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Master's thesis

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The European Union and Norway in the Arctic: Conflict or cooperation?

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A study of the European Union and Norway's Arctic relationship

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Acronyms

A5	Arctic Five
A8	Arctic Eight
AC	Arctic Council
ACIA	Arctic Climate Impact Assessment
ALDE	Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe
AMAP	Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme
ATS	Antarctic Treaty System
BEAC	Barents Euro-Arctic Council
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
Commission	European Commission
Council	Council of the European Union (Council of Ministers)
DAMOCLES	Developing Arctic Modeling and Observing Capabilities for Long-term Environmental Studies
DG Environment	Directorate-General for the Environment
DG MARE	Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformist
EDP	European Democratic Party
EEA	European Economic Area
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ELDR	European Liberal Democrats and Reform Party
EP	European Parliament
EPP	European People's Party
EU	European Union
FAC	Foreign Affairs Council
FPZ	Fisheries Protection Zone
GAERC	General Affairs and External Relations Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	High Representative
IMO	International Maritime Organization

IMP	Integrated Maritime Policy
IPY	International Polar Year
IR	International Relations
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEP	Northeast Passage (also known as NSR)
NOU	Official Norwegian Reports
ND	Northern Dimension
Nm	Nautical miles
NOK	Norwegian Kroner
NSR	Northern Sea Route (the same as the NEP)
NWP	Northwest Passage
PMO	Office of the Prime Minister
U.S.	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
USD	United States Dollar
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWII	Second World War / World War II

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1 Introduction

The Arctic[1] has once again become a geostrategic area of importance. This is illustrated by the escalation of interest in Arctic Affairs in practical politics, academic literature and in the media in the latest decades (Hønneland & Stokke, 2007). The renewed focus on the Circumpolar North derives from a number of changes that together are transforming the Arctic in "profound, irreversible and transformative ways" (Young, 2011, p. 186). Of all the changes, climate change seems to be at the very "heart of the issue" (Howard, 2009, p. 7). The effects of the climate changes are paradoxical. On the one hand, they raise concern among political leaders about the risk of rising sea levels and global impacts on coastal communities, water resources and human health. On the other hand, new economic possibilities in the High North arise as a result of climate change and of the melting of ice (Holdhus, 2010, p. 1).

The opportunities and challenges have resulted in the region being increasingly interpreted as a potential zone of conflict. For instance, Åtland (2010) claims that even though the chances of a traditional military conflict in the Arctic are lower than they were during the Cold War, the scenario has not been eliminated (p. 41). Classical geopolitics and realist assumptions are steadily more applied to the Arctic, a phenomenon disclosed in academic literature and public discourse through the use of descriptions of the Arctic in negative terms (Blunden, 2009; Emmerson, 2010; Fairhall, 2010; Sale & Potapov, 2010). When applying realism to the Arctic, emphasis is put on how conflicting interests may jeopardize the stability of the region. The Arctic is then interpreted to be on the verge of, or at least of having the possibility of becoming an unstable region (Blunden, 2009, p. 137).

At the same time, there is a complex framework for cooperation in the High North. The Arctic Governance system is made up of a number of regional institutions preoccupied

[1]The Arctic, a vast geographical area encircling the North Pole, has a number of distinctive characteristics such as harsh climate and vulnerability. Different definitions and interpretations of the region exist. These tend to vary according to geographical, as well as administrative and political aspects (AMAP, 2003). The definition of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) has gained ground due to its flexible approach that encompasses sub-arctic areas as well as more typical Arctic areas (ACIA, 2004). Consequently, it includes many of the different areas of the Arctic; "the terrestrial and marine areas north of the Arctic Circle (66°32'N), and north of 62°N in Asia and 60°N in North America, modified to include the marine areas north of the Aleutian chain, Hudson Bay, and parts of the North Atlantic Ocean including the Labrador Sea" (AMAP, 2003). The UN, in its Arctic Human Development Report, has adopted AMAP's definition which displays its strength and acknowledgment (United Nations Human Development Reports, 2004). Hence, the AMAP definition will be applied in the present thesis. Furthermore, the Arctic will go by several names: the Arctic, the Circumpolar North, the High North and the far North in order to create variations in the text. All these refer to the same geographical area.

with Arctic questions, such as the Arctic Council (AC)[2] and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)[3]. Moreover, the Arctic and Arctic waters are subject to the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).[4] The Arctic States,[5] are therefore working on the delineation of the outer limits of their continental shelf in accordance with the provisions of the UNCLOS. Thus, both compromise and cooperation are central characteristics of Arctic Affairs.

Evidently, the High North is a region where the line between conflict and cooperation is thin. This line is arguably becoming even thinner as a result of the current geopolitical changes. In this regard, Young (2011) argues that the Arctic is at a "historic turning point" where the future might be characterized by peaceful co-existence and multilateral cooperation, or on the contrary, of confrontation and conflict (p. 191). The present thesis analyzes the Arctic relationship between the European Union (EU) and Norway in order to shed light on the debate of the Arctic as a zone of conflict or cooperation.

1.1 Research question

A complex web of actors operates in the Arctic. The Arctic States, such as Norway, have their northernmost territories in the region, as well as deep physical and psychological roots to the Circumpolar North (Watson, 2009, p. 325). The High North has been the Norwegian Government's "most important strategic priority area" since 2005 (PMO, 2005). In this regard, Oslo has launched two High North Strategies to clarify priorities, as well as national interests in the far North. The Arctic has also become an area of interest for non-Arctic actors, such as the EU. External and internal factors have driven Brussels towards the North, such as the enormous economic potential and the need to develop and sustain the EU's global role (Archer, 2011). As a result, the EU and its member states have started the process of

[2]The Arctic Council is an intergovernmental forum that promotes cooperation between the Arctic States (AC, 1996). See section 3.4 for details.
[3] BEAC is a regional institution preoccupied with Arctic Affairs. It was established by Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the European Commission in 1993. Its objectives are diverse and address several issues simultaneously, such as promoting sustainable development, as well as environmental and economic cooperation. Integrated into all the activities of the institution is the commitment to the environment (BEAC, 1993, para. 14).
[4] See chapter three (section 3.3.1) for an explanation of the UNCLOS
[5] The Arctic States are the eight countries who have their northernmost territories in the far North: Canada, Denmark (encompassing Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States (U.S.). Five of these are Arctic costal states, namely Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia, and the U.S.

developing a European Union Arctic Policy. They have done so, despite the fact that the Arctic States have been reluctant to let the EU in.

The relationship between Brussels and Oslo has been seen as successful, both from EU and Norwegian points of view (Council, 2010; NOU, 2012). The relationship is built on strong economic and political ties, as Norway is closely associated to the EU by the virtue of the European Economic Agreement (EEA).[6] When it comes to Arctic Affairs, the EU and Norway participate in regional bodies and policies, such as BEAC and the ND. With the development of an EU Arctic Policy, however, it has become increasingly evident that the interests of Brussels and Oslo are not necessarily compatible regarding Arctic questions (Offerdal, 2011, p. 21). Their collaborative abilities have therefore been put to the test in the High North.

The present thesis analyzes the relationship between the EU and Norway in the Arctic, to put the current debate on the High North as a zone of conflict or cooperation into perspective. The fact that the EU and Norway are known for being good partners emphasizes the need to understand why Arctic questions have led to clashes between the parties. The present thesis is therefore based on the following research question:

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To be able to answer the question, it is necessary to analyze the development of the EU and Norway's Arctic Policies separately before comparing them. Their High North Policies are cross-sectoral, covering a wide range of policy areas. Despite this, the study concentrates on the foreign policy dimension, while the domestic dimension is left out. By doing so, the question of the EU and Norway in the Arctic, becomes a question about the foreign relations between two actors. This opens up for the use of IR-theories, such as defensive realism that is applied in the present study. The thesis' time frame stretches primarily from mid-2000 up until April 2012, as this is the period when both the EU and Norway started developing their current Arctic Policies. The study is therefore an analysis of the situation in the Arctic today, based on empirical data from the last decade. The aim is to evaluate the current potential for conflict and cooperation, along with the future potential.

[6] The EEA went into force in 1994 and aimed at establishing "a dynamic and homogeneous European Economic Area" between the signatories, EU and the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) (EUR-lex, 1992, preamble). In practice this signifies that Norway is given access to the Internal Market, and at the same time is obligated to adapt to all relevant EU law. To ensure equal conditions for trade and competition between the two partners, competition law, regulations concerning the four freedoms as well as government subsidies are key areas of importance (Archer & Sogner, 1998, pp. 46-49).

It is also necessary to clarify the present thesis' definition of "conflict" in order to understand the proper meaning of the word in international relations (IR). Conflict is "a social condition that arises when two or more actors pursue mutually exclusive or mutually incompatible goals" (Evans & Newnham, 1998, p. 193).[7] Furthermore, "conflict behavior" is action taken by the parties displayed either through hostility or tension (Nicholson, 1992, p. 13). A conflict is therefore not necessarily a situation where military means are deployed. Evidently, conflicts vary in intensity, severity and duration. A conflict is therefore a situation where two or more parties have opposing goals and/or interests, which can be solved in different ways.

1.2. Previous research

The renewed interest in the Circumpolar North, primarily from the early 2000s, has led to a vast amount of literature covering Arctic questions. To gain an overview of previous studies, it is helpful to categorize it into different groups. Authors can be sorted according to their outlook on the far North as 1) a zone of conflict, or on the contrary as 2) a region of cooperation. It is an interesting observation that authors analyzing the circumpolar region as a whole tend to have a more pessimistic view on the possibilities of Arctic cooperation, while scholars studying specific actors' policies seem to arrive at more positive conclusions.

The scholars within the first category, who interpret the Arctic as a zone of conflict, are many. These scholars focus on the geopolitical changes in the High North, and tend to perceive Arctic Affairs through the perspective of *realpolitik.* Sale and Potapov (2010) are the authors who are the easiest to place within this category, because of their clear-cut focus on the Arctic conflict potential. They describe Arctic Affairs as a power game where states compete for national interests against one another. They recognize the existence of international organizations and regimes governing the Arctic, but criticize these for being "toothless" (p. 141). Furthermore, they argue that the collaborative endeavors cannot hinder external factors, such as an increase of oil prices, from leading to a struggle for Arctic resources. In this regard, they assert that the "…scramble for the Arctic will result in a new, and far more dangerous, Cold War" (p. 196).

[7] Scholars within different theoretical approaches have various understanding of the concept of conflict, and the chances of avoiding them. See chapter two for an analysis of the realist school of thought's outlook on conflict and conflict prevention.

Fairhall (2010) has adopted a similar, but a more nuanced, approach to the far North. He is placed within the first category as he asserts that there "is conflict ahead in Arctic waters". In similarity with Sale and Potapov, he points to how unexpected incidents, such as a major offshore oil spill, could lead to a conflict. Despite that, he observes that "…there are solid reasons why the main players in the [A]rctic arena should avoid confrontation" (p. 188). Blunden (2009) emphasizes power politics as well, and claims that there is a problem of Arctic stability. However, she has a greater belief in multilateral cooperation than the abovementioned scholars, as she claims that a number of Arctic issues are suitable to be addressed with joint efforts (p. 133). According to Blunden, the best model for Arctic behavior is the Norwegian Government's three-folded approach of deterrence, reassurance and engagement.[8] The nuanced approach of these authors is valuable for the analysis in the present thesis, which aims at assessing both collaborative efforts and Arctic conflicts.

Young (2011) has distanced himself even more from what he claims to be "wishful thinking and the rigid premises of Realist thinking" (p. 186). He has criticized Sale and Potapov for focusing solely on issues such as Arctic resource extraction and shipping opportunities. He argues that to build ones arguments on "scenarios or projections that may occur sometime in the future" is not fruitful (Young, 2011, p. 188). Young has therefore proposed a different set of sources of conflict. Young's classification is applied in chapter three of the present thesis (but with some modifications), as it is an advantageous approach that allows for a thorough analysis of the Arctic. Despite the use of a different set of sources of conflict, Young arrives at the conclusion that there is no certainty that the Arctic will continue to be a "zone of peace" in the future (p. 189).

Åtland (2007) can also be placed within the category of scholars focusing on the Arctic as a potential zone of conflict. In comparison with the abovementioned authors, Åtland applies securitization theory in his work. Securitizing theory appeared as a response to the polarized debate over a constructivist versus a more traditionalist concept of security in the 1980s. Consequently, the theory is in-between constructivist and traditionalist approaches. Åtland (2007, 2010) holds that the European Arctic is a suitable and interesting object for securitization theory. He has for example treated climate change as a security issue, claiming that the melting of the ice will have an impact on the security situation of the Arctic States and the rest of the world (Åtland, 2010, p. 48). Åtland's approach is interesting, as it opens up

[8] See chapter five, section 5.1 and 5.2, for an analysis of the Norwegian High North Policy and objectives.

for looking at the geopolitical changes in the Arctic as questions of security. Consequently, Åtland's conclusions fit well with the realist approach of the present thesis.

The second category consists of scholars who emphasize collaboration. This group is considerably smaller than the former, and at the same time more varied. Brosnan, Leschine, and Miles (2011) emphasize how several avenues for cooperation exist, and are likely to be pursued in the future. They have based their research on common issues in the strategy documents of the five Arctic coastal states, arguing that these actors have a common interest of cooperating on a number of issue-areas. Rottem (2009) is also critical of other scholars' anarchic perception of the far North, asserting that the Arctic will most likely continue to be a civilized region. He supports his argument by pointing to how the High North resource potential is primarily within the sovereign borders of the Arctic States and that estimates on the opening of Arctic shipping routes are exaggerated. Moreover, Rottem claims that Arctic collaboration has a strong foothold, since the involved actors have clear incentives to cooperate.

Koivurova and Vanderzwaag (2007) are among the scholars who focus particularly on Arctic institutions, such as the Arctic Council (AC). They admit that there are weaknesses with the current institutional system, but do not predict a future for the Arctic without collaboration. Their analysis is nuanced as it also assesses the challenges of the AC, and how these can be solved. These interpretations of Arctic institutions are valuable as they balance the realist view of other scholars and put Arctic issues into perspective.

Academics that study specific actors' policies can also be placed within the second category. When assessing the Arctic policies of the EU and Norway, the analyses of Offerdal and Airoldi are particularly important. In comparison with the abovementioned scholars, Offerdal (2008, 2010, 2011) studies the Arctic policies of actors such as Norway and/or the EU. In particular, she gives valuable analyses of the role of energy in the High North. She has thus proved the need for academic work on specific Arctic policy areas. As was the case with Brosnan, Leschine and Miles (2011), Offerdal (2008, 2010, 2011) has a more positive view on the Arctic, emphasizing the possibilities for collaboration. Furthermore, she distances herself from Sale and Potapov, and argues that there is no scramble for resources in the High North (NRK, 2012). Airoldi (2008, 2010) and Østhagen (2011) are also within this group of scholars, as they have studied the development of the EU Arctic Policy. Airoldi focuses on specific policy areas, while Østhagen studies why the EU has engaged itself in the High North.

1.3 Justification of the study

There are two main justifications of the present study. Firstly, the present thesis has value to add to our understanding of the practical Arctic Policies of the EU and Norway. The study is grounded on current debates and an increasing interest in Arctic questions. The High North is an important policy-area that develops rapidly, which underlines the need for a thorough understanding of Brussels and Oslo's High North Policies. This is exemplified with the visit of the EU's High Representative (HR) for Foreign Affairs, Lady Catherine Ashton, to Svalbard together with the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Jonas Gahr Støre, in the beginning of March 2012. The HR's visit reveals the importance of gaining a better understanding of the Arctic relationship between the EU and Norway.

Secondly, the study adds to previous research by the virtue of its comparative approach. The analysis in the previous section made evident that research comparing the EU and Norway in the High North is insufficient – and especially with the combination of a *realpolitik* analysis. Some of the abovementioned scholars have approached the issue, but with a different perspective than the one applied in the present thesis. Offerdal (2011), for example, has studied the relationship between Norway and the EU. She has a Norwegian perspective and focuses primarily on energy policy, while Østhagen (2011) has studied the EU's relations with the Arctic States. The value of treating the Arctic States separately, due to their diverging views and interests, justifies the present study's focus on the EU and Norway. Evidently, the study is unique as it analyzes the relationship between Brussels and Oslo in light of defensive realism.

Furthermore, a comparative analysis allows for a thorough understanding of the interference of an Arctic and non-Arctic actor. This is particularly interesting since the involvement of non-Arctic actors has been identified as a source of conflict (Young, 2011, p. 190). Young emphasizes the conflict potential of non-Arctic actor involvement by emphasizing how "…there is no suitable mechanism for engaging these actors and ensuring that they act in ways that are compatible with maintaining the Arctic as a zone of peace" (Ibid.). Young's remarks underline the need to gain better comprehension of the interaction of a non-Arctic Actor and an Arctic State. In this regard, Brussels and Oslo are particularly interesting since their economic and political ties are strong. Their difficulty of agreeing on Arctic questions emphasizes the need to understand why the High North has put their collaborative efforts to the test. Thus, examining whether the relationship between the

European Union and Norway is characterized by conflict or cooperation can provide new insights to the study of the Arctic and the actors involved.

1.4 Approach and sources

The present thesis offers a long-term qualitative analysis of the relationship of the EU and Norway in the Circumpolar North, beginning with the end of the Second World War (WWII) up until 2012. This allows for an understanding of changes in policies and objectives. With regards to Norway, it is necessary to include the post-WWII period, as the Norwegian Government's High North Strategies have been based on long foreign policy traditions. Furthermore, it helps account for the geostrategic importance of the Norwegian High North during the Cold War. When it comes to the EU, the time span is somewhat shorter as the EU is a newcomer to Arctic Affairs. Therefore, the EU analysis begins with Brussels' participation in Arctic regional bodies in the 1990s. Despite the value of a long-term approach, the prime focus is the years after 2000. This can be explained by the fact that the Arctic policies of both Brussels and Oslo have primarily been developed in the post-Cold War period.

The analysis of the EU and Norway in the Arctic is based on a broad range of sources: official documents and reports, speeches and official statements, qualitative interviews, academic studies, as well as newspaper articles. The advantage of such a wide range of sources is that it enables a broad interpretation where the EU and Norway are analyzed from different angles and points of views. Also, it allows for comparison of the actors' objectives, declared interests, and actions.

In order to analyze whether the EU and Norway are collaborators in the Arctic, it is necessary to assess official documents and reports. Due to the broad approach of the analysis, documents from Norway, EU institutions, as well as certain EU member states are included. Additionally, declarations from international institutions, such as the Arctic Council, are taken into consideration. This allows for a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the EU and Norway in the Circumpolar North. It should be noted that the present thesis does not take form as a discursive analysis. The EU and Norwegian materials are instead used as means of understanding the objectives and interests of the actors.

Official EU policy documents are beneficial when analyzing the process of creating a common EU Arctic Policy. It is necessary to include documents from the three main EU institutions, since there is yet no official or coherent EU High North Policy. Furthermore, a

comprehensive analysis of the EU is important in order to account for the role of the different institutions, and national governments within the EU system. The study is therefore based on Commission communications, as these are a natural basis for any analysis of EU policies due to the Commission's agenda-setting role. Joint papers from the High Representative and the Commission are also included. Moreover, Council conclusions are essential due to the unanimity rule of EU external policies. The European Parliament (EP) has been an influential institution in the development of an EU Arctic Policy, and resolutions, motions for resolutions, as well as EP debates are therefore included in the analysis as well. Since the EU is not a single and coherent actor, it is also decisive to account for the strategies and official policy documents of key EU member states.[9]

The Norwegian materials applied are primarily the Norwegian Government's High North Strategies, official reports, reports to the Storting (White Papers), as well as its two political platforms. It is also an advantage to include Official Norwegian Reports (NOU) as these are written by independent committees or working groups on different aspects of the society, such as the EEA Agreement. Norway is, in comparison with the EU, a more unified actor when it comes to Arctic questions. It is therefore not necessary to assess the official documents from all the political institutions as thoroughly.

In addition to the abovementioned Norwegian sources, the present thesis is also based on information obtained through interviews.[10] The interview was conducted with Morten Høglund, who is a member of the Norwegian Storting. Høglund's knowledge and experience on Arctic issues derives from his membership in both the Storting's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, as well as the Enlarged Foreign Affairs Committee. It is particularly interesting that he has close contact with the European Parliament, which has been a central actor in the development of an EU Arctic Policy. However, it should be noted that he is a member of the Progress Party. Even though there is a broad consensus on foreign policies across the Norwegian party lines, one might question whether the information from Høglund is affected by his affiliation with an opposition party. Nonetheless, the interview has offered an interesting perspective on the relationship between Brussels and Oslo in the Arctic. It would have been an advantage to interview an EU official as well, as the present thesis is a comparative study of the EU and Norway in the High North. However, the material on the development of an EU Arctic Policy is substantial, which reduces the need for an interview.

[9] The member states included in the analysis are Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Germany, France and the United Kingdom (UK). These are key EU member states with regards to EU Arctic Policies. See chapter four for an analysis of the role of the member states in the development of EU foreign policies.
[10] See appendix 1 for the interview guide.

Speeches and official statements made by Norwegian and EU officials are also useful as these often go further than official strategy papers and accounts for the aims of political elites. It is, however, important to supplement the use of speeches and statements with policy documents and factual actions in order to limit the disadvantages of normative sources. The reason is that one cannot be sure that speeches and statements reflect the reality. This is particularly important, as the aim of the present study is to move beyond the actors' rhetoric and desires, and to understand the interplay between what is said, and what is done.

Academic studies are also included in order to give an in-depth interpretation of Arctic policies, objectives and actions. Due to the large amount of literature, brutal selection must be made to select studies to strengthen the argument of the present thesis. Since Arctic issues are in constant development, newspaper articles, future articles and editorial commentaries are included as these are helpful in identifying the course of events in Norwegian and EU Arctic Policies.

1.5 Thesis outline

Chapter two provides an assessment of the analytical framework of the thesis; defensive realism. Core assumptions of realism are analyzed, along with a brief assessment of the opposing theory of neo-liberalism. Waltz' structural realism is treated in depth, with a specific focus on the defensive realist view on the possibilities of cooperation. The main argument is that defensive realism seems to be a suitable approach when assessing international relations in the changing Arctic. The theory's main advantage is its broad understanding of IR, and that it accounts for state behavior.

Chapter three explores the historical context and current developments of the Arctic. The changes occurring in the far North are explored, with a particular focus on climate changes as a trigger of challenges and opportunities. An assessment of the Arctic States' interests is given, in order to illustrate the upsurge of assertive policies with regards to Arctic Affairs. The following two sections explore the debate on whether the Arctic is a region of conflict or cooperation. Sources of conflict are categorized and analyzed, before the focus is shifted to Arctic regime formation. The main argument is that the Arctic is a peaceful region, but that it has a great potential of turning into a conflict zone, as the geostrategic importance of the far North increases.

Chapter four analyzes the development of an EU Arctic Policy. Since Brussels is still in the formulation process of a common High North Policy, emphasis is put on internal EU

processes. The chapter starts with an explanation of how the EU has legitimized its role in the Arctic, followed by a chronological presentation of the "turf battles" between and within EU institutions. The EU's objectives are also assessed, as it allows for an understanding of the interplay between what is said, and what is done. The role of the EU member states is analyzed, before focus is shifted to the EU's efforts to influence the Arctic States, and in particular Norway. The latter is included to understand how the EU has tried to play a greater role in Arctic Affairs. The chapter argues that the EU has created a great number of controversies and disputes with the Arctic States, despite the attempt of the Council to adjust EU policies according to external and internal opposition.

Chapter five explores the Norwegian High North Policy – the development of the policy and its objectives. The approach is somewhat different than in chapter four, as Norway is an Arctic State with an established Arctic Policy. Instead of assessing internal processes, the focus is to a greater extent put on Norway's objectives and how its policy can be explained by the balance of power logic. Also, the chapter assesses how Oslo has sought to influence Brussels in Arctic questions. This allows for a greater comprehension of the EU and Norway's chances of solving controversial issues. The chapter claims that Norwegian authorities have safeguarded national interests by upholding the balance of power system.

Chapter six provides a comparative analysis of the EU and Norway in the Arctic, and whether their relationship is characterized by conflict or cooperation. The first section addresses EU-Norwegian cooperation, with emphasis on the field of research and economic collaboration. The second section analyses the conflict potential between Brussels and Oslo in the Circumpolar North, by focusing on the different interpretations of the Svalbard Treaty, the diverging views on Arctic Governance, and the repercussions of the EU's involvement in animal welfare. In the third and final section, the relationship between the EU and Norway in the High North is assessed in light of defensive realism. The main argument is that even though the EU and Norway are cooperating in certain policy-areas, there is a considerable chance for conflict due to different goals and interests in Arctic questions.

2 The theoretical framework of defensive realism

In this chapter, defensive realism is assessed in order to understand the strength of the theory and in what way it can facilitate our understanding of the changing Arctic. Theories are a "simplifying device", they facilitate our understanding of complex systems such as world politics and international relations (S. Smith, Baylis, & Owens, 2005, p. 3). However, in order for a theory to simplify our understanding, it is necessary to gain a thorough comprehension of the theory. To do so, the chapter starts with an analysis of the core assumptions of realism. Secondly, the opposing theory of neo-liberalism is briefly discussed in order to put realism into perspective. Thirdly, an introduction to Kenneth N. Waltz' structural (neo)-realism is given, before the chapter proceeds with an assessment of the views of defensive realists on the possibility of cooperation in IR. With these elements clarified, the main argument is that defensive realism seems to be a suitable approach to describe the changing Arctic.

2.1 Core assumptions of realism

Realism is one of the dominant theoretical perspectives of international relations. In the 1930s and 1940s, realist writers such as George Kennan and Hans J. Morgenthau explained international politics as "power politics" rooted in the evil and selfish behavior of man. Since then, the theory has evolved as scholars have replaced it with new interpretations or focuses. To talk of a unified theory has become less common as new categories, or forms, of realism have evolved. As a result, it has proved difficult to define realism. Scholars have nonetheless tried, and Donnelly (2009) defines it by its "emphasis on constraints on politics imposed by human selfishness ('egoism') and the absence of international government ('anarchy'), which require 'the primacy in all political life of power and security'" (pp. 31-32). Dunne and Schmidt (2005), on the other hand, identify the theory as a "manual for maximizing the interest of the state in a hostile environment" (p. 162).

The definitions of realism reveal that it is possible to single out a number of key assumptions. Firstly, it is a rational theory as defensive realists assume that states are rational actors. John J. Mearsheimer (2011), a prominent realist figure, argues that states are aware of their environment and are capable of thinking strategically about how to survive (p. 60). Secondly, it is a state-centric theory as states are considered to be the main actors of world politics. Compared to the liberal school of thought, realists are not concerned with the internal

structure of states. On the contrary, the "black box" remains unlocked and states are treated as unitary actors dismantled for every other attribute than their capabilities (Waltz, 1979, p. 99). That is true only to a certain degree, as the internal structure of states is used to distinguish the domestic political structure from the international one. Realists argue that domestic societies are hierarchical, because they are characterized by stability. When it comes to the "black box," the present thesis diverges from realist assumptions as the box is somewhat opened. The reason is that the internal structures of the EU and Norway are considered to be important.

The traits of the domestic structure cannot be applied to the international political system as its nature is anarchic. Mearsheimer (2011) claim that the ordering principle of anarchy refers to a system that "…comprises independent states that have no central authority above them" (p. 59). Realists assert that anarchy influences the rules of conduct and options available to state leaders. Indeed, they assume that because of anarchy, force is legitimate and all states strive to use it, and must in fact always be prepared to use it, to secure their interests. Waltz (2001) argues that because of the anarchic world structure, "…conflict, sometimes leading to war, is bound to occur" (p. 159). This derives from the fact that states must do everything in their might to reach their goals (Ibid.). Evidently, the definition of conflict presented in chapter one, referring to it as "a social condition that arises when two or more actors pursue mutually exclusive or mutually incompatible goals", fits well with realist thinking (Evans & Newnham, 1998, p. 193).

Mearsheimer (2011) emphasizes the realist assumption that survival is the core national interest and priority of every state (p. 60). This has to do with the fact that insecurity is the most significant implication of anarchy (Grieco & Ikenberry, 2003, p. 98). As a consequence, realists believe that no matter how much effort a state puts into ensuring its survival, its security can never be guaranteed (Dunne & Schmidt, 2005, p. 4). In such a climate, global hegemony is perceived to be the best position as it ends the struggle for power. It should be noted that realists recognize other motives than survival, but consider these to be irrelevant and subordinate.

Furthermore, realists argue that a state's principle action is self-help, since every state is responsible for its own security as there is no superior authority to look for one's survival. Mearsheimer (2011) explains this phenomenon by the use of an allegory called "the '911' problem", referring to the lack of an emergency number for states when they feel threatened (p. 61). Within anarchy, statesmen must therefore rely on their own resources and always be prepared to use force to stay secure (Ibid.; Waltz, 2001, p. 188). In practice, the self-help

system leads states to restrain from specialization of any kind as it will make them dependent on the means of others (Waltz, 2001).

Another key assumption of realism is that "statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power" (Morgenthau & Thompson, 1985, p. 5). Power has such a central standing, that Morgenthau has defined international politics as "a struggle for power" among nations. The basic assumption is that the more power a state has, the more unlikely is it that its rivals will attack (Mearsheimer, 2011, p. 61). Power is thus a way of getting what one wants and to ensure one's security. Even though realists agree that power is important, there are different views on what it constitutes. Classical realists such as Morgenthau and Thompson (1985) operate with a narrow definition, focusing primarily on military power. Structural realists such as Kenneth N. Waltz (1979, 2001, 2011), on the other hand, tries to offer a more nuanced definition, shifting the focus from power to capabilities (ranked according to strength).

Evidently, realists tend to be preoccupied with war and the struggle for power. Nonetheless, the theory seems to be a suitable tool to understand the behavior of states. At the same time, it is evident that key realist assumptions do not necessarily grasp the complexity of Arctic Affairs, and especially the role of international law and institutions. In order to understand the value of defensive realism for the purpose of the present study, it is also necessary to look at the neo-liberal school of thought and its interpretation of conflict and cooperation.

2.2 Neo-liberal institutionalism

Neo-liberal institutionalism appeared in the 1970s and is considered to be the "intellectual sibling" of neo-realism, and arguably also the main challenger of recent forms of realism (Lamy, 2005, p. 205). Neo-liberal scholars, of which Robert O. Keohane and Joseph N. Nye are considered to be key thinkers, try to correct the limitations of earlier forms of liberalism and to explain the resilience of institutions despite the changing context. Neo-liberal institutionalism builds upon theoretical approaches such as liberalism, neo-functionalism and interdependence theory – and has adopted an emphasis on interdependence and international institutions. At the same time, the neo-liberal school contains certain traits of realism. For example, it assumes that world politics take place within a competitive environment that makes states compete. At this point, however, the similarities end as neo-liberal scholars have

a very different interpretation of the consequences of anarchy, and in what way it affects state behavior and cooperation.

Firstly, in comparison with realism, neo-liberal intellectuals believe that cooperation is easy to achieve when states have mutual interests. Neo-liberals argue that states are concerned with maximizing their absolute gains[11] through cooperation, despite the anarchic world system. Thus, when dividing a pie, neo-liberals believe that states are content if the total amount of gain for all parties involved increases. In practice, that signifies that leaders are willing to cooperate, even if it means that other states might gain more from the cooperation than they will (Burchill, 2009, p. 67). Hence, neo-liberal scholars distance themselves from realist thought, as they do not regard world politics as a zero-sum game.

Secondly, neo-liberal institutionalism holds that international institutions are a significant force in international relations. They assert that institutions mitigate the effect on anarchy because they enhance trust, stability, monitors cooperative habits, and sanction cheaters (Ibid.). Furthermore, neo-liberal scholars argue that institutions can change state behavior and enhance cooperation. These assumptions are revealed in the works of Keohane and Nye (2001), who claim that institutions are increasingly important since they "…help set the international agenda, and act as catalysts for coalition-formation and as arenas for political initiatives and linkage by weak states (p. 30). In other words, neo-liberals look at institutions as vital instruments in world affairs, as these protect and nurture norms that correct state behavior (Dunne, 2005, pp. 185-188). Therefore, realists argue that cooperation is difficult to obtain even in situations of mutual interest, whereas neo-liberals claim that it is easy to cooperate when common interests are at hand.

Neo-realist scholars have criticized the optimistic view of neo-liberals on institutions. In particular, structural realists have found faults with the neo-liberal interpretation of anarchy, as well as their belief in institutions. Joseph Grieco (1988), for example, holds that neo-liberalism will be proved wrong because it "…fails to address [international anarchy as] a major constraint on the willingness of states to cooperate…" (p. 487). Mearsheimer (1995) seems to agree, as he claims that liberal institutionalism is an unambitious theory because it "does not directly address the important question of how to prevent war, but focuses instead on explaining why economic and environmental cooperation among states is more likely than realists recognize" (p. 14). Neo-liberal institutionalism is thus criticized for failing to explicate the durability of cooperation and why it occurs in some situations and not in others.

[11] See section 2.3 for an explanation of absolute and relative gains.

Even though neo-liberal institutionalism offers a significant explanation of the role of institutions in certain scenarios, it does not seem to be a suitable approach to Arctic Affairs. With regards to regions such as the High North, where vital national interests are at play, but are not necessarily mutual, neo-liberalism has a hard time explaining why cooperation is kept at a minimum (as happens to be the case with several Arctic institutions). Also, neo-liberal institutionalism would most likely ignore, or limit, the consequences of the geopolitical dimension of the Circumpolar North, such as the importance of oil and gas resources. Consequently, the neo-liberal school of thought does not seem to be a suitable approach to Arctic Affairs and it is therefore necessary to further assess the realist, and in particular the neo-realist, understanding of conflict and cooperation.

2.3 Waltz' structural realism on conflict and cooperation

Structural realism, or neo-realism, is a more recent form of realism that diverges from classical realism by the virtue of its emphasis on the structure of the international system as the most important determinant of state behavior. The theoretical perspective is first and foremost identified with Waltz' *Theory of International Politics* (1979). Waltz' structural realism forms the basis for the different types of neo-realism, such as defensive and offensive realism. As we will see, these vary in their contrasting conclusions on the possibilities of cooperation – a key concern in Arctic Affairs.

Neo-realist scholars concur with a great number of basic realist assumptions. In fact, Waltz (2001) recognizes the value of classical realism for having noticed conflict, asked why it occurs, and blamed it on a small number of behavior traits (p. 39). Despite this, in *Man, the State and War. A Theoretical Analysis* (2001) he argues that it is necessary to go further than the behavior of man (what Waltz identifies as the first image) when explicating the international political structure. The reason is that the role of units (the second image), and in particular the international structure (the third image), endures personality, behavior and interaction (p. 80). Thus, the structure of the international system is given a dominant place in neo-realist thinking.

Waltz (1979) defines the international political system in terms of three elements; 1) ordering principles, 2) the character of the units, and 3) distribution of capabilities across the units (pp. 79-101). The first element, ordering principles, refers to the distinction between the hierarchical and centralized domestic political structure on the one side, and the anarchic and chaotic international structure on the other (p. 88). Thus, structural realists believe that states

will, due to anarchy, remain preoccupied with power and security in their international relations. As a result, in certain situations, conflict and competition cannot be prevented (Grieco, 1988, p. 488). At this point, Waltz' view resembles that of key realist assumptions. In order to understand why structural realism is *neo*-realism, one must therefore devote attention to the second and third element.

The second element, the character of the units, refers to the functions that are performed by the units. Even though Waltz (1979) admits there are obvious differences between states with regards to their size, wealth and power, states are nonetheless similar "…in the tasks that they face, though not in their abilities to perform them" (p. 96). As a consequence, structural realists assert that units remain the same, and that structure only changes if the organization of units changes (p. 93). To define a structure, Waltz argues "…requires ignoring how units relate with one another (how they interact) and concentrating on how they stand in relation to one another (how they are arranged or positioned)" (p. 80). In case of the Arctic, structural realist would claim that it is the structure of the international system that preconditions the changes that are taking place in the Circumpolar North.

The distribution of capabilities, the third and final element, is treated as a key variable of both defensive and offensive realism. The reason is that they claim that it is the greater or lesser capabilities that differs the units from one another (Waltz, 1979, p. 79). Even though units are functionally undifferentiated, they are distinguished from one another by the virtue of their capabilities (Waltz, 2011, p. 46). Consequently, this mode of realism tends to focus on major actors, as they are perceived to define the system because of their substantial capabilities. When considering the Arctic, for example, that would lead to a focus on Russian conduct and capabilities. Even though the behavior of smaller states, such as Norway, and non-state actors, such as the EU, are not typical cases for defensive realism – the theoretical approach have value to add to our understanding of their behavior.

Capabilities, which are interpreted broader than what is common within classical realism, are the only attribute that neo-realists assess with regards to the internal structure of units. While classical realists focus on military power, structural realists account for other types of capabilities as well, such as resource potential and economic capabilities. When assessing the Arctic, where the actors' focus is not primarily on military capabilities, but on the resource potential of the High North, the broad neo-realist definition of capabilities is an advantage.

Large parts of Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* touches upon the long-lasting realist question of whether cooperation is possible to obtain. Consequently, the book has

become the basis of defensive realism. Defensive realists, such as Charles L. Glaser, Joseph M. Grieco, Robert Jervis and Kenneth A. Oye, have sought to correct the limitations of earlier forms of realism by putting the security dilemma and/or the balance-of-power logic at the center of their approach. Consequently, defensive realism tends to have a more positive stance on cooperation than both classical and offensive realists. At the same time, they do not go as far as neo-liberal institutionalism in their belief in inter-state collaboration.

Defensive realists are typical realist in the way they emphasize that a natural attribute of a system based on self-help is competition – a trait scholars of realism claim surpass cooperation. Thus, to a greater degree than neo-liberal institutionalists, they admit that there are considerable international structural limits to cooperation (Waltz, 1979, p. 206). Waltz (2001), as well as other defensive realists, argue that cooperation might occur, but that two important hindrances impede the chances of successful collaboration; 1) relative gains and 2) fear of becoming dependent on other states (p. 107). That is, cooperation will not happen if states do not make it happen. In other words, states might choose to form alliances, but might as well engage in "power-balancing wars" (Waltz, 1979, p. 204).

These assumptions have to do with the fact that defensive realists perceive international politics to be a zero-sum game where power is relative; "my winnings plus your winnings are exactly equal to the losses of our opponent or opponents" (Waltz, 2001, p. 202). This is the phenomena of absolute and relative gains, which can be explained by referring to a scenario where states are dividing an expanding pie. When caring of absolute gains, states are content if they "… at least get some portion of the increase, whereas states that worry about relative gains must pay careful attention to how the pie is divided…" (Morgenthau & Thompson, 1985, p. 68). In the Arctic, the "expanding pie" is the great oil and gas potential. Defensive realists would claim that the actors involved in Arctic Affairs pay close attention to how the High North resources are divided, and how much the others get. Hence, defensive realism argues that as long as states are either real enemies, or have the potential of becoming enemies; relative gains are the prime concern of states. Consequently, they claim that states tend to ask "who will gain more?", and not "will both of us gain?" when considering cooperation (Waltz, 1979, p. 105).

Defensive realists argue that in such a game, a state will withdraw from cooperation if it expects other states to gain more than itself, regardless of whether they have common interests. Advice to put international interests above national ones is thus perceived to be meaningless – states must always act in the way they calculate to be the best strategy to survive. The focus on survival as the prime concern of all nation states is thus at the very

center of defensive realism, and distinguishes it from the neo-liberal school of thought. Consequently, defensive realists emphasize that the creation of institutions is *not* a natural outcome of international relations. They argue that states only establish institutions if they believe that it will help them reach their goals. That is, an institution will never be an end in itself. These considerations derives from the realist assumption that a state must always be prepared to use force, because it can never know if another state will pursue expansionary moves. The difference between neo-liberalism and neo-realism is thus evident; while neo-liberals believe that institutions can mitigate the constraining effects of anarchy on cooperation (Lamy, 2005, p. 215), neo-realism asserts that institutions are not effective unless they are supported by major powers and/or a hegemonic power.

Nonetheless, defensive realists argue that it is possible to alter the consequences of anarchy (Jervis, 2011; Oye, 2011). In comparison to neo-liberalism, however, structural realists claim that it is only possible to do so to a limited degree, and in certain situations. Indeed, Oye (2011) claims that, despite the anarchic world order, states can realize common goals through cooperation (pp. 92-113). The straining effect of anarchy on inter-state cooperation can thus be damped, but anarchy does not cease to exist. These observations seem to be valuable with regards to the Arctic as the region does not "… suffer under a state of virtual anarchy, despite outward appearances, and states cannot claim rights to resources simply by planting flags in the sediment at the bottom of the sea" (Jensen & Rottem, 2009, p. 76). Defensive realists would explain this phenomenon by pointing to the balance of power, and that the current situation in the Circumpolar North is interpreted by state leaders in such a way that cooperation can be pursued.

Defensive realists assume that the balance of power logic is a way to dampen the consequences of anarchy and to survive in a self-help system. Morgenthau and Thompson (1985) describe the balance of power as "[t]he aspiration for power on the part of several nations, each trying either to maintain or overthrow the status quo, [which] leads of necessity to a configuration that is called the balance of power and to policies that aim at preserving it" (p.187). Realists argue that the balance of power can be carried out in a number of ways, such as by the tactic of divide and rule, armaments race, and building alliances (Morgenthau & Thompson, 1985, pp. 198-217). The ultimate goal of balance of power politics is to preserve the elements of the system in order to reduce one's insecurity. Consequently, realists believe the balance of power logic to be an important stabilizing factor in a self-help system consisting of sovereign nations.

The defensive realist view on the possibility of avoiding conflicts in certain situations, can also be described by the way they perceive states to be security maximizers. That is, states do not seek to gain greater amount of power if that means they will jeopardize their own security (Dunne & Schmidt, 2005, p. 174). Defensive realists arrive at this conclusion due to the logic of the security dilemma. The dilemma is used to explain how the security of one state depends on the behavior of other states:

> In its efforts to preserve or enhance its own security, one state can take measures that decrease the security of other states and cause them to take countermeasures that neutralize the actions of the first state and that may even menace it. The first state may feel impelled to take further actions, provoking additional countermeasures…and so forth (Art & Jervis, 2011b, p. 3).

Glaser (2010) describes this phenomenon as a kind of spiral of insecurity (p. 3). He uses the illustration of a spiral because; if a state decides on strategies for maximizing its own security, it might (unintended or intended) affect other states' security in negative terms. Thus, to increase one's security can in fact be self-defeating as one's enemy might feel threatened, start increasing its power and thus become harder to deter (Vasquez & Elman, 2003, p. 270). In a worst case scenario, an arms race or even a conflict might therefore occur.

Since states are considered to be rational actors, defensive realists argue they are well aware of the security dilemma and adjust their policies according to it. Hence, defensive realism holds that leaders understand the costs of war and outweigh the benefits when deciding on a given strategy or policy (Jervis (1999) and Snyder (1991) cited in, Lamy, 2005, p. 211). Also, they assume that states should consider moderate strategies that can alter the effects of the spiral of insecurity since they worry about one another's future intentions and relative power. As a result, expansionist strategies are not necessarily considered to be the best option, as war can be irrational. The argument of defensive realism is therefore that cooperation can be used as a means of reducing military threats. If successful, Glaser (2010) argues, cooperation can in fact increase a state's security and is thus an important way of self-help (pp. 61-63). Institutions should therefore be regarded as a way of ameliorating the security dilemma and increasing political leaders' scope of action. Indeed, institutions, such as for example the Arctic Council, are perceived to matter because they perform a number of functions: providing information about motives and actions of other states, offering states a forum for discussion, as well as creating shared norms (Glaser, 2010, p. 124). It should be noted, however, that institutions are not an end in itself, but a reflection of the power distribution in the world.

Defensive realists go further than classical realists in their interpretation of institutions, but limit themselves to argue that cooperation can be the best choice of action in *certain situations*. For example, in a situation where a status quo state is dealing with an expansionist power, cooperation is considered unlikely. Aggressor states are common, and conflict and war will therefore always be possible outcomes of international relations. At times, however, status quo states might deal with other status quo states and recognize the opportunities for reaching common goals through cooperative endeavors (Oye, 2011, p. 79). Defensive realists support their claim by pointing to existing bilateral- and multilateral agreements, international law, as well as the creation of international regimes. With regards to the Circumpolar North, the Norwegian-Russian delimitation agreement of 2010 serves as a good example.[12] That is not to say, however, that a security-seeking state can at any time be confident that other states will abide to their promises. As a consequence, national interests will always remain more important and it is not easy to find areas where interests converge.

The defensive realist interpretation of world politics should be understood by the virtue of its historical context. Waltz, for example, was in the beginning of his career influenced by the 1970s and the Cold War. A period characterized by two parallel tendencies in IR: the use of force continued as a means of state action, at the same time as international cooperation did not collapse as it had during the 1930s (Grieco, 1988, p. 491). These tendencies seem to hold true in the post Cold War era as well. As a consequence, more recent scholars, such as Glaser (2010), are still considering a political climate where cooperation and conflict seem to go hand in hand. Indeed, the situation in the changing Arctic serves as a good example since collaborative tendencies (illustrated by the application international law and institutions such as the Arctic Council) exist along with the rising conflict potential.

What is surprising, however, is that offensive realism appeared within the same historical context. The theoretical approach of offensive realism is to a large extent based on the assumptions of John J. Mearsheimer. The offensive theory appeared as a critique to Waltz' interpretation of cooperation, and is an umbrella term that unifies scholars who have in common an extensive focus on the hostile and competitive nature of international politics. The offensive focus on competition derives from its belief in states as power maximizers, not security maximizers. This refers to the fact that offensive realists believe that states are preoccupied with relative power; they always strive to gain more power than their adversaries.

[12] *The Treaty concerning Maritime Delimitation and Cooperation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean* was signed by Norway and Russia on 15 September 2010. 40 years of negotiation on the maritime zones in the Barents Sea were thus concluded. The treaty led to increased "…level of clarity and predictability…" in the area (MFA, 2010).

Calculated aggression is, according to offensive realists, therefore the prime action of states as they pursue strategies that weaken its enemies. Mearsheimer (2011) asserts that states have strong incentives to take advantage of one another, and have aggressive intentions to expand their power at all times (pp. 62-69). In such a political climate, offensive realists claim that institutions become irrelevant.

Given its focus on the competitive character of international politics, offensive realism is often misinterpreted as a theory that does not allow for any form of cooperation. Their assumption is, however, that as long as cooperation is bound to take place within a competitive structure, cooperation will remain at a minimum because states are constantly trying to maximize their power. Scholars within this theoretical perspective have been criticized for not having thoroughly explained their approach, and in particular for failing to account for the restraining character of the security dilemma (Glaser, 2010, p. 154; Vasquez & Elman, 2003, p. 271). With regards to the Arctic, the approach of offensive realism seems to miss the long-lasting and increasingly cooperative character of the High North.

Consequently, defensive realism seems to be a better approach to contemporary Arctic Affairs than both offensive realism and neo-liberal institutionalism. What is evident when assessing defensive realism, is that its value derives from its broad understanding of international politics. More precisely, the theory gives a detailed and consistent explanation of why cooperation occurs in some situations, and why disputes and conflicts characterize other circumstances. Defensive realism seems to grasp the thin line between conflict and cooperation in the High North. Furthermore, it seems to be a suitable theoretical framework to account for state behavior in international politics. Even though outright war or military confrontations, which are a focus of realists, are unlikely to develop between the EU and Norway, the theory has value to add to our understanding of their behavior. For instance, defensive realism accounts for the consequences of the great resource potential in the High North and the geopolitical importance of the region. Hence, with regards to the Arctic, that is neither a "cauldron of conflict or a zone of peace" (Young, 2011), defensive realism seems to be a suitable theoretical tool to understanding of the circumpolar relationship of the EU and Norway.

3 The changing Arctic

> "[The landscape of the Arctic] is in slow, but firm movement…It is like turning a kaleidoscope in slow motion" (Støre, 2009, p. 36).

This chapter analyzes the historical context and current developments of the Arctic in order to shed light on the debate of whether the region is characterized by conflict or cooperation. To do so, the chapter starts with an account of the changing Arctic – with a special focus on climate changes as a trigger of developments in the region. The chapter proceeds with a brief assessment and comparison of the Arctic States' interests, since it is necessary to put the case of the EU and the Norwegian North Policies into perspective. In the third section, an analysis of the sources of conflict in the High North is presented, followed by an assessment of international cooperation and regime formation in the Circumpolar North. What becomes evident is that the changing Arctic is currently a peaceful region, but has a growing potential of turning into a cauldron of conflict as changes occur.

3.1 The changing Arctic: Rising temperatures and renewed interest

There has been an upsurge of interest in the far North in the domestic and foreign policies of the Arctic States, but also among non-Arctic actors and international organizations. One has to go back to the Cold War, when the region was a "front zone" between the East and the West, to observe a similar level of political activity (Åtland, 2007, p. 7). The renewed focus of the post-Cold War era derives from a number of changes that together are altering the Arctic in fundamental ways. Of all the changes, climate change is at the very "heart of the issue" (Howard, 2009, p. 7) as it is the "main trigger of developments" in the Arctic (EP, 2010b, p. 7). Arctic monitoring has therefore become a prime focus and specialization of institutions such as the Arctic Council. Among the many scientific studies, the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) of 2004 has obtained a significant standing as it is arguably the leading research on the effects of climate changes in the Arctic.[13] The ACIA report discloses how the rise of temperatures is perceived to be particularly evident, and at an earlier stage in peripheral areas such as the Arctic, than in the rest of the world. According to the report, the atmospheric temperatures are increasing faster in the Circumpolar North than earlier

[13] The ACIA report was demanded by the AC to gather scientific research on the climate changes in the Arctic. The project was carried out by two of the AC working groups; the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP); and the Conservation of Arctic Flora and fauna, along with the International Arctic Science Committee (ACIA, 2004).

projected. In fact, it increases twice as fast in the Arctic than in the rest of the world. This trend is expected to continue, and accelerate further in the future and lead to "… major physical, ecological, social and economic changes that have already begun" (ACIA, 2004, pp. 10-11). The effects of climate change in the Arctic are many, such as shorter and warmer winters, thawing of permafrost, melting of glaciers, rising sea level, retreating of summer sea ice, as well as changing sea circulation (ACIA, 2004; Hoel, 2007; Young, 2011; Åtland, 2010). In sum, these changes contribute to the status of the Circumpolar North as an early warning zone, making it particularly interesting for research on climate change.

Climate change as a "trigger of developments" is accentuated even further when considering how the paradoxical nature of climate changes underlines its broad impact on societies and politics. On the one side, it raises concern among political leaders and is perceived to be a challenge. On the other side, new economic possibilities arise as a result of the melting of the ice (Holdhus, 2010, p. 1). These possibilities are expected to be profound, and to derive from new opportunities related to resource extraction, new shipping opportunities, fisheries and tourism. Thus, climate changes are perceived to lead to great economic opportunities, but are also looked upon as a challenge for international and regional stability (Åtland, 2010, p. 7). Consequently, security, economic and environmental issues are intertwined and interacting in Arctic Affairs (Blunden, 2009, p. 121). These changes have a far-reaching effect on the Arctic States, and it is therefore necessary to assess their interests in the circumpolar region.

3.2 The Arctic States and their interests

The net of actors in the Arctic is already compound, and has grown more complex as the geostrategic importance of the region has increased. The Arctic Eight (A8), Canada, Denmark (encompassing Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States, have their northernmost territories in the Circumpolar North. Out of the eight, five states are considered to be Arctic littoral states as they are directly bordering the Arctic Ocean (A8 minus Finland, Iceland and Sweden). The Arctic coastal states, also known as the Arctic Five (A5), have become an important institutionalized sub-group in Arctic relations since the signing of the Ilulissat Declaration in May 2008.[14] This section briefly

[14]The littoral states met on political level at the Arctic Ocean Conference on Greenland to defend their common interests, and to emphasize their unique position to address the possibilities and challenges in the Arctic, as well as to stress their prominent role with regards to stewardship of the Arctic (AC, 2008).

assesses the Arctic interests of Canada and Russia, as these reveal common traits of all the Arctic States' policies. Moreover, Ottawa and Moscow are important actors in the analysis of the Arctic policies of the EU and Norway.

Russia has been described as the "most prominent Arctic power" (Åtland, 2010, p. 16). The Russian Federation governs more than half of the Arctic land territory, and is holding the greatest resource potential in the region (Blunden, 2009, p. 122). Additionally, it has the largest Arctic coastline and population. The strategic importance of the Russian High North is great as a considerable amount of the Russian nuclear arsenal and the North Fleet (an important part of the Russian military force) are located in the Kola Peninsula (Zysk, 2011; Åtland, 2010, p. 16). Moreover, the region has a decisive effect on Russian society and economy, as a total of 20 percent of the Russian GDP derives from the far North (Blunden, 2009, p. 122). In 2008, the Russian Government adopted a new Arctic Strategy, *The fundamentals of state policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic in the period up to 2020 and beyond*. The Strategy presented a clear vision to preserve the role of Russia as a leading Arctic power in terms of resource extraction, transport and communication, as well as military security (Zysk, 2009, 2011). Russian aspirations in the Circumpolar North have therefore been interpreted to be "widely associated with an ambition to re-assert Russia's great-power status" (Blunden, 2009, p. 125). At the same time, Russia has stressed the need to keep the Arctic as a zone of peace through engaging in bilateral and multilateral regional cooperation (Zysk, 2011). Its collaborative efforts are revealed by Moscow's participation in regional bodies such as the AC, BEAC and the EU's ND.

Canada, with the second largest Arctic coastline, is another major Arctic actor. The Conservative Government, led by Prime Minister Stephen Harper since the federal election in 2006, has put Arctic issues high on the political agenda. The Canadian Strategy, *Canada's Northern Strategy. Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future,* was published in 2009. The document was constructed around four key priorities; exercising Arctic sovereignty; promoting social and economic development; protecting the environment in the North; and improving and developing northern governance (Government of Canada, 2009). The Government has also focused on the need to exert stewardship in the Arctic, maintain a strong presence in the region and to define the Canadian domain (Brosnan et al., 2011). Hence, the Strategy has a clear foreign policy component; one which represents a policy shift to a more assertive position than previous governments (Blunden, 2009, p. 126).

A prominent similarity in the approach of Russia and Canada is their obvious willingness to assert national interests in the region, along with a clear-cut focus on Arctic

cooperation. Certainly, these are incompatible interests that illustrate the complexity of Arctic Affairs, and that opportunities and challenges seem to go hand in hand in the Circumpolar North. Also, the fact that these nations strive for the same goals and emphasize the importance of being leading actors in the Arctic, accentuates the potential for conflict. Their Arctic policies are therefore relevant for the political scope of action in the region, a phenomenon that is evident in the following chapters on the EU and Norwegian Arctic Policies. The defensive realist emphasis on the need for states to focus on survival seems to be evident in the Arctic States' Strategies – as cooperation is supplemented with the need to assert national interests.

3.3 Sources of conflict in the Arctic

In recent years, a tendency of interpreting the Arctic as a potential zone of conflict, characterized by actors pursuing national interests in a "scramble for the Arctic", has evolved (Sale & Potapov, 2010). As mentioned in chapter one, classical geopolitics and realist assumptions are increasingly applied to the Arctic. Emphasis is then put on how conflicting interests may jeopardize the stability of the region. Even though there is no certainty of conflict, the region is arguably at a "historic turning point", where two possible outcomes exist; (1) a scene of conflict characterized by an intensive race for natural resources, where national interests prevails; (2) a region where peaceful co-existence, multilateral collaboration and regime formation are the fundamental rules of the game (Young, 2011, p. 191).

Young (2011) has set forth a categorization of the potential sources of conflict in the Arctic in his review article "The future of the Arctic: cauldron of conflict or zone of peace?" His three categories: (1) jurisdictional issues: (2) relationship between Arctic States and non-Arctic actors: (3) protection of Arctic ecosystems and cultures (p. 189), represent a fruitful classification. Young's classification will be applied in the present thesis, but with modifications in order to grasp the thin line between conflict and cooperation in Arctic Affairs. Also, it allows for an emphasis on the complexity of the relationship between the EU and Norway in circumpolar issues. Consequently, the following categorization will be applied; (1) jurisdictional disputes, (2) commercial shipping opportunities and resource extraction, and (3) involvement of non-Arctic actors.

3.3.1 Jurisdictional disputes: Unresolved maritime boundaries and territorial claims

The Arctic and Arctic waters are subject to international law through the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).[15] Despite the fact that the convention provides clear definitions of maritime borders, certain areas of the Circumpolar North currently lacks clear and legal boundaries. As a consequence, Arctic Affairs are marked by a number of unresolved issues regarding borders and jurisdiction of the waters and shelf areas (Åtland, 2010, p. 18).[16] The 2007 planting of a Russian flag on the seabed at the North Pole has put these issues on the radar of public discourse, as the act was commonly interpreted as a start of a "race for the North Pole" (Hønneland & Rowe, 2010, p. 139). Accordingly, unresolved maritime boundaries and territorial claims remain controversial and are considered to be a potential source of conflict in Arctic relations.

Nonetheless, the propensity of solving the jurisdictional matters in accordance with international rules and procedures is becoming increasingly common (Young, 2011; Åtland, 2010). The provisions of the UNCLOS allows coastal states to increase their marine territory beyond the 200 nm zone if they provide geological evidence that their continental shelf extends beyond this limit (Ingenfeld, 2010, p. 257). The Arctic States are thus working on delineation of the outer limits of their national continental shelf, compiling their territorial and sub-territorial claims in the Arctic in line with UN regulations. By doing so, uncertainty and disagreement on maritime boundaries and territorial claims in the Arctic might be replaced by certainty and agreements (Åtland, 2010, p. 33). The delimitation agreement between Norway and Russia, signed in 2010, is a recent example of how cooperation and compromise has led to solving of overlapping claims in the far North. These developments illustrate the commitment to "rule-based problem-solving" in Arctic issues (Young, 2011, p. 190) and that Arctic cooperation is pursued by Arctic actors when it benefits them.

[15] UNCLOS, referred to as the Law of the Sea, is a United Nations (UN) Convention from 1982 (with roots that go further back). It came into force in 1994 and applies international law to open water. It extended the maritime limits to 200 nautical mile (nm) from the baseline, also known as the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). In the EEZs, a country has the right to exploitation of natural resources (Koivurova, Keskitalo, & Bankes, 2009, pp. 7-8). Furthermore, UNCLOS defines the 12 nm as the borders of the "the high sea", which refers to the "territorial waters" where a country holds absolute sovereignty (Sale & Potapov, 2010, pp. 142-148). The continental shelf is yet another definition, normally equivalent to the 200 nm EEZs (Ibid.). UNCLOS is in force in all the Arctic States, except the U.S. as it has not yet signed the convention.

[16] Conflicts exist concerning: (1) the legal status of the Svalbard Fisheries Protection Zone and continental shelf (Norway and Russia (with others). See chapter 6 for thorough analysis); (2) the delimitation of the Bering Sea (USA and Russia); (3) the delimitation of the Beaufort Sea (USA and Canada); (4) the status of the Hans Island (Canada and Denmark); (5) the legal status of the NWP (Canada and USA); (6) the legal status of the NSR (Russia and the U.S. (with others)); and (7) the delimitation of the Arctic continental shelf beyond 200 nm (Russia, Canada, Denmark, and others) (Åtland, 2010, p. 19).

Despite the above-mentioned trend of cooperation, a number of jurisdictional disputes remain. The status of the straits along the Northern Sea Route (NSR) is one of the many controversies regarding sovereign rights to the Arctic. The NSR is the acronym for the "…seasonally ice-covered marine shipping routes" north of Russia.[17] It is controlled by Russian authorities and has been open for international ship traffic since 1991 (ACIA, 2004, p. 81). The NSR's geostrategic importance is significant, since it connects the Atlantic with the Pacific Ocean. Its significance might increase even more as it might become the transport route of Russian oil and gas from fields in Western Siberia and the Barents Sea, to the Asian and Western markets (Fairhall, 2010, p. 145; Åtland, 2010, p. 22). The status of the NSR as the most developed route in the Arctic makes the legal status of this route an interesting case. While the Russian Government claims that the straits are Russian internal waters, the U.S. argues that they are international waters where international navigation should be allowed (Åtland, 2010, pp. 21-22). Today, commercial ships must abide to Russian restrictions and pay fees to the Russian Government (Ibid.). In the future, however, the Russian claim might be challenged as the geostrategic importance of the route increases.

The dispute over the legal status of the NSR serves as a good illustration of the duality of Arctic jurisdictional disputes. First of all, it illustrates how the geopolitical changes in the Arctic are likely to increase the conflict level. Indeed, the growing awareness of the enormous resource potential in the region increases the stakes of the involved parties. It is therefore expected that the growing geostrategic importance of the Arctic will increase the difficulties of solving maritime boundaries and territorial claims. The changes occurring in the Arctic are thus securitizing the issue of jurisdictional disputes (Åtland, 2010). In this regard, Åtland (2010) argues that "…one should not underestimate the potential for interstate disputes and conflicts over the access to the land and shelf areas" as there might be considerable resources within these areas (p. 23).

At the same time, Young (2011) claims that it is unlikely that the issue will trigger any intra-state conflict or armed confrontations in the nearest future, since the involved actors seem to arrive at sensible conclusions despite the controversies. Evidently, the region seems to be, when compared to other important transit routes, a peaceful and stable region despite unclear boundaries (Åtland, 2010). In the future, however, the jurisdictional disputes might increase as the involved parties pursue goals that are either mutually exclusive, or mutually incompatible.

[17] NSR is the Northeast Passage (NEP) in English. In the present thesis the Russian name (NSR) will be applied.

3.3.2 Commercial shipping opportunities and resource extraction

The retreating of summer sea ice is making the Arctic more accessible.[18] It is expected that the opening of the Arctic will create a number of opportunities, of which the most prominent ones are linked to commercial shipping and resource extraction. The ACIA report maintains that reduced sea ice is likely to improve accessibility, and thus enable marine transport and access to natural resources (ACIA, 2004, pp. 82-85). These findings are based on estimates of longer ice-free periods leading to prolonged shipping periods, shortened shipping distances and increased traffic volume in certain areas (Åtland, 2010). Again, the NSR serves as a good example as estimates claim it to represent a 40 percent distance saving between Europe and Asia (p. 40). Furthermore, successful voyages have been carried out in the NSR, such as the German Beluga Group cargo ships that sailed the entire NSR in 2009 (Ibid.). Increased accessibility in the Circumpolar North could also lead to increased resource extraction. The resource potential in the Arctic is expected to be great with regards to petroleum, natural gas, as well as minerals. The 2008 U.S. Geological Survey, estimates that as much as 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil (90 billion barrels of oil) as well as 30 percent of the undiscovered natural gas (1.700 trillion cubic feet of gas) is to be found in the Arctic (USGS, 2008).

These figures are of course estimates, and there is no certainty of the amount of oil and gas that can be found in the Arctic. Moreover, severe problems and obstacles affect the prospects of higher activity in the Arctic. A number of difficulties have been identified such as harsh climate, large amounts of ice, lack of investment capital and infrastructure, geographical constraints, as well as high demands of technology (Fairhall, 2010; Heininen, 2008; Moe & Jensen, 2010; Åtland, 2010). As a consequence, resource extraction has not yet thoroughly started in areas that were earlier covered by ice. Also, international shipping companies are not aiming at regular or year-round journeys in the Circumpolar North (Åtland, 2010, p. 40). Moe and Jensen (2010) argue that the opening of the Arctic sea routes, NSR and the NWP, in longer periods therefore seems quite far-fetched (p. 5).

Resource extraction and shipping in the Arctic are thus two-folded issues; they are great opportunities, and at the same time security issues. Evidently, increased accessibility may accelerate conflict levels (Åtland, 2010, p. 38) since it can lead to "intensified

[18] Åtland (2010) emphasizes that the accessibility of the Arctic is an ambiguous issue; a number of developments might as well make the region "*less* accessible" such as the many challenges with regards to activities in the Arctic (p. 29).

competition over access to, and control, over energy resources" (HR, 2008, para. vi). Energy security has therefore become an important issue with regards to the Arctic, accentuated by the fact that resources have a strong strategic importance to the involved parties (Heininen, 2008, p. 5). Inter-state conflict is a possible scenario, and so is terrorism, illegal immigration, transit of weapons of mass destruction and piracy (Blunden, 2009, p. 124). A more open Arctic might therefore influence the stability in the region and the national interests of the involved parties.

3.3.3 Involvement of non-Arctic actors

The opportunities, as well as the challenges in the Arctic, have led to a global focus on Arctic Affairs. Non-Arctic actors such as China, Japan, Germany and the EU have demonstrated their interest in a number of ways; from carrying out trans-Arctic shipping journeys and investing in research projects, to creating new initiatives like the EU's Northern Dimension (Heininen, 2008). In a way, globalization has paved the way for such an involvement, as it has created "… a tightening of the economic and geopolitical links between the Arctic and the rest of the world" (Arctic Governance Project, 2010, p. 2). These developments have, to a certain degree, provided non-Arctic actors with impetus to legitimize their involvement and to argue for a new and more representative Arctic Governance system recognizing their role (Blunden, 2009, p. 136).

The Arctic States, on the other hand, have adopted a more assertive approach in Arctic Affairs, emphasizing their sovereign rights. Evidently, the goals of the non-Arctic and the Arctic actors are not always compatible. Coinciding views on important issues have therefore increasingly characterized Arctic Affairs. Opposing perspectives on issues such as Arctic Governance illustrate this tendency. On the one hand, the Arctic States argue that there is "…no need to develop a new comprehensive international regime to govern the Arctic Ocean" (AC, 2008, p. 2). On the other hand, non-Arctic actors, such as the EU, have called for a new legal framework of Arctic Governance. In regards of the increasing controversies, Young (2011) claims that even though jurisdictional disputes are known for being difficult to solve, the issue regarding the role of non-Arctic actors might in fact prove to be the arduous one (p. 190). The security implication of the involvement of non-Arctic actors is considered to be high, as there is no "… suitable mechanism for engaging these actors and ensuring that they act in ways that are compatible with maintaining the Arctic as a zone of peace" (Ibid.).

When considering the frictions that might occur within the group of the A8 as well, the potential of conflict is accentuated even more. The EU's application for observer status in the AC has revealed internal divergence among the Arctic States. While Norway has supported the EU's application, Russia, Canada and the U.S. have voiced their concerns and hindered the EU from obtaining observer status. The fact that China is also declined observer status in the AC, underlines the conflict potential of involvement of non-Arctic actors. Furthermore, it strengthens the impression of the importance of the Arctic States' self-interests, such as Norway, when it comes to Arctic questions.

3.4 International cooperation and regime formation in the Arctic

Sources of conflict exist in the Arctic, but so do international regimes and institutions. Since the end of the Cold War, there has been an extensive formation of "… a number of innovative political and legal arrangements" that have consolidated inter-state cooperation in the Arctic (Heininen, 2008, p. 2). Ad hoc regime formation in the Circumpolar North has led to the creation of a complex framework of numerous actors involved on different levels of cooperation from the global to the regional. The Arctic Governance system can thus explained as a system that "…features a mosaic of issue-specific arrangements rather than a single comprehensive and integrated regime covering an array of issues that constitute the region's policy agenda" (Young, 2005, p. 10). Furthermore, the complex system is arguably best described as a random institutional complex, or even as a collection of different institutional arrangements (Koivurova, 2008; Young, 2002). The region is therefore a suitable case for defensive realism which holds that cooperation might occur – but is in no way a natural outcome of international relations.

The Arctic Council is considered to be the main Arctic institutions. It was established in 1996 with the Ottawa Declaration, aiming to promote "… cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States…" (AC, 1996, art. 1a). The members of the AC are the A8, along with six permanent participating international organizations representing Indigenous Arctic Peoples. Additionally, a number of countries have been granted observer status.[19] In the Tromsø Declaration of 2009, the AC identified its key priorities; climate change, the International Polar Year (IPY), Arctic marine environment, human health and

[19] Observer status in the AC is granted to France, Germany, The Netherlands, Poland, Spain and the UK, along with 9 inter-governmental and Inter-Parliamentary Organizations, and 11 Non-Governmental Organizations (AC, 2011).

human development, energy, contaminants, biodiversity, and the administration and organization of the AC (AC, 2008). Its mandate is modest as it is primarily focused on environmental and natural resource issues (Blunden, 2009, p. 138; Rosamond, 2011, p. 10). The institutional framework of the AC makes it "… a policy-shaping rather than a policy-making body" as it lacks effective mechanisms and practices to avoid conflict, and of taking into account the interests of all the concerned parties (Young, 2011, p. 193). Focusing on these aspects, Sale and Potapov (2010), in line with neo-realist assumptions, criticize the AC for being "toothless", and calls it a "talking shop with no powers" (pp. 141-142). Young (2011) on the other hand, argues that the AC has, despite its limitations, proved to be an important venue as it has outlined a number of key issues and has had an important agenda-setting role (p. 193). These observations fit well with the defensive realist view on institutions explained in the previous chapter.

Despite the criticism of the Arctic institutional bodies, Heininen (2008) argues that the international collaboration in the Arctic has been a "success story". He supports his argument by emphasizing how the aim to "…decrease military and political tension and increase stability and peace in the northern 'military theatre' of the Cold war" has been successfully reached (p. 2). He maintains that the transformation from confrontation to cooperation is one of the important geopolitical changes occurring in the High North (pp. 1-2). Despite these developments, heated debates on the functionality of the Arctic institutional framework are prominent. Different solutions of how the Arctic Governance system could become more effective have been proposed, such as the creation of an Arctic Treaty in line with the Antarctic Treaty (Arctic Governance Project, 2010; Rosamond, 2011).[20]

This chapter has outlined that the Arctic is a region where the distinction between conflict and cooperation is blurred. At the moment, the Circumpolar North seems to be a peaceful region, despite the great number of sources of conflict. The far North is at the same time in constant development, which makes the area increasingly important in geostrategic terms. Along with these changes, there is no guarantee that the Arctic will continue to be peaceful as disputes and conflicts might evolve.

[20] The Antarctic Treaty was signed in 1959, and entered into force in 1961. It was signed in Washington by twelve countries that had been active in research in the Antarctic area. It has been signed by an accelerating number of nations of the UN, today counting 49 nations (Secretariat of the Antarctic Treaty, 1959). The Antarctic Treaty System (ATS) regulates Antarctic Affairs, and grants all members the right to use the Antarctic for peaceful purposes, and to engage in scientific research in the area (Ibid.). It will be further mentioned in chapter four (section 4.2.3) and chapter six (section 6.3).

4 The development of European Union Arctic Policies

The European Union's development of an Arctic Policy exemplifies the growing involvement of non-Arctic actors in the Circumpolar North. This chapter analyzes the EU's engagement in Arctic Affairs in order to clarify why, and how, Brussels has involved itself. To do so, the chapter starts with an assessment of the EU's attempt to legitimize its role in the far North. Secondly, a chronological presentation of relevant policy documents is given to grasp the institutional interplay of the EU. Thirdly, Brussels' Arctic objectives are examined, with a particular focus on climate change and economic considerations as prime movers. Fourthly, the EU's efforts to influence Arctic Affairs are analyzed. Finally, external opposition and divergence towards the EU's Arctic involvement is assessed to clarify whether the development of EU Arctic Policies has been a controversial turf battle. What becomes obvious is that the EU's engagement in the High North has created a great number of controversies and disputes with the A5, despite the attempt of the Council to level the EU's approach with the Arctic States'.

4.1 The European Union legitimizing its role in the Arctic

Maria Damanaki, the 2010-2014 Commissioner for the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), claimed that "[i]ndeed, the European Union is an Arctic player in its own right" (Damanaki, 2010, p. 2). Despite her assertive tone, EU institutions and actors have seen a need to devote efforts into legitimizing the EU's role as an Arctic actor. EU actors have argued for a geographic connection to the far North by emphasizing that three EU member states, Denmark, Sweden and Finland, are so-called Arctic States. Consequently, the EU has Arctic land and is inhabited by Arctic indigenous peoples (the Saami).[21] Furthermore, Brussels has stressed its partnerships when legitimizing its connection to the far North. Firstly, the EU has underlined how two of its closest neighbors and EEA-partners, Norway and Iceland, are Arctic coastal nations. Secondly, the Commission has pointed out that the Arctic nations Canada, Russia and the U.S. are strategic partners of the EU. Consequently, "….the EU and its associated states comprise more than half the numeric membership of the Arctic Council" (EP, 2008b, p. 2). EU participation in Arctic regional bodies and policies, such as the BEAC and ND, has also been articulated. So has the fact that

[21] The EU has no Arctic coastline since Greenland is not a member of the EU. Additionally, only Denmark, one out of five Arctic littoral states, is a member state of the EU.

a number of EU policies (such as energy, environmental policies) are directly relevant for the circumpolar region. With regards to economic links to the region, emphasis has been put on the fact that the EU is a large consumer of Arctic fisheries and that it has a large merchant fleet that will be navigating in Arctic waters (European Commission, 2008). In short, "…the EU is affected by Arctic policies and likewise has an impact on Arctic policies" (EP, 2011, p. 4). Evidently, Brussels argues that it has a role to play in the High North in terms of its historic, geographic and economic links to the region.

The EU has also emphasized its scientific achievements and its role as one of the major contributor to Arctic research. Firstly, Brussels has underlined how its economic activities have an impact on the Arctic climate and that the EU should therefore be an Arctic player. Well-founded arguments from a number of research projects and reports have been used to support this claim (ACIA, 2004; Cavalieri et al., 2010).[22] Secondly, the EU has taken advantage of its role as a leader in the global efforts against climate change to legitimize its role in the High North. Notably, the EU has consolidated itself as an international green power, by illustrating its willingness to utilize its economic power to enforce strict environmental regulations, and to front sustainable development in environmental regimes. The EU has thus portrayed itself as a "… global fighter and manager of environmental action in the European Arctic" (Grindheim, 2009, p. 31). Furthermore, the EU's multilateral experience and expertise is presented as a way of hindering future conflicts in the Circumpolar North. The EU has thus applied arguments from outside the Arctic to justify its role, and to illustrate that it can enhance the input to Arctic Affairs. This is according to Grindheim a rather altruistic move from the EU as it represents itself as a global fighter and that the world "…is best served with EU engagement and stewardship" (Ibid.).

In the European Parliament's Arctic Resolution of 2011, the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) argued that the historic, geographic and economic links "…underlines the need for a coordinated Arctic Policy at EU level and represents a strategic opportunity for the EU to assume a more active role and contribute to multilateral governance in the Arctic region" (EP, 2011, nr. 6). The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC)[23] has because of its intergovernmental nature had a more vague approach than the EP, welcoming a "gradual

[22] For details on EU's Arctic Footprint, see the EU's report on http://arctic-footprint.eu/.

[23] The European Council (where the member states' Heads of State meet) is not particularly preoccupied with foreign affairs. Thus, the different configurations of the Council of Ministers, such as the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC), have a pivotal role in foreign policies. The GAERC used to be the most important arena for discussion. With the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, in order to strengthen the institutional base of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), GAERC was separated and became the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC). FAC is chaired by the HR, and is the main decision-making body with regards to CFSP (Nugent, 2010, pp. 388-389).

formulation of a policy on Arctic issues to address EU interests and responsibilities, while recognizing Member States' legitimate interest and rights in the Arctic" (Council, 2009, p. 1). Despite the many arguments presented by the EU, its claimed Arctic role has been criticized by the Arctic States. The EU is thus commonly categorized as a non-Arctic actor along with countries such as China, Japan and South-Korea (Berkman & Young, 2009; Ingenfeld, 2010; Keil, 2010; Young, 2011).

4.2 The European Union Arctic Policies: A policy in development

The EU is often considered to be a newcomer in Arctic Affairs. This is understandable when considering the young age of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which dates back to the Maastricht Treaty of 1993. A chronological presentation of EU policy documents and actions, however, reveals that the EU has to a varying degree been engaged in Arctic Affairs since the beginning of the 1990s.

4.2.1 Unsuccessful regional moves pre 2008

The foundations for an EU Arctic Policy were laid in the 1990s. During this decade, the EU adopted a regional approach to the European Arctic. That is, the EU was engaged in the establishment of regional institutions, driven by the need to deal with Russian interests in the High North. The establishment of regional institutions started in 1993, as the Commission was one of the founding fathers of the BEAC (BEAC, 1993, para. 1). In 1999, the Council of the European Union followed suit with the establishment of the Northern Dimension Policy. The ND was built on the initiative of the Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen. It was by no means a purely Arctic policy, as it covered a wide geographic area from the European Arctic, to North-West Russia and the Baltic Sea (Arter, 2000, p. 678). The so-called "Arctic window" of the ND is still one out of three regional foci, and is arguably a peripheral one as Russia and the Baltic area have been prime priorities.[24] Evidently, the regional bodies established in the 1990s were not successful in placing Arctic issues permanently on the political agenda, as they were more of a regional aspect of the EU's policies towards Russia.

[24]Arctic enthusiasts, such as British Diana Wallis, a MEP Parliament (MEP) for the ALDE, have argued that the Arctic window should be "…stripped out and given a policy of its own" (Wallis, 2008, para. 7). Improvements were made in 2006, with the so-called "new Northern Dimension", as Russia, Norway and Iceland were made equal partners. Since then, the ND has been the main cooperative framework between the EU and the Arctic States (Airoldi, 2008, p. 21).

In 2005, and again in 2007, MEP Diana Wallis asked the Commission for a more active role of the EU in the Arctic (Maurer, 2010, p. 6). She received a negative response, and the development of an EU Arctic Policy remained at a stand-still. Nonetheless, policy documents indirectly touching on Arctic issues appeared. The Marine Strategy Framework Initiative, Integrated Climate and Energy Policy, as well as an Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) were spurred by the EU's focus on climate change. The IMP represents an important turning point as the EU reintroduced questions regarding the Arctic Ocean on the political agenda (Koivurova, 2009b, p. 172). The Commission did so as it emphasized the need to create an integrated and holistic policy because "…all matters relating to Europe's oceans and seas are interlinked, and that sea-related policies must develop in a joined-up way…" (European Commission, 2007, p. 2). Until 2008, the EU was therefore only indirectly dealing with Arctic Affairs.

4.2.2 Institutional turf battles of 2008

2008 saw an upsurge of interest as all the main EU institutions issued policy documents dealing directly with the EU's role in the Arctic. The tide started turning in mid-March as the High Representative,[25] Javier Solana, together with the Commission published a paper on climate change and international security (HR and European Commission, 2008). The document became a milestone as the climate-security connection that came to flourish within the EU was articulated (Grindheim, 2009, p. 15). In the document, climate change was described as a "threat multiplier", meaning that it aggravates existing trends, tensions and instability. Consequently, the HR and the Commission declared that it was in the EU's self-interest to adress the security implications of climate change as they can have "…potential consequences for international stability and the European security interest" (HR and European Commission, 2008, p. 8). The paper had a general character, and the Arctic was mentioned in detail as one out of seven geographic examples. Another trait was that the HR and the Commission emphasized multilateral governance as the solution to the problem, and argued that the EU has a vital role to play. The document was symbolically important, as it

[25] The High Representative for the CFSP was a new position established with the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999. The aim was to raise the profile of the EU in foreign policies, and to strengthen the capacity of the EU to achieve common positions. The Spanish politician and former Secretary General of NATO, Javier Solana, was the first to hold the position as HR. Institutional limitations of the HR have been apparent, and the position was therefore altered with the Lisbon Treaty in 2010 (Nugent, 2010, pp. 390-391).

represented a go-ahead and was a key turning-point for the development of an EU Arctic Policy.

The European Parliament was the first institution to follow-up on the HR and Commission's paper. On 9 October 2008, the EP adopted a Resolution on Arctic Governance (EP, 2008b).[26] The document was characterized by a focus on the geopolitical significance of the region and its security dimension. Additionally, an urgency of action was revealed, for example when stating that "…the time for diagnosis is over and the time for action is now" (EP, 2008c, p. 2). The EP recognized the value of the Arctic window in the ND, but argued that the EU should nonetheless adopt a specific EU Arctic Policy. The EP urged the Commission to take a more pro-active role in Arctic Affairs. Moreover, the MEPs called for opening of international negotiations on "an international treaty for the protection of the Arctic" based on the Antarctic Treaty (EP, 2008b, p. 2). The Antarctic Treaty is a classical intergovernmental arrangement that is open to all UN nations carrying out research in the Circumpolar South. The EP's call for an Arctic Treaty based on the principles of the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS) should therefore be interpreted as a call for a more representative system that would ensure non-Arctic Actors a greater role in Arctic Affairs.

The EP's call must be understood in connection with the interpretation of the Arctic by certain MEPs as a "wild west" lacking multilateral governance, an analysis which fits well with the realist perception of international relations as anarchic. In the debate leading to the Resolution, the Austrian rapporteur, Richard Seeber (EPP),[27] even claimed it to be a "…terra incognita…as far as international law goes…" (EP, 2008a). The EP's motion for an Arctic Treaty has been criticized by Arctic stakeholders, and has often been misinterpreted as the political will of the EU as a whole (Offerdal, 2011, p. 10). When interpreting the resolution, one must keep in mind how MEPs are not necessarily constrained as their powers in external policies are limited. Additionally, they tend to have a more regional and local focus because of their attachment to constituencies (Airoldi, 2008, p. 99). Consequently, the EP is more inclined than other EU institutions to front issues that are not particularly mainstream (Ibid.).

On 11 November 2008, the Commission submitted a Communication titled *The European Union and the Arctic Region* (European Commission, 2008).[28] In the document, the

[26] EP resolutions are non-binding acts, where the MEPs make a political statement about an issue to give political impetus to the legislative or political process (Airoldi, 2010, p. 19).
[27] Richard Seeber is a MEP for the Group of the European People's Party (EPP). The EPP is the European party for Christian Democrats (EPP, 2012).
[28] Commission communications are non-binding documents issued by the Commission on a subject where the institution wants to make a statement. Grindheim (2009) argues that they are merely declarations as they have no legislative power and are thus not actual policy documents (p. 15).

Commission argued that the EU should develop a coordinated and systematic EU Arctic Policy in order to meet the challenges caused by the climate changes. Three main objectives were proposed; 1) protecting and preserving the Arctic in unison with its population, 2) promoting sustainable use of resources, 3) contributing to enhanced Arctic multilateral governance. The Communication has acquired a distinctive standing among the many policy papers, as it is considered to be the first layer of an EU Arctic Policy by both the EP and the Council. It should be noted that the approach was assertive in issue-areas where EU interests were considered to be at stake, such as the right to navigation and innocent passage. Also, the third policy objective, regarding enhancing Arctic Governance, has caused negative response and caution from the Arctic States.[29] Critique has been common, despite the fact that the Commission recognized the existing framework governing the Arctic, and that its approach was more in line with the view of the Arctic States than the EP's Resolution.

In order to enhance the role of the EU in Arctic Governance, the Commission also called for the EU to apply for permanent observer status in the AC. Since the Council and the EP gave the Commission a green light for such a move, it sent an application in the end of 2008. The application came at a bad time, however, as the EU was about to adopt a ban on seal products, which spurred conflicts with Arctic States and indigenous peoples.[30] The dispute with Canada was of particular importance, as the Canadian Government responded to the ban by declining the EU's application in April 2009 (Barents Observer, 2009). The seal products ban was also criticized by Norway, and even though Oslo supported the EU's application, one might wonder whether the Norwegian Government pushed as hard for the entrance of the EU after the seal case. Evidently, Brussels seemed to be interpreted by the A5 as a competitor, rather than a collaborator in the Circumpolar North. The EU application was once again declined in April 2011. This underlines how the EU is kept on the sideline of Arctic Affairs, despite its continuous efforts to become an integrated participant.

On 8 December 2008, the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) adopted a *Conclusion on the EU and the Arctic Region* (Council, 2008a; 2008b).[31] In the document of 2008, the GAERC welcomed the Commission Communication of November 2008 as the first layer of an EU Arctic Policy, and agreed that the EU had to gradually

[29] See chapter six (section 6.3) for an analysis of the EU's third objective and the negative response from the Norwegian Government.

[30] A seal products ban was proposed by the Commission as early as 2007. It was adopted by the EP and the Council in July 2009. At the time of the EU application, the dispute was therefore well-established. See chapter six (section 6.4) for further analysis.

[31] Council conclusions are an expression of the unanimous political agreement of the member states on a specific subject. They are non-binding legal acts, but often serve as a basis in further consideration or action (Airoldi, 2010, p. 22).

develop its approach in a systematic and coordinated manner. Also, the Council concurred with the Commission's emphasis on existing multilateral framework and cooperation with Arctic States. It went even further, however, in correcting the EP Resolution's bold nature. The GAERC stressed that the EU should increase its contribution "...in conformity with international conventions, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and recogni[s]ing the role of the Arctic States and that of the Northern Dimension policy" (Council, 2008a, p. 2).[32] Evidently, the Council emphasized the role of the Arctic States and toned down the controversial issues mentioned by the Commission and the EP. It is likely that it did so in order to correct the image the EU had obtained in the eyes of Arctic stakeholders after the EP and Commission's bold proposals on Arctic Governance, as well as the seal products ban (Offerdal, 2011, p. 11). These tendencies underline the fact that Council conclusions are products of the member state's unanimous decisions, along with the EU's challenge of acting as a coherent actor in external policies.

The handling of Arctic issues in 2008 can thus be characterized as an institutional turf battle within the EU institutions – an extension of typical trends in EU external policies. This observation is supported by Cameron (2007) who argues that constant "turf wars" within and between the Commission and the Council are common in EU foreign policies. Keukeleire and MacNaughtan (2008) agree as they claim that the problem between the different competences of the EU has resulted in a "succession of 'border conflicts' or outright 'war'" between the Commission and the Council (or member states), as well as within the internal structures of the EU institutions (p. 86). Another EU foreign policy phenomenon that became apparent, was that the member states were in the driving seat, while there was room for entrepreneurship by Community actors, such as the Commission, the EP and the HR (K. E. Smith, 2008). When considering the evident turf battles between and within the institutions, along with the role of the member states in the GAERC, these considerations seem to hold true for the development of an EU Arctic Policy.

4.2.3 From 2009, careful tip-toeing?

In April 2009, the EP discussed a motion for a Resolution in order to "… wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission…" (EP, 2009b, p. 1). The idea of a more

[32] The Council also called for a detailed reflection on Arctic Affairs. On 18 December, 2008 the HR therefore published a follow-up on the paper on climate change from 2007. In the paper, the HR recommended to carry out a more detailed analysis of security implications at the regional level, and to intensify the dialogue with third countries and organizations (HR, 2008).

comprehensive Arctic Charter was an issue that certain MEPs, such as Wallis, refused to give up (Wallis, 2008, para. 4). This was portrayed by the fact that the resolution was meant as a motion for an international treaty for the protection of the Arctic. The motion's first paragraph consisted of a new call on the Council and the Commission to initiate international negotiation on a treaty along the lines of the Antarctic Treaty. The resolution was later postponed, and eventually withdrawn, due to the negative response from the Council and the Commission representatives present in the discussion on 1 April 2009, emphasizing the "… politically untimely and potentially counterproductive character of such a call" (EP, 2009a). Benita Ferrero-Waldner,[33] representing the Commission as the European Commissioner for External Relations, warned the EP of proposing a treaty:

> So the idea of establishing a binding legal regime specifically designed for the Arctic is, unfortunately, difficult, because none of the five Arctic Ocean coastal states – Denmark, Norway, Canada, Russia and the United States – is in favo[u]r of such a regime. I therefore fear that such a proposal would at this stage not only be ineffective but could prove to be detrimental to the EU's role and credibility in overall Arctic cooperation. Rather than expending efforts on that cause, the EU's interests and objectives are better served by building greater multilateral cooperation and making better use of the existing legal instruments (Ferrero-Waldener, EP, 2009a).

In the debate, the internal divergence among the EU institutions was thus apparent. The debate illustrates how the HR, the Commission and the EP made efforts to be entrepreneurs of a more active Arctic Policy, while the Council and the member states had a straining effect on bold initiatives. The Council representative's emphasis on the counterproductive nature of the EP's call is perhaps an illustration of how the Council representatives (who have be accountable for their foreign policy decisions) have to think more in line with *realpolitik* and less idealistically than the EP.

Towards the end of 2009, during the Swedish presidency, the Foreign Affairs Council adopted its *Conclusions on Arctic issues* (Council, 2009). The FAC approved the three main policy objectives proposed by the Commission in 2007, and emphasized the need for further work in order to develop overarching and coherent EU Policies on Arctic issues. Again, the Council sought to correct the image the EU had obtained after the bold initiatives of the EP and the Commission. More precisely, the focus concerned non-controversial issues such as research, and the positive sides of intra-state cooperation, while controversial areas, such as the questions of governance and extraction, were excluded (Østhagen, 2011, p. 21). The FAC also stressed how EU policies should be based on the existing multilateral framework, in

[33] Ferrero-Waldener served as Commissioner of External Relations until 1 December 2009, when the position was merged with that of the HR due to the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. Until 2010 she was the European Commissioner for Trade and European Neighborhood Policy (European Commission, 2012).

particular UNCLOS and the AC. The need to establish close dialogue, and to seek consensus with the Arctic States and local communities, was also emphasized. In this regard, Airoldi (2010) maintains that the paper reflects "…the composite, multidisciplinary nature of the subject, as well as the different priorities and wishes by Member States meeting in the Council" (p. 24). The Council has thus been a "brake block" that has taken a firm grip of the Commission and the EP in order to limit the consequences of internal divergences.

The following year, 2010, was characterized more by regress, than progress. The exception was arguably the newly elected EP's Arctic involvement. In this regard, the extensive debate in the EP in March 2010, where the HR participated, is of particular importance. In the debate, HR Baroness Catherine Ashton stressed that, in order for the EU to portray itself as an credible Arctic actor, the EU should restrain from proposing to replicate the Antarctic Treaty as it "would be unrealistic, and […] would probably also be detrimental to the proactive role that we aim to develop" (Ashton, EP, 2010a). Furthermore, the wide array of views on Arctic issues within the EP was evident, even among MEPs in the same political party. Divergent views were for example prominent within the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR): while the British MEP Charles Tannock argued that the EU should not hesitate to defend its interests in the Arctic "robustly and vigorously", the Dane Anna Rosbach claimed that the EU had nothing to do in the Arctic and should "… leave the Arctic to those countries which are directly involved in the region" (Tannock & Rosbach, EP, 2010a). This is an interesting observation, as it illustrates how these MEPs followed their Governments' interests, and not their European Party discipline.

In January 2011, the EP's Arctic engagement led to the adoption of the *Resolution on a sustainable policy for the High North* (EP, 2011). The resolution represented a shift of approach as far as the European Parliament was concerned. More precisely, the EP leveled itself somewhat with the approach of the Commission and the Council, recognizing "… the existing international, multilateral and bilateral legal frameworks such as the comprehensive set of rules laid down in UNCLOS…" (EP, 2011, p. 3). Evidently, the EP agreed that there is no legal vacuum in the High North. Like the Commission, the EP nonetheless argued that the current framework for Arctic Governance had to be further developed. Another similarity with the Commission's approach was the assertive tone when addressing issues of vital importance to the EU, such as the freedom of the seas and the right to innocent passage through international waterways (EP, 2011, p. 5). Evidently, the EU seemed to be more coordinated on Arctic questions in 2011 than it was up until 2009.

The EP's debate and resolution should be viewed in the light of the Lisbon Treaty, ratified on 1 December 2009, which led to reform of EU policies and institutional set-up. The EP's importance in the legislative process increased as a result of the Lisbon Treaty. With regards to the Arctic, the EP gained power in a number of key policy areas such as fisheries and energy (Airoldi, 2010, p. 15; Gundersen, 2010, p. 99). Indeed, with increasing power, there is reason to believe that there will be a moderation of the EP's approach as it will be held responsible for its decisions. The EP change of tone on Arctic Governance in the Resolution of 2011 supports this projection.[34]

When analyzing the process towards an EU Arctic Policy, it is obvious that the EU has not succeeded in creating a concrete policy as it is still in the agenda-setting and formulation process. Hence, the level of EU activities in the Arctic has remained low despite the increasing number of policy papers addressing the issue (Airoldi, 2010, p. 61). With regards to the role of the EU institutions, it is evident that the European Parliament and the Commission have served as entrepreneurs, and have to a certain degree

> …proposed yardsticks for an EU arctic policy approach by setting our proposals …[and have]…assumed 'European interest' in the region without carefully analyzing the Member State's basic understanding of the High North…(Maurer, 2010, p. 16).

Out of the two, the EP has acted as a "wild child" and has caused several clashes with the interests of the Arctic States. The active role of the Community actors is in line with the trend of a more active common foreign policy approach (Østhagen, 2011, p. 27). The Council, however, has been a kind of "bridle", and at times a "brake block", adhering to internal and external divergences to correct the mistakes. Moreover, national interests seem to trump European interests, which is a common tendency with regards to EU foreign policies.

4.3 The objectives of the European Union and its member states

The analysis has so far illustrated how the Council tends to steer the EU's foreign policies, but that the Community actors (such as the Commission and the EP) also play a part. It is therefore necessary to consider the EU's objectives and interests in the Arctic, as it allows for an understanding of the conflict potential between Brussels and Oslo. The main argument in

[34]The situation today is that in June 2011, accession talks with Iceland started. If these are successful the inclusion of Iceland will strengthen the geographic foothold of the EU in the Circumpolar North. As of April 2012, the much awaited Commission progress report, which the Council asked for in its conclusion of 2009, is delayed. It was supposed to be issued in the end of June 2011 but has been postponed due to the harsh political and economic situation of the EU, which continues to mark its political agenda.

this section is that the EU primarily is driven by external security-related concerns, as well as the challenges and opportunities of a changing Arctic. The prospects of climate change-driven conflicts and the need to ensure sustainability are presented as the main driver in the EU policy documents. Nevertheless, economic objectives have come to play an even greater role along with the increasing prospects for resource extraction. What is not openly expressed, however, is that the EU is also driven by the need to maintain and sustain the balance of power.

4.3.1 Climate change expertise to hinder conflicts

Airoldi (2008) argues that the increasing awareness of the effects of the climate changes has been the main impetus for the EU's surge of interest in the Arctic. As evident in the analysis of the EU's legitimization of its Arctic role, Brussels' approach has been a two-folded one: focusing both on economic and normative environmental objectives. More precisely, the EU has emphasized its footprint on the Arctic climate, and at the same time utilized its role as a leader in the global efforts against climate change to legitimize its role in the far North.

The EU's coupling of climate change and security considerations is important as the EU has tended to portray the region in negative terms, close to an "unregulated wild west" (Grindheim, 2009, p. 43). The argument is that in the Arctic, which lacks a functional legal framework, the EU is in a unique position, as a multilateral and cross-border institution, to limit the conflict potential through cooperation. Wallis (2008) claims that the EU "…could have something to bring to the table, in that we provided evidence of how you can work across borders in sensitive difficult areas" (para. 10). The question of climate change is thus linked to security: The EU has to engage itself in the Arctic to hinder future conflicts that can threaten European stability and fuel risks to international security as a whole. Thus, at a first glimpse, the EU's external environmental policy seems to be driven by economic and normative environmental objectives (Brande, 2008, pp. 171-172).

Multilevel governance as a solution to environmental problems has not only been an entrance key to Arctic Affairs – it has also been presented as the main objective and "focal point" in the EU Arctic policy documents (Maurer, 2010, p. 16). However, there has been a tendency since 2008 of toning down this consideration. Airoldi (2010) claims that it is possible to "… sense a reluctance to step into a situation increasingly sensitive and complicated internationally, not least because security issues are prominent in the Arctic strategies of the main Arctic – and world – players" (p. 29). In this regard, it is interesting that

Bretherton and Vogler (2006) argues that the EU's link between trade and environmental aspirations can be challenged. Gupta and Grubb (2000) seem to agree, arguing that when it comes to climate change the EU has "… fallen short of its potential and ambitions…[and that] its effectiveness is disputed and external judgements are very mixed" (p. 5). One might therefore question whether the EU's focus on Arctic climate change should be seen as an extension of EU's foreign policy objectives to become a global environmental pioneer?

Neumann (2010) argues that climate change is in fact not very prominent in respect to the Arctic, except for the field of research. She supports her argument by emphasizing that there is "…a considerable discrepancy between EU's declared interest towards the Arctic in the field of climate change and its actual actions…" (p. 2). More precisely, Neumann claims that even though there is a clear recognition of the Arctic as a vulnerable area, the EU has not emphasized, nor addressed, the High North in EU positions during international climate change negotiations, such as the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (p. 30). Due to the increasing reluctance to address these issues, coupled with the low level of actions, it seems evident that the EU is not primarily driven towards the Circumpolar North because of climate change. As time has passed, different and stronger motives seem to have surpassed – in particular economic ones.

4.3.2 Economic objectives as the rising "co-driver"

The EU is a considerable power in external economic relations, revealed by its import and export figures. Considering such statistics, Orbie (2008) claims the EU can in certain regards compare with the U.S. (p. 36). It is a vital concern of the EU, as a large economic power, to maintain and sustain its position in the global economy. The Arctic, with its economic possibilities, is therefore of interest to the EU and its member states. Analysis of key EU member states' positions, such as Germany, France and the UK, reveals the importance of economic objectives and considerations (Major & Steinicke, 2011).[35] Consequently, it seems like EU member states are increasingly driven by 1) the fear of being neglected the right to innocent passage in the Arctic Ocean, and 2) being sidelined in a potential scramble for resources.

Firstly, the need to gain access to Arctic transit routes has been a decisive economic objective of the EU. This is revealed by the assertive tone in several EU policy documents

[35] See section 4.4 for further analysis of the member states' role in the development of an EU Arctic Policy

when emphasizing the importance of gaining access and right to innocent passage. The economic benefits of the opening of the Arctic for international shipping will be considerable for the EU, which is mainly made up of export-oriented nations. Shorter and safer shipping routes will be of decisive importance since maritime trade between Europe and Asia accounts for about 26 percent of the total trans-continental shipping traffic (Major & Steinicke, 2011, p. 5). With regards to Germany, Major and Steinicke (2011) claim that as much as 90 percent of its external trade is transported via maritime shipping routes, and 30 percent of its trade is non-European (p. 8).[36] Evidently, the reduction of sailing distance will be considerable, and the routes would also mean substantial savings per ships (Moe & Jensen, 2010). The goal of the EU is thus to gain access in order to secure further economic development and trade.

Secondly, the Arctic oil and gas potential is of great importance for an energy-importing entity such as the European Union. The EU is becoming increasingly dependent on energy imports, as the EU-27's production has followed a downward trend. In 2009, the energy dependence of EU was 53.9 percent of gross energy consumption, and Denmark was the only EU member state with a negative dependency rate (Eurostat, 2012a). The origin of the EU's energy imports of crude oil was first and foremost Russia, closely followed by Norway.[37] In such a climate, the EU has moved energy security to the top of its agenda, revealed by its ambitions to create a common EU Energy Policy. In order to hinder energy scarcity, gaining access to Arctic oil and gas has become a prime objective of Brussels. Hence, it is in the collective interest of the EU, as an energy importer, to ensure that Norway and Russia are able to deliver Arctic gas and oil (Airoldi, 2010, p. 48). Also, the fact that gas is considered to be the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly energy alternative, emphasizes the importance of the Barents Sea, which is rich in natural gas deposits. Consequently, there are significant reasons to believe that the EU's interest in the Arctic is driven by economic and energy-related considerations.

Arctic oil and gas has been coupled with sustainability and security considerations. The goal of the EU, as an energy importer, is to diversify its energy supplies in order to limit the potential of a competition for the scarce resources (Major & Steinicke, 2011, p. 5). To succeed, the EU has underlined how European industry and companies can contribute with their expertise. In particular, Brussels has accentuated that EU companies know how to

[36] The importance of the Arctic with regards to shipping can be exemplified by the fact that the shipping distance from Hamburg (Germany) to Yokohama (Japan) is 11,073 nm when sailing the Suez Canal, and will be 6,920 nm with the NSR (Ragner, 2000, p. 1).

[37] Import from Russia was the largest bulk, counting 33.1 percent, while Norway was the second largest with 15.2 percent. With regards to natural gas the figures were 34.2 from Russia, closely followed by a 30.7 percent import rate of Norwegian natural gas (Eurostat, 2012a).

combine sustainable use with exploitation (Grindheim, 2009, p. 38). Again, it is obvious that the EU portrays itself as a relevant actor that can be a constructive contributor to Arctic Affairs. Also, Brussels' goal is to ensure EU participation and access to the oil and gas potential of the High North. Notably, Airoldi (2008) argues that energy might become the "co-driver" of EU interest in the Arctic (p. 48). When assessing EU policy documents, where there has been a move from a security and geopolitical focus to environmental and climate change considerations, Airoldi's argument seems valid as economic considerations are indeed presented as secondary.

The actions of the EU, however, reveal that economic considerations are more than an appearing "co-driver" – it is a prime objective of the EU. This is made evident by the fact that energy security has become a central future of EU's external policy. Consequently, the objectives of the EU go in the opposite direction of what is evident in the policy documents, as economic considerations and securitization endures and intensifies. This has to do with the fact that, as illustrated in the present thesis, the EU's policy shift has been a response to the negative critique of the Arctic States and indigenous peoples. Evidently, there is not necessarily a shift of policy objectives even though the policy documents portray it to be.

4.3.3 EU efforts to maintain and sustain its global position

Considering the similarity of the abovementioned objectives, they seem to boil down to one main objective, namely the need to develop and maintain the EU's role in the world. Indeed, the EU has emphasized how climate change is a trigger that can threaten not only the environment, but also Europe's economic and political power, as well as its security (Grindheim, 2009, p. 35). Consequently, the dedication of EU officials to legitimize the EU's role in the Arctic should be understood as an attempt by EU member states to gain access to the Arctic, in order to maintain and sustain the global balance of power. Evidently, the EU's objectives fit the theoretical perspective of defensive realism, which focuses on states' struggle for survival and security.

It seems as if the EU has seen the need to suppress these objectives in the official documents, in order not to upset the Arctic States. In comparison with the Norwegian High North, where the need to safeguard national interest has become more explicitly mentioned, the EU has thus increasingly put emphasis on "… cooperative or supportive action to address the challenges, rather than on seeking chances to take advantage of the opportunities" (Airoldi, 2010, p. 60). Airoldi (2010) argues that these tendencies are in line with what is

realistically possible for the EU to accomplish in the North. That does not necessarily mean, however, that these are the EU's real objectives.

Furthermore, Russia seems to be a decisive factor in the EU's Arctic approach. MEP Tannock openly expresses the fear of a stronger Russia in his speech during the debate in the European Parliament on 10 March 2010, as he claimed that:

> …European participation in the Arctic Forum […] is vital because Russia has left us little doubt as to its own designs in the Arctic, famously planting a Russian flag on the seabed of the North Pole in 2007. Only a united front by other members and the observers on the Arctic Council, working through the EU's Northern Dimension policy, will keep the Kremlin in check. We cannot allow the Arctic to become the new arena for Russia's expansionist tendencies (Tannock, EP, 2010a).

This statement underlines the importance of the balance of power. The EU seems to be driven by the need to deter and balance Russian power – even though these considerations are not mentioned explicitly in the EU Arctic policy documents. Also, there is reason to believe that Finland's enthusiastic support of an EU Arctic Policy discloses the relevance of Russia and the balance of power logic to certain EU member states. Consequently, Russia seems to be the prime mover, causing interest within the EU in the great power game in the Circumpolar North. Again, the link to realist assumptions is evident, as the balance of power explains the EU's policies and actions.

However, Russia is not the only power the EU is cautious of in the Arctic. Due to the possibilities of a great power game in the far North, involving other major powers such as Russia, the U.S., and China, the EU seems to be driven by the need to gain access to the Arctic in order to maintain and sustain the current power balance. It has therefore been of importance to the EU that the major powers in world politics, such as the U.S. and China, are increasingly turning their attention to the High North. Thus, a motivation for the EU has likely been to gain access to the Arctic because it would be a significant challenge for Brussels to be sidelined if Arctic Affairs became a great power game. In this regard, China is considered to be of particular importance, as the country could become a powerful Arctic actor due to its size and economic status (Keil, 2010, p. 25). These considerations are underlined by the fact that "China is aware that its size and rise to major power status evoke jitters but at the same time it is striving to position itself so that it will not be excluded from access to the Arctic" (Jakobson, 2010, p. 12). It is perhaps no coincidence that these considerations are not mentioned in the EU Arctic policy documents, as it is important to avoid creating potential conflicts with any of the stakeholders in Arctic Affairs.

4.4 The role of EU member states

The analysis so far has illustrated the importance of the intergovernmental nature of the Council, as the EU member states have "called the shots" in the development of an EU Arctic Policy. In EU foreign policies, clashes between national interest and European interest occur regularly. The decision-making system is often said to be the reason, since initiatives are easily "blocked, neutered and derailed" (Toje, 2010, p. 18). In particular, this has to do with the fact that Council conclusions represent the unanimous view of the EU member states. It is therefore essential to account for the diverging views of the EU member states on the importance of Arctic issues. Key EU member states can roughly be separated in two opposing groups, namely the "motors", and the "brake blocks" of the process.[38] By doing so, the diverging interests of key EU member states are made obvious and illustrate the limits of EU Arctic Policy and the chances of succeeding in creating a coherent and enhanced approach (Keil, 2010, p. 28).

Finland, Germany, France and the UK have been so-called "motors" of an EU Arctic Policy. Finland is the most distinct member state within this category, as it has been the most active in the process. The country was the initiator of the ND, and has since then supported an enhanced role of the EU in the Arctic. In its Arctic Strategy of 2010, where a whole chapter was dedicated to the EU and the Arctic region, the Government stated that "… Finland welcomes the fact that the Union pays increasing attention to Arctic issues" (Prime Minister's Office Finland, 2010, p. 9). The Finnish engagement should arguably be perceived to be a securitizing move, as there is reason to believe that Finland is eager to ensure an EU Arctic security dimension in order to appear stronger *vis-à-vis* its Russian neighbor, and to safeguard its interests (Arter, 2000, p. 680; Dinan, 2004, p. 268).[39]

Germany, France and Britain, known as the "big three" in EU foreign policy, have joined Finland as "motors" of an EU Arctic Policy. In comparison with Finland, these countries have been driven by economic interest such as the quest to secure energy supplies and safeguard maritime transport routes (Major & Steinicke, 2011). In this regard, Germany is particularly interesting due to the size of its merchant fleet, its considerable contribution to

[38] It would probably be possible to categorize an even greater number of member states within these categories, and arguably also into several sub-categories. In order to illustrate the diverging views of the member states, however, it is sufficient to keep to a limited number of member states.

[39] For more than four decades Finland was closely linked to the Soviet Union by the virtue of the 1948 Treaty of Friendship and the Co-operation and Mutual Assistance. With the collapse of the USSR, however, Finland's situation changed drastically and the cornerstone in its foreign policy elapsed. Consequently, Finland looked towards the EU for a new "security community" (Arter, 2000, p. 680).

Arctic research, the economic weight of the country, and that it is a large consumer of Arctic oil and gas. The fact that German merchant vessels were the first to sail through the NWP is clear evidence of Berlin's interest in Arctic Affairs (Nilsen, 2009). Thus, the German Federal Foreign Office has, as was the case with Finland, emphasized that Germany "supports the recent strenuous efforts on the part of the EU to promote an active Arctic policy" (German Federal Foreign Office, 2009).

France and the UK have also shown renewed interest in the Arctic. In France, this was illustrated by the 2009 appointment of the former Social Party's Prime Minister Michael Rocard as Ambassador of the Arctic and the Antarctica (Le Nouvel Observateur, 2009). In the UK, the adoption of a National Arctic Strategy in 2008 and the establishment of an "Arctic Network" in the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office have had the same effect (Major & Steinicke, 2011, p. 4). As was the case with Germany, these nations support a stronger role of the EU in the Arctic. The UK, for example, has favored a more active role of the EU based on the argument that the "…EU and the UK have shared objectives in the Arctic...[accordingly] a co-ordinated approach seems sensible and prudent" (UK Parliament, 2010, para. 9.17). The compatible interests of the "big three" and their support for an active EU in the Circumpolar North reveal why these member states have acted as motors in the process.

Denmark is in the opposite camp, as it has been the primary "brake block" in the formulation of an EU Arctic Policy.[40] Denmark, the only EU member state that is an Arctic littoral state, has nonetheless shown some interest in including the EU in Arctic Affairs. More precisely, Copenhagen envisages a role in the Arctic for the EU, but one that is built on a certain EU competences (such as research and the environment). Accordingly, the Danish approach is not compatible with the view of the EU representatives who envisage a more active role of Brussels in all the aspects of Arctic Affairs. The Danish Government has favored cooperation with the five coastal states, and not the EU. This can be exemplified by the fact that it was the Danish Conservative foreign minister Per Stieg Møller that invited the Arctic Five to Greenland to sign the Ilulissat Declaration (Petersen, 2009, p. 54). The act illustrates the distance between Danish interests and the EU actors who have criticized the "inner circle" of the AC as detrimental to international and regional cooperation in the region (EP, 2010a; Wallis, 2008). Furthermore, the EU ban on seal import caused Danish

[40] Sweden can, to a certain degree, also be categorized as a "brake block". The reason is first and foremost that the Swedish Government has tended to favor the Baltic Sea Area, which has been at the expense of an Arctic focus (Østhagen, 2011, p. 20).

dissatisfaction with the EU. In the Danish Strategy, *Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020*, the Government stressed that it "…must seek to avoid further cases where the laws, traditions, cultures and needs of Arctic societies are neglected, as for example in the EU's ban on the import of seal products" (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, p. 52).

When categorizing key EU member states into two opposing blocks, it becomes evident that internal divergences have influenced the Council's scope of action – and thus also the EU's scope of action. Due to the common voice procedures of the Council proceedings, along with the prominent role of the FAC in foreign policy-making, it has been difficult to enhance cooperation and to produce anything but policy documents of a general character. Again, it seems as if national interests surpass European interests in the development of an EU Arctic Policy.

The role of the EU member states in the development of an EU Arctic Policy fits well with the neo-realist emphasis on state sovereignty. Neo-realists would interpret the EU's foreign policy as a product of the 27 member states' interest, as it is driven and developed by the interests of the member states. The fact that Denmark has become an integrated part of the A5, despite voiced concern for the "inner circle" by numerous EU officials, illustrates how the member states pursue independent foreign policies. Also, it exemplifies that national interests at times do not cohere with that of other member states. Neo-realists would therefore argue that Denmark is a prime example of the role of sovereign states within an organization like the EU. The way Finland envisages a role of the EU in the High North, is also in line with neo-realist views on cooperation. More specifically, the formulation of an Arctic Policy seems to be explained by neo-realists as a formation of alliances, or coordinated efforts, to aggregate the capacity of the EU member states in a regional game where different and strong national interests seem to co-exist (Østhagen, 2011, p. 12). The EU Arctic Policy should therefore be understood as a means for the EU member states to follow their individual political agendas through cooperation and bargaining with other states.

4.5 Efforts of the EU and its member states to influence Arctic Affairs

It is important to understand the EU and its member states' efforts to influence Arctic Affairs, as it allows for a better comprehension of the conflict potential and the chances of solving Arctic disputes by peaceful means. The EU institutions have therefore emphasized the need to ensure greater input of the EU and its member states in Arctic Affairs. To gain access, however, has been complicated since there is no such thing as an official EU Arctic Policy.

Additionally, it has been difficult for the EU to influence Arctic Affairs due to the EU's intergovernmental and supranational composition. Notably, it has been a challenge that 27 different countries, with individual political agendas and interests, formulate the EU's external policies.

Consequently, regional bodies serve as the prime path of influence as the EU positions itself through multilateral cooperative endeavors (Airoldi, 2010, p. 45). The BEAC and the Nordic Council of Ministers are for example important arenas for collaboration. In these bodies, the EU, represented by the Commission, participates on a regular basis discussing Arctic issues. Due to the use of regional bodies as a path of influence, it has been a challenge for the EU that the A5 have been hesitant to give room for third parties in the Arctic Council (Maurer, 2010, p. 11). The continuous EU efforts to gain permanent observer status in the AC must be understood in this regard, as it would be an arena where the EU could gain greater knowledge and influence in Arctic Affairs.

The EU has also included Arctic aspects in its bilateral relations and diplomacy with the Arctic States (Airoldi, 2008, p. 23). The Council has stressed "…that the EU should actively seek consensus approaches to relevant Arctic issues through cooperation with Arctic States and/or territories outside the EU" (Council, 2009). Among the many, the Council has listed Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Russia and the U.S. as particularly important as these nations are strategic partners of the EU. The contact and collaborative endeavors with these countries has varied considerably. The EU has had greatest influence on Norway and Iceland, as these are members of the EEA and therefore also subject to regulations concerning the internal market.[41] This has for example visible with regards to energy policies, as EU regulations have affected the Norwegian energy sector. The Directive 98/30/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas, is one of many examples of how the EU has indirectly influenced the Norwegian energy sector (EUR-lex, 1998).[42] To a lesser degree, but still important, EU regulations have also had an impact on the Arctic States that are not EEA-members. The seal products ban is once again an example, as it has affected the Arctic States' seal products trade to the EU market. Obviously, the EU has an indirect impact on Arctic Affairs through the virtue of its great economic power.

The EU has to a limited degree tried to influence the Norwegian High North Policy. Offerdal (2011) asserts that the multi-level character of the EU is part of the explanation (p.

[41] See chapter five for more information about the EEA and its institutions.
[42] It should be noted, as Offerdal (2011) asserts, that these directives influence the domestic policy dimension, and not necessarily Norway's foreign policies (p. 14).

19). Another possible explanation could be that the responsibility for contact with third countries, therefore also the EEA countries, was moved from the Commission to the European External Action Service (EEAS) with the Lisbon Treaty. Norway is therefore one of many countries in the EEAS' Europe and Central-Asia division. Consequently, there are fewer EU officials directly working with issues regarding the EEA and Norway (NOU, 2012). These structural changes are expected to reduce Norway's role in the EU, which fit well with the more global orientation of the EU. The EU's efforts to influence Arctic policies are thus less developed than at national level. One reason is that "…member states still insist on pursuing their foreign policy interest separately…any 'foreign policy' formulated at the EU level is inconsequential and weak because it represents the lowest common denominator, or what the most reluctant member states could accept" (K. E. Smith, 2008, p. 10). Therefore, much depends on whether the EU will succeed in developing a coherent and consistent Arctic Policy.

Despite the challenges, the analysis has so far illustrated how both the EP and the Commission have used the extensive EU contribution to Arctic research as a way of gaining access to Arctic Affairs (Offerdal, 2011, p. 20). The Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) has been another successful path of influence, as the EU has managed to bring together the member states' positions in maritime issues. For example, the EU has increasingly succeeded in coordinating the EU member states' position with regards to the Polar Code, despite the position of the EU as an observer in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) (Ibid.). Koivurova (2009b) argues that the IMP has led to a more unitary positioning of the EU, and that it is likely to solidify the role of the EU as a major maritime actor (pp. 179-180).

At the same time, the EU's ban on seal products, which went into force in July 2009, illustrates the need for the EU to create better coordination and cooperation with Arctic countries in order to avoid further clashes with indigenous peoples and the A5. This exemplifies the value of a coordinated EU, and the need to continue the trends present in the handling of the Polar Code. If the EU manages to do so, it can use its institutional capacity to strengthen its presence in the High North and compensate for the lack of tools for direct influence.

To gain access to the Arctic, however, might become increasingly difficult as the geostrategic importance of the High North increases. Airoldi (2010) claims that the EU's entrance already has become more arduous after the international game in the region went from a straightforward environmental cooperative scene to a more traditional and complex (soft) power game (p. 59). The fact that other non-Arctic actors have knocked on the door,

while the Arctic States have been preoccupied with developing their Arctic Strategies, has made it harder for the EU to gain influence in the Circumpolar North. At the same time, these factors accentuate EU's objective of gaining entrance as soon as possible. If there will be a race for the Arctic in the future, there is an urgent need for the EU to develop a coherent policy, as it will become increasingly harder to gain access and influence.

4.6 EU Arctic Policies: A controversial turf battle?

The lack of coordination and coherence in the EU's approach has made it look like the EU's engagement has been a rushed and random initiative. Scholars have criticized the EU Arctic efforts for being weak. Holdhus (2010) has assessed the EU Arctic Policies and revealed how there is an evident lack coherence. Airoldi (2008) has also drawn attention to the need of better coordination, as well as the need for greater information and preparedness on Arctic issues. She argues that it is clear that the EU should take a more systematic and pro-active approach in order to be viewed as a constructive actor in Arctic Affairs (pp. 11-13). In her assessment of the period after 2008, Airoldi (2010) maintains her criticism, and points to the fact that the EU needs internal efforts to ensure that EU policies and actions are prioritized and kept consistent (p. 10). What becomes obvious is that the EU has struggled with legitimizing its Arctic role, and to develop a sustainable policy to address opportunities and challenges in the High North.

The reasons for the critique of the EU Arctic Policy are two-folded, as both external and internal divergences have had a significant impact. The institutional turf battles within and among the EU institutions have led to the EU increasingly being viewed as an unstable actor in the Circumpolar North. Hence, the external opposition has been evident. This has been particularly apparent with regards to the move for an Arctic Treaty, the calls for enhanced Arctic Governance, as well as the seal products ban. These issues reveal how the willingness of the EU to play a more active role in the Arctic could conflict with the interest of other states in the region (Maurer, 2010, p. 15).

The EU's institutional turf battle has created a number of controversies with the Arctic States and can therefore be characterized as a controversial turf battle. The Council, however, seems to have taken a wise decision in moving the EU's approach towards a more cautious one. The role of the EU in Arctic Affairs is still uncertain and depends to a large degree on whether the Commission and the EP decide to follow the Council, or to act on their initiatives. Still, the EU seems to be more coordinated in April 2012, than before 2009. The challenge for

the EU is now to develop a coherent policy that can be the necessary political tool to assert EU presence in the Arctic by bringing its experience, together with its political and economic weight, to support international agreed solutions (Airoldi, 2010, p. 10). The EU's approach to Arctic Affairs has come closer to the Norwegian approach, since Brussels has recognized the role of the UNCLOS and the sovereign rights of the Arctic States. Nonetheless, there are still numerous issues where implications and controversies might appear.

5 The Norwegian High North Policy

This chapter analyzes the Norwegian interests and objectives in the High North. Firstly, the chapter assesses the step-by-step process that has developed into the Norwegian High North Policy. Secondly, Norwegian objectives are put into perspective by looking at Oslo's triangular containment. Thirdly, Norwegian efforts to influence the EU and its member states are assessed – with a particular emphasis on energy as a foreign policy tool. It is important to look at these efforts as it allows for a comprehension of the chances of solving controversial issues with the EU. Fourthly, the Norwegian response to the EU's controversial turf battle is analyzed. The main argument is that Norwegian authorities have failed in their efforts to ensure a more active EU Arctic Policy in line with Norwegian interests, but have managed to safeguard national interests by maintaining the balance of power in the Arctic.

5.1 The Norwegian High North Policy: A step-by-step process

The Norwegian High North Policy has developed gradually, influenced by both internal and external factors. In order to present the Norwegian High North Policy in a clear manner three intertwining, but distinctive periods will be analyzed; 1) Cold War tension and the Law of the Sea, 2) Barents euphoria and cooperation in the 1990s, and 3) the "renaissance" of the Norwegian High North. Out of the three, the third period will be emphasized as it is the most important with regards to the present thesis.

5.1.1 Cold War tension and the Law of the Sea

International focus on the High North culminated during the Cold War period as the European Arctic became an area of geostrategic importance. The region was important due to its position as the geographic meeting-point of the ideological east-west divide. Norway, bordering the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR), and in particular the highly militarized Kola Peninsula, was considered to be of high relevance to the security of the NATO alliance (Archer & Sogner, 1998, p. 91). In the climate of superpower rivalry, the Norwegian Government carried out a foreign policy based on both deterrence and reassurance of the USSR. The aim was to find a suitable response to the suspected expansionist Soviet aims in the High North, and to avoid Russian provocation (Riste, 2005, p. 185). On the one

hand, Norway sought to involve Western partners and the NATO-alliance in Arctic Affairs to balance and deter the Soviet Union. On the other hand, Oslo focused on avoiding direct confrontation with the more powerful Moscow through various means, such as the "no foreign basis policy" refusing Western military bases in Norway (Riste, 2005, p. 203).

Despite Cold War tension, there were also signs of increased international cooperation in the Arctic, and in particular with regards to maritime law. Notably, the Law of the Sea was established in the 1970s, a development that led to increased cooperation between Norway and the USSR with regards to fish stocks and the delimitation in the Barents Sea (Hønneland & Rowe, 2010). Despite this, Norway and the USSR did not agree on the delimitation of the Barents Sea during the Cold-War period.

5.1.2 Barents euphoria and cooperation in the 1990s

The geostrategic importance of the Norwegian Arctic decreased as the Cold War came to an end in the late 1980s. As the USSR collapsed and the Russian Federation emerged in its place, Western allies could gradually withdraw their attention and presence from NATO's Northern Flank. Norway, however, was left to deal with a much weaker, but still considerably militarized neighbor (Berggrav, 2004, p. 5). Despite Russian cuts in the defense budget and deterioration of conventional forces, the military presence in the Kola Peninsula remained high as the Northern Fleet with its nuclear missiles was located in the area (Riste, 2005, p. 277). To Norwegians, the end of the Cold War was thus not necessarily perceived to be a major shift with regards to Norwegian-Russian relations, as was the case for other Western states (Archer & Sogner, 1998, p. 114).[43] Even though the security situation improved as Russia was no longer a direct threat to the West, long-term uncertainty remained high (Riste, 2005, pp. 277-278). Fears of marginalization on the international stage, and of being left alone with Russia, characterized the period and the Norwegian approach to the Circumpolar North.

Nonetheless, the end of the Cold War did change important aspects as revealed by Gorbachev's so-called Murmansk speech of 1987.[44] The speech set the stage for a more open post-Cold War Arctic, and enabled the pursuit of institutional cooperation and euphoria

[43] There is an on-going debate whether the Cold War represents a break or continuity in Norwegian foreign and security policy, and there are arguments supporting both claims (Lange, Pharo, & Østerud, 2009, p. 7).
[44] In the Murmansk Speech, Gorbachev asked for a new direction in international foreign policy in the High North. Moreover, he called for increased cooperation in a number of key areas such as nuclear and environmental cooperation. He also emphasized the need for a demilitarization of the region (Hønneland & Rowe, 2010, pp. 13-14). In sum, the speech was a suggestion to how one can: "[l]et the North of the globe, the Arctic, become a zone of peace." (Gorbatchev, 1987, para. 26).

(Hønneland & Rowe, 2010, pp. 13-16). In Norway, an emphasis on the combination of a bilateral and a multilateral approach towards Russia intensified. The reason was that it was perceived to be the best way to diminish the asymmetrical power balance and avoid marginalization (Blakkisrud, 2009, p. 257). Hence, external factors paved the way for the creation of BEAC and other regional forums for cooperation.

Despite the Norwegian efforts of cooperation in the 1990s, criticism flourished towards the end of the decade claiming the initiatives to be weak, futile and impracticable to meet the new opportunities and challenges of the post-Cold War Arctic (Hønneland & Rowe, 2010, p. 17; Jensen & Hønneland, 2011, pp. 42-43). In sum, the period made obvious how Russia continued to be, as was the case with the EU's approach, a central aspect in Norwegian foreign policy considerations throughout the 1990s. Evidently, the Norwegian Arctic Policy continued to vary according to changes in the more powerful Russia.

5.1.3 The "renaissance" of the Norwegian High North post 1999

New opportunities and challenges in the Arctic have led to a "renaissance" of High North focus in Norwegian foreign and security policy. The year 2002/2003 is often considered to be the starting point of the new wave of interest. The main catalyst was arguably the optimistic prospects of resource extraction in the High North (Tamnes, 2009, p. 303). It was the coalition Government of Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik that reintroduced the High North on the political agenda.[45] It did so by setting up the Orheim Inquiry to identify opportunities and challenges in the European Arctic, and to explore how Norwegian interests could be protected (NOU, 2003). The Orheim committee presented a "bold and creative" report that suggested a shift of approach to the High North (Skagestad, 2010, p. 14).[46] In 2005, after several delays, the Government followed-up with the first High North White Paper (MFA, 2005). The document was less ambitious than the Orheim Inquiry and by no means revolutionary. Instead, traditional foreign policy approaches were prolonged in what was to become the cornerstone of the High North Policy – the skillful intertwining of high and low

[45] The second coalition government of Kjell Magne Bondevik (commonly referred to as Bondevik II) was inaugurated in October 2001, and ended its term in October 2005. The coalition government was made up of the Conservative Party, the Christian Democratic Party and the Liberal Party (Norwegian Government, 2012a).
[46] The Orheim Inquiry identified five main initiatives: 1) creating a more dynamic and complex approach, 2) ensuring close bilateral relations with Russia, 3) focusing on the AC and downplaying other regional institutions to avoid institutional overlap, 4) providing 1 billion NOK to High North initiatives, and 5) setting up a minister dealing with High North issues (Hønneland & Rowe, 2010, p. 18).

politics[47] in two pillars 1) bilateral relations and cooperation with Russia, and 2) High North dialogue with important partners and allies.

The focus on the Arctic was extended and accentuated with the change of Government in 2005. The coalition Government of Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg transformed the High North from one out of many foreign policy issues, to *the* key strategic and foreign policy target area (PMO, 2005).[48] The Government's political platform explicitly emphasized the need to ensure an active High North Policy "by attending national interests, but also emphasizing stronger international cooperation to meet the many Arctic challenges" (PMO, 2005, pp. 6-7).

In December 2006, Norway became the first country to present and define a specific Arctic Policy, as it launched *The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy* (MFA, 2006). The approach was complex and the line between foreign and domestic policy was blurred in order to ensure broad enthusiasm (Hønneland & Rowe, 2010, pp. 23-24). The two pillars were kept, and seven key priorities were presented and summed up in three words; "presence, activity and knowledge" (MFA, 2006, foreword). The Strategy was presented as an epoch-making "new dimension of Norwegian foreign policy" (MFA, 2006). Nonetheless, it was more of a *déjà vu* than a new and revolutionary approach.

In 2009, a revised edition was presented to put the Government in a better position to meet the challenges and the opportunities in the North (MFA, 2009). The document illustrated a broader cross-ministerial approach and was presented by the Government as a whole, and not only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) as the preceding one. The document took shape as an updated version of the seven key priorities for the next ten to fifteen years (Ibid.).[49] Even though the document was not a final action plan, it was presented as the guiding document for the Norwegian High North Policy (Angell, Eikeland, & Selle, 2010, p. 46). The focus on oil and gas extraction was somewhat accentuated, a phenomenon that

[47] Low politics is a term used in analyses of foreign policy. It refers to issues that are not perceived to involve "…fundamental or key questions relating to a state's national interests…" (Evans & Newnham, 1998, p. 310). Welfare, social policies, education, research and culture are examples of low politics (NUPI, 2012). High Politics are the opposite, and refers to issues that are of vital importance. High politics are therefore questions regarding a state's chance of survival, such as security policies (Ibid.).

[48] Stoltenberg's second coalition government (Stoltenberg II) was made up of the Labour Party, the Socialist Left and the Centre Party (Norwegian Government, 2012b). It was re-elected in 2009. In the Government's second political platform (commonly referred to as Soria Moria II) the High North was yet again defined as "the most important strategic priority for foreign policy" (PMO, 2009, p. 6).

[49] The seven priorities were 1) develop knowledge about the climate and environment, 2) improve monitoring, emergence response and maritime safety systems in Northern waters, 3) promote sustainable development of offshore petroleum and renewable marine resources, 4) promote onshore business development, 5) develop the infrastructure, 6) exercise sovereignty and strengthen cross-border cooperation, and 7) safeguard the livelihood of indigenous peoples (MFA, 2009).

probably correlated with the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) production start of the Snøhvit field, close to Hammerfest in Norway, in August 2007, along with increasing predictions for the Russian Shtokman field.[50]

There has been no revision of the Strategies since 2009, but the work on the High North Policy has nonetheless continued as a step-by-step process. In November 2011 a new White Paper on the High North was published (MFA, 2011). The document was set forth as a "long-term coherent Norwegian Policy for dealing with the challenges and the opportunities in the High North" (Støre, MFA, 2011, p. 5). The document assessed the seven key priorities of the Norwegian High North Strategies. Moreover, it clarified "the way forward and the overall objectives" for the period 2011-2030, along with an overview of strategic priorities and results (MFA, 2011). The document could thus be interpreted as a new and updated guideline for the Norwegian High North Policy. In comparison with earlier documents, the Norwegian Arctic relationship to the EU was somewhat alleviated. Consequently, it seemed as if the link between the High North Policy and the Norwegian European Policy had been weakened (NOU, 2012, p. 744).

This step-by-step process illustrates the on-going Norwegian engagement in the far North, but also the difficulty of establishing an overall policy to meet the opportunities and challenges in Arctic Affairs. Variations and changes have occurred, but continuity of foreign policy traditions has been more prominent. Hence, it is evident that the overall goal has been to safeguard Oslo's national and international interests in the far North.

5.2 Norwegian High North objectives

The development of the Norwegian High North Policy reveals a parallel Norwegian approach to Arctic Affairs focusing on Russia on the one side ("the first pillar"), and key allies and partners on the other ("the second pillar"). Norway's current objectives are similar to the ones prominent during the Cold War, but with certain differences (such as a greater possibility of cooperation with Russia). What we see today is therefore a continuation of foreign policy traditions evident in Norway as early as in the immediate years after WWII. Norway has always sought to contain Russia to secure its interests and sovereignty, and the High North

[50] Snøhvit, a LNG production plant operated by Statoil, was the first offshore development in the Barents Sea (the Hammerfest basin). The process leading up to the production start of 2007 has been long-lasting, as gas was discovered already in the 1980s (Hønneland & Rowe, 2010, pp. 118-119). The Sthokman field is a Gazprom field development project located in the Russian part of the Barents Sea. Phase 1 and 2, which is the allocation of shares, have started. Phase 3, the production phase, has not yet started (Gazprom, 2012).

Policy is thus more of a continuation, and an accentuation of established traditions, than a revolutionary new approach.

Notably, Norway is a small state operating with larger and more powerful actors in Arctic Affairs. The involvement in the High North should thus be analyzed with reference to the balance of power logic through the use of a *geopolitical power triangle* (see Figure 1). The triangle is a simplified illustration of the main external factors that influence Norwegian security and foreign policy-making. The triangle's three angles represent Russia, the U.S. and the EU, while Norway is placed in the middle to illustrate how the country is encircled by greater powers (Jensen & Rottem, 2009; Neumann, 2003; NOU, 2012; Offerdal, 2008).[51] Figuratively, the triangle illustrates how the political scope of action available to Norwegian foreign policy-makers is constrained by the "triangular containment" of three larger powers (Jensen & Rottem, 2009, p. 76). Additionally, it exemplifies how Norway's geopolitical position makes it particularly vulnerable to great power rivalry (Bingen, 2008, p. 47).

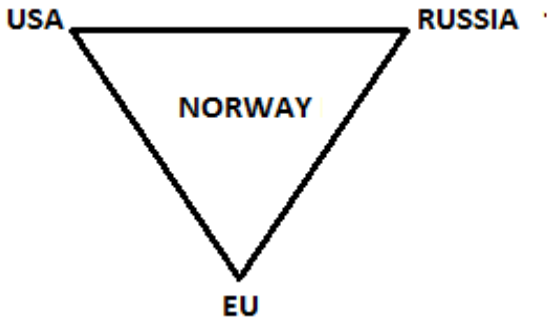

Figure 1

The "triangular containment" is a useful tool when explaining the Norwegian High North Policy, such as the first pillar's focus on Russia. The basic thought in the Norwegian approach, one that correlates with realist assumptions, is that Russia has an advantage because of the asymmetrical power. More precisely, if a conflict emerged in the Arctic, Russia could easily threaten Norwegian interests and sovereignty. Norway has thus focused on cooperation as a method to contain Russian power to limit the conflict level and to safeguard Norwegian interests. Cooperation is therefore emphasized as a way of creating information-sharing platforms and forums where disputes can be solved peacefully.

Additionally, Norwegian interests in the High North could hardly be realized without pursuing close cooperation with the larger Russia due to Norway's minor size. At this point,

[51] Jensen and Rottem (2009) pinpoint how the illustration would be more correct if it was a rectangle or a pentagon that included the Middle East, Asia and other regions or countries that influence Norwegian policy (p. 76).

the focus of so-called small state studies within IR comes to our attention. More precisely, these studies assume that small states tend to prioritize institutionalization and cooperation as a way to ensure their security, and to gain more international prestige and visibility than their size would indicate (Hey, 2003; Ingebritsen, 2006). Thus, the first pillar of the Norwegian approach should be understood as a small state's attempt to decrease Russia's chances to exploit its power and threaten Norwegian interests in the far North.

The problem with this approach, however, is that cooperation exclusively with Russia does not fundamentally alter the asymmetrical power balance between Norway and its eastern neighbour. Moreover, a clear-cut focus on cooperation with Moscow does not fit with the assertive Russian tendency to view international relations as a great power game where the zero-sum logic prevails (Blakkisrud, 2009). In line with defensive realist assumptions, it is obvious that cooperation with Russia is not perceived to be a sufficient mechanism to keep the Norwegian Arctic a peaceful region.

In this regard, the second pillar of the Norwegian High North Policy, cooperating with other partners than Russia, comes to our attention. Engaging in High North diplomacy and building alliances with other nations should be understood as a supplement to the first pillar, and as a way to counterbalance Russian power. The thought is that if important partners, such as the EU, acquire knowledge and understanding of Norwegian interests in the High North, Norway has a greater chance of receiving support if conflicts emerge (Blakkisrud, 2009, p. 258). Indeed, from an energy and security point of view, the fear of being left alone in the High North with Russia seems to have been characterized as an undesirable scenario. Offerdal (2010) supports this claim as she argues that the fear of marginalization was "…a major reason behind the High North [Policy]", while Tamnes (2009) claims that fears of Russia re-establishing itself as a great power in the Arctic, emphasizes Norway's need for allies (Tamnes, 2009, p. 261).

Key realist assumptions, and in particular its belief in the balance of power as a means of survival, explain the Norwegian High North Policy. Evidently, the *geopolitical power triangle* explicates how the Norwegian Arctic Policy is driven by the wish to contain and reassure Russia to avoid conflict and marginalization in the Circumpolar North. Norway's High North diplomacy with the EU and key EU member states, such as Germany, France and the UK, is thus a part of a greater process where the aim is to avoid conflict and marginalization in the North.

The disadvantage with an approach built solely on cooperation, however, becomes evident in a situation where Norway and its partners have incompatible goals. One such

example is when Oslo and Brussels have conflicting interests in Arctic issues. In controversial situations, such as the Svalbard issue,[52] the EU has from time to time been interpreted by Norwegian actors (such as for example Norwegian fishermen) more of a competitor than a collaborator in Arctic issues (Høglund, 2012; Hønneland & Rowe, 2010, pp. 122-123). Therefore, there are scenarios where the two Arctic States, Norway and Russia, have stronger common interests in the region, than the more distant actors on the European continent (MFA, 2009). In addition to its parallel approach with Russia and key allies, Norwegian authorities have therefore also emphasized the need to exercise sovereignty in the High North to safeguard Norwegian interests and priorities as its overall goal (MFA, 2006; 2009). In sum, the Arctic approach of Norway is three-folded, built on deterrence, reassurance and engagement (Blunden, 2009, p. 133).

Thus, it is within the picture of geopolitics and *realpolitik*, and in particular defensive realism, that Norwegian efforts to influence EU Arctic Policy should be analyzed. Oslo's tendency of emphasizing the policy of balance of power has become even more distinct in recent years with the changes in the Arctic. NATO and the U.S. are still considered to be decisive partners, but a new tendency in the post-Cold War era has appeared; the reconsideration of other sources of security, such as the EU (Archer & Sogner, 1998, p. 127). Evidently, the value of the neo-realist focus on balance of power policies is accentuated.

5.3 Norwegian efforts to influence the development of EU Arctic Policies

Defensive realists argue that political devises, such as international law and diplomacy, can facilitate cooperation, resolve disputes and lower the potential for conflict between states (Art & Jervis, 2011a, p. 6). It is therefore essential to analyze Norwegian efforts and possibilities of influencing the EU, as it allows for a greater comprehension of their chances of solving controversial issues and disputes. Moreover, Oslo's attempts to influence Brussels indicate what role Norway envisages for the EU in the High North, and therefore also whether it is likely that there will be conflict or cooperation. It is an interesting observation that Norwegian efforts to influence the EU have decreased as Brussels' Arctic engagement has generated clashes with Arctic States.

[52] The case of Svalbard will be analyzed further in the following chapter (section 6.4).

5.3.1 The High North dialogue with EU member states

The analysis so far has illustrated how Norway has focused on building close relations with the EU and its member states to avoid marginalization in the High North. The very first dialogue set up to create awareness about the Arctic among Western partners took place as early as in the mid-1970s, and dissolved already in the 1990s (Tamnes, 2009, p. 314). The contact was re-established, first with Germany in 2004 and then with Great Britain and France the following two years. Even though bilateral High North dialogues have increased the European countries' interest in Arctic questions, the quality of the conversations has varied. The dialogue with the UK, for example, has proved to be particularly difficult due to diverging views on the Svalbard issue. It has been easier to establish constructive dialogues with Germany and France, due to compatible interests. There is, however, reason to believe that both countries perceive the cooperation with Russia to be more important than the one with Norway (Ibid.).

Norwegian authorities have also established close contact with the Arctic EU member states Denmark, Sweden and Finland on circumpolar issues. In fact, a triangular cooperative configuration is about to be developed between Norway, Sweden and Finland. The collaborative endeavors are built upon existing relations and traditions. It could therefore become a particularly useful tool to increase the EU's focus on High North questions (Tamnes, 2009, p. 315). Additionally, it is a great opportunity for Norway that Denmark holds the Council Presidency in the first half of 2012, since the rotating presidency serves as a particular important contact point for Norwegian policy-makers (NOU, 2012, p. 178). Denmark has for example put focus on maritime issues, including matters regarding Arctic maritime safety (Arctic Portal, 2012).

Thus, Norway established High North dialogues with key EU member states before it addressed the EU-level as a whole. This has to do with the fact that, as was evident in the previous chapter, Brussels has not managed to acquire sufficient political weight in Arctic Affairs. As a result of this, EU member states remain central players in the EU's external policies, and therefore also in the development of the EU's Arctic Policies. Oslo's contact has therefore been more developed and coherent on bilateral level (Offerdal, 2011, p. 5), and creating contact with key EU member states has therefore been of decisive importance.

5.3.2 Efforts to influence at the EU-level

Norway is not a member of the EU, which affects its ability to influence the EU agenda and decision-making process. Norwegian authorities have nonetheless managed to build a strong and dynamic relationship with Brussels through longstanding political cooperation. The collaboration is regulated by a total of 74 agreements covering a broad number of policy-areas (NOU, 2012, p. 35).[53] The most important agreement is the European Economic Area Agreement (EEA),[54] which is by far the most extensive economic agreement that Norway has entered into. Moreover, Norway cooperates with the EU with regards to border control (the Schengen Agreement), foreign and security politics, education and so forth. The result has been a considerable Europeanization of Norway, as the cooperation has had political, legal, administrative, economic and social consequences. Hence, there are already well-developed collaborative ties between Oslo and Brussels, which might increase the chances of avoiding conflicts.

In 2006, Norway extended its cooperation with the EU to include a High North dialogue. Because of Oslo's focus on key EU member states, it took some time before official political communication with the EU was established. During the first years the contact was thus ad hoc and sporadic (Offerdal, 2011, p. 7). Since then, the dialogue has intensified, but with varying pace. The contact on the political level has primarily been through informal meetings (NOU, 2012, p. 168). The meetings have taken place in different settings and on different levels. International and regional forums, such as BEAC, have for example been used as these are considered by the Norwegian Government to be functioning platforms to "raise the profile of Norway's High North Policy" (MFA, 2006, p. 9). The Norwegian support for EU observer status in the AC could therefore be an attempt to create yet another platform for cooperation between Norway and the EU.

Even though Norway remains outside the EU's decision-making and voting procedures, a number of formal and informal channels of contact exist. As a result, Norwegian actors tend to influence the EU from the inside rather than the outside (NOU, 2012, p. 164). EEA and EU institutions serve as important contact points both at the very highest political level and on ministerial level. It has been an advantage that Norwegian

[53] For an overview of the most important agreements between Norway and the EU, see figure 2.1 in *Utenfor og Innenfor. Norges avtaler med EU* (NOU, 2012, p. 36).
[54] The Agreement has a so-called two-pillar institutional structure where the EU represents one pillar, and the EFTA-countries and institutions the other. The relationship between the pillars is an asymmetrical one, where the EU has certain advantages. EU's dominance *vis-à-vis* the EFTA-countries continues to increase as the integration process is "widening and deepening" (NOU, 2012, p. 18).

representatives have met with the Commission on a regular basis to discuss EEA-related issues. The Commission is therefore the most important contact point for Norwegian policy-makers, not only with regards to High North, but in general (NOU, 2012, p. 170). The access and the knowledge Norwegian actors have acquired through the EEA Agreement, has therefore been a great benefit in the High North dialogue with the EU. This was illustrated by Norway's successful influence on the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy (Offerdal, 2011).

The Council and the EP have also gained importance in the Norwegian High North diplomacy, as both institutions have become increasingly important in the development of an EU Arctic Policy. Since Norwegian actors do not have the same access to the EP and the Council, the contact has been more sporadic and less influential than with the Commission. Oslo's contact with the EP, for example, can be illustrated with the visit of the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Støre, to the EP in May 2008. The Foreign Minister went to Brussels to give an account for Norwegian interests as a response to the EP's call for an Arctic Treaty (Offerdal, 2011, p. 10). Støre's visit articulates the importance of the Norwegian efforts to influence the EU in matters where interests are diverging.

It has also been essential for the Norwegian Government to maximize the advantage of informal channels of influence. That is not necessarily because it is perceived to be the most effective method; it is on the contrary a way to rectify for Norway's absence from EU institutions and decision-making processes (NOU, 2012, p. 167). One such path of influence has been to established close contact with key individuals within the EU-institutions. The analysis in the previous chapter revealed how a small number of policy-makers within the EU institutions have been explicitly interested in Arctic issues, and therefore also the Norwegian High North dialogue. Contact with these people, such as MEP Wallis and Commissioner Damanaki, has been particularly important since Norway has not aimed to influence an existing EU policy, but to raise an issue on the EU agenda. Informal contact has been decisive as the existing agreements do not, or to a very small degree, allow for Norway to raise issues on the EU agenda (NOU, 2012, pp. 165-169).

Despite the many channels of contact, Norwegian officials seem to come short in Arctic issues where the EU and Norway have incompatible goals and interests. It should be noted that these tendencies are not particular for the High North dialogue, but are to a certain extent true with regards to Oslo's efforts to influence Brussels more generally (NOU, 2012, pp. 165-168). In the sealing issue, for example, the Norwegian attempts to influence did not

change the EU's focus on animal welfare.[55] The Norwegian efforts to influence Brussels' Arctic Policies have therefore been criticized, and in particular because they have not resulted in an EU policy that is compatible with Norwegian interests. Offerdal (2008, 2010, 2011) has analyzed the Norwegian High North diplomacy with important partners, such as the EU and the U.S., and argues that the problem seems to be the way it is presented; as a confusing, non-coherent and inconsistent information campaign. Norwegian authorities have on the one side shown willingness to include the EU, and on the other side given the impression that they do not want interference in Arctic Affairs (Offerdal, 2010, p. 38). As a result, EU officials have been left with confusion on a number of aspects: what exactly do Norwegian authorities want from them, how would they like the EU to respond, and what interest is in it for them?[56]

5.3.3 Energy as a foreign policy tool

In a world where energy scarcity and diversification have become key factors in international relations, the relevance of energy has increased. Norway, with its large oil and gas reserves, possesses an important foreign policy asset. In practice, energy is used as a foreign policy tool when Norway emphasizes in its dialogue with the EU how the Barents region is a future energy province that can decrease EU's energy scarcity. Indirectly, what Norwegian authorities are doing, is taking advantage of the Norwegian position as a major energy exporter to become more attractive on the international stage (Neumann, 2003, p. 52). Thus, in line with defensive realist assumptions, Oslo has used the Norwegian energy potential in its High North diplomacy with the EU and other partners.

There are numerous advantages connected to the use of the resource potential of the Barents Sea as a foreign policy asset. It can, for example, be utilized to create awareness of the Norwegian policy in order to avoid marginalization and conflict. By doing so the country can create greater visibility and influence on the international stage than its size indicates (Tamnes, 2009, p. 291). The reason is that Oslo is considered to be a more stable and trustworthy energy supplier than for example Russia. Creating energy relations with Oslo is thus perceived to be a way of limiting dependence on Russian gas and oil, and at the same time to hinder Russia and other energy suppliers from using their energy potential to maximize international status and influence (Tamnes, 2009, pp. 301-303). Evidently, it can be

[55] See chapter six (section 6.4) for an analysis of the seal products ban.
[56] See Offerdal's article "Det norske nordområdeinitiativet og USA: Utenriks- eller energipolitikk" for an assessment on the High North dialogue with the U.S., where she draws the same conclusion regarding the Norwegian success of influence on Washington (Offerdal, 2008).

used to create new platforms where Norwegian interests and priorities can be promoted. Additionally, as energy is an increasingly important capability, it can be used to turn the EU's attention towards a broader range of issues than just the High North (Offerdal, 2008, p. 369). These observations emphasize the value of the defensive realist focus on resources as an important capability.

Since the Commission has placed energy scarcity on the top of the EU agenda, Norwegian authorities have had a great window of opportunity to the use of energy as a foreign policy tool. As a consequence, Norway has had a "golden opportunity" to raise awareness in Brussels about its High North Policy (Offerdal, 2010, p. 32).[57] Despite this, the success has been long in coming (NOU, 2012, p. 748). Regardless of the many advantages, "…High North energy has not shown itself as a great foreign policy asset, leaving Norway unsuccessful in using its High North diplomacy to take advantage of the increased focus on energy security within the EU" (Offerdal, 2010, p. 39). The obstacle has been both the context and the delivery of the message. It has also been a problem that the gas licenses from the Snøhvit field had already been sold at the time when the High North diplomacy with the EU started. Furthermore, it has not made it easier that Norwegian officials have been unclear with regards to quantity and pace for Arctic extraction (NOU, 2012; Offerdal, 2011).[58] Neither has Norway's good reputation with regards to energy sustainability helped in its energy dialogue with the EU; as long as Norway acts as a responsible steward, the EU does not see the need to act on these issues (Offerdal, 2011, p. 8).

Evidently, the main obstacle has been that the great power focus on the Norwegian High North is not a result of active Norwegian diplomacy, but Russian policy and activity (Offerdal, 2008, p. 363). The High North dialogue is thus interpreted by the EU as an input to understand Russian Arctic Policy. The tendencies of the Cold War are therefore once again evident: the strategic importance of Norway is a product of Russian policies. As defensive realists would argue, given their focus on major powers, Russia draws the attention of the great powers towards the Norwegian High North. Thus, the critique of the Norwegian High North dialogue seems proper, as there are a number of ways in which it could be improved. The question is, however, whether improvements have been desired.

[57] The Russian-Ukrainian gas crisis of 2006 is one of the many crises in the long-lasting dispute between Russia and Ukraine regarding gas prizes. In 2006, the dispute intensified as Gazprom, the Russian state-owned oil and gas company, cut off all gas supplies to Europe through Ukrainian pipelines. The political and economic crisis was considerable for the whole European continent (Gow, 2009).

[58] Indications on the pace of resource development and clarification of areas open for research are stated out in the 2006 *Integrated Management Plan* (Norwegian Ministry of the Environment, 2006) and later in the High North Strategies (MFA, 2006; 2009).

5.4 The Norwegian response to the EU's controversial turf battle

Even though the Norwegian High North dialogue has been criticized for not leading to more active EU Arctic Policies, there is a possibility that Norwegian authorities have not necessarily *wanted* that the EU gained a greater role in Arctic Affairs. Getting the attention might have been considered sufficient. Indeed, an "information campaign" to create greater awareness about the Circumpolar North could limit unnecessary interference in Arctic Affairs, and at the same time hinder marginalization. If that is the case, Norwegian High North diplomacy has on the contrary been an advantage; Oslo has ensured greater EU knowledge and interest in the Arctic (Offerdal, 2010), but have hindered Brussels from threatening Norwegian interests. When considering the realist focus on the balance of power logic, it would make sense to engage the EU in Circumpolar Affairs to balance Russian power. At the same time, it is obvious that too much engagement could threaten Russian interests and in a worst case scenario trigger conflicts. Hence, the balance of power logic is once again a valuable approach to the Norwegian High North Policy. These observations make it look like Oslo has increasingly sought to exclude the EU from Arctic Affairs, which accentuates the possibility for conflict in the far North.

The most surprising result of the High North diplomacy is arguably that Norwegian activity has led to greater opposition towards Oslo's interests in the Arctic (Hønneland & Rowe, 2010; Leira et al., 2007). Hønneland and Rowe (2010) claim that Norwegian diplomacy has created a common front among its partners opposing Norwegian interests in the Circumpolar North (p. 149). Leira et al. (2007) use the international meeting, set up by the British in 2006, to discuss the status of Svalbard (where Norwegian representatives were not invited), to illustrate how other countries have reintroduced the High North on their political agendas. The analysis in chapter four underlined how the same has been evident at EU-level, as opposition to Norwegian sovereignty and interests was, for example, prominent when the EP called for an Arctic Treaty (EP, 2008b). This phenomenon reveals how Norwegian authorities have failed to create a greater understanding for Oslo's priorities and interests with important allies, such as Britain (Leira et al., 2007, p. 32). Consequently, Norwegian officials seem to have understood that EU engagement in Arctic Affairs is not positive at all costs (Offerdal, 2011).

Because of the growing divergence in the goals of Norway and its European partners, there has been a reduced interest from the Norwegian side to involve the EU and certain EU member states in the Circumpolar North (NOU, 2012, p. 724). It has been possible to look for

other partners than the EU because of two correlating reasons; 1) the AC has become a stronger forum for cooperation on High North issues, and 2) High North relations with Russia, Canada and the U.S. have deepened in recent years. Notably, Oslo does not have the same need to build close Arctic relations with the EU, as long as there are other allies with more concurrent interests and priorities (NOU, 2012, p. 747). Thus, it is evident that Norwegian policy-makers have intentionally safeguarded national interests by keeping the High North dialogues with the EU and EU member states inconsistent.

From this we can conclude that the Norwegian High North diplomacy has been a success, as it has been a competent tool to safeguard Norwegian interests (which are primarily based upon the need to protect Norwegian sovereignty and resources in the High North). At the same time, the Norwegian Government has created awareness and attention of the Norwegian High North in Brussels in order to avoid a conflict in its near abroad. To maintain and build close relations with the EU and its member states remains important to the Norwegian Government, but it is evident that interference and EU influence in the Norwegian Circumpolar North should be kept at a minimum.

6 The European Union and Norway in the Arctic: Conflict or cooperation?

> …[T]he Arctic will test our ability to work together and our willingness to put environmental protection, sustainability and public safety first (Damanaki, cited in Hester, 2011).

The European Union and Norway are closely associated partners. Even so, a number of controversies exist when it comes to the High North. The aim of this chapter is to analyze whether the Arctic relationship between the EU and Norway is characterized by conflict or cooperation. The chapter consists of three sections. The first section is a discussion of cooperative endeavors – with a particular emphasis on the field of research and economic collaboration. In the second section, sources of conflict are assessed. Namely, the different interpretations of the legal status of Svalbard, diverging views of the EU and Norway on Arctic Governance, as well as the conflict potential of the EU's seal products ban. In the third section, cooperative endeavors and sources of conflict are discussed in light of defensive realism. The main argument is that the EU and Norway are collaborators in the Arctic, but that there is a significant potential for conflict and competition.

6.1 Arctic cooperation between the EU and Norway

6.1.1 Research on climate change

EU-Norwegian cooperation in the field of Arctic research goes far back, and is therefore not necessarily spurred by the geopolitical changes in the Arctic. The collaboration seems to be a result of the converging interests of Brussels and Oslo in this particular field. Cooperation on Arctic research takes place within regional bodies and policies such as BEAC and the EU's ND. Also, Norway fully participates in EU's Research Policy as an associated country. Maria Damanaki (2011b), EU Commissioner for DG MARE, has emphasized the active role of Norway in EU research programs on fisheries and aquaculture, referring to Norwegian participation in 26 out of 57 research projects in the period 2007-2011. From a Norwegian point of view, the participation in EU Programs has been valuable for research institutions and the business sector. It has been particularly positive that cooperation has paved the way for projects that have been perceived to be too risky to undertake, without the assistance of European partners (Boekholt et al., 2012). Thus, when it comes to research "the Arctic might need the EU as much as the EU needs the Arctic" (Østhagen, 2011, p. 18).

The project *Developing Arctic Modeling and Observing Capabilities for Long-term Environmental Studies* (DAMOCLES), part of the IPY 2007-2008, is one of the many Arctic-relevant research projects where the EU and Norway have participated together (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2007).[59] DAMOCLES exemplifies the collaboration between the EU and Norway with regards to environmental research. Høglund (2012) argues that in research on climate change, the EU is a "constructive partner" that could be as good a collaborator as the Arctic States, such as Russia and the U.S. Therefore, the successful cooperation between Brussels and Oslo is a product of converging interests and that both parties seem to gain from the cooperation as costs are shared.

Furthermore, DAMOCLES illustrates how the EU and its member states have carried out considerable Arctic-relevant research. The high level of EU contribution is probably the reason why research seems to be the Arctic issue where the EU is most confident (Offerdal, 2011, p. 18). Research is also the policy sector of the EU that targets Arctic issues most directly. This is particularly true with regards to research related to climate change, since it has been the focus and interest of the EU and its member states (Airoldi, 2008, p. 53). The EU has, as demonstrated in chapter four, emphasized its research contribution when legitimizing its role in the Arctic. Accordingly, Brussels seems to have understood that the greater presence and contribution of the EU in the Arctic, the more difficult it is for other actors to exclude the EU from certain decision-making procedures. Hence, research and climate change efforts are areas where EU contribution has, and most likely will continue to give the EU a foothold in Arctic Affairs.

Offerdal (2010), however, has questioned whether EU-based research will give the European Union increased influence and acceptance in the High North (p. 18.). The reason seems to be that there is a potential for clash of interests between Arctic States, such as Norway, and the EU. Grindheim (2009) has assessed how Oslo and Brussels have framed climate change in their respective Arctic policy documents. She argues that both actors perceive themselves as the primary protector of the environment and responsible steward of the Arctic. The question is whether there is enough room for two actors pursuing the same objectives? The answer is twofold. Firstly, collaboration could be beneficial as the EU's

[59] DAMOCLES was a four-year project that ended in 2009. It involved participation of 48 research institutions in 12 European countries, along with contribution from the U.S., Russia, Canada and Japan. The aim was to identify and understand "…the changes occurring in the sea-ice, atmosphere and ocean of the Arctic region, improving modeling of these changes, and determining appropriate adaption strategies for a range of anticipated socio-economic impacts following the disappearance of perennial sea-ice" (Airoldi, 2008, p. 53; DAMOCLES, 2012a). The EU's contribution amounted to over 17 million euro. Norway and other participants had to match the EU's contribution.The total cost of the project was thus more than 30 million euro (DAMOCLES, 2012b).

identity as a "green pioneer" could give Norwegian efforts increased force, and ensure the EU's access to the Arctic. Secondly, Brussels and Oslo could challenge each other as both aim for the leading role in the far North. Hence, the EU's efforts to gain access to the Arctic by focusing on research could become problematic.

In order to limit the conflict potential, the EU must therefore illustrate to its Norwegian counterparts whether it has real interest in protecting the environment together with its Arctic partners, or if it is primarily using climate change as an entrance key (Bailes, 2009, para. 8). Høglund (2012) also stresses the need for the EU to make its Arctic research objectives clear, arguing that it is essential to avoid suspicions of the EU contradicting fundamental Norwegian interests. He supports his argument by pointing to how certain EU officials have wanted to forbid oil and gas extraction in the Arctic because of climate change considerations. If such a path was chosen, the EU's engagement could challenge vital Norwegian interests.

In chapter four, it became apparent that Denmark called for a limited EU Arctic Policy based on low politics such as research.[60] The Danish approach is interesting, since it exemplifies how cooperation is more likely to be pursued in low politics as national interests are more similar and more easily converge. The EU's Research Policy is an example of this phenomenon, as EU member states agree that it is beneficial to pool their resources to increase their relevance. When deciding on external policies, such as EU Arctic Policies, however, it is harder to agree, and cooperation is thus kept limited. The present thesis has revealed how the same is true with regards to Arctic cooperation between the EU and Norway. Notably, Brussels and Oslo cooperate when dealing with low politics such as research, and to a certain degree environmental policies, as they have converging interests.

6.1.2 Economic cooperation: The case of oil and gas extraction

The economic ties between the EU and Norway are strong. This is revealed by trade figures on import and export. Norway is the EU's fourth most significant import partner for trade in goods, and is the sixth largest export market. When combined, these figures make Norway the fifth largest trade partner for the EU-27 (Eurostat, 2012b). Norway is relatively more dependent on the European Union since it is Norway's most important trading partner (Statistics Norway, 2007). 70 percent of Norway's import of goods comes from the EU, and

[60] See chapter five, section 5.1.3 for a definition of low politics.

80 percent of the total export goes to the EU-market (Statistics Norway, 2007). With regards to oil and gas, the EU-27 is particularly important as 86 percent of total crude oil export, and almost 100 percent of the total export of gas goes to the European market (European Commission, 2009; Statistics Norway, 2007). Furthermore, Norwegian resources are essential for EU member states, as Oslo is the EU's second most important crude oil and gas exporter (Eurostat, 2012a).

EU-Norwegian Arctic cooperation in the field of energy is therefore well-established as interests converge. The analysis in previous chapters illustrated how both the EU and Norway perceive the Barents Sea to be an important European energy region that can help reduce energy scarcity and insecurity. Additionally, both Brussels and Oslo have a two-folded emphasis on sustainability, along with the need to open up for energy extraction (Grindheim, 2009). European companies and industries have been actively engaged in extraction in the Barents Sea, both in Norwegian and Russian projects. It should be noted that this cooperation takes place within the areas of Norwegian jurisdiction, which reduces the conflict potential and opens up for collaboration. The importance of European know-how and technology can be exemplified with the LNG production facility Snøhvit. The Norwegian company Statoil has 33.53 percent, while Petero AS has 30 percent. Just above 60 percent of the contracts for the Snøhvit project were thus granted Norwegian industry. The remaining owners are European companies (Statoil, 2012).[61] Even though the Norwegian shares were higher than initially expected, the European companies' involvement has been important. Their role has been vital due to the harsh Arctic conditions, which have led to high demand for technology and need for foreign investments because of great financial costs. Evidently, the commercial interests of the EU and Norway are correlating when it comes to resource extraction, and cooperation has therefore been successful.

The picture is not that clear-cut, however, as Arctic resources are coupled with security. A potential clash of interest between the EU and Norway became evident following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon accident in the Gulf of Mexico. After the incident, voices within the EU Commission, and in particular EU Commissioner for Energy, Günter Oettinger, called for a deep-sea oil moratorium (Offerdal, 2011, p. 14). The idea was followed up by the Commission, which launched a *Communication* […] *facing the challenge of the safety of offshore oil and gas activities* (European Commission, 2010). Even though the Communication was not put into practice, it illustrated how EU legislation could limit

[61]The French companies, Total E&P Norway and GDF Suez Norway, respectively have 18.40 and 12 percent, and the German company RWE Dea AG 2.81 percent license in the field (Statoil, 2012).

Norway's room for maneuver due to unforeseen external events. Høglund (2012) maintains that circumstances like the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, could lead to debates being raised again.

Even though Brussels and Oslo are moving towards cooperation in the field of Arctic oil and gas, there is clearly still a need to clarify the right to the access and utilization of resources to avoid conflicts. The conflict potential is thus significant in areas where the legal claims are not solved, such as the Svalbard continental shelf. Evidently, cooperation between Brussels and Oslo is established in low politics, such as research and environmental issues. When it comes to resource extraction, however, the picture seems to be somewhat different as vital national interests are at stake.

6.2 Unresolved maritime boundaries and territorial claims: The case of Svalbard

The legal status of Svalbard, an archipelago in the northern part of the Barents Sea, is one of the most important and apparent controversies between the EU and Norway in the Arctic. Svalbard is an interesting case because of its geostrategic location in the Arctic Ocean, along with its rich resource potential of fish and possibly petroleum (Jensen & Rottem, 2009). The Spitsbergen Treaty of 1920, commonly referred to as the Svalbard Treaty, grants Norway the "full and absolute sovereignty […] over the Archipelago of Spitsbergen" (Lovdata, 1920, art. 1).[62] Additionally, the treaty preserves certain rights for the remaining signatories. The so-called *non-discriminatory principle* grants the remaining parties the right to "enjoy equally the rights of fishing and hunting" (Lovdata, 1920, art. 2) as well as to engage in commercial operations with regards to maritime, industrial or commercial activity in the same territory (Lovdata, 1920, art. 3).

Despite the legal framework of an international treaty, controversies exist regarding the treaty's geographical range. More precisely, the controversies evolve around 1) Norwegian rights to regulate fishing in the Svalbard Fisheries Protection Zone (FPZ),[63] as well as 2) the legal status of the continental shelf of Svalbard. The bottom line of the conflict

[62] The Spitsbergen Treaty was signed in Paris February 9, 1929, by representatives of Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Great Britain and Ireland and the British overseas Dominions and Sweden (Lovdata, 1920). When the treaty was signed, Spitsbergen (which refers to one specific island) referred to the entire Svalbard archipelago. Today, Svalbard is more commonly used as it refers to the whole group of islands. Svalbard is therefore applied in the present thesis.

[63] The Svalbard FPZ was declared by Norway in 1977. It refers to a 200 nm area around the Svalbard archipelago of fisheries jurisdiction. It grants Norway jurisdictional fishing rights in the area (Hønneland & Rowe, 2010, p. 102).

is that Norway and other actors, such as the EU and Russia, have incompatible views with regards to the legal basis of the Svalbard Treaty (Fairhall, 2010; MFA, 2005; Åtland, 2007).

The Norwegian Government maintains that the territorial waters around Svalbard belong to Norway.[64] Oslo argues it has sovereign rights to the maritime zones because the Svalbard Treaty does not apply to the areas beyond the archipelago. One important argument in this respect is that:

> The status of the waters around the island's territorial waters must be considered against the background of the provisions of the law of the sea, and cannot apply the treaty's provisions on a presumption that the state would have widened the treaty's scope of application to the continental shelf and adjacent waters had they been aware of these legal arrangements in 1920 (Fleicher, 112, 1994, cited in Jensen & Rottem, 2009, p. 80).

Hence, Norway claims that, as a coastal state, it has sovereign rights over the maritime zones beyond the 12 nautical miles.

The Norwegian interpretation of the treaty has been contested by nations such as Iceland, Russia, Spain and the United Kingdom (Pedersen, 2006). These countries argue that the provisions stipulated in the treaty gives all the parties rights to the fishing zone, and/or the continental shelf of Svalbard. Jensen and Rottem (2009) claim that the complexity of the Svalbard issue is that there is no cohesive group of actors, but a "cluster of states whose interests converge or diverge interchangeably according to the policy field in question" (p. 81). The UK Government, for example, argues that the non-discriminatory principles provided in the treaty should be applied to the waters as well, while Spain claims that signatory states have rights beyond the 12 nm maritime zone, and that Norway cannot exercise jurisdiction over non-Norwegian vessels fishing in the area (Numminen, 2011, pp. 12-14). Within this context, the Norwegian Government can easily be isolated while other nations form alliances. In this regard, it is interesting how Leira et al. (2007) assert that the Norwegian High North dialogue has led to an exclusion of Norway, because the dialogues have increased other nations' awareness of the Svalbard issue (p. 32). Regardless of whether that is the case, it has been a challenge for the Norwegian Government that a great number of EU member states and Arctic States have opposed its claim regarding the legal status of the Svalbard archipelago, and the maritime zones beyond it.

The Svalbard controversy has been on the EU agenda as well. The European Parliament has been the most active EU institution, illustrated by the fact that it mentioned the different interpretations of the Svalbard Treaty in its 2011 Arctic Resolution (EP, 2011).

[64] This refers to the 200 nm fisheries zone, as well as the contested continental shelf of Svalbard.

Nonetheless, the EU has only been involved in the issue to a limited extent, and it has primarily been a preoccupation of certain EU member states and EU officials. MEP Diana Wallis has been among the EU politicians calling for an official EU Svalbard Policy (Wallis & Arnold, 2011, p. 6). She argues that the EU should get involved, since "…tensions have been dealt with by relatively polite diplomacy and legal process between the state parties of the Spitsbergen Treaty but in effect there is a stalemate which could and, indeed should, perhaps be used as an opportunity" (Ibid.). Regardless of such calls, there is no official EU policy regarding the legal status of Svalbard.

However, there is reason to believe that the issue regarding the jurisdiction of Svalbard will be put on the EU agenda again in the future, and external factors could be the trigger (Høglund, 2012; Offerdal, 2011, p. 17). For example, Numminen (2011) argues that if Norway was to open the Svalbard area for oil and gas exploitation, the tensions regarding the provisions of the Svalbard Treaty would likely increase (p. 14). Indeed, given the preoccupation of certain EU member states, such as Spain and the UK – the issue is likely to appear again. These states could pressure other EU member states to accept their interpretation of the Svalbard Treaty. EU involvement is supported by the fact that EU member states together could "…lead to effective operation of the Spitsbergen Treaty terms as Norwegian competence is on a gradual climb towards exclusiveness at the expense of signatory states' rights to exploit the resources in the zone" (Scotcher, 2011, p. 31). Offerdal (2011) maintains that this can be a challenge to Norway, which is outside the EU decision-making system and lacks partners within the system supporting its claim (p. 18). Evidently, the Svalbard conflict is one where Norwegian interests will continue to be challenged also in the future.

The controversial character of the Svalbard issue is a central element in Norwegian policy documents. The conflict was for example an important component in Oslo's High North Strategy of 2006, as the Government emphasized the importance of Svalbard and the need for "firm enforcement of sovereignty" (MFA, 2006, p. 14). Moreover, it was identified as a case where there are "…real conflicts related to the utilization of fisheries resources and future offshore petroleum resources" (MFA, 2006, p. 16). Offerdal (2011) emphasizes the conflict potential as well, arguing that the legal questions regarding Svalbard might be the Arctic issue where Norway faces the greatest challenges in its relationship with Europe (p. 6). From a Norwegian point of view, the Svalbard case is therefore about more than the problems of interpreting a treaty; it represents a foreign and security policy challenge (Jensen &

Rottem, 2009, p. 80). The reason is that the conflict has considerable implications for fisheries and resource extraction in the areas, which are of vital importance to Norway.

On Svalbard, Norway has therefore carried out an assertive foreign policy with national interests as prime movers. The assertive tone of the Government was for example evident in its Second High North Strategy of 2009. This is exemplified by its focus on the Coast Guard's role to maintain Norwegian presence in Northern sea areas, and specifically in the FPZ around Svalbard (MFA, 2009, p. 38). A number of fishery disputes have occurred in the Svalbard area, exemplified by the Norwegian Coast Guard's arrest of Spanish trawlers for illegal fishing in 2004 and 2005.[65] The Spanish arrest was succeeded with the *Elektron*-case in 2005. *Elektron*, a Russian trawler, was detained by the Norwegian Coast Guard for suspected violation of Norwegian fisheries legislation. During inspection, the trawler fled towards Russian territory with two Norwegian fisheries officials on board. *Elektron* was followed by four Norwegian Coast Guard ships and an aircraft. Even though the incident was resolved in a peaceful manner, Moscow felt the Norwegian Coast Guard had acted aggressively and treated them unfairly (BBC News, 2005; Jensen & Rottem, 2009; Numminen, 2011). It accentuated Oslo's shift of policy from a lenient tone towards a more assertive one, as Norwegian authorities increasingly flexed muscles *vis-à-vis* its Russian counterpart. The Svalbard case is therefore a good illustration of the Norwegian Government's focus on sovereign rights in the Norwegian Arctic. According to the definition of a conflict as "a social condition that arises when two or more actors pursue mutually exclusive or mutually incompatible goals", the Svalbard controversy is without doubt a conflict.

The analysis of the Svalbard controversy serves as a good illustration of the duality of Arctic jurisdictional disputes. The case exemplifies how the geopolitical changes, such as an opening of the Arctic for oil and gas exploration, might increase the conflict level. At the same time, the case accentuates that similar conflicts are likely to appear in the future. Indeed, the growing awareness of the resource potential in the region increases the stakes of the involved parties. The Arctic States are, as mentioned in chapter three, working on the delimitation of the outer limits of their national shelf in the Arctic in accordance with the UNCLOS. To do so becomes even more important as the growing geostrategic importance of the Arctic will make it increasingly difficult to solve maritime boundaries and territorial

[65] In 2004, the Spanish trawlers *Olazar* and *Olaberri* were caught for illegal fishing, succeeded by the arrest of *Goraya Segundo* and *Monte Meixueiro* in 2005. Spain disputed Norway's right to do so (Numminen, 2011, p. 13).

claims. As of today "…a clarification over the legal status of the Svalbard shelf is not in sight" because the question is a sensitive one (Pedersen, 2006, p. 339). Numminen (2011) argues that the question is, and will be, difficult as a high number of the treaty's signatories are major international players, and also non-Arctic actors. Evidently, the changes occurring in the Arctic are "securitizing" the issue of jurisdictional disputes (Åtland, 2010).

At the same time, the Svalbard issue does not seem to trigger any armed conflicts or confrontations in the nearest future. Thus, the involved parties' conflict behavior is first and foremost peaceful as they currently arrive at sensible conclusions despite the controversies (Young, 2011, p. 193). In this regard, Jensen and Rottem (2009) argue that conflicts are not likely to escalate – they are likely to be solved with other means than military ones (p. 80). When considering these interpretations, the Arctic region seems to be, when compared to other important transit routes, a peaceful and stable region despite unclear boundaries. Jensen and Rottem (2009) claim that this has to do with the fact that the controversial issues are best explained "…as remnants under the wider aegis of the law of the sea. Most of the pieces of the puzzle are already in place…" (p. 81). Also, the Svalbard issue must be viewed within a broader analysis of international relations. Svalbard, as well as the Arctic, is one of many geostrategic areas where the national interests of the involved actors are at play. It is therefore unlikely that the involved actors, with today's situation, interpret the Svalbard controversy to be important enough to create an armed conflict with key partners. Irrespectively, the Svalbard case emphasizes the conflict level between Norway and the EU in the Arctic – and especially how it might increase because of the areas' resource potential.

6.3 Disputes on Arctic Governance and stewardship

The analysis in previous chapters illustrated how the Arctic Governance system is arguably best described as a random institutional complex, or even as a collection of different institutional arrangements (Koivurova, 2008; Young, 2002). Moreover, Arctic Governance has been criticized for being inadequate to respond to the geopolitical changes of the far North. Within the EU system, the EP has been the prime advocator of a new legal system for the High North. Chapter four addressed the EP's call for an Arctic Treaty along the lines of the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS). The ATS is a classical intergovernmental arrangement, and is open to all UN nations carrying out extensive research in the Antarctic region. The EP has argued that a similar arrangement should be transferred to the Circumpolar North, as it would give non-Arctic actors, such as the EU, a greater chance of influencing Arctic Affairs.

Due to the negative response to the EP's call for an Arctic Charter, the Commission has not advocated the negotiation process the EP requested (Koivurova, 2009a, p. 7). Nonetheless, the third objective of the Commission's Communication *The European Union and the Arctic Region*, called for enhanced Arctic Governance (European Commission, 2008). In comparison to the EP's bold call for an Arctic Treaty, the Commission recognized the existing framework governing the Arctic, such as the UNCLOS and the AC. Even though the Commission did not go as far as the EP, it leveled itself somewhat with the MEPs in diagnosing the existing system as weak. The Commissioners stated that "[t]he main problems relating to Arctic governance include the fragmentation of the legal framework, the lack of effective instruments, the absence of an overall policy-setting process and gaps in participation, implementation and geographic scope" (European Commission, 2008, p. 10). Due to the ambiguous tone in the Communication, Commissioner Damanaki (2011b) has seen a need to clarify what the third objective signifies. She has stressed that it means that the EU will ensure that all actors go in the same direction, and that there is not duplication of Arctic efforts. Her statement is interesting because it illustrates how the EU has sought to legitimize an Arctic role by the virtue of its multilevel governance experience.

Koivurova (2008) argues that the debates on the creation of a new legal cooperative mechanism for the Arctic, is a critique of the way the Arctic Council operates, and how its mandate on environmental protection is insufficient (p. 14). Indeed, the EU's call for enhanced Arctic Governance gives reason to believe that voices within the EU have feared that the AC, without a legal mandate, might remain "…a façade under which unilateral and uncoordinated development-oriented policies of the States in the region can proceed; a scenario which already dominates much of the development in the Arctic" (Koivurova, 2008, p. 26). Consequently, the EU's call for improved governance is an attempt to hinder that the EU member states are excluded from Arctic Affairs. The analyses in the previous chapters have made obvious that the EU's view on Arctic Governance is not compatible with that of Norway, as Oslo has emphasized the sovereign rights of the Arctic States under the provisions of the UNCLOS. Hence, there is a conflict between Brussels and Oslo as they pursue mutually incompatible goals in the High North.

The EU's call for enhanced Arctic Governance has spurred external opposition among the Arctic States and indigenous communities. The critique of the Arctic stakeholders has first and foremost derived from the fact that the Arctic coastal states, also known as the A5, have emphasized that they are the responsible stewards of the region due to their territorial and sovereign rights in the High North. The Norwegian Government has therefore responded

negatively to both the EP's call for an Arctic Treaty and the Commission's third objective, as these have been directly in conflict with vital Norwegian interests.

With regards to the Arctic Treaty, the immediate Norwegian response was that the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Støre, on 7 May 2008 went to the European Parliament in Brussels to give an account of Norwegian interests in the Circumpolar North. The EP's engagement was followed-up in the Storting in October the same year. In the debate, the Foreign Minister emphasized the need to make absolutely clear to the EU that the Law of the Sea applies to the Arctic. That is, "we do not need any new treaty to regulate what is going on in the Arctic Ocean, even if there is ice on the top" (Støre, Norwegian Storting, 2008). The Norwegian response illustrates the sensitivity of the issue, and how Oslo discovered that Brussels' engagement would not necessarily be a positive contribution to Arctic Affairs (Offerdal, 2011, p. 10). Evidently, it was in Norway's interest that the EU adopted a line that correlated with the Norwegian policy objectives in order to limit the potential of a conflict.

With regards to the Commission's call for enhanced Arctic Governance, the Norwegian Government emphasized that there is already "…an ample basis for concrete action to promote safety, responsible management policies and environmental protection…" (Støre, 2008, para. 14). Furthermore, Støre (2008) distanced Norway from the EU opinion by arguing that the problem is not lack of rules, but instead lack of implementing the rules that already exist. On several occasions, the Norwegian Government has thus warned the EU that calling for a new legal charter for the Arctic might lead to uncertainty, and that it in the long run might undermine the existing legal framework (Ibid.). The high level of communication between Norway and the EU reveals the value of the existing paths of influence analyzed in the previous chapters. Moreover, it discloses the conflict potential that exist due to opposing views on the appropriate legal framework as the contact has been carried out on the highest political level.

Norway has also emphasized to the EU that the Arctic States are already involved in developing the Arctic Governance system. The A5 have argued that there is "…no need to develop a new comprehensive international legal regime to govern the Arctic Ocean. We will keep abreast of the developments […] and continue to implement appropriate measures" (AC, 2008, p. 2). The A5 also stressed their role as stewards, arguing that the "…five coastal states are in a unique position to address these possibilities and challenges" (AC, 2008, p. 1). These statements reveal how the A5 perceive the EU to involve itself unnecessarily since the Arctic States are already dealing with the problem. The A5's exclusive "inner circle" of the AC is thus a prime example of how the Arctic States are strengthening the Arctic Governance

system, while upholding its intergovernmental structure to safeguard their national interests. The Arctic Council is arguably kept, and will be kept as an intergovernmental arrangement, because the Arctic States have desired such a configuration. From the point of view of the A5, the current system is therefore beneficial. A statement of Evan Bloom, former U.S. Department of State Representative, supports this observation, as he argued that "…these types of cooperative forms were an objective for the US, given the enhanced flexibility they provide" (Bloom, 1999, p. 721, cited in Koivurova, 2009a, p. 3).

The coming together of the Arctic coastal states has been provocative, and is thus yet another example of the diverging views of the EU and Norway on Arctic Governance. The "inner circle" has been criticized for weakening Arctic Governance and excluding key actors. The EU member states Finland and Sweden have been particularly critical. Voices within the EU system, such as MEP Diana Wallis, have also uttered negative views about the development of an exclusive group of the coastal states. The reason is that the "inner circle" increases the EU's difficulties of influencing Arctic Affairs, and that the law of the sea approach of the A5 is not beneficial for the EU (Koivurova, 2009a, p. 7). Only a broader and more inclusive Arctic governance arrangement would safeguard EU's interests in the High North.

Despite the fact that certain EU member states and EU officials have criticized the coming together of the A5, they have gradually leveled themselves with the view of the Arctic States. The analysis in chapter four illustrated how EU officials increasingly have understood that Brussels has to consider the interests of its counterparts when deciding on a policy for the Arctic. In a response to the critique of the Commission's third objective, Commissioner Damanaki stated that "…in hindsight we might have used a different wording" (Damanaki, 2011a, p. 3). Her statement illustrates how voices within the EU system have picked up on the controversial character of its engagement in Arctic Governance.

Despite the policy shift, however, it is fair to say that the European Parliament's engagement, and to a certain degree also that of the Commission, has led to a great number of controversies with the A5 and the indigenous peoples of the Arctic (Airoldi, 2010, p. 100). These moves have made it look like the EU at times has excluded itself as an illegitimate partner, which has sought too much influence in the Circumpolar North. Therefore, Airoldi (2010) claims that if the EU wants to be a more powerful player in the region, it might have to accept a place in Arctic cooperation that is not necessarily in the front row with the Arctic States (p. 61). Evidently, there is reason to believe that Arctic Governance will continue to spur controversies in the coming years.

6.4 Disputes on the seal products ban

The seal products ban was proposed by the Commission in 2007, requested by a great number of MEPs. The European Parliament's involvement was a response to concerns of citizens and consumers on animal welfare. Even though the ban did not originate in the Arctic, it has proved to have significant repercussions for Arctic Affairs. The case went forward in September 2009, when the *Regulation on the trade of seal products* was adopted with the co-decision procedure (EUR-lex, 2009). The final regulation diverged considerably from the Commission proposal, as the Council and the EP went further and put a ban on the market of all seal products. The broad character of the ban derived from the fact that the EP, in particular, put emphasis on the "… pain, distress, fear and other forms of suffering which the killing and skinning of seals, […] cause to those animals" (EUR-lex, 2009, para. 4). The seal products ban went into force in August 2010, and has since then banned all trade of seal products in the EU.

The EU engagement in animal welfare has polarized feelings towards the EU's role in the Arctic (Airoldi, 2010, p. 34). The controversial character of the ban has to do with the fact that the European Union has used its trade relations to change the commercial traditions of other nations and communities. Seal hunting is primarily conducted by Inuit or other Arctic indigenous communities. These local Arctic communities have long-standing traditions for seal hunting, and it is a part of their food supply and a considerable income (DG Environment, 2009, p. 4). Sealing is thus primarily carried out outside EU territory,[66] where EU legislation cannot change the situation. The seal products ban demonstrates the EU's great power with regards to the consumer market and how widespread dissatisfaction in countries with sealing has been the result.

Denmark (along with Greenland) is among the EU member states who have felt the repercussions of the ban. The reason is that large parts of the indigenous communities within their territories conduct hunts of seal as a part of their tradition and income. The analysis in chapter four portrayed how there has been a decisive internal divergence within the EU regarding the seal products ban. Denmark and Greenland continue to criticize the EU's

[66] Within EU territory sealing occurs in Denmark, Finland and Sweden. In addition, seals are hunted in the UK (Scotland), but the hunting in the latter is not regulated. Also, some EU member states are involved in the processing and/or trade of seal products. See the Europan Commission Directorate-General Environment's *Study on implementing measures for trade in seal products*. *Stakeholder Briefing Note* for more information: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/animal_welfare/seals/pdf/study_implementing_measures.pdf.

involvement in seal hunt.[67] The Danish opposition to the ban is interesting, as it underlines how EU member states might put national interests above EU interests. Because of the vital role of EU member states in the development of EU foreign policies, Denmark can hinder the development of an EU Arctic Policy.

Other Arctic States, such as Canada and Norway, have also been affected by the ban. The reason is that Canadian Inuit communities and licensed Norwegian hunters[68] conduct sealing. Canada, the world's largest exporter of seal products, has been among the loudest opponents. In 2009, Canada sent a complaint regarding the seal products ban to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Ottawa called for consultations with the EU regarding the ban, in which the Norwegian Government joined. In October 2010, Oslo also asked to join the supplementary consultations that Ottawa had put forward. The following year, Canada requested a dispute settlement panel, in which Norway became a third party (WTO, 2012). The consultations have not led to mutually acceptable solutions, and the conflict remains unsolved. Norway has thus, together with Canada, been among the Arctic States criticizing the EU seal products ban emphasizing the need for the EU to gain a better understanding of the High North.

The conflicting character of the ban, which made Canada and Norway involve the WTO, does not derive from economic considerations. Even though the ban in practice stops all Norwegian export of seal to the EU market, it is not very harmful in economic terms. This has to do with the fact that the Norwegian seal industry is rather limited, and that the EU is not the most important market for seal products.[69] The ban is instead controversial as it entails important principles and sovereign rights of resources for the affected actors. The Norwegian Minister of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs, Lisbeth Berg-Hansen,[70] explained this by stating that "… this issue involves important principles, such as our right to sustainably harvest our living marine resources and to sell products derived from hunting and fishing" (Norwegian Government, 2011, para. 5). The Norwegian Government has further emphasized the fact that the EU's ban is groundless; seal stocks are not endangered, and Norwegian seal hunting is already subject to regulations and fulfills requirements of ethical destruction of animals (Ibid).

Additionally, the controversial character of the seal products ban derives from the fact that it has been used as a means in the Arctic power game. This is exemplified by the way the

[67] Denmark and Greenland obtained an exception from the regulation.
[68] In Norway there is no separate "indigenous hunt", meaning that qualified hunters take part in the hunting on equal basis regardless of whether they belong to Saami communities (DG Environment, 2009, pp. 30-31).
[69] The largest quantity of the Norwegian seal products are exported to Russia and countries in the East.
[70] Berg-Hansen, a Labour politician, has been Minister of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs in Stoltenberg's Second Government since 2009 (Norwegian Government, 2012b).

Arctic States have responded to the seal products ban, by neglecting the EU as a permanent observer in the Arctic Council. Canada has been the prime advocator of keeping the EU outside the AC. The former Canadian Foreign Minister, Lawrence Cannon,[71] voiced his concerns at an AC meeting in Tromsø in 2009. More precisely, Cannon made clear that "Canada doesn't feel that the European Union, at this stage, has required sensitivity to be able to acknowledge the Arctic Council, as well as its membership, and so therefore I'm opposed to it" (EU Observer, 2009, para. 13). Notably, Canada, one of the major Arctic powers, has managed to exclude the EU from the most important Arctic institution. This demonstrates the pivotal role of major Arctic powers in Arctic Affairs. Norway has on the other side, supported EU observer status in the AC regardless of the seal products ban. In this regard the analysis in chapter five is interesting, which portrayed how Norway, a relatively small Arctic power, could benefit from including the EU as an permanent observer in the AC in order to balance the power of other major actors, such as Canada, and in particular Russia.

Høglund (2012) emphasizes the severity of the seal products ban and argues that that the ban made the EU appear as an unattractive partner – it portrayed itself partly as a competitor, and as an actor that involved itself in an issue that it should not be engaged in. Consequently, it seems as if the EU will make no progress in Arctic Affairs as long as it is responsible for controversial cases like the seal products ban. Airoldi (2010) argues that the seal ban case is

> [h]eavily loaded with symbolism, […] has gained high visibility in the Arctic and attracted huge – arguably disproportionate – negative attention in the region, as a proof of the lack of consideration given by the EU to Arctic values and interests, and ultimately to Arctic populations. While it would be unfair to judge EU action in the Arctic on the basis of this incident, it underlines an urgent need for the EU to establish ways by which information on its activities, actual and intended, could flow from its institutions […] (p. 60).

Airoldi is correct when arguing that it is unreasonable to judge the EU solely on the seal products ban. Nonetheless, it is evident that this type of controversy does not fit well with the urgency of matters expressed in the EU policy documents on the Arctic. The great number of controversies the EU has generated with regards to Arctic Affairs, reveal how there is a considerable conflict potential between Brussels and Oslo when it comes to the Circumpolar North.

[71] Cannon served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Conservative Government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, from 2008 until the federal election of 2011 (Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 2012).

6.5 The EU and Norway in the Arctic: In light of defensive realism

In chapter two, the main argument presented was that there are valuable reasons to believe that the Arctic is a suitable case for defensive realism. The argument was based on the assumption that defensive realism is a simplifying device as it grasps the thin line that exist between conflict and cooperation in the High North. It is now necessary to look at the analysis of the present thesis in the light of defensive realism.

Defensive realists argue that there is nothing natural about cooperation in international relations. They explain this by the fact that relative gains are the prime concern of states as world politics are a zero-sum game (Waltz, 1979). Consequently, defensive realists assume that states, when considering cooperation, are preoccupied with relative gains – asking "who will gain more?" (Waltz, 1979, p. 105). The EU, for example, seems to be dissatisfied with the relative gains it achieves in Arctic cooperation. Accordingly, the EP has called for an Arctic Treaty along the lines of the Antarctic Treaty, which would ensure a more representative system that would grant non-Arctic Actors a greater role in Arctic Affairs. Evidently, the EP is trying to gain greater influence in the far North, as well as access to the resource potential of the region. This illustrates how the EU is preoccupied with relative gains, and not absolute gains as the neo-liberal scholars would argue.

At the same time, defensive realists, such as Oye (2011), holds that it is possible for states to realize common goals through cooperation. With regards to Brussels and Oslo's High North relationship, this seems to be correct when it comes to collaboration in low politics such as research. The defensive realist focus on relative gains is once again able to account for the Arctic cooperation between the EU and Norway. The present thesis has illustrated how Brussels and Oslo seem to be content with the relative gains they achieve when it comes to Arctic research cooperation. Evidently, collaboration in the field of research seems to reflect the consensus of what the EU and Norway believe to benefit them both. The reason is arguably also that these are uncontroversial issues where the interests of Brussels and Oslo converge. This fits well within the realist assumption that where vital interests are not at stake, states might adhere to cooperation (Art & Jervis, 2011a, p. 6).

Furthermore, the analysis has revealed how the A5 value the role of the UNCLOS and the AC. This is interesting when recalling how defensive realists believe that institutions can, in certain situations, ameliorate the security dilemma and increase political leader's scope of action. One might wonder whether this is the reason why the "inner circle" came together in Ilulissat to emphasize the role of the UNCLOS. Consequently, and in line with structural

realism, Arctic cooperation seems to be established when states want it to happen, and where vital interests are not at play.

In the future however, there is no certainty that the calculations will remain the same as the geostrategic importance of the region increases. Indeed, the analysis has proved how the climate change objectives of the EU and Norway might clash, as both actors search to be the steward and environmental protector of the region. In this regard, it is interesting that structural realists argue that as long as states have the potential of becoming enemies, relative gains are the prime concern of states. The value of defensive realism in explicating why cooperation occurs in some instances, and not in others, is thus obvious. Additionally, it underlines why neo-liberal institutionalism is not a suitable approach, as its great belief in intra-state collaboration would not enable it to explain why Arctic cooperation is kept at a minimum.

Evidently, defensive realists are inherently skeptical of the effect and advantage of institutions and legal regimes. The Arctic Council's appearance as a "talking shop with no powers" (Sale & Potapov, 2010, pp. 141-142) is interesting in this regard, as it corresponds with the defensive realist mistrust in institutions. The analysis in the present thesis has illustrated how the Arctic States are skeptical of too much cooperation and favor an Arctic Governance system that is intergovernmental, as it allows for them to safeguard their national interests. Moreover, the different interpretations of the Svalbard Treaty reveal how the Arctic region is characterized by conflict despite the existence of an international treaty. In line with defensive realist assumptions, a state's security is thus not necessarily safeguarded with the establishment of legal regimes. Defensive realists argue that in a zero-sum game states are likely to withdraw from cooperation if it expects other states to gain more than itself – regardless if the actors involved have common interests. That is, institutions are not an end in themselves. Even though none of the involved parties have withdrawn from the Svalbard Treaty, there is no certainty that they will not do so in the future. Indeed, the number of controversies that exist regarding its geographical range might become even more accentuated with the growing importance of the High North as an energy region.

Due to their inherent skepticism in the effect and advantage of institutions, defensive realists further assume that advice to put international interests above national ones is meaningless – states must always act in the way they calculate to be the best strategy to survive. In this regard, the development of an EU Arctic Policy is interesting. The institutional turf battle has exemplified how certain EU member states have been reluctant to pool sovereignty to a supranational organization. Denmark is an interesting case, as the

Danish Government has been uneager to involve the other EU member states in Arctic Affairs. The reason seems to be that Copenhagen favors intergovernmental collaboration with the A5, as their interests are more similar with that of Denmark. For example, all the coastal states emphasize the UNCLOS, while voices within the EU have criticized the existing governance scheme in the Arctic.

Furthermore, the defensive realist focus on the structure of international politics, and how it shapes foreign policy choices, has value to add to our understanding of Arctic Affairs. The decisive role of major powers such as Russia, and to a certain degree also Canada, has become evident in the analysis of the EU and Norway in the Arctic. The fact that Canada has managed to postpone the EU application for observer status in the AC exemplifies this tendency. In this regard, the system seems to precondition changes in the Arctic, as the cooperation reflects the regional power distribution.

The defensive realist focus on anarchy as the defining character of international politics, however, seems to be somewhat exaggerated when considering the Arctic. Indeed, the analyses in the previous chapters have made evident that Arctic cooperation exist, and that one cannot ignore the role of the AC and UNCLOS. To say that the Arctic is characterized by anarchy is therefore somewhat exaggerated. In this regard, Jensen and Rottem (2009) claim that the Arctic region does not "… suffer under a state of virtual anarchy, despite outward appearances, and states cannot claim rights to resources simply by planting flags in the sediment at the bottom of the sea" (p. 76). Defensive realist scholars, who have argued for the possibility of dampening the effects of anarchy, might therefore have a greater chance of explaining the changing Arctic.

The balance of power logic, which is at the heart of the defensive realist approach, helps explain the Norwegian approach to the Circumpolar North. It is particularly interesting how the *geopolitical power triangle* accounts for the Norwegian attempt to involve the EU to balance the power of other major Arctic actors, such as Russia. The analysis in chapter five explained the Norwegian focus on collaboration as an attempt of a small state to ensure security and to gain more visibility than its size would originally indicate (Hey, 2003; Ingebritsen, 2006). Defensive realists, such as Art and Jervis (2011a) explain this phenomenon by pointing to how small states might choose cooperation in order to eliminate the threat of larger and more powerful states (p. 6). At the same time, the analysis of the present thesis revealed the problem with a clear-cut focus on cooperation in cases where Brussels and Oslo have diverging interests. Thus, in order to meet the challenges of an approach built solely on cooperation, Norway has also adapted an assertive foreign policy

focusing on the need to exercise sovereignty and to safeguard Norwegian interests. Defensive realists would explain this as an attempt by Norway to increase its security in the High North. The value of defensive realism is thus evident, as it helps account for the Norwegian emphasis on the balance of power logic in its High North Policy.

Balance of power politics are also present in the European Union's approach to the High North. Art and Jervis (2011a) argue that the balance of power system is used by states to hinder another state of getting too much power (p. 6). From a realist point of view, it would be damaging for the EU to be left outside of Arctic Affairs. This defensive realist assumption helps explain why the EU has used its historic, geographic and economic links to the Circumpolar North to legitimize its Arctic role. Indeed, the present thesis has revealed how Brussels' objectives are based on the wish to become a part of the Arctic power play in order to develop and maintain the EU's global role.

Certainly, the present thesis has made evident how defensive realism can be applied to the more general policies of the EU and Norway – regardless of the fact that realism tends to be preoccupied with why war occurs. Defensive realists, such as Art and Jervis (2011a), agree that even though anarchy means that the international arena is a *state of war*, it does not mean that states are constantly at war with one another (p. 2). The value of defensive realism is that it accounts for why conflicts might occur, but also how these can be limited with the help of the balance of power logic, and/or diplomatic means. Evidently, defensive realism is a suitable theory to explain situations such as why Norway has felt that its interests were threatened when the EP called for an Arctic Treaty. Furthermore, defensive realism emphasizes how there are no guarantees that conflicts are avoided in the future. The potential of external oil spill accidents, for example, reveals how the EU and Norway's interests might diverge because of different responses to external events.

Consequently, defensive realism is a useful theoretical tool that enables an understanding of the EU and Norway's behavior in the Circumpolar North. It gives a detailed and consistent explanation of the thin line that exists between conflict and cooperation in the Arctic. On the one hand, the present thesis has made evident how Arctic cooperation is established and maintained when the actors believe they gain from the collaborative endeavors. On the other hand, the thesis has demonstrated how conflicts might occur when two or more actors have incompatible interests or goals – even among actors who are generally close economic and political partners, such as the EU and Norway. Also, conflicts do not necessary signify that military means will be deployed as they might emerge with varying intensity and severity. Consequently, Waltz' structural realism, and in particular

defensive realism, has been applied in the present thesis as it simplifies our understanding of whether there is conflict or cooperation between the EU and Norway in the High North.

6.6 Concluding remarks

The analysis in the present thesis has proved how the answer to the research question is not clear-cut. The EU and Norway are to a certain extent collaborators in the Arctic. The cooperative endeavors are evident in the participation of both Brussels and Oslo in a number of Arctic institutions and policies, such as the BEAC and the ND. The present thesis has also shown how Arctic cooperation is first and foremost pursued in low politics, such as research. The collaboration between the EU and Norway is facilitated through the existing framework for economic and political cooperation. The cooperative framework has been beneficial when managing disputes, and is arguably also one of the reasons why the controversies have been handled in a peaceful and diplomatic ways.

However, the present thesis has also illustrated that there is a potential for conflict between the European Union and Norway in the Arctic, as these actors are pursuing goals and/or interests that are incompatible. As mentioned earlier, Young (2011) argues that the role of non-Arctic actors might be the most complicated source of conflict in the far North. Young's statement underlines the severity of all the cases presented in the present thesis, because the relationship between Brussels and Oslo is a prime example of the consequences the involvement of a non-Arctic actor, and the response of an Arctic State. There is no suitable mechanism to ensure that non-Arctic actors follow the rules in Arctic Affairs, and conflicts might therefore evolve. Accordingly, even though the EU and Norway are cooperating in the Arctic – there is a significant potential for conflict.

When comparing all the cases analyzed in the present thesis, it is evident that the sum of the controversies has been detrimental to the EU's role in the High North. The European Union has not only created external opposition to its engagement in the Arctic, but has to a certain degree led to its own exclusion. Indeed, the thesis has illustrated how the EU's involvement has led to an understanding of the European Union as an unattractive partner in the Circumpolar North. The EU would therefore be better off if it avoided controversies and created closer ties with Arctic nations, such as Norway. From a realist point of view, it would be decisive for the EU to be sidelined in Arctic Affairs if a potential scramble for resources developed.

The Svalbard controversy illustrates that there is not only a potential for conflict between the EU and Norway in the High North, there is already a conflict. The Svalbard issue is an interesting case as it touches upon fundamental interests, such as sovereign rights, utilization of fisheries and future offshore petroleum resources. Even though the conflict is unlikely to trigger any armed conflicts or confrontations in the nearest future, the assertive tone of the Norwegian Government illustrates the severity of the issue. The present thesis has therefore demonstrated how disputes and conflicts between the EU and Norway vary in intensity, severity and duration. These observations fit well with the definition of conflict that was introduced in the first chapter.

The conflict level might intensify even further with the geopolitical changes that are occurring in the Arctic. As the opportunities and challenges in the far North are developing, it might become increasingly difficult to solve controversies in a peaceful manner. The distinction between cooperation and conflict is thus likely to become even more blurred. Especially since the conflicting interests of the actors involved might jeopardize the stability of the region. In the future, the answer to the question of whether there will be conflict or cooperation between Brussels and Oslo could therefore differ from today's reality. Evidently, the High North is at a historic turning point: It might become a region characterized by multilateral collaboration and regime formation, or potentially a scene of conflict where national interests prevail.

The Arctic relationship between the EU and Norway will continue to be an interesting study as it is in constant development. It would be valuable if future research focused on specific policy-areas, in order to further assess how the level of conflict and cooperation depends according to the issue at hand. The collaboration with regards to maritime policy is particularly interesting, as Norway has been an active actor in the development of the EU's IMP. Furthermore, the postponed Commission progress report represents a unique opportunity to further assess the EU's development of an Arctic Policy. There is also a lack of academic studies on the Arctic relationship between Norway and EU member states. It would therefore be valuable to further assess the relations between Oslo and the most active EU member states with regards to the Arctic questions. One might question whether future research will confirm the conclusions of the present thesis; namely that Norway and the EU are cooperating in the High North – but that there is a great potential for conflict as these actors have incompatible interests in a number of Arctic questions.

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Appendix 1: Interview guide

1. **Nåværende stilling**
    a. Tittel/posisjon
    b. Hvilken stilling har du nå?
2. **Personlig bakgrunn**
    a. Hva er din profesjonelle bakgrunn?
    b. På hvilken måte har du jobbet, eller jobber du med spørsmål relatert til Arktis?
    c. På hvilken måte jobber din enhet med Arktiske spørsmål?
3. **Den norske nordområdestrategien**
    a. Hva synes du er de viktigste norske interessene i nord?
    b. Mener du regjeringens strategi er egnet for å ivareta norske interesser? I så fall, hvordan?
    c. Kan du si noe om hva som synes å være de viktigste motivene for norsk nordområdepolitikk?
    d. Har det vært endringer i regjeringens tilnærming til Nordområdene gjennom perioden? Hva er i så fall de mest fremtredende endringene?
    e. Har du inntrykk av regjeringens nordområdesatsning har skapt en felles front mot Norge i spørsmål slik som Svalbard?
        i. Er det internasjonale møtet om Svalbard sin status, initiert av britiske myndigheter, et tegn på dette?

4. **Norske myndigheters forsøk på å påvirke EU**
    a. Har norske myndigheter forsøkt å påvirke EUs utforming av arktisk politikk?
        i. Hvilke kontaktflater har vært brukt for å øve innflytelse?
            1. Bilateralt?
            2. EU-nivå?
                a. Er Kommisjonen det viktigste kontaktpunktet?
                b. Formelle eller uformelle kanaler?
            3. Kan du gi en vurdering av hvilken av de to synes er den viktigste?
        ii. Hvilke saker har vært på agendaen?
    b. Tror du norske myndigheter oppfattes som en enhetlig aktør i Brussel?
    c. I hvor stor grad mener du Norge har lykkes i sin nordområdedialog med EU?
    d. Tror du norske myndigheter indirekte har forsøkt å forhindre for stor innblanding av EU for å ivareta norske interesser?

5. **EUs forsøk på å påvirke norsk politikk**
    a. Er det slik at EU forsøker å påvirke norske myndigheter ift. nordområdespørsmål?
        i. Hvilke kanaler/kontaktflater benyttes?
            1. Formelle kontaktflater
                a. EØS et virkemiddel?
                    i. Vil EU i økende grad benytte seg av EØS for å påvirke norsk nordområdepolitikk?
            2. Uformelle kontaktflater
        ii. Hvilke saker har vært og er på agendaen?
    b. I hvor stor grad lykkes europeiske aktører med å bli hørt i Norge?
    c. Oppfatter du EU som en enhetlig aktør når det gjelder arktiske spørsmål? Hvis ikke, hva må gjøres for å forbedre deres rolle?

6. **Hvordan oppfatter du EUs utvikling av en Arktisk politikk?**
    a. Kan du si noe om din oppfatning av EUs engasjerer seg i nord?
    b. Hva mener du er de viktigste motivene for EU?
    c. Finnes det politikkområder hvor EU bør øke sin deltakelse?
    d. Er det politikkområder som synes å være spesielt kontroversielle?
        i. Arktisk styresett
        ii. Forslaget om en arktisk traktat
        iii. Svalbard
        iv. Selforbudet
    e. Er du enig i at "det er et betydelig potensial for at EU-politikk på enkelte saksfelter kan få implikasjoner for muligheten norske myndigheter har for å forfølge sine interesser i nord?"
    f. Tror du EU (og da spesielt Rådet) har forsøkt å korrigere inntrykket av EU som utenforstående aktør som har søkt for mye og illegitim makt i regionen?
        i. Synes dun EU gradvis har nærmet seg norske syn og interesser? Hvis ja, hvorfor har dette skjedd?
    g. Når det gjelder de ulike medlemslandene…
        i. Hvilke land synes å være pådrivere for en arktisk politikk?
        ii. Hvilke land har vært de mest negative?
        iii. Har du inntrykk av at det er medlemsstatene driver prosessen, eller er det de overnasjonale institusjonene (Kommisjonen og EP)?
    h. Hva tror du fremtiden bringer for EU i nord?

7. **Helt til slutt, kan du gi en kort vurdering på hvorvidt du mener EU er konkurrent eller samarbeidspartner for Norge når det gjelder Nordområdene?**

8. **Har du noe du ønsker å legge til før vi avslutter?**