State of the Arctic Strategies and Policies – A Summary

Lassi Heininen

In the past five years, the eight Arctic states have each published comprehensive Arctic strategies, a manifestation of the growing political interest in the region. This article examines the Arctic strategies of each Arctic state in turn. It goes on to identify common themes found in the strategies: security and sovereignty; economic and business development; sustainable and regional development; environmental protection and climate change; safety, search and rescue; human dimension and peoples; research and knowledge; and international cooperation. Similarities and differences between the Arctic states on these key themes are examined, providing an insightful illustration of current regional values and interests.

Background

The recent launch of national strategies and state policies on the Arctic and Northern affairs by the governments of all eight of the Arctic states clearly show, even manifest, the growing interest of these states toward their own northernmost regions, as well as the entire Arctic region. The same level of interest towards the Arctic has also recently been demonstrated by several powers from outside the region, including China, Japan and South Korea in Asia, and France, Germany and UK as well as the European Union in Europe. Comparing this to the situation in the 1990s as regards internal and foreign policies of the Arctic states demonstrates a clear shift in interest towards the North, since in the early 1990s there were only two countries - Canada and Norway – with "an explicit Arctic policy" (Heininen, 1992).

The Arctic strategies and state policies of the Arctic states, as well as agendas and emerging policies on Arctic/Northern issues by non-Arctic states, can be seen as reflections of the changing conditions in the entire Arctic region on one hand. On the other hand, they show the growing international and global interest toward the Arctic region, and the entire North,

Lassi Heininen is University Lecturer and Adjunct Professor at the University of Lapland, Finland.

and the emerging kinds of interrelations between the region and the rest of the globe (Heininen, 2004). Consequently, they can be interpreted as responses to the significant, multi-functional and global change(s) of the early-21st century in the Arctic environment, geopolitics and economies as well as Northern security. This is rather obvious in the cases of Canada, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and the USA, though the reasons for this range from the broad to the narrow: security risks and threats to sovereignty as a result of the potential impacts of climate change are large factors in Canada's Northern Strategy. The growing global interests toward the Arctic region and its rich natural resources lie at the core of the strategies of Finland and Iceland. The Swedish strategy's response to the challenge is to emphasize biodiversity and the human dimension. And the US policy emphasises national and homeland security.

In the cases of the Kingdom of Denmark, Norway and the Russian Federation there are other motivations which are as, or even more, important: the new self-governing status of Greenland as well as the first ministerial meeting of the five littoral states of the Arctic Ocean provides a central focus in the Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy. The Norwegian High North strategy is very independent and reflects the new Norwegian-Russian relationship in the Barents Sea region, emphasizing closer bilateral cooperation between the two countries. The Russian State Policy first and foremost is a response to and reflection of the domestic politics of the Federation.

Finally, a common feature in all of the Arctic strategies and state policies is that each of the Arctic states would like to become a natural/real, even leading, actor/player in the Arctic, or in some field of northern affairs, or would like to maintain a leading role there.

This article discusses and compares the recent strategies, or state policies, for the Arctic region of the Arctic states (here Arctic strategies), and their priorities and main objectives with an aim to emphasize their outlining differences and similarities.[1] It is neither an inventory nor analysis on the content of the strategies, but is based on the author's inventory and comparative study on the Arctic strategies and policies (Heininen, 2011). There are also a few other comparative studies on Arctic strategies, though mostly on those of the five littoral states of the Arctic Ocean - Canada, Denmark or Greenland/Denmark, Norway, Russian Federation and the USA. For example, Brosnan et al. (2011) looks at and discusses how cooperation and conflict appear in the Arctic strategies of these five states.

Correspondingly, Summers (2010) studies the littoral states and their relations with a focus on energy and the environment, and also looks at China and the European Union as new players in the Arctic.

I will begin by briefly introducing how each Arctic state has (re)positioned itself in the Arctic region, and then by providing an overview of the Arctic strategies and their priorities. It briefly describes how the states (re)position and (re)define themselves as Arctic states/nations, and how the Arctic is (re)mapped. Finally, the paper proceeds to a comparative study between the Arctic strategies based on the explicit priorities or priority areas through nine inwards – and outwards-oriented indicators, emphasizing outlying differences and similarities between them.

Priorities of Arctic Strategies

This section is an overview on the Arctic strategies and state policies of the Arctic states with an emphasis on the priorities or priority areas, and the main objectives of the strategies (in alphabetic order). Each sub-section begins by briefly discussing how each Arctic state (re)positions itself in the Arctic region, or the entire Circumpolar North. It is then followed by a brief overview of the priorities and main objectives of each strategy/state policy.

Canada's Northern Strategy

Canada's Northern Strategy "Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future" was released in July 2009 at Gatineau, Québec, by the Government of Canada (2009). It was followed by the "Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy" in August 2010 (Government of Canada 2010).

The Canadian Government has been active in international northern and Arctic discussions and cooperation during the last few decades, particularly in the 1990s, such as in proposing and promoting the establishment of the Arctic Council (AC) and pushing sustainable development and human security as the focus of circumpolar cooperation. Already in the 1970s Canada enacted the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act (AWPPA) to protect its marine environment in its Arctic archipelago. It was an early and unique environmental prevention act, though it has not wholly managed to convince other states that the Northwest Passage (NWP) is Canada's internal waters (e.g. Heininen, 1992).

In dealing with its Northern region, Canada has been somewhat ambivalent: On one hand, it has approved strategies or policies at the local and regional circumpolar level, such as through the Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy. On the other hand, the Canadian Government has a history of institutional neglect when it comes to its Northern region (Borlase, 2010: 83-92). In 2004 the Liberal Party of Canada launched Canada's Northern Dimension policy with ambitious goals in terms of a national and foreign policy directive. The Conservative government, however, failed to pursue these objectives when it came into power, adopting instead a defensive stance following the Russian expedition to the shelf under the North Pole in August 2007. Followed from this the debate was shifted towards an emphasis on sovereignty and national defense, although there are a few on-going disputes concerning northern waters, particularly the NWP between Canada and the USA. In spite of this, no other country reflects the complexity of geopolitical change(s) in the Arctic as well as Canada: Harper's Conservative government has taken a considerably more direct interest in the North, "made the Arctic a major political platform" (Globe and Mail (Metro) National News, 2011), and emphasized Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic.

Indeed, the Canadian Government first released its Northern Strategy in 2009 with the following priority areas, which the 2010 released Statement on Canada's Foreign Policy also fully promotes: first, exercising our Arctic sovereignty; second, promoting social and economic development; third, protecting the North's environmental heritage; and fourth, improving and devolving northern governance (Government of Canada, 2009).

In the Strategy, Canada is defined as a "Northern nation"; the North is central to Canada's character and national identity. The term "Our North, our Heritage" refers geographically to Canada's Far North which is included in the definition of Canada's heritage and future, even "central to the Canadian national identity". Further, Canada's North is said to be "first and foremost about people – the Inuit, other Aboriginal peoples and Northerners" (Government of Canada, 2009: 3). However, neither (indigenous) peoples nor the human dimension are among the priorities of the Strategy, although "Empowering the Peoples of the North" is included in the Statement's four priorities (Government of Canada, 2010: 22-24).

Canada's "Arctic (maritime) Sovereignty" is stated to be the first priority and "our number one Arctic Foreign policy priority" (ibid: 3). Also emphasized is the importance of strengthening Canada's presence in the Arctic by, for example, exerting rights based on the

historical presence of the Inuit, and with the aim of strengthening military presence and control in the Arctic through the establishment of an Army Training Centre and the construction of a power icebreaker. The Strategy refers to existing disagreements, for example between Canada and the USA, contending that Canada's sovereignty over its Arctic lands and islands is "undisputed". It however says explicitly that there are neither conflicts nor a "race" and consequently, according to the Statement, Canada is seeking to resolve these boundary issues. This does not change the position of Ottawa over the NWP, except that it has been recently renamed the 'Canadian Northwest Passage', and the application of the AWPPA has been extended from 100 to 200 nautical miles, in accordance with the UNCLOS.

The Strategy also emphasizes Arctic science and the International Polar Year (IPY), with two key priority areas: climate change impacts, and human health and well-being. Through its big investments into the IPY Canada has become, and is, very much a global leader in Arctic science. Now it seeks to secure that position by establishing a new world-class research station, and thus trying to become a hub for scientific activities, an image of apparent importance to Canada.

Economic development, including the exploration and utilization of natural resources, is a high priority with the Canadian Government whereas transportation appears less so. Indigenous groups are included in processes leading up to mega-projects regarding the utilization of natural resources like for example in the Mackenzie Gas Project. This is tied in with indigenous ownership and land claim negotiations, and is thus an indication of devolution. An interesting point in the Statement is the implementation of a free trade agreement with EFTA member countries, as an avenue to enhancing trading relations with other Arctic states.

All in all, in spite of its criticism within Canada, the Strategy includes a vision about, and for, the North in the context of the entire country. Final, the documents can be seen as a reflection, a response even, to the ongoing significant and multi-functional change(s) in the Arctic.

The Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy for the Arctic

"The Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020" was adopted by the Government of Denmark, the Government of the Faroe Islands and the Government of Greenland, and launched by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in August 2011 (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011).

The Kingdom of Denmark has recently had an active and effective influence in the Arctic region, particularly due to the new jurisdictional position of Greenland. This was already apparent in the joint draft strategy of Denmark and Greenland, which was published in May 2008 (Namminersornerullutik Oqartussat and Udenrigsministeriet, 2008), and now this is approved by the final Strategy. The draft strategy contained a series of objectives for the work, which broadly fell within two categories: first, supporting and strengthening Greenland's development towards increased autonomy and self-government; and second, maintaining Denmark's position as a major player in the Arctic.

Correspondingly, the Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020 is comprehensive and includes all relevant fields in substantial detail. Its primary focus is on Copenhagen's new relations with the self-government of Greenland and on strengthening the Kingdom of Denmark's status as a player in the Arctic. Its objective is twofold: first, to react and respond to significant environmental and geopolitical change(s) in the Arctic and the growing global interest toward the region; and second, to redefine a (new) position of the Kingdom of Denmark and strengthen its status as a player in the Arctic.

According to the Strategy document, the Kingdom of Denmark is "in an equal partnership between the three parts of the Danish Realm", Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands – this much legitimizes the use of the term "Kingdom of Denmark" when it comes to Arctic affairs – will work for "a peaceful, secure and safe Arctic; with self-sustaining growth and development; with respect for the Arctic's fragile climate; and in close cooperation with our international partners". Further, the Strategy is described "first and foremost" as "a strategy for development that benefits the inhabitants of the Arctic". It has a clear global perspective by stating that the vast changes in the Arctic are one of most significant global issues, and that "[T]he world has again turned its attention to the Arctic", and consequently the aim is "to strengthen the Kingdom's status as global player in the Arctic" (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 9-11).

The four chapters of the Strategy, each of which has a certain number of mentioned tasks, correspond to the above-mentioned main aims. Each of them also takes into consideration the three parts of the Danish Realm, emphasizing the positions and roles of the Faroe Islands and Greenland, particularly Greenland's new status, as the northern-most parts of the Danish Realm.

In the first chapter, "A peaceful, secure and safe Arctic" the Strategy emphasizes the importance of sovereignty and national security, as do the strategies of the other littoral states of the Arctic Ocean, and also emphasizes the importance of NATO and the cooperation between the 'Arctic 5'. A more sophisticated picture is revealed through emphasizing the importance of sovereignty and national security as the strategy highlights a linkage between the importance of security and for protecting the economic base of Greenland's economy.

Although the exploration of off-shore hydrocarbons is viewed as critical to Greenland's development, in the second chapter, "Self-sustaining growth and development", high standards for the exploitation as well as the use of renewable (marine) resources are emphasized. The rhetoric concerning "the use of renewable energy resources" and that living resources "shall be harvested in a sustainable manner based on sound science" (ibid: 23) indicates a more comprehensive and sophisticated method of linking the utilization to sustainable use of natural resources, as well as to environmental protection. Growth and development is described as knowledge-based and consequently, international cooperation in research as well as Greenland's prominent role in such cooperation is highlighted.

In the third chapter, "Development with respect for the Arctic's vulnerable climate, environment and nature" the Strategy includes a discussion on the protection of the environment and biodiversity, and the managing of the Arctic nature "based on the best possible scientific knowledge and standards for protection" (ibid: 43). It also emphasizes the importance of international cooperation and the reinforcement of "the rights of indigenous peoples in negotiations towards a new international climate agreement" (ibid: 44).

The main tasks included in the final chapter, "Close cooperation with our international partners" are to prioritize global cooperation in relevant fields, such as climate change, maritime safety and indigenous peoples' rights, enhance cooperation in the AC, with the EU and regional councils, and emphasize the 'Arctic 5' and the 'Polar Sea Conference' (of 2008)

as essential regional forums. Here the Kingdom "will retain the 'Arctic 5'", but the AC is mentioned with the goal of strengthening cooperation within the Council. In terms of bilateral cooperation the Strategy mentions Canada, the USA, the Nordic countries, Russia, China, Japan and South Korea.

As a conclusion, based on the four aims and four chapters, the priority areas as well as main tasks of the Strategy can be interpreted to be, first, to enhance maritime safety and enforce sovereignty; second, to exploit mineral resources and new economic opportunities and use renewable energy, maintain a leading role in Arctic research, and promote Arctic cooperation on human health; third, to pursue knowledge building on climate change, and manage the Arctic nature based on the best scientific knowledge; and final, to prioritize global cooperation, and enhance cooperation in the AC and under the 'Arctic 5'.

All in all, the primary focus and ultimate aim of the Strategy is undoubtedly twofold: on one hand, to strengthen Greenland's new position in its status of self-government and (re)define a new position of the Kingdom of Denmark in the Arctic as a 'global player'; and on the other hand, to react and respond to the ongoing environmental, geo-economic and geopolitical change(s) in, as well as the growing global interest toward, the Arctic region. Finally, the Strategy has a clear global perspective.

Finland's Strategy for the Arctic Region

"Finland's Strategy for the Arctic Region" was adopted by the Finnish Cabinet Committee on the EU and launched in June 2010 (Prime Minister's Office, 2010).

Finland is one of the eight Arctic states with significant economic, political and security interests in the Arctic region. Consequently, the Strategy document clearly states (for the first time) that "[a]s an Arctic country, Finland is a natural actor in the Arctic region" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010:7). Finland has also been active in international Northern and Arctic undertakings like, for example, the initiatives for the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) and the EU's Northern Dimension (Lipponen, 1997), and has long had some sort of '*de facto*' Northern (dimension) policy (Heininen, 1999: 150-198). Finland has not, however, had an official Arctic policy of its own before.

After the five coastal states of the Arctic Ocean had adopted their respective Arctic strategies/state policies and had their first ministerial meeting in May 2008, Finland 'woke

up' and started to become interested again in Arctic issues. Behind this re-awakening was the growing interest in Arctic issues in Finland, particularly as regards economic interests and climate change. As a result, Finland started to prepare and roll out a national Arctic strategy, drafted by a working group representing all the ministries appointed by the Prime Minister's Office in February 2010. This governmental activity was accelerated by the report on "Finland and the Arctic Regions" issued by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Finnish Parliament as well as by a general discussion of Finland's activities in the Arctic in Parliament in November 2009 (Ulkoasiainvaliokunta, 2009).

Finland's Arctic Strategy clearly states that the Arctic region is a stable and peaceful area, but, it adds, significant changes are taking place in the region, including climate change and increased transportation. Consequently, the global significance of the region is growing. Due to all of this, a holistic evaluation on the current situation and circumstances is required, and it is briefly touched upon in the introduction to the Strategy.

The document consists of six substantial chapters, the first four of which define Finland's political objectives in four important sectors, followed by chapters on policy tools and the EU and the Arctic. The first sector "Fragile Arctic nature" states that "the environmental perspective must be taken into account in all activities in the region" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 13), and climate change, pollution and biodiversity must be given considerable attention. Climate change is defined as one of the most serious challenges to the Arctic, and increased human activity in the region raises the risk of environmental pollution. Finland's main objectives here are threefold. It is also said that Arctic research, regional climate models and long-term monitoring of the environment should feed into decision-making processes, clearly indicating the importance of the interplay between science and politics.

Finland's objectives in the second sector, "Economic activities and know-how" are ambitious, and here the Finnish Strategy document emphasizes economic activities, as do most of the other Arctic states' strategies, and can be considered business-oriented. The Strategy reflects the desire to promote and strengthen Finland's position as an international expert on Arctic issues and know-how in the fields of winter shipping, sea transport and shipbuilding technology, expertise in forest management, mining and metals industry, and cold-climate research. Although protecting Arctic ecosystems is prioritized, it seems

somewhat short-sighted not to give greater emphasis to the promotion and export of Finnish know-how and expertise in environmental technology.

Finland's objectives in "Transport and Infrastructure" are understandable, since the development of transport, communication and logistic networks both in Northern Finland and the Barents Region is much needed. There is also an urgent need to ensure safe navigation in northern seas, both in terms of the physical impact of climate change and growth in seagoing transport. The fourth sector of the Strategy, "Indigenous Peoples", will be realized by facilitating the participation of indigenous peoples in matters to do with their affairs and strengthening the status of the Barents Region's indigenous peoples. Absent, however, is a clear objective to ratify the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples 169 Convention (ILO 169).

In declaring the AC as the main forum for Arctic affairs and policy, and striving to promote international cooperation on Arctic issues at the global and regional level, as well as bilaterally, Finland is taking an important and timely step. Here it is imperative that the mandate of the Council be renegotiated and broadened, as Finland has proposed, so that it can leave its current state of political 'inability' behind. Finally, the EU's recognition of "the importance of the Arctic Region" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 45), and that the Union is accepted as a (global) Arctic player, are emphasized. Here, Finland could be seen to be promoting itself as an advocate of the EU in Arctic affairs. This sounds logical from Finland's point of view, but may involve risks for Finland as an AC member and more generally in the context of multilateral Arctic cooperation due to a divided opinion regarding the role of the EU as an Arctic actor among some Arctic states and Northern indigenous peoples' organizations.

All in all, Finland's Arctic Strategy covers most of the features of a modern strategy document in adopting a holistic approach. It does not have clear priority areas, though there is an apparent preference for economic activities. Finally, the Strategy can be seen as reflecting and responding to the recent significant and multi-functional environmental and geopolitical change(s) in the Arctic region, not least by its worldwide approach to the region.

Iceland's Report on the High North and Resolution on Arctic Policy

The Report "Ísland á norðurslóðum" ("Iceland in the High North") on Iceland's position and status in the Arctic was published by the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs in September 2009 (Utanrikisraduneytid, 2009).

The Report was first followed by the report of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Icelandic Parliament, in May 2010, where "Iceland's interests in the High North" is one of the four areas emphasized (Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2011); and second, by "A Parliamentary Resolution on Iceland's Arctic Policy", approved by the Icelandic Parliament, Althingi, in March 2011 with twelve principles (Althingi, 2011). It has already been indicated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that there is a goal to develop a further policy for Iceland on issues pertaining to the High North; in the meantime the Report together with the Parliamentary Resolution could be interpreted to represent the Icelandic strategy on the Arctic region.

According to the Report, Iceland is the only country located entirely within the Arctic region, and its prosperity relies heavily on the sustainable utilization of the regions' natural resources. Indeed, Iceland has recently (re)defined its geopolitical position in the High North and become very active in Northern issues supporting both Arctic cooperation in many fields and global cooperation on Arctic issues (Grimsson, 2011). There has, for example, been an emphasis on marine transport through new trans-arctic sea routes (Government of Iceland, 2007) and research on ice (Northern Research Forum, 2011).

Behind Iceland's somewhat ambivalent position is its geographic location between North America and Europe, though it clearly shares a European and especially Northern European heritage. Iceland played a strategically important role in the development of the UN's Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in the 1970s and 1980s as one of the leading countries in the negotiations. This was largely because the Icelandic economy at the time was entirely dependent on fisheries. Early 21st century Iceland is a small island nation and Nordic country with a unique geopolitical location in the North Atlantic.

The six key headings and highlights of Iceland's Report on the High North are: first, international cooperation; second, security through international cooperation; third, resource

development and environmental protection; fourth, transportation; fifth, people and cultures; and sixth, international cooperation on research and monitoring.

The clear emphasis of the Report is on international, multilateral Arctic and northern cooperation, mostly referring to neighboring countries, particularly Greenland and the Faroe Islands, but also including the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) and the AC. The Report clearly indicates that there is a strong focus on the Arctic, or the High North, in Iceland's foreign policy and that it has become one of its key priority areas. Consequently, it is emphasized that Iceland is strongly involved in international, Northern cooperation, and is an active member of international and intergovernmental organizations. Here Iceland's possible EU membership (it is not mentioned) would most probably be viewed as a positive development within the Nordic Region, though Iceland is already entirely integrated into Nordic/Northern cooperation. But in terms of Arctic cooperation it would not be such a significant development except if it causes a sort of 'domino effect' in the near future, which would strengthen Iceland's position in the North Atlantic, particularly in the West-Norden and cooperation with Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Norway – all of which stand outside the EU.

Indeed, stability and security through international and scientific cooperation, even in terms of the safety of cruise ships, is greatly emphasized both in the Report and the Parliamentary Resolution. It is also said that one of the objectives of Iceland is to work against the militarization of the High North, and despite the US troops having only recently left Iceland, the importance of state sovereignty is not emphasized in the Report. Nor is there mention of the race for natural resources or emerging conflicts in the Report.

Resource development, including renewable energy and the fishing industry, is of high importance in the protection of Iceland's interests, higher even than environmental protection. Further evidence of economic interests is the strong vision of a new and global trans-arctic shipping route and the use of such a route for trade and cargo in the near future. Furthermore, the vision of Iceland playing an important role in these developments and in becoming a trans-shipment hub for container traffic is evident and seen as logical in light of its central location in the North Atlantic. What is also interesting is that Iceland envisions a role in a new aviation network. Here Europe and Asia are coming together, as they have many common interests.

The emphasis of the Report that Iceland is "the only country" located entirely within the Arctic region is a strong response to the five (official) littoral states of the Arctic Ocean, and a statement against the legitimacy of their ministerial meetings. This was made, if possible, even more clear by the Parliament's Resolution by securing "Iceland's position as a coastal State within the Arctic region" as well as the improvement of the wellbeing of Arctic residents and their communities (Althingi, 2011: 1-2).

All in all, the Report first indicates a growing interest towards the Arctic region and second highly emphasizes an importance of international, multilateral cooperation in general and particularly dealing with research, monitoring and higher education. The policy of emphasizing Northern cooperation has been part of mainstream Icelandic foreign policy for some time and appears successful, and is subsequently supported both by the Report and the Parliamentary Resolution. Finally, both the Report and the Parliamentary Resolution can be seen as reflections of and responses to significantly changing conditions in the Arctic region.

Norway's High North Strategy

Norway's policy in the Arctic region and Northern affairs has been defined by "The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy". Its latest version "New Building Blocks in the North" was launched in March 2009 (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009).

Norway was the first country in the 21st century to release its Arctic strategy and policy, since in the early 2000s there was an expert report on Norway's strategic interests and new policy in the High North, "Mot nord! Utfordringer of muligheter I nordområdene" (Statens for valtningstjeneste informasjonsforvaltning, 2003). "The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy", launched for the first time in December 2006, explicitly sets out a directive for the High North to become the Norwegian Government's main area of focus. The 2009 Strategy was updated and concretized with figures of allocated budget money through annual status reports.

The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy itself is robust, with attention being placed on topics related to the environment and climate, sovereignty and foreign policy, development and business, monitoring and knowledge, and indigenous peoples and their cultures. Within these sections are a number of policies, promises and intentions for the Government of Norway to follow. It is clear that the intention of making the High North

the focal area of interest for the Government in the years to come requires a commitment from all levels and sectors of government, and is thus an embracement from the country as a whole. Particularly so, when its main focus is on (North-West) Russia.

An interesting notion is how the Norwegian Strategy uses, consistently and stubbornly, the term 'High North': in the 2006 Strategy the High North is described as a "broad concept both geographically and politically" (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006: 13), though it really refers to the Barents Sea and the surrounding areas, including Svalbard, and has a particular focus on Russia. Although the 2009 Strategy claims that the High North is without a precise definition in the Norwegian political debate, the horizon of the term is "broader than Northern Norway and Svalbard since Norway has major interests to safeguard in a greater region" which is claimed to be "really a Norwegian perspective (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009: 50).

The 2009 High North Strategy largely continues the chosen Norwegian policy features but with a focus on business development, and on knowledge and the environment. It includes seven advanced strategic priority areas: first, to develop knowledge about climate change and the environment in the High North; second, to improve monitoring, emergency response and maritime safety systems in northern waters; third, to promote sustainable use of off-shore petroleum and renewable marine resources; fourth, to promote on-shore business development in the North; fifth, to further develop the infrastructure in the North; sixth, to continue to exercise sovereignty firmly and strengthen cross-border cooperation (with Russia) in the North; and finally, to safeguard the cultures and livelihoods of indigenous peoples.

This document is comprehensive and includes many fields of politics, issues and strategic areas with concrete goals of both internal and external affairs. Actually, it does this more so than is usual in foreign policy; an advanced strategy with a follow-up system to further long-term Norwegian policy in the North, particularly by the (current) government coalition. Furthermore, the High North is given a place 'at the top' as the most important strategic priority area of Norway with a growing recognition of the importance of the North for Norway as a whole. Consequently, the High North Strategy with its main political priorities plays an important role.

The Norwegian Government has built its High North Strategy on the general perception that the main feature of the geopolitics of the Arctic region in the early 21st century is stability and peaceful cooperation; not a 'race' for energy resources nor emerging conflicts, or the return to a cold war, although Russia has increased its military activities in the Arctic. Therefore, it makes great sense to emphasize the development of knowledge, to promote sustainable use of natural resources and business, and to maintain state sovereignty by strengthening cross-border cooperation (with Russia) in the North.

Based on and following from this, it is not surprising that perhaps the most progressive part of the High North Strategy, particularly in the 2006 version, is Norway's focus on Russia and cooperation with Russia. Indeed, objectives in that regard are numerous, ambitious and concrete. In several places, for example, references are made to how Norway plans on building and engaging its Russian partners. The text is progressive, almost aggressive, at times in the way it calls on an active Russian participation in cooperation. This indicates the significant shift in the Norwegian foreign policy in the early 1990s – after the end of the Cold War period and the collapse of the Soviet Union – towards decreasing military tension and increasing stability in the European North. These objectives have led to establishing the BEAR between the Nordic countries and Russia, and enhancing bilateral functional cooperation with Russia and its neighbors. As a consequence, this ultimate aim gained some ground, when in September 2010 Norway and Russia managed to reach an official agreement by their Treaty of Maritime Delimitation and Cooperation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean.

The Norwegian Government also aims to develop marine industries and business activities, particularly petroleum-based business activities, and therefore defines "the High North as a (new) petroleum province", in cooperation with Russia, as a part of promoting sustainable use of off-shore petroleum and renewable marine resources (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009: 18). Furthermore, it describes its determination to be "the best steward of resources in the High North" (ibid: 13, 55). The premise for this is energy security on which the Strategy states that globally "energy is becoming more clearly defined as a part of security policy", and further that "it is clear that climate change will have an impact on the security of countries and people all over the world" (ibid: 14).

All in all, the High North Strategy is primarily, on one hand, an advanced continuation to long-term Norwegian policy in the High North, meaning the Barents Sea region. The most strategic element is Norway's focus on Russia and an active engagement of Russia's participation in bilateral cooperation. On the other hand, it seeks the strengthening of Norwegian state sovereignty in the High North, as is evident from statements, such as "large parts of the Norwegian Sea and the Barents Sea are under Norwegian fisheries jurisdiction", or that Norway will maintain its "presence on the islands of Jan Mayen, Björnöya and Hopen" as well as its influence in Svalbard (ibid, 31, 32).

Finally, by focusing on (North-West) Russia, Norway is clearly defining the importance of regional cooperation and region-building as well as business development in foreign and security policy in terms of comprehensive security. Here the Strategy can be seen as an important means to achieving such a goal.

The Russian Federation's State Policy in the Arctic

The Arctic policy of the Russian Federation "Fundamentals of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic in the Period up to 2020 and Beyond" was adopted by President D. Medvedev in September 2008, and made public in 2009 (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009).

In October 1987, a speech by the then-Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev (1987) in Murmansk gave the initial impetus for the current intergovernmental cooperation in the Arctic and led to a significant geopolitical change and the start of broad international northern cooperation, such as the AEPS and the AC (Heininen, 2004). The speech, with its numerous initiatives, was a surprise for the West, but behind it was the fact that the Arctic and the entire North has been, and still is, of particular importance for Russia. For example, most of the federal districts and subjects of the Russian Federation deal with Arctic and Northern regions. From the industrial as well as military points of view the North is an important and strategic area for Russia. Finally, the discourse is increasingly academic with an aim to redefine the role of the Russian North as more than a geo-strategically important resource reserve (Alekseyev, 2001).

At the turn of the 21st century, Russian political discussions centered on Western/EU-Russian relations, and in terms of the EU's Northern Dimension, a focus was given to the role Russia might play in Northern (geo)politics (Sutyrin, 2000). There was also

an interesting, though not well-known, statement by President Putin saying that there is a need for a long-term Northern policy in the Russian Federation (ITAR-TASS, 2004). Although nothing tangible emerged at the political level before September 2008, Russia continued its scientific expeditions in the Arctic as well as the Antarctic. Among them were the North Pole-35 drift research station, the integrated high latitude Arctic Expedition and the high latitude deep-water Arctic Expedition to the North Pole in 2007 (IPY 2007/08). One of those expeditions became somewhat of an international public and media hype, largely misinterpreted, and thus a manifestation of how easily a scientific activity can be transferred into a highly (geo) political incident (Heininen, 2010).

However, it was not until September of 2008 that the newly-elected President Medvedev adopted an official state policy, *Fundamentals of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic in the Period up to 2020 and Beyond*. Thus, Russia had recovered and (re)defined itself as an Arctic state, though, for sure even without the State Policy, Russia is viewed as an Arctic nation. This State Policy was intended as a clear indication of national interests and basic objectives of the Russian Federation in the Arctic region, and of how Russia's State Policy in the region should be developed (Lavrov, 2009). The document was supported by several other documents, such as (Heininen, 2011: 44-46): the *Russian Maritime Doctrine of 2001*, the *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*; *Russia's National Security Strategy to 2020; Energy Strategy of Russia For the Period up to 2030;* and *The Concept of Sustainable Development Of the Small-numbered Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East*.

The strategic priorities of the Russian State Policy are: first, to carry out an active interaction of Russia with the sub-Arctic states with a view of delimitation of maritime areas on the basis of norms of international law; second, to create a uniform Arctic search and rescue regime and prevention of man-caused accidents; third, to strengthen bilateral relationships within the framework of regional organizations, such as the AC and the BEAR; fourth, to assist in the organization, management and effective use of cross-polar air routes and the Northern Sea Route (NSR) for international navigation; fifth, to actively contribute to international Arctic forums through the Russia-EU partnerships; sixth, to delimit maritime spaces in the Arctic Ocean and maintain a mutually advantageous presence of Russia in the Spitsbergen archipelago; seventh, to improve state management of the social and economic development of the Arctic, such as to increase support for scientific research; eighth, to

improve the quality of life for indigenous peoples and their social and economic activities; ninth, to develop the Arctic resources base through improved technological capabilities; and tenth, to modernize and develop the infrastructure of the Arctic transport system and fisheries in the Russian Arctic (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009).

The State Policy in the Arctic is strongly linked with and supported by other federal policies and strategies as the region is a strategic resource base for the whole Federation. This is an important consideration in the context of the socio-economic gap that exists within the Federation. Furthermore, it is possible to interpret the State Policy as a pragmatic means for domestic politics and development of the Federation, particularly in light of infrastructural challenges in the Russian Arctic and the out-of-date condition of elements such as the road network, airfields, harbors and fleets. Improvements are needed, and of particular importance is the NSR with a status of national passage and federal line of communications.

When it comes to real priorities of the Russian Federation in the Arctic, this State Policy document is not very helpful as so many priorities are included – altogether ten – all of which are called 'strategic priorities'. Thus it comes as no surprise that several interpretations concerning the actual main priorities exist. An example would be Lomagin's (2008) short list: first, active extraction of natural resources; second, building transport, telecommunications and border infrastructure; and third, making the Arctic a primary strategic resource base of Russia. Or, perhaps the most recent list of Russian real "top priorities" in the Arctic can be found in the then-Prime Minister Putin's speech (Putin, 2010) in September 2010 with three top priorities: the creation of top-quality, comfortable living conditions for local people; support for new economic growth for large-scale domestic and foreign investment and exchange of innovations; and a substantial investment in the scientific and nature-conservation infrastructure including cleaning-up all the garbage.

Correspondingly, the main objectives of the State Policy can be interpreted to be on one hand, stabilizing Russia's northern frontiers and guaranteeing legal ground for exploration of Arctic resources, and on the other hand, bridging the gap in socio-economic disparities between Russian Arctic regions and the rest of the country, paying special attention to indigenous populations and sustainable development. The tools with which to achieve these objectives will primarily be through bilateral and multilateral cooperation in areas that provide relatively speedy pay offs and strengthen national security. The State Policy defines Russia's basic national interests in the Arctic very clearly: the Russian Arctic as a strategic

resource base is seen as a prerequisite to solving challenges of social and economic development.

Further, taking into consideration that delimitation of maritime spaces in the Arctic Ocean (and maintenance of a mutually advantageous presence of Russia in the Spitsbergen archipelago) is one of the strategic priorities of the State Policy, it is easier to understand why Norway and Russia were able to agree on a resolution to the dispute of a maritime border in the Barents Sea by signing an agreement concerning maritime delimitation and cooperation in that area, as mentioned earlier.

Another interesting notion is that the State Policy describes the Arctic both as "a zone of peace and cooperation", where it is necessary to preserve its unique ecological systems; and as a "sphere of military security" including the maintenance of a favorable operative regime, such as "a necessary fighting potential". Such contradiction is also found where concerns the environment. On the other hand, according to its definition of the Arctic the region only includes the five littoral states and the Arctic Ocean. International forums and regional organizations, such as the AC and the BEAC, as well as bilateral relations, such as the Russia-EU partnership, are mentioned, although not greatly emphasized.

All in all, at the same time when the Russian State Policy in the Arctic can be interpreted as a response to the new geopolitical situation in the post-Cold war Arctic, it should be taken more as a pragmatic means for domestic politics of the Federation to achieve the primary aim of the early-21st century's administration, the stabilization of the Federation and its economy. Finally, the Policy can be seen as a process through which Russia will again become a major power and a global energy player in world politics.

Sweden's Strategy for the Arctic Region

"Sweden's strategy for the Arctic region" was adopted by the Swedish Government and published in May 2011 (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011; Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011).

Since Sweden was the last of the eight Arctic states to issue and approve an Arctic strategy or policy, there was growing international pressure on Sweden as well as domestic calls for the Government to do so. Indeed, it was on the very day that Sweden launched its Arctic strategy in May 2011 that the country took over the chairmanship of the AC and published its "Chairmanship Programme for the Arctic Council 2011–2013".

Though Sweden has substantially contributed to polar research efforts for more than a hundred years (SWEDARCTIC and SWEDARP, 2011-2015), there have not been many political statements or speeches by Swedish politicians on the Arctic – one of the few is the speech by Foreign Minister Carl Bildt at the AC ministerial meeting in 2009 (Bildt, 2009). Taking this into consideration, it can be taken as something of an achievement that Sweden was ultimately able to prepare, adapt and launch an Arctic strategy by the time of its adoption of the AC Chairmanship. This might also partly explain why the document is rather traditional, without surprises or special emphasis on any particular theme. Conventionality, however, it could also be taken as a mark of strength, insofar as the Strategy is straightforward and clear on its priorities.

Sweden was, however, one of the founding states of the current international cooperative body on Arctic matters, i.e. the AC. Historically, Sweden has natural and strong ties linking it to the Arctic region, as is mentioned in the Strategy, both geographically and demographically, and a strong record of Arctic research. Sweden is also an active member in many forums and organizations, such as the AC, the EU, the Nordic Council of Ministers, BEAR/BEAC; the United Nations and its conventions (e.g. UNCLOS), agencies (e.g. Convention on Biodiversity) and bodies (e.g. WHO) which demonstrates the importance it gives to effective multilateral cooperation on the Arctic. Nonetheless, it has long been Sweden's policy to work actively with others in international organizations, though this is the first time it applies to modern international Arctic cooperation.

The second half of the document is all about the three priorities, which are neither surprising, nor that the climate and environment are the priorities to be mentioned first. The fact that there are only three priorities shows that Sweden's Arctic strategy is one of the most focused of the Arctic strategies; all the same, each strategy comes with a rather long list of objectives. The first priority is "Climate and the Environment" and of particular interest and importance in this connection is biodiversity. In the second priority, "Economic development" Sweden is looking to pursue many business and economic interests in (the free trade area of) the Arctic and Barents Region, such as "Mining, petroleum and forestry". Rather surprisingly, the strategy emphasizes petroleum in the Barents Sea region, even more than mining which has been, and remains, the cornerstone industry of Northern Sweden. Sweden will also be seeking or planning to promote economically, socially and

environmentally sustainable development. The third priority, "The human dimension" includes people (of the region) and their living conditions. Here Sweden's objectives include promoting the preservation of the Sámi and other indigenous languages and a more active participation of young people and women in political processes.

All in all, Sweden's Strategy for the Arctic covers most of the features of a modern political strategy, particularly in terms of adopting concrete objectives under each priority. Economic development seems to be a top priority of Sweden's Arctic policy, and 'Resilience' is some sort of flagship project of the Swedish Chairmanship of the AC (Lind, 2011). The policy can also be seen as a reflection of and response to the recent significant, multi-functional (global) change(s) in the Arctic as much as the growing interest of and pressure from other Arctic states and several non-Arctic states.

The US National Security Directive Concerning an Arctic Region Policy

The United States of America's document "National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD – 66" concerning an "Arctic Region Policy" was released on January 9, 2009 by President George W. Bush's Administration (White House, 2009).

The Arctic has not in general played an important role in US foreign or domestic policy. For example, the Clinton Administration had issued, but did not publicly circulate, its US Arctic Policy Objectives in 1994 which had as its main objectives the protection of the Arctic environment, sustainable use of natural resources, strengthening of intergovernmental cooperation, involving northern indigenous peoples in decision making, enhancing scientific research, and meeting post-Cold War national security and defence needs (Macnab, 2009).

After the Russian expedition to the North Pole in August 2007, some experts argued that the United States was falling behind Russia in the Arctic 'race' (Borgerson, 2008). The U.S. State Department, however, declared in September 2008 that the Arctic countries use different criteria to define whether their territory is considered to be a part of the Arctic region or not. There were also some lobbying efforts within the US, the purpose of which was to emphasize that the United States needs "an Arctic agenda" and has to understand its identity as "an Arctic nation", too (Commonwealth North, May 2009). Thus, it started to become clear to the US Government that it was "necessary to develop coherent approaches to problems that occupy a wide spectrum of issues" (Macnab, 2009: 27). Subsequently, the US President's Administration released an Arctic Region Policy in January 2009, which

supersedes the 1994 "Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-26 with respect to Arctic policy but not Antarctic policy" (White House, 2009: 1).

The policy objectives/priority areas of the "US National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD – 66" concerning an "Arctic Region Policy" are first, national security and homeland security; second, international governance; third, extended continental shelf and boundary issues; fourth, promoting international scientific cooperation; fifth, maritime transportation; sixth, economic issues, including energy; and seventh, environmental protection and conservation of natural resources. The document states (for the first time) that the United States of America is "an Arctic nation, with varied and compelling interests in that region" (ibid: 29).

The US Arctic Policy strongly emphasizes national and homeland security and borders, particularly dealing with maritime areas – "(F)reedom of the seas" - through increased military presence and the projection of sea power throughout the region (ibid: 3). This is not surprising, but what is striking (Macnab, 2009) is that the US Policy is the only one excluding (indigenous) peoples or communities from its main priorities or objectives, although the involvement of the "Arctic's indigenous communities in decisions that affect them" is stated as one of its targets (White House, 2009: 2).

US ratification of UNCLOS is also supported by the document, but this decision remains stuck in the US Congress. Behind this is the fact that although the US has not as yet ratified UNCLOS, it would like to establish the outer limits of its continental shelf as well as push Russia towards ratification of the 1990 US-Russian boundary agreement. In practice, it has agreed on certain common rules with other littoral states of the Arctic Ocean through the Ilulissat Declaration.

The US Arctic Policy places a high priority on the environmentally sustainable management of natural resources and economic development in the region. Furthermore, it appears to promote international governance, to take place primarily through the AC, and the strengthening of institutional cooperation among the eight Arctic states. It also declares continued US cooperation on Arctic issues through the United Nations and its agencies as well as international treaties, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). On the issue of environmental protection the text identifies the challenge of climate change and the related uncertainties, and recognizes that "[B]asic data is

lacking in many fields", there is, however, no mention of climate change as regards the implementation of the Policy. In order to implement the US objective to "continue to play a leadership role in research throughout the Arctic region", President Obama issued a Presidential Memorandum in the summer of 2010 "that assigns responsibility for Arctic research to the White House National Science and Technology Council" (Farrow, 2010).

Although the US "Arctic Region Policy" was approved and released by the Bush Administration as one of its last documents, it itself as well as the above-mentioned and a few other documents of the Obama Administration indicate that in the early-21st century the Arctic region is steadily emerging as a new important area in US foreign policy. This was pointed out and emphasized by State Secretary Hilary Clinton in her interview in Newsweek (2009/2010) calling the Arctic as an emerging area in US foreign policy with "a matrix of issues".

All in all, despite the high emphasis on national (and homeland) security the US Arctic Region Policy can be interpreted as a response to the recent significant environmental, geopolitical and geo-economic change(s) in the Arctic.

Comparative Study of the Priorities and Objectives

This part of the article is a comparative study based on the priorities/priority areas of the Arctic strategies and state policies of the Arctic states: either they are explicitly mentioned or highlighted above as priorities or major objectives, or they are implicit in my interpretations based on the above-mentioned substantial sectors or areas, of the strategies. Based on the priorities/priority areas and major objectives it is possible on one hand, to draw up a holistic picture of the national interests of the Arctic states on the Arctic as well as Arctic and Northern affairs, and on the other hand, to compare them between each other, and also to outline differences and similarities in the Arctic strategies and particularly their priorities. Here I concentrate on the latter.

For the comparison I use eight inwards and outwards-oriented indicators: 1) first, sovereignty and comprehensive security including on one hand, state (territorial and maritime) sovereignty and national security, security-policy and defence, and on the other hand, comprehensive - human, environmental and climate – security; 2) second, economic and business development including all kinds of economic and business activities (e.g.

shipping, aviation and tourism), the utilization of natural resources (e.g. exploitation of mineral resources and renewable sources) and know-how, knowledge and education related to economic development; 3) third, sustainable and regional development including sustainable use of resources as well as that of renewable energy resources, and regional economic development and improvement of regional infrastructure; 4) fourth, environmental protection and climate change including preserving environmental heritage, impacts of climate change, knowledge about the environment and climate change, and international cooperation for environmental protection and on climate change; 5) fifth, safety, search and rescue, and management including on one hand, concern and measures for management of resources, establishing rules for development, and improving Northern governance, and on the other hand, maritime safety and preparedness, response and rescue measures in the case of air or maritime accidents; 6) sixth, human dimension and peoples including inhabitants of the Arctic region, particularly indigenous peoples and their cultures and livelihoods as well as promotion of human health; 7) seventh, research and knowledge including research, science, monitoring, technology and know-how as well as higher education and knowledge in general, and international cooperation on research, monitoring and higher education; and 8) eighth, international cooperation including international - global, multilateral, regional and bilateral - cooperation in general, and particularly cooperation within IGOs and IGOs with regional/sub-regional approaches as well as bilateral cooperation.[2]

There is, however, one more interesting indicator, which I would like to first discuss, i.e. how each Arctic state (re)positions and (re)defines itself as an Arctic country/nation, and how they (re)map the Arctic region.

(Re)constructing, (Re)defining, and (Re)mapping

The modern Arctic strategies and state policies show a growing need and interest of each of the Arctic states to, on one hand, (re)position and (re)define themselves as an Arctic country or nation as well as to (re)construct its internal and foreign policies dealing with Arctic or northern affairs. On the other hand, they also show that there is an interest, even a need, to redefine and remap the Arctic region.

This is first and foremost reflected in the way in which each country/nation locates and identifies itself as an Arctic country or nation of, or global/natural player or actor in, the Arctic region.

Canada describes itself as a "Northern nation. The North is a fundamental part of our heritage and our national identity, and is vital to our future". It is similarly held that defending Canada's sovereignty is "our number one Arctic Foreign policy priority". (Government of Canada, 2010: 2-3)

The Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy for the Arctic has as its aim "to strengthen the Kingdom's status as global player in the Arctic" (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 10-11).

The Finnish Strategy defines Finland "as an Arctic country…a natural actor in the Arctic region" and has a "natural interest in Arctic affairs" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 7-8).

Iceland is "the only country located entirely within the Arctic region" according to the Icelandic Report (Utanrikisraduneytid, 2009). The Parliamentary Resolution further states as an objective securing "Iceland's position as a coastal State within the Arctic region" (Althingi, 2011: 1).

According to Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg in the Norwegian Government's High North Strategy of 2009, "The High North is Norway's most important strategic priority area… [and] the need to develop our High North Strategy is greater than ever." (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009: 3).

The Russian Federation would like to "maintain the role of a leading Arctic power" (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009).

Sweden is linked to the Arctic with many – historical, security-political, economic, climate and environmental, scientific and cultural – links (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011: 9-15).

According to the US National Security Presidential Directive concerning an Arctic Region policy "The United States is an 'Arctic nation'" (White House, 2009: 2).

This same growing interest is also shown in how the Arctic (region) is (re)defined and (re)mapped by many ways in the documents as the following definitions clearly show:

Canada: "Our North, Our Heritage" is Canada's Far North, and Canada's North is said to be "first and foremost about people" (Government of Canada, 2010: 3).

The Kingdom of Denmark: "The Arctic in recent years becomes a central location on the world map" (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 9).

Finland: "The Arctic Region can be defined using various criteria, e.g. the Arctic Circle" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 8).

Iceland: The country is located "on the periphery of the Arctic in the center of the North Atlantic Ocean" (Utanrikisraduneytid, 2009). And, as mentioned above, it is necessary to further secure "Iceland's position as a coastal State within the Arctic region".

Norway: The High North means "the Barents Sea and the surrounding areas" including Svalbard, though it is described as a "broad concept both geographically and politically…broader than Northern Norway and Svalbard since Norway has major interests to safeguard in a greater region". This is claimed to be "really a Norwegian perspective" (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009: 50).

Sweden: There are several definitions of the Arctic, such as the Arctic Ocean and the five "surrounded states", and "the Arctic Circle and the associated eight Arctic states" (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011: 8-9).

The Russian Federation: The Arctic consists of the five littoral states of the Arctic Ocean (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009).

The USA: For the USA the Arctic means "a matrix of issues" (Newsweek, 2009/2010: 26-30).

As a brief conclusion each of the Arctic states describes and defines itself as an Arctic/Northern country/nation.

An interesting difference here is that those Arctic states, who had earlier defined themselves as Arctic countries, would like now, in the early-21st century, to be even more so. For example, "a global leader in Arctic science" as Canada puts it; "a global player in the Arctic", as the Kingdom of Denmark aims; "as a coastal State within the Arctic region" as Iceland would like; "a leading nation" as regards environmental policy, as Norway states; or to

maintain itself as "a leading Arctic power", as Russia articulates. For the others – the 'new-comers' – the self-definition as an Arctic country or nation is quite a new thing.

Sovereignty and Comprehensive Security

In the strategies of the five littoral states (of the Arctic Ocean) sovereignty is mentioned and emphasized as a major or primary priority in the strategies: Canada's sovereignty over its Arctic lands, islands and waters is "undisputed" (Government of Canada, 2009: 13), and the country seeks "to resolve boundary issues in the Arctic region" (Government of Canada, 2010: 7). The Kingdom of Denmark's strategy includes the priority (and task) of enforcement of sovereignty exercised "by the armed forces through a visible presence in the region where surveillance is central" as well as to enhance maritime safety (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 20).

The Norwegian strategy is rather multi-functional when dealing with sovereignty and defence: it states that presence of armed forces as well as police and prosecuting authorities is imperative to the priority of the exercise of authority, or "sovereignty firmly", and consequently, it mentions defence, i.e. the role of the Norwegian Armed Forces in the North (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006: 17-20). The Strategy also emphasizes developing of border control and civilian border surveillance, increasing of coast guard activities, and strengthening of (bilateral) competence-building and "good neighbourly relations" with Russia (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009: 37-42 and 54-57). In addition of the Arctic "as a zone of peace" the Russian policy states that the Arctic is also "the sphere of military security" to the Russian Federation (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009). The US policy strongly emphasizes national security and "homeland security and defence", particularly borders dealing with maritime areas, and freedom of the seas as a "top national priority" for example, by preserving "the global mobility of the United States military and civilian vessels and aircraft" (White House, 2009: 2-3).

There are, however, also more sophisticated pictures when emphasizing the importance of sovereignty and national security: for example, the Kingdom of Denmark's strategy makes a linkage between the importance of security and for protecting the economic base of Greenland's economy. The Norwegian strategy states that climate change has an impact on the security of countries and peoples, and includes energy as a part of security policy. This is

in line with its primary goals, the strengthening of its cooperation with Russia and increased stability in post-Cold War Barents Sea region, and the benefit of the country's economy.

By contrast, in the cases of Finland, Iceland and Sweden, neither (state) sovereignty nor national security or defence is emphasized in their strategies. International cooperation and international treaties "lay the foundation for Finland's activities in the Arctic. It is Finland's interest to maintain stability and continue cooperation…. and to keep the security situation predictable" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 10). Further, the country "strives to increase international cooperation" and stability in the Arctic region at many levels (ibid: 52). Rather, these strategies embrace a broad understanding of security and stress the importance of comprehensive security by promoting "safety in the wide sense", as Finland's strategy does (ibid: 10).

Or, there is an emphasis on environmental security and response measures against accidents and environmental emergencies, as the Icelandic report does. Iceland aims to address its "broadly defined security interests in the Arctic region through civilian means and working against any kind of militarisation of the Arctic". For Sweden security policy challenges of the Arctic are "not of military nature", and through its policies, Sweden "will work to ensure that the Arctic remains a region where security policy tensions are low" and emphasizes the importance of "an approach based on a broad concept of security, and that the sue of civil instruments is preferable to military means" (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011: 2).

In addition, international cooperation is mentioned as a main priority, meaning that security should be increased through better international cooperation, as Iceland's report highlights. These strategies also emphasize the use of international treaties in the Arctic, where the likelihood of a military confrontation or armed conflict is very low. This is seen to be a good, maybe even the best, way to guarantee national security without warfare, so that indeed, the Arctic region will stay as a stable and peaceful region.

Similarities: All the strategies recognize, and many of them emphasize, the current stability of the Arctic region. They also include the aspect of comprehensive security, either in general or in regards to climate change.

Differences: The strategies of the five littoral states emphasize state sovereignty and defence. Unlike the rest, Finland, Iceland and Sweden, emphasize comprehensive, or broadly defined, security.

Economic and Business Development

Promoting economic development including exploitation of natural resources is one of the four pillars in the Canadian Arctic policy, the Arctic is a region with "dynamic economic growth and trade" which provides the possibility of a "vibrant, prosperous future for all" (Government of Canada, 2009: 2). Canada's Strategy ties together social and economic development, since in Canada's vision, the Arctic is a region where "self-reliant individuals live in healthy communities" (ibid: 22), the exploitation of natural resources is still high in the country's priorities.

The Kingdom of Denmark is expecting "a multi-faceted boom" in the Arctic region, as the changes in climatic conditions, combined with technological developments, are making the region's "vast economic potential more accessible" (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 9). Here an "overriding political priority for the Kingdom and particularly in Greenland to seize the many opportunities in the Arctic to create more growth and development" by respecting the Arctic peoples' cultures (ibid: 23). Consequently, the Kingdom's Strategy has a strong emphasis on (new) industrial activities in addition to fisheries, such as hydropower, mining, tourism, oil exploration, and other minerals and energy resources which are viewed as critical to development in Greenland.

The Finnish strategy paints a picture of the Arctic region as possessing "considerable economic potential that can be of benefit to Finland" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 8). Finland defines the increase in Arctic maritime traffic and natural resource exploitation in the region as business opportunities, and sees that it can benefit from the Arctic developments through its Arctic expertise, know-how and research, the "Finnish know-how", which are internationally recognized and "must be utilized and supported" for example, in the large and mega-projects of the Barents Region (ibid: 8 and 18-21).

The Icelandic Arctic policy outlines the aim to secure Iceland's multiple interests "with regard to the effects of climate change, environmental issues, natural resources, navigation and social development" (Althingi, 2011: 1). Among these interests are economic activities

and resource development with high importance including renewable energy and the fishing industry (Utanrikisraduneytid, 2009: 31-39).

In the Norwegian High North strategy, one of the "Government's most important priorities in the years ahead will be to take advantage of the opportunities in the High North" (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006: 5) including economic and (maritime) business activities, particularly sustainable use of offshore petroleum and renewable marine resources, and marine industries, such as bioprospecting (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009: 18-25). For strengthening economic growth in the High North "knowledge, innovation and exploitation of the inherent advantages of the region are key elements" (ibid: 59). Norway is very actively engaged in activities of oil and natural gas drilling, and consequently its strategy (re)defines the High North as a "new petroleum province" (ibid: 18).

Through its Arctic policy, Russia aims to turn the current situation of its Arctic characterized by "remoteness from basic industrial centers, high resource consumption and dependence of economic activities and life-support of the population on deliveries of fuel, foodstuffs and essential commodities from other regions of Russia" (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009). Further, Russia aims to make its Arctic region to become "a strategic resource base" and "solution of problems of social and economic development" of the whole federation (ibid). Russia also ties social and economic development together in its State Policy and would like to "develop the Arctic resources base through improved technological capabilities" (ibid).

Sweden sees the Arctic region as "rich in natural resources", such as forest, fish, energy and minerals and with new opportunities and "potential for further development and greater growth in several areas" (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011: 25-26). Economic development and business interests, such as mining, petroleum and forestry, and expanding free trade (of both the entire Arctic and the Barents Region) are identified as playing an important role for the Swedish economy and its further development. Consequently, in the Swedish strategy, economic development is highlighted as one of the priority areas of the country's Arctic strategy, and also tied with Swedish research and industries, and their Arctic and environmental expertise.

The US policy deals with issues related to economic development to a lesser extent and in less detail. However, the growing awareness of the Arctic being "rich in resources" is among

the factors motivating the U.S. strategy (White House, 2009: 2). It aims to safeguard the country's interests in the region, such as energy development, and "to balance access to, and development of, energy and other natural resources with the protection of the Arctic environment (White House, 2009: 7-8).

Correspondingly, transportation, mostly meaning shipping and transport on sea routes, is among the priorities or objectives of the strategies of Finland, Iceland, Russia and the US: Finland's interests are more in winter shipping and ship-building. The island-state of Iceland has a particularly strong emphasis on shipping and northern sea routes, such as trans-arctic routes, and also on aviation. Russia is here the master of Arctic transportation due to the experiences from the use of the NSR. The US state policy prefers "to facilitate safe, secure, and reliable navigation" as well as to protect maritime commerce and the environment.

Similarities: All the Arctic states are aware and explicitly discuss, even emphasize, the Arctic's economic potential due to its rich natural resources and/or strategic location for the whole country.

Generally this refers to exploitation of natural resources, both renewable resources and non-renewable ones, particularly fossil energy resources. Indeed, based on the Arctic strategies, the offshore petroleum industry seems to be the main economic activity and business opportunity in the Arctic region of the early-21st century.

In addition and related to vast or considerable economic potential more immaterial values are explicitly discussed in the strategies – for example Canada (on healthy communities), the Kingdom of Denmark (on Arctic peoples' cultures), Finland (on expertise, know-how), Iceland (on sustainable development of resources), Norway (on competitiveness, knowledge), Russia (on social and economic development) and Sweden (on sustainable development).

Differences: The Kingdom of Denmark's and Norway's strategies emphasize "new" economic activities and industries in the Arctic, mostly meaning offshore fossil fuels and minerals. At the same time they emphasize the use of renewable (marine) resources. By contrast Iceland's report emphasizes the fishing industry, practiced in a sustainable way, as well as shipping and aviation. Finland's strategy emphasizes transport and ship-building.

The strategies of Finland, Iceland, Russia and the US, all list increased transportation among their priorities or objectives. Of those, Iceland and Russia emphasize the use of (cross-polar) air routes.

Sustainable and Regional Development

In many cases the rhetoric used indicates a more comprehensive and sophisticated method to link the utilization of natural resources to sustainable use of natural resources, particularly renewable resources. This linkage can be found for example in the Kingdom of Denmark's strategy which promotes that "[A]ll living resources must be developed and exploited sustainably based on an ecosystem management" and aim to use renewable energy resources (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 32). The Icelandic report emphasizes "sustainable" and "long-term economic" development, particularly in terms of ensuring their full share in sustainable fisheries (Utanrikisraduneytid, 2009: 31-39), and the Icelandic Arctic policy outlines the aim of sustainable utilization of resources to safeguard long-term sustainable development (Althingi, 2011: 2). Norway's strategy intends to be the best steward of environmental and natural resources in the High North, and therefore, high environmental standards will be set for all exploitation of natural resources with a particular emphasis on the protection of "vulnerable areas against negative environmental pressures and impacts". And, the US State policy also asks to ensure that natural resource management and economic development are environmentally sustainable (White House, 2009: 8-9).

Correspondingly, the Canadian strategy mentions "promoting social and economic development" and to build and improve "self-sufficient, vibrant, and healthy Northern communities" (Government of Canada, 2009: 14). Russia intends "to modernize and develop the infrastructure of the Arctic transport system and fisheries" (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009).

Concerning regionalism, meaning regional economic development and regional infrastructure, Finland's strategy includes the development of regional transport, communication and logistic networks of North Finland (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 24-25). The Icelandic report emphasizes the role of Akureyri and the importance of the University of Akureyri. Correspondingly, in addition to Svalbard – which has a special status and role in Arctic research due to its unique position in, and access to, the Arctic – the

Norwegian strategy mentions a few important northern universities and other knowledge-based institutions, and towns in North Norway, such as Tromsø and Kirkenes (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009: 84-88). Finally, the Russian state policy is (almost) all about the Russian Arctic, while at the same time, it is strongly linked with, and supported, by other federal policies.

Similarities: The rhetoric of sustainable development/sustainability, when talking about the utilization of natural resources, is present in all the Arctic strategies. Consequently, all of them emphasize the sustainable use of energy resources.

Differences: The strategies of the Kingdom of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Russia take into consideration regional policy emphasizing the role of the northernmost regions of the country. In the case of the Danish Realm the positions of the Faroe Islands and Greenland, particularly the new status of Greenland, are emphasized. The Finnish strategy takes into consideration the development of regional transport, logistic and communication networks.

Environmental Protection and Climate Change

Canada's Northern strategy lists protecting the North's environmental heritage as one of the "four equally important and mutually reinforcing priorities" of the Canadian Northern policy (Government of Canada, 2009: 2). Canada aims to "protect the environment in a predictable, effective and efficient manner" (ibid: 15), demonstrate its role "to play in the ongoing stewardship of the Canadian Arctic, its vast resources" and this magnificent ecological region (ibid: 8), improve infrastructure and contribute to "a cleaner environment" (ibid: 17), and enhance its efforts on other pressing environmental issues.

The Kingdom of Denmark's strategy describes the climate, nature and wildlife of the Arctic as "fragile" and "unique", which "must be managing based on the best possible scientific knowledge and standards for protection" (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 43). The environmental dimension of the strategy focuses on strategic priorities "to improve knowledge building on the consequences of rapid climate change and to strengthen the protection of the environment and biodiversity" (ibid: 43).

The Finnish strategy devotes the first content chapter to the "Fragile Arctic Nature", and its fragility especially in the northern regions of Finland is emphasized. It underscores that environmental issues are not a "separate sector of their own; instead they are an important

element of a wider whole", and "must be taken into account in all activities in the region" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 13-14). The strategy also gives special attention "to measures that would support the adaptation of livelihoods dependent on the Arctic environment", and aims to support the development of regional climate models, and recognized biodiversity (ibid: 15-17).

For Iceland "ecological issues" are among the issues calling for a special response. The environment is discussed as "an intrinsic element of security" understood in a comprehensive sense: on one hand, its protection is to take place through international cooperation (Althingi, 2011: 1), and on the other hand, it is tied together with resource development which is of high importance for Iceland (Utanrikisraduneytid, 2009: 31-39). The Icelandic document also refers to the new shipping routes which are expected to be open as a result of decreasing sea ice (ibid: 42-46).

The Norwegian strategy characterizes the Arctic both as "The region of opportunity", but also as "vulnerable", where increased traffic and petroleum activities have posed risks and challenges to Norway as a coastal state (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009). According to the High North strategy, Norway is a leading nation as regards environmental policy and its determination to be "the best steward of resources in the High North" (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006: 13 and 55).

In the Russian policy the preservation of "unique ecological systems" of the Arctic is defined to be as a "basic national interest". Further, "preservation and maintenance of the Arctic environment", as a part of environmental security is seen as one of the main challenges which requires a solution, and consequently it is one of the basic objectives of the state policy. (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009)

In the Swedish strategy climate and the environment are defined as one of the three major thematic areas, where Sweden commits to strengthening the efforts to combat environmental degradation in the Barents region and elsewhere in the Arctic (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011: 19-24). In order to achieve its goals, "Sweden has contributed to greater global understanding of climate change" via long measurement series, and in order to increase knowledge about the effects of global warming "current research cooperation and network-building need to move towards more integrated research" and to strengthen joint efforts through international forums, such as the EU and the UN bodies, and sensitive areas

from exploitation, promoting Swedish environmental technology (ibid: 23-24). Sweden's strategy also emphasizes biodiversity.

The US strategy describes the Arctic and its environment as "unique and changing", and due to increased human activity "fragile". Consequently, the State policy aims to "protect the Arctic environment and conserve its biological resources", and environmental protection is listed as a "national interest" and Arctic environmental research, monitoring and vulnerability assessments as "top priorities" (White House, 2009: 8-9).

In the strategies of the Kingdom of Denmark, Norway and Sweden climate/climate change is explicitly mentioned in the priorities/priority areas. Interestingly, the Kingdom's 2011 Strategy mentions the Arctic's fragile climate, while the Denmark/Greenland's draft strategy said that climate change "will increase accessibility and opportunities for exploration". The first priority area of the Norwegian strategy is "Developing knowledge about climate change and the environment in the High North". And in addition to biodiversity, Sweden's strategy also emphasizes research on climate and the environment.

Similarities: Environmental protection including climate change is explicitly defined as one of the priorities and/or basic objectives of all of the Arctic strategies.

The strategies of Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden explicitly mention the environmental protection as one of the priority areas. In the US State Policy environmental protection is mentioned as one of the policy objectives. The strategies of the Kingdom of Denmark, Norway and Sweden explicitly mention climate change as a priority area.

Differences: When it comes to describing the nature, or ecosystem, and climate of the Arctic, the term "unique" is used by the Kingdom of Denmark, Sweden, Russia and the USA. The term "fragile" is used by the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and the USA. The term "vulnerable" is used by Norway and Sweden. The term "environmental heritage" is used by Canada.

Canada, Finland, Iceland and Russia recognize, even emphasize, that the environment is not a separate sector (of its own) but an element of a wider whole, such as sovereignty in the case of Canada, security for Iceland, and environmental security in the case of Russia.

In addition to aiming to protect the environment Canada and Norway seek to demonstrate "stewardship" of the environment. The Kingdom of Denmark underlines that the Arctic nature must be managed based on the best (possible) scientific knowledge and standards for protection. Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden also mention "environmental technology", and the Kingdom of Denmark refers to green technology in the context of energy.

Safety, Search and Rescue, and Management

Safety, and search and rescue, is substantially discussed and also emphasized in the Arctic strategies, not least due to the recent legally-binding Search and Rescue agreement under the auspices of the AC. Canada's vision for the Arctic is a stable region with undisputed sovereignty, clearly defined boundaries and maritime safety. The last one is crucial in remote, isolated and coastal communities and requests "expanding and modernizing the Canadian rangers … for assisting with search and rescue" (Government of Canada, 2009: 10). The Canadian strategy also seeks to improve Northern governance. The Kingdom of Denmark's view is to ensure the Arctic as "[A] peaceful, secure and safe" region characterized by "close cooperation with our international partners" (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 11). An important part of this aim is maritime safety which is mentioned as a "fundamental priority" (ibid: 13). The strategy also makes a linkage between the importance of security and protecting the economic base of Greenland's economy. Correspondingly, Finland defines increasing sea transport currently as "the biggest threat to Arctic marine ecosystems" and states that the "regulations concerning the safety of shipping" are "badly inadequate" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 28).

The Icelandic Resolution states that for Iceland it is important to "take full part in cooperation on Arctic fisheries management" for to protect "straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks" (Althingi, 2011: 9) as well as to strengthen cooperation with other countries on preparedness and response measures against maritime accidents and environmental emergencies (Utanrikisraduneytid, 2009: 28-29). The Norwegian strategy discusses safety and security in several contexts and levels. For Norway, the security policy situation in the Arctic region is complex with a broad range of different risk factors, such as climate change having "an impact on the security of countries and people" (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006: 14), and that energy is included as a facet of security policy. Therefore strengthening the cooperation with Russia is needed to increase stability in

the post-Cold War Barents Sea region (ibid: 18-19). The strategy also ties monitoring and emergency response to oil spills in with maritime safety systems in Northern waters.

The Russian policy declares the "maintenance of the Arctic as a zone of peace and cooperation" as one of its "basic national interests" and pays attention to the environmental dimension of security (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009). However, the policy also adopts a comprehensive approach by aiming to create "a uniform Arctic search and rescue regime" (ibid). The Swedish strategy refers to the need for maritime security, safe navigation, and sea and air rescue, which is not surprising due to their locations on both sides of the Baltic Sea (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011: 28-30). The US policy explicitly mentions safety and security of maritime transport "to facilitate safe, secure, and reliable navigation" and protect the environment (White House, 2009: 6-7).

Similarities: All the Arctic strategies emphasize the importance of safety and security of and in the Arctic, meaning mostly maritime safety. Most of them interpret the vision for the Arctic as a safe area or stable region.

Since 'governance' can be understood to mean almost everything dealing with the environment and management of natural resources, it is no surprise that governance and management (of resources) are among, or integrated in, the priorities and objectives of all the strategies, and explicitly mentioned by most of them.

Differences: There are no obvious differences on safety, search and rescue, and management.

Human Dimension and Peoples

The Canadian strategy requires supporting healthy communities and human wellbeing in the North, since "Canada's North is first and foremost about people" (Government of Canada, 2009: 3). By having the promotion of economic and social development and improvement of northern governance among the equally important priority areas Canada relates the social dimension to development, although human dimension is not explicitly among the four priorities and thus, claims to allocate "more resources and attention to the Northern issues than at any time" (ibid: Message from the Honourable Chuck Strahl).

As well as the Kingdom of Denmark's strategy emphasizes cooperation on human health and social coherence, and its policy is said to be "first and foremost a strategy for a development that benefits the inhabitants of the Arctic" (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 10).

Finland relates this issue to climate change, pollution, biodiversity and economic development, and the participation of Northern indigenous peoples, particularly the Sámi, when dealing with their own affairs and decisions that affect them. The Finnish strategy states that Finland "continues to work for the rights of indigenous peoples" for example, by strengthening education and culture in the Sámi languages, and seeks for a solution "that meets the minimum requirements for removing the barriers preventing ratification" of the ILO Convention 169. (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 30-33)

Iceland refers to people, and culture, in general terms and states that the unique cultural heritages and cultural identities of Arctic communities should be preserved (Utanrikisraduneytid, 2009: 54-57). Norway's strategy aims to "lay foundations for sustainable economic and social development", and therefore the seventh priority is to "safeguard the culture and livelihoods of indigenous peoples" (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009: 42-44), and develop contact between people, particularly with the Russians (ibid: 54-57). The Russian policy is above all an interior document with a focus on domestic issues also related to social and economic development, and would like "to improve the quality of life for indigenous peoples" (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009).

The Swedish strategy highlights "the human dimension" in general, but a special attention is paid to indigenous peoples as well as "other groups with traditional lifestyle", particularly the Sámi and their cultures and languages (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011: 35-40). The US policy mostly emphasizes national security, freedom of the seas and external affairs, but explicitly mentions the status of social development and "the lives of Arctic inhabitants, particularly indigenous communities", which should be safeguarded and improved (White House, 2009: 7).

Similarities: 'Human dimension' and/or 'social dimension' – either meaning the resident population in general, or particularly indigenous peoples - is explicitly discussed in the strategies of all the Arctic states.

All the strategies discuss Indigenous peoples, and take into consideration and underline their rights, or traditional cultures and languages.

Differences: Canada's Strategy requires supporting healthy communities and human wellbeing in the North, and the Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy emphasizes Arctic cooperation on human health and social coherence.

Indigenous peoples are explicitly emphasized in the priorities of the Finnish, Norwegian and Russian strategies. Interestingly, the Kingdom of Denmark and Norway have ratified the ILO 169, while Finland and Sweden have not (though the Finnish strategy discusses that); and in Iceland there are no indigenous peoples.

Research and Knowledge

Research including international cooperation on research (and monitoring) is explicitly mentioned as a highlight in the Iceland report and a priority in the US state policy to promote "international scientific cooperation" (White House, 2009: 5). Correspondingly, the strategy of the Kingdom of Denmark and that of Norway emphasize knowledge on climate change and its impacts. In the Canadian strategy "Arctic science", including the International Polar Year and the aim to remain "a global leader in Arctic science", is keenly connected with the priority areas of "Protecting our Environmental Heritage" (Government of Canada, 2009: 24-26).

In the rest of the strategies, research is implicitly integrated: the Finnish strategy mentions "technology-based expertise" and "Finnish know-how" and integrated them with economic activities (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 18-21). One of the priorities of the Russian state policy is "technological capabilities" (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2009). Finally, the Swedish strategy has research on climate and the environment as one of the sub-priorities under "Climate and the Environment", and "Climate and environmental research" (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011: 19-24). A few reports of the AC, such as the ACIA, the AHDR and the AMSA, are mentioned in the Arctic strategies of Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway. In the cases of Iceland and Sweden the University of the Arctic, and higher education, is mentioned.

Similarities: Research and knowledge, meaning science, technology and monitoring, and international cooperation on research (and monitoring), is either explicitly mentioned as a priority, or an objective, by all of the Arctic strategies.

Differences: Research is explicitly highlighted as a priority in the Iceland report and the US State Policy, and implicitly integrated in the Finnish and Swedish strategies. The strategy of the Kingdom of Denmark and that of Norway emphasize knowledge on climate change and its impacts.

International Cooperation

International cooperation per se as well as several international organizations for cooperation are explicitly mentioned in all of the Arctic strategies. When it comes to prioritizing which organizations to connect and cooperate with, there are inconsistencies between the strategies: all of them explicitly mention the Arctic Council and cooperation within the Council; the strategies of Canada, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and the USA emphasize the Council as an important or major venue for multilateral cooperation and policy dialogue. The Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy would like to strengthen cooperation within the Council, though it emphasizes the importance of cooperation between the 'Arctic 5' as well as that of NATO (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 49-55). By contrast, Iceland states that the AC member states "must be prevented from joining forces to exclude other Member States from important decisions", which primarily refers to the Ilulissat and Chelsea ministerial meetings of the 'Arctic 5' (Althingi, 2011: 6).

The intergovernmental and international organizations mentioned in most of the strategies include the United Nations, UNCLOS and the IMO. As regional organizations or bodies, the EU Northern Dimension as well as and the BEAC are mentioned in most of the strategies. When it comes to bilateral cooperation, other Arctic states are usually mentioned as close partners. For example, in the case of Finland, Norway and Russia are mentioned, and in the case of Norway, cooperation with Russia and "good neighbourly relations with Russia" and the Russians are emphasized (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009: 54-57).

What is a bit surprising here, is a lack of global perspective, particularly so in a time and world of globalization, or when considering that climate change is very much a global

phenomenon, and the strategic role of the Arctic region is growing within world politics and the globalized world economy. Most of the strategies require international/global action to respond to climate change, however the Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy and that of Finland take into consideration and discuss a world-wide, global perspective in more general terms: The Kingdom's Strategy states that the vast changes in the Arctic are one of the most significant global issues, such as the global rise in sea levels, refers to the global community (Kingdom of Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011: 9-11), and asks "Global solutions to global challenges" in one sub-title (see ibid: 49-51). Consequently, it is necessary to strengthen the Realm's status as a "global player in the Arctic" (ibid: 11). The Finnish strategy describes the Arctic as having new potential that stresses its strategic importance and global significance, and that of the Arctic climate "for the global climate" (Prime Minister's Office, 2010: 9-10 and 14). The Strategy also names the European Union as a "global Arctic player" (ibid: 45-47).

Similarities: International cooperation per se as well as several international organizations for cooperation is explicitly mentioned in all the Arctic strategies. The AC is also mentioned by all of them, and emphasized as a major venue for international cooperation in the Arctic by most of them.

Differences: Unlike the other strategies, the Kingdom of Denmark's Strategy and that of Finland adopt a world-wide and global perspective.

Conclusion

The Arctic states are still the most important, though not any more the only, actors in the Arctic region and Northern (geo)politics, not least due to the fact that the entire region is legally and politically divided by the national borders of these states. The Arctic of the 21st century is stable and peaceful without armed conflicts or the likelihood thereof, and this state of affairs depends to a great deal on the Arctic states and their policies, and the criteria by which they make their decisions. This is supported and promoted by the existing institutional structures for international and regional cooperation: first, the AC, the major forum for both intergovernmental and other cross-border cooperation on Arctic affairs, which is much enriched by the knowledgeable contributions of its Permanent Participants and other non-state actors. Second, there is UNCLOS with enough rules and procedure

(such as the legal rights accorded to the Arctic Ocean's littoral states to make submissions to claim, and thus utilize the resources, of the continental shelf of the Ocean) to keep states 'cool' and careful neither to break the 'rules' nor feel a need for a new or different regime.

The position of the Arctic states is, however, changing – changing for the second time since the end of the Cold War, when stability and peace-building through international cooperation became the ultimate aim instead of confrontation. There are two other perspectives that deserve more attention and may enable an approach to Arctic geopolitics that goes beyond the familiar terms of conflict and cooperation: first, a significant and rapid environmental, geo-economic and geopolitical change has occurred in the Arctic region due to climate change, and also because this vast, resource-rich region is under pressure for an increased utilization of its rich (energy) resources. Second, the Arctic's geo-strategic importance is increasing, the region is playing a more important role in world politics, and there is growing international and global interest toward the region, for example, by Asian and European non-Arctic states.

Consequently, the Arctic states are on the one hand, more interested in and active in exploiting the vast natural resources, particularly off-shore hydrocarbons, of the Arctic region; and on the other hand, placing more strategic emphasis on (state) sovereignty, particularly maritime sovereignty, and national interests linked to climate change or energy security, as evidenced by the exclusive ministerial meetings of the Arctic Ocean states. Taking this into consideration, a world-wide, global perspective is surprisingly little discussed in most of the strategies, which is not due to ignorance, but is more tactical and demonstrates some sort of deliberate calculation.

A final indicator and reflection of the newly enhanced importance of the Arctic region, and partly as a response to multifunctional changes that have taken place in the region, is that all eight Arctic states have in a short time period (within 2008-2011) approved their own national strategy or state policies on Arctic and Northern affairs, setting national priorities/priority areas and objectives, as this paper has shown. Further, the Arctic states have (re)defined themselves as Arctic/Northern countries or nations, and would like to become natural, real, or major, actors/players, or even (global) leaders or powers, in the Arctic, or in some field of Northern affairs.

An interesting development is that a second round of adaptations and launches of national strategies has already started: first with the 2009 version of the Norwegian High North Strategy; second, with the 2011 'final' strategy of the Kingdom of Denmark; and finally, even the 2012 European Union Commission's Communication on the Arctic. We might now expect other updated strategies of the Arctic states already in the near future. It will also be interesting to see who will be the first non-Arctic state to adopt a public Arctic strategy, policy or agenda. Here the EU Commission's Communications, both in 2008 and 2012 are not quite enough, since the EU is a supranational entity and three of the Arctic states are among its members. However it does indicate the growing interest of the Union toward the Arctic region and potential for a more formulated Arctic policy.

Notes

1. This paper is only concerned with the Arctic states and their strategies, and does not include the European Union's policies and activities on Arctic policies despite the fact that the EU Commission has launched its Communication on the Arctic in 2008 and up-dated it in 2012 (see Commission of the European Communities, 2008 and 2012; also Heininen, 2011).
2. See also the study on the five littoral states of the Arctic Ocean by Brosnan et al. (2011), which uses the following six themes: sovereignty, scientific research, resource development, shipping, environmental concerns, and governance.

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