defining the geographical area north of it as ‘the Arctic’.⁶⁰ As already briefly mentioned in Footnote 6, this area covers the territories of the A8: Canada, Denmark (in relation to Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the U.S., *see* Figure VIII.⁶¹

Figure VIII: Arctic Administrative Areas



Source: (Dallmann 2014) The map was slightly edited for the purpose of this dissertation.

⁶⁰ The Arctic Circle encircles the area of the midnight sun as its southern limit; an area where the sun does not set at least one day each year (Ibid.: 6).

⁶¹ The Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council, often referred to as *Ottawa Declaration* enumerates these eight states, determining them as “the Arctic states” (Arctic Council 1996). However, the question of which states are actually Arctic actors had long been contested (Keskitalo 2004: 45–47). The region and its states, respectively, covers around 40 million km² or 8% of the earth’s surface and is currently inhabited by approximately 4 million people (Bogoyavlenskiy & Siggnér 2004: 27; Young 2005: 10).

However, despite this common and widespread characterisation, a generally accepted definition of neither the ‘Arctic’, the ‘marine Arctic’ nor the ‘Arctic Ocean’ exists (Molenaar et al. 2014: 4). Moreover, due to altered regional weather patterns and ocean currents, the biophysical borders of the Arctic can also be determined according to certain scientific parameters that take into account physical, geographical and/or ecological features, *see* Annex III (page 354).

As the Arctic Ocean is lacking a universally accepted definition, its geographical scope varies upon definition *inter alia* between 14.056 km² and 15.558 km² (Arctic Council 2009a: 16; Eakins & Sharman 2010).⁶² It is widely accepted that the five coastal states to the Arctic Ocean, commonly known as ‘Arctic Five’ (A5) are Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the U.S. (The Ilulissat Declaration 2008; Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 106). The A5 are, however, “exposed to the Arctic Ocean in different ways” (Pedersen 2012: 148). Both Canada and Russia hold a vast, largely unpopulated Arctic territory that is inherently present in their national self-perception and psyche. Denmark is an Arctic coastal state because of Greenland, which is an autonomous country within the Kingdom, predominantly populated by an indigenous population. The archipelago of Svalbard makes Norway an Arctic littoral state and the U.S. by virtue of its possession of Alaska, acquired from the Russian Empire in 1867 (Ibid.: 148).⁶³

In addition to this pan-Arctic perspective, the geographical definition of the European Arctic also needs to be clarified. The European Arctic, as illustrated in Figure IX (page 86) (onshore area coloured in blue), extends from Greenland to

⁶² For an often used delimitation of the Arctic Ocean, *see* (International Hydrographic Organization 1953: 11–12). Regardless its definitional size, the Arctic Ocean is the smallest of the world’s oceans, connected to the Atlantic Ocean via the Greenland Sea and the Pacific Ocean via the Bering Strait. The Arctic Ocean is bordered by numerous marginal or coastal sea fronting either the Eurasian continental land mass (Greenland Sea, Norwegian Sea, Barents Sea, White Sea, Kara Sea, Laptev Sea, East Siberian Sea and Chukchi Sea) or the North American continent (the Bering Sea, the Beaufort Sea, the waters within the Canadian Archipelago including those of the NWP, Hudson Bay and Hudson Strait, Lincoln Sea, Baffin Bay, Davis Strait and Labrador Sea) (Arctic Council 2009a: 16).

⁶³ Svalbard is a Norwegian archipelago in the Barents Sea that includes all the islands situated between 74° and 81°N and 10°E and 35°E, *inter alia* Spitsbergen, Nordaustlandet, Edgeøya or Bjørnøya, with a total landmass of 62,400 km². Formerly and more prominently known under its English and Dutch name, *Spitsbergen* (or Spitzbergen), Svalbard is the modern Norwegian name of the territory (Churchill & Ulfstein 2010: 552).

Northwest Russia and covers the area with the greatest leverage of EU policies affecting the Arctic: Northern Fennoscandia and the European Economic Area (EEA) (Stępień, Kankaanpää & Koivurova 2014: 3).⁶⁴ Consequently, and from a state-centric perspective, five out of the eight Arctic states are EU/EEA states, namely Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

Figure IX: The European Arctic



Source: (Ibid.: 4) The map, received upon e-mail request, was slightly edited for the purpose of this dissertation.

⁶⁴ Fennoscandia, *see* Annex IV (page 355), is the geographic term for the area covering the Scandinavian Peninsula (Norway and Sweden), Finland and Northwest Russia (Karelia and the Kola Peninsula) (Donner 1996: 101; Hölttä 2011: 582).

As Powell noted: “There are different ways of mapping the Arctic.” (2011: 105) As a matter of fact, “[m]ap-making is an inherently political process” (Moore & Perdue 2014: 892). Subject to the thematic area under research, such as maritime transportation, fisheries or environmental protection, the Arctic, both from a territorial or maritime perspective, may be defined slightly differently, with each particular definition serving its very own purpose, depending as much on political and historical as on geophysical elements (Rudloff 2010: 8; Powell 2011: 105). In other words, “[t]he political, geographical, cultural and legal extent of the Arctic is highly context-dependent” (Stephens 2011: 330). This is considered a relevant starting point for this dissertation, as competing spatial “definitions have allowed for many narratives to be constructed about the northern latitudes” (Powell 2011: 105) and consequently also allow the EU construct its very own Arctic story.

Concerning the Geography of Maritime Arctic Transport Systems

As specifically demonstrated in Section 4.4.3, three Arctic shipping routes, namely the Northeast Passage (NEP) or Northern Sea Route (NSR), the Northwest Passage (NWP) and the Transpolar Sea Route (TSR), *see* Figure X (page 89), dominate the public perception and related analyses of economic feasibility, risk calculation, environmental concerns and infrastructure challenges.

According to Østreng et al. these three routes can be “delineated by fairly exact historical coordinates” (2013: 300). It has to be noted that the terms ‘passage’ and ‘route’ are somehow misleading as neither the NEP, NWP or TSR depict one single lane but a variety of passages between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, either north of the Russian Arctic, the northern coast of North America (the Canadian Arctic Archipelago) and across or near the North Pole. Climatic uncertainty and constantly changing navigational and sea ice condition essentially determine this variability of routes and lead to varying estimates on the actual length of each route.

The NEP is defined as a set of routes from northwest Europe around North Cape and along the north coast of Eurasia and Siberia through the Bering Strait to the Pacific (Arctic Council 2009a: 34). The NEP is publically often referred to as NSR, which however only signifies the definition as set out by Russian law (Solski 2013).

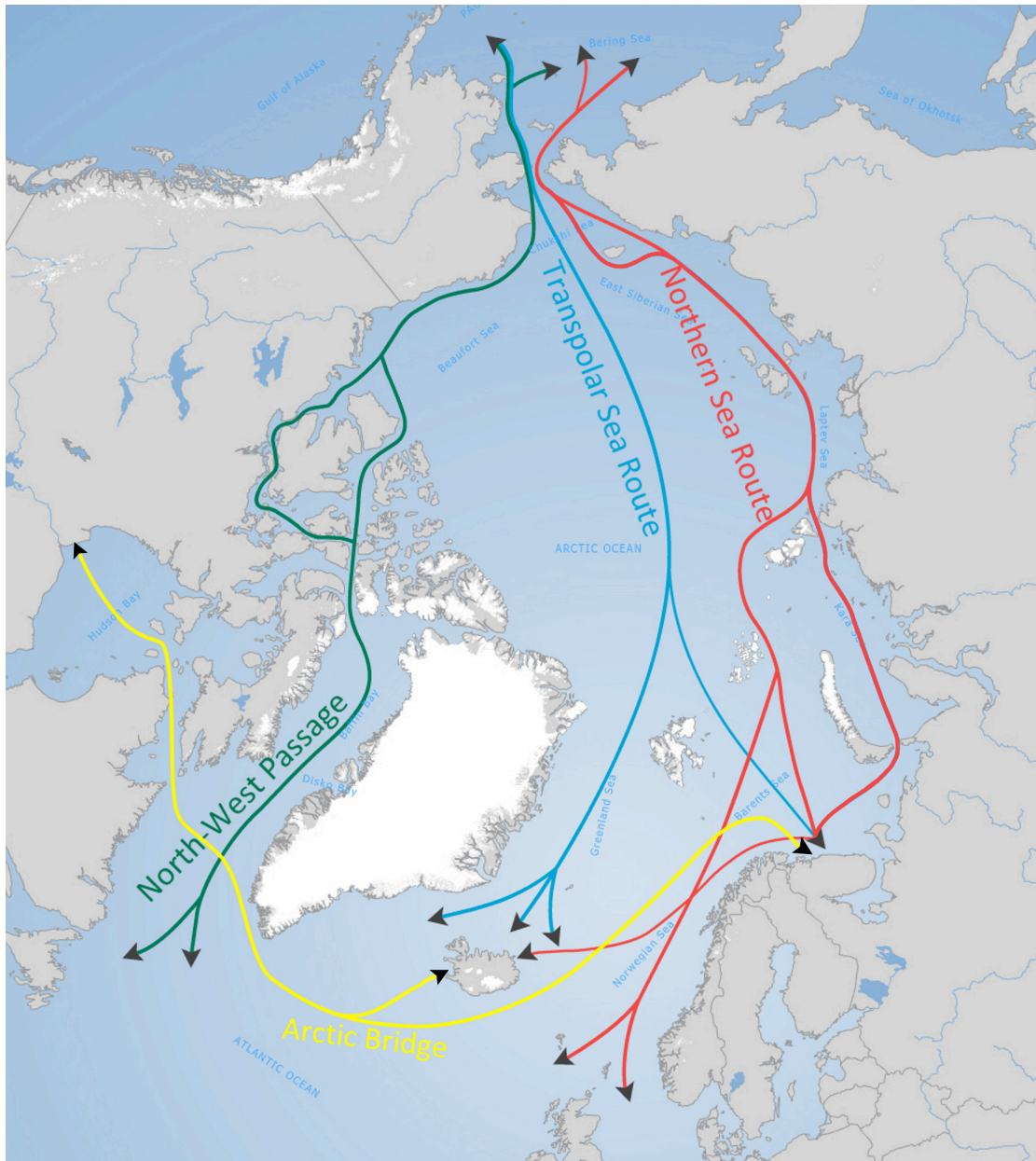
Consequently, the NSR is a set of marine routes from Kara Strait (south of Novaya Zemlya) in the west to the Bering Strait in the east with some of the routes running along the coast and others running north of the islands of the Russian Arctic (Arctic Council 2009a: 23). In comparison, the definition of the NEP additionally comprises the Barents Sea, which is partly Norwegian and Russian, and provides access to the port of Murmansk, the largest Russian Arctic port (Buixadé Farré et al. 2014: 299). Accordingly, the NSR is part of the much longer NEP (Tymchenko 2001: 271).

The NWP is a series of five major channels between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans along the northern coast of North America, separating the islands of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago and the Canadian mainland (Arctic Council 2009a: 20).

The TSR represents the third option of trans-Arctic shipping.⁶⁵ Unlike the NEP and the NWP, both considered coastal routes, the TSR represents a mid-ocean route across or near the North Pole. Again, this route can vary due to climatic uncertainty and constantly changing navigational and sea ice conditions, either traversing closer to the North Pole or closer to the NEP/NSR (Humpert & Raspotnik 2012: 284).

⁶⁵ The TSR is also often referred to as ‘Central Arctic Ocean Route’, ‘North Pole routes’ or ‘Transpolar Passage’ (Molenaar & Corell 2009b: 9; Stephenson, Smith & Agnew 2011: 158; Østreng et al. 2013).

Figure X: Major Arctic Shipping Routes



Source: (Ibid.: 282) The map was slightly edited for the purpose of this dissertation. For the purpose of the quoted analysis NSR was used instead of NEP and consequently the map refers to NSR.

The term ‘Arctic Bridge’ defines a (potential) maritime transportation route linking the Arctic seaports of Murmansk and Churchill (Canada) (Arctic Council 2009a: 12).

4.2. The History and Identity of a 'Geopolitical' Arctic

For Fridtjof Nansen, the famous Norwegian explorer, “the history of arctic [sic] discovery shows how the development of the human race has always been borne along by great illusions” (1911: 3).⁶⁶ Technology and science has undoubtedly advanced but the widespread illusions about the Arctic are still sensations of icy polar waters and an abundance of riches. Due to its remoteness, its vastness, its perceived inhabitability and its global frontier character, the Arctic has hardly been a hot topic for the broader public. Nonetheless, the region has at no time in contemporary history been an area of complete negligence but rather important scenery for regional strategic considerations determined by distinct global political and military conditions. In that regard, Bruun & Medby underlined that “the Arctic is by no means without history” with historical geographies of the Arctic being rich in myths and images of an exceptional and excessive space (2014: 916). According to Heininen, “(...) the ‘northern feeling’ has tended to come and go in waves” (1992: 36) and also Stuhl emphasised that although changes are currently apparent, “the New North is not new” (2013: 95).

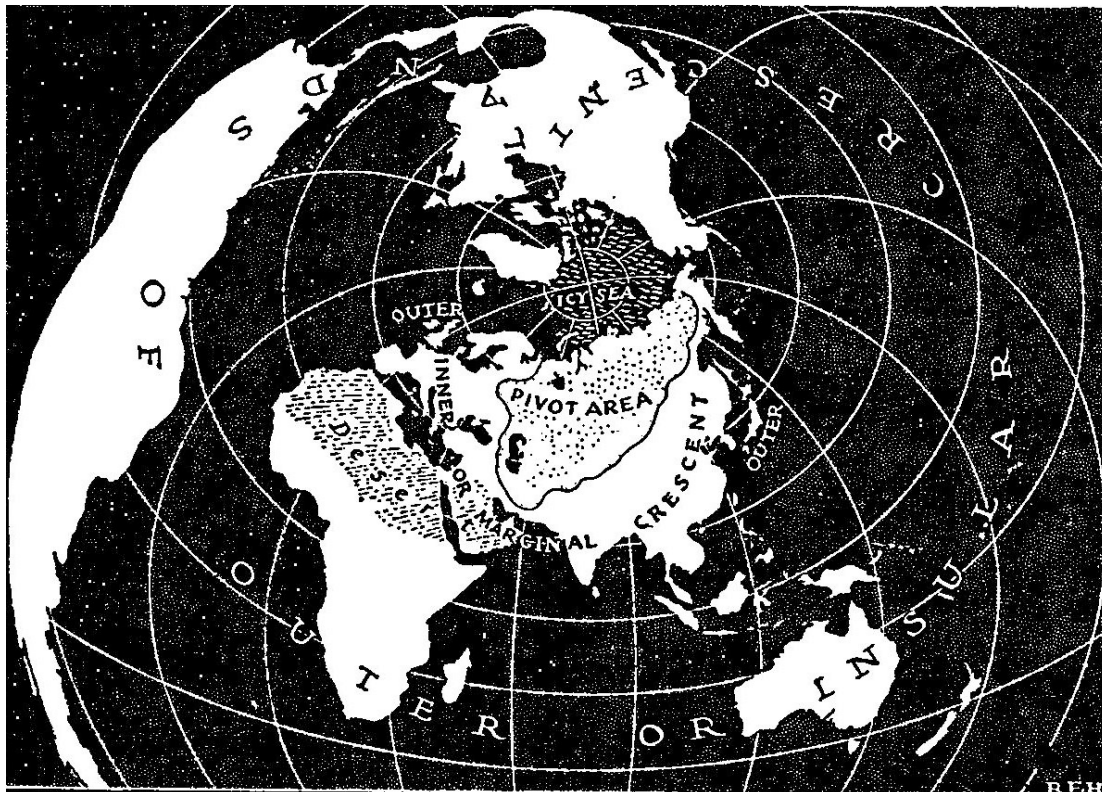
For the classical geopolitical thinkers of the early 20th century, the Arctic was rather a sub-plot of theoretical consideration than a centre of global notability. For Mackinder, the Arctic was a natural fortification to defend his pivot area, the heartland of the Eurasian landmass: “She [Russia] can strike on all sides and be struck from all sides, save the north” (1904: 436). Four decades later, the Arctic’s shore was “no longer inaccessible in the absolute sense”, however, “a hostile invasion across the vast areas of the circum-polar ice (...) almost impossible” (Mackinder 1943: 600). Similarly, Spykman stressed that “the Arctic ports of Russia will not thaw” (1938b: 236) and that “the Polar Mediterranean and its surrounding area represent the greatest inhospitable area on the surface of the globe” (1944: 56). From a sea power perspective also Mahan emphasised Russia’s geographical limitations, highlighting its “irremediable remoteness from an open sea” and therefore remaining inevitably dependent on land routes and powers (1900: 42).

⁶⁶ For a broad overview on the history of Arctic exploration, *see* (Emmerson 2010: 16–94; Sale & Potapov 2010: 31–103).

Nonetheless, the emerging primacy of air power on global political and military considerations slightly changed Arctic perceptions with polar projection maps becoming fashionably by mid-20th century (Lattimore 1944: 374). The age of air communication was believed to liberate mankind from physical obstacles that impeded movement on the earth's surface and would eventually create the world's completed sphere – its final image (Parker 1985: 104). In 1942, Renner suggested that the Arctic connects the Heartland of Eurasia, comprising Russia, Siberia, Turkestan⁶⁷ and western China with the North American Heartland including most parts of Canada and the U.S. This expanded, circumpolar Heartland was believed to possess a strategic location with beneficial air, sea and land routes essentially crossing the Arctic region (1942: 152–154). Also Weigert believed that in terms of new lines of communications, the Heartland is no longer concealed from the U.S. by the vastness and inaccessibility of the Arctic Ocean. He accentuated that “[i]t is no longer behind an impenetrable wall of isolation” (1949: 86). Consequently, Harrison & Weigert transposed Mackinder's pivot area map, *see* Figure II (page 34), to an azimuthal equidistant map centring on the pivot area, aiming to give a “more revealing picture on the relationship of the Heartland to the other continents” (1944: 79). Figure XI (page 92) illustrates this new ‘pivotal’ picture and a changed relative importance of the Arctic with both Greenland and Iceland being supposed to be strategic areas on international air routes and intercontinental communications (By the Editors of *Fortune* 1944: 133; Parker 1985: 104 and 106). As Jones put it, “the northern region may be (...) an aerial “pivot area”” (1955: 508).

⁶⁷ The term Turkestan describes a region in Central Asia, including today's Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and the southern portion of Kazakhstan (The Columbia Encyclopedia 6th Edition 2014).

Figure XI: Azimuthal Equidistant Map Centring the Pivot Area



Source: (Harrison & Weigert 1944: 79) The map was scanned and slightly edited for the purpose of this dissertation.

According to de Seversky the aerial age changed the perception on how to perceive geographical ideas and assumptions. “(...) [W]e must get used to looking “down” on our planet from the North Pole. The “polar projection” displaces the centuries-old Mercatorial map. (...) Defense and security plans influenced by the old geographical notions have become wholly unrealistic.” (1950: 307) De Seversky assumed the Arctic Ocean to have a specific role as frontier between the USSR and the U.S. in his denoted ‘area of decision’ (Ibid.: 312).

Vilhjalmur Stefansson, a Canadian Arctic explorer, also envisaged the ‘Northern Mediterranean’ as strategic, future hub of air communications with the centres of civilisation marching northwards to exploit the awaiting natural resources of the Arctic (as cited in Parker 1985: 106) and further identified the Arctic as an “Air Route of the Future” (Stefansson 1922) and the Arctic Mediterranean as new hub of world power (Stefansson 1944). Instead of a peripheral perception, “a trackless vacancy removed from the principal courses of world history”, the Arctic

was envisioned as a “potential core of a future intercontinental community” (Henrikson 1990: 25). Eventually, it was believed that the circumpolar North is on the edge to become the pivot area that makes the “old Heartland eccentric” (Watson 1949: 40).

However, during World War II the Arctic was mainly about military-related supply and logistics, most importantly in the Barents Sea, serving as an allied-supply route to Murmansk and Archangelsk or for weather stations on Greenland, Iceland and Svalbard (Emmerson 2010: 124–126). Yet, if World War II was a “landmark in the discursive transformation of the Arctic” (Chaturvedi 2005b: 936), it was the Cold War that brought the Arctic “to the crossroads of (...) global confrontation” (Tamnes & Holtsmark 2014: 21). Conditioned by its geographical location and technological advancement, especially in the field of air power, “the north was a key avenue for targeting the adversary”, with the U.S. and the USSR facing each other across the Arctic Ocean, both heavily nuclear-armed (Ibid.: 21). It was this particular logic of geopolitics that placed the Arctic at the very centre of the world in a classical Cold War era map, “making the Arctic Ocean a modern-day equivalent of the Mediterranean of ancient times” (Zellen 2009: 1).

The Arctic has always been substantially integrated into Soviet national strategy with the region increasingly being thought of as a *mare sovieticum*, controlled by the Soviet Northern Fleet and its submarine-based nuclear weaponry, stationed at Severomorsk on the Kola Peninsula (Young 1985: 163; Emmerson 2010: 132–133; Tamnes & Holtsmark 2014: 27).⁶⁸ In contempt of its military and strategic pertinence, the Arctic was, however, never a region of particular Cold War confrontation as regional attention was never induced by resource rivalry, which were/are mostly in areas of undisputed national jurisdiction, nor determined by unstable or weak regimes allowing for great power intervention (Ibid.: 21). Moreover, the region was never perceived as Cold War prize but rather valued by both superpowers for its strategic utility and base for early warning concerning

⁶⁸ During the Cold War period the Arctic was characterised by the greatest concentration of the USSR’s nuclear forces (Zysk 2011: 92).

threats by long-range bombers, submarines or missiles (Mychajlyszyn 2008: 1).⁶⁹ It remained “at most a peripheral theater in [the] grand struggle” of the Cold War (Zellen 2009: 30). It was also during the Cold War period that maritime state control reached the Arctic with the Law of the Sea (LOS) Convention granting specific sovereign rights to coastal states, such as the establishment of an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) (LOS Convention, Part V) or specifically polar/Arctic-related through the protection of ice-covered areas within an EEZ (LOS Convention, Art. 234).⁷⁰ In an article published before the LOS Convention was signed in 1982, Bloomfield (1981) highlighted the Arctic as last unmanaged, yet stable and rather conflict-free frontier and potential blueprint for international cooperation.⁷¹ It was the strategic importance of the region for the two superpowers that, yet, maintained. In 1985, Young predicted the “age of the Arctic, an era in which those concerned with international peace and security will urgently need to know much more about the region (...)” (1985: 160–161). Young alluded to a then increased strategic significance of the Arctic region and a “dramatic transformation” based on developments in the military technological sector and the rapid industrialisation of the area and its corresponding importance to Soviet and U.S. security (Ibid.: 160). In an article entitled “the geopolitics of the Arctic”, Roucek highlighted the Arctic as “perfect example of an area in which technological advances, especially in aviation, have caused far-reaching changes which force a new evaluation of locational factors of the region” (1983: 463).

Yet, particularly during that time Northerners began to consider “the potential of the circumpolar north as a means of re-establishing horizontal connections across the Cold War political divide” with several bilateral agreements on scientific and environmental cooperation reached between the USSR and other Arctic states (Heininen 2004: 208). The idea of closer circumpolar cooperation eventually

⁶⁹ For a comprehensive overview on the Arctic as a strategic arena throughout the post-World War II era, see (Osherenko & Young 1989: 17–44).

⁷⁰ The exact designation of each convention and/or treaty referred to in Chapter 4 is only to be found in Annex V (page 356) and not explicated in a footnote after the respective convention/treaty has been mentioned.

⁷¹ Yet, international law already applied to the Arctic Ocean before the LOS Convention was signed and subsequently ratified, e.g. the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears, signed in 1973 and in force since 1976 (Koivurova & Molenaar 2009: 42).

matured during the 1980s based on increased military-strategic tension and growing environmental concerns (Pedersen 2012: 147). Mikhail Gorbachev's Murmansk speech on 1 October 1987 is prominently considered as the initial impetus for increased Arctic collaboration, cooperation, state region-building and related foreign policy development. Accordingly, Gorbachev (1987) envisaged the Arctic to become a "zone of peace", a nuclear-weapon-free-zone with reduced military activities, an opened NSR for foreign ships and civilian cooperation in developing natural resources, scientific research and environmental protection. "The Murmansk momentum" (Keskitalo 2004: 42) led to the "first stage of Arctic-wide cooperation" (Molenaar et al. 2014: 9), the so-called Rovaniemi process in 1989 and the creation of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS), signed and adopted by the Arctic states in Rovaniemi (Finland) in June 1991.

In 1996, the A8 replaced the AEPS with the Arctic Council (AC), the region's now established high-level intergovernmental forum for Arctic international cooperation – a necessary step for the definition, international recognition and Arctic-internal construction of the circumpolar North as distinct international region (Keskitalo 2004). Further efforts on broader Arctic-related region building and transnational cooperation initiatives were, among others, (non)-governmental arrangements addressing specific Arctic issues such as the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), the International Arctic Science Committee, the North Calotte Council or more prominently the BEAC and the NC (Heininen 2004: 215–217; Young 2005). Palosaari summarised the comeback of the Arctic in the 1990s as "post-Cold War euphoria" (2011: 15). International and regional organisations were introduced and founded by states to tackle a broad security concept, involving classical concerns but also environmental and human security issues, that enabled multi-level cooperation to initially overcome the Cold War's East-West division and also facilitate the political mobilisation of Arctic indigenous peoples (Ibid.: 16).

The Arctic Backyard and the Issue of Eight National Identities

For most of the Arctic states, the region holds a prominent place in both their domestic and foreign policies with national concerns, priorities and assumptions brought together in specific Arctic policies/strategies over the last decade.⁷² Moreover, but yet in varying degrees the region plays an essential role in the national self-perception of the A8 with a particular understanding of ‘our Arctic only’ recently being challenged by an literally opened (maritime) Arctic space and the increasing regional interests of non-Arctic states, *see* Subchapter 4.4. In an Arctic setting, sovereignty essentially relates to possession goals – land, waters and the resources they contain (Griffiths 2011: 7); ‘natural’ variables that were allegedly called into question by increased global interest in the region with some Arctic states having identified sovereignty problems of Arctic outsiders that essentially lack such ‘natural’ Arctic possessions (Aalto 2013: 108). Besides, especially for (some of) the A5, the Arctic region entails strong elements of national identity-building with distinct cultural and historical relevance, in addition to certain economic and military significance (Keil 2013a: 50–78).

In Canada, the Arctic, or the concept of the ‘North’ has always been central for both domestic policy and national identity and eventually led to a specific Canadian Arctic nationalistic discourse and the conception of the region as a distinct Canadian frontier, *see inter alia* (Abel & Coates 2001; Keskitalo 2004: 127–147; Dodds 2011; Østhagen 2013e; Steinberg, Bruun & Medby 2014: 279–280).⁷³ In that regard, Perreault (2011) concluded that over the last decade Canada developed a distinct ‘security rhetoric’ in the Arctic that basically synthesises the Canadian approach to securitise its political sovereignty, Northern identity and territorial integrity. Moreover, a ‘securitised’ Arctic serves as the (rhetoric) wildcard of emerging ideas

⁷² These national Arctic strategy documents are not only limited to identify threats and opportunities but devote considerable space on terminologically granting Arctic sovereignty. Simultaneously these strategies/policies cover both internal aspects – agendas relevant to the Arctic states’ respective own Arctic territories only – and external elements – foreign policy approaches towards its Arctic neighbours and actors from outside the Arctic (Bailes & Heininen 2012: 16–17; Østhagen 2013e). For comprehensive and comparative analyses of the various A8’s Arctic policies, *see* (Brosnan, Leschine & Miles 2011; Bailes & Heininen 2012).

⁷³ Hence, both Canada’s Northern Strategy and Canada’s Arctic Foreign Policy from 2009 and 2010, respectively, strongly emphasise Canada’s inherent Northernness/Arcticness and the necessary exercise of Canadian sovereignty over the Far North (Government of Canada 2009, 2010).

concerning an updated and more influential global role for the North American country.

Denmark's 'Arcticness' essentially rests upon and is driven by its overseas constituent countries Faroe Islands and (more importantly) Greenland; two autonomous countries that together with Denmark form the Danish Realm, *det danske rige*. Both parts of the Danish Realm have an extensive type of self-government, established by the Faroe Island's Home Rule in 1948 and Greenland's in 1979 and further strengthened by the transition from Home Rule to Self Rule in 2005 and 2009, respectively. Accordingly, comprehensive political competence has been transferred to the Faroe Islands and Greenland with Denmark providing annual grants and retaining control of foreign affairs and defence matters. Based on Greenland's Self Rule, the people of Greenland – a predominantly Inuit population – are recognised as a nation under international law with the option of full independence from Denmark in the long term (Petersen 2009; Keil 2013a: 74–75; Prime Minister's Office of the Kingdom of Denmark 2015). Thus, Exner-Pirot held the opinion that Denmark itself is the "least Arctic of the Arctic states" with its "Arctic policy (...) increasingly be its Greenland policy" (2011: 19).

Although Finland has had cultural, environmental or economic interests in its Arctic territories, the region as such has only played a subsidiary role in national identity building. As a matter of fact, Finland is rather used to be a Nordic country with clear interests in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region, and the maintenance of good relations with neighbouring Russia. However, as forerunner in Arctic international cooperation, also Finland recently re-activated its national Arctic (narrative) presence with its 2010 strategy being considered the 'Arctic awakening' of Finnish foreign policy (Garcés de los Fayos 2012: 30; Heininen 2014).

Also for Iceland, the Arctic had never occupied a strongly objectified component of its foreign policy. Moreover, after the U.S.' military withdrawal from the Nordic country in 2006, Icelandic political elites only slowly 're-discovered' its Arctic location, eager to remind both a domestic audience and its Arctic partners of the Island's geographical connections to the Arctic (Dodds & Ingimundarson 2012; Ingimundarson 2015).

In Norway, however, the Arctic/North has been ascribed an important role in the national conceptualisation of being ‘Northerners’ (Keil 2013a: 70). Accordingly and ever since 2005, the so-called ‘High North’ narrative – *nordområdene* – aims to create a distinct Norwegian Northernness/Arcticness as essential part of Norway’s national identity and its international role in the wider world, *see inter alia* (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006; Sawhill 2008; Jensen & Hønneland 2011; Jensen, Jensen & Rottem 2011; Offerdal 2011a; Jensen 2012; Medby 2014; Wilson Rowe 2014). However, despite the country’s Arctic policy entrepreneurship, as for instance visible in its leadership efforts within the AC, and economic wealth, it still remains caught in its small power nature that faces a dominated neighbour to the north-east (Godzimirski 2007; Exner-Pirot 2011: 19; Aalto 2013: 110).

For Russia and the Soviet Union, respectively, the Arctic acts as decisive factor in “both Russian national identity and conceptions of security and sovereignty” (Wilson Rowe 2009: 2). This domestic component essentially entails Russia’s Arctic exploratory heritage and the related intention to construct a particular Northern identity based on the ‘conquest of the North’ (Baev 2007). In today’s Arctic environment, Russia pursues a “geographically clear-cut strategy between the domestic arena, where it refuses to tolerate any kind of foreign interventionism and its commitment to goodwill and cooperation in the international [Arctic] arena” (Knecht & Keil 2013: 181).⁷⁴

Similar to Finland also Sweden has only recently manifested a certain Arctic identity in its foreign affairs. Generally, the Arctic has rather been perceived as regional issue of Swedish domestic policy only and not involving a circumpolar perspective. Accordingly, the Nordic country issued its first Arctic policy/strategy only back in 2011, despite its already existing geographic and demographic Arctic ties (Bailes & Heininen 2012: 81; Sörlin 2014: 149–150).

Ever since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. has rather kept a low Arctic profile and has been prominently denoted as “reluctant Arctic power” (Huebert 2009). As a matter of fact, the Arctic has not been used to define American self-perception and identity with the U.S. (still) lacking a strategic vision, focus and

⁷⁴ For comprehensive overviews on policy discourses and Soviet/Russian state interests in the (Russian) Arctic from 1917 to the present, *see inter alia* (McCannon 1998; Jensen & Skedsmo 2010; Nilsson & Filimonova 2013: 4–11; Foxall 2014; Wilson Rowe & Blakkisrud 2014).

engagement for the region – an Arctic ‘state’ that has only recently been (slowly) changing (Petersen 2009: 48–50; Conley et al. 2012: 17–18; Herrmann 2015).

A Summary on History and Identity

As briefly illustrated in this Subchapter, the Arctic has never been an area of complete (international) negligence over the last century. In fact, the region is able to tell a variety of different stories, depending on the respective narrator and differently perceived elements of, *inter alia*, (national) security, identity and historical relevance. Accordingly, the Arctic cannot be denoted as a homogenous area but basically entails many different regions: Arctic sub-zones that vary greatly in their physical geography, accessibility, climate and population, playing different roles in the domestic and foreign policy of the A8 (Dolata 2015: 3; Bailes 2015) – the many ‘Arctics’ of the Arctic. And yet, the circumpolar North has surfaced as *one* global region, an area that developed from being considered a natural fortification only to a distinct political region, where (first and foremost) eight heterogeneous actors and several non-governmental stakeholders jointly deal with a region in a constant state of flux (Knecht 2013: 2). Ultimately, the end of the rigid bipolarity of the Cold War and the emergence of a more fluid geopolitics of the 21st century also reached the Arctic region (Emmerson 2010: 139).

The dissertation’s next step scrutinises the Arctic’s ‘melted’ geopolitics of the last decade by performing an Arctic reality check broadly based on three key terms:

- *Arctic rights* (Subchapter 4.3)
- *Arctic interests* (Subchapter 4.4)
- *Arctic responsibilities* (Subchapter 4.5)

This sketched triangle of Arctic interaction serves as basis for the empirical evaluation provided in Part Four as it delineates and scrutinises the legal, political, economic, environmental and social space(s) the EU has been targeting to operate in. Moreover, it constitutes the main ingredient of the Arctic’s geopolitical story of the early 21st century – the regional *context* of a geopolitical system of structures, process and flows.

4.3. Arctic Rights: Black or White Hole?

The framework and functionality of international governance in and for the Arctic region are a matter of on-going political and academic discussions as expected conflicts, risks and ramifications of present and future Arctic exploration and exploitation demand legal adjustment and consequent enforcement, both on a national and multilateral level (Humrich 2011: 6). The growing complexity of processes of environmental, (geo)-economic and institutional/political change results in a regional security agenda, essentially influenced by climate change considerations that interlocks regional factors with globalized developments (Bailes & Heininen 2012: 11–12). In that regard, Arctic (Ocean) governance is continuously used as catchall term for authority structures that capture the continuum between politics, administration and law in the Arctic region. It describes the formal and informal policies and processes that steer human activities in the Arctic, responding to collective, interdependent action problems, which are tightly coupled to sectoral issues, as for instance resource development, transportation and navigation, environmental issues and scientific research (Young 2009a, 2010).

The following two Sections – 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 – provide a general overview of the international legal framework covering the Arctic and the main governance structure surrounding it: a complex array of international treaties and programmes, bilateral agreements, national and sub-national laws, and non-governmental and governmental initiatives (de Roo et al. 2008: 11).⁷⁵ Eventually, Section 4.3.3 summarises the first element of the dissertation’s Arctic reality check: Arctic *rights* and its interplay of *law* and *governance*.

⁷⁵ The particular laws, regulations, standards and organisations that regulate resource exploration and exploitation, maritime transportation, fishing and environmental protection can, however, only be found in Annex V (page 356).

4.3.1. Law and Governance in the Arctic: The Legal Situation

Within the Arctic region all the levels of law – international law, European law and national legal systems – apply and interact, as the major part of the area falls under the sovereignty and sovereign rights of the A8 (Koivurova 2008: 15).⁷⁶ The A5's Arctic waters maritime rights derive from their sovereignty over land, based on a firm principle in international law which can be summarised as 'the land dominates the sea'.⁷⁷ As subsequently outlined in detail in Section 4.4.1, the Arctic region, in particular its marine area – the Arctic Ocean – has been purportedly perceived and characterised as a space of legal and governmental vacuum, an alleged matrix of conflictual future Arctic interaction, be it either of cross-state or –economic nature. It is correct that the Arctic is not subject to an international treaty regime explicitly purpose-built for the region, as for instance its polar opponent, the Antarctica.⁷⁸ Yet, under no circumstances may the Arctic Ocean and its respective seabed area be considered *terra nullius* – no-man's land (Proelss & Müller 2008: 654–655). All instruments being part of the law of the sea are globally applicable and therefore also apply to the entire marine Arctic, however defined (Molenaar et al. 2014: 5).

In fact the law of the sea and its combination of the LOS Convention and customary international law stipulates the respective sovereignty and sovereign rights of the Arctic coastal states and further constitutes the area beyond national jurisdiction.⁷⁹ All Arctic states are parties to the LOS Convention and its implementation agreements, except the U.S., which is only party to the Fish Stock

⁷⁶ Sovereignty over almost all Arctic land areas – continents as well as islands – has been established by the A8 and is not subject to any dispute (Koivurova 2008: 15). Only Hans Island, an uninhabited island located in the Kennedy Channel between Ellesmere Island (Canada) and Greenland, constitutes an exception as both Canada and Denmark assert sovereignty over the island. However, the island has never generated actual serious tensions between the two states (Byers 2009: 22–35; Stephens 2011: 336).

⁷⁷ North Sea Continental Shelf Cases, Para. 96

⁷⁸ The Antarctic Treaty System (ATS), which entails the Antarctic Treaty and a body of subsequent international agreements, is widely recognised a success story in international law and relations, addressing questions of demilitarisation, scientific research, environmental protection and marine resources, *see inter alia* (Stephens 2011; Brady 2013).

⁷⁹ In general, international law of the sea is a multitude of global, regional and bilateral instruments, decisions by international (intergovernmental) organisations and international rules from other sources, including customary international law (Molenaar et al. 2014: 5). Cornerstones are the LOS Convention and two implementation agreements: the Deep Sea Mining Agreement and the Fish Stock Agreement. As of 2 January 2015, the LOS Convention has 167 parties, the Deep Sea Mining Agreement 147 and the Fish Stock Agreement 82 (United Nations 2015). International custom, results from a general practice of states and is defined as a primary source of international law (Statute of the International Court of Justice, Art. 38, Para. 1(b)).

Agreement (United Nations 2015). The U.S., however, has asserted that most of the LOS Convention represents customary international law, in particular concerning rights of navigation and overflight (Administration of Ronald Reagan 1983).

From Internal Waters to the Area: Understanding the LOS Convention

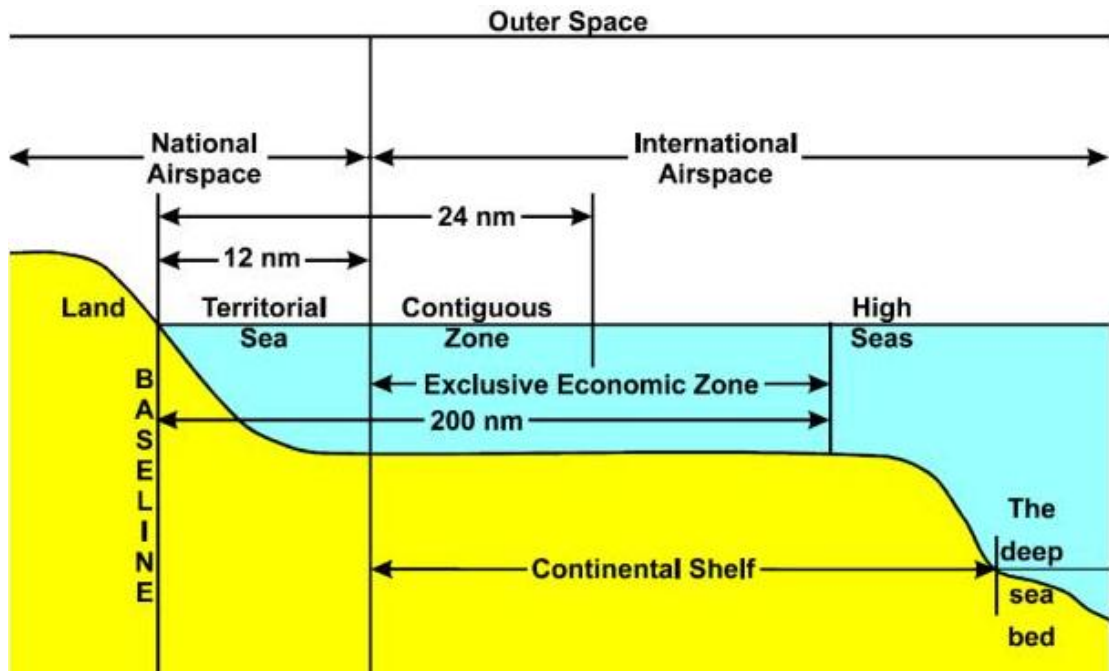
By recognising sovereignty, sovereign rights, freedoms and obligations, the LOS Convention balances the different rights and responsibilities of states in their capacities as coastal, port and flag states.⁸⁰ In that regard the LOS Convention has to be understood as equilibrium between the interests of coastal states, especially concerning resource exploitation and management, and maritime states, aiming to retain the freedom of navigation for both commercial and naval vessels. A general pattern, ultimately codified in the LOS Convention, is that a coastal state's right to set and enforce rules on various activities, be it for scientific, navigational or resource management purposes, decreases with distance from the respective coastline (Stokke 2007: 403). In doing so, the LOS Convention distinguishes between the concept of sovereignty entailing the coastal state's absolute prescriptive and enforcement power, limited only by treaty obligations and customary international law, and the concept of sovereign rights related to a certain purpose: "sovereign rights for the purpose of (...)", *see e.g.* LOS Convention, Art. 56 and Art. 77. National maritime zones under the sovereignty of a coastal state are internal waters, the territorial sea, archipelagic waters⁸¹ and the contiguous zone; zones under sovereign rights, the EEZ and the continental shelf (CS). The outer limits of these respective maritime zones are mostly measured from baselines, either normal or straight, which also constitute the limits between the territorial sea and internal waters.⁸² The LOS Convention additionally creates two zones beyond national jurisdiction: the high seas and the Area. Figure XII (page 103) illustrates these different maritime zones as stipulated in the LOS Convention.

⁸⁰ A flag state is commonly defined as a state under which flag a vessel is registered or flies. The terms coastal and port states do not have a generally accepted definition (Molenaar et al. 2010: 6).

⁸¹ Mainland states exercising sovereignty over non-coastal archipelagos, like Norway and the Svalbard archipelago or Canada and the 'Canadian Arctic Archipelago' are not archipelagic states as defined by the LOS Convention (Churchill & Lowe 1999: 120).

⁸² With respect to the Arctic it has to be noted that the LOS Convention does not sufficiently address the status of ice under international law in general and the drawing of straight baselines along ice-covered coastlines in particular (Joyner 1991, 2001).

Figure XII: Maritime Zones under the LOS Convention



Source: (Molenaar et al. 2010: 8) The figure does not show internal waters landward of the baselines. The 'deep sea bed' is the 'Area'.

Within the territorial sea, an area that may extend up to 12 nautical miles (nm), a coastal state has sovereignty over the seabed, the water column and the superjacent air space. Sovereignty over this maritime zone is intrinsic and does not need to be proclaimed by the coastal state. Furthermore, the coastal state exercises broad prescriptive and enforcement jurisdiction, *a priori* only restricted by the right of innocent passage that all states enjoy in the territorial sea (LOS Convention, Art. 17).⁸³ Beyond the territorial sea a coastal state may claim a contiguous zone up to a maximum of 24 nm from the baselines in order to extend enforcement jurisdiction against potential infringements of its customs, fiscal, immigration or sanitary laws and regulations occurring within its territory or territorial sea (LOS Convention, Art. 33 and Art. 303 (2)).

Most significantly from a Law of the Sea (and Arctic) perspective, the LOS Convention introduced the concept of the EEZ (Articles 55 to 75). The EEZ is a zone extending up to 200 nm from the baselines, seaward of the territorial sea, vertically

⁸³ The regime of innocent passage was developed to regulate the opposing interests of states, both coastal and maritime, in the territorial sea (Hakapää & Molenaar 1999: 131). A coastal state should not hamper the innocent passage of a foreign vessels through the territorial sea, provided this passage is continuous and expeditious and not prejudicial to the peace, good order or security to the coastal state (LOS Convention, Art. 18, 19 and 24).

covering the seabed, its subsoil and the waters superjacent to the seabed (= the water column), within which the coastal state enjoys sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring, exploiting, conserving and managing living and non-living natural resources as well as jurisdiction with regard to marine scientific research and the protection and preservation of the marine environment (LOS Convention, Art. 56). A coastal state needs to proclaim an EEZ in order to make use of it but is under no obligation to do so (Churchill & Lowe 1999: 161). As a coastal state's sovereign rights are mainly resource-related, third states enjoy broader rights compared to in maritime zones closer to the coast. These rights are constituted in Art. 58 and entail the freedom of navigation, overflight by aircraft and the laying of cables and pipelines.

By contrast to the explicitly LOS Convention-introduced EEZ, the CS has a longer legal history and was eventually codified in the Convention on the Continental Shelf in 1958. The CS constitutes the natural prolongation of a coastal state's territory, comprising the seabed and its subsoil and extends beyond its territorial sea to the outer edge of the continental margin or to a distance of 200 nm from the baselines (LOS Convention, Art. 76). A coastal state's sovereign rights over its CS for the purposes of exploring and exploiting its natural resources do not depend on occupation or proclamation (LOS Convention, Art. 77(3)) and exist *ipso facto* and *ab initio* by virtue of sovereignty over the land.⁸⁴ Exclusivity refers to the fact that no other state may undertake activities of exploration and exploitation without the consent of the coastal state (LOS Convention, Art. 77(2)). Art. 76 additionally specifies that coastal states are entitled to an extended CS beyond its initial 200 nm up to 350 nm or 100 nm from the 2,500 metre isobath, which is a line connecting the depth of 2,500 metres. Relevant scientific data and information helping to claim an extended continental shelf need to be submitted to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) within 10 years upon ratification of the LOS Convention.⁸⁵ After submission, the CLCS makes a recommendation to the respective coastal state on matters related to the establishment of the outer limits of its CS. If the coastal state follows the CLCS'

⁸⁴ See Footnote 77, Para. 19

⁸⁵ For a detailed analysis on the CLCS, its history and legitimacy, see (Jensen 2014).

recommendation, the outer limits become final and binding (LOS Convention, Art. 76, Para. 8). The CLCS has, however no authority to adopt recommendations if overlapping claims between two LOS Convention parties exists (LOS Convention, Annex II, Art. 9). Consequently, disputing states shall reach an agreement bilaterally on the basis of international law (LOS Convention, Art 83), leaving negotiations of respective maritime boundaries a political issue (McDorman 2009: 173).

The two maritime zones beyond any national jurisdiction correspond to waters (and airspace) beyond the EEZ: the high seas (LOS Convention, Art. 86) and the areas of the seabed and its subsoil beyond the CS or the outer CS, termed ‘the Area’ (LOS Convention, Art. 1(1)(1)). No state may claim sovereignty over the high seas or the Area and consequently exercise coastal state jurisdiction (Molenaar et al. 2010: 8). The high seas are open to all states, which enjoy the freedom of the high seas, *inter alia* the freedom of navigation, the freedom of overflight, the freedom of fishing or the freedom to construct artificial islands (LOS Convention, Art. 87). The marine Arctic has four high seas pockets, namely the so-called “Banana Hole” in the Norwegian Sea, the “Loophole” in the Barents Sea, the “Donut Hole” in the central Bering Sea, and the “Central Arctic Ocean” (Molenaar 2012a: 64). The Area and its (mineral) resources have the status of ‘common heritage of mankind’ (LOS Convention, Art. 136) with only the International Seabed Authority being entitled to act on behalf of mankind and to regulate the exploration and mining in the deep seabed, promote and conduct related marine scientific research or to ensure the protection of the Area’s marine environment.

The Legal Case of Svalbard

In the context of maritime zones, the particular regime created for the archipelago of Svalbard needs explicit consideration. The issue of Svalbard, an archipelago to be formerly considered *terra nullius* was addressed *sui generis* in the *Treaty Concerning the Archipelago of Spitsbergen (Spitsbergen Treaty)*, signed in Paris on 9 February 1920.⁸⁶ The Svalbard Treaty is considered a “unique combination of sovereignty, internationalization and demilitarization” (Archer & Scrivener 1983: 73) that conferred sovereignty over the archipelago to Norway when coming into force in 1925. Understood as a diplomatic “package deal” (Anderson 2009: 374) it did, however, stipulate that Norwegian sovereignty is subject to certain conditions (Art. 2 to 9), assigning the right of access for maritime, industrial, mining and commercial operations for nationals of all the contracting parties to the territory of Svalbard and its territorial waters. As a pre-LOS Convention settlement it remains politically and legally inconclusive to the present if a) Norway is entitled to the usual sovereign rights seaward Svalbard’s territorial sea as enacted through the LOS Convention and b) if the Svalbard Treaty regime applies to these maritime zones or not (Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014a).⁸⁷ According to Pedersen & Henriksen, Norway is entitled to establish maritime zones around Svalbard, including an EEZ and to accordingly exercise related coastal states jurisdiction (2009: 161). Various parties to the Svalbard Treaty, *inter alia* Denmark, Iceland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and presumably Russia and Spain, have an essentially similar position; however, do not share the Norwegian position on the spatial scope of the treaty as being only applicable to the territory and the territorial waters of Svalbard (Molenaar 2012b: 52–53). Churchill & Ulfstein concluded that “[i]t is (...) not possible to reach a clear-cut and unequivocal conclusion as to the geographical scope of the non-discriminatory right of all parties to the Svalbard Treaty to fish and mine in the waters around Svalbard” (2010: 593).

⁸⁶ As of 4 December 2014, 42 states are parties to the treaty, 20 of them EU Member States, *see* <http://emeritus.lovdata.no/traktater/>. The EU as such is not party to the treaty. For a detailed analysis on the history of Svalbard’s legal status, *see* (Ulfstein 1995).

⁸⁷ Norway has so far ‘only’ applied a Fisheries Protection Zone (FPZ) for the purpose of the conservation and management of marine living resources (Molenaar 2012b: 15 and 52).

Claiming (Parts of) the Arctic Ocean

As already indicated, sovereignty over territory has not been a real issue in the Arctic. However, with regard to the maritime areas, outer CS claims and related boundaries' delimitation, a slightly different picture has to be drawn. The current situation is by no means immediately or severely conflict-prone but already entails long and costly scientific operations, an on-going vivid public and political debate in the concerned Arctic states and potentially lengthy political and diplomatic discussions and negotiations.

Over the last decades several maritime boundaries in the Arctic have been settled and agreed on between different Arctic states, most recently, however yet provisional, between Canada and Denmark (Greenland) in 2012 and Norway and Russia in 2010.⁸⁸ Others are *inter alia* between Denmark (Greenland) and Norway (Svalbard), delimiting the CS and the EEZ of Greenland and the FPZ and CS around Svalbard in 2006, between Denmark (Greenland) and Iceland, dividing the CS and fishery zones of the two parties in 1997 or between the USSR and the U.S. on the boundary in the Bering Sea in 1990.⁸⁹

Pending issues, however, remain with regard to the Beaufort Sea and related disagreements between Canada and the U.S. concerning the maritime boundary and to the right of Arctic coastal states to claim and establish an extended CS. Essentially, Canada argues that the Beaufort Sea boundary was delimited in the 1825 treaty between Great Britain and Russia on defining the territorial boundary between the Yukon Territory (Canada) and Alaska. The U.S. opposes that particular view, arguing that no maritime boundary has yet been delineated by treaty (Baker & Byers 2012).

As outlined below in Section 4.4.1, many observers, in particular the media have feared that the A5's current legal processes to stake out extended CS claims could escalate into international disputes and competition over vast maritime areas,

⁸⁸ In November 2012, Canada and Denmark reached a tentative but not yet final agreement on a long disputed maritime boundary in the Lincoln Sea (Global Affairs Canada 2012). On 9 September 2010 Norway and Russia signed a treaty on delimitating the maritime boundary between the two states in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean, with the ratification documents being exchanged on 7 June 2011.

⁸⁹ For a detailed list and analysis on the agreed maritime boundaries since 1973, see (Tanaka 2011; IBRU (Durham University) 2015).

especially concerning overlapping claims along the Lomonosov Ridge and the publically prestigious North Pole (Koivurova 2011: 211; Pedersen 2012: 150; Keil 2013b).⁹⁰ Yet, at a meeting in Ilulissat in May 2008, the A5 concluded that any possible overlapping claims will be orderly settled by the virtue of the legal framework that applies to the Arctic Ocean (The Ilulissat Declaration 2008). Although from today's point of view nothing reasons to the contrary, only time will tell if the A5 will keep to this agreement.

The CLCS has by now already processed Norway's submission of 2006, adopting its final recommendations on 27 March 2009. The extended CS, as eventually recommended by the CLCS, measures in total approximately 235,000 km² and comprises areas in the Arctic Ocean, the Barents Sea and the Norwegian Sea, but does not extend the Norwegian CS to the North Pole.⁹¹

Three other Arctic states, namely Canada, Denmark and Russia have also already prepared and presented partial submissions, or, in the case of Russia re-submission, as it was the first state to make a submission to the CLSC in 2001. This first Russian submission was neither accepted nor rejected by the CLCS but especially for the central Arctic Ocean a revised submission and additional research was recommended (Weber 2009: 665). Eventually, this partially revised submission was submitted to the CLCS on 3 August 2015, including claims of both the Mendeleev and the Lomonosov Ridges (Russian Federation 2015).

Canada made a first partial submission in respect of the Atlantic Ocean, including the Labrador Sea on 6 December 2013. It specifically indicated that the necessary information with respect to the Arctic Ocean will be submitted at a later date (Government of Canada 2013: 3).

Denmark also presented a partial submission in respect of the north-eastern CS of Greenland on 26 November 2013 (Kingdom of Denmark 2013: 5). An additional, and internationally eagerly expected partial submission for the maritime areas north

⁹⁰ The Lomonosov Ridge is a major submarine ridge of the Arctic Ocean, close to the North Pole. 1,800 km long it ranges from Ellesmere Island to the New Siberian Islands, dividing the Arctic Ocean in two major basins (Encyclopædia Britannica 2014).

⁹¹ The recommendations affirm the existence of a CS in a geological sense around Svalbard and further recognise Norway's entitlement to delineate the CS beyond 200 nm in this area (Kingdom of Norway 2006; Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf 2009; Jensen 2010: 537).

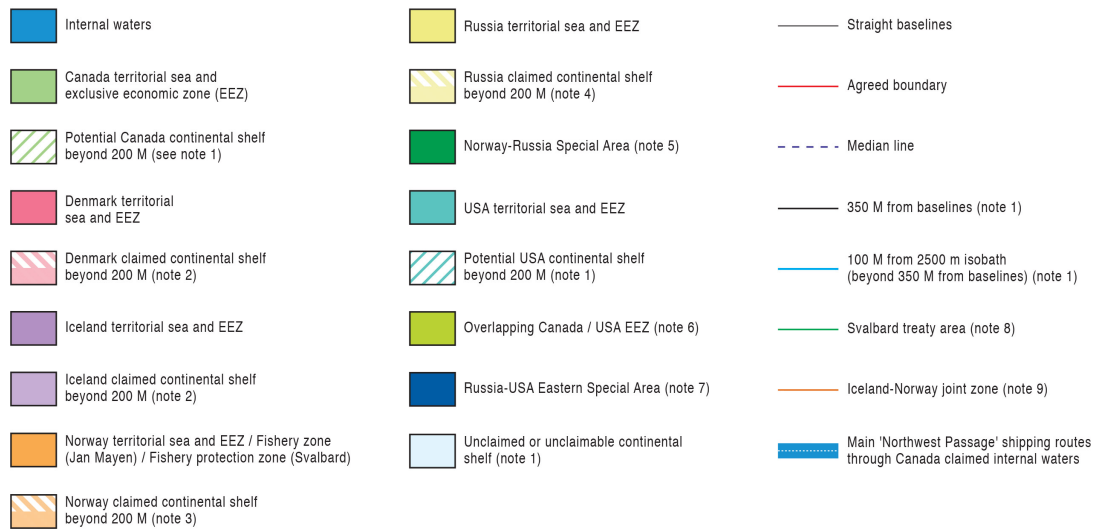
of Greenland was eventually submitted on 15 December 2014 with Denmark claiming an area of approximately 895,541 km², stretching all the way to the outer limit of the Russian EEZ, including the Lomonosov Ridge and the North Pole substantially overlapping with the Russian claim (Kingdom of Denmark 2014; Breum 2014; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2014; Russian Federation 2015).

In addition to Canada, Denmark and Russia also the U.S. has collected a substantial amount of scientific data in order to support a submission (U.S. Department of State 2014). However, as the U.S. is not party to the LOS Convention, it may not make a submission to the CLCS.

Yet, a lot of Arctic ice will melt before the CLCS will eventually deal with the different claims, either already submitted or in process, and the concerned states bilaterally negotiating maritime boundaries. The Arctic's "ping pong game" continues, involving a process that takes "a lot of time and patience" (Hopper 2014). Furthermore, the most recent Russian submission of August 2015 clearly stated that after the CLCS has adopted related recommendation based on the Russian submission, an eventual final delimitation of the Russian CS shall be carried out in accordance with the LOS Convention's Art. 83, meaning maritime delimitation reached by (bilateral) agreement between the involved A5 (Russian Federation 2015: 11–12).

Figure XIII (page 110) visually applies the LOS Convention to the Arctic Ocean in detail and delineates current maritime jurisdiction, related boundaries and potential overlapping outer CS claims in the Arctic region.

Figure XIII: Maritime Jurisdiction and Boundaries in the Arctic



Source: (IBRU (Durham University) 2015). The file was slightly edited for the purpose of this dissertation.

Furthermore, bilateral disagreements exist over the jurisdictional status of some maritime areas in the Arctic, in particular regarding the NWP but also the NSR. The waters of the Canadian Arctic archipelago are beyond any reasonable doubt maritime areas under Canadian jurisdiction. The dispute on hand, however, arises from the legal status of the waters under international law, either being internal waters or territorial sea. While Canada supports the internal waters perspective, other states, like the U.S. or Member States of the EU hold the latter view.⁹² The legal status of the NSR has been a “fairly low key, but nevertheless contentious, political issue in US-Soviet/Russian Arctic relations” (Østreng et al. 2013: 253). Russia has claimed all straits of the NSR as internal waters, enclosed by straight baselines with only the U.S. officially contesting that particular legal perspective and taking the view that parts of the NSR are straits used for international navigation; a perspective subsequently contested by Russia (Østreng 2000; Brubaker 2001; Molenaar et al. 2010: 6).

The Legal Arctic Exception Clause

With regard to legal measures related to navigation in Arctic waters and designed to protect its marine environment, Arctic coastal states can also rely on the LOS Convention, Art. 234 (Bartenstein 2011b: 23), which is a tailor-made provision applicable explicitly to a coastal state’s ice-covered EEZ in order to protect the marine environment against vessel-source pollution. Art. 234 particularly addresses the nexus of environmental protection and navigation in an area of exceptional climatic circumstances, practically extending a coastal states competences; it does, however, have no implications for any claims to sovereignty in Arctic areas (Rosenne & Yankov 1991: 398). Often referred to as the “Arctic Exception” (Bartenstein 2011b), Art. 234 recognises the right of coastal states to adopt and enforce non-discriminatory pollution prevention laws and regulations related to

⁹² For detailed analyses advocating either the Canadian perspective, in particular the straight baseline claim or the opposing view, *see* either (Pharand 1979, 2007; Rothwell 1993; Byers & Lalonde 2007; McRae 2007) or (Kraska 2007, 2009).

shipping in ice-covered areas that go beyond powers granted to a coastal state, in particular by the Art. 211 and 220 (Bartenstein 2011a: 84).⁹³

4.3.2. Law and Governance in the Arctic: The Institutional Approach

Politically, Arctic governance is pursued unilaterally and through the grouping of Arctic states: the A8 and to some extent the A5 (Stephens 2011: 331). As already indicated, the institutionalisation of Arctic governance tentatively started with the adoption of AEPS and the later creation of the AC.

The Arctic Council

The AC incrementally acts as an emerging international Arctic regime, covering soft-policy issues, such as environmental, scientific and human aspects (Bailes & Heininen 2012: 12). The AC's establishment in Ottawa in 1996 broadened the mandate of cooperation and coordination among the A8 to all common issues, especially relating to environmental protection and sustainable development, yet explicitly not related to, and still remaining a taboo today, military issues, as for instance aspects of regional security, arms control or disarmament (Arctic Council 1996; Bailes 2013: 32; Molenaar et al. 2014: 9). This high-level forum brings together three categories of participants: the A8 as *member states*, six indigenous peoples' organisations (IPOs) as *permanent participants*⁹⁴ and currently twelve non-Arctic states, nine intergovernmental and inter-parliamentary organisations (both global and regional) and eleven non-governmental organisations with *observer status* in the AC (Arctic Council 1996, 2016).⁹⁵ It has to be explicitly emphasised, that the AC is not an international organisation in an understanding of international law, with

⁹³ However, also these rights are subject to several restrictions (Molenaar et al. 2010: 12). For related discussions on how to interpret the article and its current Arctic application, *see* (Franckx 2009; Bartenstein 2011a; Raspotnik 2011a; Solski 2013).

⁹⁴ The Ottawa Declaration recognised three IPOs as permanent participants: the ICC, the Saami Council and the Association of Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation (later renamed to Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North) (Arctic Council 1996). Three other IPOs have been included since then, the Aleut International Association in 1998, the Arctic Athabaskan Council and Gwich'in Council International in 2000 (Graczyk & Koivurova 2014: 229).

⁹⁵ The presently twelve non-Arctic states are China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Singapore, Spain, South Korea and the United Kingdom. The nine intergovernmental and inter-parliamentary organisations and eleven non-governmental organisations are also listed on the AC's website (Arctic Council 2016).

neither the A8 nor any observer states considering it as such an entity (Graczyk 2011: 599). The organisational structure of the AC includes several Working Groups,⁹⁶ a two-year changing chair period with a ministerial meeting at the end of each period and a group of high-level officials (Senior Arctic Officials, SAO) guiding the work of the AC between the ministerial meetings. Additionally, it was decided in 2011 to establish a permanent secretariat in Tromsø (Norway) in order to strengthen the AC's functional structure and capacity (Arctic Council 2011c: 4). This standing secretariat eventually became operational on 1 June 2013.

Although the AC includes IPOs, decision-making formally remains with its core members, the A8. Consequently, the Rules of Procedure, adopted in 1998 and revised in 2013, stipulate that all decisions of the AC and its subsidiary bodies "shall be by a consensus of all eight Arctic States" (Arctic Council 2013d: 4). For non-Arctic states, observer status is the only formal procedure to be substantively politically involved in circumpolar cooperation efforts (Buixadé Farré et al. 2014: 307; Graczyk & Koivurova 2014: 229).

With the Arctic rapidly changing over the last two decades, also the AC is experiencing an evident change of character, willingly highlighted by the narrative "the Arctic Council at a crossroads" (Exner-Pirot 2014). Deliberately established as a low-profile forum, the Ottawa Declaration did not equip the AC with (legal) competences to govern actions of its member states or having the authority to adopt formal decisions of significant governance issues that could legally bind its members (Young 2005: 11; Bartenstein 2011a: 119). However, the AC did not remain passive but commissioned and adopted various reports and assessments or monitored programmes in order to document and highlight major issues arising in the Arctic, especially from an environmental and human perspective.⁹⁷ It was particular the

⁹⁶ The six Working Groups of the AC are the Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP), the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF), Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR), Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) and the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) (Arctic Council 2014).

⁹⁷ By request the AC's Working Groups conducted *inter alia* the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment in 2009 (Arctic Council 2009a), followed by two progress reports (Arctic Council 2011b, b 2013), the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA 2004, 2005), the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (CAFF 2013a, b), the Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR 2004), an Arctic oil and gas assessment (AMAP 2007) or Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines (Arctic Council 2009b).

framing of a distinctive Arctic agenda, including the attention drawing of relevant issues to key policymakers that led to the definition of the AC as a policy-shaper and –framer (Molenaar et al. 2014: 11). Two recently agreed on legally binding circumpolar instruments, signed under the auspices of the AC, bolster the indicated Arctic policy of gradualism: the *Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic* (SAR Agreement), signed in 2011 and the *Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic*, signed in 2013 (Arctic Council 2011c, e 2013).⁹⁸

However, the AC does not (yet) have “legal personality or the ability directly to adopt legally binding regulations” itself (Bailes 2013: 32). Despite these recent changes it still remains a “high-level forum” (Arctic Council 1996) that depends on the individually expressed political goodwill of its member states, instead of being an international organisation with the structural capacity “to form a genuinely collective will” (Bartenstein 2011a: 121). Furthermore, as well-reflected and elaborated by Ingimundarson, the Arctic’s framework is strongly determined by open and latent sub-hierarchies and power disparities between the different stakeholders – between the A5 and the three Arctic non-coastal states, the A8 and permanent participants or the A8 and AC observers – that counteracts often proclaimed tendencies of comprehensive regional integration (2014: 185), *see* Text Box II (page 117).

The policy of gradualism referred to has, however, experienced an initially perceived setback after the afore-mentioned A5 Ilulissat meeting in May 2008, that eventually led to the *Ilulissat Declaration* (2008). By virtue of the *Ilulissat Declaration*, the A5 accentuated their key role concerning issues of sovereignty and jurisdiction in the Arctic Ocean and partly sidelined the remaining three Arctic states and the permanent participants in respect of Arctic governance.⁹⁹ It was in particular Denmark, Russia and the U.S. that were eager to establish an additional forum as an

⁹⁸ It has to be mentioned, however, that both agreements are intergovernmental in character with the AC not being mentioned in the SAR agreement and only once in the oil pollution preparedness and response one (Ingimundarson 2014: 187).

⁹⁹ Although both Finland and Sweden were considerably conspicuous about their absence at the Ilulissat meeting, it was Iceland that has been particularly concerned, *see inter alia* (Koivurova 2010: 151; Powell 2011: 113; Dodds & Ingimundarson 2012: 24).

alternative or supplementary to the AC and ventured “[d]ire predictions of the Arctic Council’s irrelevance” (Ingimundarson 2014: 185). As vividly reconstructed by Pedersen (2012: 149–152), it was the then newly appointed U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton that eventually favoured the AC over the A5, proclaiming the AC as “the preeminent forum for international cooperation in the Arctic” (U.S. Department of State 2011). In retrospect the Ilulissat meeting and its consequent declaration achieved four significant objectives for then present and future Arctic governance: the consolidation of the A5’s Arctic interests, the affirmation of the LOS Convention’s key role, the marginalisation of previously envisaged alternative governance proposals for the region, such as the suggestions of an Arctic Treaty comparable to the ATS and the groundwork for the expansion of the AC as regards the issue of observers in May 2013 (Dodds 2013: 45–46).¹⁰⁰

Observers in the Arctic Council

This latter point, the gradual opening of the AC to non-Arctic states able to participate in AC meetings as observers was another hot topic in the development process of the AC. Although non-Arctic actors were long present in the region before intergovernmental cooperation in the region began, notable interest from these entities in observer status, either within the AEPS or the AC has been rather limited and only dramatically increased since 2007 (Graczyk & Koivurova 2014: 226).¹⁰¹ As the A8 were already during the AEPS not particularly in favour of external participation and interference, the willingness of China, Italy (both in 2007), the EU, South Korea (both in 2008), Japan (2009), Singapore (2011) and India (2012) to become observers to the AC, was particularly sceptically perceived (Ibid.: 226–227). As Graczyk put it, “[t]he AC’s Member States seem to treat actors from outside the region cautiously and, despite favorable declarations, keep them at distance.” (2012: 278) Accordingly, the Arctic (Council) has seen much debate along an inside/outside

¹⁰⁰ The proposal of an Arctic Treaty, as e.g. suggested by the EP (*see* Chapter 6), emphasised the global common character of the Arctic favouring a moratorium on resource exploitation and enhanced scientific collaboration (Dodds 2013: 49). A similar proposal was already developed by Pharand (1991) or the World Wide Fund for Nature in 2005 (Koivurova 2008). In Ilulissat, however, the A5 emphasised that because of the existence and Arctic applicability of “an extensive legal framework (...) no need to develop a new comprehensive international legal regime to govern the Arctic Ocean” was seen (The Ilulissat Declaration 2008).

¹⁰¹ As highlighted in Subchapter 4.4, this boost of institutional interests coincided with the geopolitical re-loom of the Arctic.

divide: who is in, who is out and eventually who has the power to decide (Østhagen 2013d). In that regard, the Nordic countries have generally been more open to the inclusion of additional observers than Canada, Russia or the U.S. (Ingimundarson 2014: 190).¹⁰² Regardless the rather symbolic meaning of AC observer status, in particular if compared to the observers' actual capabilities and practical benefits of being an AC 'bystander', the A8's initial reluctance was based on the Arctic states' preoccupation with their very own interests and competences of national sovereignty as well as a perceived anxiety that (powerful) outsiders could jeopardise the consensus-based governance principles and outnumber the members and permanent participants of the AC (Graczyk 2011: 614; Graczyk & Koivurova 2014: 229; Ingimundarson 2014: 190). Yet, it was the Ministerial Meeting in Nuuk (Greenland) that introduced several important innovations concerning formal criteria, admission and accreditation procedures and have subsequently defined the external actors' role within the AC (Graczyk & Koivurova 2014: 230).¹⁰³ Consequently, this led to the A8's acceptance of China, India, Italy, Japan, South Korea and Singapore at the 8th Ministerial Meeting in Kiruna (Sweden) in May 2013. The states, however, deferred from a final decision on the EU's application until concerns of two AC members are to be resolved (Arctic Council 2013e: 6), *see* Text Box II (page 117). Nevertheless, the EU did obtain *de facto* observer status and the "right to attend all AC meetings (...) without having to receive an invitation each time" (Garcés de los Fayos 2015: 2).

¹⁰² Canada's Arctic governance approach, for instance, can be described as restrictive form of multilateralism – a 'yes' to cooperation within the AC but restricted to the A8 only.

¹⁰³ The adopted criteria are set out in Annex 1 of the SAO Report to the Ministers (Arctic Council 2011a). The AC Observer Manual states that observers, as the term would indicate, should primarily observe the work of the AC but are yet also encouraged to contribute to the work of the AC's Working Groups (Arctic Council 2013c: 7). It has to be noted that observer status is not *per se* 'permanent', as often wrongly indicated. It only continues as long as consensus exists among the AC's ministers with the possibility to get observer status suspended in case of an observer acting at odds with the Ottawa Declaration or with the Rules of Procedure (Ibid.: 5). However, prior to the changes adopted at the 8th Ministerial Meeting, it was differentiated between *permanent* and *ad hoc* observers with states being already accredited as observers and others aspiring to this status and 'only' being granted observer status on a meeting by meeting basis (Graczyk 2011: 582).

Text Box II: The EU's AC Observer Status and the Underlying Issue of Animal Welfare

When then Prime Minister of Finland, Paavo Lipponen clarified his position for the EU to have a ND in 1997, he also brought up an issue that, from a EU-Arctic perspective, is more topical than ever: the Union's attempt to become an AC observer. "The Arctic Council (...) is a new forum that needs to be properly built up. (...) It would be only natural to have the EU among the participants, too." (1997: 33) This proposal was even followed by a Russian suggestion in 1999 of the AC to be the EU's "window on to the Arctic" (Arctic Council 1999: 15) In 2007, at the SAO Meeting in Tromsø, the Commission's representative declared the Union's AC interest by stating that the "Arctic Council represents a valuable additional transatlantic link between Europe and America, besides its important circumpolar characteristic" (European Commission 2007b). After attending several AC Ministerial meetings as *ad hoc* observers, see Subchapter 6.1, the Commission officially applied, on behalf of the EU, for observer status in December 2008, in due time before the following AC Ministerial Meeting in Tromsø in April 2009.¹⁰⁴ However, observer status was not granted to the EU, with the decision being postponed to the following Danish Chairmanship (Arctic Council 2009c: 3).

The decision of rejecting, or diplomatically postponing, the EU's application (partly) originates from the second 'hot' and lasting EU-Arctic topic: the EU's restrictions on the marketing and trading of seal products from September 2009.¹⁰⁵ By adopting its Regulation 1007/2009, the Union banned seal products, imported for commercial purposes from its internal market. However, products originating from indigenous subsistence hunting remained permitted to be placed on the European market.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, the Arctic's indigenous communities critically regarded the ban, as the trading with seal products constitutes a valuable economic sector particularly in Canada and Greenland with the ban having (had) adverse effects on Inuit livelihoods (Government of Nunavut 2012). An interviewee noted that the seal ban was less problematic for Greenland with the island's government putting a lot of effort in persuading its citizens that the ban has no negative repercussions for Greenland.¹⁰⁷ Yet, the regulation raised strong political and emotional reactions in the autonomous country (Kleist 2009: 3–4).

In this context of the seal ban dispute, one has to interpret the updated criteria for AC observers from 2011, which indicated that any to-be successful applicant needs to "respect the values, interests, culture and traditions of Arctic indigenous peoples (...)" (Arctic Council 2011a: 50), a clear reference to the EU's restrictions on seal products (Graczyk & Koivurova 2014: 233). At the Ministerial Meeting in Nuuk a decision on the EU's observer status application was again postponed. After both the 2009 and 2011 knock-back, the Commission submitted updated

¹⁰⁴ Interview 23

¹⁰⁵ In that regard it was particularly Canada that pushed the other Arctic states to not consider the EU's application due to lacking Arctic sensitivity. However, also Norway, although pro-EU observer status, supported the view Canada's view on the seal ban (Phillips 2009). Additionally, also Russia favoured a non-consideration of the EU based on the belief that both the EU's and China's observer status could alter the balance of power within the AC (Pedersen 2012: 152). This particular notion of 'losing Arctic sovereignty' if the EU would become an AC observer and potentially coordinates the EU Member States' policies and opinions in their capacity as observer has also been spotted in many attended conferences and conducted interviews, *inter alia* stated at a panel during the 3rd Annual Geopolitics in the High North conference in Berlin in May 2012 or Interview 6.

¹⁰⁶ The Canada-EU seal dispute actually goes back to 1983 (Scarpa 2014). For a comprehensive legal summary on the dispute regarding the EU's Regulation No 1007/2009, see *inter alia* (Koivurova et al. 2010: 33–35; Fitzgerald 2011), for analyses on how the ban eventually politically came into being, see *inter alia* (de Ville 2012; Sellheim 2013; Wegge 2013) and for questions on its effectiveness and equivocal goals, see *inter alia* (Sellheim 2015a, b).

¹⁰⁷ Interview 14

information to the AC in December 2011 in order to be eventually considered for observer status at the Ministerial Meeting in Kiruna. However, as mentioned above, also these expectations were only partially answered with Canada and Russia (still) being opposed to EU AC observer status (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2015), partly because of the seal ban issue but also due to tense(r) relationship between the EU and Russia ever since the war in Georgia in 2008.¹⁰⁸ And yet, it was especially Canada that considered the Union as “elephant in the room”.¹⁰⁹ From a European perspective, the seal issue is/was predominantly a Canadian-domestic one that was deliberately internationally hyped to enhance Canadian Arctic sovereignty¹¹⁰ with Canada changing its EU-Arctic mind “dramatically” from 2005 to 2008.¹¹¹

Eventually, the Canadian-European seal ‘dispute’ was solved in October 2014 with Canada and the EU agreeing for Canadian indigenous communities being treated the same as other indigenous communities when seeking access for seal products in European markets (Global Affairs Canada 2014).¹¹² Although the AC again deferred the EU’s observer status issue at its 9th Ministerial Meeting in Iqaluit (Canada) in April 2015 until at least 2017 (Arctic Council 2015), Canada now officially supports the EU’s application with only Russia remaining opposed (Bell 2015; Haines 2015). In October 2015, the Council additionally adapted the regulation to bring into compliance with WTO rules as both Canada and Norway challenged the regulation in 2009. The WTO upheld the ban in July 2014, yet holding the opinion that two exceptions within the regulation were problematic and needed to be clarified (Council of the European Union 2015).

Nothing But the Arctic Council?

In addition to the AC governance framework, it is essential to re-state that Arctic governance reaches far beyond the AC’s table, or an even more inclusive A5 approach (Bailes 2015). A number of transnational institutions, (research) initiatives or indigenous peoples’ organisations that address particular Arctic issues have already been mentioned, e.g. the ICC but also the Saami Council. From a state perspective, sub-regional institutions, such as the NC and the BEAC are of additional particular interest and relevance. The NC and the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) is an inter-parliamentary and inter-governmental forum, respectively, for Nordic-cooperation between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The NCM’s long-term policy priorities consist, *inter alia*, of the opportunities and challenges of globalisation for the Nordic countries and the role of the Nordic model in that particular global environment (Aalto et al. 2012: 17). Mainly focusing on

¹⁰⁸ Stated in a 2013 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author. It should be stated that the U.S. is not in opposition to the EU’s AC observer status application (Interview 21).

¹⁰⁹ Interview 7

¹¹⁰ Interview 4 (4 September 2012); *see also* (Østhagen 2013d)

¹¹¹ Interview 8

¹¹² The issue of the trade in seal products was actually excluded from the negotiations on the EU-Canada Comprehensive Trade and Economic Agreement, which were eventually concluded in August 2014 (Troszczyńska-Van Genderen 2014: 9–10).

cooperation efforts with the Baltic States in the immediate post-Cold War era, the Arctic region has only recently taken a more prominent place within the NCM with several Arctic Action Programmes launched since 1996. Additionally, the NCM has also been granted AC observer status (Rosamond 2011: 25–27).

The BEAC was established by the Commission, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Russia in 1993 to further inter-governmental regional cooperation, especially on matters of sustainable development in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR). Geographically, the institutional work was limited to land territories only with ocean territories and marine issues kept outside the cooperation effort (Leland & Hoel 2008: 38–39). BEAC's inter-regional counterpart, the Barents Regional Council was simultaneously established and focuses on cooperation initiatives between the region's counties and its indigenous representatives (Rosamond 2011: 27–30).

Additionally, also the IMO holds particular Arctic (governance) relevance as a broad variety of conventions prepared and finalised under an IMO umbrella also applies to the Arctic Ocean, *see* Annex V (page 356). Accordingly, this UN agency has also adopted *Guidelines for Ships Operating in Arctic ice-covered Waters* and *Guidelines for Ships Operating in Polar Waters*, both recommendatory in nature, and has by 2014/2015 developed a mandatory shipping code for polar regions, the *International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters*, commonly known as 'Polar Code', to be expected to enter into force on 1 January 2017, *see* (Bartenstein 2011a; Anderson 2012; Brigham 2014; Rayfuse 2014; IMO 2014).

4.3.3. The Arctic Rights Round-Up

Subchapter 4.3 performed the first step of the Arctic's reality check and gave a comprehensive overview of the legal framework and governance structures that co-determine day-to-day Arctic politics: Essentially, the Subchapter discussed the broad picture of *Arctic rights* and the interplay of *law* and *governance* – an eclectic Arctic cooperation framework as illustrated in Figure XIV (page 122).

In a nutshell, today's regional system of the Arctic can be characterised as a stable, somehow institutionalised and formalised, yet exclusive network of (mainly) eight states that contains both a robust legal and organisational element (Kobza 2015: 9). The A8's regional political spectrum entails strong aspects of national sovereignty in order to assert exclusive political and narrative competence over Arctic space. And yet, these states are brought together by a regional-consensual understanding of common stewardship for an Arctic commons (Knecht & Keil 2013: 180). From a legal point of view the law of the sea and its inherent global applicability governs the Arctic Ocean like any other maritime region. National, European (in nuances) and international law applies to the territories and maritime zones of the A8, which are furthermore (peacefully) brought together under the governance umbrella of the AC. Eventually, this particular institutional regional set-up serves as producer and circulator of certain Arctic ideas and representations and effectively contributes to the prevailing spatial order of the region (Dodds 2012: 12). Accordingly, Dodds characterised the policy efforts of the AC as a consolidation of a "territorially bounded future vision of the Arctic", where the possession of an Arctic shoreline or regional territorial presence is prioritised in the dominated Arctic perception of who is eventually 'in' and who is 'out' (Ibid.: 22).

And what about Military Security?

In addition to this particular reality of *Arctic rights*, also aspects of traditional security, meaning weapon-oriented, national military security, have re-appeared over the last decade. Although military presence undoubtedly and evidently remains in place in the Arctic, predominantly based on its Cold War legacy, associated competition is not considered a main driver of related investments (Heininen 2013b: 49; Hilde 2013: 145). Recent analyses on the military dimensions and capabilities of the A5 have concluded that any military investments by the Arctic states serve modernisation or capacity-enhancing purposes that primarily relates to non-military, 'soft-security' concerns, as for instance, human and environmental safety or the aim

to enforce respective national jurisdiction (Lasserre, Le Roy & Garon 2012; Wezeman 2012; Hilde 2013; Konyshev & Sergunin 2014).¹¹³

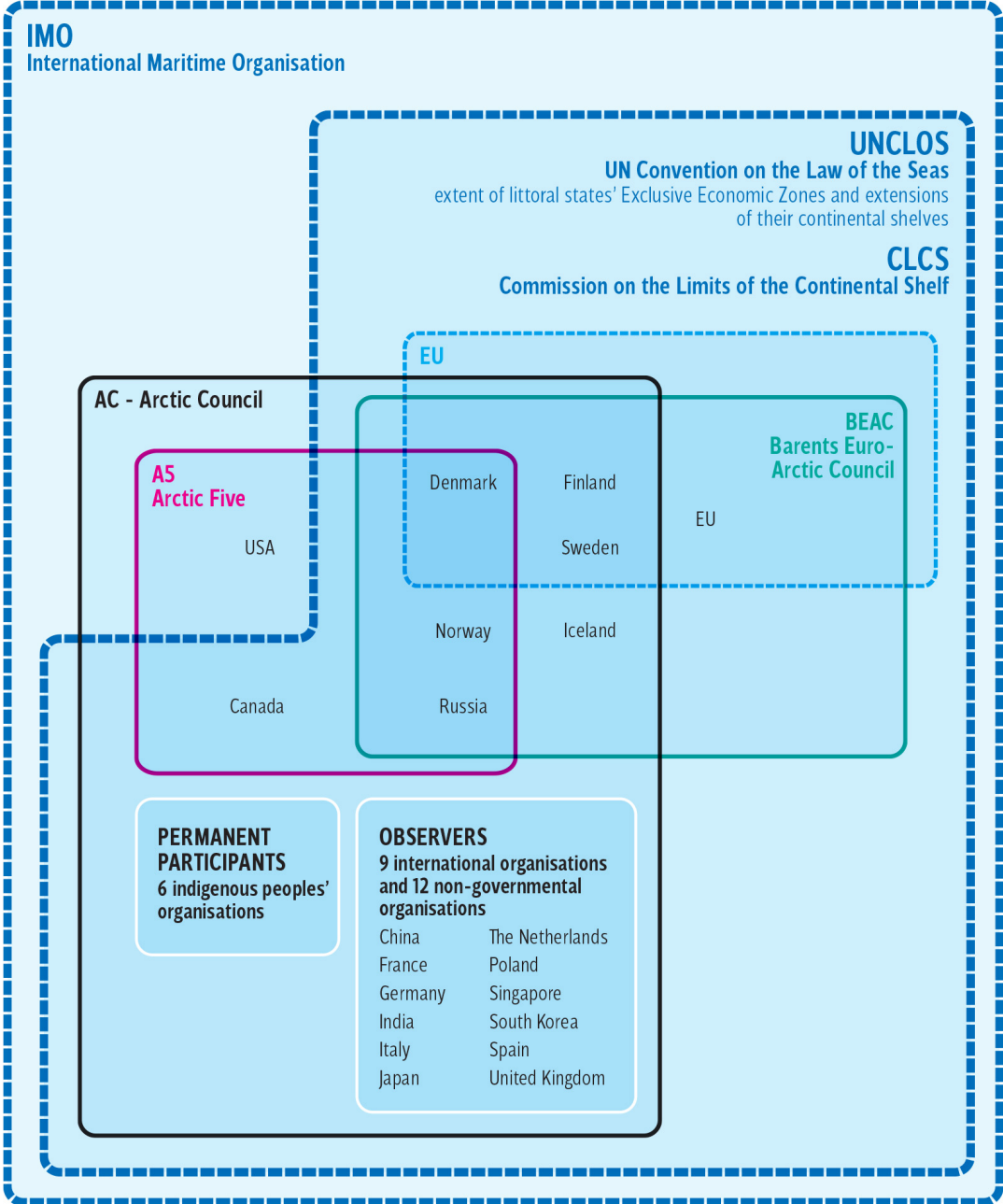
Moreover, it currently seems to be widely held that conflict in the Arctic, if ever occurring, will not stem over resources and strategic considerations inside the Arctic, but from factors and events happening outside the Arctic with Arctic states involved. According to Huebert, “[t]he security issues that cast the greatest shadow over the region’s impressive advances in cooperation do not really originate as ‘Arctic issues’. Rather they are situated in the larger international security relationship between Russia and the United States” (2014: 84). Similarly, also other Arctic pundits underlined the potentials of global spill-over effects, as for instance the Ukrainian unrest 2013/2014 that could eventually affect future Arctic stability (Käpylä & Mikkola 2013: 2; Ingimundarson 2014: 188–189; Mikkola 2014; Olesen 2014; Murray 2014). However, the spillover hypothesis has not been corroborated yet (Exner-Pirot 2015).

The Arctic, as it stands now, remains a region of operative international law and diplomacy, of cooperative work within the various institutional settings, mainly the AC, and without or hardly any international disputes.

And yet, despite this existing and well-performing governance framework the Arctic was too often depicted as a future area of international conflict in a purportedly lawless arena. A commonly drawn picture of economic competition over the region’s resources and opportunities only consolidated this public perception. Essentially, three major economic storylines filled the alleged tabula rasa of the Arctic’s past decade and shaped the broader plot of *Arctic interests*.

¹¹³ For a comprehensive analysis on the current state of Arctic security, scrutinising in particular questions of traditional, environmental, human and energy security, *see* (Heininen 2013a, b). On related questions of regional military security/cooperation, *see inter alia* (Bailes 2010a, b; Haftendorn 2011; Zysk 2011; Depledge 2015; Etzold & Steinicke 2015; Jokela 2015).

Figure XIV: Arctic Cooperation Frameworks



Source: (Jokela 2015: 37)

4.4. Arctic Interests: The Last Frontier?

Many years after initially predicted, the “age of the Arctic” (Young 1985: 160) was eventually within the world’s reach by the turn of the century. With the Arctic slowly emerging from being a frontier, a transition zone and remote periphery of little international significance, to a new global region that is interconnected with and exposed to a globalised world, also strategic debate concerning the region’s ultimate accessibility and availability increased (Dodds 2010b: 72; Heininen & Southcott 2010: 1–2). Moreover, regional climate change contributed to the perception of the Arctic as being on the verge of a political and environmental state-change (Berkman & Young 2009). And indeed, the myth of a geopolitical ‘scramble for the Arctic’, a new northern form of alleged Great power rivalry and economic competition in the 21st century was an essential part of this new *age*.

It was a period when climate change in the Arctic eventually made its way from a purely scientific agenda to the political agenda with a touch of economic ‘romance’ (Palosaari 2011: 16–17). It was also period when global climate change cut the public surface with Davis Guggenheim’s 2006 movie *An Inconvenient Truth* and former U.S. Vice President Al Gore effectively demonstrating the dangers of global warming. Additionally, in March 2007 the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its Fourth Assessment Report, headlining “warming of the climate system is unequivocal” with the observed increase in global average temperature being very likely due to an increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations (IPCC 2007); and only a month later in April 2007 the UN’s Security Council held its very first debate on the security implications of climate change (United Nations 2007). Ultimately, it was also the same time when Greenland became the Mecca of climate tourism with several European representatives photographically visiting the island.

Eventually, two incidents, coincidentally occurring at roughly the same time (summer/autumn 2007), can be characterised as the *pivot points* – to retain a classic geopolitical notation – of the Arctic’s 21st century geopolitical re-emergence:

- The planting of a Russian flag more than 4,000 m beneath the North Pole
- A record low of the Arctic’s average sea ice extent

Structure of Subchapter 4.4

The following Section 4.4.1 reflects on the two – above mentioned – public Arctic watershed events and their repercussions on a then emerging Arctic hype. Subsequently, the broader plot of *Arctic interests* is decoded along the three major economic Arctic storylines of the Arctic as being the next global energy hot spot (Section 4.4.2), the next golden silk route (Section 4.4.3) or the next global ‘protein shake’ (Section 4.4.4). Basically, these three Sections interpret an assumed Arctic economic development along two main questions:

1. What is the likelihood of a (geo-)economically important Arctic?
2. What are the related practical challenges?

Finally, Section 4.4.5 concludes this comprehensive Subchapter by additionally providing some Arctic (economic) outlook.

4.4.1. A Flag beneath an Ocean of Melting Ice

The planting of a Russian titanium flag at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean in August 2007, broadcasted by the Russian channel NTV, caused a global series of public and political outcry that recalled bygone times of a zero-sum game in the traditional Cold War understanding: “the coldest war” (Matthews 2009) resurfaced with a world’s new Great Game slightly moving north (Smith 2007; Borgerson 2009). In “the fight for the top of the world” (Graff 2007) the Arctic states were expected to “make pre-emptive military strikes” in order secure the region’s estimated natural resources (Galeotti 2008: 11).¹¹⁴ It purportedly set off a “race for control of the Arctic” (Woodard 2007) and is considered a “turning point in international attention to the region” (Offerdal 2011b: 863–864). Although “the flag plant incident was inconsequential” from an international legal perspective (Dodds 2013: 46), the episode was followed by an Arctic turmoil causing strong and seemed to be overcome Russophobic reactions not only among academic circles and the media but essentially also from other Arctic states. According to Cohen, “Russia's decision to take an aggressive stand in the polar area has left the U.S., Canada, and the Nordic

¹¹⁴ Already as early as 2005, The New York Times quoted an energy analyst’s statement of a “Great Game in a cold climate” (Krauss et al. 2005).

countries little choice but to forge a cooperative High North strategy (...)” (2008: 36). Especially in Canada the incident spurred intense nationalistic reactions (Ingimundarson 2010: 21). Most prominently quoted, the then Canadian foreign minister Peter MacKay stated that “[t]his isn't the 15th century. You can't go around the world and just plant flags and say: 'We're claiming this territory’” (Parfitt 2007). The U.S., in terms of the State Department’s deputy spokesman Tom Casey, reacted similarly: “I'm not sure of whether they've put a metal flag, a rubber flag or a bed sheet on the ocean floor. Either way, it doesn't have any legal standing or effect on this claim.” (CNN 2007) Russia publically responded with Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov returning: “I was amazed by my Canadian counterpart’s statement that we are planting flags around. We’re not throwing flags around. (...) The purpose of the expedition is not to stake whatever rights of Russia, but to prove that our shelf extends to the North Pole.” (Gabuev 2007)

The Russian interpretation varied from a purely technical and scientific purpose in order to obtain seismic and bathymetric data for Russia’s submission to the CLCS to territorial consolidation and cultural symbolism. This territorial interpretation nourished a geopolitical imagination of the planting, indicating Russian polar nationalism that both highlights a domestic perspective and was simultaneously supposed to address Arctic opponents by specifying Russia’s belief of an extended sovereignty to the North Pole (Dodds 2013: 47). Consequently, the planting of the Russian flag has been comprehended as a demonstration of Russia’s desire to secure its strategic, economic, scientific and defence interests in the Arctic (Dey Nuttall & Nuttall 2009: 29). For some observers, the episode and the strong figurative substance the planting of a flag entails, was “symbolizing a claim for control” (Haftendorn 2011: 338). However, the expedition was basically a “private affair” (Young 2009b: 75), literally fuelled with Russian expertise and equipment for a well-articulated scientific purpose but yet financed by a Swedish pharmaceutical magnate and accompanied by an Australian adventure tour operator (Gerhardt et al. 2010: 996).

Although the flag planting episode had no international legal implications and was overall highly exaggerated, it concentrated speculations on the Arctic being a near-future epicentre of a new Cold War with Russia being publically perceived as “wild card” in the Arctic strategic equation” (Zysk 2011: 93). Questions were raised if the region’s long-term future was one of international harmony based on the rule of law or one of a Hobbesian free-for-all (Borgerson 2009). It was especially the international media coverage about the event that influenced many policymakers around to globe to believe that the Arctic lacks any legal and institutional framework on political cooperation and environmental management (Powell 2011: 111).

Concerning an Ocean that Starts to Melt

The strategic elements of an apparently high potential of hydrocarbon resources, Arctic-domestic considerations and related rising international awareness were directly interrelated with an increasingly alarming climatic component: global warming and the record low of the Arctic’s average sea ice extent in 2007. As Gerhardt et al. put it fittingly: “As long as the Arctic Ocean was predominantly frozen but drifting ice pack, international interests in staking territorial claims over the vast Arctic were pushed to the side.” (2010: 996) The “Arctic meltdown” (Borgerson 2008), however, decisively changed this particular Arctic public picture.

In the Northern Hemisphere, the Greenlandic ice sheet has been losing mass ever since 1992, likely at a larger rate from 2002 to 2011, the extent of spring snow cover has continued to decrease and permafrost temperatures increased in response to amplified surface temperature and changing snow cover since the early 1980s. Additionally, the annual mean of Arctic sea ice extent has decreased over the period 1979 to 2012 (IPCC 2014b: SPM-4), reaching the above-mentioned provisional record low in 2007. In October that year the U.S. National Snow and Ice Data Center announced “Arctic sea ice shatters all previous record lows”. The September 2007 average sea ice extent, *see* Figure XV (page 127), was 4.28 million km², so the lowest level then since satellite measurements began in 1979 (NSIDC 2007), a reduction of 24% of the previous record low reached in September 2005 and 38% of

the climatological averages (Comiso et al. 2008: 6).¹¹⁵ For the purpose of comparison: the average September sea ice extent from 1979 to 2000 was 7.04 million km², the climatological minimum 6.74 million km² (NSIDC 2007).

Figure XV: Sea Ice Extent, September 2007



Source: (NSIDC 2014a) The graph was slightly edited for the purpose of this dissertation.

¹¹⁵ Sea ice extent either defines a sector as ‘ice-covered’ or ‘not ice-covered’. The most common threshold for a satellite data cell to be defined ‘ice-covered’ is 15%, meaning if the cell has greater than 15% ice concentration, the cell is considered ice covered (NSIDC 2008).

During the past decades, but particularly since the last 10 to 15 years, Arctic sea-ice extent, thickness and the age of ice have experienced continuous and faster accelerating reductions (Buixadé Farré et al. 2014: 311). Perennial sea ice extent has been considerably lower since 2002 (Comiso et al. 2008: 6).¹¹⁶ In March 2007, it was highlighted that over the period of satellite observations linear trends in the decline of Arctic sea ice extent have been negative in every month – smallest in winter and largest in September – assuming to have reached a tipping point with impacts not only confined to the Arctic region (Serreze, Holland & Stroeve 2007: 1533; University of Colorado at Boulder 2007). The concern of a potentially reached tipping point – the critical threshold of sea-ice thickness, greenhouse-gas concentration or a combination of factors – was considerably fuelled in September/October 2007 with the already indicated record September minimum in sea-ice extent. This was particularly driven by a “combination of several decades of sea-ice thinning and a highly unusual summer weather pattern” (Serreze 2011: 47). The seasonal asymmetry in trends further depends on a spring sea ice cover that is increasingly dominated by relatively thin ice, formed during the previous autumn and winter with less thicker-ice having survived at least one summer-melt period. To put it simple, the thinner the ice in spring, the less energy needed to melt out thin ice, the lower the ice extent at the end of summer (September).¹¹⁷

Additionally, thin spring ice strengthens the positive seasonal ice-albedo feedback, with areas of dark open-water (and a low albedo) being exposed to the sun earlier in the melt season, consequently leading to stronger heating of the ocean, more ice to be melting and more dark ocean to be exposed (Ibid.: 47). It is generally assumed that sea ice thickness is the best overall indicator to measure the health of the Arctic (University of Colorado at Boulder 2009) as it is essential to the stability of the sea ice cover. The thicker the ice the better it can withstand heat, winds and currents to survive the warmer summer months (NSIDC 2011). Winter sea ice

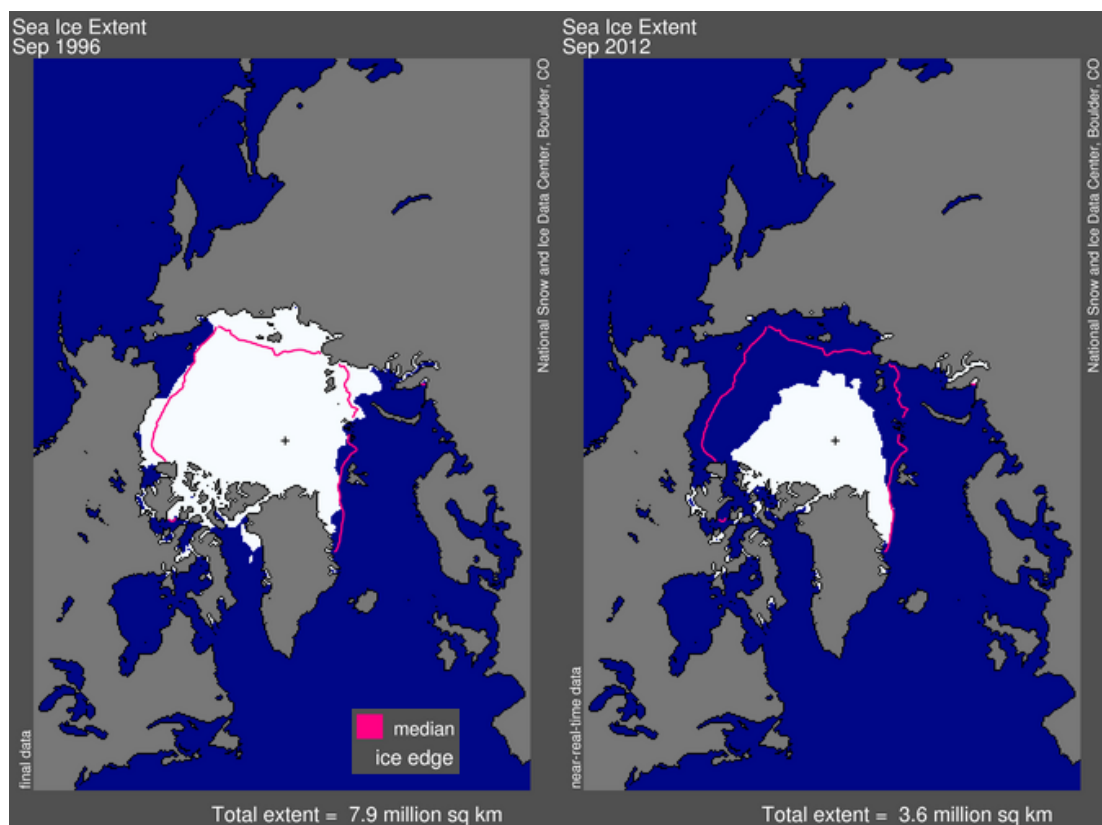
¹¹⁶ Perennial (sea) ice has been defined as “the ice that survives the summer and represents the thick component [- called multiyear ice -] of the sea ice cover that may include ridged first-year ice” (Comiso 2012: 1176). Multiyear ice, typically ranging from 2 to 4 m, is ice that has survived at least one summer or more. During the 1980s, 50-60% of the Arctic Ocean’s ice were multiyear ice with the percentage dropping to 15% by the end of the summer 2010 (Polyakov, Walsh & Kwok 2012: 146).

¹¹⁷ Moreover, the rate and process of melting and freezing of sea ice is subject to oceanic currents, cloud cover or air temperature (Emmerson 2010: 148).

thickness decreased from 3.64 m in 1980 to 1.89 m in 2008 which was a net decrease of 1.75 m (a minus of 48%) (Kwok & Rothrock 2009: 5).

The 2007 record low in average sea ice extent was, however, by no means the end of the related Arctic story. In September 2012, the average sea ice extent dropped to a new record low of 3.61 million km², which was 3.43 million km² below the 1979 to 2000 average extent (NSIDC 2012b).¹¹⁸ This trend continues, yet non-linear, with the 2014 average of 5.28 million km², the sixth lowest extent since 1979. The 10 lowest September ice extents have now all occurred in the last 10 years (NSIDC 2014b). Figure XVI visualises the Arctic's average summer sea ice retreat by contrasting the most recent record low from 2012 with the average extent of September 1996. Reaching 7.9 million km², the 1996 average extent was the largest since the beginning of satellite data record in 1979.

Figure XVI: Sea Ice Extent, September 1996 and September 2012

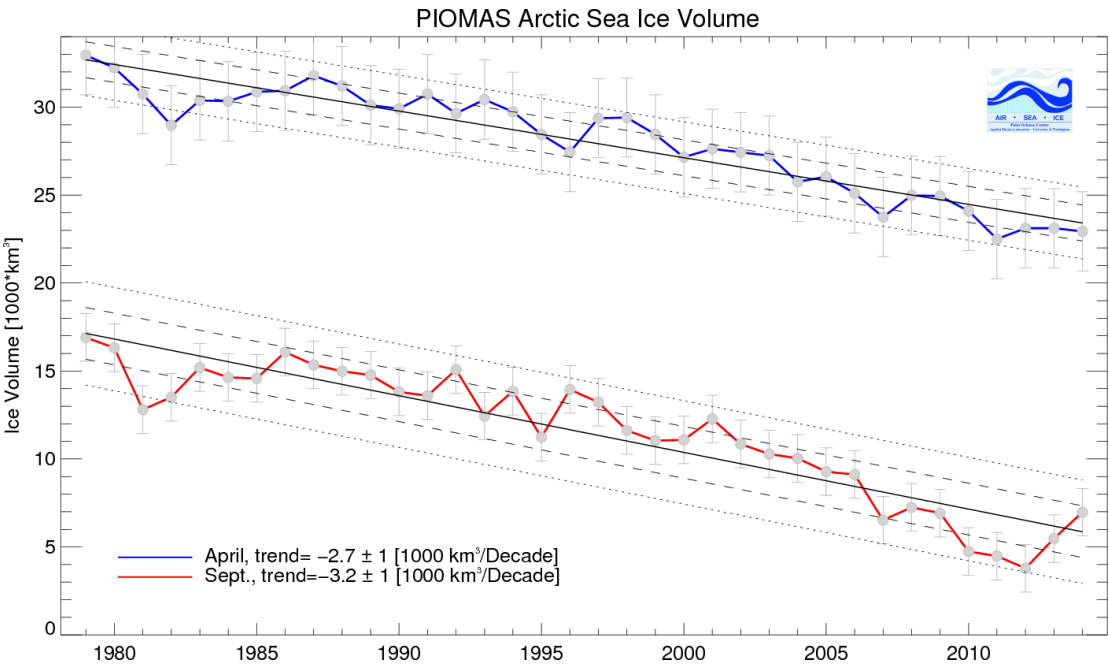


Source: (NSIDC 2014a) The two graphs were slightly edited and visually contrasted for the purpose of this dissertation.

¹¹⁸ The minimum record low was 3.41 million km², reached on 16 September 2012 (NSIDC 2012a).

Similarly alarming is the dramatic decline of sea ice volume, an indicator directly related to thickness and extent and, hence, more directly tied to long-term trends of climate change, making it a more sensitive climate indicator than extent (Schweiger et al. 2011: 1). Changes in the sea ice volume impacts the heat budget of the Arctic and the related exchange of fresh water between the sea ice and the ocean (Laxon et al. 2013: 1). Simulations predicted that the loss of sea ice volume (3,4% per decade) will be greater than reductions in Arctic sea ice extent (2,4% per decade) (Gregory et al. 2002: 28–4). As visualised in Figure XVII (page 130), Arctic sea ice volume has declined over the past decades. The monthly average for September 2014 was 6,970 km³, 40% lower than the mean over the period, 59% lower than the maximum in 1979 and consequently consistent with the long-term decline of Arctic sea ice volume (Polar Science Center University of Washington 2014).¹¹⁹

Figure XVII: PIOMAS Arctic Sea Ice Volume, Monthly Sea Ice Volume for April and September from 1979 to 2014



Source: (Ibid.)

Even before the 2007 record low Holland et al. concluded that Arctic sea ice has undergone dramatic changes over the last decades, ranging from a substantial thinning of the ice pack, a reduction in the multiyear-ice area and a constantly

¹¹⁹ The Polar Science Center’s webpage is constantly updated at approximately one-month intervals. The September 2014 update and the used graph were saved locally and are on file with the author.

renewed record minimum September ice cover (2006: 1). Serreze et al. inferred that although natural variability continuously impact the extent and thickness of Arctic sea ice, the observed sea ice loss “strongly suggests a human influence”, primarily attributed to an observed rise in greenhouse gas concentrations and emissions (2007: 1536).

The Arctic is undoubtedly moving to a seasonally ice-free state in the summer, owing much of this development anthropogenic climate change and increased greenhouse gas forcing; the pace, however, is matter of serious discussions (Serreze 2011: 47; Overland & Wang 2013: 2100; IPCC 2014b: SPM–5).¹²⁰ The prediction of long-term ice conditions in the Arctic remains a difficult task, also decisively due to numerous spatial and temporal uncertainties (Stroeve et al. 2012; Smith & Stephenson 2013).¹²¹ Yet, it is very likely that Arctic summer sea ice loss will occur rather in the first than the second half of the 21st century (Overland & Wang 2013: 2100) as “the Arctic will continue to warm more rapidly than the global mean” (IPCC 2014b: SPM–8). Recent analyses have concluded an expanded September – the Arctic shipping’s peak period – navigability by mid-century for all three Arctic shipping routes, the NEP, NWP and TSR (Smith & Stephenson 2013) and an expanded prolongation of the shipping season with a free passage from 3 to 6 months for the NEP/NSR and from 2 to 4 months for the NWP by the end of the 21st century, all for different kind of explicitly evaluated vessel classes (Khon et al. 2010).

Summary

Retrospectively, the events of summer/autumn 2007, the subsequent climatic developments and its inherent repercussions can be evaluated as starting point for another circle of Arctic geopoliticisation that essentially and enduringly reconfigures already uncertain Arctic spatialities. The following three Sections – 4.4.2 to 4.4.4 – give an overview on basically three different, yet interconnected spatialities that

¹²⁰ Although, a summer ice-free Arctic is within the bounds of decadal possibility, the region will, however, continue to have winter ice coverage in the foreseeable future (Comiso et al. 2008: 6).

¹²¹ In general sea ice increases from the Russian Arctic to the Canadian Arctic, responding to the mean pattern of sea ice drift, convergence and lower temperatures on the Canadian side. In addition to the already unusual geography of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, weakened multi-year sea ice and many icebergs that move over the Arctic Ocean, create more complex long-term sea ice conditions with a relatively higher degree of variability for the NWP (ACIA 2004: 85, 2005: 190).

commonly created a new hype on the geopolitics of the Arctic: resources, maritime transportation and fisheries. They are aimed to shed a realistic light on the appearing wonders of an ‘Arctic scramble’. It has to be noted, however, that a comprehensive picture of every single activity and its related development cannot be offered. The intention is to convey an Arctic-related picture that is built upon certain expectations but decisively hampered by uncertain global developments and manifold, interrelated variables.

4.4.2. Arctic Resources: An ‘Oil Dorado’?

A new “Arctic Gold Rush” (Howard 2009) essentially characterised the initial Arctic stories told when the region re-surfaced on the global agenda after two decades of ‘only’ regional considerations and international negligence. Ironically, the very melting of the Arctic sea ice actually yielded commodities that have essentially contributed to the sea ice’s decline in the first place: fossil fuels. However, as depicted by Stokke, “the relationship between these environmental changes and the commercial viability of Arctic economic activities is not straightforward” (2011: 838). Especially early interpretations of scientific assessments have communicated an Arctic hydrocarbon resource future as “commercial bonanza”, indicating and echoing figures that have not only turned out to be too optimistic but essentially conveyed a one-dimensional, simplistic concept of ‘Arctic oil and gas’ (Zysk 2011: 91; Østhagen 2013c). Already in 2000, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) published an assessment of worldwide oil and gas resources that, yet unsystematically, included some Arctic areas (USGS 2000).¹²² However, although the USGS indicated a lack of sufficient data concerning the region’s hydrocarbon resource potential, the appraisal was commonly quoted ostensibly indicating that the Arctic holds 25% of the world’s undiscovered oil and gas resources (Krauss et al. 2005; Hargreaves 2006; Borgerson 2008) – a statement actually never made by the USGS (Bailey 2007; Powell 2008). Additionally, a continuously rising oil price between 2004 and 2008 mixed with perceptions of little excess capacity and instability in the Middle East excessively contributed to readings of an oil-rich and

¹²² For a historical overview on (onshore) commercial oil activities in Canada, Russia and the U.S., see (AMAP 2007: 14–16; Budzik 2009: 3–4).

highly profitable Arctic future (Offerdal 2009: 153; Claes & Harsem 2010). Essentially, higher outselling energy prices contributed to that one-side picture. The international learning process on how to evaluate melting ice and the potential access to resources still seems to be on-going. However, a more nuanced perspective on the hydrocarbon resources potential of the region has slowly found its way into the offices and minds of policymakers, researchers and journalists.

What Is *Potentially* There?

The 2000 USGS figures of “25 percent of all untapped reserves” (Hargreaves 2006) were prominently re-produced with many commentators not only swaying between ‘oil resources’ and ‘hydrocarbon resources’ (that is, oil *and* gas) but essentially not sufficiently highlighting the mere fact that the resources were (and as a matter of fact still are) *undiscovered* (Powell 2008: 829).¹²³ The image of an Arctic ‘Oil Dorado’ peaked after the USGS’ 2008 *Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal (CARA)*, an evaluation of the oil and gas resource potential north of the Arctic Circle (Bird et al. 2008). Accordingly, the Arctic *may* contain 22% of the world’s undiscovered conventional oil and natural gas resources, which amounts to about 13% of the mean estimated global undiscovered oil resources, 30% of global undiscovered conventional gas and 20% of the world’s natural gas liquids, translating into a total of oil and natural gas reserves of approximately 412 billion barrels of oil equivalents (bboe) (Ibid.; Budzik 2009: 5–6).¹²⁴ It was further stressed that about 84% of the undiscovered oil and gas are estimated to be located on the Arctic’s continental shelves, an area (yet) essentially unexplored with respect to petroleum (Bird et al. 2008). Keil illustrated that 215.94 bboe (52%) of these expected Arctic hydrocarbons are located on Russian territory, 83.31 bboe (20%) in the U.S., 47.46 bboe (12%) in Norway, 44.49 bboe (11%) in Denmark (Greenland) and 22.08 bboe (5%) in Canada (2013a: 82–83). Consequently, it has been estimated that the Eurasian continent holds about 63% of the total resources and is mainly

¹²³ The term ‘petroleum reserves’ describes the estimates of the amount of oil a gas that can be exploited from already proven fields. The term ‘resources’ indicates estimates of all stocks, including undiscovered resources that might be found after further exploration (Ocean Futures 2006: 1).

¹²⁴ Oil equivalents are used to collectively describe oil, gas and condensate. The USGS uses a natural gas to oil conversion factor in which 6,000 cubic feet of natural gas equals 1 barrel of crude oil (Budzik 2009: 5). The indicated 412 bboe are the total of approximately 90 million barrels of oil, 1,669 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 44 million barrels of natural gas liquids (Bird et al. 2008).

natural gas-prone while the North American continent holds about 35% and is more oil-prone (Budzik 2009: 7). It was in particular the European Arctic and considerable discoveries of oil and gas reserves in the Barents, Pechora and Kara Seas, such as the Snøhvit and Shtokman gas fields or the Prirazlomnoye oil field, that have caused Norwegian and Russian optimism during the first decade of the 21st century (Ocean Futures 2006: 1).

Although the assessment provided by CARA showed a more nuanced picture than the 2000 appraisal and explicitly stressed that the estimates did not include technological or economic risks (Gautier et al. 2009: 1178), the Arctic region was quickly publically branded as “new energy province” (Østhagen 2013c). It sparked global interests in the region regardless the fact that large uncertainties associated with resource estimates still existed (Lindholt & Glomsrød 2012: 1466).

Economic Variables

However, even *if* the Arctic region holds a large share of hydrocarbon resources, the relative importance, viability and profitability of Arctic production is difficult to assess due to a complex set of variables, essentially to be summarised by two interrelated factors: 1) the cost of retrieving the estimated resources and 2) future expectations on oil and gas prices obtained on a market that is constantly in flux (Lindholt 2006: 36; Harsem, Eide & Heen 2011: 8044; Østhagen 2013a: 6). The ‘in the field’ variables include *inter alia* the Arctic’s (still) harsh and difficult to predict environment, the higher development and production costs due to the region’s extreme environment, related needed offshore expertise, transportation considerations and the distinct influence of national policies and legislation in the respective Arctic oil and gas producing countries. ‘External’ factors basically include the global energy picture and specifically market conditions (such as the changing oil and gas price, lower developing and production costs in other regions (gas-on-gas competition) or the available infrastructure in customer countries, especially with regard to liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals), technological innovation, a growing demand for non-renewable energy, developments in the fields of energy efficiency, the sizes of until-now undiscovered accumulations or changing geopolitical

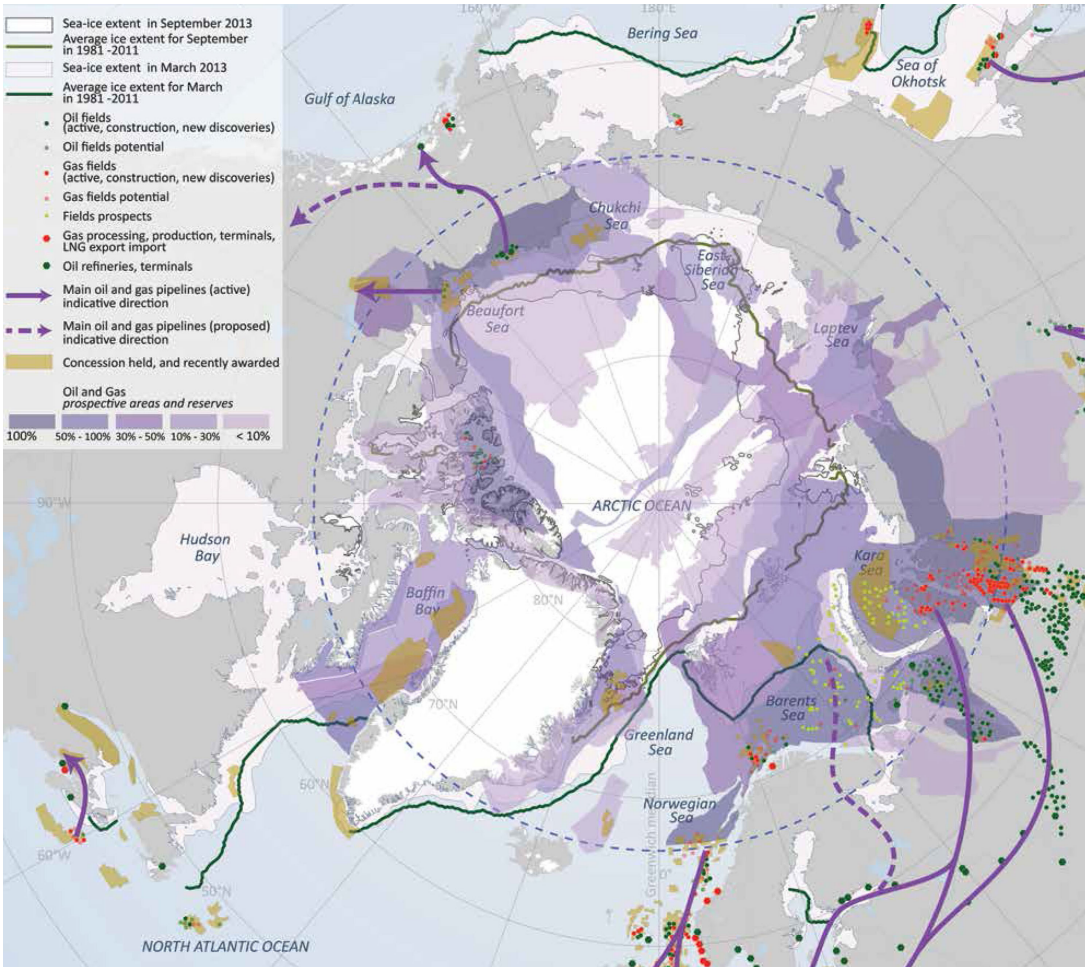
circumstances (Gautier et al. 2009: 1178; Harsem, Eide & Heen 2011: 8044; Raspotnik 2012; Ernst & Young 2013: 5).

From the European Arctic to the U.S.: a Reality Check

The Arctic is typically considered a “long-term investment” (Emmerson & Lahn 2012: 22) with a complex interplay of various forces that impedes the strategic decisions-making process by the interested stakeholders. Consequently, reality has superseded the initially highly optimistic outlooks on the future of the Arctic as a new energy frontier during the last decade.¹²⁵ The following paragraphs exemplify this on-going reality check and briefly illustrate recently successful or less effective development processes in the various national ‘Arctics’. Figure XVIII (page 136) illustrates related activities, potentials and prospects in the broader North, visualising a large concentration of (onshore) oil and gas endeavours in the Russian Arctic and indicating an increasing amount of exploration efforts in the Barents Sea.

¹²⁵ For a comprehensive overview on Arctic oil and gas developments during the last decade, *see* (Moe 2010; Keil 2013a: 79–135; RepRisk 2013).

Figure XVIII: Main Oil and Gas Areas, Mining Sites and Sea-Ice Extent in the Arctic



Source: (Łuszczuk et al. 2014: 74–75). The map was slightly edited for the purposes of this dissertation.

On the European part of the Arctic Ocean the Norwegian Snøhvit gas field came on stream in 2007. Snøhvit, which is located in the Barents Sea is Europe’s first and the world’s northernmost gas field with a connected LNG facility. Discovered in the late 1980s, Snøhvit and its neighbouring gas fields Albatross and Askeladden have proven reserves of approximately 173 billion cubic metres of natural gas, 22 million cubic metres of condensate and 9 million tons of natural gas liquids (Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy & Norwegian Petroleum Directorate 2012: 90). The project was actually delayed several times and only got a green light in 2000 after relevant tax concessions and positive market signals from the U.S. as a potential LNG customer hub (Moe 2010: 229). However, due to the U.S.’ increased energy independence, Snøhvit’s LNG is nowadays primarily shipped to countries in Europe

and Asia (Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy & Norwegian Petroleum Directorate 2014: 45). Also Norway's most prominent Arctic oil field, the Goliat field, was considerably delayed. Located south of Snøhvit and discovered in 2000 with reserves of approximately 31 million cubic meter of oil, the world's northernmost offshore oil field was supposed to start in 2013 but eventually only produced its first oil in March 2016 (Nilsen 2016). Although the oil discoveries of the Skrugard and Harvis fields in 2011 and 2012, respectively, sparked Norway's Arctic energy optimism, the most recent regional efforts in the Barents Sea were rather disappointing (McGwin 2014c; Nilsen 2015).

Expectations are currently also high in Iceland with envisaged commercial oil discoveries off the Icelandic coast by 2025 (Valdimarsson 2012). By 2014, three drilling licences for areas northeast of Iceland were already awarded with China's National Offshore Oil Corporation signing a 60% deal early this year and making the company the first Chinese one to be involved in oil explorations in the Arctic region (National Energy Authority 2014a; Mainwaring 2014). It is in particular the Dreki region, an area north-east of Iceland and south of Norway's Jan Mayen island that Iceland is presently pinning its hydrocarbon hopes on (McGwin 2014a).¹²⁶

On the Russian side of the Barents Sea, the Shtokman gas field, once labelled as the "new gold mine" (Bingen 2008: 26) has still not come on stream despite the field itself being one of the world's largest natural gas fields, an already established international consortium to exploit the field and the initially alleged strategic importance of the gas field for Russia's energy production and international and European energy security (Nilsson & Filimonova 2013: 12). The project was officially halted in August 2012 with the Russian state-controlled gas company Gazprom indefinitely having postponed an investment decision on the field due to questions of profitability (Marson 2012).¹²⁷ In contrast, the Prirazlomnoye field, an oil field containing 72 million tons of oil reserves, which are approximately 530 billion barrels of oil, was the first offshore oil development in the Arctic. After years of delay the first oil from Prirazlomnoye was shipped in April 2014 and is expected

¹²⁶ However, the first exclusive license in the Dreki area, issued in January 2013 was already relinquished in December 2014 (National Energy Authority 2014b).

¹²⁷ In June 2014, Total proposed to Gazprom to restart the project using new technological solutions (Barentsnova 2014).

to reach an oil production of 6 million tons/year in 2020 (Gazprom 2014; McGwin 2014b). In addition to the already existing Arctic projects in Russia, the Yamal peninsula is of particular strategic relevance as, for instance, the Yamal LNG project with a projected 16.5 million tons of LNG per year is supposed to go on stream in 2018. Hopes are also high with regard to the Kara Sea oil basin with a publically expected volume comparable to the resource base of Saudi Arabia. In September 2014, the Russian Rosneft and the U.S. Exxon Mobil have successfully completed drilling of the Universitetskaya-1 well located in one of three East-Prinovozemelsky areas with an overall expected volume of 87 billion barrels of oil equivalent (bboe) (Rosneft 2014). However, western sanctions imposed on Russia over the 2013/2014 unrest in Ukraine could jeopardise these projects and Russia's Arctic energy ambitions in general (Bierman 2014; Chazan & Farchy 2014; Nilsen 2014a; The Moscow Times 2014; Graeber 2014). The International Energy Agency analysed Russia's Arctic offshore potential in its *World Energy Outlook 2011* and assumed that due to logistical challenges Russia's CS would not become a major production area before 2035 (2011: 295).

On the opposing shore of the Arctic Ocean, an economic Arctic oil and gas success story is even further from being written, although several exploration activities have been conducted in Canada, Greenland and the U.S. over the last years. Though several companies hold exploration licences in the Beaufort Sea, no offshore drilling is currently occurring in the Canadian Arctic (Ernst & Young 2013: 8). Similarly, and with the USGS expecting 44 bboe to be located in Greenland's offshore areas, no development has yet taken place. Related efforts by the British Cairn Energy have not revealed any commercially feasible recoveries (Bird et al. 2008; Gautier et al. 2009; Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 112). In the U.S. it was particular the Dutch Shell and its U.S. subsidiary Shell Oil that has come to "symbolise the problems associated with Arctic drilling" based on the enormous investments taken without yet striking any oil and severe environmental and social concerns due to the grounding of the Kulluk oil rig in 2012 (Martin 2014b; Funk 2014). In February 2014, the company decided not to drill in Arctic waters offshore Alaska in 2014 and may abandon Arctic drilling indefinitely after a company's decision to be taken in

March 2015 (Weaver & McGwin 2014; Cunningham 2014). However, Shell's Arctic story reveals a lot about an already indicated vagueness with regard to any future (economic) prediction about the Arctic region. In summer 2015 the company's Arctic endeavour re-changed when eventually receiving final and necessary permits for exploration drilling in the Chukchi Sea, which started soon after. And yet, it was indicated that even though the project potentially be sanctioned by 2020, production will not start before 2030 (Ahmed 2015); an assessment that was only days later reduced to absurdity when Shell announced that it "will now cease further exploration activity in offshore Alaska for the foreseeable future", based on disappointing exploration outcomes (Royal Dutch Shell 2015).

And for the Future?

In a convincing analysis of different Arctic scenarios determined by varying petroleum prices and resource endowments up to 2050, Lindholt & Glomsrød concluded that the future Arctic share of global production would be around 8-10% (2012: 1473). However, the share of the more promising natural gas resources of Arctic is supposed to be lower in 2050 than in 2012 due to cheap and abundant reserves in other regions and countries, like Qatar and Iran and the development of unconventional natural gas, as for instance shale gas from rock formations, currently mainly established in the U.S. but with envisaged global potential (Budzik 2009; U.S. Energy Information Administration 2011, 2013; KPMG Global Energy Institute 2011; Lindholt & Glomsrød 2012: 1473). Decreasing oil prices in 2014, partly influenced by extensive U.S. shale gas production or remaining high production output by Saudi Arabia and its allies, seemed to amplify this assessment with, for example Statoil clearly stating that Arctic projects will only be pursued if commercially viable. Consequently, energy experts argued for a more patient Arctic energy approach, especially if considering that energy prices will pick up at some point (Nilsen 2014b; Koranyi & Fouche 2014; Financial Times 2014). However, the many unknowns and uncertainties with regard to hydrocarbon resource exploitation counteract Exner-Pirot's (2012) provocative prediction that the future primary actors in the Arctic are going to be oil companies instead of nation states.

Mining in the Arctic

With romanticised potentials of an ‘oily’ Arctic future (again) dominating the public perception over the last decade, the immediate importance for many Arctic countries’ economies of other resources, mainly minerals, are often forgotten. As coal deposits on Svalbard were already exploited in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, mining has a longer Arctic history than hydrocarbon production (Emmerson & Lahn 2012: 26). Arctic mining ranges from lead, copper and diamonds to gold, zinc, iron ore and coal. The most profitable and known mining sites are the world’s largest underground iron ore mine in Kiruna, the Norilsk Nickel site (palladium and nickel) in Krasnoyarsk Krai (Russia) near the Yenisei River, the Red Dog Mine (zinc) in Alaska or the Diavik diamond mine in Canada (Bambulyak, Rautio & Grigoriev 2012: 8; Emmerson & Lahn 2012: 26–27; Keil 2013a: 79). To express the Arctic share of global production of minerals in terms of percentage, Lindholt stated that the region, in particular the Russian Arctic, contributes as much as 40% of palladium, 26% of diamond gem stones, 23% of industrial diamonds, 3,6% of silver 2,3% of iron ore, 1,9% of bauxite or 0,3% of titanium to global production (2006: 30–32). Although the long-term potential for economic development are considered often better for minerals than for hydrocarbons (Emmerson & Lahn 2012: 26), production and exploitation remains seldom until now with more than 200 initially announced Arctic mining projects over the last years being either abandoned or in an early planning stage (Macdonald & Miller 2014). Similarly to hydrocarbon resource exploration and exploitation the Arctic’s minerals situation is one of predicted potentials in a largely unexplored area with severe challenges concerning the environment, logistics and the needed infrastructure, competitors from other regions, global demand and a related price market being constantly in flux. Particularly Greenland has experienced these ups and downs over the last few years. The island’s self-rule government aims to make raw materials such as iron ore, copper, zinc, rare earth elements, gold and gemstones one of the autonomous country’s primary sources of income (Keil 2013a: 79). In February 2014, the government published its oil and mineral strategy for 2014-2018 with an ambitious schedule planned, promoting the island as a destination for the international mining industry (Government of Greenland 2014). However, although

large-scale mining is expected to take place in Greenland, a considerable slowdown in related and needed external investments has been recently observed (Boersma & Foley 2014: VI).

Summary

The Arctic resource picture is one of many unknowns and consequently determined by uncertain developments. It partially gained relevance by something that “was not anything revelatory” – the USGS 2008 appraisal (Hough 2013: 41). In that regard, Hough argued that it has been “the spectacle of the robotic Russian flag-bearer that elevated the significance of the survey [in particular]” (Ibid.: 41) and essentially the importance of Arctic (hydrocarbon) resources in general. Instead of an Arctic ‘boom’ the region is expected to see an “oil ‘saunter’” (Ibid.: 41) with an industry carefully reassessing the (economic) pros and cons of an already expensive endeavour. Yet, a variable currently often pointed out as future ‘pro’ for Arctic hydrocarbon resource exploitation highlights a related ‘thirst’ for Arctic energy by Asian states, in particular China, India, Japan and South Korea (Park 2013; Kaiman 2013; Katakey & Kennedy 2013; Wegge 2014; Staalesen 2014a, b; Lanteigne 2014). Furthermore, it is assumed that an Asian-directed energy development could also give boost to the 2nd Arctic spatiality much discussed and referred to over the last decade: maritime transportation (Bennett 2014a, b).

4.4.3. Arctic Maritime Transportation: Putting Ships in Place?

The Arctic’s sea ice retreat has not only produced ‘foretelling masterpieces’ concerning the region’s hydrocarbon future but essentially also re-fuelled perceptions of the Arctic Ocean as potential “Arctic Highway” (Børresen 2008a) – a maritime motorway that, if economically competitive, could in the long term alter global maritime trade and vie with the traditional trading routes via the Suez or Panama Canal due to shorter distances between major world markets in Europe, Asia and North America. As already illustrated in Subchapter 4.1 and Figure X (page 89), three routes brand the Arctic’s geographical maritime transportation picture: the NEP, the NWP and the TSR. Although the Arctic’s hydrocarbon riches were undoubtedly considered essential for the imposed global importance of the region, it

was the “polar express” that was believed to be an even “greater prize” (Borgerson 2008: 68). In addition to the absence of piracy and the Arctic region’s relative political stability, maritime shortcuts across the top of the world were, and as a matter of fact still are, continuously used to highlight the region’s transportation advantages (Krauss et al. 2005; Omestad 2008; Troszczynski 2013), indicating, for instance, a considerable shorter sailing distance between Rotterdam and Yokohama of 6,500 nm via the NSR as compared to 11,200 nm via the Suez route and related distance savings of more than 40% (Borgerson 2008: 69), *see also* (Arctic Council 2009a: 44). The realisation of the long-lost dream of navigation through the different seas of the Arctic Ocean, highly coveted by the 19th century’s Arctic explorers, finally seemed within reach (Hough 2013: 21), especially with both the NEP and NWP being ice-free at the same time for a couple of weeks in September 2008, the first time ever since the first satellite measurements started in the 1970s (ESA 2008). It is, however, essential to note, that especially the NSR has already been an important shipping route before the region’s public re-appearance in the early 21st century. For the USSR, the NSR was a crucial, yet heavily subsidised, entirely domestic route with traffic peaking in 1987 and 6.58 million tons of cargo carried by 331 ships over 1306 voyages (Arctic Council 2009a: 44; Buixadé Farré et al. 2014: 302). In comparison to the NSR, the NWP saw 43 complete transits until 1991 and an overall 135 by the end of the 2009-shipping season (Headland 2010: 1 and 5).

What Kind of Arctic Shipping and Which Variables to Consider

The Arctic maritime transportation system is characterised by four types of voyages that can be undertaken in the Arctic Ocean and its bordering waters: 1) destinational transport, 2) intra-Arctic transport, 3) trans-Arctic transport and 4) cabotage (Arctic Council 2009a: 12).¹²⁸ High potentials for increased shipping activities are particularly ascribed to the NEP/NSR, especially in relation to destinational transport, that is shipping for any activity with an origin or destination in the Arctic, and trans-Arctic shipping, that are voyages using the Arctic Ocean as a marine link between the Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans. Currently, most shipping

¹²⁸ While intra-Arctic transport refers to marine activities within the region, linking two or more Arctic states, cabotage terms marine transport or trade in coastal waters within one Arctic state (Arctic Council 2009a: 12).

throughout the Arctic, both in context of destinational and trans-Arctic transportation consists of the carriage of various resources extracted either onshore or offshore in the Arctic and delivered to world markets either with oil and LNG tankers or bulk carriers. In addition, destinational shipping also includes fishing vessels, scientific research operations, passenger vessels and tourist cruises and smaller cargo vessels, all mostly operating in summer (Ibid.: 12; Buixadé Farré et al. 2014: 301; Stephenson, Brigham & Smith 2014: 112).¹²⁹

As highlighted in the previous Section 4.4.2, the broader Arctic region is supposed to hold a high potential of various resources, both hydrocarbons and minerals with many interconnected variables eventually not only influencing their discovery but essentially also their exploitation. Consequently, uncertainties determine the very extraction of these resources and a resultant appraisal on the likelihood of increasing bulk resource transport from the Arctic into global markets. The potentials are undoubtedly given, the probability of ‘when’ and ‘how much’ however remains rather vague, having direct repercussions on the potential growth of destinational shipping. Two of these uncertainties are the already indicated Shtokman project or the Yamal LNG project and its eventual implementation. The Yamal LNG project is currently considered crucial for the development of the NSR as an all-year round shipping route (Moe 2014: 791).¹³⁰

Additionally, the one-dimensional focus on the ‘distance’ variable has led to public belief of ‘golden Arctic routes’ concerning the potentials of trans-Arctic cargo and container shipping that is not able to match up to reality. The anticipated economic advantages are too often publically assumed by using a rather simplified formula with shorter sailing distances allowing for faster trips and consequently resulting in cost savings for the concerned shipping companies (Humpert & Raspotnik 2012: 291). However, this “common-sense hypothesis has barely been tested” (Lasserre 2011: 803). The simplicity of such a calculation neglects several

¹²⁹ Marine-based tourism represents a significant proportion of vessel activity in the Arctic, mainly in the ice-free waters of Norway, Svalbard, Iceland and Greenland, ranging from small expedition style vessels to large luxury cruise liners (Ibid.: 78–81; Lasserre & Têtu 2015).

¹³⁰ In February 2015 it was announced that for the very first time oil from the Novy Port field, an onshore field on the Yamal Peninsula, was sent along the NSR in winter conditions (Pettersen 2015).

decisive variables that have to be considered and can be summarised by one basic question: what kind of product is bound for what market and destination, shipped from what point of origin? Or as Keil put it, “trading patterns are equally important as possible distance savings” (2013a: 136). International seaborne trade basically depends on three key factors: predictability, punctuality and economy-of-scale. In other words, a just-in-time system that relies on precise schedules for loading, shipping and unloading of large-scale quantities of goods, usually bound for the globe’s powerful centres and their *hinterlands* with several stopovers on the route in order to maximise the potential market (Lasserre 2011: 805; Humpert & Raspotnik 2012: 292–293). With both the NEP and NWP constrained by draft and beam restrictions only ‘smaller’ container vessels are able to traverse these routes, which consequently lead to fewer containers loaded and less related profit made (Carmel 2013). Furthermore, geographical ‘break-even points’, significantly decrease the alleged savings of distances, making the Arctic routes irrelevant for many significant global markets, such as South East Asia (Keil 2013a: 136–137; Humpert 2013: 10).

In addition to these economic parameters, that furthermore include questions of insurance, permits and fees for icebreaker assistance, maritime transportation considerations across the Arctic Ocean are influenced by still persistent legal uncertainties along the NEP and NWP, as already briefly indicated in Section 4.3.1, and specific technological and infrastructure-related challenges due to the Arctic’s weather conditions. Despite the on-going decrease of multi-year sea ice, harsh weather conditions, low visibility and persisting severe sea ice conditions throughout the winter season and intermittent fog in all seasons remain important technical obstacles to navigation purposes in the Arctic (Buixadé Farré et al. 2014: 312). Further significant hindrances continue to be *inter alia* the icing from sea spray, wind chills, the remoteness and related implications for search and rescue and emergency operations, the lack of reliable weather forecasts or floating sea ice during the summer season (Humpert & Raspotnik 2012: 287).

The Reality Check

In order to comprehend the complex picture of Arctic shipping in the context of international maritime trade and resource considerations, various scholars have scrutinised the still predominant, dreamy reflections of the Arctic's future as global maritime motorway. The most recent feasibility analyses and modelling studies of potential future maritime activity in the Arctic have predominantly focused on the NEP/NSR (Ragner 2000; Arpiainen & Kiili 2006; Verny & Grigentin 2009; DNV 2010; Liu & Kronbak 2010; Schøyen & Bråthen 2011; Buixadé Farré et al. 2014; Stephenson, Brigham & Smith 2014), the NWP (Somanathan, Flynn & Szymanski 2009; Bourbonnais & Lasserre 2015), the TSR (Humpert & Raspotnik 2012), technically accessible areas in general (Stephenson, Smith & Agnew 2011) but have also scrutinised the 'Arctic' intentions of ship-owners (Lasserre & Pelletier 2011; Huang, Lasserre & Alexeeva 2015), aspects of fuel consumptions and related emissions (Paxian et al. 2010; Peters et al. 2011) or presented a decision-support model identifying the most viable ice class for a liner vessel (Erikstad & Ehlers 2012). In general, the studies have shown that the three Arctic routes, in consideration of the predicted Arctic's decreasing sea ice during summer months, can potentially be shorter between different global markets, however not necessarily faster or more cost-efficient due to the mentioned economic parameters concerning the various commodities to be transported.

As a matter of fact, the actual numbers of vessels transiting through the NEP and NWP – the TSR still remains a hypothetical one – over the last years have validated the sceptical tone of the mentioned studies. International attention towards the alleged promises of Arctic shipping was explicitly enhanced by the 2009 voyage of two German cargo vessels that delivered 41 heavy lift modules from Ulsan (South Korea) to Novy Port in the Gulf of Ob (Russia), saving 3,000 nm and 10 days by using the NSR as compared to the 'normal' Suez Canal route (Nilsen 2009; Stokke 2013: 74; Moe 2014: 787). The following summer, the heavy ice-class bulk carrier *Nordic Barents* was the first non-Russian flagged vessel that fully transited the NSR/NEP, carrying 41,000 tons of iron ore from Kirkenes (Norway) to China (Nilsen 2010). From 2010 onwards transits via the NSR have increased drastically, however as Moe put it concisely, "in relative terms [only]" (2014: 787). From 2010

to 2013 transits increased from 4 to 71 but fell to 22 in 2014, with cargo volumes also growing until 2012 but falling slightly in 2013 (Northern Sea Route Information Office 2013, 2014; Moe 2014: 787).¹³¹ The majority of commodities shipped, as exemplified here by the 2013 numbers, are oil products, followed by iron ore, general cargo and coal (Humpert 2014: 5–8). However, as emphasised by Humpert, the NSR “exhibits a strong bias for eastbound journeys”, indicating that more cargo is actually delivered from Europe to Asia than *vice versa* (Ibid.: 4). The picture is vaguely different for hydrocarbon resources with oil products going both ways on the NSR and making the route “useful for taking advantage for price differentials between Pacific and European markets”, although the total volumes remain rather small (Moe 2014: 790).

Despite these rather low numbers, or conceivably because of it, single transits still create broad public attention. In 2013, the Chinese *Yong Sheng* was the first Chinese cargo vessels to transport container goods (steel and heavy equipment) from Dalian (China) to Rotterdam using the NSR (Keil & Raspotnik 2013). On the other side of the Arctic Ocean, the 2013 NWP transit of the *Nordic Orion* “market a new phase of Arctic navigation” (Marsh Risk Management Research 2014: 1). The *Nordic Orion* shipped coal from Vancouver to Pori (Finland), saved about 1,000 nm, 4-5 days, \$80,000 in fuel costs and could, in addition, load more coal than would have been possible via the Panama Canal (McGarrity & Gloystein 2013; Stueck 2013). In 2014, the *Nunavik* was the first commercial vessels that made an unescorted voyage through the NWP, loaded with Arctic cargo, 23,000 tons of nickel concentrate from Deception Bay (Quebec, Canada) on its journey to Bayuquan (China) (Farquhar 2014).

Summary

Notwithstanding the promising numbers in cost and time savings, the Arctic’s shipping routes are still far from becoming potential ‘silk roads’ for maritime trade considerations between Europe, Asia and North America. Too many climatic-conditioned, economic, legal, but essentially also environmental variables determine Arctic shipping considerations, making it difficult to precisely predict near-, medium

¹³¹ According to Humpert only 41 of the 71 transits qualify as “full transits” (2014: 4) and just 28 out of the 71 had departures or destinations outside Russia (Moe 2014: 788).

and long-term future developments. With the TSR remaining a hypothetical route and the NWP a hardly used one, the interested eyes are set on the NEP/NSR. Although the overall conditions undoubtedly improved over the last two decades, uncertainty remains on the ‘how much’ and ‘when’ (Moe 2014: 799). Today’s prevailing opinion perceives Arctic shipping in general, and the NEP/NSR in particular, as a potential strong niche for certain commodities and specific markets, essentially feasible for a limited of operators only and a considerable amount of seasonal destination transportation. Consequently, Arctic hydrocarbon resource exploitation *could* become a regional related shipping enhancer, yet with a certain improbability continuing (Lasserre 2011: 807; Humpert & Raspotnik 2012: 300–301; Humpert 2014: 11). Similar to the hydrocarbon picture drawn, also the shipping one is determined by long-term strategic considerations with a rather uncertain outcome in the years ahead. It is not the theoretical potential that is lacking, it is fundamentally the question *how* – to what extent and at what pace – Arctic potentials for economic opportunities concerning to hydrocarbon resources and maritime transportation are eventually actualised (Mikkola & Käpylä 2013: 3). It is essentially “more of a possibility for tomorrow than a reality of today” (Aaltola et al. 2014: 136).

4.4.4. Arctic Fisheries: An Abundance of Riches?

In comparison to the generated public attention and the related created stories over the golden potential of Arctic resources and maritime transportation, regional fisheries were publically only put in second place. In the majority of the already quoted sources on the ‘geopolitics of Arctic melt’ or the ‘scramble of the Arctic’, Arctic fisheries and its future potential were undeniably part of the story. However, they did not produce pictures of a ‘golden Arctic fishing future’ or an ‘Arctic protein bonanza’.¹³²

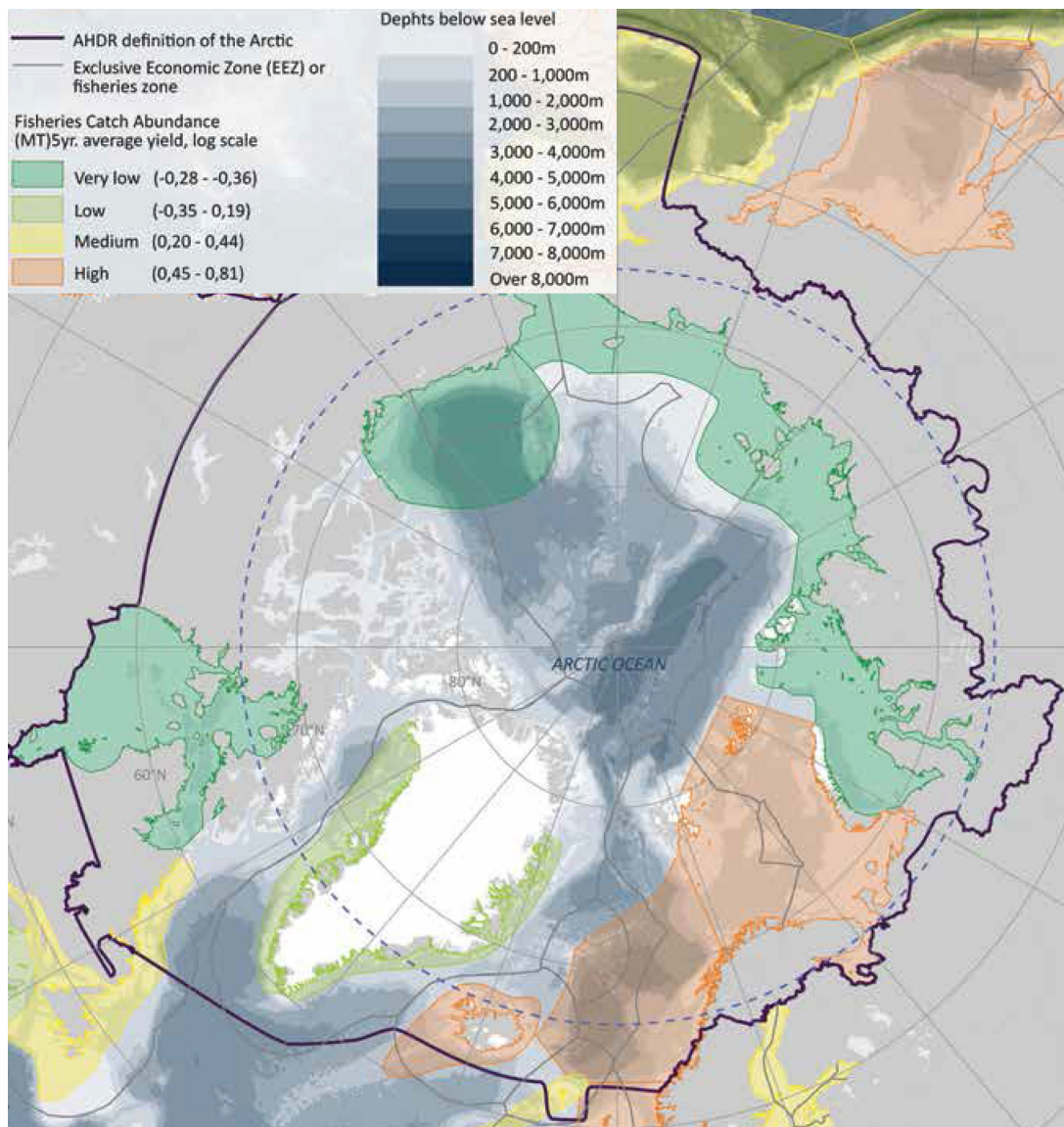
It is generally accepted that the effects of climate change (will) affect the Arctic’s marine fish stocks; however, due to a number of variables, as for instance ocean temperatures, water mass mixing or upwelling, that are normally not

¹³² Exceptions of course confirm the rule, *see* (Børresen 2008b: 5; Skogrand 2008: 11).

considered in climate models, any predictions on the actual long-term effects on both the region's fish stocks and related socio-economic consequences remain of tentative nature only (ACIA 2005: 692; Wassmann et al. 2011). As basically highlighted by Hollowed et al., "there are many unknown factors that might have an impact on the future distribution of fish stocks" (2013: 366). Nevertheless, it is noted that moderate warming of the Arctic Ocean and its surrounding waters will improve conditions for some of most important commercial fish stocks, such as Atlantic cod or herring (ACIA 2005: 692), facilitating a northward extension of several stocks (CAFF 2013b: 193–245; Hollowed, Planque & Loeng 2013; Hoel 2014). Hence, fisheries in a yet non-fished Central Arctic Ocean could potentially occur at some point in the long-term future.

Based on marine ecosystem characteristics the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment distinguished between four major Arctic and Subarctic fisheries: 1) Northeast Atlantic (Barents Sea and Norwegian Sea), 2) Central North Atlantic (Iceland and Greenland area), 3) Northeast Canada (Newfoundland and Labrador area) and 4) North Pacific (Bering Sea). Circumpolar species include *inter alia* capelin, Greenland halibut, northern shrimp, polar cod and those of commercial importance in specific regions, as for instance Atlantic cod, haddock, Alaska Pollock, Pacific cod or snow crab (2005: 693). The Arctic's current fisheries' catch abundance and biological productivity is illustrated in Figure XIX (page 149) highlighting a particular high abundance in the Northeast Atlantic. In addition to the maritime areas of the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland, the Northeast Atlantic is one of four main regions of fisheries in the European Arctic (European Environment Agency 2004: 20).

Figure XIX: Large Marine Ecosystems – Catch Abundance



Source: (Arnarsson & Justus 2014: 59). The file was slightly edited for the purpose of this dissertation.

Although the current global relevance of Arctic fish captures is rather low, underscored by a 4% share of global fisheries (3.5 million tons per year), Arctic fish is an important export commodity for the A5 (Rudloff 2010: 11; Keil 2013a: 199 – 207).¹³³ As a matter of fact, Arctic fisheries form one of the backbones of the economy of almost all coastal and island areas in the Arctic, including subsistence activities of many indigenous communities in Canada, Russia and the U.S. (Duhaime

¹³³ Economic relevancy, however, is not only gained via the more traditional fishing of certain fish stocks but essentially also includes significant numbers from aquaculture (Arnarsson & Justus 2014: 60).

2004: 72; Keil 2013a: 206). From a European perspective, “fisheries and related activities is the single most important component of the economy in Iceland, accounting for 27% of GDP in 2011”, a significant regional factor in Northern Norway and generating more than 90% of export earnings of both Greenland and the Faroe Islands (Arnarsson & Justus 2014: 57). However, due to a multitude of different definitions of the Arctic’s fishing and statistical areas, a sound and distinct economic analysis comes with certain difficulties (Rudloff 2010: 8). In addition to the not yet fully understood effects of climate change on the different species in the Arctic, several other challenges and risks affect the Arctic’s marine ecosystem and its related fisheries. This entails in particular the lack of data and scientific knowledge on the sizes of the Arctic’s fish stocks and related uncertainty with regard to fisheries management as a consequence thereof but also the danger of overfishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in general (Ibid.: 5–8; Keil 2013a: 195–198).

The Legal Situation

Relevant international forums and instruments applying to the marine Arctic and addressing certain risks and challenges include *inter alia* the already outlined LOS Convention and its related Fish Stocks Agreement, all legally and non-legally binding instruments of the Food and Agriculture Organization, non-binding resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly or the Convention on Biological Diversity. As both the LOS Convention and the Fish Stocks Agreement are in many ways ‘only’ framework conventions, they do not contain any substantive standards of fisheries regulation, such as the total allowable catch, its allocation or restrictions on by-catch of non-targeted species. Related questions are dealt by the Arctic states individually, or jointly via bilateral agreements or regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) (Molenaar 2012a: 64–65). Some examples of related agreements or RFMO, that deal with certain fisheries on a regional and sub-regional basis, are: the Joint Norwegian-Russian Fisheries Commission, the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) or the

North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC).¹³⁴ The high sea pocket of the Central Arctic Ocean is currently not covered by any RFMO, although NEAFC has the mandate to adopt related measures in one portion of that area. The topic of a Central Arctic Ocean RFMO was, however, discussed in April/May 2013 when the A5 met to particularly address questions on potential future fisheries in these waters. It was agreed upon that a RFMO for that specific area is currently not necessary, with interim measures to be developed until the potential establishment of a Central Arctic Ocean RFMO. The A5 particularly concluded initiatives on these matters, meaning interim measures and a future RFMO, shall be taken by “the States whose exclusive economic zones border this high sea areas” – the A5 (U.S. Department of State 2013). In March 2014, the A5 agreed on temporarily ban fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean until an appropriate regulatory system has been enacted (Johannessen 2014). A consequent declaration of interim measures in order to prevent unregulated commercial fishing in this portion of the Arctic Ocean was eventually signed in July 2015 (Canada et al. 2015; U.S. Department of State 2015). In particular Iceland criticised the respective A5 ‘solo action’ and the exclusion of the remaining three Arctic states (= Finland, Iceland and Sweden) in the related discussions (Quinn 2015).

In general Arctic fisheries are currently managed in a rather cooperative manner between the various states involved. The only exception to that rule concerns the disputed maritime zones around Svalbard and the FPZ established by Norway in 1977, *see inter alia* (Hønneland 2001; Molenaar 2012b).

Another living resources that are harvested in most Arctic countries are marine mammals, in particular commercial harvest of minke whales in Iceland and Norway and related aboriginal one in Canada, Greenland, Russia and the U.S. and commercial and aboriginal sealing in Canada, Greenland, Norway and Russia. (Hoel 2009b: 450). The exploitation of marine mammals is a controversial topic with the broader public opinion either supporting or opposing it. As scrutinised in Section 4.3.2, it was especially the topic of sealing that lead to controversies between

¹³⁴ For an extensive list on existing institutions relevant for Arctic fisheries, including the present RFMOs, *see* (Keil 2013a: 210–232), for a comprehensive overview on Arctic fisheries, its spatial scope, national and international regulations, *see* (Molenaar & Corell 2009a).

Canada and the EU and significantly hampered the EU's Arctic institutional progress.

Summary

Over the last decade Arctic fisheries has not significantly aroused broader international public attention, especially if compared to the Arctic hydrocarbon and maritime transportation picture. A purely economic explanation could be the rather 'simple' fact that there is not yet a concentration of fish species of commercial interest in the Arctic Ocean's high seas, an area in any case (still) inaccessible for large-scale fishing efforts. Adjacent maritime areas are well managed by the A5, bilaterally and via related RFMOs. Questions on the effectiveness, responsibility and sustainability of these management efforts, however, dominate related discussion. Furthermore, it is essentially the question on how to protect the vulnerable Arctic (marine) ecosystems from influences of increased economic activities that has been a topic of discussion and debate over the last decade(s) and is consequently briefly dealt with in Subchapter 4.5.

4.4.5. And as for the Future?

The aim of Subchapter 4.4 was to illustrate, scrutinise and explain the tenor of the last decade's Arctic 'economic hot air', offering a comprehensive reality check on *Arctic interests*: the porous situation of the region's melting ice and permafrost and the economic impracticalities and opportunities thereof.

Geopolitics and its subsidiary of geoeconomics undoubtedly returned to the Arctic in the 21st century. Eventually, it was the broadcasted planting of a flag that triggered a global public Arctic discourse on geopolitics and security that was dominated by expressions such as 'race', 'scramble' or 'conflict' – manipulated by a "cold war legacy of Arctic geopolitical studies" (Heininen 2011b: 91) that among others cleaved to the hypothesis of a rational 'West' vs. an inconsistent 'East' (Smith 2007; Blunden 2009; Åtland 2011).

In general, many different voices highlighted an Arctic future that was based on a romanticised past of heroic explorations and Northern vision, Arctic

nationalism, an abundance of riches, a related gold-rush mood and an accordingly assumed inter-state conflict over the various (potentially) available resources.¹³⁵ However, many these envisaged futures of the Arctic were not based on a firmer contemporary foundation. Knecht underlined that the Arctic's future realities are, too a large extent, still 'only' imaginable scenarios (2012: 5–6). Partly based on dreamy and rosy speculations, geopolitical and geoeconomic realities of the region have been created "wholly irrespective of whether they correspond to internal or scientific realities" (Ingimundarson 2010: 21). The disequilibrium between rhetoric and reality, an imbalance often visible in IR, seems to be exceptionally distinct in the politics of the Arctic and the media surrounding it (Zysk 2011: 115; Hough 2013: 46). Hough emphasised that "[w]hilst global warming is rightly bringing much-needed attention to the needs of its indigenous populations, (...) an awful lot of hot air has been spoken about an Arctic oil rush, territorial scramble and new Cold War" (Ibid.: 47). Similarly, Keil concluded that the recent developments in Arctic energy development, maritime shipping and fisheries illustrate an exaggerated picture of the "Arctic as [future] 'prime real estate' of global significance" (2013c). The decoded picture of Arctic *resources*, *maritime transportation* and *fisheries* exemplified that the circumpolar North indeed has a global economic potential. However, the ultimate decision to exploit that potential does not only rest with Arctic stakeholders but is essentially a global economic decision of feasibility, profitability and socio-ecological willingness. Eventually, it is not about *when* the Arctic will become economically relevant on a global scale but rather *if?*¹³⁶

¹³⁵ However, this particularly Arctic perception of 'scramble' and 'conflict' was/is only one side of the region's discursive story. Especially from an Arctic-internal perspective, a second discourse emphasised the region's stability and peacefulness, predominantly supported by the fact of increased transboundary cooperation between the A8 as well as interrelations between the region's people and civil societies (Heininen 2011b: 91). In that regard, the sketched Arctic future is one of institutional, bi- and multilateral cooperation based on the economic interests of, but not exclusively, the A8 (Knecht & Keil 2013: 179). Over the last decade several analyses have validated the assumption of Arctic space being one of cooperation, rather than conflict, *see inter alia* (Brosnan, Leschine & Miles 2011; Keil 2013a; Wilson Rowe 2013).

¹³⁶ And yet, related stories of an Arctic economic boom remain to be written, *see inter alia* (Borgerson 2013; Troszczynski 2013; Miner 2013). Accordingly, the 'new' golden future of the Arctic is predominantly based on the emerging interests of Asian states, *see inter alia* (Rainwater 2013; Dadwal 2014; Huebert 2014).

4.5. Arctic Responsibilities: Adapting to a Changing Arctic

The globalisation of environmental concerns is a key characteristic of international politics in the late 20th century – a period of global ‘environmental awakening’ that eventually peaked in the 1980s with the discovery of ozone depletion and the general problem of global warming. The post-World War II generation was ultimately confronted with increased energy and resource consumption, rising levels of pollution and waste production and the rapid erosion of the world’s biodiversity (Vogler & Imber 1996; Eckersley 2007; O’Neill 2009). And related developments did not spare the Arctic, leading to an emerging (inter-state) discourse on questions of environmental security in the late 1980s, especially with respect to long-range air and water pollution, radioactivity, the phenomenon of Arctic haze but also environmental threats caused by military infrastructure and activities (Palosaari & Möller 2004: 256; Heininen 2013b: 40–43). By the turn of the millennium, the Arctic has become a matter of global environmental concern, decisively amplified by the effects of climate change with major physical, ecological, sociological and economic impacts to be then expected (Everett & Fitzharris 1998). Subchapter 4.4 explicitly highlighted the alleged positive effects of climate change and related economic opportunities that eventually arise thereof. However, it goes without saying that the ‘Arctic meltdown’ and a potential rise of economic activities already has and will continue to have serious impacts on the region’s ecosystems, its marine and terrestrial biodiversity and the human population permanently living in the broader Arctic region. Even the most one-sided and sensational comments over the past years explicitly stressed that worrisome development. Borgerson, for instance, concluded “[i]f the Arctic is the barometer by which to measure the earth’s health, these symptoms point to a very sick planet indeed” (2008: 67).

Regardless if focusing on particular questions concerning the region’s climate, its biodiversity or ecosystems, the Arctic is generally characterised as dynamic, complex and variable system intrinsically connected with the global (climate) system via its atmosphere, its ocean and surrounding seas and rivers (ACIA 2005: 22; Kriwoken 2014: 44). Global climate change affects the Arctic, but changes in the Arctic equally matter globally. In many respects the Arctic serves as a canary in the

coal mine of global climate change as transformations within the Arctic occur earlier and the rate of warming is faster than the global mean (ACIA 2004, 2005; IPCC 2014b: SPM–8). The ‘Arctic amplification’ effect explains changes of the region that, due to feedback linkages, accelerate at a faster pace than in other regions (Strahlendorff et al. 2014: 21). Alterations in the Arctic cryosphere have strong impacts on the global climate and sea level and undoubtedly affect global societies. According to Kriwoken, “Arctic regions can produce feedbacks with globally significant implications” (2014: 51). The mass loss of the Greenland ice sheet and freshwater from river discharge, snow and melting glaciers in Canada and Russia are significantly contributing to the current global sea level rise and will remain dominant contributors to sea level rise, in addition to the melting Antarctica ice sheet, in the forthcoming decades (AMAP 2011: 11; Rignot et al. 2011: 5).

Arctic-internally, vulnerability symbolises the region’s present and its immediate and long-term future. The dramatic loss of Arctic sea ice has already been extensively summarised in Section 4.4.1, also briefly describing the albedo feedback effect. Additional climate change-related threats to the Arctic’s (marine) environment entail the shifting of Arctic vegetation zones, the change of animal species’ diversity, ranges and distribution, the thawing of permafrost and related greenhouse gas releases, the increased acidification of the Arctic Ocean, regional pollution due to the accumulation of external contaminants, e.g. persistent organic pollutants (POPs) or heavy metals or the economic and cultural impacts on indigenous communities (ACIA 2004: 10–11, 2005: 61–98; AMAP 2009; CAFF 2013a; Riedel 2014: 30–34).¹³⁷ The vulnerability of the Arctic region can be further enhanced by the afore-mentioned potentials of increased economic activity, especially concerning resource development and maritime transportation and the possible environmental problems arising therefrom, e.g. (transboundary) pollution from drilling platforms or vessels.

¹³⁷ The greenhouse gas feedback describes the vast amounts of methane and carbon dioxide that are currently trapped in the Arctic’s permafrost. Their release due to melting permafrost will further exacerbate global and regional warming (ACIA 2005: 459). Higher carbon dioxide concentrations, again, will also result in continuous ocean acidification as the Arctic Ocean, due to its lower temperature can absorb more CO₂ than other oceans (Riedel 2014: 31–32).

The Arctic is undoubtedly in a state of change and terms such as sustainable development,¹³⁸ ecosystem-based management,¹³⁹ resilience and adaptation (or adaptive capacity) have become catchphrases in the analysis of the coping mechanism of both human and environmental systems (= socio-ecological systems) concerning the region's on-going transformation (Hoel 2009a; Arctic Council 2013a; Andrew 2014). Especially questions on climate and environmental governance in the Arctic extensively deal with matters of adaptation and the development of adaptation processes for and in the region (de Roo et al. 2008; Koivurova, Keskitalo & Bankes 2009; Stokke 2011). Over the last decades, first the AEPS and then the AC have strengthened circumpolar environmental governance by continuously improving the scientific knowledge base, *see* for instance the various AC-endorsed reports cited in this analysis, preparing practical guidance or supporting the capacities of Arctic states to implement commitments (Stokke 2007: 407; PAME 2013). Additionally, the human factor often seems to be neglected when discussing Arctic matters from the region's outside. Issues of future adjustment to regional alterations concern in particular questions on population and migration, issues of human health and well-being, education or community viability (Larsen & Fondahl 2015).

A 'Responsible' Summary

Over the last decade(s) the Arctic region has experienced substantial climate change that essentially impinges upon the physical and biological conditions of the circumpolar North. Eventually, the continuing loss of Arctic sea ice (*see* Section 4.4.1) and climate feedback loops will only act as a catalyst for regional transformation in the years and decades to come with threats to human and species' habitats. Moreover, the global/Arctic nexus characterises climatic and environmental alterations in the Arctic that are linked to global changes such as sea level rise or oceanic circulations while simultaneously also describing the regional 'arrival' of

¹³⁸ The term 'sustainable development' generally refers to a definition coined by the UN World Commission on Environment and Development, the so-called Brundtland Report in 1987, stating "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (1987: 43).

¹³⁹ The term 'ecosystem-based management' refers to an integrated, transdisciplinary management approach of a certain activity within an ecosystem, such as fisheries that is designed to holistically address the full array of biophysical and socio-economic interactions within that particular ecosystem (Slocombe 1998: 31–32; Murawski 2007: 681).

pollutants from outside the Arctic that (currently) enter the region via air, ocean or river pathways (Riedel 2014: 40). Also in environmental terms, the sparsely populated Arctic region is increasingly forced to cope with the forces of globalisation and to basically deal with regional processes and global linkages (Heininen & Southcott 2010: 1–2; Larsen & Fondahl 2015).

4.6. The Geopolitical Arctic of the 21st Century: The Bottom Line is that...

The dissertation's second step provided an in-depth examination of the various conditional elements that eventually framed the blurry Arctic picture of the early 21st century – a geopolitical Arctic *tour d'horizon*. Accordingly, Chapter 4 gave a comprehensive insight into the complexity and multifacetedness of the Arctic's fluid geopolitics of the last decade by basically highlighting its historic roots and related national identities (Subchapter 4.2), and 'unpacking' a sketched Arctic triangle of *Arctic rights* (Subchapter 4.3), *Arctic interests* (Subchapter 4.4) and *Arctic responsibilities* (Subchapter 4.5). To that effect, the preceding Subchapters helped to what is claimed as the dissertation's second purpose and major output, to *understand the context*.

#2: Understanding the *Context*

- *A thick Arctic description*

Essentially, the thick description and scrutiny of the Arctic context followed the logic of Bachmann's (2009) system of structures, processes and flows – the understanding of the contemporary geopolitical condition, yet adapted to a regional context (= the Arctic), that characterises a potential European space of interaction.

With the events of summer/autumn 2007, seemingly suppressed and by-passed geopolitical characterisations and descriptions returned to the Arctic. Not only was the allegedly open and melted space represented as “multi-faceted security risk[.]” (Dittmer et al. 2011: 204); too often, the region was depicted as an alleged zone of contestation, where the uncertain spatialities of the circumpolar region were reconfigured in a contemporary, modern clash of scientific knowledge, legal regimes,

offshore technologies and anachronistic, inward-looking, nationalistic behaviour over maritime territories, resources and transport routes (Powell 2008: 827). A “once static geographic (...) region” (Conley & Kraut 2010: 1) – a “geopolitically undefined” space (Dittmer et al. 2011: 206) – was eventually discursively imposed geostrategic relevance with the re-territorialisation of a climate change-induced, literally opened Arctic space only too willingly publically read in *classic geopolitics*’ terms.¹⁴⁰ Eventually, Stefansson’s Arctic Mediterranean – an opening maritime space betwixt continental spaces – has appeared with the region being imagined “as a zone of transition” (Powell & Dodds 2014a: 7). And indeed, the changing Arctic slowly emerges into one regional part of the globalised system. Consequently, Arctic development cannot be understood as being disconnected from global trends and changes. Moreover, it is developing into a global Arctic that “can no longer be perceived as a spatially or administratively confined region” (Aaltola et al. 2014: 140).

However, this particular Arctic internationality was biased by a multitude of diversified understandings of this ‘new’ Arctic region and its very functioning. Besides, this internationality was only too commonly referred to as ‘Arctic geopolitics’; a term that was defined by Chaturvedi as “a historically contingent, but on-going, political project of scripting, staging, and projection of the circumpolar northern polar region” (2005a: 724). And without the shadow of a scientific doubt, the Arctic region has been politically re-scripted, re-staged and re-projected over the last decade. Eventually, it continues to be ‘on-going’ or as fittingly put by Knecht & Keil, “(t)oday’s [Arctic] geopolitics may follow different paths tomorrow” (2013: 187). Today’s Arctic construction is tomorrow’s re-construction.

¹⁴⁰ Yet, this particular Arctic status quo has also attracted the attention of critical geopolitics. Ever since the re-emerging geopolitical focus on the Arctic, critical geopolitics and its academic advocates have continuously questioned the space-making practices of the A8, in particular the A5 in a variety of reflections and analyses, *see inter alia* (Dodds 2008, a 2010, 2013; Gerhardt et al. 2010; Steinberg 2010; Dittmer et al. 2011; Strandsbjerg 2012; Knecht 2012; Knecht & Keil 2013; Bruun & Medby 2014; Steinberg et al. 2015) but also commented on the international media coverage on the AC’s Ministerial Meeting in Kiruna (Steinberg, Bruun & Medby 2014), the interplay of state and media discourses on the Arctic (Wilson Rowe 2013), ‘Western’ public perceptions of China’s increased Arctic interest (Woon 2014) or focused on a more broader perspective of polar geopolitics in general (Powell & Dodds 2014b).

As pointed out throughout Chapter 4, this Arctic re-narration had very different writers, perceptions and understandings. It consisted of mutual challenges, common leitmotifs of cooperation but also misinterpretations, overstatements and deceitful hopes of a public economic hype with too many unknowns remaining. It involved a complex web of different actors, all essentially determining daily ‘Arctic operation’ and interpretation. Basically, the A8, and in particular their costal agents (= A5), took and are continuing to take the central role in the process of Arctic scripting, staging and projecting (Ibid.: 178), stressing in varying shades their particular Arctic identities and sovereignty and inevitably creating a national Arctic *Self*.

Yet, the foreign *Other* has also (re)-discovered the Arctic stage, articulating ideas and suggestions in order to be heard and taken seriously on that particular ‘icy’ platform. As Arctic affairs are continuously perceived as transregional issues, the predominantly A5-set criteria, that ‘only’ geographical presence and related sovereign rights determines “legitimate actorness in Arctic affairs” (Knecht 2013: 8) casts doubts on future persistency. Accordingly, Arctic-geographical presence does not inevitably establish an actor’s “capability of influencing Arctic regional affairs” (Hossain 2015: 98). Hence, if “geography [and space] is [indeed] a non-static component in global affairs” (Knecht & Keil 2013: 187), the very narration of an open Arctic space and a related envisaged spatialisation of accessible Arctic politics/governance structures could lead to regional influence and power induced by Arctic ‘outsiders’. If the Arctic region is *not* perceived as a geographically fixed and self-contained entity and regime, it rather has to be defined in relational terms that prominently reflects the interaction between territorial and non-territorial actors (Ingimundarson 2014: 185), seriously takes into account the global/Arctic nexus and accordingly allows Arctic *Others* to claim a regional say.

Analysing the narration and politics of the “New North” over the last century, Stuhl concluded that “[t]echnology, capital, science and state power have repeatedly come together to create and recreate the North over time” (2013: 112–113). One can easily exchange the term ‘capital’ with ‘economic opportunities based on anticipation’ and this four-sided Arctic prism appears again in what is understood,

perceived and comprehensively outlined in this dissertation as ‘Arctic geopolitics of the 21st century’. Accordingly, Arctic geopolitics cannot be characterised as fixed effects of a limiting and determining global/regional physical geography but rather as a socially constructed one, varying from epoch to epoch (Agnew & Corbridge 2003: xi). And the dissertation’s Part Three essentially offered an in-depth description of an ‘unpacked’ contemporary characterisation. Thus, and based on the depiction by Dittmer et al. (2011), Arctic geopolitics of the very early 21st century was an emerging discourse on the potential futures of the region on the basis of an open, literally ‘melting’ space.

“Should the EU worry about the Arctic?”¹⁴¹

PART FOUR

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTENT

¹⁴¹ (Carnegie Europe 2014)

The Roadmap for Part Four

From understanding the *concept* (Part Two) and the *context* (Part Three) follows the last step in the dissertation's broader storyline: the comprehension of the *content*. In order to systematically comprehend the Union's endeavour in and for the Arctic, **Part Four** aims to 'unpack' the EU's (geopolitical) reasoning towards the Arctic region. Thus, it sheds light on a distinct EU-Arctic triangle, consisting of...

- ... four European dimensions of Arctic *presence* (Chapter 5)
- ... a EU Arctic *policy* in the making (Chapter 6)
- ... a critical geopolitical analysis of EU space-making *practices* (Chapter 7)

Part Four gets to the bottom of European geopolitical agency in the Arctic region and 'unpacks' the multiple dimensions of the Union's Arctic legitimisation process and the attempted construction of a distinct European space. Thus, it scrutinises the past Arctic articulations of a very distinct Arctic *Other*.

Accordingly, it does not only delineate the *Arctic's EU* story but essentially the *EU's Arctic* story and the EU-internal effects of distinct Arctic rationales that are potentially blended into one particular spatial European Arctic perception. Furthermore, it illustrates the complexity of European foreign policy-making from a distinctive critical geopolitics perspective, highlighting how the various internal voices of the Union create geopolitical ideas, aim to produce geopolitical action and try to potentially gain legitimacy in a very peculiar region.

Part Four elaborates of how the Arctic has been brought in the EU's political orbit over the last decade. It essentially goes into detail on how the Union's various institutions shaped policy development and the circumpolar North as an envisaged geopolitical region of EU's exertion of interests. Eventually, it amalgamates the three broad themes of this dissertation: (critical) geopolitics (= the *concept*), the geopolitical Arctic of the 21st century (= the *context*) and the EU in the Arctic (= the *content*) and concludes on the question on how and under what conditions the EU tried to construct a regulated European space in an allegedly open Arctic space in an era when the region re-appeared on the geopolitical radar.

5. European Dimensions of Arctic *Presence*

Commonly, the Arctic has only been regarded as a “peripheral concern of little importance” for the EU and its predecessor, the EEC, respectively (Wegge 2012: 13). This was in particular the case once Greenland, after obtaining Home Rule from Denmark in 1979, withdrew from the EEC on 1 February 1985 (Airoldi 2008: 93). However, although often too willingly, yet only vaguely depicted along the lines of being an “external Arctic actor” (Neumann 2010: 12), a “reduced Arctic actor”¹⁴² or not an “immediately obvious” one (Archer 2010b: 6), the EU’s Arctic journey is not *per se* a peripheral one but based on various components of factual EU presence in the Arctic region. These four multifaceted, nonetheless intrinsically connected dimensions are:

- Territorial component and legal competences (Subchapter 5.1)
- Economic interests and demands (Subchapter 5.2)
- Environmental impact and polar research (Subchapter 5.3)
- Regional and cohesion policy (Subchapter 5.4)

Accordingly, Chapter 5 sets out the various bases the currently developed EU Arctic ‘action’ is built on. The Subchapters help, together with the extensive analysis of the Arctic’s 21st century’s re-appearance (*see* Chapter 4), to understand on which different grounds and in which context the Union’s institutional actors have eventually acted upon, based and re-changed their created Arctic accounts. As geopolitical reasoning never occurs in a vacuum it is necessary to understand how the Union is already interconnected with the region and *vice versa*. Moreover, the Chapter serves as the basis for the two ensuing Chapters to highlight that an existing multi-dimensional Arctic presence is not *per se* a prerequisite for regional influence and related capabilities and actorness.

¹⁴² Interview 8

5.1. Territorial Component and Legal Competences

The return of a geopolitical Arctic in 2007/2008 undoubtedly directed the EU's attention to the region (*see* Chapters 6 and 7). And yet, the area, in particular its European part, already returned on the EU institutional and jurisdictional screen a decade earlier when Finland and Sweden joined the EU in 1995 and the EEA introduced a European single market area that is also applicable to the Arctic states Iceland and Norway.¹⁴³ Consequently, the EU's *acquis communautaire* covers an extensive area of the geographical European Arctic, as visualised in Figure IX (page 86).¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, the EU is, by virtue of its (Arctic) Member States and EEA relations represented at the AC, either via the AC's member states Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden or its observers, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom (Stępień & Koivurova 2016: 22–23). Accordingly, Østhagen concluded that “[f]rom a geographical viewpoint, it is therefore unsurprising that the Arctic should appear on the EU-agenda” (2013b: 74).¹⁴⁵ However, international emphasis concerning an active and politically participative role of the EU in the Arctic has been predominantly put on the geographical fact of the EU not having an actual European shoreline on the Arctic Ocean (Koivurova et al. 2012: 361), which holds true after Greenland withdrew from the EEC in 1985. And indeed, this physical component correctly features, at least to a certain degree, a major constraint of EU policy regarding the region as EU law only directly applies to two Arctic states, Finland and Sweden, and yet specifically not to the Arctic marine area (Neumann 2010: 12; Molenaar et al. 2014: 12). Consequently, “neither the EU nor its Member States can act as coastal states with respect to the Arctic Ocean” (Koivurova, Molenaar & VanderZwaag 2009: 253). Regardless that particular restrictive territorial element, the EU does hold a legally functional presence in the Arctic and has competences and capacities to act in various policy fields, directly and indirectly affecting the various Arctic regions. Acting as a foreign policy actor in relation to the majority of the Arctic states, additionally directs the

¹⁴³ However, the ‘Arctic’ was not an issue area that was discussed during the Northern enlargement negotiation rounds (Interview 16).

¹⁴⁴ The term ‘*acquis communautaire*’ identifies the cumulative body of legislation and court decisions which eventually constitute EU law (Koivurova et al. 2012: 362).

¹⁴⁵ As a matter of ‘countable’ fact, more than 400.000 EU citizens live in the Arctic (Vella 2015a: 248).

focus of analysis on EU foreign policy and related institutional changes, as introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon (Neumann 2010: 13). It is also the EU's transforming role as a foreign policy actor since 2009 that underpins the Union's vocalisation on Arctic matters (Østhagen 2013b: 72).

The Legislative Basis

In general, the EU treaties serve as the legal basis for any EU policy action.¹⁴⁶ The most recent modification to the founding treaties of the EC/EU is the Treaty of Lisbon, entering into force on 1 December 2009. It amended both the *Treaty on European Union (TEU)* (Treaty of Maastricht) and the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (Treaty of Rome), the latter one renamed in Lisbon to the *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)*.¹⁴⁷ The three different internal competences to act that were eventually clarified by the Treaty of Lisbon are distinguished between an exclusive, shared and complementary one (TFEU, Art. 3, 4 and 6).¹⁴⁸ Conferred exclusive competence in a specific policy area, e.g. the conservation of marine biological resources under the common fisheries policy, empowers the EU to solely legislate and adopt legally binding acts (TFEU, Art. 2 and 3). Competence, however, may also be shared, enabling both the EU and the Member States to enact legal instruments, e.g. in case of environmental policies, energy or transport issues (TFEU, Art. 2 and 4). Additionally, competence can still fall under jurisdiction of the Member States only, with the EU being allowed to support and supplement the actions of its Member States, e.g. in the policy fields of industry, culture or tourism (TFEU, Art. 6). Although the Treaty of Lisbon fairly clarified the matter of competence in many policy fields, the determination of the legal basis is (still) key for determining the EU's competences to deal with a certain issue. It eventually also decides upon the relevant type of decision-making procedure

¹⁴⁶ Similar to the quotation of legal acts with regard to the Arctic (*see* Footnote 70), also the exact designation of each treaty, directive or regulation referred to in the Chapters 5 to 7 is only to be found in the Appendix (Annex VI, page 358) and not explicated in a footnote after the respective act has been mentioned.

¹⁴⁷ Together the TEU and the TFEU are referred to as 'the Treaties' (TEU, Art. 1).

¹⁴⁸ The limits of EU competences are governed by the principle of conferral (TEU, Art. 5) and must furthermore comply with the principle of subsidiarity and the principle of proportionality (TEU, Art. 5).

(Koivurova et al. 2010: 17–19).¹⁴⁹ Following the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, the formerly established co-decision procedure became the ordinary legislative procedure (TFEU, Art. 289 and 294), which explicitly enhanced the (legislative) role of the EP. In that regard TFEU, Art. 289 stipulates that “[t]he ordinary legislative procedure shall consist in the joint adoption by the European Parliament and the Council of a regulation, directive or decision on a proposal from the Commission”. Consequently, the EP became co-legislator with the Council, except in specific cases provided for in the Treaties.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, it is necessary to note that the Treaty of Lisbon explicitly granted legal personality to the EU (TEU, Art. 47), which enables the Union to conclude agreements with one or more third countries or international organisations in its own name (TFEU, Art. 216 and 218).¹⁵¹

Aiming to create a better coordination and consistency in EU foreign policy, the Treaty of Lisbon also extended the responsibility of the former High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, as created by the Treaty of Amsterdam, now referred to as *High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy* (hereinafter ‘HR’), and further introduced the EEAS.¹⁵² In the context of the EU’s external relations, the question of external competence and legitimacy is of significant importance as it deals with the question of who is eventually authorized to act externally – the EU, its Member States or eventually together as a joint effort? (Neumann & Rudloff 2010: 9–10) Furthermore, the establishment of the EEAS and the strengthening of the HR does not only illustrate the emergence of a European diplomatic culture but essentially also a stronger emphasis on European foreign policy as well – it highlights “the operation of the Union as a (geo)political subject” (Kuus 2010b: 381). As compared to the internal competence, the Treaties lack a clear listing of the EU’s external competences, with the EU only possessing related ones in a few areas, such as trade,

¹⁴⁹ In principle, the legal basis also determines the EEA status (relevant or not) of a certain legal act.

¹⁵⁰ The EP’s strengthened role in the Union’s setup and functioning includes a majority of policy sectors, *inter alia* energy, agriculture, fisheries or tourism. Yet, minor exemptions of the EP’s co-decision-making ability within the respective policy sector still exist.

¹⁵¹ Yet, it has to be noted that the EU already concluded agreements before legal personality was explicitly granted.

¹⁵² The abbreviation ‘HR’ is used for both today’s formal title of ‘High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy’ as well as the pre-Lisbon style ‘High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy’.

development or external environmental policy (*explicit external competences*) (Koivurova et al. 2010: 15). However, the EU also holds *implicit external competences*, authority that derived from the EU's internal competences and related legislation that has been passed over years and decades (Neumann & Rudloff 2010: 9–10; Koivurova et al. 2012: 363). Again, also external competences can either be exclusive to the EU or shared between the Union and the Member States (Koivurova et al. 2010: 15–16).¹⁵³

Concerning the EU's Arctic Legal Capacity

In order to examine the EU's legal competences and capacities affecting the Arctic, Koivurova et al. specified three dimensions: 1) internal, 2) in close association and 3) external (Ibid.: 6).

The *internal dimension* refers to the most northern – Arctic – parts of the EU's Member States Finland and Sweden and the related application of EU territorial jurisdiction. Consequently, for policy areas without exclusive competence, the EU has to follow the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

The *close association dimension* highlights EU legislation affecting the two European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member states Iceland and Norway via their EEA agreement relationship with the EU. The EEA was established on 1 January 1994 and extends, in many respects, the geographical scope of EU legislation beyond the EU's Member States territorial jurisdiction, creating a single market for all state parties (Koivurova et al. 2012: 362). It, however, excludes some specific policy areas: common fisheries and agriculture policies, justice and home affairs (although Iceland and Norway are part of the Schengen area), foreign policy and monetary coordination (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 103). Regarding the EEA's Arctic effectiveness it has to be noted that Svalbard was explicitly excluded from EEA application pursuant to the agreement's Protocol 40 (Ibid.: 104).

¹⁵³ In cases of shared external competences, e.g. in the matter of climate change, both the Union and the Member States can be parties to an agreement ('mixed-agreements') (Neumann & Rudloff 2010: 11).

Text Box III: In or Out? Iceland and the EU

In the wake of its financial crisis, which hit the Nordic country from 2008 to 2011, Iceland formally applied for EU membership on 16 July 2009 (Government of Iceland 2009; Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 105). In the Commission's 2010 assessment on Iceland's application, the institution concluded that Iceland could play a "significant role in the development of the EU's policy in the Arctic" (European Commission 2010a: 71). In that regard, Bailes emphasised that Icelandic accession could "extent the EU's policies and regulatory competences over a key piece of 'real estate' in the Atlantic maritime approaches to the Arctic zone proper" (2010b: 220). However, the Arctic factor was only evaluated as low-order concern for both the EU and Iceland during the negotiation talks (Avery, Bailes & Thorhallsson 2011: 118). As a matter of fact, Arctic-specific issues have only been of minor importance for the Commission's enlargement-concerned DG and treated as a side issue in some of the 35 chapters of the *acquis*.¹⁵⁴ With Iceland slowly recovering from the crisis, a newly elected government put the accession negotiations on hold in Spring 2013 and eventually, officially dropped the country's membership bid in March 2015 (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 105; Minister for Foreign Affairs Iceland 2015).

The *external dimension* defines the third, and arguably Arctic-publically most important level of EU action in the region with the Union being able to act alone – as a distinct external actor in relation to the non-EU Arctic states – or jointly with its Member States via the participation in treaty regimes or international organisations that have some kind of a regulatory Arctic capacity (Koivurova et al. 2010: 6). In addition to the non-EU Arctic states, also the relationship between the EU and Greenland and the EU and the Faroe Islands has a distinct external characteristic, as both are self-governing entities within the Danish Realm, yet explicitly not part of the EU.¹⁵⁵ However, Greenland is currently linked to the Union through the association of Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT).¹⁵⁶ In that regard, Greenland is not directly subject to the EU's *acquis communautaire* but has a special associate status based on the Overseas Association Decision, which is furthermore complemented by a Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) and an additional comprehensive Partnership Agreement (PA) (Ibid.: 16; Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 106–107). Also cooperation with the Faroe Islands remains close, exemplified by the case of fisheries via the Northern Fisheries Agreement between the EU, the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Norway (Koivurova et al. 2010: 28–29).

¹⁵⁴ Interview 7 and Interview 16

¹⁵⁵ According to TFEU, Art. 355.5 (a), the EU Treaties also do not apply to the Faroe Islands.

¹⁵⁶ Defined by TFEU, Part Four and subject to the specific provisions for Greenland as set out in the Protocol (No 34) on special arrangements for Greenland, annexed to the Treaties.

As highlighted in this brief synopsis, the EU has a distinct setting of jurisdictional capacities to act in the various ‘Arctics’, either be it internally in Finland or Sweden, or (semi)-externally in the geographical areas beyond. The subsequent sectoral analysis gives an overview on EU policies and jurisdiction relevant to the Arctic context. Although the following pages provide an overview on different sectors, all these various policy fields are intrinsically interconnected, as for instance resource exploration cannot be considered without transport policy or energy policy without environmental and its related climate change police. Yet, the following paragraphs neither provide a fully comprehensive summary of every European legal step taken that eventually has a legal influence in the Arctic nor does it vindicate a potential feasibility of respective EU legislation on an international level. International jurisdictional competence and capacity cannot be put on an equal footing with *de facto* political practicability, in particular in the *sui generis* international Arctic arena. In order to maintain structural homogeneity, the sectoral overview follows the structure as outlined in Chapter 4 and its various Subchapters: Arctic energy resources, Arctic maritime transportation, Arctic fisheries and Arctic responsibility, the latter complemented by the issue of research competences and the particular EU-Arctic sensitive topic of animal welfare (*see* Text Box II, page 117). In addition to these related policy fields, the EU also operates in the Arctic through a variety of other specific policies, e.g. regional and cohesion policy, forestry policy, indigenous peoples issues or tourism (Koivurova et al. 2010, 2012).

Concerning Arctic Energy Resources

European primary law did not explicitly provide related EU competence in the field of energy until the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force, which now stipulates shared competence between the EU and its Member States (Koivurova et al. 2010: 29).¹⁵⁷ It is in particular TFEU, Art. 194 that defines the EU policy on energy issues in context of the internal market and the protection of the environment. Accordingly, the EU policy on energy shall a) ensure the functioning of the energy market, b) ensure security of energy supply, c) promote energy efficiency and energy saving and the development of new and renewable forms of energy and d) promote the

¹⁵⁷ For a broader overview on the EU’s Arctic legal competences in that particular issue area, *see* (Koivurova et al. 2010: 29–30, 2012: 366; Neumann 2012: 622–625; Liu 2015).

interconnection of energy networks (TFEU, Art. 194). Concerning the matter of energy supply, which potentially can become rather relevant in the EU relation to the Arctic oil and gas producers Norway and Russia, the Council may exceptionally adopt measures appropriate to the economic situation in the frame of EU economic policy, yet taken in a “spirit of solidarity between Member States” (TFEU, Art. 122) (Ibid.: 30). Moreover, resource policy can also affect the common market and concern the policy area of industry, both policy fields with exclusive competence for the Union (TFEU, Art. 3 and 6) (Neumann 2012: 625).

In general, legal mechanisms and policies that (potentially) have both a direct and indirect effect on Arctic oil and gas developments include *inter alia* a Directive on the safety of offshore oil and gas operations, a 2012-established EU Offshore Oil and Gas Authorities Group, an Environmental Impact Assessment Framework, measures to safeguard the security of natural gas supply, the Renewable Energy Directive or an Energy Efficiency Action Plan (Łuszczuk et al. 2014: 83–84). From an European Arctic point of view it is also necessary to note that any mechanism related to energy policy does in principle not extend to the EEA and therefore restrict the EU’s (legal) influence on the Icelandic or Norwegian (Arctic) continental shelf and the Nordic states’ hydrocarbon resource efforts (Koivurova et al. 2012: 366). With regard to Arctic mining efforts, the EU also directly and indirectly influences mining in the European Arctic via various legislative acts and policy measures, which are especially relevant for the Barents Sea region and to some extent to Greenland (van Dam et al. 2014: 96). This includes in particular the Raw Material Initiative, a related Commission Communication on commodity markets in particular for raw materials, the related comprehensive partnership agreement with Greenland and various regulations, which are also EEA-applicable, that contribute to the mitigation of environmental impacts of mining, e.g. the Water Framework Directive and Groundwater Directive or the Mining Waste Directive and Landfill Waste Directive (Ibid.: 96–97).

Concerning Arctic Maritime Transportation

An area of shared competences (TFEU, Art. 4), the EU is “competent to develop both internal and external legislation with respect to shipping in the Arctic” (Liu 2013: 718). From an EEA legal point of view, and at least theoretically, any potential EU legislation affecting the field of maritime transportation in the Arctic could also be implemented in the Icelandic and Norwegian Arctic as well (Koivurova et al. 2010: 23; Liu 2013: 719). With respect to the Arctic Ocean, the EU and its Member States, respectively, hold de-facto competences, able to act as flag state, port state, market state or with respect to their natural and legal persons (Koivurova, Molenaar & VanderZwaag 2009: 253). In their capacities as flag states, the EU and its Member States can exercise the freedom of the high seas in the Arctic’s high seas pockets, *see* Section 4.3.1, navigational rights and freedoms in the Arctic coastal states’ maritime zones, including all the connected obligations related to marine living resources and the marine environment (Molenaar et al. 2014: 12–13).

In general, matters currently regulated by EU law with potential impact to the safety of Arctic shipping and related environmental considerations include maritime safety and the prevention of pollution from ships, rules for ship inspection, port state control, improving the Member States’ performance as flag states, the liability of carriers or the training of seafarers (Koivurova et al. 2010: 22; Sander et al. 2014: 48). Especially port state control has been stressed as the “one of the most successful examples of the EU’s effort to improve maritime safety within European water” (Liu 2013: 724). Legislation that could be theoretically and EU-internally strengthened by a potential ban on the carriage and/or use of heavy grade/fuel oil for trans-Arctic shipping that leave or enter into any EU port (Ibid.: 728). Additional Arctic-applicable regulations include *inter alia* the Directive on vessel traffic monitoring and information system or the Directive on sulphur in marine fuels (Koivurova et al. 2010: 22; Sander et al. 2014: 48). With the EU also holding implicit external competences with regard to maritime transportation, Member States need to take into account EU policies and common positions when acting internationally. Agreeing on a common position should ensure coherence and consistency of the EU’s respective external action (Raspotnik & Rudloff 2012: 16). In an Arctic context this becomes particularly relevant at IMO level and the related development of the Polar Code,

with the EU yet not being member to the international organisation (Sander et al. 2014: 48). The Commission, however, holds IMO observer status, participates in the relevant meetings and coordinates all negotiations where the Member States are involved. It is furthermore assisted by the European Maritime Safety Agency, both on AC and IMO level (Raspotnik & Rudloff 2012: 13; Airoldi 2014: 54).

Concerning Arctic Fisheries

The EU's competence concerning fisheries is twofold as it relates to different aspects within the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP): a general shared competence between the EU and the Member States, based on TFEU, Art. 4, and a related exclusive one concerning the conservation of marine biological resources, also covering the allocation of fishing quotas, as stipulated in TFEU, Art. 2 (Neumann & Rudloff 2010: 11; Koivurova et al. 2010: 28). Nonetheless, with regard to the Arctic and the EU's lacking coastal state status, the EU's fisheries policy for that particular marine area is considerably constrained (Arnarsson & Justus 2014: 65). In line with TFEU, Art. 4, the EU is party to the three RFMOs that partly cover Arctic fisheries: NEAFC, NAFO and NASCO, and consequently co-manages related fisheries. The CFP is not covered by the EEA with both the allocation of fishing quotas and licences falling under the exclusive competence of Iceland and Norway (Koivurova et al. 2010: 28). The EU's fisheries relationship with the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway are regulated by bi- and multilateral agreements between the Nordic states/entities and the EU, which act as a strong Arctic link between the EU and these partners (Østhagen 2013b: 75). From an international perspective, the EU is party to both UNCLOS and the UN Fish Stock Agreement and can act in a wide range of flag, port or market states capacities with regard to fisheries in the Arctic Ocean and its marine surroundings. Concerning the potential opening of fisheries in the high sea pocket of the Central Arctic Ocean, the EU would hold the exclusive (external) competence to tackle both illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities, and negotiate a related RFMO on behalf of its Member States (Koivurova et al. 2012: 365–366).

Concerning Arctic Responsibilities

From a particular EU legal perspective the issues of environment and climate change are intrinsically interconnected with the EU's climate change policy, which in itself is part of the Union's environmental policy, as expressed in TFEU, Art. 191 and furthermore extensively interlinked with the EU's maritime, energy and research policies (Neumann 2010: 16 and 24; Koivurova et al. 2012: 366). TFEU, Art. 4 stipulates that environmental policy (and climate change policy as a consequence thereof) is a field of shared competences between the EU and its Member States that fully applies to the EU's territorial Arctic parts but to a considerable amount also to Iceland and Norway via the EEA (Ibid.: 364).¹⁵⁸ However, as previously indicated in Subchapter 4.5, most environmental and climate change related problems in the Arctic are transboundary by nature and thus involve a particularly external dimension of related EU action. The EU ratified various international agreements that are of particular relevance for the Arctic, as for instance, the Stockholm Convention on POPs, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the OSPAR Convention (Koivurova et al. 2010: 26). Additionally, with long-range air and water pollution being a significant problem in Northern regions, the Union's regional legal competence could also be derived from the Common Agriculture Policy (Heininen 2011a: 59).

TFEU, Art. 4 governs EU activities in the field of research and technological development, stipulating a specific regime of shared competence with the Member States not being prevented of exercising their issue-related competences as a result of EU predominance. EU research competence is primarily exercised via the establishment and implementation of multiannual framework programmes (TFEU, Art. 183), aimed to support and foster research in Europe. In that regard the EU closely cooperates with the EEA countries and may also include collaboration with third countries, as well as international organisations (Koivurova et al. 2010: 31–32). The issue of animal welfare, in particularly the cases of seal and whale hunting, generally falls within the scope of the EU's environmental and agriculture policies,

¹⁵⁸ For a short overview on several environmentally related legislative acts affecting the European and EEA Arctic, *see* (Koivurova et al. 2010: 24–26). For a comprehensive overview on the EU's climate change policy with regard to the Arctic, *see* (Neumann 2010; Neumann & Rudloff 2010); on the EU's potential contribution to protect the Arctic's marine biodiversity, *see* (Liu & Kirk 2015).

matters of shared competences between the EU and its Member States (Ibid.: 32). The EU's ban on seal products has been a matter of particular controversial political and legal debate in Arctic international circles (Wegge 2013), affecting the EU's applications for AC observer status, *see* again Section 4.3.2 and Text Box II (page 117). The aforementioned Regulation 1007/2009 also has EEA relevance and consequently affects Iceland and Norway, two states that traditionally engage in seal hunting (Koivurova et al. 2012: 366–367). The issue of whaling is predominantly discussed and regulated via the International Whaling Commission, with the EU having the competence to act and adopt all relevant positions on whaling activities binding for its Member States (Koivurova et al. 2010: 35–36). To that effect, the Union adheres to a moratorium on commercial whaling but however supports the possibilities for indigenous communities to continue whaling under certain conditions, with particularly Denmark safeguarding the interests of the Faroe Islands and Greenland (Airoldi 2010: 36–37).

Concerning Indigenous Peoples

Europe's only indigenous peoples are the Sámi, the oldest ethnic group in the Nordic Countries and on the Kola Peninsula. Today both the people and their land have been divided by the (Arctic) states of Finland, Norway, Sweden and Russia (Baer 2005: 247). The Union's policy towards indigenous peoples is not of high relevance with related policy development only dating back to 1998 (Airoldi 2008: 81; Neumann 2010: 9). The EU's (legal) engagement with indigenous peoples in the (European) Arctic is embedded in a variety of different policies, e.g. development, trade, animal welfare, environment, education and culture or regional policy, and particularly bound by international human rights law.¹⁵⁹ Yet, only few European measures apply directly, as for instance the already referred to Regulation 1007/2009 on trading of seal products (Koivurova et al. 2010: 37–39). And yet, it is particularly the EU ban on seal products that highlights the ambiguous picture of the Union in the Arctic. On the one hand, it illustrates the EU's strong legal, political and economic influence in the region, but on the other side also depicts the high costs the Union is

¹⁵⁹ The EU has, for instance, strongly supported the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 and also extensively focused on related acknowledgements within Europe, previous to the Declaration (Scarpa 2014: 438–439).

paying in terms of credibility and trustworthiness with an undeniable influence on its ‘way into’ the Arctic’s (main) institutional governance structure (Scarpa 2014: 459), see Section 4.3.2 and Subchapter 6.2.

A Legal Round-Up

From a legal perspective it can be concluded that the Union’s policy-making for the Arctic occurs in the same embedding as any other European policy creation process: the various institutions act within the legislative procedures based on the EU Treaties, which is in most cases the co-decision procedure between the Council and the EP (Stępień & Koivurova 2016: 21). In many Arctic-relevant policy areas, the EU has either exclusive or shared competences with its Member States. In cases of shared competences, however, the EU often coordinates negotiations in international settings (Koivurova et al. 2012: 368). Broadly summarised it can be stated that the EU’s legal influence is undoubtedly strongest and clearest in its Arctic Member States (Finland and Sweden) and its EEA partners (Iceland and mainland Norway) but also fairly extensive in the broader European Arctic (Koivurova & Stępień 2014: 13). Thus, the Union undeniably leaves a regulatory footprint in the Arctic. Being geographically disconnected from the Arctic Ocean *may* be relevant for maritime affairs, yet less relevant for other policy fields and elements (Koivurova, Stępień & Kankaanpää 2014: 69). Nevertheless, from a more global Arctic perspective, “the EU acts mostly as an external actor given that EU law only directly applies to three of the eight Arctic states” (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 117). Thus, as concluded by Neumann, this distinguishes the Arctic and the EU’s related and currently developed policy “decisively from that to other sea-related regions, like the Mediterranean or Baltic Sea Region” (2010: 12). Accordingly, it represents “an unconventional internal/cross-border/external mix, in which the EU varies in competences, strengths and influence” (Kobza 2015: 4).

5.2. Economic Interests and Demands

In comparison to the replicable territorial and legal dimensions of European Arctic presence, the economic stake of a related EU/Arctic nexus remains rather hypothetical. For one thing this can be accounted for by the already extensively described vagueness of current and future Arctic economic development as such, *see* Sections 4.4.2 to 4.4.4, but to a similar extent also by the related, uncertain economic Arctic orientation of the EU.

By nature of its spatial proximity, Europe always has had some kind of economic influence on the broader Arctic region and exploited regional resources for centuries with also *inter alia* the ND's first Action Plan referring to Arctic and sub-Arctic energy resources and raw materials (Council of the European Union 2000: 26; European Environment Agency 2004: 19; Stępień & Koivurova 2016: 22). The EU-Arctic economic picture is currently characterised by strong trade interdependencies between the EU and the Arctic states with the Union's single market covering an extensive part of the European Arctic. Moreover, the U.S. (1st place), Russia (4th), Norway (7th) and Canada (10th) are essential trading partners for the EU(-28) (Eurostat 2016).¹⁶⁰ However, as indicated in Subchapter 4.4 only in relation to Norway and Russia these trade ties also have a pronounced Arctic dimension (Aalto 2013: 113).

Yet, existing policy linkages imply a vested interest of the EU and certain (non Arctic)-Member States in Arctic economic development that allegedly help to drive EU-Arctic aspirations and provide an additional legitimacy of related regional European presence and engagement (Østhagen 2013b: 74). However, explicitly measuring these interests and accordingly deducing certain policy steps and approaches, remains a highly complex scientific task that has, in its entirety, not yet been conducted. It is therefore important to note that the economic dimension of EU-Arctic presence over the last decade and a related European commercial awareness in the regional opportunities is as vague and ambiguous as the economic present and

¹⁶⁰ The referred to numbers/positions figure the trading situation as of January 2016. Yet, the numbers have been rather stable/similar over the dissertation's period under scrutiny.

future of the Arctic as such. It greatly depends on the various global variables already indicated in this dissertation. This Subchapter addresses the EU/Arctic economic nexus and, similar to the legal overview, scrutinises the EU's Arctic economic presence and potential dependence along the alleged Arctic economic hotspots of energy/resources, shipping and fishing.

Concerning Arctic Energy Resources

The EU and its Member States, respectively, is highly dependent on energy imports, in particular oil and (natural) gas. In 2012, 53,4% of the EU-28's gross inland energy consumption came from imported sources, predominantly from Russia (33,7% of imported crude oil and 32% of imported natural gas) and Norway (11,1% crude oil and 31,3% natural gas).¹⁶¹ Over the last three decades EU-28 dependency on energy imports has increased from 40% in the 1980s to the indicated 53,4% in 2012, importing about 90% of its crude oil and around 66% of its natural gas (European Commission 2014d: 2; Eurostat 2014). Consequently, security of supply became one of the key themes in the EU's energy policy approach, most prominently lately addressed in the European Energy Security Strategy (COM(2014) 330 final).

Ever since the Arctic's geopolitical re-appearance, its presumed on- and offshore energy resources have been publically perceived as one source of imported hydrocarbons in the decades to come, able to ensure future European energy needs (Bailes 2010b: 220–221; Cavalieri et al. 2010: 39; Raspotnik 2011b; Keil 2011; Neumann 2012; Łuszczuk et al. 2014: 82). Due to the geographical proximity, partly already existing infrastructure, both for exploitation and transportation, established energy trade relations, e.g. the bilateral energy dialogues, and expected deposits in the Barents and Kara Sea, Norway and Russia have been the focus of related considerations. The EU Arctic Footprint and Policy Assessment calculated that the then EU-27 already received 24% of Arctic oil and gas outputs (Cavalieri et al. 2010: 41–42).¹⁶² In the same year, Claes & Harsem, for instance, depicted “the European

¹⁶¹ The related oil and gas import bill amounted to more than €400 billion or approximately 3,1% of the EU's gross domestic product (European Commission 2014a: 2).

¹⁶² However, the authors explicitly indicated that the calculation of the referred to 24% comes with some data-related problems (Cavalieri et al. 2010: 42).

road to Arctic energy resources [as one going] (...) through Russia” (2010: 25), highlighting the energy interdependence between Europe and Russia and potential Arctic-related effects. And indeed, over the last years also European energy companies have been involved in the exploitation efforts of both Norwegian and Russian offshore hydrocarbons (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 111–112).

However, as extensively scrutinised in Section 4.4.2, the Arctic hydrocarbon resource picture is one driven by global demand, political alterations, shifting market conditions, infrastructure-related considerations and physical access to other resource capacities (Łuszczuk et al. 2014: 82). The development of Arctic oil and gas resources is a slow and costly business that seemed by all accounts more ‘golden’ than it currently is. Reserves that have enormous proven capacities and are considerably relevant for the European market have yet still not been exploited, as for instance the already mentioned Shtokman gas field. In 2012, Neumann concluded that although the then EU-27 were highly dependent on hydrocarbon resources coming both from Norway and Russia, the Arctic as an distinct economic region barely made an appearance (2012: 629). Similarly, also Harsem & Claes adapted their 2010 statement to a changed Arctic reality, indicating a temporal adjustment concerning the development of Arctic energy resources in Russia due to the global impact of the U.S. shale gas reserves and a lower European energy demand as a consequence of the financial and economic crisis in Europe over the previous years (2013: 784). Intra-European considerations, both politically and economically related, could in the medium and long-term future also turn away the focus from Arctic hydrocarbon resources. Some already influencing recent debates are, for instance, a strong(er) emphasis on renewable energy and matters of energy efficiency, the potential of shale gas resource in Europe, enhanced LNG capacities or European sanctions imposed against Russia in consequence of the Ukrainian crisis (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 112–113).¹⁶³

Over the last years mining activities in the European Arctic have undoubtedly increased, with about 40 active mining sites in Finland, Norway and Sweden by the

¹⁶³ Yet, concerning the issue of renewable energy, an anticipated growing European demand could lead to the rise of hydro- und wind power plants in the European Arctic and related positive effects on both European Arctic economy and environment (Latola et al. 2014: 106; Raspotnik 2016a).

end of 2013 and Russia being one of the world's leader in mineral production (van Dam et al. 2014: 89–91). The EU, which consumes about one-fifth of global metallic production, is highly dependent on non-energy raw materials, with a considerable amount of imports coming from the (European) Arctic. In 2011, Finland and Sweden accounted for 17.5% of EU-35¹⁶⁴ silver production, 28% of gold, 10.5% of copper and 27% of zinc, Finland and Norway contributed 62% and 18%, respectively, of EU-35 cobalt production and the Russian Murmansk Oblast alone covering 80% of rare material needs. The indicated demand is likely to rise in the years and decades to come, with Greenland potentially being added as an additional trade partner for the EU with regard to minerals (Ibid.: 94–95; Boersma & Foley 2014: 33–41). Accordingly, the Commission and Greenland signed a letter of intent on the cooperation in the area of mineral resources in June 2012 (European Commission 2012a). The Commission also briefly envisaged a similar Arctic raw material cooperation approach with Russia. Yet, as the Russian side showed no particular interest, the Commission eventually dropped its related dialogue efforts.¹⁶⁵

Concerning Arctic Maritime Transportation

Section 4.4.3 provided a detailed analysis on the pros and cons, known and unknown of Arctic shipping, depicting it as a highly complex economic matter that faces a high degree of uncertainty. For the EU, maritime transportation comprises a significant connection of the Union with the Arctic, covering a wide range of economic activities that interlink several additional topics, such as energy/resource, fishing or tourism (Cavalieri et al. 2010: 75). As almost 90% of EU external trade is carried out by sea and around 40% of the global commercial fleet (measured in gross tonnage) is owned or controlled by EEA resident ship owners (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 2–4; European Community Shipowners' Association 2013: 9), potential changes in shipping related Arctic considerations certainly affects the political interests of the EU and economic deliberations by interested European companies.¹⁶⁶ Some of these effects are *inter alia* the access to

¹⁶⁴ EU-35 includes the EU's MS, EEA, EFTA and candidate countries including Turkey.

¹⁶⁵ Interview 20

¹⁶⁶ Shipping is considered as the “backbone of the [European] maritime cluster” and vital for Europe's international and domestic trade” (Commission of the European Communities 2007: 7).

alternative trade routes and new energy resources, cost savings related to shorter shipping routes between certain markets or a greater demand of ice-class ships, icebreakers and related technology with a European production base (Sander et al. 2014: 47–48).

From an economic point of view, a sound forecast on the *de facto* economic value of Arctic shipping for the EU remains nevertheless difficult due to the various, already indicated uncertainties and a lack of data on the EU's actual percentage share of Arctic marine traffic (Cavaliere et al. 2010: 78; Raspotnik & Rudloff 2012: 8). A first related analysis, hence, focused primarily on the strengths and weakness of the EU's maritime transportation sector in general and how the EU's maritime trade dependency *could* eventually influence the Union's interests in and contribution to exploring the northern maritime trade routes (Raspotnik & Rudloff 2012). It was concluded that the EU's future economic role in Arctic shipping will mainly cover the development of Arctic shipping infrastructure, all technology-related maritime issues like monitoring and surveillance, as well as the tourism sector (Ibid.: 38), *see* also (Cavaliere et al. 2010: 85).¹⁶⁷ Additionally, the issue of marine insurance could also become rather relevant with Europe as such possessing the oldest and most important centres of marine insurance, located predominantly in Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom (Bailes 2010b: 221).

Thus, the final (economic) decision *if* and *when* (trans)-Arctic maritime transportation will increase significantly from a European perspective, remains with the shipping industry and will be decisively stimulated by external global developments (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 114). In that regard, a Commission official pointedly remarked, “the Commission does not control Maersk”; hence, Arctic shipping will remain a business and not European choice.¹⁶⁸ And yet indirectly, the EU could influence the volume and pattern of maritime transportation in the Arctic via general transport policies, an intensified engagement in Arctic resource

¹⁶⁷ Over the last two decades Arctic tourism, in particular cruise ship tourism, has experienced an increase in both demand and supply. It was calculated that European visitors account for 40% of nights spent in the Arctic region (Cavaliere et al. 2010: 70).

¹⁶⁸ Interview 4 (19 June 2013). Maersk is a Danish business conglomerate and the world's largest container ship operator. Another interviewee critically remarked that European businesses are actually more interested in the Arctic than European institutions (Interview 22).

development and trade or consumer-related actions fostering the demand for Arctic resources (Sander et al. 2014: 49).

Concerning Arctic Fisheries

The EU is among the world's top three importers of fish and aquaculture products and accounted for 26% of global fish imports with a value of about €36 billion in 2011 (Arnarsson & Justus 2014: 64 and 66). Hence, the EU is a highly relevant export market for the Arctic states due to its high per capita consumption rate and related high import demands. In 2008, 80% of all Icelandic exports and 60% of all Norwegian exports went to the EU (Rudloff 2010: 12; Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 116). In general, more than one-third of all fish caught in the Arctic are sold on the European market (Arnarsson & Justus 2014: 64). The EU, however, holds only a small percentage of all Arctic catches (4%), which represents 2,6% of its worldwide catches (Rudloff 2010: 12).¹⁶⁹ Consequently, “from a consumption perspective the EU accounts for more than its share in fish capture production” and is more likely to influence regional fisheries via its, already mentioned, market mechanisms than through its own fishing activities (Cavalieri et al. 2010: 54–55).

An Economic Summary

It can be concluded that the EU already holds an economic presence in the Arctic region. Moreover, although a certain dependency, and indeed interdependency between the EU and non-EU Arctic states, is perceptibly given, the commercial dimension of an EU/Arctic nexus has a considerable potential to increase. In the long run hydrocarbons from the European Arctic and raw materials from Greenland could be a potential asset for EUrope. In that regard, the European Arctic has been characterised as the “most significant part of the [Arctic] region”.¹⁷⁰ Especially the regional commodity ‘gas’ and the (potential) resources in the Barents and Kara Sea could be of particular relevance in the EU/Arctic nexus. Yet, and as already understood after scrutinising the global Arctic picture (*see* Subchapter 4.4), the causally perceived path from *potential* to *reality* is not inevitable. It does not only

¹⁶⁹The most important Member States fishing in the Arctic are Denmark, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom, accounting for 70% of all (then) EU-27 catches (Rudloff 2010: 12).

¹⁷⁰ Stated in a 2014 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author.

remain debatable if an overarching Arctic economic boom will actually occur any time soon, but also whether the EU would consciously ‘act’ on its market influence and put considerably more economic emphasis on the (European) Arctic.

5.3. Environmental Footprint and Polar Research

As extensively highlighted in Section 4.4.1 climate change, despite being a matter of global concern, is of specific relevance for the Arctic (Neumann 2010: 5). In fact, the Arctic is the most rapidly changing region on Earth. From an European perspective, the region plays an essential role on how Europe is affected by climate change with both the melting of the Greenland ice sheet and the effects of ‘Arctic amplification’ having an impact on Europe’s coastal areas, weather, climate and biodiversity (Strahlendorff et al. 2014: 27).¹⁷¹

As a major source of pollutants contaminating the Arctic, the EU’s socio-economic and ecological impact is significant (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 108). Eventually, the EU and its Member States, respectively, can affect the Arctic environment in mainly two ways: a) directly or indirectly via EU consumption and production activities and the release of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (transboundary effects) and b) through the Arctic production of goods for EU consumption (Cavalieri et al. 2010: 3). In 2013, the EU accounted for about 11% of CO₂ emissions (3,7 billion tonnes of CO₂), a share in global emissions, however, that has actually been declining over the last years (Strahlendorff et al. 2014: 28; Olivier et al. 2014: 4).¹⁷² Europe’s share of black carbon emissions, the second greatest contributor to global warming, to the Arctic is considerably higher (59%) (Cavalieri et al. 2010: 32). Furthermore, POPs, heavy metals and acidifying pollutants from Europe pose a significant risk to the Arctic (Ibid.: 15–22). Although only contributing to 5,5% of global mercury – a heavy metal – emissions, the EU’s

¹⁷¹ The main impacts of climate change on environmental systems and society in Europe comprise of an overall rise in sea levels across most of Europe’s coasts, an increase in ocean acidification, sea surface temperature and ocean heat content, a decrease in river flows in southern and eastern Europe, but also an increase in the frequency and intensity of droughts, changes in agriculture and forestry and threats for human health (European Environment Agency 2012).

¹⁷² Yet, CO₂ emissions are increasingly ‘outsourced to less industrialised countries with goods and services being produced in rising economies but eventually consumed in Europe (Davis & Caldeira 2010; IPCC 2014a).

respective share reaching the Arctic accounts for 34%, which is because of its geographical proximity (Ibid.: 19; Stępień & Koivurova 2016: 23–24). Also with regard to the share of sulphur dioxide emissions the EU holds the largest share in the Arctic (42%) (Cavalieri et al. 2010: 20).

Both the EU and its Member States have been a major financial contributor to international research activities and the development of Arctic research infrastructure throughout the last decade with an extensive amount of both FP5 and FP6 funded project results feeding into the International Polar Year 2007-2009 (European Commission 2007a; Dahlbäck et al. 2014: 21–22).¹⁷³ Under its Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7), lasting from 2007-2013 with many funded projects still running beyond 2013, the EU contributed around €200 million to Arctic research projects (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 4). (Co)-funded initiatives and projects, some already supported by FP6, predominantly covered ‘classic’ Arctic topics, such as the (regional) effects of climate change, changes in Arctic maritime transport or Arctic fisheries, the exploitation and extraction of Arctic resources and/or social and cultural changes in the European Arctic.¹⁷⁴ Both FP6 and FP7 calls primarily focused on environmental analyses and climate change research. Horizon 2020, the EU’s eight phase of the Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, yet aims to promote research and innovation in order to enhance smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs in the EU, with Arctic related research playing an essential role in that field (Dahlbäck et al. 2014: 31). From an international perspective, the EU, Canada and the U.S. have subscribed to the Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation in May 2013 in order to develop a “shared vision for the Atlantic”. The effort to enhanced trans-Atlantic marine research cooperation additionally aims to open a specific window for Arctic cooperation, highlighting the interaction of the Atlantic Ocean with the bordering

¹⁷³ FP5 and FP6 are the abbreviations for the EU’s Fifth and Sixth Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development lasting from 1998 to 2002 and 2002 to 2006, respectively.

¹⁷⁴ Some of the publically most known projects are/were Arctic Tipping Points, ACCESS, DAMOCLES, ICE-ARC, SIOS, Arctic Transform or the Arctic NGO Forum. For a comprehensive list of already FP5, FP6 and FP7 supported initiatives, *see* (European Commission 2007a; Dahlbäck et al. 2014: 33–99; Immler 2014).

portion of the Arctic region and its transboundary effects (European Commission 2013b).¹⁷⁵

An Environmental/Research Re-Cap

As scientifically proven, pollutants that are generated within the EU are reaching the Arctic region, having both an impact on regional environmental pollution and climate change, which in turn has repercussions on the European climate, weather and biodiversity. By reducing the release of greenhouse gases and other pollutants, the EU could have a direct impact on climate and environmental change that affects the Arctic.

Indirectly, research efforts are an important European contribution in the field of climate change. As explicitly stressed by Airoidi, “[r]esearch policy remains the flower in the buttonhole of EU policies with relevance to the Arctic” (2014: 49). Similarly, Aaltola et al. stated that the EU’s “emerging Arctic climate policy has started to emphasize up-to-date knowledge of regional climate dynamics and the need to invest in Arctic environmental research” (2014: 120).

5.4. Regional and Cohesion Policy

Regional policy constitutes the fourth broader European dimension of Arctic presence. In general, the EU delivers regional policy through three main funds: the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund (Koivurova et al. 2010: 42). Economic, social and territorial cohesion, as defined in TFEU, Art. 174 aim to reduce disparities between different levels of development of the various European regions and the backwardness of the least-favoured regions. Directly referring to European Arctic territories, TFEU Art. 174 stipulates that “particular attention shall be paid to (...) regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density (...)”, *see also* (Ibid.: 42). For the 2007-2013 financial period, the operation of cohesion policy related funds was harmonised across three main objectives: 1) convergence, aimed at least developed

¹⁷⁵ Interview 10; for the Galway Statement, *see* (European Union, Government of Canada & Government of the United States of America 2013)

countries and regions, 2) regional competitiveness and employment and 3) European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), previously known as ‘Interreg’, which is part of the EU’s cohesion policy since 1990 (Airoldi 2008: 29–30). The ETC’s 2007-2013 budget of €8.7 billion was distributed along three strands of European cooperation: cross-border (Interreg IV A, for areas separated by an EU border), transnational (Interreg IV B, for a specific larger area, e.g. the North Sea, the Northern Periphery, the Baltic Sea or Alpine Space) and interregional (Interreg IV C, comprising all EU regions) cooperation (European Commission 2011a: 10). Various programmes with different geographic coverage and specific aims covered the European Arctic:¹⁷⁶

- Interreg IV A Nord: a cross border cooperation programme between Finland, Sweden and Norway to strengthen the competitiveness and cohesion of the northernmost regions of the three Nordic countries for the benefit of the local people, in particular via its Sápmi sub-programme. The EU covered approximately €34 million of the programme’s €57 million budget.
- Interreg IV A Botnia-Atlantica: a cross border cooperation programme, covering the maritime border between Finland and Sweden and the mountainous border between Sweden and Norway with an overall budget of €60.9 million, of which €34.4 million were EU-covered.
- Interreg IV B Northern Periphery Programme: a transnational cooperation programme, involving regions in Finland, Ireland, Sweden, the United Kingdom with the participation of the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway. The EU’s investments via the ERDF amounted to about €35 million of an €59 million budget (Airoldi 2008: 30–31; European Commission & High Representative 2012c: 8–9).¹⁷⁷

Two additional programmes, the Kolarctic-Russia programme and the Karelia-Russia programme, were cross border cooperation initiatives between regions in Finland, Norway, Sweden and northern regions in Russia, co-funded by the EU via the ERDF

¹⁷⁶ Similar ones already existed in previous budget/Interreg periods (Airoldi 2008: 30–32, 2014: 57–58).

¹⁷⁷ The Baltic Sea Region Programme is/was another Interreg IV B instrument that also partly covered European Arctic regions, namely the Arctic regions of Finland and Sweden.

and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. Promoting economic and social development and addressing common challenges in the border areas were key objectives of both programmes (Airoldi 2008: 32; European Commission & High Representative 2012c: 9).

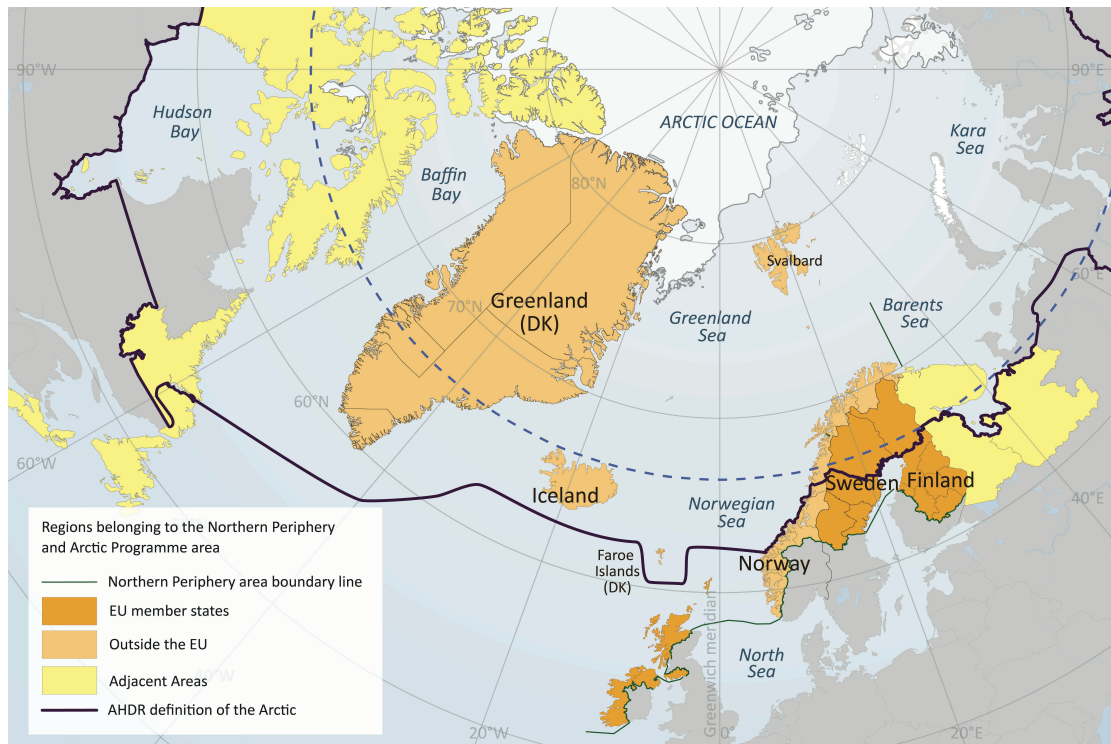
In addition to cohesion funding in North Finland and Sweden, the Commission estimated that by and large €1.14 billion were dedicated to regional development in the EU and neighbouring Arctic regions throughout the financial period 2007-2013 (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 14).

For the new financial period – ETC 2014-2020 (Interreg V) – the EU allocates approximately €10 billion, continued to be funded by the ERDF (European Commission 2015g). The European Arctic-covering Interreg programmes – Nord, Botnia-Atlantica and the Northern Periphery Programme – continue to exist. The respective budgets were increased for all three programmes: about €42 million out of an overall budget of €66 million for Nord, €36 million out of €61 million for Botnia-Atlantica and €50 million out of €78 million for the Northern Periphery Programme (European Commission 2015b, c, d).¹⁷⁸ Additionally, the Arctic dimension of all three programmes aims to be strengthened during the budget period (Airoldi 2014: 58). The Northern Periphery Programme, for instance, was consequently Arctic-upgraded – at least by name – and renamed ‘Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme’, as visualised in Figure XX (page 187). The specific Arctic dimension is supposed to play a cross cutting role between the EU’s northern periphery and the Arctic, creating a nexus between these two areas and their comparable (natural) challenges e.g. sparse population, harsh conditions and peripherality (European Commission 2015d). The very task of adding ‘Arctic’ to the title was a matter of long Commission-internal discussion.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Both the Kolarctic-Russia and the Karelia-Russia programme are to be continued as well. The main financing instrument, however, was renamed to European Neighbourhood Instrument, *see* Regulation (EU) No 232/2014

¹⁷⁹ Stated by a EU official at the seminar ‘The EU and the Arctic’ at the Centre for Arctic Policy Studies in Reykjavik on 2 June 2014

Figure XX: EU Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014-2020



Source: (Stępień et al. 2014: 127) The map was slightly edited for the purpose of this dissertation.

Concerning the Case of Greenland

Various elements of the EU's relationship with Greenland, the "special case in the history of EU/Arctic relations, and indeed in EU history" (Airoldi 2008: 93), have already been accentuated throughout Chapter 5. The financial dimension of the EU-Greenland association related to a yearly amount of €25 million for the 2007-2013 financial period via the PA and an additional €17,8 million per annum under the FPA, also for the same budget period (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 18). For the new financial period 2014-2020, the renewed PA foresees an indicative amount of €217,8 million for the entire period and the FPA again €17,8 million for fishing rights and quotas in the EEZ of Greenland.¹⁸⁰ The PA's programming document for the 2014-2020 defines education and vocational training as most essential dimensions of cooperation for the indicated period (European Commission 2014e). Contrary to the other OCTs, the financial

¹⁸⁰ Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement, *see* Annex VI (page 358).

instruments for Greenland are directly secured by the EU budget, which dates back to the island's history as part of the EEC.¹⁸¹

A Regional Setup

In general, it can be summarised that although some of the various Northern-related funds also cover regions that are *sensu stricto* not Arctic areas but 'only' adjacent ones, the EU has been a significant provider of funds for regional development in the European Arctic over the last budget periods (Airoldi 2014: 57). Or alternatively in the words of the Commission, "the EU is a key investor in the Arctic" (European Commission 2014b: 1) and "strong financial and research actor",¹⁸² yet referring to not only the funds for regional development, but also the Greenlandic support scheme and Arctic research efforts in general, as already exemplified in Subchapter 5.3. However, it has to be explicitly noted that no specific financial instrument was created to facilitate the Union's emerging Arctic policy with 'Arctic funds' coming from various chapters of the European budget. Accordingly, the quoted amount of €1.14 billion for 2007-2013 resulted from summing up all European Arctic activities (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 14; Kobza 2015: 16–17).

5.5. Four Broad Dimensions, one Brief Conclusion

As comprehensively scrutinised in Chapter 5 and correspondingly illustrated in Figure XXI (page 189), the EU already has multiple links to the Arctic region, on both a geographical, legal, economic, environmental, research and regional development-related level. Referring to these ties as the "EU's Arctic credentials", a Commission official responsible for Arctic affairs emphasised that the EU is part of the Arctic, linked to the Arctic, and simultaneously affects and is affected by the Arctic.¹⁸³ In view of the outlined dimensions, Østhagen consensually stressed that "it can be argued that the EU is by all means an Arctic actor" (2013b: 86). Similarly, also Bailes underlined that the EU's stakes in the region do not "stand or fall just on calculations of geo-strategic [namely, geographical] presence" (2010b: 220) or the

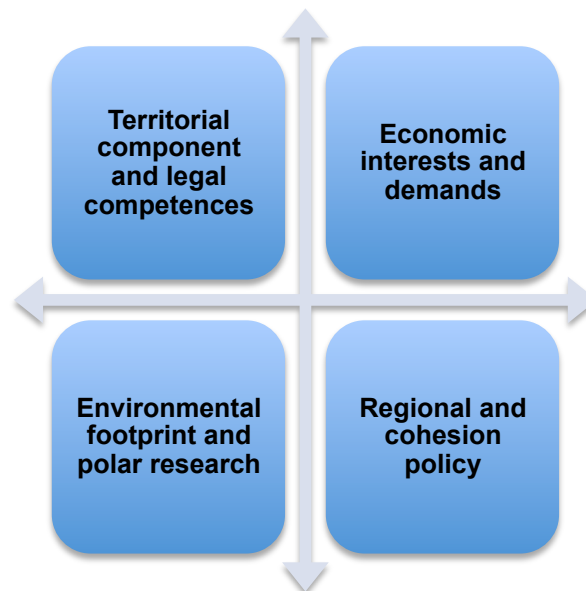
¹⁸¹ Interview 17

¹⁸² Interview 4 (4 September 2012)

¹⁸³ Interview 4 (4 September 2012)

Commission's bid for AC observer status.¹⁸⁴ In fact, these linkages act as proof of a particular European Arctic identity today and are accordingly prominently highlighted in the various official EU documents on this matter, discussed and produced in the institutional halls of Brussels since 2007/2008. However, while the broad reasoning for EU involvement in the Arctic appears geographically and thematically conclusive, the concrete policy approach the Union has taken so far in order to substantiate its multi-dimensional Arctic role is rather elusive (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 119), as it is particularly discussed in the subsequent Chapter 6. The EU constitutes one distinct 'Arctic reality'; and yet, this actual state of regional existence has not appeared in a clear-cut 'Arctic rhetoric'.

Figure XXI: European Dimensions of Arctic Presence



Source: Own compilation

¹⁸⁴ Interview 7

6. An Action in the Making: The EU's 21st Century Arctic Policy-Making Process

The following Chapter 6 investigates the next – elusive – dimension of a EU/Arctic nexus: the development of a single European policy for the Arctic. In doing so, it starts to delineate the EU's institutional Arctic journey and drills down on who in the EU headquarters initiated what, when, why and in which spatio-temporal setting.

As particularly highlighted in Subchapter 4.2, the Arctic of the (late) 20th century was mainly conceptualised from an issue-specific perspective, such as strategic military or environmental considerations, and only gradually evolved into a distinct international region. The European political attitude towards the Arctic was no exception to this international perception and just slowly changed from a more topic-based awareness to an envisaged holistic approach (Weber 2014: 45). Furthermore, Arctic issues that are also (currently) evident in EU policies did not “confer to a linear evolution, progress, or achievement (...) [but are] the result of a complex and persistent dialogue among multiple actors inside and outside the Arctic (...)” (Balão 2014: 101). Similarly but explicitly referring to the EU's institutional set-up, Offerdal argued that the EU's Arctic policy and its policy-making process, respectively, cannot be understood “as the coordinated product of clear-cut rational calculations” (2011b: 862). It is one characterised by discrepancies between different European institutional levels and the complexity of their related interaction (Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014c; Stępień 2015: 273). Two supranational institutions, the Commission and the EP, and one intergovernmental one, the Council, hold different kind of competences, pursue different agendas, have continuously developed diverging institutional dynamics, both internally and among themselves and often become entangled in their very own power relations to each other. According to Powell, “an appreciation is needed for how agendas emerge in a context of constant tension, collaboration and cooperation between [the institutions]” (2011: 110).

The Chapter's Structure

For the purpose of a better synopsis, the evolution of the EU's Arctic policy is structurally separated in two Subchapters. Subchapter 6.1 encapsulates the few official Arctic steps and voices prior to 2007/2008, some of which are also partly connected with the EU's ND. Subsequently, Subchapter 6.2 analyses the 7+1 Arctic-related policy documents from 2008 to 2014, as enlisted in Table II (page 198), and their coming-into-being. Although only made for structural reasons, this separation is not *per se* an artificial one. It derives from the events occurring in the Arctic summer/autumn season of 2007 and the related *pivot points* of the region's 21st century geopolitical re-emergence, *see* Subchapter 4.4. A period when also European policymaker started to systematically review the Union's role in the Arctic region, realising that the 'Arctic outside' may not be a good place to be (Offerdal 2011b: 864 and 876).

6.1. From the Cold War Era to 2007/2008...

The development of the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) in 2006/2007 is commonly portrayed as the starting point of the EU's internal consideration to also develop a common and integrated approach towards the Arctic region and to eventually formulate a related European policy for the circumpolar North (Wegge 2012: 14; Stępień & Koivurova 2016: 26). Yet, as specifically emphasised by Maurer, EU institutions already dealt with the Arctic on few occasions prior to the IMP, albeit in an understated, toned down and fragmented form only (2010: 5). Airoldi referred to it as an "“occasional” approach” that was rather driven by individuals, special interest groups or Member States than by EU institutions (2008: 13).

By the end of the Cold War era, specific and clear Arctic references can only be found in two questions by Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to the Council, both reflecting environmental and climate security matters.¹⁸⁵ Two individual initiatives that a) epitomise a broad European lack of interest in the

¹⁸⁵ Similar to the quotation of each treaty, directive or regulation in Chapter 5 (Footnote 146), also the exact designation of each written/oral question and answer is only to be found in the Appendix (Annex VII, page 360) and not explicated in a footnote after the respective act has been mentioned.

broader circumpolar region in the 1980s and 1990s as well as b) grasped the Arctic from an environmental and security-military perspective only and did *not* consider it as a policy area in its own right, which is similar to the international Arctic conceptualisation of this era (Weber 2014: 46).

Yet, the Commission was one of the signatories of the Kirkenes Declaration that established the BEAC in 1993 (Myrjord 2003: 240). With the Barents Euro-Arctic region being located entirely outside EU territory at that time, the EU's initial interest in institutionally participating is not utterly clear. It is assumed that the motivation lay in a combination of factors, mainly comprising of an envisaged increased European visibility in Finland, Norway and Sweden as well as continuing cooperation efforts with Russia (Airoldi 2008: 23). With the Arctic geographically returning to the EU in 1995, its policy orientation was correspondingly adjusted, however mainly restricted to issues within Finland and Sweden, basically oriented towards agriculture and EU-internal affairs and not targeting the broader circumpolar region as such (Weber 2014: 47).¹⁸⁶ Eventually, the Arctic re-appeared in two EP resolutions from 1999 and 2004, respectively that both tackled the issue of agriculture in Arctic regions and its relevance of northern Europe's only indigenous people, the Sámi (Maurer 2010: 5; Weber 2014: 47–48).

The Arctic and the Northern Dimension

Although the EU's physical Arctic presence was further strengthened during the 1990s by, *inter alia*, the establishment of BEAC, the accession of Finland and Sweden and the related implementation of the ND, European discussions on the Arctic at the turn of the millennium lacked a certain momentum and were not translated into immediate action. It was in particular the ND and its Arctic Window that could have been used (more extensively) to raise Arctic awareness within the EU's institutional framework in order to enshrine the region in the EU's political agenda (Balão 2014: 102; Weber 2014: 48).¹⁸⁷ Already in the ND's first Action Plan from 2000, the Council asked the Commission to seek contact with the AC "in order

¹⁸⁶ Yet, a Commission working document from 1997 emphasised the EU's contribution to basic Arctic (environmental) research in the Barents region and on Svalbard (1997: 6).

¹⁸⁷ The Ministerial Conference on the ND and the Arctic Window was held in Ilulissat on 28 August 2002, with Greenland preparing a report aimed to facilitate EU interests in the Arctic (Airoldi 2008: 19).

to establish knowledge and cooperation within the Arctic” and “explore further possibilities for cooperation in the Arctic region” (2000: 35). As a matter of fact, the Commission attended – for the first time – the AC’s 2nd Ministerial Meeting in Barrow (U.S.) in October 2000, represented by the Commission’s DG RELEX (Arctic Council 2000; Stålvant 2002: 283).¹⁸⁸

However, as outlined in Subchapter 2.3, the ND became a specifically eastern-enlargement related Russia politics in the Baltic region and slowly drifted away from its initially envisaged broad geographical coverage that specifically included the Arctic region. Ultimately, “(...) during the process of reaching the status of an official EU policy the ND lost its *transarctic* or *circumarctic* aspect.” (Palosaari & Möller 2004: 262) (Italics in the original) Yet only in 2008, János Herman, Deputy Political Director of DG RELEX, laid emphasis on the immediate necessity to reflect upon the ND’s Arctic Window as it has “so far not fulfilled the expectations” of a more concrete Arctic approach within the ND (2008: 35).

Eventually, the ND had “proved to be unsuccessful in engaging Arctic affairs” within EUropean hallways (Weber 2014: 49). The EP, for instance, urged the Commission in its 2005 *Resolution on the future of the Northern Dimension* to be more active in both AC and BEAC meetings and to eventually “create a comprehensive approach in the external Northern Dimension policies of the Union (...), including the Baltic Sea and Barents region as well as the Arctic as a whole” (European Parliament 2005). In that regard, this particular institutional interpretation of the ‘North’ comprehensively comprised both a territorial and maritime Arctic dimension, underling the key role of the EU’s Arctic partner on the other side of the Arctic Ocean (= Canada and the U.S.) as well. Taking that Resolution into account, MEP Diana Wallis issued a written question (E-4860/05) to the Commission in December 2005, asking on the Commission’s intended steps to be more active within both the AC and BEAC, and the potential EUropean initiatives taken in relation to the preparation for a possible ‘Charter on Arctic Governance’. The Commission replied by mainly focusing on its alleged participation within BEAC. Concerning the

¹⁸⁸ Until 2010, DG RELEX was the Commission’s responsible DG for the Union’s external policy. Consequently, DG RELEX was administrating the ND at that time. Under the Treaty of Lisbon the EEAS took over the functions of DG RELEX.

AC, the Commission indicated that it is usually invited as “special guest” to the AC’s ministerial meetings and tries to participate whenever possible.¹⁸⁹ Maurer concluded that this “rather unsatisfactory reply inspired Mrs Wallis and other MEPs to intensify the debate on the EU’s Arctic policy” (2010: 6).

In September 2007, MEP Wallis issued another written question (P-4519/07) that directly referred to the “developments in the Arctic over the summer” (= the Russian flag planting in August 2007) and asked the Commission if it “will (...) now properly participate in the work of the Arctic Council and set up a dedicated Arctic desk?” A month later in October 2007, the Commission replied by explicitly highlighting the Arctic element of the EU’s ND: “The Arctic, including the Barents region, is one of the priority areas of the policy [= the ND].” It was this very ‘Arctic Window’ that was only a year later denoted as not having fulfilled its expectations. Additionally, a potential Arctic desk was insofar negated in the answer as it was stressed that “a substantial contribution of the Commission can only be assured by the efficient coordination and cooperation of a wide variety of Commission services”; *see* Annex VII (page 360).

The Arctic and the Integrated Maritime Policy

At the very same time however, the Arctic made its first more prominent appearance on the Commission’s horizon, when the IMP was launched on 10 October 2007 with the Commission’s DG for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) holding the key-developing role. The policy’s main objective is the development of an integrated, inter-sectoral approach to Europe’s oceans and the Union’s maritime issues, based on the premise that all activities centred on the sea are ultimately interconnected. Geographically, this Communication explicitly covered the Arctic Ocean and, almost more importantly in the EU-Arctic policy context, expressed the Commission’s incentive to present a “report on strategic issues relating to the Arctic Ocean” in 2008. In that regard, the Arctic (Ocean) was mentioned in the same breath with the “geopolitical implications of climate change”; embedded in an overall (maritime) security and economic reasoning, but yet without the elaboration on what kind of geopolitical repercussions are actually to be expected

¹⁸⁹ The term ‘special guest’ refers to *ad hoc* observer status.

in the Arctic (Commission of the European Communities 2007: 13).¹⁹⁰ As stressed by Airoidi it was the Commission's general reflection on European maritime issues that eventually led to a first in-depth examination of the EU-Arctic relationship by the Commission (2008: 103). Additionally, Wegge (2011) concluded that Norway decisively influenced the Commission to include the Arctic Ocean and region in its maritime considerations. Similarly, it was also indicated that around that time Canada generally pushed the Commission to look further north and not to remain too Eurocentric.¹⁹¹ Accordingly, the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs specifically emphasised its priority to increase Northern cooperation with the EU, when evaluating its own Northern Dimension in 2005 (Global Affairs Canada 2005). Then again, MEP Wallis particularly accentuated that it was the EP's effort – "our effort" – that directed the IMP and the Commission, respectively, towards the Arctic (2008: 36).

In any case, the IMP's assessment was eventually institutionalised in December 2007, when the Commission established an inter-service coordination group, encompassing about 20-25 policymakers from various DGs and agencies, that was aimed to develop a draft proposal for the first Commission Communication on Arctic matters.¹⁹² As the IMP was chosen as the EU's Arctic blueprint, DG MARE found itself also in a key role with regard to the Arctic's policy drafting process, yet effectively supported and led by DG RELEX in order to ensure a supposedly coordinated outcome (Weber & Romanyshyn 2011: 852–853).

Although the policy-making process was eventually initiated, the EP and in particular MEP Wallis stuck to her conferred on guns and persistently questioned the Commission on Arctic issues. In a written question (P-0620/08) from February 2008 she repeated her enquiry if the Commission is to develop a "coherent and cross-cutting EU Arctic policy". Compared to the previous answers and based on the ongoing internal developments, the Commission's reply in March 2008 was rather

¹⁹⁰ The related 2006 Green Paper on *a future Maritime Policy for the Union* also already considered climate change in the Arctic to potentially become a "major challenge for EU Maritime Policy" (Commission of the European Communities 2006b: 14).

¹⁹¹ Interview 8. Participating at the 2005 ND Ministerial meeting, Canada explicitly requested "continued EU support for High North issues" (Commission of the European Communities 2006c). Transatlantic cooperation with the EU on Arctic issues was also welcomed by Canada at the SAO meeting in Oulu (Finland) in May 2002 (Arctic Council 2002: 5).

¹⁹² During the drafting process, Commission officials also discussed the topic with NGOs, (Arctic) representatives from Canada and Russia and with energy companies (Weber 2014: 60).

extensive and now explicitly stressed the “growing strategic importance [of the Arctic which] deserves increased attention”. Moreover, a series of Arctic-related policy steps already undertaken by the Commission were mentioned: the development of the IMP, the reiterated priority of the Arctic within the ND, the Commission’s participation within BEAC, the EU’s regional research efforts, a widened scope of assistance to Greenland or the European Community being party to conventions and protocols being fundamentally important to the Arctic environment. Maurer argued that it was due to the persistence of the EP and MEP Wallis, respectively, that the Commission eventually acknowledged the internal necessity of increased coordination and a strengthened cross-cutting approach, confirmed by the set-up of the inter-service coordination group (2010: 6).

A pre-2007/2008 Round-Up

As briefly summarised in this Subchapter, the EU’s Arctic policy history prior to 2007/2008 is not *per se* an empty one. It is, however, a fragmented story, either dominated by some very specific issues, such as environment and climate change, or mentioned within regional objectives in the context of the ND and BEAC and the adoption of a more regional approach to the European Arctic only. From an Arctic-international perspective even a deepened inclusion of the EU into the region’s main governance framework – the AC – was in the first decade of the 21st century expected and to some extent taken for granted (Pelaudeix & Rodon 2013: 60) with both Canada and Russia being fairly sympathetic to an enhanced European Arctic presence.

However, by early 2008, the Arctic was not prominently put on comprehensive European policy feet and only indirectly dealt with. By then it was mostly the EP and individual MEPs, in particular MEP Wallis, that have shown the greatest attention to Arctic issues (Airoldi 2008: 99). Contours of a systematic approach, only became publically visible later that year with the Commission issuing its first Communication on Arctic matters, entitled *The European Union and the Arctic Region* (Commission of the European Communities 2008a). Additionally, two documents with (particular) Arctic relevance, the *Climate Change and International Security* Paper by the HR/Commission (2008) and the first-ever comprehensive EP

Resolution on *Arctic Governance* (2008) have directly preceded the Commission's 2008 Communication, characterising the year 2008 somewhat an official starting point for the Union's distinctive Arctic storyline.

6.2. ... And from 2008 Onwards

The following Sections 6.2.1 to 6.2.8 address the 7+1 EU-Arctic policy documents in depth, *see* Table II, aiming to give an extensive overview of the Union's Ping Pong policy-making process lasting from 2008 to 2014. If considered necessary, the respective Section starts with a paragraph on the 'spatio-temporal Arctic setting', the time and context-specific Arctic scenery the documents have been embedded in. Moreover, a table at the end of each Section recapitulates the document's main characteristics, highlighting to some extent, yet neither sequential nor explicitly, five central narratives running through the 7+1 documents: problem, uncertainty, opportunity, choice and solution.

Table II: The EU's Arctic Policy Milestones, 2008-2014

2007	– Commission Communication on <i>An Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union</i>
2008	– HR and Commission Paper on <i>Climate Change and International Security</i> – EP Resolution on <i>Arctic governance</i> – Commission Communication on <i>The European Union and the Arctic region</i> – Draft Council Conclusions on <i>The European Union and the Arctic region</i>
2009	– Council Conclusions on <i>Arctic issues</i>
2011	– EP Resolution on <i>A sustainable EU policy for the High North</i>
2012	– Commission and HR Joint Communication on <i>Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: progress since 2008 and next steps</i>
2014	– EP Resolution on the EU strategy for the <i>Arctic</i> – Council Conclusions on <i>developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region</i>

Source: Own compilation based on (Raspotnik & Rudloff 2012: 11)

A Commission *Communication* is a non-binding policy document, issued by the Commission to set out its own opinion on a topical issue (European Commission 2015a). *Joint Communication* refers to a new attribution of competences since the Treaty of Lisbon and the conferred on possibility of the HR, for the area of common foreign and security policy, and the Commission, for other areas of external action, to submit joint proposals to the Council (TEU, Art. 22). Similarly, also a *Resolution* is a non-binding political statement by the EP in order to give political impetus to the legislative and political process. It is subject to a simple majority (Airoldi 2010: 19; Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014b). Council *Conclusions* express the unanimous, yet non legally binding, political agreement by all Member States on a certain matter and are often the basis for further consideration or action (Airoldi 2010: 22).

6.2.1. *Climate Change and International Security* (High Representative & European Commission, 2008)

The very nexus of ‘climate change and geopolitical implications’ was prominently addressed by the paper from the HR/Commission on *Climate Change and International Security* (2008). A text some consider a “seminal document” in the EU’s Arctic endeavour, as it recognised the trends of a changing Arctic and eventually started the political debate in Brussels outside some (parliamentary) offices about the challenges and opportunities of the circumpolar North (Weber & Romanyshyn 2011: 852).¹⁹³

The spatio-temporal Arctic setting.

The policy statement was published in March 2008 and explicitly referred to the planted Russian flag under the North Pole from August 2007. The used rhetoric fitted the then predominant Arctic narrative and further served as illustration within the document of an enhanced new strategic interest in region. Additionally, it has been assumed that the, then almost annually recurring, Russia-Ukraine gas disputes and their related adverse effect on Europe’s gas supply sparked Arctic interest (Holdhus 2010: 43; Pelaudeix & Rodon 2013: 60). It was only a month earlier, when President Barroso (2008) identified ‘energy’ and ‘climate change’ as the defining challenges of our generation.

From problem to opportunity/solution.

As titled, the paper’s main concern was the general impact of climate change on aspects of international security with the Union’s own security interests *inter alia* being affected by the “changing (...) geo-strategic dynamics of the [Arctic] with potential consequences for international stability and European security interests” that eventually challenge the EU’s “ability to secure its trade and resource interests in the region” (High Representative & European Commission 2008: 8). A to-be-ice-free

¹⁹³ The Arctic was one detailed example out of seven geographical illustrations in the joint paper. In that regard it has to be noted that any quoted document authored or co-authored by Steffen Weber (Weber & Romanyshyn 2011; Weber 2014) needs to be considered carefully as Weber was an advisor to MEP Michael Gahler and (co-)founder of the *EU-Arctic Forum*, a cross-sector and cross-party neutral platform in the EP that had a certain impact on the Arctic-knowledge building with in the EP (Daemers 2012: 10). The Forum was later re-named to *Arctic Forum Foundation*, see <http://eu-arctic-forum.org/>.

Arctic is highlighted as an additional dimension of global energy competition with related interstate conflict potential and the alleged need to address the occurring debate on territorial claims and access to new trade routes (Ibid.: 4 and 8). In general, climate change is perceived as a “threat multiplier[,] which exacerbates existing trends, tensions and instability” and amplifies risks that are not only of humanitarian but essentially also of political and security nature “that directly affect European interests” (Ibid.: 2). This relates in particular to the Union’s immediate neighbourhood where some of the most vulnerable regions to climate changes are located (Ibid.: 6).¹⁹⁴ In that regard, European action cannot be suspended anymore as the impact of climate change on international security is already a problem of today and not one in the time to come (Ibid.: 8). Furthermore, it was explicitly emphasised that only multilateral governance, with a potentially to be strengthened LOS Convention, can efficiently tackle climate change with the EU holding an unique and key role in the global responses on the impacts of climate change on international security: “The EU is in a unique position (...) given its leading role in development, global climate policy and the wide array of tools and instruments at its disposal” (Ibid.: 2). As climate change is considered a central element of current and future international relations, the Union’s multilateral leadership skills are considered to not only promote global climate security but also seen as a positive driver to improve and reform related global governance issues (Ibid.: 10). Additionally and EU-Arctic-policy-importantly, also this document suggested the development of a standalone EU Arctic policy (Ibid.: 11).

¹⁹⁴ The ‘climate change/global warming – international security – competition for resources’ nexus is not an invention of this quoted policy statement, but was, for instance, already exemplified in the ESS (European Council 2003). Moreover, the emphasis on the EU’s strengths to lead “in the international response to key issues that cannot be constrained by national boundaries like climate change” is also obvious in the Commission’s Communication *Europe in the World* from 2006 (Commission of the European Communities 2006a).

Table III: Joint Paper on *Climate Change and International Security* (2008)

- (Collective) problem
 - Climate change as threat multiplier
 - Global warming amplifies the competition for natural resources
 - Climate change as insecurity trigger in EUropean neighbourhoods
- Uncertainty
 - The geo-strategic dynamics of the Arctic (may) impact international stability and EUropean security
- Timeliness
 - Need for rapid action
- Role definition and opportunity
 - EUrope's multilateral leadership skills could promote climate security and enhance governance

6.2.2. Arctic Governance (European Parliament, 2008)

The spatio-temporal Arctic setting.

As described in Section 4.3.1, the A5 gathered in Ilulissat in May 2008 and asserted forcefully not to see a “need to develop a new comprehensive international legal regime to govern the Arctic Ocean” (The Ilulissat Declaration 2008: 2). In that particular environment of a “radical shift in the tone of the geopolitics of the Arctic” (Powell 2011: 114), MEP Wallis and other MEPs reached out to the Commission once more, using an oral question (O-0084/08) in September 2008 to debate the broader picture of “Arctic governance in a global world”. Explicitly referring to the Ilulissat Declaration and the A5’s affirmation of the LOS Convention’s key role to govern the Arctic Ocean, the MEPs questioned the Commission on its opinion concerning the Arctic’s governance structure, the feasibility of a potential “binding Arctic Charter”, similar to the ATS, and the Commission’s intention to eventually improve the coordination of its Arctic-related policies. In his answer during the EP’s plenary session on 8 October 2008, Commissioner Vladimir Špidla confirmed the Commission’s work on its first Arctic-related Communication, a policy effort that should finally serve as a basis for the Union’s future regional policy. Concerning the posed questions, Commissioner Špidla emphasised the importance of the LOS

Convention and explicitly stressed, “the conditions are not yet in place for a binding legal framework specifically designed for this region.”¹⁹⁵

From problem to solution.

The issues raised by MEP Wallis were also considered by the EP in its very first, comprehensively Arctic-related Resolution, entitled *Arctic Governance*, that was discussed and adopted in the subsequent plenary session on 9 October 2008 (European Parliament 2008). In particular, the EP called the Commission to present “the foundations for a meaningful EU Arctic policy”, a “standalone EU Arctic policy” as envisaged policy outcome going beyond the ND (Ibid.: 5 and 7).¹⁹⁶ The EP’s suggestions included a variety of issues, ranging from a potential cross-border political/legal structure concerning environmental protection and the sustainable orderly development of the region, to the inclusion of energy and security policy in the Arctic region on its agenda and the proposition to develop joint working procedures between the EU and Arctic states in the fields of climate change, sustainable development, security of energy supply and maritime safety. The document further stressed that future European policy options need to respect the indigenous population and their livelihoods. In a rather dramatic tone, the EP assessed that the “time for [global warming related] diagnosis is over and the time for action is now” (Ibid.: 2). Drafted and issued in the 2007/2008 Arctic setting with the Ilulissat Declaration and the ‘flag incident’ as external stimulus and a (publically) perceived Arctic-international environment of alleged conflict and inter-state confrontation, *see* Section 4.4.1, the EP was similarly concerned over the “race for natural resources in the Arctic, which may lead to security threats for the EU and overall international instability” (Ibid.: 13). The increase of maritime traffic in Arctic waters was specified as “exponentially” with considerably prospects to be offered by a to-be-opened NWP, yet without mentioning the NSR. In that regard, the EP urged the Commission to strengthen maritime safety, both the human and environmental aspect, via suggested amendments to existing IMO regulations. Furthermore, an envisaged “proactive [regional] role” of the Commission was supposed to be attained

¹⁹⁵ European Parliament, Debates, Wednesday, 8 October 2008, *Arctic governance in a global world (debate)*

¹⁹⁶ Any Resolution-related citation does not refer to a page number but to the paragraph.

by “taking up ‘observer status’ on the Arctic Council” and the internal set-up of a “dedicated Arctic desk” (Ibid.: 14).

Most controversially, especially considering the subsequent outcries by several Arctic states, the EP also suggested the Commission to pursue “the opening of international negotiations designed to lead to the adoption of an international treaty for the protection of the Arctic, having as its inspiration the Antarctic Treaty” and aimed to particularly cover “the unpopulated and unclaimed area at the centre of the Arctic Ocean” (Ibid.: 15); an issue that was already discussed in the preceding debate in September 2008.¹⁹⁷ The EP’s alleged Arctic governance vacuum of the region not being “governed by any specifically formulated multilateral norms and regulations” was not particularly well perceived by (most of) the Arctic states (Ibid.: F; Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014b). This negative Arctic perception was further strengthened by a rather blunt ‘Arctic-in’ approach. Accordingly, the Resolution stressed that 3 Member States and 2 EEA states are Arctic states and hence the Union and its associated states comprise more than half of AC member states (European Parliament 2008: para. N). Nevertheless, the EP supported the work of the AC in maintaining the Arctic as a region of low tension and further urged the Commission to take a proactive Arctic role by becoming an AC observer (Ibid.: 12 and 14).

External Reading.

However, although often only reduced to the ‘Arctic Treaty’ suggestion and ‘governance vacuum’ reference, the EP’s first Resolution has a rather broad approach, tackling both potential resources and opportunities in the Arctic but also environmental considerations and the position of indigenous peoples, all embedded by climate change consequences and in that regard similar to the HR/Commission document (Śmieszek 2013: 14). Based on the Ilulissat Declaration, the Resolution – for the first time – also used the term ‘A5’ to delineate the Arctic coastal states. In consideration of the temporal context (e.g., flag planting, the Ilulissat Declaration, the Arctic hype discussions), one also understands the EP’s broader geographical

¹⁹⁷ And yet, the EP’s suggestion of a potential Arctic Treaty was “often incorrectly interpreted as an expression of the political will” of the entire Union as such (Airoldi 2010: 20). Wegge highlighted that it was in particular MEP Wallis that became the political driving force behind that suggestion and a more, general pro-active Arctic role of the Commission (2012: 16), as it can also be concluded from the pre-2008 phase.

orientation on the circumpolar Arctic and its distinct challenges and opportunities. Furthermore, Powell stated that despite an often-alleged clumsiness of the EP, it is forgotten that the Resolution met with high approval – 597 votes in favour, 23 against and 41 abstentions (2011: 115). This can either be interpreted as ‘lack of knowledge and we just follow what sounds sexy’ or ‘we know what we do’ approaches. Either way, it underlines the uniqueness of the EP within the EU’s policy-making and institutional system with the EP having collectively a less constrained vision of the world (and foreign policy) with the opportunity for individual MEPs to specifically focus on regional and local issues based on their constituencies or interests (Airoldi 2008: 99). The Resolution, however, positioned the EP “on the radical wing” about the region’s future with particularly Canada and Russia but also Norway strongly opposing the EP’s issued position (Kobza 2015: 13–14).

<p>Table IV: Resolution on Arctic Governance (2008)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The spatio-temporal Arctic setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ilulissat Declaration, May 2008 • (Collective) problem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fragmented (maritime/regional) governance framework • Uncertainty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Race for Arctic resources lead to instability • Timeliness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need for rapid action ○ ‘Arctic Desk’ and standalone EU Arctic Policy • Solution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arctic Treaty ○ Supporting the AC, proactive Commission needed (envisaged AC observer) • Territorial perspective: the circumpolar Arctic

6.2.3. The European Union and the Arctic Region (European Commission, 2008)

Only one month after the EP’s Resolution, the Commission eventually adopted its first Communication – *The European Union and the Arctic region* – on 20 November 2008. The policy statement was a joint lead-effort of DG MARE and DG RELEX, based on the inter-service working group. Hence, it highlights both functional policy areas, mainly of maritime nature and foreign affairs and security-

related aspects. The Communication is based on the IMP premise that “each sea-region is unique and needs individual attention” (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 2). Eventually, and in the context of the IMP it was stated that an extended IMP into the wider international arena, including the Arctic sea basin, should strengthen the Union’s international authority as “an international maritime power” (Commission of the European Communities 2009: 3 and 9).

The spatio-temporal Arctic setting.

It has been emphasised that the document was launched “at a difficult timing” with both the Resolution and the previous HR/Commission paper having triggered “cold reactions” by Canada and Russia. This was predominantly based on the ‘enhancing governance’ theme and the related Arctic state’s intention to determine ownership and sovereignty over the Arctic (Ocean), as well as by the ‘seal ban – indigenous peoples’ issue (Garcés de los Fayos 2012: 32).

Arctic ties and territorial delimitation.

The Communication started by prominently emphasising – in the Union’s very own Arctic *name* and *claim* bid – the EU’s “inextricably” Arctic connections, manifested “by a unique combination of history, geography, economy and scientific achievements”. Furthermore, it particularly stressed that “EU policies in areas such as environment, climate change, energy, research, transport and fisheries have a direct bearing on the Arctic” (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 2). Repeating the ‘climate change as threat multiplier’ reference, the Communication took this consideration further and highlighted that both Arctic challenges and opportunities “will have significant repercussions on the life of European citizens for generations to come”. Hence, global response is needed and a comprehensive and cooperative Arctic policy approach by the Union considered “imperative”, especially as “each sea-region is unique and needs individual attention in balancing its uses in a sustainable manner” (Ibid.: 2–3). The Arctic itself is delimited as a region that covers “the area around the North Pole north of the Arctic Circle, including the Arctic Ocean and territories of the eight Arctic states (...)”, with Denmark, Finland and Sweden being Member States, Iceland and Norway being EEA members and

Canada, Russia and the U.S. being denoted as “strategic partners” (Ibid.: 2). Simultaneously, the North Pole and the Arctic Ocean serve as distinct geographical marker to highlight limitations of the A5’s regional sovereignty (Ibid.: 9).

Aimed to provide “a structured and coordinated approach to Arctic matters, as the first layer of an Arctic policy for the European Union” (Ibid.: 12), the Communication set out a variety of EU interests and proposed actions for EU Member States and institutions around three main policy objectives:

1. The protection and preservation of the Arctic in unison with its population
2. The promotion of sustainable use of resources
3. The contribution to enhanced Arctic multilateral governance (Ibid.: 3)

Safeguarding the region.

Within the broader ‘*protection and preservation of the Arctic*’ banner, the Commission re-emphasised the Union’s international role as “leader in fighting climate change and in promoting sustainable development”, its support to indigenous peoples and their livelihood and the Union’s, including the Member States’ individual, financial contributions to Arctic research. Being a “major contributor” to Arctic research is considered a necessary effort to close the knowledge gaps in the area of climate change (Ibid.: 3–6). With regard to supposed efforts for the indigenous communities living in the Arctic, an interesting problem arises, which has had an affect on the EU’s further Arctic endeavour ever since: animal welfare and a contemplated ban on the market, import, transit and export of seal products, *see* Text Box II (page 117). Although particularly stressing that such a ban should not “affect the fundamental economic and social interests of indigenous communities traditionally engaged in the hunting of seals”, the Communication also indicates that animal welfare is a growing concern within the Community and its citizens. Consequently, “EU policies should (...) take all factors into account” (Ibid.: 4). Similarly, the management of indigenous subsistence whaling should be supported, yet provided that subsistence is given and the management regulation properly (Ibid.: 5).

Stressing opportunities.

The Communication's second main policy objective concerned '*promoting the sustainable use of resource*' and essentially highlighted four elements: hydrocarbons, fisheries, transport and tourism. Although emphasising that the region and its offshore areas contains "large untapped hydrocarbon reserves", the policy statement explicitly accentuated that a) the USGS' assessments (mainly) relates to estimates only and b) Arctic resource exploitation is a long-term challenge. Yet, both Arctic hydrocarbons and raw materials "could contribute to enhancing the EU's security of supply" (Ibid.: 6). However, the very nature of this contribution and the Union's own competences, both internal and in the Arctic, remain ambiguous and tacit with the proposed actions being rather predictable: future exploitation should fully "respect (...) strict environmental standards" and operate via "a level playing field and reciprocal market access" (Ibid.: 7). The sustainability and preservation angle is also obvious with the Communication's policy objectives concerning Arctic fisheries. The outlined hypothesis reads as follows: climate change may lead to an increased productivity in areas beyond today's fisheries, which is mainly in the Barents Sea. As the Central Arctic Ocean is not (yet) covered by an international regulatory framework, no fisheries should commence before such a management regime has been put in place (Ibid.: 7–8). By implications this can be interpreted as the suggestion of a temporary moratorium for fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean, water areas beyond national jurisdiction as discussed in the Sections 4.3.1 and 4.4.4. Although also explicitly highlighting the promotion of stricter safety and environmental standards with regard to Arctic maritime transportation, emphasis was rather laid on the Union's "interest to explore and improve conditions for gradually introducing Arctic commercial navigation". It was specified that the regional economic 'openener' climate change could shorten the shipping routes between Europe and the Pacific Ocean, however again, "the development of Arctic commercial navigation will require time (...)" (Ibid.: 8). As the EU Member States collectively hold the world's largest merchant fleet, it is in the Union's (and Member States') interest to defend the freedom of navigation and the right of innocent passage in the to-be-opened routes with discriminatory practices to be avoided. The discriminatory reference has to be read in the then rather unclear situation concerning

Arctic maritime transportation along the NSR and Russia's rather non-transparent fee and regulation systems, *see* Section 4.3.1. The 'defending' reference was also received "with open mistrust in Ottawa" although the Communication does not take any position on the legal status of the NWP (Garcés de los Fayos 2012: 30). Additionally, it was stressed that regional maritime surveillance capabilities could be significantly strengthened via the Galileo satellite navigation system (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 8).

Impact on regional governance structure(s).

The third theme – '*contributing to enhanced multilateral governance*' – started by reciting some key (legal) Arctic facts: a) no specific (international) treaty applies to the region, b) no national sovereignty over the North Pole and the Arctic Ocean, c) some, still disagreed maritime borders and d) a varying legal interpretation concerning the conditions of passage in (some) Arctic waters. Similar to the EP only the NWP was particular mentioned in that regard without referring to the NSR. However, the Communication did not mention the creation of a potential 'Arctic Treaty', as brought forward by the EP. On the opposite, the Commission firmly supported the Arctic-validity of the LOS Convention, underlining that this particular legal framework also applies to the Arctic Ocean. Nevertheless, the Communication was clear that Arctic governance – both its legal and political angle – is highly fragmented, lacking effective instruments and an overall policy-setting process with related gaps in participation, implementation and geographic scope (Ibid.: 9–10). Hence, 'enhancement' was needed. The thematic policy objectives highlighted that cooperative, LOS Convention based, Arctic governance should ensure security/stability, strict environmental management (= the possibility to establish new, multi-sector frameworks for integrated ecosystem-based management) and the sustainable use of resources. It can be argued that the A5's Ilulissat Declaration of May 2008 depicts the international context of the Communication's argumentation with the Commission stressing the A5's (announced) steps to affirm and extend their national jurisdiction and regional presence in the Arctic. Almost even more importantly, the Communication underlined that the EU should not support any agreements that exclude EU Arctic Member States and/or EEA Arctic states. This

reference expressed the Commission's discontent of Finland, Iceland and Sweden not being admitted to the 2008 Ilulissat table. Additionally, it was underlined to eventually assess the factual effectiveness of Arctic-relevant multilateral agreements and be cautious if the process of maritime delimitation in the Arctic counteracts the EU's emphasised interests (Ibid.: 11). The issue of Greenland was also shortly discussed in one brief paragraph with the only suggested policy of action referring to an enhanced Arctic-related cooperation with Greenland and making "the EU an even more important partner for Greenland" (Ibid.: 12).

Although explicitly referring to EU-Arctic linkages, yet in a rather broad and fluffy language, the Communication's conclusion reflected a certain awareness of a still to be established regional European (policy) presence (Airoldi 2010: 21). In that regard, it was also suggested to include Arctic considerations into wider EU policies and to examine, in cooperation with its related partners, if ND projects can cover the wider area of the European Arctic (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 10–11). The Communication was aimed to provide the basis for a more detailed reflection on Arctic matters, the inward-looking objective of creating an Arctic policy, which inherently also holds an external angle. Concerning the external perspective, it was supposed to "open new cooperation perspectives with the Arctic states" to commonly decrease the region's perceived instability and to establish a balance between protecting the region's environment (= the Communication's priority goal) and the need for sustainable use the Arctic's resources (Ibid.: 12). Furthermore, the Communication also listed the Commission's envisaged application "for *permanent* observer status in the Arctic Council" in order to enhance the EU's regional input (Ibid.: 11) (*Italics added*).¹⁹⁸ The AC and its Arctic role was illustrated as being "successful in preparing assessments, developing a regional identity and setting the Arctic agenda" (Ibid.: 10).

¹⁹⁸ On the very same day the Communication was presented, the Commission also introduced its policy document to the AC at the SAO meeting in Kautokeino (Norway), held on 19 and 20 November 2008. The Commission expressed its intention to apply for *permanent* AC observer in "due time before the April 2009 [AC] Ministerial [Meeting]" (Arctic Council 2008: 12). The reference 'permanent' relates to the common terminology prior to the revised Rules of Procedure as adopted at the 8th AC Ministerial Meeting, *see* Footnote 103. As already mentioned in Section 4.3.2, the EU eventually applied for observer status in December 2008.

External reading.

In general, it can be concluded that although being rather assertive in some areas with stakes for the Union, e.g. the innocent passage reference or equal access to Arctic opportunities for European companies indications, the Communication's general contours was *prima facie* less controversial than the EP's Resolution; although capturing a large extent of the EP's preoccupations, especially under the first two objectives (Airoldi 2010: 21). At large, the policy statement was geared towards Arctic support and cooperation in the common soft policy AC dialectics; however, specifically emphasising some need for 'enhanced Arctic governance'. In essence, the document's conclusion reveals much about the EU's Arctic perception and its anticipated regional role: a structured and coordinated European Arctic approach leads to new cooperation perspectives with Arctic states that eventually increases regional stability and establishes a right balance between preserving and sustainable using the Arctic (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 12). Additionally, and similarly to the EP's Resolution, also the Communication has a stronger focus on circumpolar challenges and opportunities and did not take into (broader) account the terrestrial European Arctic and related aspects, as for instance the Sámi as European Arctic indigenous people or developments of land transportation capacities.

Table V: Communication on *The European Union and the Arctic Region* (2008)

- The spatio-temporal Arctic setting: disapproval of Canada and Russia
- Arctic ties – regional naming and claiming
 - 'Inextricable linked'
 - 'Direct bearings'
- (Collective) problem
 - Vulnerable Arctic suffers from global climate change
 - Fragmented (maritime) governance framework
- Timeliness: 'Rapid imperative action needed'
- (Future) Opportunities
 - Open and equitable access to resources
 - European (AC) engagement could enhance Arctic Governance
- Role definition (and achievements so far - solution)
 - Leader to fight climate change and promote sustainable development
 - Major (financial) contributor of Arctic research
 - Supporter of indigenous peoples and local population
- Territorial perspective: the circumpolar Arctic

An International Treaty for the Protection of the Arctic (2009)¹⁹⁹

The EP, however, did not let up its push for a binding Arctic, ATS-inspired, charter. In oral questions to both the Commission (O-0061/09) and the Council (O-0060/09), three MEPs wondered about the Council's stance on an international treaty that covers the Arctic (Ocean). This issues was eventually discussed in the EP's plenary session in 1 April 2009. However, both the Council and the Commission came out in opposition to an international treaty for the Arctic and emphasised the A5's disfavour of such a regime.²⁰⁰ The Joint Motion for a Resolution on *The international treaty for the protection of the Arctic* was put to vote on 2 April 2009. Given the serious objections by both the Council and the Commission, the EP, however, voted to postpone the consideration of the joint motion, which was eventually withdrawn at all to not cause any problems to the Commission and its AC observer status application process (Airoldi 2010: 22).

6.2.4. Conclusions on Arctic Issues (Council of the European Union, 2009)

During the Swedish Presidency, lasting from July to December 2009, the Arctic returned on the EU's institutional table when the Commission's Communication was reflected by the Council and its competent working parties, which eventually led to the adoption of the *Council Conclusions on Arctic issues* in December 2009.²⁰¹ In this act, the Council approved the policy objectives outlined by the Commission, expressed its support for the Commission's (and Italy's) AC observer status application, emphasised the strong links of the EU with Greenland, Iceland and Norway and reiterated the Arctic-relevance of the LOS Convention. Additionally, it

¹⁹⁹ This proposed Resolution is not part of Table II.

²⁰⁰ European Parliament, Debates, Wednesday, 1 April 2009, *Opening of international negotiations in view of adopting an international treaty for the protection of the Arctic (debate)*

²⁰¹ However, the Council already welcomed the Communication a year earlier in its meeting on 8 December 2008 (Council of the European Union 2008). The adopted Conclusions were of short nature only and referred to a more detail reflection of the Communication during the first half of 2009. Nevertheless, it particularly stressed the "special position and interests of the Arctic areas of the three Arctic member states, including those areas of one Member State enjoying OCT-status and special contractual links with the EU" (Ibid.: 2). The Council's slight attention at that time was mainly due to the global financial crisis of 2007-2008. The continuing crisis, in addition to a lack of Arctic competency by the Czech Presidency (January-June 2009), eventually further postponed the Council's Arctic-related work until the Swedish Presidency (Wegge 2012: 19–20).

requested to Commission to present a progress report – “a next step” – on its Arctic endeavour by the end of June 2011 (Council of the European Union 2009).

State of the Ar(c)t(ic).

As a matter of fact, the Council considered the policy to be based on five main elements (of responsibility): 1) the effective implementation by the international community of adequate measures to mitigate climate change, referring in particular to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations, 2) a reinforced multilateral governance through consistent implementation of the relevant agreements, including 3) legal instruments = the LOS Convention (without mentioning the EP’s ‘Arctic Treaty’ suggestions), 4) the formulation of Arctic-affected EU policies with respect to the region’s unique characteristic, including its indigenous community and 5) maintaining the Arctic as an area of peace and stability and the sustainable development of its economic opportunities (Ibid.: 1–2). Overall, the general approach is undoubtedly led by environmental and climate change considerations and certainly less security focused as compared to the HR/Commission Paper and to some extent even the Commission’s Communication. Furthermore, the Council did not list any European economic/trading interests in the region or referred to the sensitive sealing issue. Yet, with regard to its LOS Convention reference, it reiterated “the rights and obligations for flag, port and coastal states (...) in relation to freedom of navigation” (Ibid.: 4); and also echoed the Commission’s proposal for a regulatory fisheries framework that covers areas beyond national jurisdiction (= the Central Arctic Ocean), explicitly favouring a temporary ban until such a regime has been put in place (Ibid.: 3).

Although the Council welcomed the gradual formulation of a policy on Arctic issues, it also recognised the “Member State’s legitimate interests and rights in the Arctic” (Ibid.: 1) – the key sentence of the Conclusion as according to Airoidi (2010: 22), who underlined that the Member States’ reference presumably means the Arctic Member States – Denmark, Finland and Sweden (Ibid.: 23). While an explicit *EU policy* for the region is welcomed, the Council gave unambiguous weight to the *Member States’* rightful interests; a message that “resembles the typical rhetoric of the Arctic littoral states when they claim their sovereignty in the region” (Weber &

Romanyshyn 2011: 854). This is further obvious in the Conclusion’s recognition of the AC as being the “primary competent body for circumpolar regional cooperation” (Council of the European Union 2009: 4); an emphatic statement that is not to be found in such an explicitness in neither the EP’s Resolution nor the Commission’s Communication and gives some strong indication on the ‘spokesmen’ of the Conclusion. Accordingly, Maurer concluded that both the Commission and the EP have proposed EUropean yardsticks without sufficiently analysing the Member States’ understanding of and interests in the Arctic (2010: 16).²⁰²

Table VI: Conclusions on Arctic Issues (2009)

- State-of-the-Ar(c)t(ic)
 - Area of peace and stability
 - Member States have legitimate interests and rights
 - LOS Convention is key and AC as primary governance body
- (Future) Opportunities
 - Sustainable development of region’s economic opportunities (in accordance with the Arctic’s (indigenous) communities)

6.2.5. Resolution on a Sustainable EU Policy for the High North (European Parliament, 2011)

After discussing Arctic matters on 10 March 2010, the EP adopted an updated policy position, the *Resolution on a sustainable EU policy for the High North* in plenary on 20 January 2011 (European Parliament 2011).²⁰³ Characterised as a “rather belated response to the Commission 2008 Communication”, the Resolution demonstrated the EP’s ambition to “address all aspects of the EU Arctic policy under development” (Airoldi 2014: 11).²⁰⁴ And the Resolution did indeed address a lot of aspects. It is rather long, overloaded and to some extent intrinsically repetitive, with yet the overall policy approach slightly varying as in comparison to the previously mentioned statements by the Commission and the Council.

²⁰² Text Box IV (page 224) provides an overview on the various Member States’ Arctic interests in relation to the Union.

²⁰³ Any Resolution-related citation does not refer to a page number but to the paragraph.

²⁰⁴ As already mentioned in Subchapter 5.1, the modification of the Union’s setup and functioning, brought about by the Treaty of Lisbon, considerably strengthened the role of the EP and constitutes a major functional change between the EP’s two Arctic-related Resolutions at that time.

Arctic ties and territorial delimitation.

The Resolution took up the Commission's effort to highlight the links between Europe and the Arctic and reaffirming the Union's (legitimate) regional interests "by virtue of [its] rights and obligations under international law (European Parliament 2011: 1). In addition to the 'typical' references of, *inter alia*, a) Denmark, Finland and Sweden being EU Arctic Member States and Europe's only indigenous people – the Sámi – living in the European Arctic, b) Norway's position as reliable EEA partner, c) the EP being an active participant in the work of the Standing Committee of Arctic Parliamentarians²⁰⁵ or d) the Union's research contribution, the Resolution also underscored two 'events' of situational-related – international context – relevance: Iceland's EU membership application and the growing Arctic interest of Asian states (Ibid.: D and K). In that regard the EP stressed the to-be-altered geopolitical perspectives that come with these two 'events' and would have to be taken into European account. Especially as an Icelandic membership "would transform the Union into an Arctic coastal entity" (Ibid.: 6).

Stressing opportunities.

The two themes 'new world transport routes' and 'natural resources' characterise the economic perspective of the Resolution; an angle also slightly taken by the Commission but definitely not the Council. In that regard, the EP underlined the (economic) importance of safety and security of the Arctic's maritime transportation routes, without explicitly naming NSR, NWP or TSR, and the related issue of international law (= the freedom of navigation and 'free' passage)²⁰⁶, stressed the importance of regional transportation in the European Arctic and pointed to the necessity of collaboratively working on issues of maritime safety within the relevant IOs, e.g. IMO (and its Polar Code) and AC. No explicit reference was made to the amount of (expected) natural resources to be located in the region, however, the Resolution recalled the Union's position as being a main consumer of Arctic

²⁰⁵ The Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region is a biennial event for parliamentarians representing the A8 and the EP and was set up in 1993, see <http://www.arcticparl.org/>.

²⁰⁶ The indication of 'free passage' most likely refers to 'innocent passage'. Paragraph 14, however, explicitly referred to the NSR (and Russia in that regard) by stating that states should "refrain from introducing any unilateral arbitrary burdens, be they financial or administrative, that could hinder shipping" (European Parliament 2011: 14), see Section 4.3.1.

natural resources, *see* Subchapter 5.2, and requested the Commission to make full use of the Union's related (legal) competences to regulate any exploration and exploitation and to promote the principles of sustainable development (Ibid.: 21). Furthermore, the matter of sustainable development was also put in a socioeconomic context that explicitly accentuated the 'positive' effects of climate change of creating "opportunities of economic development in the Arctic region", especially for its indigenous peoples (Ibid.: 31).

A changed governance perspective.

Most strikingly, the EP – under the header 'Governance' – finally abandoned its idea of an 'Arctic Treaty' and concluded that "the Arctic region is not to be regarded as a legal vacuum", due to the existence of a broad Arctic governance framework, including the LOS Convention, the AC or the IMO (Ibid.: 42). Yet, the EP was "conscious of the different [legal] interpretations of the (...) Spitsbergen Treaty", a position that was not well received in Norway, especially after MEP Wallis – in her private capacity – published a report on that matter in August 2011 (Østhagen 2013b: 83).²⁰⁷ Similarly to the Commission's Communication, the EP also affirmed not to support any arrangements which exclude any of the Arctic EU Member States or Arctic EEA states and explicitly called for further cooperation between the EU and the A8 in order to uphold overall stability and peace in the region (European Parliament 2011: 5), *see also* (Daemers 2012: 9–10; Airoidi 2014: 12). Furthermore, the Resolution supported the Union's AC observer status application and particularly underlined the "need for a united, coordinated EU policy on the Arctic region, in which both the EU's priorities and the potential challenges and a strategy are clearly defined" (European Parliament 2011: 8 and 54). The AC's role was, however, not terminologically emphasised, as e.g. by the Council in 2009.

The information overload has already been (critically) mentioned, with Airoidi illustrating the Resolution as a "rambling text" that needs to "accommodate different interests" and a difficult to identify clear message (2014: 12). However, especially from a (European) geopolitical perspective, paragraph 46 is revealing: "[The EP

²⁰⁷ *See* (Wallis & Arnold 2011)

recognises that the challenges facing the Arctic are global and should therefore include all relevant actors” (European Parliament 2011: 46). It undoubtedly highlights the already prominently stated global/Arctic interactions, apparent in the preceding European Arctic documents. By implication, the inherent ‘we are affected and have an impact’ nexus also concerns the opportunity segment, relating to ‘Arctic users should have a right to say as well’ with the theme of ‘research’ being the operational connector.

Table VII: Resolution on A Sustainable EU Policy for the High North (2011)

- State-of-the-Ar(c)t(ic)
 - Rejection of initial Arctic Treaty suggestion
 - LOS Convention as key
- (Future) opportunities
 - Stronger emphasis on economic aspects (to be exploited in a sustainable socioeconomic form)
 - Enhanced governance with EU AC observer status

6.2.6. Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region (European Commission & High Representative, 2012)

Although requested by the Council to be presented in June 2011, it was only in June 2012 when the Commission, together with the HR, issued its follow-up report. Titled *Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: progress since 2008 and next steps*, the Joint Communication proposed a) “a set of building blocks for the EU's constructive [regional] engagement” – the way forward in developing an standalone Arctic policy (Part 1) – and b) summarised the “range of [EU] activities” since 2008 (Part 2) (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 2–3).²⁰⁸ The drafting process of the documents actually already started in September 2010 under then still DG RELEX, consequently carried on by the EEAS and substantially supported by other DG’s, in particular DG MARE, on the basis of the inter-service coordination mechanism (Weber 2014: 62).²⁰⁹ It has been remarked that “the EEAS

²⁰⁸ The document was supplemented by two accompanying staff working documents (SWD) that provided detailed information on the progress and undertakings from 2008 onwards, the SWD *The inventory of activities in the framework of developing a European Union Arctic Policy* (European Commission & High Representative 2012c) and the SWD *Space and the Arctic* (European Commission & High Representative 2012b).

²⁰⁹ It has been the establishment of the EEAS, as a direct consequence of the Treaty of Lisbon, that has led to a delay in publishing the Joint Communication; in addition to a EU-internal debate on “how

holds 51% of the [Arctic] shares”,²¹⁰ although the EU’s Arctic intelligence sits in DG MARE.²¹¹ Thus, one interviewee indicated some kind of “conflict” between the two institutional actors.²¹² However, according to another interviewee and based on the Arctic being considered a foreign policy issue, “it seems normal that the EEAS has the lead”.²¹³ Representatives from the EEAS considered the document a messy example of EU foreign policy, emphasising the various internal voices and related difficulties when eventually compiling the policy document.²¹⁴ However, the document obtained (broad) approval by Sweden and several other Member States that are already AC observers.²¹⁵

The spatio-temporal Arctic setting.

The document has been (rightly) characterised as “particularly sympathetic to the prerogatives of the Arctic states and populations”.²¹⁶ This is partly based on the Arctic-international ‘turbulence’ caused by the EP (the ‘Arctic Treaty’ issue) and the Commission (the ‘enhancing Arctic governance’ theme) and in that regard has to be interpreted in the very Arctic setting and context it was drafted.²¹⁷ The policy document followed the Commission’s renewed application for AC observer status, which was then to be eventually decided at the AC’s Ministerial Meeting in Kiruna in May 2013. Hence, the Joint Communication was supposed to be a decision-helper for AC members when deciding on EU observer status.²¹⁸ In order to not get the application rejected, the text is written in a rather accommodating language – a general contour that can be traced throughout the entire document and is particularly obvious in the following statement: “The European Union wants to engage more

to best overcome the Arctic Council’s resistance to accepting to observers, including the Commission representing the EU” (stated in a 2012 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author).

²¹⁰ Interview 9

²¹¹ Stated at the German-Norwegian Workshop on Cooperation in the Arctic at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany in Berlin on 21 March 2013. The event was held under Chatham House Rules.

²¹² Interview 7

²¹³ Interview 8

²¹⁴ Interview 3

²¹⁵ Interview 2

²¹⁶ Stated in a 2012 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author

²¹⁷ As a matter of fact, the term ‘governance’ is not used once. Part 2 of the Joint Communication gave a summary on the Union’s objectives since 2008 and was built along the first Communication’s three policy objectives of ‘protecting/preserving’, ‘promoting’ and ‘enhancing’. Yet, the controversial ‘contributing to enhanced Arctic multilateral governance’ was changed in 2012 to a more neutral ‘international cooperation’ (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 17).

²¹⁸ Interview 3

with Arctic partners to increase its awareness of their concerns and to address common challenges in a collaborative manner.” It is especially the research theme that was considered as EU Arctic policy integration argument (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 3).

State of the Ar(c)t(ic).

In essence, the central point, if compared to the Commission’s first Communication, remained the same: “(...) the European Union should step up its engagement with its Arctic partners to jointly meet the challenge of safeguarding the environment while ensuring the sustainable development of the Arctic region” (Ibid.: 2) (Underline added) Consequently, and building on its 2008 objectives, the proposed way forward was summarised by three, rather abstract, catchwords: knowledge, responsibility and engagement (Ibid.: 4). This key message was denounced as “easily to remember”²¹⁹ or in contrast “virtually degraded to three buzzwords” (Stępień & Raspotnik 2015: 434). In order to sustainably develop the region (= responsibility), research (= knowledge) is needed, embedded in a legally and institutionally cooperative framework (= engagement). Emphasis was particularly laid on the cooperation angle (‘jointly meet’), especially via the research agenda and information sharing (‘engagement to safeguard’) with climate change remaining the primary instigator of desired action. In that regard, the Communication particularly stressed the (self-perceived) importance of the Union to not only support Arctic cooperation but essentially also to tackle the regional challenges ahead – the Union remains to be the “world’s strongest proponent of greater international efforts to fight climate change” (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 3). It (again) indicated the growing strategic importance of the Arctic region, by actually referring to some well-known Arctic facts of environmental concern and (potentially vague) economic opportunities, including the region’s (alleged) peaceful nature and the legal and institutional framework (= LOS Convention, AC) in place (Ibid.: 2–3).

Hence, to a major extent, the document only mentioned these renowned Arctic facts, without (again) taking any clear standpoint on the few (legal) Arctic disputes,

²¹⁹ Stated by a Commission Official at the ‘Humans in the Arctic’ Seminar in Brussels on 26 November 2013.

as for instance with regard to the NSR or the NWP (Keil & Raspotnik 2012). However, in order to strengthen its own emphasis on being established as a “key supporter of the Arctic region” (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 2), some of the European dimensions of Arctic presence, as illustrated in Chapter 5, are particularly highlighted in the Joint Communication and referred to as “elements of the EU’s Arctic contribution” (Ibid.: 4). Thus, in comparison to the 2008 Communication, the 2012 version (and its add-ons) had a stronger focus on European Arctic territory and the Union’s related links, as for instance aspects of regional research, tourism or trans-European transport networks. Although environmental protection is illustrated as “[remaining] cornerstone of the Union’s policy”, this priority goal from 2008 was specifically broadened by a particular economic angle – similar to the preceding EP Resolution – and linked with the Europe 2020 Agenda for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In that regard, the EU’s financial contribution should benefit both the Arctic states, as well as the needs of indigenous and local communities (Ibid.: 5). Moreover, the Communication explicitly highlights the Union’s financial support, funding that is distributed via a variety of programmes and instruments, as illustrated in Subchapter 5.4.

In addition, some other facts are noticeable. Similar to the Council’s Conclusion, the AC is now (explicitly) considered the “primary forum for international cooperation in the region” (Ibid.: 11). In order to maximise the EU’s (financial) efforts, the geographic scope of the Union’s related contributions should now include a circumpolar angle (and not the European Arctic anymore). The (financial) support and dialogue effort with the indigenous communities is particularly underlined and the ‘freedom of navigation’ reference re-occurs again. However, the often, publically-referred to global Arctic awareness, namely the emerging interests of Asian states, has not been mentioned; neither a potential role of European industry, with both points referred to by the EP. Interestingly, although prominently signified as almost existential for Arctic cooperation, neither the LOS Convention’s lack of compliance mechanisms nor an explicit strengthening of the AC’s competences is stated.

External reading.

As concluded in 2012, the Joint Communication, embedded in the already described context and made experiences, showed to a certain extent the Commission's/EEAS' unwillingness "to step on the toes of any of the Arctic states by remaining largely unspecific, pushing back against the perception of [being] a "super regulator" and [almost only] concentrating on environmental, climate change and research issues" (Keil & Raspotnik 2012). Eventually, the document's general tone, embedded in the distinct pre-Kiruna setting, mirrors the Union's key interest for the region's future = the Arctic should remain a stable region based on already existing international cooperation and governance (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 11).

Table VIII: Joint Communication on Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region (2012)

- State-of-the-Ar(c)t(ic)
 - Arctic cooperation (already exists and) is key via...
 - ... Knowledge (= research)
 - ... Responsibility (= sustainable development)
 - ... Engagement (= embedded in Arctic legal/institutional framework)
 - Drafted 'Kiruna-friendly' (e.g. the EU's financial Arctic contributions, the AC as primary forum for international cooperation in the Arctic)
- Role definition (and achievements so far - solution)
 - The EU's Arctic contributions – dimensions of regional presence
- Choice
 - From *enhancing governance* to international cooperation
- Environmental protection still key, yet also focus on (regional) economic aspect
- Geographic orientation: both circumpolar and European Arctic

6.2.7. EU Strategy for the Arctic (European Parliament, 2014)

The spatio-temporal Arctic setting.

In April 2013, the EP again debated on a Union's *strategy* for the Arctic region. Accordingly, MEP Gahler indicated that the debate was not scheduled randomly but in the context of the AC's Ministerial Meeting in Kiruna in May 2013 and an expected decision on the EU's application for AC observer status. Commissioner Štefan Füle informed the EP on the EU's progressing contribution to Arctic cooperation. Additionally, he explicitly stressed that the 2012 Communication

“is not a strategy” and that the EU’s Arctic policy is “still at the development stage”.

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Also in the months to come, the EP did not remain Arctic-passive. On 6 January 2014, MEP Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa issued questions to the Commission on the legal status of Svalbard’s maritime areas and its fisheries resources. The topic was eventually discussed in the EP’s plenary session on 26 February 2014 with Commissioner Janez Potočnik delivering the Commission’s answer.²²¹ Being aware of the sensitivity of the topic, especially if considering Norway’s particular position (*see* Section 4.3.1), Commissioner Potočnik’s answers were rather diplomatically driven. The answers highlighted the Commission’s understanding of the complexity of this matter and how an apparently small issue, at least from a European perspective, might have a ripple effect on the EU’s wider Arctic engagement; a clear reference to the seal ban issue (Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014a).²²²

It was only a month later, when the EP, following the April 2013 debate, adopted a new Arctic-related Resolution on a *EU strategy for the Arctic* (European Parliament 2014) – a re-statement that the assembly should be taken into account when discussing the Arctic and respective policy-making (Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014b).²²³ Approved shortly before the end of the EP’s 7th legislative term (2009-2014), Airoldi described the Resolution as the “outgoing’s Parliament legacy”, “[rather] long (57 operational paragraphs), loosely structured and not completely consistent” (2014: 16); and in that regard persistent if compared to the previous Regulation. The EP insistently referred to the various EU’s Arctic linkages, the Union’s need to ensure Arctic legitimacy, predominantly via its research efforts, and local support for its regional-domestic engagement. Strikingly, the EP “regrets the effects which the EU regulation relating to the ban on seal products has produced (...) in particular for indigenous culture and livelihood” (European Parliament 2014: 5; Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014b). This account has been brought up in the same

²²⁰ European Parliament, Debates, Wednesday, 17 April 2013, *EU strategy for the Arctic (debate)*

²²¹ European Parliament, Debates, Wednesday, 26 February 2014, *Svalbard Archipelago and its fisheries resources (debate)*

²²² The legal issue of Svalbard, as also referred by the EP in its 2011 Resolution, was not referred to in its 2014 Resolution.

²²³ As the Resolution is not page-numbered, the subsequent quotations do not refer to page numbers but instead to the numbered paragraphs in the Resolution.

paragraph with the EP taking note of the AC’s Kiruna Declaration and the Union not yet been accepted as AC observer, *see* Section 4.3.2. In conformity to its 2011 Resolution, the EP took up again the theme of an ‘Arctic of European businesses’ and reiterated the “increasing global geopolitical interest in the Arctic” based on the Asian countries AC observer status and their research endeavours (European Parliament 2014: N).

Table IX: Resolution on a EU Strategy for the Arctic (2014)

- State-of-the-Ar(c)t(ic)
 - A (regional) Arctic of European business
 - A geopolitical Arctic (= interest of Asian states)
- Role definition
 - EU needs to ensure its Arctic legitimacy (= becoming AC observer)
 - EP regrets effects of seal ban
- Territorial perspective: stronger focus on European Arctic

6.2.8. Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic (Council of the European Union, 2014)

Although expected to be on the Council Foreign Affairs’ agenda rather shortly after the Joint Communication’s release in June 2012, the Council only re-dealt with the Arctic in May 2014 when ultimately issuing its *Conclusions on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region* (Council of the European Union 2014a).²²⁴ With the Commission, EEAS/HR and EP being fairly Arctic-active over the last years, it was the Council that lacked a certain interest to put the Arctic on the EU policy table. This is due to more urgent issues affecting the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood during that time, a lack of pressure for more energetic Arctic initiatives (= the region as a low economic-strategic priority) but to a certain extent also a common tendency in European foreign policy of distinct national interests trumping European ones (Linge Valberg 2012: 44; Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014c; Kobza 2015: 22).²²⁵ Kobza branded the observed delay as “a *de facto* consensus on a

²²⁴ The Council also exchanged views on the Arctic and discussed the Joint Communication in its 3218th Foreign Affairs meeting on 31 January 2013 (Council of the European Union 2013). It essentially only discussed the then upcoming AC Kiruna Ministerial Meeting and how to eventually obtain envisaged observer status (Interview 9).

²²⁵ It was indicated that the Conclusions were to be expected for fall 2012 (Interview 4 (4 September 2012)). However, in addition to the lack of Council-internal importance, Sweden was blocking any discussion within the Council due to its then AC Chairmanship and the upcoming Ministerial Meeting in Kiruna. It was reasoned that the Nordic State did not want Canada and Russia to be upset and hence

low-profile character of the EU Arctic policy” (Ibid.: 22) (Italics in the original). Furthermore, and as discussed in Text Box IV (page 224), the different perceptions of the Member States on the Union’s regional involvement also determines the low-profile character. As summarised by Airoidi, the Conclusions are “short and coached in rather general, non-controversial language” (2014: 17), but nevertheless an essential and institutionally necessary step in the EU’s Arctic policy formulation process. As a matter of fact, it reiterated the EU’s ‘way to go forward’ by supporting:

- The conduct of research to address environmental and climate change challenges
- A responsible approach to sustainable development of the region
- A constructive, active engagement with the Arctic states and its indigenous peoples (Council of the European Union 2014a: 1)

As by now usual, the Conclusions referred to the importance of freedom of navigation, the Polar Code and the AC as primary body of regional cooperation. Canada was particularly urged to use the current positive momentum in the bilateral relationship to help the EU to eventually become an AC observer, *see* Text Box II (page 117). Additionally, the Commission was requested to consider the establishment of a EU Arctic Information Centre (EUAIC) to “promote efficient access to Arctic information, to facilitate dialogues and to communicate on Arctic issues” (Ibid.: 2–3); a proposal that is also to be found in previous EU-Arctic policy document but experienced a new momentum in 2014/2015.

Table X: Conclusions on *Developing a EU Policy towards the Arctic Region* (2014)

- Cooperation and European angle
 - AC as primary body of cooperation
 - Scientific knowledge essential to address climate change
 - Arctic research as key, yet European funding instruments need synergy
- (Future) opportunities
 - Sustainable development for the region
 - Active engagement (in accordance with indigenous communities)

aimed for a quiet and peaceful end of its Chairmanship (Interview 9 and Interview 11. Arctic-related discussions in the Council in May 2013 were postponed due to more urgent necessities with regard to the war in Syria (Interview 4 (19 June 2013)).

The Council further requested the Commission and the HR to prepare a new Joint Communication by December 2015 to further develop an “integrated and coherent Arctic Policy” (Ibid.: 3). An essential component of the ‘coherence path’ was the Council’s request (“the Council encourages the Commission”) to “ensure effective synergies between the various EU funding instruments in the Arctic region” (Ibid.: 3). In that regard, the Commission launched a consultation process in September 2014 to obtain an overview of key investment and research priorities for the European Arctic region in order to exchange best practices with the stakeholders involved and discuss opportunities of improvement (European Commission 2014b: 3, c). The results of this process, lasting from 1 September 2014 to 2 December 2014, were further discussed in a series of workshops over the course of spring/summer 2015. The increased attention on the European Arctic and a related focus on terrestrial and European Arctic-internal (economic) development may be the essential direction in the Union’s future Arctic policy steps.

Text Box IV: One Voice or Many Voices? The EU, its Member States and the Arctic

The Arctic is not only (very) slowly becoming a policy matter within the Union’s institutional hallway, but has also, only recently gained more prominent attention in the various European capitals, with the obvious exception of the Nordic centres.²²⁶ With regard to the EU’s role in the Arctic, Maurer noticed “remarkable divisions among EU Member States on the division of labour with the EU in the Arctic”.²²⁷ In 2008/2009, it was particularly Denmark that “pulled the strings during the [Council Conclusions’] negotiations, exploiting its status as an Arctic littoral state” and criticising the language used by the Commission in its first Communication (Weber 2014: 64–65). In that regard, the theme of ‘*contributing to enhanced multilateral governance*’ was extensively discussed by (some of) the Arctic states, as the EU was perceived as an aggressive outsider wanting to enter the Arctic stage.²²⁸ However, both Finland and Sweden expressed their general intention to support an explicit EU policy for the Arctic region, with other Member States indicating specific interests in Arctic issues only, e.g. Germany, Greece and the Netherlands in maritime routes, Italy in hydrocarbon resources, Spain and the United Kingdom in matters of Arctic fisheries or again Germany, France and Poland in Arctic research (Ibid.: 65).²²⁹ As with (almost) every issue on European foreign policy, the varying interests of Member States impinge the development of a common policy/approach, with some Member States (might) having conflicting views on the Arctic policy’s content, the degree of European leverage or simply do not have enough interest to pursue Arctic issues at all (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 117–118). From a ‘community’ perspective, it was remarked that both Iceland and Norway were more Arctic-supportive than EU Member States.²³⁰

²²⁶ For a comprehensive reflection on and comparison of the Arctic policies of the EU Arctic Member States, see (Bailes & Heininen 2012).

²²⁷ Stated at a panel during the 3rd Annual Geopolitics in the High North in Berlin in May 2012, see (Maurer et al. 2012: 17).

²²⁸ Interview 2. After the EU has been rejected as AC observer in Tromsø in 2009, it was noted that Denmark was also opposed to the Union’s Regulation 1007/2009; a business segment particularly relevant for Greenland and its indigenous community (Phillips 2009), see Text Box II (page 117).

²²⁹ Interview 9

²³⁰ Interview 3

In **Denmark's** 2011 Arctic Strategy, the EU was considered under the subtheme of “enhanced regional cooperation” and the overall “close cooperation with our international partners” heading (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Department of Foreign Affairs of Greenland & Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Faroe Islands 2011: 52–53). Although stressing its contribution “towards the EU having a space in international discussions on the Arctic”, it is also explicitly stated that Denmark aims to “actively contribute to the shaping of EU policies relevant to the Arctic” to also make sure that Arctic peoples’ rights and interests (= Greenland and Faroe Islands) are safeguarded (Ibid.: 52). Based on the very fact that Denmark also speaks (in favour) for Greenland and the Faroe Islands, Maurer concluded that Denmark cannot be expected a driver of a European Arctic policy, (even if Copenhagen would want so).²³¹ Moreover, Denmark has also fairly supported the rather exclusive A5-setting, which does not only go in opposition to the EU but also Finland, Sweden (and Iceland) (Stępień 2015: 276–277).

In its 2010 *Strategy for the Arctic Region*, **Finland** referred to the EU as a “global Arctic player” and discussed the EU’s Arctic role, including BEAR and the ND in 7 pages. Moreover, the Nordic country set three main objectives with regard to the EU’s Arctic presence: 1) the Union considers the special features of the region in its policies, 2) the EU is to be approved as an AC “observer member” and 3) the ND becomes a central foreign policy tool for the EU’s Arctic policy (Prime Minister’s Office Finland 2010: 44–45).²³² Bailes & Heininen concluded that Finland’s approach to profile itself as somehow an advocate and/or defender of the EU in Arctic affairs “sounds logical” (2012: 70) based on Finland’s geographical location, the ND and a rather general pro-EU history in Arctic/Northern matters. Finland’s Arctic Strategy was updated in 2013 with a yet less prominent emphasis on the EU and a stronger focus on domestic issues (Prime Minister’s Office Finland 2013).

Although the **Swedish** *Strategy for the Arctic region* from 2011 did not emphasize a particular role for the EU in the Arctic, as Finland did, both the Council Conclusions were affirmatively reiterated, as well as Sweden’s support for EU AC observer application (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden 2011: 19–20).²³³

Out of the ‘Big EU Three’, **France** was the most engaged one within the Council to discuss the 2009 Conclusions (Holdhus 2010: 59). In the same year, France also appointed its own Ambassador for the International Negotiations of the Polar Regions, former Prime Minister Michel Rocard. Especially between 2009 and 2011, Rocard was highly critical on the AC’s decision-making procedure and the A5’s Ilulissat Declaration. An outspoken position that certainly did not help the EU in the Arctic and challenged the Union’s (internal) consensus on Arctic cooperation (Pelaudeix & Rodon 2013: 67–71). In general, it was remarked that the EU is certainly a strategic user of the Arctic with the Joint Communication of 2012 being very much in line with the French position on Arctic matters.²³⁴ Although it was reported that France wanted to publish a roadmap on Arctic issues to “spearhead” the EU’s approach by late 2014, this has not happened (Martin 2014a).

Germany strongly supports an active Arctic role of the EU and dedicated an entire section its 2013 *Guidelines of the Germany Arctic Policy*, favouring EU AC observer status, close(r)

²³¹ Stated at a panel during the 3rd Annual Geopolitics in the High North in Berlin in May 2012, see (Maurer et al. 2012: 17). According to the Germany news magazine *Spiegel* “European solidarity ends [for the Danes] at the Arctic Circle” (Schwägerl & Seidler 2011). However, both the conducted interview and several Danish representatives talking/discussing at attended conferences indicated the Danish ‘wish’ of a stronger and more active role of the EU in the Arctic (Interview 9).

²³² The somewhat misleading term “observer member” was two pages on referred to as “appl[ing] for permanent observer” in the AC (Prime Minister’s Office Finland 2010: 47).

²³³ Daemers counted 110 EU-references in Finland’s Strategy (in 94 pages), 44 in the Swedish Strategy (in 43 pages) and 36 in the Danish (in 58 pages) (2012: 18). Although not *per se* scientifically informative, due to a potential context-relation issue, the numbers highlight to a certain extent the attributed Arctic importance of the EU for the three Member States.

²³⁴ Interview 11

coordination between the ND, the European Arctic and the EU's Arctic policy and making the Arctic part of long-term strategic planning within the EU (Federal Foreign Office of Germany 2013: 15–16), *see also* (Pelaudeix & Rodon 2013; Śmieszek & Kankaanpää 2014). Yet, the focus should not only be on research and fisheries but essentially on environmental, climate change and energy issues. Taking the EU's strong stance on combatting climate change, it was particularly Canada that was/is perceived as Arctic problem for both Germany and the EU due to Canada's withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol in 2011 – “Canada cannot be regarded as environmental/climate change actor”²³⁵ with the Canadian government not being interest in environmental issues.²³⁶

The **United Kingdom** – “the Arctic's nearest neighbour”²³⁷ – published its Arctic policy framework in October 2013. Unsurprisingly, the EU was hardly mentioned and only directly referred to with regard a cooperative approach on matters of sustainable Arctic fisheries and management (HM Government 2013). In February 2015, the House of Lords published a comprehensive report on Arctic issues, stating that “[t]he European Union's case for permanent observer status at the Arctic Council is overwhelming”, suggesting the United Kingdom's government to “continue to voice its strong support for the EU to be granted permanent observer status at the [AC] 2017 Ministerial meeting” (House of Lords 2015: 115). In its response, the Government agreed that the Union has a “role to play”, considering the EU's potential AC observer status a valid contribution to the United Kingdom's own Arctic policy. Hence, it aims to actively contribute to the HR/Commission's next Arctic Joint Communication (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2015: 3–4).

Poland has a considerably Arctic interest, based on its long-established research engagement in the European Arctic since the 1930s (Graczyk 2011: 580–581; Łuszczuk et al. 2015). Moreover, Poland organises the so-called ‘Warsaw Meeting’, a biennial seminar of the (European) AC observer states, including participating officials from the EEAS and the Commission. In 2011, during the Polish Presidency (July–December 2011), a working meeting on the Union's Arctic policy development was initiated with all Member States being invited. However, attendance was manageable with Arctic issues also not being mentioned in the Presidency's Final Report.²³⁸

Additionally also **the Netherlands** supported a larger role for the EU in the “North Pole region”, including AC observer status (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands 2013: 3).

From an institutional perspective, the President of the **European Council** at that time, Herman Van Rompuy only once delivered a speech that was directly Arctic-related. At a conference in Brussels, Van Rompuy (2010b) emphasised the Union's activism in combatting climate change, the necessity of dialogue and cooperation in the Arctic, the EU's broad involvement on Arctic issues, especially in the field of research and the Union's willingness to play a cooperative role in the region. In the same year, after meeting Norway's then Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg, Van Rompuy (2010a) also shortly mentioned the Arctic and referred to the strategic importance of the region and the challenges and opportunities of climate change, energy issues, marine resources and environment.

In summary, it can be stated that Arctic-interested Member States have dissenting opinions on the Union's Arctic engagement, ranging from strong(er) support (Finland, Germany, Sweden) to sceptical voices (Denmark but also the United Kingdom). Nevertheless, in particular the Union's Arctic Member States generally encourage the EU's supportive role in the Arctic and a growing awareness/sensitisation for Arctic issues in the hallways of European power (Stępień 2015: 274).

²³⁵ Interview 13

²³⁶ Interview 12

²³⁷ Stated by Jane Rumble, Head of the Polar Regions Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office at Arctic Frontiers 2014, ‘Humans in the Arctic’, in Tromsø on 20 January 2014.

²³⁸ Interview 24

6.3. In a 'Policy-Making' Nutshell

While Chapter 5 comprehensively illustrated the European dimensions of Arctic presence, the 'EU's Arctic credentials' as put by a Commission official, Chapter 6 provided an extensive analysis on the various Arctic-related policy steps taken by the three main European institutions – the Commission, the Council and the EP; not only since the Arctic's reappearance in 2007/2008 but also referring to first, yet minor, community initiatives in the years and decades before (*see* Subchapter 6.1). Subsequently, Subchapter 6.2 comprehensively reconstructed the EU's Arctic policy-making process from 2008 to 2014 by highlighting the documents manifold content, their recurring patterns but also withdrawn visions and ideas. On a variety of grounds a European Arctic presence, both from a territorial, functional and policy-related perspective can be asserted as a given. Thus, Dodds characterised the Union's Arctic involvement (and/or its related process) as "both territorial and relational" (2012: 22). In fact, the Union can be termed a *de facto* 'Arctic actor', based on its Arctic Member States, its regulatory scope and footprint, its proven impact on the region's climate, its market relevance for and certain dependence of key economic Arctic sectors and its institutional and policy linkages via the AC, the BEAC and the ND. By implication, this multidimensional presence also gives an indication on the diverse meaning of 'the EU in the Arctic' as 'the EU' can *inter alia* signify a strong market and economy (*see the EU Arctic Footprint and Policy Assessment Report*, (Cavalieri et al. 2010)), a source of regulations (*see* Subchapter 5.1) or the combination of its three main institutional bodies and the related development of an Arctic policy.

Yet, *claiming* to be a regional actor by *naming* a variety of linkages has not been crowned with circumpolar acceptance, as the mixed institutional signals have rather led to many sceptical depictions of the EU's regional role (Bailes 2015). Besides, the *claiming by naming* has not constituted any "real institutional presence for the EU as an integrated Arctic actor" (Hossain 2015: 98) with the Union's objective to become an AC observer not been achieved yet. Despite the EU's multidimensional presence, it is rather the symbolic status of being an AC observer that is publically perceived as enhancing European credibility and legitimacy as

Arctic actor (Østhagen 2013d). Moreover, the multiplicity of functional elements that represent the EU/Arctic nexus have not directly led – in terms of a determining causality – to the development of a single Arctic policy that would comprehensively guide Arctic action; neither with regard to the EU’s regional impact nor concerning the relevance of regional changes for Europe (Stępień & Raspotnik 2016: 4). Already in 2001, the European Environment Agency criticised that there is “little appreciation within Europe (...) of the environmental issues faced by the Arctic” (European Environment Agency, UNEP/GRID-Arendal & AMAP 2001: 1) and extensively highlighted the Arctic’s impact on Europe in a subsequent report, which discussed several critical points on “why Europe should actually care” (European Environment Agency 2004). Until 2007/2008 the Arctic has only been a marginal note in EU foreign policy – a periphery of the periphery – and another illustrative example of Hix’s criticism that “EU foreign policies are essentially reactive rather than proactive: responding to global events rather than shaping them” (2005: 398).

EU policy-making never occurs in a vacuum. It does not only have to take into account – act and/or re-act to – the international, systemic level (*see* Chapter 4) but essentially also reconcile internal variations, e.g. different (institutional) views and/or national, hence Member States-related interests (Bailes & Heininen 2012: 93). The Union’s Arctic policy approach makes no exception. Although the positions of the Commission, the Council and the EP have been gradually converging, the ‘policy’ is – in its eighth year – still emerging with the institutions being incapable to yet propose a clear-cut overarching European concept for the Arctic region. The development of the policy can neither be directly linked to related Arctic priorities of the agenda-setting Commission (and/or the EP), nor has it been directly driven by Member States interests (Offerdal 2011b: 862); although it can be argued that the supranational level has had a stronger Arctic focus over the period under scrutiny. Yet, the careful reading of the 7+1 policy documents also indicates that the supranational level did *not* aim to harmonise the various Arctic policies/approaches/initiatives by the Union’s Member States but essentially focused to coordinate the broad variety of European actions at Community-level (Stępień 2015: 274). Additionally, the ‘many voices’ of the Union’s internal policy apparatus

have (mistakenly and/or intentionally) led to misunderstandings in the Arctic states of the EU's Arctic intentions and thus severely hampered European Arctic governance 'access' and acceptance.²³⁹

Eight years after the Commission's first Communication on Arctic matters, the Union continues to be in the agenda-setting and formulation process, caught in an unconventional internal/cross-border/external policy mix (Bailes & Heininen 2012: 93; Kobza 2015: 4; Stępień & Raspotnik 2015). Moreover, the policy-making process serves as a "striking example of the prevailing EU-dichotomy of what is essentially *internal* or *external*, *domestic* or *foreign* policy" (Østhagen & Raspotnik 2015) (Italics in the original).

The 7+1 policy documents "hardly amount to a specific [single] "policy", if understood as a stable and predictable pattern of action" (Stępień 2015: 251).²⁴⁰ Committed to paper, the Arctic policy umbrella has so far encompassed climate change and environmental protection issues, initially embedded in a broader security concept, with a touch of economic considerations (hydrocarbon and raw material resources, maritime transportation, fisheries), regional (sustainable) development and research plus a concern of the livelihood of the indigenous peoples in the European Arctic (= social dialogue). Yet, this particular European terrestrial domain has rather been neglected in the first policy documents with only the 2012 Communication, the 2014 Resolution and the 2014 stakeholder consultation process putting more emphasis on the European Arctic (Stępień & Raspotnik 2015: 434). This follows criticism that emphasised that a European policy for the Arctic should first and foremost focus on its own Arctic areas (*see* Subchapter 5.1) and only subsequently meddle in larger circumpolar affairs (Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014b). Considerably well adjusted to Arctic sensitivities none of the policy documents, with the slight exception of the 2008 HR/Commission one (= the +1) however mentioned 'classic'

²³⁹ Interview 12

²⁴⁰ Accordingly, Kobza (2015) had his (valid) doubts on the EU's Arctic policy approach being labelled as single 'EU Arctic policy'. The Commission perceived the 7+1 policy documents as 'policies' = actual steps taken by the European institutions that could eventually lead into a 'strategy' – a long-term outlook with a clear and well-framed budget (Interview 4 (4 September 2012)). Similarly, another interviewee referred to the Union's Arctic participation as "Arctic approach" with a mosaic of different policies and geographical areas not yet put in an "Arctic strategy box" (Interview 17).

security and defence issues; topics, that are generally not discussed within the broad framework of Arctic governance, ever since the establishment of the AC in 1996 (*see* Section 4.3.2). And nevertheless, Arctic-internally both the EU's initial regional governance perception and the sealing issue became rather controversial issues, albeit the Union's following and continuous (terminological) focus on an AC and LOS Convention-based regional governance framework.

The 2008 Communication offered a series of policy objectives, yet, lacked horizontal cross-references between the policies areas; an issue that was only subsequently tackled in the 2012 Joint Communication with a concrete focus on Arctic research and related financial support mechanism that could link together the different policy fields. Overall, the general European tone shifted from a more regulatory focused one to a more neutral, rather technical and regional-supportive attitude, characterised by the global Arctic connector of scientific research. However, in that regard it has to be explicitly noted that up to now no Arctic-specific financial instrument has been created that eventually supports the emerging EU Arctic policy. As illustrated in Subchapter 5.4, Arctic-related funds remain a piecemeal, coming from various chapters of the Union's budget and predominantly cover Arctic research and aspects of European Arctic cohesion policy. A fact, Kobza critically referred to as “characteristic” in the Union's ‘non-endeavour’ to independently shape the future of the Arctic (2015: 16). Lack of financial resources has also been indicated as the reason of the EEAS not (yet) having its own Arctic division – the proposed Arctic Desk by the EP.²⁴¹

Moreover, despite visible progress in some of the EU's Arctic-specific activities, *see* Subchapter 5.4, the agreed-on compromise with Canada concerning the seal's issue or considerable input of EU representatives to the work of the AC Working Groups (Stępień & Raspotnik 2015: 433), the Union has not elaborated a clear statement of its northern regional ambitions – a distinct EU-Arctic narrative – nor achieved its anticipated ‘goal’ to become an ‘official’ part of Arctic governance – an observer to the AC (Ibid.: 432). For the first time in its immediate neighbourhood policy, the Union faces a region where it cannot *per se* act as a dominant actor vis-à-

²⁴¹ Interview 3

vis its neighbours (= to externalise its internal set-up and policies) but is rather bound in a distinct 'regional system' (Kobza 2015: 5), whose systemic peculiarities were extensively discussed in Subchapter 4.3. Hence, the Arctic raises an interesting question about the very *extent* of EUrope and how to eventually gain 'Arctic access' and legitimise related action via which geopolitical discourse? (Powell 2011: 121; Bailes & Heininen 2012: 95)

Chapter 7 relates to that issue and scrutinises the Union's Arctic reasoning, particularly in the early phase of its policy production, by putting on 'critical geopolitics' glasses. Consequently, it gives some indication of how the EU aimed to construct regional legitimacy and pursue its very own geopolitical ideas.

7. The EU's Arctic Space-Making *Practices*

The ensuing Chapter 7 analyses the Union's previously introduced Arctic policy steps in its 'geopolitical' light. Yet, before starting the final part of the dissertation, some key methodological considerations that have already been discussed in Chapter 3 have to be recalled. In order to examine the internal and external social processes that condition the construction of a geopolitical action of an organisation, this dissertation uses, as extensively described in Subchapter 3.2 and illustrated in Figure VII (page 74), the methodological tool developed by Müller (2012). Moreover, this particular framework also serves as underlying structure of the subsequent analysis. In that regard, four intertwining, and to some extent overlapping, nodes of research have to be called back to mind, applied in order to reconstruct the multiple associations through which the EU (attempts to) evolve as a legitimate actor in the Arctic region:

- The circulation of geopolitical ideas (Subchapter 7.1)
- The production of geopolitics (Subchapter 7.2)
- Governance at a distance (Subchapter 7.3)
- Technologies of geopolitics (Subchapter 7.4) (Ibid.: 383–386)

The production of geopolitical action is reconstructed with the assistance of Ó Tuathail's framework on practical geopolitical reasoning (*see* Section 3.1.1).²⁴² Thus, the Chapter exemplifies the Union's step 'north' by using a unique, as not yet used, analytical approach and gives an indication on how the EU aim(ed) to get a regional foothold and claim(ed) Arctic legitimacy between 2008 and 2014. The analysis is based on the traced process and defined elements of Subchapter 6.2 but further underpinned by distinct statements of European policymakers, *see* Annex VIII (page 361). If considered insightful these statements are scrutinised by the spatial argumentation model and the related categories of a persuasive argument: claim, fact and warrant (*see* Section 3.1.2). As Chapter 7 builds upon Subchapter 6.2, the 7+1

²⁴² Formal geopolitics has up to the present not particularly tackled the broader Arctic region as a specific European concern, with exceptions only confirming the rule, *see* (Rogers & Simón 2009; Thomann 2010; Rogers 2011; Rogers & Gilli 2013; Balão 2014).

policy documents are not explicitly referred to; yet, if a reference has been made it appears as 2008 Resolution, 2008 Communication, etc., respectively.

Finally, Subchapter 7.5 concludes and summarises the EU-Arctic triangle of multi-dimensional regional *presence* (Chapter 5), a *policy* in the making (Chapter 6) and related Arctic space-making *practices* (Chapter 7). Thus, the previously introduced meta-concept of *geopolitical subjectivity* (see Subchapter 2.3) – Aalto's (2002) developed model to capture the Union's on-going evolution as a geopolitical 'subject' in progress – is applied as synoptic reflection of the findings of Part Four and its three Chapters.

7.1. Geopolitical Ideas and the Union's Moral (Arctic) Language

Subchapter 2.1 illustrated the most prominent geopolitical ideas that appeared, disappeared and re-appeared over the last century; ranging from the idea of *Lebensraum* or the Heartland theory to the concept of human security or the emergence of environmental dimensions of contemporary geopolitics and an inherent related security discourse, see Table I (page 32). As it was briefly highlighted in Subchapter 4.2, the Arctic has not been excluded from related considerations and attracted some attention as for instance as a potential 'expanded, circumpolar Heartland'.

From today's, general European perspective geopolitical ideas predominantly refer to the Union as a promoter and guarantor of certain rights and values (Bialasiewicz 2008: 76), a model of civilian power (Bachmann & Sidaway 2009; Bachmann 2013b) or integrative power, centralised by the 'Europeanization' narrative (Rovnyi & Bachmann 2012). As outlined in Subchapter 2.3, policies or initiatives for the European neighbourhood followed the predominant idea of approximating the respective region's domestic order to the Union's model, either via the enlargement model or other forms of closer integration below membership, such as the EEA or the ENP (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009). On aspects of the Union's global role, related positions, worldviews or foreign policy paradigms are generally manifested via the Treaty of Lisbon (see the page below) or demonstrated in foreign policy initiatives and frameworks, such as the IMP and its international

extension, the ESS, both the recently developed Energy Security Strategy and EUMSS or the currently drafted Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy for the European Union.²⁴³ For the Arctic region, the 7+1 policy documents serve as related framework with the region also being cross-referenced in, *inter alia*, the IMP or the EUMSS. As it is identified below, in the case of the ‘Northern neighbourhood and beyond’ the EU ‘relied’ on a soft external policy approach in order to promote its visions and secure the area (Kobza 2015: 6–7). Accordingly, the ‘value-added of the Community agenda’, meaning the European Arctic influence via different policy fields (and Commission’s DGs), is considered key, with the EEAS serving as diplomatic policy distributor.²⁴⁴

In general, a geopolitical idea/vision is “any idea concerning the relation between one’s own and other places, involving feelings of (in)security or (dis)advantage and/or invoking ideas about a collective mission or foreign policy strategy” (Dijkink 1996: 11) (Original in italics). Hence, geopolitical ideas are particular strategic ways of thinking that assign specific roles to certain actors and certain spaces. From a European perspective, an idea essentially relates to the question of a distinct global role of the Union, based on its ‘core values’ and a self-perceived unique space of “freedom, security and justice” (Bialasiewicz 2009) – an aim to promote its values and interests and contributes to peace and the sustainable development of the Earth (TEU, Art. 3). A European identity based on the self-conception of being a major stabilising factor in the global political system, essentially determined by its very own ‘ideational projection’ (Scott 2005a: 438).

The Union’s ‘Stipulatory’ Moral Language

It is the Treaty of Lisbon that contractually solidifies the ideas, visions and values of European relevance that need to be promoted, strengthened and advocated from the Union and the Member States (TEU, Title I). This includes, *inter alia*, the Union’s aim to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples, the sustainable development of Europe based on economic growth, technological and scientific advance, territorial cohesion, or to improve the quality of the environment. Furthermore, the Union’s existence is *inter alia* underpinned by the respect for

²⁴³ <https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/global-strategy-foreign-and-security-policy-european-union>

²⁴⁴ Interview 3

human rights, including the rights of persons belong to minorities (TEU, Art. 2). With regard to the Union's relations with the wider world, the Treaty stipulates that the Union:

- Shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens
- Contribute to peace, security, sustainable development, free and fair trade and the protection of human rights
- Contribute to the strict observance and development of international law (TEU, Art. 3)²⁴⁵

Therefore, the Union's action in the international arena shall be based and guided by the very principles that have inspired the EU's own creation, development and enlargement, in particular democracy, the rule of law or the universality of human rights (TEU, Art. 21). The Union's pursued international actions and policies shall *inter alia* safeguard the EU's values, its interests, security and independence, consolidate the principles of international law, foster sustainable development or promote an international system based on multilateral cooperation and good global governance (TEU, Art. 21, para 2 a-h). Furthermore, environmental protection requirements, including the promotion of sustainable development, have to be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Union's policies and activities (TFEU, Art. 11). Requirements of animal welfare should be paid full regard, while simultaneously respecting cultural traditions and regional heritage (TFEU, Art. 13). Moreover, the Union's various policies and actions shall, *inter alia*, strengthened the EU's very own, internal, economic, social and territorial cohesion (TFEU, Art. 174), contribute to promoting international measures to deal with regional and international environmental problems, in particularly combating climate change (TFEU, Art. 191) and/or ensure security of energy supply (TFEU, Art. 194).

Subchapter 6.2 comprehensively specified and clarified the various European documents published on Arctic issues so far, highlighting not only the texts' most substantial elements and the inherent conducted discussions but essentially also

²⁴⁵ Additionally, TEU, Art. 21 sets out further provisions on the Union's external action.

mentioning, yet without *per se* branding the geopolitical ideas that ‘wandered around’. Thus, which particular geopolitical ideas have dominated the Union’s Arctic policy discourse?

Broadly speaking it can be argued that the recurring line of ideas that have been developed since 2007/2008 fall within the nexus of ‘security – responsibility – dialogue’; three intrinsic overlapping elements that essentially go in line with the agreed on common provisions of promoting the Union’s values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. Specifically, and embedded under the broader security umbrella, this nexus comprises five interrelated ideas, as illustrated in Table XI.

Table XI: The EU’s Geopolitical Ideas for the Arctic Region

- The EU as the leader to tackle climate change
- The EU as a sustainability manager
- The EU as governance stabiliser and enhancer
- The EU as promoter of the rights of indigenous peoples
- The EU as guardian of animal welfare

The EU as the Leader to Tackle Climate Change

Although climate change has been illustrated as the essential instigator of regional transformation in all policy documents, the Union’s combatting leadership skills have ‘only’ been particularly stressed upon by the two Communications, once being the ‘leader’ and once the ‘strongest proponent’. Yet, neither the EP nor the Council *per se* asserted forcefully the EU’s alleged internationally elevated position.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, also the Commission was projecting the idea in several nuances. In eight speeches delivered by both Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Maria Damanaki and her predecessor Joe Borg on various Arctic-related conferences between 2008 and 2013 (*see* Annex VIII, page 361), the leadership angle was only once specifically emphasised. Yet, this particular argumentation was paired with a distinct spatial logic: as the Union is a world leader in fighting climate change (= fact), a successfully related policy would benefit the region and its inhabitants (= claim). This causal relation was supported by the warrant of the EU having a regional impact via a variety of European activities/dimensions – the

²⁴⁶ Generally, European policymakers perceive themselves as “pioneers in developing (...) international (...) measures to mitigate climate change (Buchan 2010: 374).

global/Arctic nexus (Damanaki 2011b: 3). In that regard an EEAS official described the “EU as the best international actor to tackle the upcoming problems of climate change”.²⁴⁷ And even though the leadership angle was not terminologically kept track of and/or put in different ways, the very notion of being (partly) responsible for Arctic climate change, and hence supposed to be a part of the region is a coherent argument to be found, yet in nuances, in all policy documents. The Commission’s 2008 ‘responsibility – environmental footprint’ statement was actually specified as “remarkably innovative at that time when compared to national Arctic strategies”.²⁴⁸ However, the EU’s responsibility and commitment to tackle climate change were not aimed to be dealt Uni(on)laterally but in a “climate of collaboration” between the EU and the various Arctic states (Damanaki 2010a: 3). In that regard, Arctic research and the EU’s related capabilities and financial efforts function as operational element of responsibility with particularly the 2012 Joint Communication and its add-on on ‘the inventory of activities’ highlighting the financially supported research programmes (European Commission & High Representative 2012a, c).²⁴⁹

The EU as Sustainability Manager

Sustainability and its embedded sub-terms of sustainable development, management and/or use is *the* dominant catch phrase that was brought forward by every document and in that regard often connected with the ‘responsibility’ frame.²⁵⁰ When referring to a then-soon-to-be published first Communication, Commissioner Borg identified its main objective as the assessment of “how Europe can best contribute towards (...) sustainable development (...) while protecting the Arctic from environmental changes (...)” (2008: 3). In that regard, the EU’s vision of being a sustainable regional actor follows a twofold approach: an active promotion of environmental protection linked with an economic imperative of (necessary)

²⁴⁷ Stated at an internal EP-Arctic meeting arranged by the EU Arctic Forum in Brussels in May 2012

²⁴⁸ Stated in a 2012 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author

²⁴⁹ Interview 4 (4 September 2012)

²⁵⁰ By emphasising sustainable development, the EU’s institutional actors follow the global/Arctic *zeitgeist*, as the concept has somehow become the obligatory imperative when publically and politically discussing the future of the Arctic region (Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014b). However, it is interesting to note that ‘sustainable Arctic development’ was already part of the Presidency Conclusions on the future of the ND in 2002 (Council of the European Union 2002: 14). In general, the high-level promotion of sustainability has become part of self-constructed European identity in the last decades (Bretherton & Vogler 2006: 103–104).

development. On several occasions, it was stated that the EU could serve as a facilitator to effectively balance the possibility of economic development and the sustainable exploitation of these resources,²⁵¹ finding an Arctic balance between damage and opportunity.²⁵² In that regard sustainable development is perceived as a *win-win scenario* with inherent normative environmental objectives and interest-related intents – an approach to overcome the “classical trade-off between ecology and economy” (Vanden Brande 2008: 172). When presenting the 2008 Communication, Commissioner for External Relations, Benita Ferrero-Waldner stressed the aspect of environmental sustainability as the Union’s main concern with any exploration and exploitation activities to be carried out in accordance with the highest environmental standards (EurActiv 2008b). Clearly, the protection of the region’s environment remains a continuous objective within the various policy documents; and yet, the approach is coupled with indicative statements of pointing out the Union’s interests: “Our (...) goal is to ensure that emerging activities (...) are subject to the highest environmental and safety standards, while securing fair treatment for EU citizens and enterprise in accessing these activities” (Damanaki 2010b: 2). Commissioner Borg articulated “sustainable management (...) is not just about environmental action” but essentially also about the concerns and needs of indigenous communities, the knowledge factor of sound scientific data and the promotion of sustainable use of the region’s resources (2009: 3).

The EU as Governance Stabiliser and Enhancer

Especially in the early phase, the changing Arctic was particularly perceived from the (broader) security angle with Commissioner Borg, *inter alia*, stressing that the “changing face of the Arctic impacts upon European security, trade and the supply of resources” (Ibid.: 2). The perceived regional instability in the Union’s immediate neighbourhood – the alleged geopoliticisation of the Arctic, as for instance amplified by the EP’s reference of an alleged Arctic race – served as the basis for considerations on an *enhanced* concept of ‘right’ Arctic *governance*. Consequently, the EP brought forward its idea of an Arctic Treaty, which caused

²⁵¹ Interview 18; Stated by a Commission official at an internal EP-Arctic meeting arranged by the EU Arctic Forum in Brussels in May 2012

²⁵² Interview 12

considerable Arctic irritation. In that regard, the Treaty proposal has to be understood as a more representative system of Arctic governance, as compared to the AC, that gives non-Arctic actors a stronger foothold in regional affairs and consequently concedes stronger competences and a regional right to a say.²⁵³ However, both the Commission and the Council successfully suppressed the contested suggestion.²⁵⁴ And yet, re-defining and/or improving the political and legal status of the Arctic was not off the table but inflated with another EU-Arctic faux-pas word: *enhanced governance* and the potential re-assessment of international law (of the sea).²⁵⁵

Both the HR/Commission paper and the first Communication identified the Union as an entity with leadership skills in promoting global climate security that could furthermore positively reform related governance issues. The LOS Convention was considered key and an essential part of the broad Arctic governance framework. However, in order to efficiently tackle the imminent, ‘geopolitical’ Arctic challenges, such as potential maritime disputes or a non-managed Central Arctic Ocean (= the Arctic Ocean’s High Seas), the existing governance system was under European surveillance and considered to be re-improved. The global/Arctic interaction was also in this case the characteristically used spatial argumentation. As the Arctic Ocean, its management and preservation concerns mankind (= warrant), an enhanced regional governance system could be an asset (= claim). The EU effectively contributes and promotes the strict observance of international law (= fact) (Ibid.: 3–4). And yet again, the Union’s enhanced governance approach was never an envisaged Uni(on)laterally one but based on (Arctic) multilateral cooperation within the AC and predominantly via the policy field of research, which links the governance aspect with the first two outlined geopolitical ideas. Accordingly, an interviewee referred to the Union as potential “facilitator of Arctic research

²⁵³ In addition, Koivurova argued that the Treaty idea was (partly) based on broader Arctic discontent concerning the AC’s performance of its environmental protection mandate, with especially the Conference of Arctic Parliamentarians suggesting the need to examine existing Arctic governance structures, including the option of an Arctic Treaty (2008: 14 and 23).

²⁵⁴ Accordingly, after a meeting with Norway’s then Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg, President Barroso publically clarified the Union’s position by stating that “the Arctic is a sea, and a sea is a sea” (Phillips 2008); a simplified statement that, however, indicates that the Arctic cannot be compared with the Antarctic and its related ATS.

²⁵⁵ An EP briefing stressed that the term ‘governance’ should be avoided when discussing international Arctic politics as it is “unnecessarily sensitive, being understood by some of the so-called Arctic coastal states as if there is no governance in the region” (Stated in a 2015 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author).

cooperation” and research as such being the EU’s “top-seller” of the EU’s ‘way north’.²⁵⁶ Moreover, Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner stressed that “without effective multilateral governance” any progress concerning sustainably protecting the Arctic “will be difficult” with the Union explicitly not aiming to re-invent the (institutional/legal) wheel but “adding value” (2009: 2–3) with new specific sectoral instruments might being possible (EurActiv 2008b).²⁵⁷

Thus, also the EU’s envisaged AC observer status follows the logic of enhanced governance, which can only be achieved if the Union is part of this particular Arctic regime framework. The spatial argumentation was a similar one: As the Union promotes an international system that is based on stronger multilateral cooperation and good global governance (TEU, Art. 21) (= fact), its AC observer status would enhance Arctic governance (= claim). The EU’s strong links with the A8 in issues such as research, fisheries, trade and environmental policy make the Union a natural partner for the AC (= warrant) (Damanaki 2010b: 3). Likewise, Commissioner Siim Kallas characterised the EU as “Arctic entity”, based on Union policies’ long-lasting regional impact. Hence, the EU should sit at the AC table, where it could be of “significant added value”, as already experienced by BEAC and the Union’s respective membership since 1993 (2009: 2–3). If one considers the AC as first and foremost being an ‘environmental protection agency’, its (regional) importance for the Union – the self-perceived leader to tackle global climate change and environmental protection forerunner – is not far to seek.

Furthermore, fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean were also considered an Arctic governance ‘bottleneck’. Both the 2008 Communication and the 2009 Conclusions referred to a regulatory vacuum in parts of the Arctic’s High Seas that eventually needs to be internationally tackled by extending existing management regimes such as NEAFC or banning fisheries for the time being. In that regard, the EU – represented by Sweden – brought forward a related proposal to include a call for regional Arctic fisheries regulations in the 2009 UN General Assembly Oceans and Sustainable Fisheries Resolutions. More precisely, it proposed the need for more

²⁵⁶ Interview 15

²⁵⁷ The EurActiv quote refers to a statement of Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner when presenting the 2008 Communication.

scientific research on the implications of climate change on Central Arctic Ocean fisheries management. However, the A5, with the potential exception of the U.S., opposed the Union's proposal but agreed themselves on a temporary ban of related fisheries in 2014, *see* Section 4.4.4 (United Nations 2009; European Commission & High Representative 2012c: 23; Molenaar 2012a: 65–66).

The EU as Promoter of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The Joint Communication and its add-ons strongly emphasise the Union's commitment to include human rights into all aspects of external policies with indigenous issues being an integral part of the EU's human right policy (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 14–15, c: 8). Yet, the observed development of this idea indicates a vision that was 'imposed' on the Union and its institutions with the early phase rather been signified as 'support' than 'engagement' stage. Moreover, the indigenous issue highlights a specific discrepancy between this idea and the subsequent one of a 'guardian of animal welfare', which became obvious during the Canada/EU seal ban debate. Indigenous peoples were predominantly considered under the 'changed Arctic' and 'sustainable development' theme and the necessary European support to the communities' livelihood, as already visible pre-2007/2008, *see* Subchapter 6.1. Only from 2009 onwards (= the Council's Conclusions) both the Commission and the EP had a stronger focus on an intensified, constructive engagement of stronger dialogue with the communities to take their needs into proper account. Accordingly, it has also been argued that in 2008 the potential effects of Regulation 1007/2009 (= the seal products trade regulation) were not weight (and/or considered) up the pros and cons with regard to the issue on AC observer status (Sellheim 2015b: 278). As later put by Commissioner Damanaki: "The EU's overriding concern (...) has been for cooperative action with a special emphasis on the involvement of indigenous communities (...)" (2010b: 2). However, eventual implementation efforts hardly referred to indigenous peoples with, for instance, the first events of the "Arctic EU-Indigenous Dialogue" having been mainly used to present EU projects relevant for

Arctic indigenous peoples instead of being a ‘real’ dialogue between two equal partners (Stępień 2015: 260), *see also* (Scarpa 2014).²⁵⁸

The EU as Guardian of Animal Welfare

Although undoubtedly being of EU-internal relevance, animal welfare does not *per se* take on an important role in the Union’s foreign policy endeavours. Besides, especially if considering the seal products trade regulation a discrepancy and related inconsistency between the EUropean inside and the neighbouring/global outside can be observed. Banning seal products from the Union’s internal market on the basis of supporting animal welfare reflects badly on the EU’s moral base if simultaneously allowing bull fighting for traditional reasons and/or facing criticism concerning the state of animal welfare in industrial food production in EUrope (Sellheim 2013: 447–448; Stępień 2015: 271). With regard to the Arctic, animal welfare is yet intrinsically embedded in the matter of ‘taking into account’ the needs of indigenous communities. The growing concern for animal welfare has only been referred to in the 2008 Communication and was quickly dropped afterwards – if actually ever being a tangible vision – based on the problems caused by the seal ban issue, *see* Text Box II (page 117). Accordingly, Sellheim concluded that Regulation 1007/2009 basically contradicts fundamental goals formulated in the 7+1 documents, e.g. with regard to the support of indigenous communities (2015b: 286). As a matter of fact, the 2008 Communication discussed animal welfare within the ‘support of indigenous people’ scheme, yet taking a distinctively contradictory stance. Subsistence sealing and whaling is supported on paper, however a specific EUropean moral language on how to best manage these natural resources, besides the ‘usual suspects’ on ecosystem-based and/or sustainable management, is not noticeable.

An ‘Ideal’ Summary

This Subchapter illustrated five geopolitical ideas that have been considered, implicitly and explicitly, to a stronger and lesser degree, within the already referred to documents and additionally via selected speeches given by EUropean policymaker. These highlighted visions were clearly not solely developed for the

²⁵⁸ Between 2010 and 2014, the Commission has hosted four related events.

Arctic but have their basis in the Union's very self-image and the imposed 'duties' as stipulated in the Treaty of Lisbon.²⁵⁹ Hence, *claiming* Arctic actorness by *naming, inter alia*, its strong moral authority in the area of climate change or the broader governance agenda is easily comprehensible.

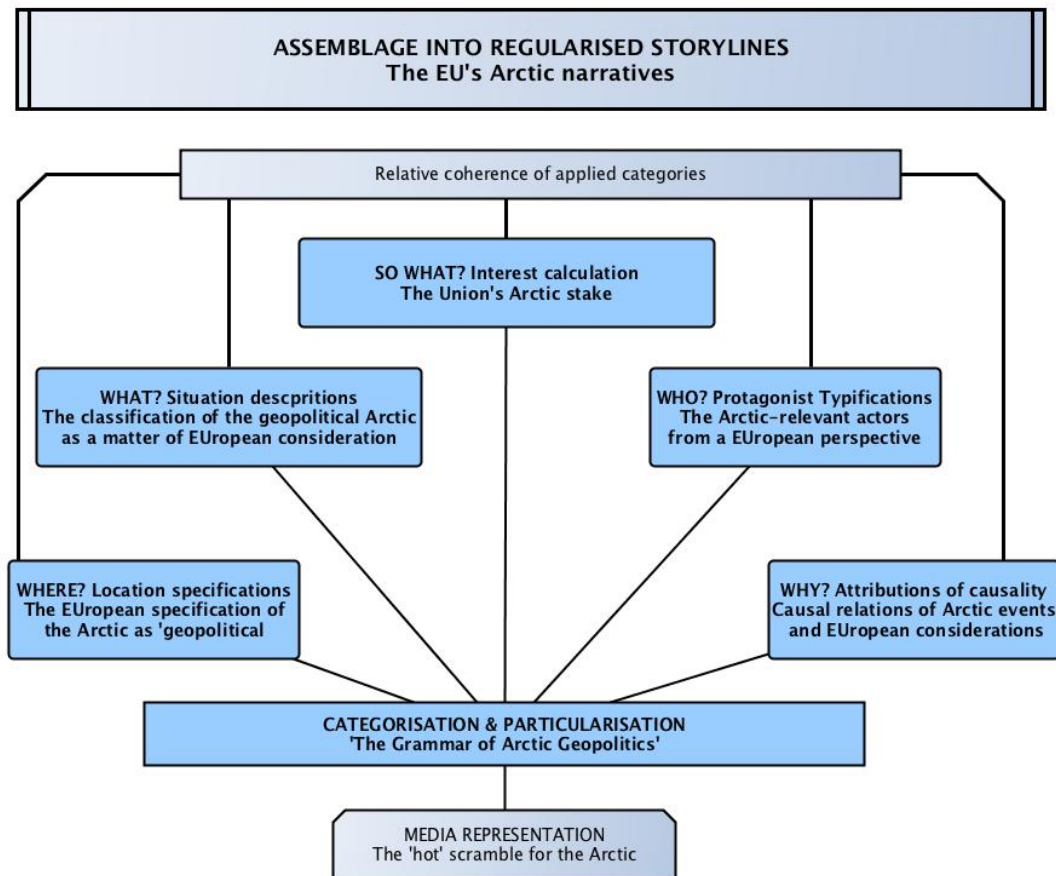
Eventually, Subchapter 7.2 goes into detail on how these circulated ideas have evolved into a European Arctic storyline across the realms of practical geopolitics.

7.2. The Production of the EU's Arctic Storyline

From the focus on ideas follows the second angle of analysis, the development of a specific storyline. The assemblage of such a storyline – “the dramaturgy of the frames of action” (Grindheim 2009: 22) – eventually creates the respective organisation as a (coherent) actor that speaks the same geopolitical language and performs along the same geopolitical narratives. It basically identifies the “grammar of geopolitics” – the specific ‘building-blocks’ that categorise and particularise practical geopolitical reasoning (Ó Tuathail 2002b: 608), *see* Section 3.1.1. It pinpoints the set of arguments and further clarifies the European Arctic discourse. The above-outlined geopolitical ideas are a distinct, yet often implicit, part of the related argumentation. According to Ó Tuathail (Ibid.: 609) the final assemblage of a geopolitical storyline comprises a scalar, situational, agent-related, causal and interest-related category, delineated along the questions: Where? What? Who? Why? So what? (*see* Figure XXII, page 245)

²⁵⁹The Union's claim of being a leader in the combat against global climate change goes back to the 1990s and is based on its strong commitments at the 1992 Climate Convention or the 1997 Kyoto Protocol (Bretherton & Vogler 2006: 89–110; Schunz 2012).

Figure XXII: The Grammar of EU/Arctic Geopolitics



Source: Own compilation based on (Ibid.: 609)

Where? Location Specifications

As specified in the methodological part of this dissertation, Ó Tuathail described the scalar categorisation – the activity of specifying location – as central to geopolitical reasoning as it relates the ‘local’ with the ‘regional’ and/or ‘global’ level (Ibid.: 610–611).

European policymakers have hardly considered Europe’s local Arctic – the European Arctic – in the initial phase of the policy-making process with only minor references to the BEAR, Greenland, the ND, the Sámi and potential (financial) support schemes or the Barents Sea as fishing area. As a matter of fact, the very term ‘European Arctic’ and a related geographic attribution were only to be found in the 2008 Communication in relation to the ND. Interestingly enough, the 2011 Resolution refers to a “EU policy for the High North”. As already indicated in Subchapter 4.2, the term ‘High North’ is a Norwegian creation in order to strengthen

a Norwegian Arctic/Northern identity. The Resolution's title indicates a distinct Norwegian influence in the EP policy-making process; either directly via the Norwegian MFA or indirectly via Norway's prominent role in the (European) Arctic and a related influence on EP policymakers (both MEP and assistants).²⁶⁰

Essentially, the *regional* Arctic has been almost only categorised from a *EUropean/global* perspective, highlighted by reciprocal interaction: the Arctic affects the Union and vice versa. In that regard, Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner accentuated that the "Arctic is a unique and vulnerable region located in the immediate vicinity of Europe" (Commission of the European Communities 2008c: 1). Moreover, both the region's "challenges and opportunities (...) are international in nature" (Borg 2009: 3). Consequently, several themes of the global/Arctic categorisation emerged: the region's key role to regulate the global climate system, the Arctic as a potentially important space for EUropean energy diversification or a globally significant place of "concerted international action" with "unity" being the "watchword" of the 21st century's new global order (Ibid.: 3). The Arctic was apprehended as an area of "common concern" that needs "common solutions" (Damanaki 2012: 4). In that regard the Union positioned non-Arctic states/entities as relevant 'stakeholders' being equivalently important for the region's future. The LOS Convention was key to that argumentation, as obvious in all policy documents with the exception of the first Resolution. As the LOS Convention establishes the notion of a common heritage of mankind with the Arctic Ocean undoubtedly being covered by that international law agreement, the maritime area does not only concern the A5 (Borg 2009: 4).²⁶¹ Consequently, the nexus of international law of the sea and a distinct spatial area was used to claim 'Arctic access'. Paradoxically, the A5 based their Arctic sovereignty argument on the same two variables, yet maintaining that their very coastal state status claims justified sovereign rights over (parts of) the Arctic Ocean based on the LOS Convention (or international law in general, *see* the Ilulissat Declaration (2008). It is this particular discrepancy that Østhagen (2012b)

²⁶⁰ Interview 22

²⁶¹ Such a statement could entail the possibility of misinterpretation with both Borg's (2009) and Damanaki's (2012) words being interpreted as the Union's approach to govern the entire maritime Arctic according to the LOS Convention's Art. 136 as a "common heritage of mankind", *see* Section 4.3.1. However, Art. 136 specifically only refers to the Area and its resources and not to any other maritime areas.

critically remarked as “are we talking about the same “Arctic”?” Moreover, it highlights a distinct perceptual incongruity concerning *Arctic sovereignty* between the EU and the A5. Although the Union prominently underlined the LOS Convention as key for the determination of the A5’s regional rights and duties, it misinterpreted the significance of regional *sovereignty* for the A5 (*see* Subchapters 4.2 and 4.3 for related discussions on Arctic sovereignty), especially in the domestic context of Canada and Russia; the two Arctic states that openly slowed down and/or disapproved the Union’s application for AC observer.²⁶²

However, with the 2014 Resolution putting a stronger emphasis on the European Arctic and the Commission holding three workshops over the course of spring/summer 2015, prior to the new 2016 Joint Communication, in order to gain relevant on-site European Arctic feedback (*see* Section 6.2.8), the EU’s Arctic policy may develop in a (geographical) direction closer to its very European home – the European Arctic (Østhagen & Raspotnik 2015).

What? Situation Descriptions

This categorisation theme refers to the classification of the region as being ‘meaningful’ and ‘relevant’ for Europe. The two competing, situation descriptions that stand out, highlight the Arctic paradox from a European perspective with ‘security’ being abstracted both in negative and positive terms.

- The Arctic as climatic ‘hot spot’ and zone of instability
- The Arctic as zone to enhance European energy security

Based on the Union’s self-image as international leader in combatting climate change, the Arctic could not only be the EU’s ‘accelerated stress test’ to prove leadership but simultaneously also strengthen related governance mechanisms (= the geopolitical ideas of both being a leader to tackle climate change and governance enhancer). The used rhetoric created a discursive situation where European response

²⁶² Similarly, also Aalto criticised the Union’s failure to properly recognise the centrality of the sovereignty issue in its 7+1 documents despite firmly accepting the international law corollary of the sovereignty institutions (2013: 108–109). With the slight exception of the 2011 and 2014 EP Resolutions, which “acknowledges the wish of the inhabitants and governments of the Arctic region with sovereign rights (...)” (European Parliament 2011: 31, 2014: 42), none of the documents directly validates this crucial interlink for the A5 of “by virtue of (...) sovereignty” and the “extensive international legal framework that applies to the Arctic Ocean” (The Ilulissat Declaration 2008: 1).

was deemed to be instantly necessary as the contemporary (climatic) changes already impact and will continue to have an effect on Europe (= the argument of indispensable rapid action). In that regard Commissioner Borg emphasised: “We cannot remain impassive in the face of the alarming developments affecting the Arctic climate and, in consequence, the rest of our planet.” (2008: 2) “Action is not a matter of choice – but of urgent necessity” (Ferrero-Waldner 2009: 3) and “[t]he golden rule is to get in early” (Damanaki 2011a: 4).

The second classification concerns the concept of energy security, a general issue that emerged as a top priority in the internal European debate in the early 2000s (*see* Subchapter 5.2). This was partly based on increasing projections of the Union’s energy-import dependence – from 70% (gas) and 90% (oil) in 2000 to 84% (gas) and 93% (oil) in 2007 – and a growing scepticism about the existing energy market’s role as a guarantor of stable and diversified supplies (Offerdal 2010: 32). The notion of the Arctic and the ‘North’, respectively, of being one geographical pillar of related security considerations already dates back to Lipponen’s ND initiative and the Barents Sea as a (future) oil and gas region being mentioned in several ND progress reports (Ibid.: 34). In 2005, Commissioner Andris Piebalgs highlighted the enormous potential of that region as an important source of Europe’s energy exploration and production (2005: 2 and 8). The Commissioner attended a roundtable discussion in Kirkenes that addressed the opportunities of an Arctic Energy Agenda framework and included representatives from the EU, Norway, Russia and the U.S. (Norwegian Government 2005) – an idea that was eventually not followed up on. As comprehensively discussed by Offerdal, the EU’s Arctic (energy) *awareness* increased from 2006 to 2008, yet without an explicitly demonstrated *interest* (2010: 36). The EU’s early Arctic policy phase, however, slightly changed that perception with Arctic resources labelled as contribution to enhance the Union’s security of supply concerning hydrocarbons and raw materials. Accordingly, in 2008 Commissioner Piebalgs re-emphasised his 2005 statement and referred to Arctic oil and gas explorations as justified in order to guarantee European energy security (EurActiv 2008a). In that regard, also the widely quoted *EU Arctic Footprint and Policy Assessment Report* highlighted the Arctic as a regional source that could potentially increase the Union’s energy security in the coming decades (Cavaliere et

al. 2010: 39). Thus, the Arctic was simultaneously perceived as potential energy-conditioned conflict area as well as a region to counteract the EU's very own energy insecurity (Grindheim 2009: 37). However, the theme of energy/resource security was always intrinsically connected with the various policy documents' most "fundamental position": the promotion of sustainable development.²⁶³ In that regard, the connecting concept of 'high environmental and safety standards for Arctic access and exploitation' became "one of the main assets" of the Union's Arctic policy process, repeated in all documents and to that effect (internally) denoted as 'convincing', 'determined' and 'prominently listed', even when compared to the A8' regional strategies.²⁶⁴ Accordingly, this particular situational description goes in line with the Union's interconnected understanding of energy and climate security, an alleged inseparable nexus for European policymaker since 2000 (Vogler 2011: 363). As put by Commissioner Piebalgs, "Climate change and energy security are two sides of the same coin. The same remedies must be applied to both problems." (2009: 2)

Who? Actor Typification

The third process relates to the necessity to determine the involved (Arctic-relevant) actors and how these actors are perceived and distinguished from a European perspective. In general, the classification of regional actors depicted an explicit 'EU-Arctic/Arctic-EU' delineation with both the 2008 Resolution and Communication identifying the 'Arctic others' (= A5) on the basis of the Ilulissat Declaration. Two elements of such a representation are striking. First, the ambiguous description of Denmark/Greenland as an 'Arctic other' by simultaneously (and correctly) referring to Denmark as Member State. Second, a terminological vagueness on the number of Arctic coastal states: "In May 2008 five Arctic Ocean coastal states adopted a Declaration" (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 10). This statement lacks the definite article "the" to clearly brand Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the U.S. as A5, and hence leaving some room for spatial interpretation concerning Iceland's 'to be' or 'not to be' coastal state status. In that regard, several interviewees have indicated that Iceland should be regarded as

²⁶³ Stated in a 2012 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author

²⁶⁴ Stated in a 2013 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author

Arctic coastal state.²⁶⁵ One geographical argument illustrated in that regard is the island's strategic location at the centre of the European entry to the Arctic Ocean.²⁶⁶

Furthermore, all policy documents continuously examine the various, yet distinct relationships between the Union and the A8. In that regard, the ordering followed an equivalency strategy by stressing geographical/legal/political proximity to all Arctic states: 3 of them are Member States, 2 are EEA members and the 3 other are strategic partners. In principle, all Arctic states are considered cooperation partners.²⁶⁷ Accordingly, Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner identified the Union as “well placed to contribute [and] [b]y geography [being] a natural stakeholder” (2009: 2). In the words of Commissioner Damanaki, “The EU itself is an Arctic actor by virtue of three Arctic states” (2012: 3).²⁶⁸ However, certain deviations have been observed as the 2008 Communication drew, by (legal and institutional) nature, a particular attention and related responsibility to the 3+2 countries (such as not supporting any Arctic arrangements that exclude the 3 plus 2). This protagonist typification only differed when comparing the 2008 HR/Commission paper with the subsequent policy documents, as it particularly used a classificatory strategy closely connected to blame strategy. Based on “the growing debate over territorial claims (...) by different countries”, Europe cannot “effectively secure its trade and resource interests” which potentially “put[s] pressure on its relations with key partners” (High Representative & European Commission 2008: 8). Yet, the ‘different countries’ are not mentioned by name, which is most likely due to diplomatic design.

Only subsequently, cooperation with all Arctic states is considered key with particularly the 2012 Joint Communication stressing the need to strengthen the bilateral dialogues with its Arctic partners, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Russia and the U.S. Besides, the 2009 Conclusions explicitly attached great importance to the Union's strong links with Greenland, Iceland and Norway. Moreover and in addition to the AC, the various policy documents explain the EU-Arctic states relationship via the different institutional links of the BEAC, the EEA, the ND and the OCT.

²⁶⁵ Interview 1 (8 June 2012) and Interview 3

²⁶⁶ Stated in a 2013 internal EP briefing paper that is on with the author

²⁶⁷ Interview 3

²⁶⁸ Text Box IV (page 224) illustrates the (affirmative) positions of the EU's Nordic states – Denmark, Finland and Sweden – towards stronger European Arctic engagement.

Nevertheless, the AC constitutes the strongest element of the Union's promotion of interregional cooperation with the AC, yet, only receiving specific terminological devotion from the 2009 Conclusions and the 2012 Joint Communication onwards.

However, regardless the strong emphasis on (bilateral) cooperation that was put into policy writing, the actual implementation so far gives rise to some questions.

The 2011 Resolution and the 2012 Joint Communication took account of the then-accession talks with Iceland (*see* Text Box III, page 168). Both policy documents denoted an increased 'geopolitical perspective' and an additional policy framework to discuss Arctic issues in case of an Icelandic EU membership. However, both documents remained rather vague and shallow on how Iceland's geographical location and a related 'significant role' could be asserted (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 105); additionally also the coastal state question of Iceland remained a hidden issue. In 2013, an annual high-level 'Arctic Dialogue' between the EEAS and the Icelandic MFA was introduced in order to substantiate related cooperation on issues such as oil spill prevention or maritime monitoring in North Atlantic and Arctic waters (Buckens 2013; Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 105). Yet, it was mainly Iceland that pushed for such collaboration based on the 2012 Joint Communication's proposal to seek enhanced bilateral cooperation.²⁶⁹

Although being briefly mentioned in the 2008 Communication, only the 2012 Joint Communication applied more attention to Greenland and the Union's relationship with the autonomous country, *see* Text Box V (page 252).

²⁶⁹ Interview 7

Text Box V: What to Do with a Runaway? The EU's Approach towards Greenland

Although geographically belonging to North America, Greenland is commonly understood as being part of the European Arctic, which is mainly based due to its various, and still close bonds to Denmark but also due to its political past with the Union (Ibid.: 106–107). In EEAS' terms, Greenland is perceived as the descriptive microcosm of Arctic development as it both includes the necessity of environmental protection and the goal of (sustainable) economic development; hence the island is of increased importance for the Union.²⁷⁰ Due to its OCT status (= “belonging to the Union’s own “family””), Greenland is perceived as a unique Arctic partner for the EU with great potential for future cooperation.²⁷¹

Both Subchapter 5.1 and 5.4 briefly explicated the Union’s relationship with Greenland, referring to a legal and financial dimension. It is worth noting, that Protocol (No 34) (TEU) explicitly stipulates that the Union’s special arrangements for Greenland, especially the exemption from custom duties for Greenlandic products only apply if the FPA is satisfactory to the Union. In addition to the EU-Greenland PA and FPA, a renewed Joint Declaration was signed on 19 March 2015, confirming the long lasting links between the EU and Greenland, as well as reiterating the geostrategic location and importance of Greenland (European Commission 2015e); a fact that was, *inter alia*, also mentioned by the 2014 Resolution and the Council Decision 2014/137/EU on the relationship between the EU and Greenland.²⁷² According to one interviewee, the term ‘geostrategic’ has an explicit geographical connotation, as Greenland is strategically located as a European gateway not only into the Arctic but also towards Canada and the U.S.²⁷³ Consequently, Greenland is considered as key location and important hub for maritime transportation, communications and satellite support.²⁷⁴

Although already the 2008 Communication highlighted the Union’s relationship with Greenland and proposed an enhanced Arctic-related cooperation (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 12), only the 2012 Joint Communication illustrated the relationship in-depth (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 18), which was also particularly emphasised by EEAS representatives.²⁷⁵ With Regulation 1007/2009 also causing political and emotional disruptions in Greenland, *see* Text Box II (page 117) and Text Box IV (page 224), intensified European attention from 2008 to 2012 can be deduced accordingly.

Moreover, also the Council explicitly supported a strengthening of the relationship, highlighting efforts concerning the sustainable development of Greenland and enhanced dialogue and cooperation on Arctic issues between the Union and Greenland (2009: 5; 2014: 3). And yet, the issue of Greenland was notably absent in the various speeches given by Commissioners on Arctic issues, *see* Annex VIII (page 361), with the island only be used as a geographical delimiter. Only in his 2009 speech, Commissioner Borg used his trip to Greenland in September 2008 as example of him being convinced that international action is needed (2009: 2).

However, in May and June 2012, Greenland became a prominent venue of European visitors with the EU Member States’ COREPER II ambassadors and the two Commissioners Damanaki and Antonio Tajani (for Industry and Entrepreneurship) visiting the island (Greenland Representation to the EU 2012).²⁷⁶ Both, the Member States’ ambassadors and Commissioner Tajani’s visits have to

²⁷⁰ Interview 3

²⁷¹ Interview 14 and Interview 17

²⁷² However, Greenland’s key role as an Arctic partner for the Union was already stressed in 2002 with reference to the ND Arctic Window (Commission of the European Communities 2002: 6).

²⁷³ Interview 17. In 2014, the EP’s in-house think tank published a report on Greenland, entitled “The challenge of managing a key geostrategic territory” (Garcés de los Fayos 2014).

²⁷⁴ Stated in a 2013 internal EP briefing paper that is on with the author

²⁷⁵ Interview 3

²⁷⁶ COREPER, from the French *Comité des Représentants Permanents*, is the Committee of Permanent Representatives, made up of the Head or Deputy Head of Representation from each

be understood under the framework of the Union's raw materials diplomacy – the strategy to access raw materials on world markets at undistorted conditions (Commission of the European Communities 2008b: 6), *see* also Subchapter 5.2 and the concluded letter of intent between the EU and Greenland. The three key areas of 'diplomacy interest' are investment, cooperation and research/development.²⁷⁷ A related statement by another Commission official clearly indicates the Union's self-conception in its relationship with Greenland: the focus of raw material diplomacy is not only on the European economic relevance of the island's various resources but essentially also on the sustainable extraction of these resources for the benefit of Greenland. As an OCT, Greenland is part of a multitude of geographical outposts where the Union is not prominently present but can still influence related regional development via its own values, such as the promotion of sustainable development;²⁷⁸ a statement that goes very much in line with the geopolitical ideas as exemplified in Subchapter 7.1. Then again, the Council's (or some Member States') interest in and approach to Greenland has been explained in more economic realistic terms. With China showing some interests in the island's raw materials, some Member States feared that China could win the battle over Greenland's resources, which would only amplify the global shift towards China. Hence, further cooperation with Greenland is imperative.²⁷⁹ An opinion that was also shared by some Commission officials.²⁸⁰ However, an official from the Greenlandic government critically remarked that very *naming* of the island as geostrategically important has not yet found its expression in increased financial *action* and support from the EU.²⁸¹ Yet, an active AC participation of the Union is generally supported and considered helpful in order to great better European understanding of traditional Arctic lifestyles, general human development issues and the role of marine mammals (Hossain 2015: 101).

Norway – the European state that is not really 'in' but neither really 'out of the EU (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 104) – has generally welcomed the Union's increasing Arctic engagement (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011: 32; Støre 2011: 59). In that regard, the Scandinavian country does not only closely cooperate with the Commission on Arctic issues but essentially also had a drafting impact on the 2008 Communication and the 2014 Resolution.²⁸² Both the 2008 and 2012 Communication underlined Norway's role as energy provider with the Union's interest in related resource policy developments and an envisaged Arctic-strengthening of the bilateral cooperation efforts – the high level Energy Dialogue. However, a specific European Arctic determination in that regard was not observed (Raspotnik 2011b).

Member State in Brussels. COREPER II consists of the Head of Representation (= Member States' ambassadors to the EU) and mainly deals with political, financial and foreign policy issues.

²⁷⁷ Interview 20

²⁷⁸ Interview 17

²⁷⁹ Interview 9

²⁸⁰ Interview 17 and Interview 20

²⁸¹ Interview 14

²⁸² Interview 22

Although continuously depicted as a ‘strategic partner’, the Arctic has only been mentioned *en passant* in regular meetings held with Canada, Russia and the U.S. (Kobza 2015: 18).²⁸³ With the U.S. being too globally oriented and itself (still) lacking a distinct U.S. Arctic vision, the casualness in the actual Arctic implementation of strategic bilateral partnership remains, however, inexplicable with regard to Canada and Russia. Especially given that both countries have at the turn of the century been fairly positive towards a stronger inclusion of the Union into the Arctic governance framework, *see* Section 4.3.2 and Subchapter 6.1, and furthermore been linked to the ND as observer and partner, respectively. However, operational references to links with the broader circumpolar area and in particular with the North American Arctic remained weak in all policy documents. Lacking financial instruments could be the decisive factor in that regard.

As extensively discussed in Text Box II (page 117), the ‘seal-AC’ nexus dominated Canada’s stance towards the Union’s ‘step north’ over the period under scrutiny with an observed Canadian change from rather being pro-European Arctic presence (in the early 2000s) via a refusing position to an eventually agreeing standpoint in 2014. It was indicated that without this paralysing debate the strategic partnership between these two actors, including shared interests and concerns in the north that have already been stipulated in 1999 (European Union & Government of Canada 1999, 2004), more Arctic-related subjects could have been tackled over the last years; despite a perceived Canadian reluctance to cover environmental issues.²⁸⁴ From an Arctic legal perspective, the Commission’s position, as stipulated in its 2008 Communication, on the NWP counters the Canadian legal interpretation of its Arctic waters (*see* Section 4.3.1). At least publically this has, however, not (yet) created any controversies between Canada and the EU.

The EU’s Arctic relationship with Russia has been correctly referred to and scrutinised as “Arctic exception” in an otherwise highly institutionalised strategic partnership, especially in the context of Northern institutions/regimes, as for instance

²⁸³ One recent exception may be the Galway Statement with its Arctic reference, concluded by Canada, the EU and the U.S. in May 2013, *see* Subchapter 5.3.

²⁸⁴ Interview 12

BEAC and the ND (Aalto 2013: 101). Essentially, the Union's various Arctic policy steps lack a particular Russian dimension from the very beginning, which remains puzzling if considering the bilateral economic/resource dependencies, the research/funding connections, ND-related cross-border cooperation or the rather good (institutional) ties and relationship in the European Arctic, *see* Subchapter 2.3 and Chapter 5. As a matter of fact, in the circumpolar Arctic perspective a European *blaming by naming* can be observed that basically questions Russia's 'contradictory' position on Arctic matters with positive signals for European Arctic cooperation efforts but negative ones in the broader circumpolar format.²⁸⁵ In that regard, Russia has been identified as being very selective on the EU's explicit role in the Arctic and often prefers to deal with Member States only²⁸⁶ or was criticised for not being very receptive to sustainable development discussions.²⁸⁷ On the opposing, Russian side, and back in 2009, its Permanent Representative to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov plainly referred to the Arctic as not being a EU affair. His comment was based of the opposition of some Western countries, including the voices of European representatives, on Russia's extended CS claim that also included the Lomonosov Ridge, *see* Subchapter 4.3.1 (EurActiv 2009).

Why? Attributions of Causality

The classification scheme of 'attribution' concerns the construction of causal relations and explanations of events and refers in a less convoluted language to the importance of external dimensions on EU foreign policy and how global/regional developments beyond the Union's control "determine the agenda and timetable of its global policies and the options available to EU policy-makers" (Hix 2005: 396). As demonstrated in Chapter 4 and its Subchapter 4.4, public media and perception (= *popular geopolitics*) have also significantly influenced the Arctic's geopolitical picture at that time and consequently had an effect on European considerations. In terms of European energy security, Buchan concluded that geopolitical events, e.g. the oil shocks in the 1970s or the implosion of the USSR, have generally been the driver of related European security considerations (2010: 371).

²⁸⁵ Stated in a 2015 internal EP briefing paper that is on file with the author

²⁸⁶ Interview 12

²⁸⁷ Interview 19

In the Arctic case, and as already indicated in Subchapter 6.2, it was the region's high visibility in the global context of climate change and an alleged scramble to re-territorialise an alleged opening Arctic (maritime) space that served as a systematic, conditioning factor of a to-be developed EU Arctic policy.²⁸⁸ The dominant poles of causality construction that can be retraced fit into the mould of the Arctic's 21st century re- appearance around 2007/2008 (*see* Subchapter 4.4):

- A Russian flag planted more than 4,000 m beneath the North Pole, prominently addressed in the 2008 HR/Commission and EP policy documents as well as in a 2007 written question to the Commission by MEP Wallis.
- A record low of the Arctic's average sea ice extent in an emerging era of international and European climate change awareness. According to one interviewee "climate change was one of the key issues why the 2008 Communication was developed".²⁸⁹ At about the same time, in June 2007, President Barroso visited Greenland and referred to climate change in the region as "dramatic" (Spongenberg 2007) with literal risk of global meltdown without proper action and response (European Commission 2007c). The effects of climate change and the decreasing sea ice (and permafrost) are crucial in all policy documents, although the strong HR/Commission nexus of 'climate change impacts international security' was toned down by the subsequent 2008 Commission Communication, the 2009 Council Conclusions and the 2011 EP Resolution.
- The USGS' 2008 CARA, published in June 2008: both the 2008 Communication and the 2011 Resolution referred – explicitly and implicitly – to the widely internationally circulated survey and its assessment. However, both documents (rightly and realistically) considered the future of Arctic oil and gas exploration and exploitation as long-term endeavour (*see* Section 4.4.2).

²⁸⁸ The Arctic, or the North in general, was for instance not mentioned in the ESS and/or its implementation report, with both of them only slightly tackling the security implications of climate change, *see* Subchapter 2.3.

²⁸⁹ Interview 18

So What? Strategic Calculation

The final categorisation element relates to rough strategic calculations of the geostrategic significance of a certain region and ‘simply’ asks “What is at stake for ‘us’?” (Ó Tuathail 2002b: 616) An economic Arctic evaluation of what is already and could potentially be of related relevance for the Union was extensively discussed in Subchapter 5.2. Hence, it delineated the European general demands and potential interests concerning Arctic resources, maritime transportation and fisheries.

The various policy documents stressed, yet in different nuances, the potential material significance for Europe, in particular with regard to energy security, the many opportunities of (trans-Arctic) maritime navigation or the Union being an important consumer of Arctic fish, *see* also Subchapter 5.2. The 2008 HR/Commission document explicitly emphasised that a to-be-developed EU Arctic policy needs to take into account “access to resources and the opening of new trade routes” (2008: 11). The Commission’s 2008 related considerations highlighted the various opportunities yet simultaneously particularly emphasised the ‘time’-factor and related long-term deliberations of Arctic development and exploitation. As put by Commissioner Borg, “[T]he prospects in these different fields [hydrocarbons, maritime transport and fisheries] vary” (2009: 3) with, for instance, (trans-)Arctic shipping not really being an issue right now.²⁹⁰ Nonetheless, the energy-related cooperation with Norway and Russia are supposed to be strengthened with an intrinsically envisaged European market access and to-be-avoided discriminatory practices (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 6–9). Hence, the EU aims for a European market-friendly region and wants to “keep all doors open”.²⁹¹ Accordingly, the Union’s bilateral energy dialogues with the two Arctic states are “very important to promote the EU’s perspectives, like European (technical) standards or values and to remain at least informed on what is going on in the Arctic”.²⁹² The EP followed that logic in 2011 and gave even more weight to the European aspect of potential Arctic economic opportunities.

With the material significance of the Arctic being realistically assessed, the initial worth of the region was rather of strategic-symbolic nature. The European

²⁹⁰ Interview 4 (4 September 2012)

²⁹¹ Interview 3

²⁹² Interview 19

interests at stake concerned in particular the perceived instability at its Northern frontier, induced by climate change and with global ramifications. As the Arctic plays a key role in regulating the Earth's climate system, both the *region* and the *global* level are inextricably linked, urging for a pressing need for decisive action at an international level (Borg 2009: 2). With the Union's leading role in the transnational governance of climate change, the EU's very own credibility was on the line. In that regard, the initial proposal of *enhancing governance* reveals a latent ambiguity in the Union's Arctic approach, as it is both of descriptive as well as normative/moral nature. It clearly acknowledged the region's existing governance framework (LOS Convention, AC, etc.) and the A8/A5 related rights and duties (= the descriptive part), however, in the same breath questioned the broader regimes' effectiveness, which could eventually only be guaranteed if being upgraded by a European booster (= the normative/moral side). The 2008 Communication strikingly illustrated the related EU's Arctic perception: a structured and coordinated European Arctic approach leads to new cooperation perspectives with Arctic states that eventually increases regional stability and establishes a right balance between preserving and sustainable using the Arctic (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 12). If only the EU engages in the Arctic, comprehensive stability can be reached. As analysed in Subchapter 6.2, the European attempt was not exactly well perceived beyond the Arctic Circle.²⁹³ In 2011, Commissioner Damanaki aimed to clarify the perceived European dictation by defining, rather uncommonly, 'enhanced governance' as the Union's method to "ensure that what we do in the Arctic aligns with what others are doing" (2011a: 3). The 2009 Conclusions deliberately refrained from using the term 'governance' with the 2012 Joint Communication following and exchanging 'governance' with 'cooperation'.

The Assemblage of Storylines

Climate change and its various repercussions on both the region and the global sphere served as the basis for envisaged European action. It is not *per se* the issue of climate change *but* the identification of climate change as security issue with the Arctic being in an immediate state of emergency. As climate change leads to new

²⁹³ Interview 2

geostrategic dynamics in the region, the Arctic is perceived as a neighbouring area of emerging instability and insecurity – a volatility that can disturb the stability of Europe in a variety of ways. Moreover, although the effects of climate change are particularly obvious in the Arctic, its sources mainly have an external character and hence require external support as well. Consequently, European action is inevitable. It is precisely the Union that has the international leadership skills to effectively combat climate change and promote related security.

It is this argumentation that was prominently addressed and emphasised in the EU's early Arctic visions. The IMP's 2006 Green Paper already stressed that “[s]afeguarding the Arctic region's climate (...) is (...) at the centre of the EU's strategy to combat climate change” (Commission of the European Communities 2006b: 14). The IMP itself then created the very nexus of ‘climate change fashions regional geopolitical implications’ (Commission of the European Communities 2007: 13); *the* very element that was strongly emphasised by the HR/Commission in 2008 with the paper's link of an increasing accessibility of Arctic resources that will have a negative impact on the region's security and hence negatively affect Europe (High Representative & European Commission 2008: 8).²⁹⁴ Moreover, a Communication on the international dimension of the IMP noted that the IMP “should be extended into the wider international arena” to “strengthen the EU's authority, as an international maritime power (...)”. It envisioned the “creation of an EU framework for a global integrated approach to maritime affairs” and a regional approach for the Arctic region was an essential part thereof (Commission of the European Communities 2009: 3 and 9). Then again, the Commission's first Arctic-related output highlighted both regional challenges and opportunities as having significant repercussion on Europe and its (future) citizens (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 2). Yet, the root that causes Arctic change cannot be handled region-internally only but requires international (= European) response (Ibid.: 3), ascribing some kind of climatic/environmental interdependence between the region and the Union. European action is deemed necessary as instability in the Arctic has an impact on the people in Europe. Hence, the rationale of the EU's initial Arctic

²⁹⁴ In that regard, both the IMP and the HR/Commission paper followed to some extent the ACIA (2005) and the European Environment Agency's (2004) report on “Why should Europe care”.

phase post-2007/2008 was undoubtedly security-oriented – a complex perception of security that eventually did not only entail concerns (= climate change and its repercussions) to be tackled but also interests (= energy resources) to be securitised. However, it is the interplay between vital concerns and vital interests that is crucial as both angles are – in the case of the EU’s Arctic policy development – not mutually exclusive. In this particular case both concerns and interests rather reflect geopolitics of dialogue and weakened reciprocity and not a one-sided emphasis on a hegemonic enforcement of interests, e.g. dictated via imposed ideologies, only.

Table XII represents how the grammar of European Arctic geopolitics was embedded into two broader storylines.

Table XII: Emergent European Arctic Storylines

Storyline attribute	The ‘fighter’ and ‘manager’	The resource heaven
Where? Location specification	Arctic as an international region	The regional aspect of a global Arctic
What? Situation description	Contemporary changes with future relevance; climate affects European security	Contemporary changes with future relevance (climate change could lead to disputes)
Who? Protagonist typification	A8 are all cooperation partners; EU-responsibility for 3+2	A5 with potential for disputes
Why? Attributions of causality	Inside-outside nexus: Arctic with repercussions for European citizens	Flag planting, maritime claims, high oil price
So What? Interest calculation	Threat for Europe, EU’s global role (leadership skills), EU as governance enhancer	(In)security of Arctic change, energy security

Source: Own compilation

The Performative Geopolitical Script

As briefly discussed in Section 3.1.1, Ó Tuathail underlined the necessity to introduce the notion of geopolitical scripts – the way foreign policymaker perform and argue, based on the set of arguments from the emerging storylines. It eventually creates an organisation as being and acting as a (coherent) actor that speaks the same geopolitical language and performs along the same geopolitical narrative(s). As already introduced in Subchapter 6.2, five narratives were central to the 7+1 documents (and simultaneously appeared in the various speeches of the Union’s policymakers as listed in Annex VIII, page 361), which essentially constitute the

Union's performative Arctic script of problem, uncertainty, opportunity, choice and solution. The first description concerns the 'Arctic problem' – the manifold changes that occur in an unsettled space with the potential to severely impact Europe. This possible impact is further divided in both a negative perceived one (uncertainty) and one with a more positive connotation (opportunity). Accordingly, both uncertainty and opportunity illustrate the questionable rate of regional change and related extra-regional repercussions with for instance the Arctic's climate change or the region's hydrocarbon resources having negative and positive consequences for Europe and its citizens. The fourth pillar – choice – essentially tackles the question(s) on how to deal with the various changes in the Arctic: in cooperation with the A5/A8 or Uni(on)laterally? Finally, solution describes the Union's preferred course of action: as the Union is already Arctic-present, the participation at the Arctic governance table is only reasonable.

With the Arctic energy story eventually falling behind its initial rosy picture, both from an interconnected global (*see* Section 4.4.2) and European (*see* Subchapter 5.2) perspective, the Union's various voices increasingly focused upon the 'climate change – Arctic governance/cooperation contribution' narrative in order to terminologically create Arctic legitimacy for the EU. The EU's access to the Arctic's key governance regime (= the AC) should be legitimised via the Union's multidimensional Arctic presence, in particular its (environmental) footprint (*see* Subchapter 5.3) and the alleged international leader role in the combat against climate change. The Union's financial support of a multitude of Arctic research programmes serves as the operational connector, as already prominently highlighted in the 2012 Communication and its inventory add-on. If, accordingly, the "dominant paradigm for framing Arctic security is climate science" (Bravo & Rees 2006: 205), scientific practices and the related components of mapping, illustrating and surveying have to be considered an important part of the geopolitical constitution of European Arctic space and the related space-making practices of the EU. Moreover, as the interconnected themes of research and financial investments constitute the base frame of (current) European Arctic engagement, it has been argued that these two subjects could be the substantial asset in the Union's relationship with the A8, by simultaneously characterising the Union as strong financial and research actor in that

regard, *see* Subchapter 5.4.²⁹⁵ With the Commission's and EEAS' next Joint Communication currently being developed, one can only assume if the Union's performative script of a stronger focus on climate change and research as Arctic (governance) access point sustains. At a conference in Anchorage (Alaska, U.S.) in September 2015, Commissioner Karmenu Vella (2015b), however, strongly emphasised the European nexus of 'climate change – research – international cooperation', with actions against climate change and regional environmental protection being key in the Commission's/EEAS' next Joint Communication. Moreover, the Commissioner particularly emphasised that the European Arctic's future can be a regional "forward-thinking model that fosters green growth and innovation", particularly in the renewable sector of hydro, wind power and ocean energy but also in the digital sector, which includes cloud services and data services (Vella 2015a: 249).

7.3. 'Arctic Governance' at a Distance

Müller's third node of research concerns the spatial reach of organisational power, as well as the art of governing at the distance. It relates to the question of how organisations aim to control and intervene in distant places (2012: 385). Hence, this Subchapter epitomises the Union's approach to wield European organisational authority in the Arctic.

Interpreted from a geographical perspective, Koivurova, Stępień & Kankaanpää convincingly subclassified the Union's legal-spatial reach into four 'physical' dimensions:

- A core region (the northern parts of Finland and Sweden)
- An EEA-region (Iceland and mainland Norway)
- A partnership/cooperation-region in the European Arctic (Greenland and Russia, BEAC and the ND)
- An international region (with the EU's international regulatory powers being relevant and cooperation efforts taken at AC-level) (2014: 76)

²⁹⁵ Interview 4 (4 September 2012)

Accordingly, Subchapter 5.1 extensively outlined the varying legal reach of the EU into the Arctic, depending on the Union's legal competences not only in the (European) Arctic but also in its contributions to regimes and institutions that have an effect on the region. From a policy-making point of view, especially the 2012 Joint Communication and its two add-ons comprehensively delineated the Arctic actions taken by the Union, such as its approaches to tackle climate change in the respective global fora or its financial support to indigenous peoples, local populations and Arctic research in general (*see* Subchapter 5.3). Hence, these actions are the textual and discursive manifestation of European action towards and engagement in the Arctic region. However, the referred to Arctic actions are/were not activities specifically developed in order to face the regional challenges and opportunities or even as a result of these arising problems and prospects. The emphasis was rather to put a distinct Arctic prominence on actions and (financial) programs that were already conducted and somehow related to both circumpolar and European Arctic matters (Kobza 2015: 17). Similarly, Subchapter 5.4 broadly discussed the Union's financial contributions covering the BEAC and ND area, which – from an operational level – constitute one pillar of the EU's relationship with (northwest) Russia and the EEA countries, Iceland and Norway. The financial 'carrot' also plays a prominent role in the Union's approach towards Greenland, as illustrated in Text Box V (page 252). The various financial instruments undoubtedly benefit European outsider (= Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Russia) and to some extent, in addition to the legal links with the EEA countries, impose European visions and priorities on these states. Accordingly, in that regard it could be well argued that the Union's related governance approach reaches these geographical areas; yet, it is impossible to measure a certain degree of influence.

On a more circumpolar, Arctic-international level, the issue of climate change basically serves as prime example for the Union's *claiming* by *naming* but (yet) referring from *acting*. Although climate change was continuously considered as the Union's Arctic access, a considerable discrepancy exists between the EU's declared interests in the Arctic climate change nexus and the factual actions taken by the EU (Neumann 2010: 30). As a matter of fact, the proposed action of the first

Communication to “strengthen international efforts to mitigate climate change” (Commission of the European Communities 2008a: 3) and the statement of the Joint Communication that “[t]he EU will work with others to combat global climate change” (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 6) bear the hallmarks of DG CLIMA.²⁹⁶ However, although perceiving and referring to the Arctic as especially vulnerable to climate change, distinctively new European initiatives and directions could not have been observed since 2008 (Kobza 2015: 17–18), in particularly not in the run up to the UNFCCC’s Conference of the Parties (COP) 15 in Copenhagen (Denmark) in 2009.²⁹⁷ The Union’s effort in the combat against climate change and related financial contributions to Arctic research are, however, (again) prominently emphasised in the run up to COP 21 in Paris in November/December 2015. Accordingly, Commissioner Vella (2015b) arranged his already referred to September 2015 speech in Anchorage around “climate change in the Arctic – COP 21”, “research” and “international cooperation on ocean governance”. He further highlighted that for the EU’s next Arctic policy step “action on climate change and environmental protection” is at the policy forefront (Ibid.). Yet, it has been questioned if climate change can be the top priority and single organising idea of the Union’s overall Arctic policy approach. Not only because of the multitude of crosscutting policy issues that are connected under the geographical label “Arctic” but essentially also because of the peripherality of Arctic issues as an overall concern for the EU, despite the strong words by some of its official representatives and the policy documents published in that regard (Stępień & Raspotnik 2015: 433–434).

Similarly, also distinct European regulatory efforts with regard to the exploitation of hydrocarbon resources and raw materials or on matters of maritime transportation cannot be reconstructed, despite of some legal relevance in that matter.

²⁹⁶ Interview 18. DG CLIMA established in 2009. Hence, the 2008 statement dated from DG Environment. Among other things, DG CLIMA was established to strengthen the Union’s leadership role in the run up to COP 15 (Schoenefeld 2014).

²⁹⁷ One explicit effort though was the Commission’s joining of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, an initiative to reduce short-lived climate pollutants, complementing efforts to cut global greenhouse gas emissions (European Commission 2012b). The Arctic is also referred to as “particularly vulnerable” and “exposed to climate change” in the Commission’s 2013 strategy on adaptation to climate change (European Commission 2013a: 2).

The already mentioned Directive 2013/30/EU on safety of offshore oil and gas operations (*see* Subchapter 5.1) and (potentially) some coordination efforts during the Polar Code negotiations may be the extenuated exception to the rule.²⁹⁸

As a reaction to the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon offshore oil-drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico in April 2010, the Commission issued a Communication in October 2010 with the objective to develop a legal framework that should ensure uniformly high safety standards for offshore exploration and production activities in EU and third countries. The Arctic was mentioned as an area of specific attention, due to its sensitive environment, harsh climate and untapped hydrocarbon resources (European Commission 2010b: 12). Accordingly, the document also asks for international binding rules to be developed. A year later and based on the Communication, the Commission proposed a regulation on the safety of offshore oil and gas exploration, which eventually became Directive 2013/30/EU. The reactions to this legal act, however, highlight the Arctic sensitivities the EU is exposed to and to some extent explain why the Union does not want to step on any Arctic toes and pushes back against the perception of being a ‘super policy regulator’ (Keil & Raspotnik 2012). Although hardly touching the Arctic, but being applicable to EEA members, the Directive raised some Arctic eyebrows, especially in Norway (Nilsen 2012). This was (partly) due to some MEPs pushing for a moratorium on Arctic drilling during the proposal phase,²⁹⁹ yet without the Union actually having the legal competence to do so (Neslen 2012) and the Directive stipulating that the Commission “shall promote high safety standards for offshore oil and gas operations at international level (...), including those relating to Arctic waters.”³⁰⁰ As eventually correctly assessed by Østhagen (2012a), the Directive’s proposals were neither new

²⁹⁸ Concerning the Polar Code negotiations, the Commission’s objective was to find a common approach between the EU Member States, which are also represented at IMO level. Accordingly, coordination meetings between the Member States took place before IMO-related Polar Code meetings were scheduled (Interview 1). Initially, the Commission aimed to be represented by one, common European voice only. However, this would have led to the loss of the respective voting rights of the Member States (Interview 6). Furthermore, the same interviewee critically remarked that the Commission’s IMO appearance holds some flavour of arrogance with the institution’s representative perceiving the Union’s policies and actions as superior to those of other states (Interview 6).

²⁹⁹ As observed by the dissertation’s author during attendances of meetings of the EP’s Committees on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (10 July 2012) and Industry, Research and Energy (11 July 2012), respectively.

³⁰⁰ Directive 2013/30/EU

nor shocking but from an Arctic perspective rather the Commission's (and to some extent EP's) acknowledgement of the region's hydrocarbon debate by simultaneously aiming to balance preservation and exploration. And yet this unilateral Arctic-affecting legislation caused a Norwegian public outcry.

In the wake of Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula (Ukraine) in March 2014, the EU has agreed on a variety of economic sanctions and restrictions against Russia with, for instance, export licenses being denied if products are destined for Arctic oil exploration and production in Russia (Council of the European Union 2014b: 1). The agreed-on economic as well as diplomatic sanctions currently continue to have a negative impact on the Union's bid for AC observer status, *see* Text Box II (page 117). The Union's never-ending story concerning AC observer status also entails a EU legal Arctic action with direct effects on (parts of) the region's indigenous communities: Regulation 1007/2009 on trade in seal products. While the regulation have (had) adverse (economic) effects on the livelihoods of Inuit communities, a direct conclusion between changes in Canadian seal hunting legislation/practices and the legal act cannot satisfactorily be drawn (Sellheim 2015b: 279).

With regard to the AC in general, the Union has not yet succeeded to convince (some of) the Arctic states of the very rationale for enhanced EU regional involvement in that particular Arctic governance regime. Accordingly, some Arctic voices have also critically remarked the matter of potential European policy coordination prior to AC and IMO meetings, based on TEU Art. 4 and the principle of sincere cooperation with the EU Arctic Member States being "lapdogs of the EU" at AC level.³⁰¹ Yet, European representatives within the AC allayed this 'fear', indicating that the Commission and EEAS have not been trying to coordinate Arctic policy steps of the Member States prior to AC meetings. However, the various representatives both from European institutions and Member States that work on Arctic/Northern issues constantly meet at different fora, as for instance the AC,

³⁰¹ Stated at a panel during the 3rd Annual Geopolitics in the High North in Berlin in May 2012, *see* (Maurer et al. 2012: 12) and Interview 17

BEAC or the NC and hence have many channels to discuss and communicate problems and issues and potentially reach a common European position.³⁰²

In addition to the Arctic Treaty suggestion and the just referred to moratorium discussions concerning hydrocarbon resource exploration and exploitation, the EP and its elected representatives also had on some other occasions proven to be rather problematic when aiming to alter (minor) parts of the broader Arctic governance framework (Stępień & Koivurova 2016: 28–29). It was not the EP *per se* but rather the proposals and voices of some MEPs, which were eventually perceived and taken as a Union’s official unified voice. Notably examples were, *inter alia*, the (privately) produced study and published booklet by MEP Wallis (2011) on the legal framework and suitability of the Spitsbergen Treaty (*see* Section 6.2.5), which (again) rendered critical voices in Norway (Østhagen 2013b: 83);³⁰³ MEPs pushing the Commission to support the prohibition of international trade in products originating from polar bears (Pelaudeix & Rodon 2013: 64–65; Stępień & Koivurova 2016: 28) or the, already mentioned, EP-discussion in 2014 concerning fishing rights in Svalbard’s FPZ and potential losses for European fishermen (Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014a), *see* Section 6.2.7.

Müller also highlighted policy enactment as an additional part of the proclaimed ‘art of governing at the distance’. Accordingly, a continuous performance of on-going summits, workshop, meetings or the issuing of (supplementary) documents and statements further helps an organisation to enact some kind of sovereignty over an issue and/or create legitimacy of related action (2012: 381). Accordingly, Dodds & Sidaway claimed that geopolitics and/or the circulation of geopolitical ideas depends on the “production and dissemination of strategic text and maps” (1994: 518). Supplementary to the various Arctic policy documents and the delivered speeches/statements, *see* Table II (page 198) and Annex VIII (page 361),

³⁰² Interview 2

³⁰³ Both the 2008 Communication (2008a: 9) and the 2011 Resolution (2011: 20) referred to the different interpretations of the Spitsbergen Treaty, *see* Section 4.3.1. The Commission/EU’s own position is only confined to the domain of fisheries, stressing the acceptance of the Norwegian fisheries regulations concerning the maritime areas of Svalbard (= the FPZ) as long as they are applied in a non-discriminatory manner and respected by all parties to the Spitsbergen Treaty (Molenaar 2012b: 25–26),

which are in itself already an act to establish the EU as an Arctic actor, the Union's effort to establish the EUAIC is the most demonstrable physical example of related European enactment, *see* Footnote 174. The proposed EUAIC shall operate as a service facilitator to improve awareness and understanding of the Arctic in the EU and the EU in the Arctic – the already often-acclaimed EU/Arctic nexus. If eventually established, EUAIC should serve as a pan-European network that bridges research activities, stakeholder involvement and policy-making, and accordingly contribute to the envisaged coherence of the EU's Arctic policy (Stępień, Kankaanpää & Koivurova 2016: 17–18). Additionally, also the four events of the Arctic EU-Indigenous Dialogue, as organised by the Commission between 2010-2014 (*see* Subchapter 5.1) or the three workshops over the course of fall/summer 2015, aiming to additionally gain relevant on-site European Arctic feedback for the envisaged 2016 Joint Communication (Section 6.2.8) need to be mentioned in that regard. Additionally and ever since 2010, the Commission and the EP, respectively, have requested and/or commissioned reports on a variety of Arctic topics, ranging from legal aspects of Arctic shipping, via the Union's competencies affecting the Arctic to broader questions of Arctic governance as such, *see* Annex IX (page 362).

Subchapter 7.1 illustrated the visualisation of geopolitical ideas, both on a global level and on an Arctic scale. Yet, a related visualisation of the Arctic from a European point of view has not been observed. In general, it can be noted that official visualisation of the Arctic are lacking in the related EU documents and/or the websites of the respective European institutions. Maps are indeed part of some (internal) EP briefings and/or the *Strategic Assessment of Development of the Arctic* report (Stępień, Koivurova & Kankaanpää 2014); however, these cannot be denoted as official European maps. The Commission's DG MARE (2016) uses a (rather) small map of the Arctic Ocean on its related sea basin strategy webpage, which, however, only serves as some kind of visual classification of the Arctic Ocean. An Arctic map can also be generated via the *European Atlas of the Sea*, an educational tool that was initiated by the IMP in 2007 in order to highlight the Union's common maritime heritage (Commission of the European Communities 2007: 15). Accordingly, the tool provides the opportunity to visualise the region on the basis of

a broad variety of different layers, ranging *inter alia* from the limits of the Arctic Ocean via international conventions applying in the Arctic to permafrost coverage; see Annex X (page 363) for one generated example.

A Governance/Impact Round-Up

Müller's map of tracing organizations as socio-material processes of ordering in critical geopolitics (Figure VII, page 74) broadly illustrates 'harmonisation and standardisation', in the Union's case approaches of Europeanisation or further regional integration as essential in the 'Arctic governance at a distance' theme. Despite some (minor) efforts, the EU has not yet appeared as an Arctic 'policy or legislative purveyor'. Hence, it has not been observed that distinct national Arctic policies have become 'EUropeanised', if using the broadly conceptualised process of the Union having an effect on domestic policies of (non-)European subjects. Of course, a related conclusion in that regard remains tricky and essentially depends on which 'Arctic' one analyses. The European Arctic is beyond doubt strongly regulated by the EU with some geographical areas being EUropean and others being linked to the Union via a variety of dimensions. This includes not only the EEA countries but essentially also Greenland and even (northwest) Russia. From a more circumpolar perspective, the EU-Arctic picture is, however, slightly different, with only minor EUropean actions been taken so far, as for instance Regulation 1007/2009 on trade in seal products. Moreover, if one considers the AC and the Union's envisaged observer status as the essential variable in the 'art of governing at the distance', the EU's path has been one of 'learning by doing' with a yet still unclear outcome.

7.4. 'Frozen' Technologies of Geopolitical Ordering

The fourth strand of Müller's proposed analytical framework is *technologies* used for geopolitical ordering. Accordingly, organisations can control their geopolitical action through the usage of technological devices, such as the broad spectrum of information and communication technologies (2012: 385). This allows an organisation to make its regional-related action visible in order to determine its production of 'geo-power'. With regard to the Union's Arctic 'action', this

Subchapter briefly relates to the question of the EU's technological 'behaviour' to render its own Arctic story visible.

Although arguably not a technology in the proper meaning of the word, the EU's financial Arctic research efforts and technological contributions, *see* Subchapter 5.3, undoubtedly fall under the category of *technologies of geopolitical ordering*. The Union's Arctic €200+ million that were invested during FP6 and FP7 have been prominently referred to by the various policy documents and by EU officials during attended Arctic events and conducted interviews.³⁰⁴ Furthermore, the responsible Commissioners have distinctively highlighted the Union's Arctic 'visit card': "The European Union is a major contributor to research activities" (Borg 2009: 3); "We are important contributors to Arctic research" (Ferrero-Waldner 2009: 2); "(...) the EU (...) has become the one of the biggest contributors of Arctic research" (Damanaki 2010b: 2); "(...) the EU has been a leading contributor to Arctic science and research" (Damanaki 2012: 3); "(...) we have become the biggest sponsor of Arctic research" (Damanaki 2013: 2). In a potentially more realistic tone, a European official indicated that the Union may not have the strongest role in the Arctic but has committed strongly, especially in the field of research.³⁰⁵

The research factor was considered key to strengthen the Union's 'Arctic point' before the 2013 AC Ministerial Meeting in Kiruna. An interviewee referred to it as "strong soft power instrument" and "most essential step into the Arctic" by specifically highlighting the feedback effects of Arctic climate change – the global/Arctic nexus.³⁰⁶ In that regard, the Commission has published and/or commissioned various summaries on the Union's Arctic research initiatives, *see inter alia* (Dahlbäck et al. 2014; Immler 2014). Furthermore, Arctic research is an essential part of the European Research Area (ERA), an established system to increase competitiveness of European research institutions and comparable with the Union's common market.³⁰⁷ Many of these research efforts are particularly aimed at developing mechanisms for coordination of observation systems or data exchange

³⁰⁴ Interview 4 (4 September 2012) and Interview 15

³⁰⁵ Stated at a panel during the 3rd Annual Geopolitics in the High North in Berlin in May 2012

³⁰⁶ Interview 15

³⁰⁷ Interview 15; for ERA, *see* http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index_en.htm

and consolidation, as for instance the *Marine Knowledge 2020* initiative.³⁰⁸ Most recently, one of the Horizon 2020 funded Arctic initiatives is the EU-PolarNet programme that aims to develop and deliver a strategic framework to prioritise polar research, optimise the use of polar infrastructure and broker new partnerships (EU-PolarNet 2015).

Under FP7, the Commission also financed the ERICON-AB preparatory phase project from 2008 to 2012. The project generated the strategic, legal, financial and organisational frameworks for the construction and running of the European Polar Research Icebreaker *Aurora Borealis*. If built, the European icebreaker would be the most advanced polar research vessel in the world with a multi-functional role of deep-sea drilling and the necessary support for multidisciplinary Arctic research. However, due to financial constraints, the construction project has been delayed indefinitely after ERICON was finalised in May 2012.³⁰⁹ In 2011, Commissioner Damanaki referred to the *Aurora Borealis* project as being “emblematic of the good cooperation [between the EU and] the Arctic partners” (2011b: 4).

In general, the Union has made substantial contribution to (European) Arctic infrastructure-related projects for research and monitoring purposes, in particular in the case of environmental impact assessments or spatial planning and (seabed) mapping. From a more circumpolar perspective, it is widely accepted that an increased demand of communication, navigation and surveillance needs in the vast, but sparsely populated Arctic can only be tackled by an upgrade – in terms of technology – of already existing satellite based systems (Norwegian Ministry of Trade and Industry 2013: 34). For the purpose of maritime navigation, global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) such as the U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS) or the Russian *Globalnaya navigatsionnaya sputnikovaya sistema* (GLONASS) are the “the preferred method of navigation for transportation and a variety of other positioning and timing applications” (Polar View 2012: 15). However, these two GNSS come with a variety of limitations in higher latitudes and essentially hamper safety considerations concerning Arctic maritime transportation and navigation (Ibid.: 17 and 20). By placing satellites in orbits at a greater inclination than GPS, the EU’s positioning system *Galileo* is supposed to ensure a

³⁰⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/marine_knowledge_2020/

³⁰⁹ See <http://www.eri-aurora-borealis.eu/en/home/>

better coverage of objects located in higher latitudes above 70°N (Ibid.: 15). Hence, the European GNSS increases the accuracy of navigation in the Arctic region and among others support search and rescue and positioning activities in the area and accordingly enhance safety considerations in the circumpolar North (European Commission & High Representative 2012b: 6). In order to establish the necessary ground stations in the Arctic region the EU closely cooperates with Norway. Consequently, three necessary ground stations, on Svalbard, Jan Mayen Island and the Norwegian mainland near Tromsø have been established, in addition to the Swedish one in Kiruna (Steinicke & Albrecht 2012: 29). Galileo is envisaged to initially start its service in 2016 with full completion of the 30 satellites in 2020 (European Commission 2015f). In addition to Galileo, also the EU's Earth monitoring programme *GMES* (Global Monitoring for Environment and Security) is considered an essential regional asset to enhance monitoring and surveillance capabilities (European Commission & High Representative 2012a: 7).³¹⁰ As a matter of fact, the Commission's very framing of GMES for areas of environmental concern such as climate change mitigation and adaptation policies also fits its Arctic (policy) purposes: think globally, act locally (European Commission 2011b: 2) – the global/Arctic nexus.

Both the 2012 Joint Communication and its add-on, the Joint SWD on *Space and the Arctic* prominently addressed the Arctic advantages of European (space) technologies in general and Galileo in particular, highlighting the satellite system as one of the EU's main commitment to Arctic development in general and related maritime safety and navigation in particular (European Commission & High Representative 2012b: 6). Again, with the AC's Kiruna Ministerial Meeting in mind, the Commission considered the SWD an “exceptional opportunity” to demonstrate an already established and auxiliary EU presence in the region.³¹¹ An endeavour that was then not crowned with success in terms of becoming an accredited AC observer.

Technology does not only function as the passive conduit of human intentions but essentially brings geopolitical realities into being and accordingly co-produces geopolitical action (Müller 2012: 386). With regard to the EU's Arctic endeavour

³¹⁰ Interview 5

³¹¹ Interview 5

some technological devices have indeed been considered as potential Arctic connector. However, it has been the Union's financial Arctic research efforts that depict the important constituent in the emergence (and consolidation) of the EU as Arctic actor.

7.5. A European Geopolitical Subject in the Arctic?

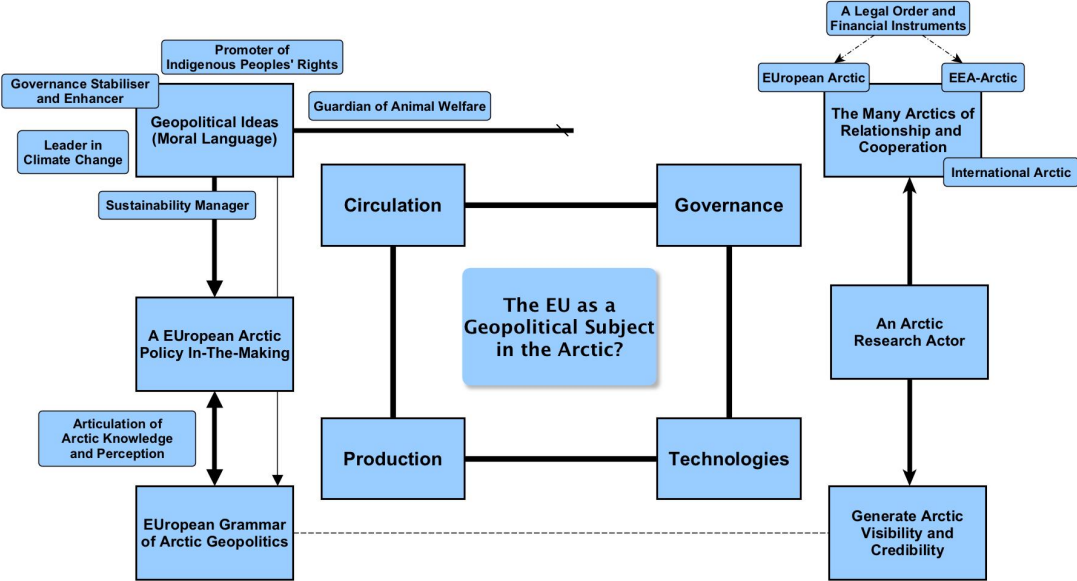
From understanding the *concept* (Part Two) and the *context* (Part Three) followed the last step in the dissertation's broader storyline: the comprehension of the *content*. Accordingly, Part Four shed light on a EU-Arctic triangle, consisting of four European dimensions of Arctic *presence* (Chapter 5), a EU Arctic *policy* in the making (Chapter 6) and a critical geopolitical analysis of EU Arctic space-making *practices* (Chapter 7) – a EU-Arctic *tour d'horizon*. Essentially, this last step got to the bottom of European geopolitical agency in the Arctic region and unpacked the multiple dimensions of the Union's Arctic legitimisation process and the attempted construction of a distinct European space. Thus, it scrutinised the Arctic articulations of a very distinct Arctic *Other*. To that effect, the preceding three Chapters helped to what is claimed as the dissertation's third purpose and major output, to *understand the content*.

#3: Understanding the *Content* (= the EU in the Arctic)

- *European dimensions of Arctic presence*
- *A EU Arctic policy in the making*
- *A critical geopolitical analysis of the Union's space-making practices*

The following six pages summarise the EU-Arctic triangle of presence, policy and practices. Eventually, the previously introduced meta-concept of *geopolitical subjectivity* (see Subchapter 2.3) – Aalto's (2002) developed model to capture the Union's on-going evolution as a geopolitical 'subject' in progress – is applied as synoptic reflection of the findings of Part Four and its three Chapters. Likewise, Figure XXIII (page 274) illustrates the 'opened Arctic black box' of geopolitical ordering along the four associations of circulation (Subchapter 7.1), production (Subchapter 7.2), governance (Subchapter 7.3) and technologies (Subchapter 7.4).

Figure XXIII: A European Geopolitical Subject in the Arctic?



Source: Own compilation based on (Müller 2012: 384)

European Geopolitical Agency and the Arctic

As extensively reviewed in Subchapter 2.3, the conceptualisation of the EU as an emerging geopolitical actor reflects a variety of approaches that essentially all raise questions about the territorial nature of the Union (Scott 2009: 235) and how to eventually promote security and stability beyond its post-21st century enlargement borders. Accordingly and by initially prompting the question of a European geopolitical subject in the case of Kaliningrad (Russia), Aalto (2002) highlighted the Union’s ambitions to order the territories and political spaces of its neighbourhoods by means of geopolitical discourses, practices and policies. Thus, Aalto based his theoretical and empirical analysis of the constitution of distinct European geopolitical agency on the very definition of geopolitical subjectivity as “goal-oriented ordering of territories and political spaces, extending from one’s own sphere of sovereign rule to broader regional contexts” (Ibid.: 148) (Original in italics). Yet, in order to be counted as a geopolitical subject, the particular subject has to make an impact at the respective regional level (Ibid.: 149).

How does this classification translate to the case on hand and the findings gained in Chapter 7?

Ordering refers to the objective of creating a certain configuration of social and material relationships with a desirable design within a pre-defined political space (Ibid.: 148) = Bachmann's (2009) regulated European space of interaction, characterised by a commitment to the rule of law, multilateralism, institution-building, democracy and universal values.

Subchapter 7.1 broadly highlighted five European geopolitical ideas that were initially considered in order to govern an assumed undefined geopolitical space and to basically create a distinct European configuration of social and material relationships in and for the Arctic. These ideas ranged from being *the* international leader to tackle global climate change to regional governance enhancer/stabiliser and indigenous peoples' rights promoter, *see* Table XI (page 237). Based on the Union's overall moral language, juridified by the Treaty of Lisbon, and its global/European self-perception of being the main international advocate of regional cooperation and integration (Farrell 2009), the opted approach for the Arctic region is in principle conclusive and consequential: a global leader in fighting climate change needs to be present in the region most affected by climate change; *see* Table XII (page 260) for the told storyline.

However, the eventual implementation of these ideas faced a distinct problem as the actual geographical space was neither as empty or undefined as initially assumed nor did European policymakers clearly delineate Arctic space in its 7+1 documents. With both the Commission's DG MARE (and its IMP background) and the EEAS (and DG RELEX, respectively) being the predominant writers of the Union's Arctic story, the EU's Arctic focus was primarily a circumpolar one that largely emphasised the Arctic as maritime and/or external policy field (only). And yet, as comprehensively illustrated via the multi-dimensional presence element (*see* Chapter 5), the Arctic region is not necessarily a maritime and/or external policy area only but also entails a broad variety of EU-internal components and regional development efforts. Essentially, and in retrospective, the EU and its various institutions, respectively, struggled with its basic Arctic focus at first: a circumpolar and/or the European Arctic?

Moreover, despite its four-dimensional and influential Arctic presence and its self-ascribed strong moral/normative power, an answer to the Union's immediate and

replicable Arctic impact proves to be problematic and eventually goes round in circles. Although a multi-dimensional European space has not directly related to stronger (public) Arctic legitimacy and credibility (= AC observer status or the attainment of a ‘single Arctic policy’), such an institutional position or operational foundation is, by present ‘Arctic implication’, not essentially needed in order to actually have regional impact (= global/Arctic nexus, e.g. in terms of environmental, economic or regional influence). Thus, a basic question has to be prompted that essentially challenges the EU-internal inevitability of a single EU-Arctic policy – an overall policy framework, pooled around the catchphrases ‘integrated, coherent and/or united’: is a “new and overarching EU-Arctic approach [actually] at all necessary” in order to substantiate the European Arctic aims, in particular against the background of the existing, strong bilateral and regional Arctic ties that the Union already has? (Keil & Raspotnik 2014: 119) To answer in the affirmative, it is particularly a single Arctic policy, an analogue to the Union’s ENP, that could give the EU a stronger conceptual and operational foundation when dealing with Arctic states and Arctic matters, especially if the Arctic is perceived as a *neighbouring* region of the Union (Bailes & Heininen 2012: 93; Raspotnik & Østhagen 2014c).³¹² However, the mosaic of existing policies that cover various geographical areas (= the many Arctics of the Arctic) has not yet effectively been compiled and put in an “Arctic strategy box”, which would eventually lead to a semantic Arctic approach by the EU.³¹³

Goal-oriented refers to the ability to use any kind of power, either positive or negative during the ordering process. As its name implies, while negative power refers to control and domination, positive power concerns a less visible ability to act, cooperate and assent (Aalto 2002: 149–150). Over the past decades, the EU’s ordering of its Eastern and Southern neighbourhood has made use of both positive and negative power, both essentially aimed to “approximate the domestic order of the neighbours to the EU model” (Kobza 2015: 6) (*see* Subchapter 2.3). With regard to the present Arctic case negative type of powers may be regionally deemed as such,

³¹² Additionally, a single Arctic policy approach could constitute one (geographical) element in the EU’s currently-developed *Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy* (Raspotnik 2016b).

³¹³ Interview 17

e.g. Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 (trade in seal products) or Directive 2013/30/EU (on safety of offshore oil and gas operations) and, in case of the former, has had a replicable ‘negative’ impact on the Union’s Arctic (governance) position. Yet, financial carrots, e.g. contributions to circumpolar research efforts or regional development initiatives in the European Arctic, have a positive power connotation and are accordingly characterised as “tactics of a soft external policy approach” (Ibid.: 7) that, *inter alia*, aim to portray the EU as *unus inter pares* – one among equals. Similarly, the notion of enhanced interdependence – from the political and economic to the environmental sphere – can itself be a positive means to promote stability and sustainable development in an allegedly undefined geopolitical space. Accordingly, the EU strongly emphasised its ideational character as part of its regional approach, not only stressing its international economic weight but essentially its strengths as frontrunner with regard to environmental protection and research. In that regard, the Union did not only perceive itself as a past and present regional actor but decisively as a relevant future actor in the region.

In order to portray itself as a geopolitical subject, the EU crucially depends on the Member States’ recognition of such a status (Aalto 2002: 155). Furthermore, the constitution of a geopolitical subject is not only relative to the intersubjective foundation processes within the geopolitical subject but also dependent on external recognition and the acceptance of the EU by its various Arctic neighbours.

As determined in the two Council Conclusions and further reflected in Text Box IV (page 224), the (broad majority of the) Union’s Member States generally favour a (stronger) ‘community’ engagement in the Arctic – *internal ‘approval’* – with the overall Member States’ policy objectives being consistent with the Union ones. Additionally, also the Arctic positions within the various EU institutions gradually converged. Yet, as compared to the policy developments for other (neighbouring) regions, the actual interests and contributions vary between the different Member States, ranging from being naturally engaged and bringing the Union’s input to the Arctic (governance) table (= Denmark, Finland and Sweden),³¹⁴

³¹⁴ And yet, as noted throughout this dissertation, especially Denmark, based on the Kingdom’s necessary consideration of its two additional geographical hats (particularly a Greenlandic but also a

to being considerably (= France, Germany, Poland), sectorally (= the United Kingdom to some extent) or not interested at all, *see also* (Stępień 2015: 277). However, it remains doubtful if the Member States' *acceptance* causally leads to the *recognition* of the EU as a geopolitical subject in the Arctic. Despite the Union's multi-dimensional presence it definitely does not subsume the regional subjectivity of (some of) its Member States.

As particularly discussed in Subchapter 7.2, *external 'approval'* – the (public) acceptance by the Union's Arctic neighbours (Canada, Iceland, Norway, Russia and the U.S.) – has proved to be problematic. Up to now, it has been difficult for the EU as being a functional institution with different levels of competences to effectively penetrate the regional 'concert of power', a distinct system based on the national interests of several strong state actors and built on a light regional structure using traditional instruments of intergovernmental relations that essentially favours regional inclusiveness (Aalto 2013: 117; Kobza 2015: 22). Additionally, the EU has not properly understood on how to tackle the various sub-regions of the broader circumpolar North and the related (slightly) different expectations of the Arctic states on what the EU actually is, can do and should do. In comparison to its Eastern and Southern frontier, the North has been rather reluctant to accept European elements of Arctic engagement or regional cooperation, especially in a global setting that increasingly sets eyes on the Arctic.³¹⁵ Too often the EU has become a rather easy target of criticism in Arctic international meetings. Accordingly, a Commission official noted, "10 years ago Arctic states may have been delighted to have the EU engaged in Arctic institutional cooperation efforts".³¹⁶ Ultimately, it is this specific complexity of the Arctic's governance framework – a "mosaic of issue-specific arrangements" and regional system of few, powerful, unitary actors with specifically articulated national interests – that essentially affects the EU's on-going Arctic policy operationalization in many different ways (Young 2005: 10; Kobza 2015: 4–5). Hence, the Arctic's *sui generis* characteristics as European neighbourhood (*see* Chapter 4) presented the Union with a unique, not yet experienced external

Faroese one) has often articulated sovereign Arctic statements and to some extent influenced the Council Conclusions accordingly.

³¹⁵ This is not to say that countries bordering the EU in the East and South naturally receive the Union with open arms.

³¹⁶ Interview 12

challenge. And yet, the Union *exists* in the narrative and political discourse of the A5/A8, being *inter alia* either used as (common) enemy/opponent for domestic purposes, as facilitator and financial support mechanism or (to some extent) as (equal) partner. Also in the circumpolar North, the EU is not a simple ‘user’ or just ‘non-Arctic’, it is an actor *sui generis*, both in relation to its internal nature and its perception by its Arctic neighbours.

Additionally, a subject-in-the-making also needs to promote its interests and particular identity projects for the given political space and its delimitation process (Aalto 2002: 157). The two concepts are highly connected to each other as identity never exists without goal-oriented factors of what one ‘wants’ and what one ‘is’ (Ibid.: 157). Accordingly, the making of a distinct EUropean Arctic space essentially requires EUropean policymakers to “build a particular position around different elements of a policy[/regional] challenge and (...) tie them together into an unambiguous and convincing narrative, thereby constituting a coherent policy problem with a coherent policy response” (Jones 2011: 42). In the present Arctic case, it has to be concluded that – in its eight year of Arctic legitimisation and credibility process – the EU and its Arctic policy is still “in search for a clear goal and purpose” – an unambiguous and convincing narrative that essentially encapsulates the Union’s Arctic ambitions, and more importantly its visions and ideas for the region’s future (Stępień & Raspotnik 2015: 432). Already back in 2011, Powell stated that it is “still unclear as to what the Arctic means for the European Union” and the Commission, Council and EP, respectively (2011: 121). Eventually, it is not sufficient to *only* conflate various components of a possible Arctic policy, e.g. climate change, maritime transportation, energy or research, by using a specific geographical label; a regional sticker that basically – and in addition – lacked a proper definition. Ultimately, the different components and its geographical umbrella need to be masterminded by a single organising idea; a distinct EUropean narrative that catches broader attention – not only within the region itself but basically also in EUrope (Stępień & Raspotnik 2015: 434). Thus, Hannemann criticised that EUrope was ultimately lacking a proper and public policy discourse on what the Arctic actually means for the Union (2009: 50). Similarly, a Commission official noted that

despite growing Arctic awareness within the EUropean hallways, “a lot of people still need to be convinced of the region’s relevance for the EU”.³¹⁷

‘Relevance’ or the implementation of interests may be a major point of discussion in that regard. Whereas the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood “undoubtedly and *in fact* matter[s]”, as for instance (currently and in retrospective) obvious in the EU-Russia-Ukraine triangle or in EUrope’s continuous failing to deal with the migration and refugees crisis at its southern borders, the north simply does not (yet) matter and/or does not matter to a degree that it actually makes a substantial EU-internal difference (Stępień & Raspotnik 2015: 434) (Italics in the original). Accordingly, an interviewee stressed that the Arctic is and will remain only of limited importance for the EU with the Union generally leaning to the south.³¹⁸ Hence, the Arctic region may be (economically) relevant in the decades to come, however currently it is simply not, despite the terminological focus on the global/Arctic nexus, especially in terms of climate change (Ibid.: 434). And even though the Arctic region is the world’s related canary in a coal mine, the global determinants of climate change are located outside the Arctic and needs to be tackled there. It remains an open and further to be discussed question if such a conclusion puts the entire ‘Arctic relevance or the implementation of interests’ into perspective.

In summary, it can be stated that the EU is a rather ambiguous geopolitical subject in the Arctic – a geopolitical actor *sui generis*. Although all constitution mechanisms are somehow materialised it is the degree of influence that varies with the ordering, goal-oriented and recognition element being fairly influential, the EU’s identity and interest component, however, being the least influential.

³¹⁷ Interview 4 (19 June 2013)

³¹⁸ Interview 22

“What does the Arctic say about the (future) extent of Europe?”³¹⁹

PART FIVE

AND THE BOTTOM LINE IS?

³¹⁹ (Stępień & Raspotnik 2015: 3)

8. The Conclusion: The Triangle of Concept, Context and Content

The foregoing study was set out to explore EUropean geopolitical agency in a distinct spatio-temporal context. Accordingly, it provided an in-depth analysis of the EU's process to construct EUropean legitimacy and credibility in its Northern Neighbourhood – the Arctic region. The dissertation has identified four key dimensions of EU Arctic presence, the reasons and motivations of creating a distinct regional policy toolkit, the main characteristics and central narratives that constituted this particular policy in the making, and the internal and external social processes that ultimately conditioned the construction of EUropean geopolitical action in and for the Arctic. Basically, the study sought to answer the following research question:

How and under what conditions did the EU construct EUropean space in the Arctic between 2008 and 2014?

Embedded in a conceptual and methodological framework using critical geopolitics in general and discourse analysis and the socio-material practices of geopolitical ordering of organisations in particular, the dissertation explored how the Arctic has been brought into the EU's political orbit by 'spatialising' the circumpolar North as an envisaged space of EUropean interaction and exertion of influence – a distinct EUropean Arctic space. Eventually, the study provided a broad answer on how the EU aimed to operate at and beyond its Northern frontier and accordingly determined the various elements that fashioned EUropean geopolitical agency in a distinct regional case study. In order to evaluate the external context that conditioned EUropean geopolitical action in the Arctic, an extensive in-depth analysis of the area under scrutiny was exercised as complementary explanation. Thus, a thick description of the 'geopolitical Arctic of the 21st century' included a comprehensive coverage of the *history* and *identity* of a 'geopolitical' Arctic and the contemporary triangle of Arctic geopolitics: *rights*, *interests* and *responsibilities*.

This final Chapter reflects upon the findings and contributions of this study by concluding on how the *content* intertwines with the *concept* and *context* (Subchapter 8.1). As a last point, Subchapter 8.2 presents avenues for further EUropean geopolitics and/or EU-Arctic research.

8.1. Research Results and Contribution

#1: Understanding the *Concept*

- *The ambiguity of 'geopolitics' and its critical spin-off*
- *The nature of its emerging EUropean branch*

The dissertation's first major output related to a proper *understanding of the concept*. Accordingly, Part Two and its two Chapters on the '*Thought Experiment*' (Chapter 2) and the '*Longer Note on Methodology*' (Chapter 3) provided a comprehensive review of the concept of (critical) geopolitics, its EUropean 'subsidiary' and questions on how to methodologically tackle the present puzzle.

Eventually, the study started from the premise that the term/concept 'geopolitics', and all its general assumptions that are publically associated with, is predominantly characterised along rather simplistic lines of thoughts about the relationship between geography/space and power. Although the 'geography-power' nexus may present a concise definition of the term's very essence – the relation of *geographical space and political power* – it does not capture the concept's inherent complexity. While the notion enjoys instant name recognition around the globe, it is not immanently meaningful in itself but essentially entails a plethora of discursive verities – conceptual contents that remain implicit and consequently need to be 'unpacked' in every single case 'geopolitics' has been deployed (Mayer 2014). Too often, academics, researchers and/or journalists only and primarily use the term as descriptor to pronounce apparently system-relevant (political) transformations, both on a global but also on a regional/local scenery.

As in the present case of the EU, geopolitics is even more perplexing. In Political Science and its related European Studies, the Union is only on rare occasions depicted as a 'geopolitical actor' or are the Union's foreign policy steps explained using a geopolitical line of thought and argumentation. This relates mainly to the concept's close relation to IR realism and the unease of EU foreign policy researchers to connect the EU civilian and normative power model with classic considerations of geopolitics. Moreover, a basic assumption remains that the EU cannot simply be denoted as geopolitical actor due to its *sui generis* character and its related history, identity and institutional setup.

Aimed at offering an alternative approach to the EU's *geo* and *politics*, this dissertation introduced the concept of *critical geopolitics* to Political Science and European Studies. Both from a conceptional and methodological point of view, it broadly presented and discussed the work of pundits in Political Geography on how to alternatively approach geopolitics. As highlighted at the outset (*see* Subchapter 1.1), the dissertation's first objective was to tackle a persistently neglected question in the realm of the two academic disciplines this dissertation is embedded in: What is the very meaning of geopolitics and how can it be used and conceptualised in the context of the EU being or not being a geopolitical subject?

In order to do so, Chapter 2 traced the ambiguous, decade-long story of geopolitics. Firstly, it covered the notion's classic understanding, origin and century-long development (Subchapter 2.1). Secondly, it displayed the emergence of its critical comprehension (Subchapter 2.2). Thirdly, it gave an account of its European subsidiary and the characterisation of the EU as an emerging geopolitical space and subject with related international agency (in the making) (Subchapter 2.3). Bachmann's (2009, 2015) regulated spaces of interaction are key to the latter classification as they function both as means and objective of European geopolitical agency: the Union's tacit geopolitical discourse – the vision and ideas for a well-functioning global system – based on the EU's internal modes of genesis, existence and interaction. Eventually, the Union aims to create (neighbouring) spaces of interaction as analogous as possible to Europe in terms of (legal) governance and routinized relations. Only such 'transfer' guarantees the EU's internal stability by simultaneously ensuring the Union's external capability to act in a space similar to home.

And yet, space is *not* to be perceived from an exclusive geophysical perspective but from a relational point of view. In contrast to (neo-)classic geopolitics, critical geopolitics perceives space as an alterable form of reality construction. Accordingly, the analytical focus is less on how geography determines political action but rather on how a broad variety of different actors, that are not only state actors, use a particular strategic construction of space for its own interests. Thus, geopolitics is not perceived as a theoretical approach based on an assumed causal nexus of

geography/space and power but rather as a mode of interrogation that needs to be specifically adapted to the case/problem under scrutiny. For the purpose of this particular case/*content* (= the EU in the Arctic), Chapter 3 extensively reviewed the methodology of ‘geopolitical’ cross-examination that has been applied concerning the Union’s construction of EUropean Arctic space: discourse analysis and the importance of texts and spatial argumentation (Subchapter 3.1), and the socio-material practices of geopolitical ordering of organisations (Subchapter 3.2). This two-fold approach helped to provide an insight into a) how the Union’s various institutional actors constructed Arctic space and on which bases, and b) the internal and external social processes that led (or not led) to EUropean geopolitical agency in the Arctic.

Yet, in order to successfully do so, comprehensive knowledge about the circumpolar North (= *the context*) was anticipated as essential for this study in order to truly understand the EU’s geopolitical knowledge-production and relation to that distinct neighbourhood.

#2: Understanding the *Context*

- *A thick Arctic description*

Thus, the dissertation’s second major output related to a proper *understanding of the context*. Accordingly, Part Three and its Chapter 4 on ‘*Arctic Geopolitics*’ provided a thick description of the spatio-temporal context on hand – the distinct Arctic setting that had a conditional effect on the configuration of EUropean geopolitical agency between 2008 and 2014.

The dissertation followed Keukeleire’s appeal to adopt a geographic and disciplinary outside-in approach when scrutinising EU foreign policy performance (2011: 2). In contrast to a predominantly inward-looking and EU-centric approach of EU foreign policy studies, this academic endeavour perceives an in-depth analysis of the distinct regional setting under scrutiny as necessary point of departure to eventually understand the production of a distinct EUropean space. Accordingly, Part Three served as the contextual basis for the empirical-analytical part of this dissertation – Part Four – as it gave account why and how an emerging *international*

Arctic caught European attention as an envisaged space of necessary European action over the last decade.

From an explorative point of view, the study performed a thick description of a regional level of Bachmann's (2009, 2015) geopolitical system of changing structures, processes and flows within which European space aims to operate in. Thus, Chapter 4 provided a comprehensive overview of the regional-specific conditions that influenced EU foreign policy making and performance: the *history* and *identity* of a 'geopolitical' Arctic and the contemporary triangle of Arctic geopolitics: *rights*, *interests* and *responsibilities*.

First, it looked back on a century of Arctic space-making, illustrating how the circumpolar North emerged into a distinct *international Arctic* by simultaneously remaining a highly important 'identity backyard' for most of the A8 (Subchapter 4.2). Second, it explained the legal and institutional structures, mainly the LOS Convention and the AC, that not only determine Arctic internal arrangements but also define the limits and possibilities of regional participation for non-Arctic actors (Subchapter 4.3). Third, it deconstructed the three major economic Arctic storylines of the past decade that essentially co-contributed to the initial public perception of the region as last golden frontier – energy resources, maritime transportation and fisheries (Subchapter 4.4). Lastly, it examined questions of socio-environmental concerns of a changing Arctic, both on a regional and global scale (Subchapter 4.5).

Ultimately, the provided, detailed consideration of the Union's 'Northern neighbourhood' in the temporal setting of the early 21st century clarified the *sui generis* character of the circumpolar North as neighbouring regional system of the EU. Eight heterogeneous Arctic states with varying regional identities and vested Arctic interests have basically elaborated a rather exclusive, self-contained Arctic network, institutionalised by the law of the sea and the AC and internally cohered by a common understanding on how to effectively manage the region. The publically advocated key to regional stewardship is Arctic territoriality – the possession of an Arctic Ocean coastline (= A5) and/or territorial presence (= Finland, Island and

Sweden). And despite a literally fluid state of Arctic affairs, Arctic sovereignty remains to be understood and conceptualised from this territorial perception only with relational factors, e.g. the global/Arctic nexus being sidelined when stressing on who is ‘in’ and who is ‘out’ in terms of Arctic governance. This particular reading of an open Arctic space with yet distinct given boundaries may be best illustrated by a statement of former Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre (2012): “Geography is changing (due to climate change) – even though we cannot change geography”.

In conclusion, the *sui generis* design of the Arctic can be described as the conjunction of different circumstances: a strong element of regional sovereignty, an environmental factor with global repercussions and an economic component that simultaneously entails certain prospects and a high degree of uncertainty. For the period investigated, the dissertation demonstrated that an initially ‘geopolitical hot’ Arctic does not stand up to a proper reality check. This concerned neither the assumed potential of ‘classic’ conflicts over resources and maritime routes and the territorial domination over space nor did it relate to broader questions of international economic dynamics and the region’s transformation towards a space of global trade flows and connections. The geopolitical Arctic of the early 21st century was and still is an accumulation of too many *ifs*. Basically, it was ‘only’ the Arctic geopolitics’ originator – the regional consequences of climate change and its global feedback loop – that remains to be persistent. Yet, also this variable is subject to seasonal fluctuations as the Arctic (sea) ice does not decline linearly. Eventually, the very presence of the Arctic future continues to draw a fuzzy picture with the unpacked Arctic geopolitics of today being an altered one tomorrow.

To come back to the research question and the dissertation’s overall objective to amalgamate a *concept*, *context* and *content*, the following paragraphs conclude on the Union’s endeavour to construct EUropean legitimacy and credibility in the circumpolar North.

#3: Understanding the *Content* (= the EU in the Arctic)

- *EUropean dimensions of Arctic presence*
- *A EU Arctic policy in the making*
- *A critical geopolitical analysis of the Union's space-making practices*

Hence, the dissertation's third major output related to a proper *understanding of the content*. Accordingly, Part Four and its three Chapters on '*European Dimensions*' (Chapter 5), '*An Action in the Making*' (Chapter 6) and '*Space-Making Practices*' (Chapter 7) got to bottom of EUropean geopolitical agency in the Arctic region. This distinct EU-Arctic triangle of *presence*, *policy* and *practices* unpacked the multiple dimensions of the Union's Arctic legitimisation process and the attempted construction of a distinct EUropean Arctic space. This section synthesises the gathered knowledge of the three Chapters to...

- ... answer the research question and...
- ... reflect on the conceptual and methodological implications using critical geopolitics for the case on hand

a. *How and under what conditions did the EU construct EUropean space in the Arctic between 2008 and 2014?*

Presence. Part Four started from the premise that the Union's Arctic legitimisation process is based on various components of factual EUropean presence in the circumpolar North. As geopolitical reasoning never occurs in a vacuum, it was considered necessary to understand how the Union is already interconnected with the broader region and *vice versa*. Hence, Chapter 5 provided a broad overview of how four multifaceted, yet intrinsically connected dimensions determine a distinct Arctic authority of the EU, despite an often accentuated belief of the Union being an 'Arctic outsider' only. This 'Arctic reality' is composed of a strong legal feature in particular with regard to the European Arctic (Subchapter 5.1), an existing economic presence with yet an uncertain outlook on whether the EU would consciously 'act' on its regional market influence (Subchapter 5.2), an undeniable environmental but also research-related footprint (Subchapter 5.3) and a valuable regional and cohesion factor (Subchapter 5.4).

Policy. However, this actual state of regional-territorial existence and representativeness has not appeared in a clear-cut ‘Arctic rhetoric’ as it has become obvious when examining the Union’s 7+1 Arctic policy steps (Subchapter 6.2). Although the EU’s policy toolkit rested on a broad and accountable foundation, the multiplicity of functional elements that represented the EU/Arctic nexus have not directly led to the development of a single Arctic policy that would comprehensively guide action in all regionally-relevant sectors. Eventually, it was not sufficient to *claim* to be an Arctic actor by ‘only’ *naming* a variety of EU-Arctic linkages without formulating a clear statement – a distinct EU-Arctic narrative – of its northern regional ambitions. The policy approach remained an umbrella framework of various policies/initiatives/programmes that somehow include the Arctic.

Practices. The interaction between presence and policy exemplified that geographical Arctic presence (= territoriality) is not *per se* a prerequisite for regional influence and related capabilities and actorness. Yet, and simultaneously, the *de facto* presence ultimately needs to be utilised in order to get accepted. Thus, Chapter 7 gave account on how the Union’s various institutional actors aimed to gain ‘Arctic access’ using particularly sets of discourse. Moreover, by applying Müller’s (2012) toolbox, the dissertation’s last empirical Chapter reconstructed the multiple associations through which the EU attempted to evolve as a legitimate actor in the Arctic region. It basically expounded which internal and external social processes fashioned the EU with geopolitical agency in the Arctic and revealed the implicit geopolitical discourses that guided EU practices towards the Arctic region. Eventually, it concluded by applying Aalto’s (2002) meta-concept of *geopolitical subjectivity* as synoptic reflection of the Union being (or not being) a geopolitical subject in the Arctic (Subchapter 7.5).

And the bottom line is? This study exposed a European geopolitical Arctic discourse that was based on related geopolitical ideas and a broad replicable reasoning, yet adaptive to certain spatio-temporal settings, on why the EU should be involved in Arctic matters. It eventually confirmed Scott’s (2009) (*see* Subchapter 2.3) assessment of the EU following a geopolitical agenda that corresponds both to

traditional Realpolitik and the pursuit of self interests but essentially also the intention to act as a force for good and promote a set of values and norms. And yet, also the latter serves as a particular end in itself as the external promotion of internal preferences aims to construct distinct ‘outer’ European spaces of interaction as similar as possible to Union’s internal spaces.

In the present case, the Union’s approach was not (yet) crowned with Arctic success, despite the EU already being a *de facto* regional actor. Neither has the EU been fully accepted at the Arctic governance table nor was it able to create enhanced Arctic legitimacy in Europe itself to eventually place the region more prominently on the Union’s agenda. Although both (regional and global) climate change and taken research efforts serve as Arctic access point, this nexus could not have been materialised as *the* single organising idea to become an Arctic policy driving force. Three main factors indicate why this was potentially the case:

- The *sui generis Arctic* as self-contained regional system. The Union’s ‘basic’ values, norms and acquis – the EU’s identity of cooperative and multilateral governance, democracy and general *modus vivendi* – are already in Arctic place with the EU being unable to convince the A5/A8 of why the Arctic actually needs Europe. In contrast to the initial belief of the region being an unregulated space – a geopolitical ‘hot’ one – the circumpolar North is (and has been) an already well-configured space with yet territorial perceptions dominating over relational ones on how to effectively manage the region and exercise related authority. The Arctic as a *sui generis* space of potential European interaction.
- The *changing Arctic*. Global climate change has undeniable negative repercussions on the Arctic region and its ecosystem. Yet, the root causes of the occurring alterations are not Arctic-based but originate in the developed areas of this world. Hence, if the EU is indeed *the leader to tackle climate change*, proper ‘attacks’ should be launched outside the Arctic.

- The *realistic* Arctic. The circumpolar North has not (yet) satisfied the initial expectations that were ‘geoeconomically’ imposed on the region. In a metaphorical sense, the Arctic can be described as *nothing*. No opportunities, necessities or *real* interests that would directly trigger enhanced EUropean engagement.

Referring to bordering crises in Libya, Syria or Ukraine, Bachmann concluded that the Union’s preference to regulate the interaction of spaces is only implementable “[a]s long as actors have an interest in being regulated (...) [otherwise] EU agency quickly reaches its limits” (2015: 700–701). This dissertation highlighted the limits of constructing EUropean spaces of interaction outside the Union’s borders in another distinct spatio-temporal context. With the region rather being a ‘cold’ than a ‘hot’ geopolitical space (= an already stable, regional politico-legal system), it remains debatable if the EU truly aims to create a distinct EUropean space of interaction. Moreover, it remains doubtful if the Union actually has the (moral) means to impose its visions on a *sui generis* regional system of powerful actors, including self-reliant Member States.

As a matter of fact, in the currently developed *Global Strategy* – an update and reconfiguration of the ESS – the Arctic is only mentioned *en passant*; a marginal note in the broader foreign policy picture of the EU. Thus, Nathalie Tocci, Special Advisor to the current HR Federica Mogherini and in charge of coordinating the work on the Global Strategy considered the peaceful Arctic region a positive story in the Union’s neighbourhood with the “EU (...) not [being] in revolutionary mode when it comes to the Arctic”. With the Arctic status quo being identified as cooperative and beneficial to EUrope, the Union does not aim to “upset the positive [regional] trends” (Raspotnik 2016b). Eventually, it attempts to act as a *sui generis* geopolitical actor.

b. Conceptual and Methodological Implications

From a conceptual and methodological point of view, this dissertation aimed to bring some light into the ‘geopolitical’ darkness of Political Science and European Studies. Hence, it offered a comprehensive examination on how to grasp geopolitics, not only with regard to the *context* under analysis but essentially concerning the subject of the *content*. In order to do so, the study drew on the work of Political Geography and its subdiscipline critical geopolitics which remains “a contradiction in terms, or in best an oxymoron” for non-geographers (Mamadouh in Jones & Sage 2010: 320). As already adequately excogitated both in Subchapters 1.2 and 1.3, this interdisciplinary approach comes with some added value but also certain limitations, which very much depend on the scientific perspective of the respective reader and his/her approach on how to gain ‘scientific’ knowledge. It is a matter of course that any discussion on ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ ends in talk. Hence, this short section ‘only’ provides some personal reflections on the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ of the used approach, so to speak post-scriptum.

For the purposes of answering the research question, the concept of critical geopolitics and the applied methodological framework was fruitful for two main reasons – an ‘external’ and an ‘internal’ one:

- Externally, it helped to re-construct the EU’s territorial-political Arctic interests and shed light on how an international actor that is geographically located (mainly) outside the Arctic, aimed to construct ‘Arctic legitimacy’; hence, it consequently tackled upon the question about the very *extent* of Europe and the creation of a distinct space of interaction in the Union’s (immediate) neighbourhood.
- Internally, it looked at the inside of a very specific organisation and gave some indication of how geopolitical reasoning is established, changed and discussed within that particular organisation.

And yet, the eventual implementation of connecting geopolitics with the EU came with some problems.

First, accepting interdisciplinarity and finally getting it accepted. As any researcher is very much theoretically, methodologically, linguistically and even personally embedded in its discipline and the related environment, the application of and adjustment to new approaches, terms and concepts causes many questions on 'why' and 'why not the other way'. In the present case of this dissertation, related questions concerned mainly the issue of the dissertation's more descriptive and explorative approach and how scientificity cannot be given as, *inter alia*, the case on hand is not compared to another regional case of European external engagement. As each academic discipline follows its own path of designing and conducting research, stepping outside this comfort zone comes with certain challenges as the researcher makes himself vulnerable to two sides; in this case the Political Science/European Studies one and the Political Geography one. However, as tellingly alleged by den Hertog, disciplines and the way of doing research are not static arrangements but essentially shaped by the individual researcher, who himself has the agency to do so (2014: 260). Again, the question is not about 'right' or 'wrong' but about contributing to the simple fact of gaining knowledge concerning a *concept, context or content*.

For the present case on hand, difficulties also concerned in particular the scientific language of Political Geography and the basic conceptual understanding of uncommon terms such as 'space', 'unpacking', 'articulations', 'space-making', etc. from a Political Scientist and International Law perspective.

Second, the applied methodological toolbox. In the outset of his article, Müller (2012) argued that geopolitics needs to open the black box of organisations and introduced the four dimensional research agenda as applied in the present study (*see* Subchapter 3.2 and Chapter 7). For the case on hand and the objective to gain knowledge on very construction of European geopolitical agency, Müller's toolbox has proven to be beneficial. And yet, two particular problems emerged: the matter of definition and a lack of guidance/explanation on how to take into account internal power relations within an organisation. Concerning the former, Müller did not provide any definition or reference of, *inter alia*, what a 'geopolitical idea' actually is, even less from a European context. This becomes problematic if researchers want to use the toolbox to compare the geopolitical ordering of an organisation in two or

three cases. The latter has turned out as even more problematic as Müller does not give any indication on how to effectively deal with the varying degrees of competences and voices within the Union's institutional set-up. The same also applies to Aalto's (2002) meta-concept of *geopolitical subjectivity*. Hence, in order to circumvent this methodological shortcoming, this dissertation provided an extensive elaboration on the EU's internal legal basis (Subchapter 5.1) and the policy-in-the-making dialogue between the Commission/EEAS, the Council and the EP to outline on how the various institutions divergently framed the Arctic and its opportunities and challenges (Subchapter 6.2).

What remains? All things considered, this study told the comprehensive story of how a *sui generis* geopolitical actor aimed to be seated at the Arctic table – its *sui generis* neighbourhood. Thus, it did not only contribute to a broader understanding of the ambiguous concept/term geopolitics but basically offered a display copy of how to tackle geopolitics from a European perspective. Eventually, the applied approach was able to expose the multiple associations through which the EU attempted to evolve as a legitimate actor in a distinct spatio-temporal context. Overall, critical geopolitics has proved to be a valuable concept for EU foreign policy studies as it gives new impetus to the academic debate of an epistemic community and essentially widens the scientific perspective on how to approach and scrutinise the Union as an emerging international actor. By broadening our perspective of space as a variable in foreign policy-making from only a geophysical element to a relational and constructional one, it adds important additional value to Political Science in general and European Studies in particular; especially in (future) EU-times where the enlargement model will not serve as a proper mean of European extension anymore.

Moreover, by unpacking the Arctic story, this dissertation successfully addressed Keukeleire's proposition to apply a geographic and disciplinary outside-in approach when scrutinising EU foreign policy performance (2011: 2). However, due to the singular character of the *context* any attempts to provide some kind of generalisations are perceived to be unrewarding and could eventually only be delivered if future research conducted studies in the same fashion and for the same given period of time.

8.2. Future Research

This dissertation unpacked Arctic geopolitics from a very particular angle, the European one. Moreover, it provided distinct answers on the Union's very own character of being a geopolitical subject in a certain spatio-temporal context. However, research cannot stop here. Neither with regard to the EU nor concerning the Arctic.

Eventually, other studies could further scrutinise the Union's geopolitical discourses and practices by simultaneously providing an in-depth analysis of the respective space under scrutiny. Research in that regard would be particularly revealing in the case of the EU-Ukraine-Russia triangle with Ukraine, for instance, historically being an essential part of Mackinder's heartland theory and still today key to Russia's self-perception as a nation and state. A critical geopolitics approach could potentially expose interesting findings of Europe's endeavour to construct spaces of interaction in a geographical area that is critical to a 'classic' geopolitical power. Another aspect in European geopolitics that came off badly in this study is a deepened focus on the social practices of geopolitical discourse within the hallways of European power. How do policymakers, officials and the surrounded environment spread and practice Europe's very own geopolitical visions in their day-to-day professional life that creates the bubble called European Quarter in Brussels?

From an Arctic perspective, many unknowns still need to be tackled, even in the EU/Arctic nexus. The Union's various institutional actors will continue to produce Arctic policy updates that need to be further analysed on their explicit and implicit statements, proposed actions and external recognition by the A8. At one point in time, the Union will become an accredited AC observer – and then? What is the future of Arctic governance and overall cooperation? What is the future of the region as such? Regional uncertainties will continue to prevail over certainties; maybe the region is at a beginning of a new era, maybe not. It is definitely changing, and it is changing fast. But, both natural and social sciences need to decelerate Arctic discussions and continue to provide realistic images of what is actually going on in the circumpolar North.

This dissertation kept an exclusive approach that solely focused on the Union's regional endeavour. Yet, other external actors, in particular Asian states, currently increase their Arctic efforts as a climatic changing Arctic affects their territories, shorelines and maritime areas. In general, this interdependence of 'outside' and 'inside', of how the 'South' affects the 'North' and *vice versa* needs to be continuously assessed, especially in questions of how the Arctic and its future is exposed and shaped by complex, global dynamics. Finally, one should not forget that despite the endless talks of a globalised, international Arctic, the circumpolar North is not an empty space to discover but an inhabited geographical area. Hence, further research needs to develop scientific guidance on how to tackle the various challenges that affect a changing Arctic life on a daily basis.

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Annex II: List of Interviews

Interview 1: Policy Officer, DG Mobility and Transport (MOVE), European Commission, interview conducted in Brussels on 08/06/12 and 13/03/13

Interview 2: Senior Arctic Official, telephone conversation, 13/07/12

Interview 3: Head of Division and Policy Officer, EEAS, conversation in Brussels on 24/07/12

Interview 4: Policy Officer, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MARE), European Commission, interview conducted in Brussels on 04/09/12 and 19/06/13

Interview 5: Senior Advisor, European Space Agency, interview conducted in Brussels on 10/09/12

Interview 6: Head, Marine Technology Section, IMO, interview conducted in London on 08/03/13

Interview 7: Counsellor, Icelandic Embassy Brussels, interview conducted in Brussels on 12/04/13

Interview 8: Policy Officer, DG External Policies, European Parliament, interview conducted in Brussels on 12/04/13

Interview 9: Adviser, Permanent Representation of Denmark to the EU, interview conducted in Brussels on 12/04/13

Interview 10: Policy officer, Delegation of the European Union to the United States, interview conducted in Washington, D.C. on 13/05/13

Interview 11: Chargée de Mission, Permanent Representation of France to the EU, interview conducted in Brussels on 19/06/13

Interview 12: Policy Officer, DG Environment (ENV), European Commission, interview conducted in Brussels on 12/07/13

Interview 13: Deputy Head of Division, Federal Foreign Office of Germany, telephone conversation on 24/07/13

Interview 14: Official from the Greenlandic Government, telephone conversation on 12/11/13

Interview 15: Research Policy Officer, DG Research & Innovation (RTD), European Commission, interview conducted in Brussels on 25/11/2013

Interview 16: Deputy Head of Unit, DG Enlargement (now Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, DG NEAR), European Commission, interview conducted in Brussels on 25/11/13

Interview 17: International Relations Officer, DG EuropeAid Development and Cooperation (DEVCO), European Commission, interview conducted in Brussels on 26/11/13

Interview 18: Policy Officer, DG Climate Action (CLIMA), European Commission, interview conducted in Brussels on 27/11/13

Interview 19: International Relations Officer, DG Energy (ENER), European Commission, interview conducted in Brussels on 27/11/13

Interview 20: Policy Officer, DG Enterprise and Industry (now Industry and Entrepreneurship, DG GROWTH), European Commission, interview conducted in Brussels on 27/11/13

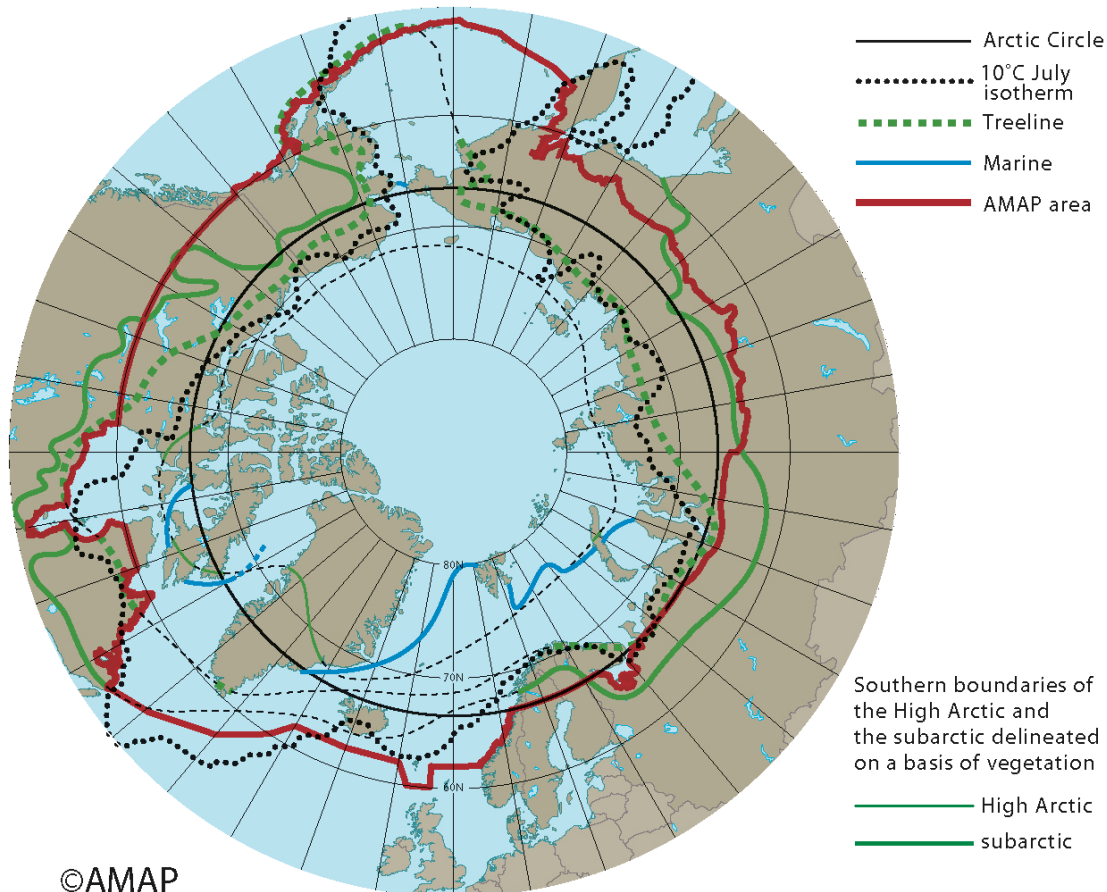
Interview 21: Environment Officer, United States Mission to the European Union, telephone conversation on 04/12/13

Interview 22: Senior Arctic Official, Arctic Council, interview conducted in Oslo on 24/04/14

Interview 23: Policy Officer, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MARE), European Commission, e-mail conversation on 10/07/15

Interview 24: Researcher, University of Tromsø, The Arctic University of Norway, e-mail conversation on 20/08/15

Annex III: Boundaries of the Arctic



©AMAP

Source: (AMAP 1997: 6) The map was provided by the AMAP Secretariat upon e-mail request and slightly differs from the report version.

The definitions provided by AMAP include various Arctic bioregions delimited as for instance by climatic boundaries, such as the area north of the 10°C July isotherm, an area which has a mean July temperature of 10°C, or a region determined by the presence of continuous permafrost. By contrast, a vegetation boundary to determine the terrestrial Arctic refers the treeline, the northern border between southern forest and northern tundra as line of delimitation. Additionally, the marine boundary is formed along the convergence of cool, less saline surface waters from the Arctic Ocean and warmer, saltier waters from oceans to the south (Ibid.: 6–7; AMAP 1998: 9–10).³²⁰

³²⁰ Given the definitional difficulties and differences AMAP did not define the Arctic *per se* for their 1998 assessment report on Arctic pollution issues but gave a guideline on the area to be covered. In that regard, the boundary lay between 60°N and the Arctic Circle, entailing several modifications, e.g. the inclusion of the Faroe Islands, the Labrador and Greenland Seas, Hudson Bay, the White Sea and the area north of the Aleutian chain (AMAP 1997: 7).

Annex IV: Fennoscandia



Source: (Stepień, Koivurova & Kankaanpää 2014: v)

Annex V: Conventions/Treaties covering the Arctic

International Conventions (Section 4.3.1)	
Convention on the Continental Shelf	Convention on the Continental Shelf, Geneva, 29 April 1958. In force 10 June 1964; United Nations Treaty Series Vol. 499, p. 311
Fish Stock Agreement	Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks
LOS Convention	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Montego Bay, 10 December 1982. In force 16 November 1994; 1833 United Nations Treaty Series 396, http://www.un.org/Depts/los/index.htm
North Sea Continental Shelf Cases	North Sea Continental Shelf Cases (Federal Republic of Germany/Denmark; Federal Republic of Germany/Netherlands), Judgement of 20 February 1969, International Court of Justice Reports 1969
Part XI Deep Sea Mining Agreement	Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties	Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, Vienna, 23 May 1969. In force 27 January 1989; 1155 United Nations Treaty Series 331

Spitsbergen Treaty (Section 4.3.1)	
Treaty Concerning the Archipelago of Spitsbergen	Treaty between Norway, The United States of America, Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Great Britain and Ireland and the British overseas Dominions and Sweden concerning Spitsbergen signed in Paris 9 th February 1920. In force 14 August 1925

Arctic Resources (Section 4.4.2)	
OPRC 1990	International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, London, 30 November 1990. In force 13 May 1995
OSPAR Convention 1992	Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, Paris, 22 September 1992. In force 25 March 1998
Arctic Council Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines	Arctic Council, Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group, Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines, April 29, 2009
Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic	Arctic Council, 2013, Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic
* For a comprehensive list of all existing institutions and a recent legal analysis of offshore oil and gas development in the Arctic, <i>see</i> (Keil 2013a: 123–135; Johnstone 2015)	

Annex V to be continued on the following page.

Arctic Maritime Transportation (Section 4.4.3)	
BWM Convention	International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships Ballast Water and Sediments, London, 13 February 2004
COLREG 1972	Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, London, 20 October 1972. In force 15 July 1977
IMO Guidelines Arctic Waters	IMO Guidelines for Ships Operating in Arctic ice-covered Waters adopted by IMO MSC/Circ.1056, MEPC/Circ.399, 23 December 2002
IMO Guidelines Polar Waters	IMO Guidelines for Ships Operating in Polar Waters adopted by IMO Assembly Resolution A.1024 (26), 2 December 2009
ISM Code	The International Safety Management Code, IMO Assembly Resolution A.741 (18), 1993
London Convention 1972	Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972 and its Protocol of 1996
MARPOL	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, London, 2 November 1973, as amended (MARPOL 73/78). Entry into force varies for each Annex
Polar Code	International Code for Ships operating in Polar Waters, MEPC 68/21/Add.1 Annex 10
SOLAS	International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, London, 1 November 1974 as amended (SOLAS 74). In force 25 May 1980
STCW Convention	International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, London, 1 December 1978, as amended (STCW 78). In force 28 April 1984
* For a comprehensive list of all existing institutions, <i>see</i> (Molenaar 2009, 2014; Brubaker 2010; Keil 2013a: 169–184)	

Arctic Fisheries (Section 4.4.4)	
Convention on Biological Diversity	Convention on Biological Diversity, Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1992. In force 29 December 1993

Source: Own Compilation

Annex VI: European Acts

European legal acts affecting animal welfare (Section 4.3.1 (Text Box II))	
Regulation on trade with seal products	Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 on trade in seal products, Official Journal of the European Union L 286/36, 31 October 2009.
Constitutional bases of the European Union (Subchapter 5.1)	
Treaty of Amsterdam	Treaty of Amsterdam amending the Treaty on European Union, the Treaties establishing the European Communities and certain related acts, signed in Amsterdam, 2 October 1997
TEU, Treaty on European Union	Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union, 2012. Official Journal C 326, 26 October 2012
TFEU, Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union	Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2012. Official Journal C 326, 26 October 2012
EU-Greenland relationship (Subchapter 5.1 and Subchapter 5.4)	
Overseas Association Decision	Council Decision 2013/755/EU of 25 November 2013 on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Union ('Overseas Association Decision'). Official Journal of the European Union L 344/1, 19 December 2013
Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) between the European Community and Greenland	Council Regulation (EC) No 753/2007 of 28 June 2007 on the conclusion of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community on the one hand, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Rule Government of Greenland, on the other hand. Official Journal of the European Union L 172/1, 30 June 2007
Partnership Agreement (PA) between the European Community and Greenland	Council Decision 2014/137/EU of 14 March 2014 on relations between the European Union on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other. Official Journal of the European Union L 76/1, 15 March 2014
Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities in the FPA	Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community on the one hand, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Rule Government of Greenland, on the other hand. Official Journal of the European Union L293/5, 23 October 2012
European legal acts affecting Arctic energy resources (Subchapter 5.1)	
Directive on the safety of offshore oil and gas operations	Directive 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on safety of offshore oil and gas operations and amending Directive 2004/35/EC (Text with EEA relevance). Official Journal of the European Union L 178/66, 28 June 2013
EU Offshore Oil and Gas Authorities Group	Commission Decision of 19 January 2012 on setting up of the European Union Offshore Oil and Gas Authorities Group (2012/C 18/07). Official Journal of the European Union C 18/8, 21 January 2012

Annex VI to be continued on the following page.

Measures to safeguard the security of natural gas supply	Council Directive 2004/67/EC of 26 April 2004 concerning measures to safeguard security of natural gas supply (Text with EEA relevance). Official Journal of the European Union L 127/92, 29 April 2004
Renewable Energy Directive	Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directive 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC (Text with EEA relevance). Official Journal of the European Union L 140/16, 5 June 2009
Energy Efficiency Action Plan	Commission Communication COM(2011) 109 final of 8 March 2011 on the Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2011
Raw Material Initiative	Commission Communication COM(2008) 699 final of 4 November 2008 on the raw materials initiative – meeting our critical needs for growth and jobs in Europe
Commission Communication on commodity markets in particular for raw materials	Commission Communication COM(2011) 25 final of 2 February 2011 on Tackling the Challenges in Commodity Markets and on Raw Materials
Water Framework Directive	Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Official Journal of the European Communities L 327/1, 22 December 2000
Mining Waste Directive and Landfill Waste Directive	Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration. Official Journal of the European Union L 372/19, 27 December 2006

European legal acts affecting Arctic maritime transportation (Subchapter 5.1)

Port state control	Directive 2009/16/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on port State control (Recast) (Text with EEA Relevance). Official Journal of the European Union L 131/57, 28 May 2009
Directive on vessel traffic monitoring and information system	Directive 2002/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2002 establishing a Community vessel traffic monitoring and information system and repealing Council Directive 93/75/EEC. Official Journal of the European Communities L 208/10, 5 August 2002
Directive on sulphur in marine fuels	Directive 2012/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 amending Council Directive 1999/32/EC as regards the sulphur content of marine fuels. Official Journal of the European Union L 327/1, 27 November 2012

Concerning Arctic energy resources (Subchapter 5.2)

European Energy Security Strategy	Commission Communication COM(2014) 330 final of 28 May 2014 on European Energy Security Strategy
Policy Framework for Climate and Energy in the period from 2020 to 2030	Commission Communication COM(2014) 15 final of 22 January 2014 on a policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030

Concerning Regional and Cohesion Policy (Subchapter 5.4)

European Neighbourhood Instrument	Regulation (EU) No 232/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument. Official Journal of the European Union L 77/27, 15 March 2014
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Source: Own Compilation

Annex VII: Written/Oral Questions of the EP

From the Cold War Era to 2007/2008... (Subchapter 6.1)	
Written question No. 2616/88 (MEP Ernest Glinne)	Official Journal of the European Communities, No. C 174, Vol. 32, 10 July 1989
Oral question H-0912/91 (MEP Otto von Habsburg)	Official Journal of the European Communities, Debates of the European Parliament, No. 3-411
Resolution on a new strategy for agriculture in Arctic regions	Official Journal of the European Communities, No. C 175, Vol 42, 21 June 1999: 27 (Resolution on a new strategy for agriculture in arctic regions)
Resolution on Arctic agriculture	Official Journal of the European Communities, No. C 92E, Vol. 47, 16 April 2004: 115-118 (European Parliament Resolution on Arctic agriculture (2003/2051(INI))
Written question E-4860/05 (MEP Diana Wallis)	Official Journal of the European Communities, No. C 327, Vol. 49, 30 December 2006. E-4860/05 by Diana Wallis (ALDE) to the Commission (22 December 2005), Subject: Resolution on Northern Dimension (Arctic Governance)
Answer given to written question E-4860/05 by Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner	Official Journal of the European Communities, No. C 327, Vol. 49, 30 December 2006. Answer given by Mrs Ferrero-Waldner on behalf of the Commission (E-4860/2005), 7 February 2006
Written question P-4519/07 (MEP Diana Wallis)	Official Journal of the European Union, No. C 191, Vol. 51, 29 July 2008. P-4519/07 by Diana Wallis (ALDE) to the Commission (18 September 2007), Subject: EU Arctic policy
Answer given to written question P-4519/07 by Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner	Official Journal of the European Union, No. C 191, Vol. 51, 29 July 2008. Answer given by Mrs Ferrero-Waldner on behalf of the Commission (P-4519/2007), 9 October 2007
Written question P-0620/08 (MEP Diana Wallis)	Official Journal of the European Union, C 291, Vol. 51, 13 November 2008. P-0620/08 by Diana Wallis (ALDE) to the Commission (7 February 2008), Subject: Arctic policy
Answer given to written question P-0620/08 by Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner	Official Journal of the European Union, C 291, Vol. 51, 13 November 2008. Answer given by Ms Ferrero-Waldner on behalf of the Commission (P-0620/2008), 19 March 2008

... And from 2008 Onwards (Subchapter 6.2)	
Oral question O-0084/08 (MEPs Diana Wallis, Bilyana Ilieva Raeva and Johannes Lebech)	Oral question with debate pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure by Diana Wallis, Bilyana Ilieva Raeva and Johannes Lebech, on behalf of the ALDE Group to the Commission, on <i>Arctic governance in a global world</i> , O-0084/08, 4 September 2008
Oral question O-0060/09 (MEPs Véronique De Keyser, Jan Marinus Wiersma and Hannes Swoboda)	Oral question with debate pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure by Véronique De Keyser, Jan Marinus Wiersma and Hannes Swoboda, on behalf of the PSE Group to the Council, on <i>Opening of negotiations designed to lead to the adoption of an international treaty on protection of the Arctic</i> , O-0060/09, 19 March 2009
Oral question O-0061/09 (MEPs Véronique De Keyser, Jan Marinus Wiersma and Hannes Swoboda)	Oral question with debate pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure by Véronique De Keyser, Jan Marinus Wiersma and Hannes Swoboda, on behalf of the PSE Group to the Commission, on <i>Opening of international negotiations designed to lead to the adoption of an international treaty for the protection of the Arctic</i> , O-0061/09, 19 March 2009
Oral question O-000001/2014 (MEP Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa)	Question for oral answer to the Commission, Rule 115 by Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa, on behalf of the Committee on Fisheries, on <i>Legal Status of the Svalbard Archipelago and its fisheries resources</i> , O-000001/2014, 6 January 2014

Source: Own Compilation

Annex VIII: Arctic-related Speeches by EU-Policymakers

Speech	Occasion	Date and Location	Number
Commission: Andris Piebalgs “The Arctic Energy Agenda - sustainable oil and gas activities in the North - perspectives and challenges”	The Arctic Energy Round Table	7 July 2005, Kirkenes (Norway)	
Commission: José Manuel Barroso “The EU/Norway Partnership: a European Approach to Energy Security and Climate Change	Europe Conference	25 February 2008, Oslo (Norway)	SPEECH/08/98
Commission: Joe Borg “The Arctic: a matter of concern to us all”	Conference “Common Concern for the Arctic”	9 September 2008, Ilulissat (Greenland)	SPEECH/08/415
Commission: Joe Borg “The European Union's strategy of sustainable management for the Arctic”	Conference “Arctic Frontiers”	19 January 2009, Tromsø (Norway)	SPEECH/09/09
Commission: Benita Ferrero-Waldner “Transforming the Arctic”	Conference “Arctic Transform”	5 March 2009, Brussels (Belgium)	SPEECH/09/92
Commission: Andris Piebalgs “EU Energy and Climate Policy”	Speech at the 7 th Doha Natural Gas Conference	11 March 2009, Doha (Qatar)	SPEECH/09/102
Commission: Siim Kallas “Speaking points”	12 th ministerial session of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)	15 October 2009, Murmansk (Russia)	SPEECH/09/472
European Council: Herman Van Rompuy “Remarks”	Meeting with Prime Minister of Norway Jens Stoltenberg	16 June 2010, Brussels (Belgium)	PCE 126/10
Commission: Maria Damanaki "Arctic footsteps in Brussels"	9th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, European Parliament	13 September 2010, Brussels (Belgium)	SPEECH/422
Commission: Maria Damanaki “Working together for a bright future for the Arctic”	Arctic Futures Symposium	15 October 2010, Brussels (Belgium)	SPEECH/10/556
European Council: Herman Van Rompuy	Arctic Futures Symposium	15 October 2010, Brussels (Belgium)	PCE 224/10
Commission: Maria Damanaki “The Arctic: a test bench for international dialogue”	Conference: "Arctic Science, International Law and Climate Protection"	17 March 2011, Berlin (Germany)	SPEECH/11/192
Commission: Maria Damanaki "The Arctic at a time of change"	Arctic Future Symposium	12 October 2011, Brussels (Belgium)	SPEECH/11/658
Commission: Maria Damanaki “The European Union and the Arctic region”	Conference “Arctic Futures: A global partnership for the Arctic?”	4 October 2012, Brussels (Belgium)	SPEECH/12/684
Commission: Maria Damanaki “The Arctic: an EU Perspective”	Conference “Arctic Frontiers”	21 January 2013, Tromsø (Norway)	SPEECH/13/33

Source: Own Compilation

Annex IX: Arctic Reports Requested by European Institutions

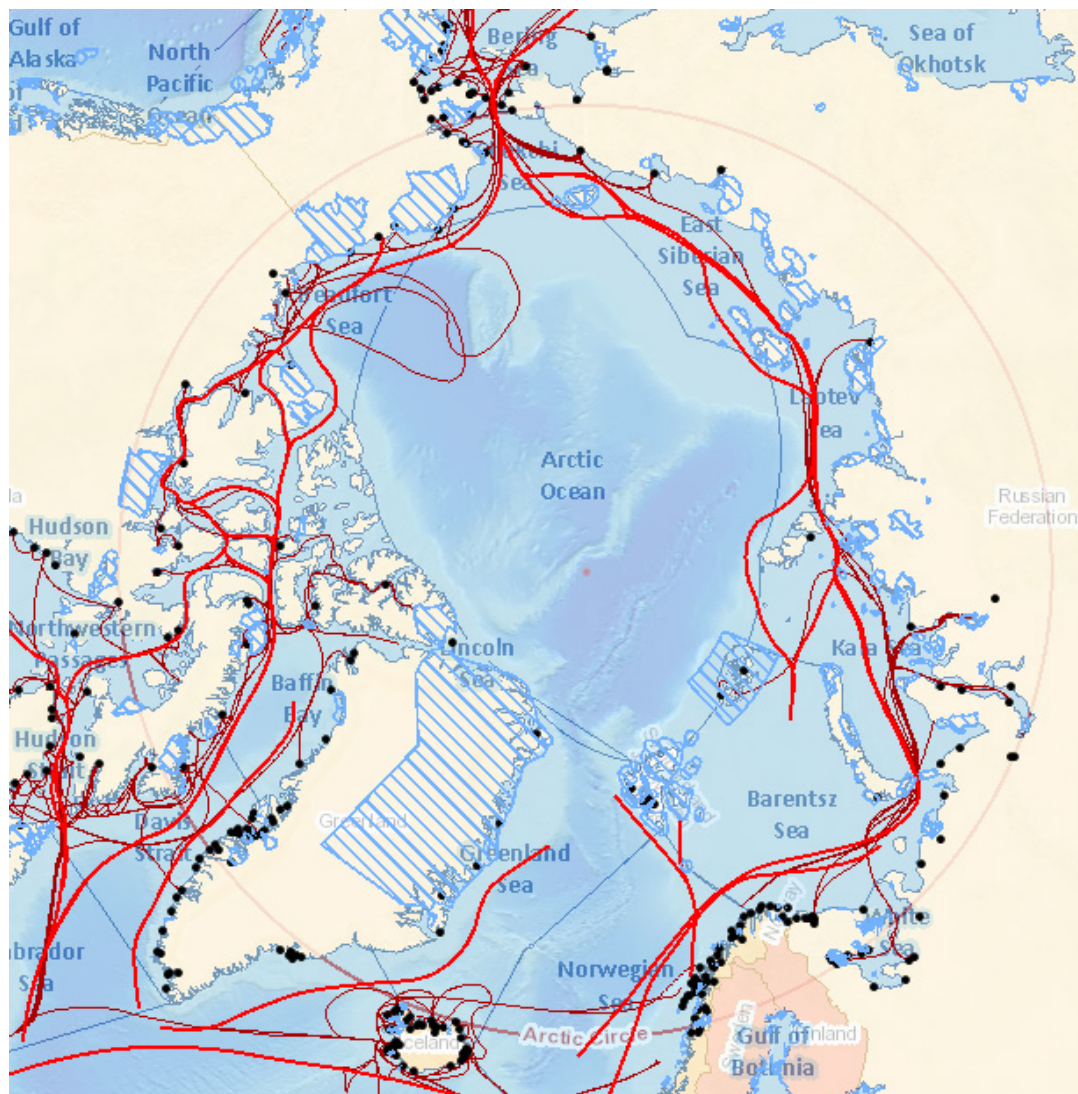
Title	Author	Requested by	Year	Number or Contract
Transport in the Arctic Region	Timo Emvall et al.	EP Directorate General for Research	1998	TRAN 104 EN 4-1998
Legal Aspects of Arctic Shipping	Erik Molenaar et al.	Commission DG MARE	2010	ZF0924 – S03
The Geopolitics of Arctic Natural Resources	Valur Ingimundarson	EP Committee on Foreign Affairs	2010	EXPO/B/AFET/FWC/2009-01/Lot 2/02
Opening of new Arctic Shipping Routes	Arild Moe & Øystein Jensen	EP Committee on Foreign Affairs	2010	EXPO/B/AFET/FWC/2009-01/Lot 2/03
EU Competencies affecting the Arctic	Timo Koivurova et al.	EP Committee on Foreign Affairs	2010	EP/EXPO/B/AFET/FWC/2009-01/LOT2/04
Impact of EU Policies on the High North	Antje Neumann & Bettina Rudloff	EP Committee on Foreign Affairs	2010	EXPO/B/AFET/FWC/2009-01/Lot 2/01
EU Arctic Footprint and Policy Assessment	Sandra Cavalieri et al.	Commission DG Environment	2010	EuropeAid/128561/C/SER/Multi
Arctic Governance: balancing challenges and development	Fernando Garcés de los Fayos	EP Delegation with Switzerland, Iceland, Norway and the EEA	2012	DG EXPO/B/PolDep/Note/2012_136
The Contribution of Space Technology to Arctic Policy Priorities	Polar View	European Space Agency	2012	
The Maritime Dimension of CSDP: Geostrategic Maritime Challenges and their Implications for the European Union	Timo Behr et al.*	EP Subcommittee on Security and Defence	2013	EP/EXPO/B/SEDE/FWC/2009-01/Lot6/21
Greenland: the challenge of managing a key geostrategic territory	Fernando Garcés de los Fayos	EP Enlargement and EEA Unit	2014	DG EXPO/B/PolDep/Note/2014_16
Strategic Assessment of Development of the Arctic: Assessment conducted for the European Union**	Adam Stępień et al.	Commission DG Environment	2014	Preparatory Action “Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment of development of the Arctic
Fisheries Management and the Arctic in the Context of Climate Change	Roland Blomeyer et al.	EP Committee on Fisheries	2015	IP/B/PECH/IC/2014_21

Source: Own Compilation

* Chapter 4.3 ‘The Northern Corridor’ discusses challenges and opportunities of the Arctic and was drafted by the dissertation’s author.

** See Footnote 174

Annex X: The Arctic by The European Atlas of the Seas



Source: The European Atlas of the Seas (http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/atlas/maritime_atlas/). A collaboration of DG MARE, DG MOVE, DG REGIO (Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy) and Eurostat. The map was generated on 18 December 2015 and included a legend that was not added to Annex X.