



Partnership on the Freeze?

Transatlantic Relations and Geopolitics of the High North

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current debate

- conflict or cooperation
- ordered process or anarchy
- nation states or regional regimes/non-state actors
- legal, environmental, social issues or politics, security
- circumpolar or international governance

own research interest

- importance of ideas and identities
- construction of the Arctic as a (geo)political space
- role of the state dealing with 21st century challenges
- what does this mean for transatlantic relations?

geography

- EU limited territorial/maritime basis
- US comparatively limited territorial/maritime basis
- their growing interest in the region cannot be neglected

geopolitics

- enclosed sea with 5 littoral states but affected by events outside
- international space (security, climate change, globalization)
- outside players
- resources and transport routes



relevance of Arctic as political space

United States:
sea power / national security

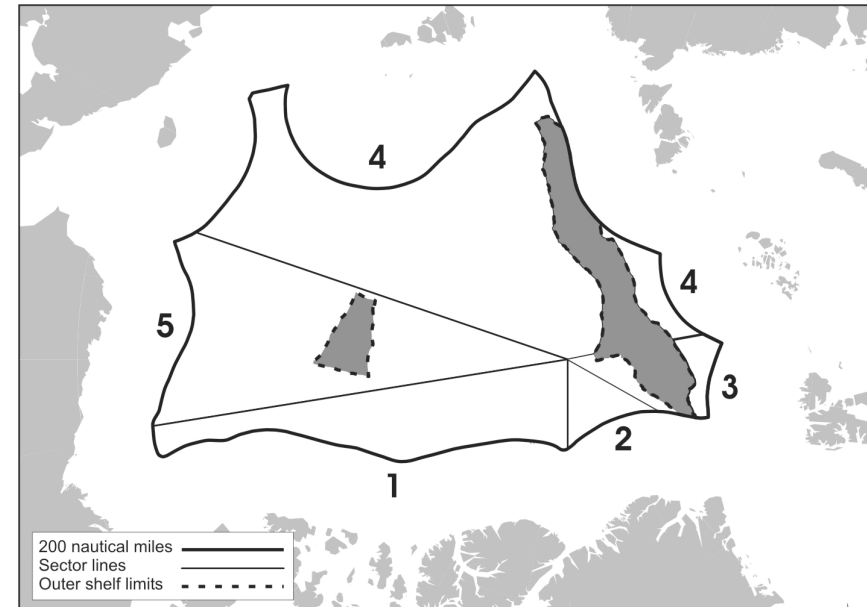
Europe:
leader in climate change policies

Canada:
Arctic power

Arctic as international space



light blue: EEZ, dark blue: high seas



Extended continental shelves beyond 200 nautical miles, partitioned by meridional *sector lines* that converge at the North Pole. 1: Canada; 2: Denmark; 3: Norway; 4: Russian Federation; 5: United States of America.



main issues

- Northwest Passage
- continental shelf delimitation
- Hans Island
- Lincoln Sea delimitation



governance

EU and the Arctic

- Denmark / Greenland (1973, 1985)
- Finland and Sweden (1992)

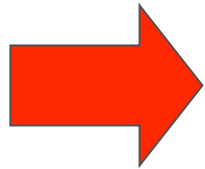
“Three Member States – Denmark (Greenland), Finland and Sweden – have territories in the Arctic. Two other Arctic states – Iceland and Norway – are members of the European Economic Area.”

The EU and the Arctic Region, November 2008

EU and the Arctic continued: The Northern Dimension

- 1999 Northern Dimension (Arctic Window)
- 2002, 2006 revived
 - partners: EU, Iceland, Norway and Russia
 - participants: northern regional councils, financial institutions operating in the north and EU institutions
 - other actors: e.g. indigenous peoples' organisations
 - observers: Canada, US

Northern Dimension (1999, 2002, 2006)



main policy framework for relations with non-EU Arctic states

- geographical focus on the Baltic (not Arctic)
- Arctic window: geographical focus on Europe and the East
- EU, Iceland, **Russia** and Norway

EU and the Arctic

14 March 2008 “Climate Change and International Security”
Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to
the European Council

“6. The Arctic:

The rapid melting of the polar ice caps, in particular, the Arctic, is opening up new waterways and international trade routes. In addition, the increased accessibility of the enormous hydrocarbon resources in the Arctic region is changing the geo-strategic dynamics of the region with potential consequences for international stability and European security interests. The resulting new strategic interests are illustrated by the recent planting of the Russian flag under the North Pole. There is an increasing need to address the growing debate over territorial claims and access to new trade routes by different countries which challenge Europe's ability to effectively secure its trade and resource interests in the region and may put pressure on its relations with key partners.”

EU and the Arctic: Toward an EU Arctic Policy

June/September 2008 “The European Union and the Arctic: Policies and Action” Adele Airoidi for Nordic Council of Ministers in preparation of September 2008 Ilulissat Conference (Airoidi Report)

“A determined effort to identify and develop the Arctic dimension of EU policies would be the appropriate answer to the challenge. An “Arctic Dimension” strategy would ensure the necessary coordination of policy initiatives and specific actions focussing or having an impact on the Arctic, and offer the necessary flexibility to allow adjustments. It would give the EU an identifiable instrument for cooperation internally, with other bodies dealing with Arctic matters such as the Arctic Council or the Nordic Council of Ministers, and with non-EU Arctic countries. An initiative in this sense, while falling well short of the concept of a Charter of Arctic Governance, would in all likelihood be seen favourably by the European Parliament, as a significant step towards an EU role in the protection of the Arctic. It would also be welcomed by civil society, in particular indigenous peoples and the important NGOs active in the region. A more developed “Arctic Dimension” would need to be reflected in the Commission structure. While a supporting network linking the relevant DGs would be necessary, a central dedicated “Arctic function” appears indispensable as a focal point for coordination and contact.”

EU and the Arctic: Toward an EU Arctic Policy

9 October 2008 European Parliament adopts Resolution on Arctic Governance:

The European Parliament ...

having regard to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which has not yet been ratified by the US Senate and which was not formulated with specific regard to the current circumstances of climate change and the unique consequences of melting ice in the Arctic Seas, ...

whereas the Arctic region is currently not governed by any specifically formulated multilateral norms and regulations, as it was never expected to become a navigable waterway or an area of commercial exploitation, ...

whereas three of the EU's Member States, and a further two of the EU's closely-related neighbours participating in the internal market through the EEA Agreement, are Arctic nations, meaning that the EU and its associated states comprise more than half the numeric membership of the Arctic Council

continued:

5. Welcomes the fact that the 'High North' forms part of the EU's Northern Dimension policy, but is convinced that awareness of the Arctic's importance in a global context needs to be raised further by delivering a standalone EU Arctic policy ...

13. Remains particularly concerned over the ongoing race for natural resources in the Arctic, which may lead to security threats for the EU and overall international instability;

14. Urges the Commission to take a proactive role in the Arctic by at least, as a first step, taking up 'observer status' on the Arctic Council, and considers that the Commission should set up a dedicated Arctic desk;

15. Suggests that the Commission should be prepared to pursue the opening of international negotiations designed to lead to the adoption of an **international treaty** for the protection of the Arctic, having as its inspiration the Antarctic Treaty, as supplemented by the Madrid Protocol signed in 1991, but respecting the fundamental difference represented by the populated nature of the Arctic and the consequent rights and needs of the peoples and nations of the Arctic region; believes, however, that as a minimum starting-point such a treaty could at least cover the unpopulated and unclaimed area at the centre of the Arctic Ocean;

EU Arctic Policy

20 November 2008 “The European Union and the Arctic Region”
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and
the Council:

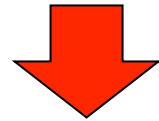
The European Union is inextricably linked to the Arctic region (hereafter referred to as the Arctic) by a unique combination of history, geography, economy and scientific achievements.

...

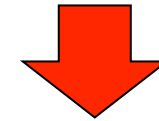
On the whole, Arctic challenges and opportunities will have significant repercussions on the life of European citizens for generations to come. It is imperative for the European Union to address them in a coordinated and systematic manner, in cooperation with Arctic states, territories and other stakeholders. This Communication sets out EU interests and proposes action for EU Member States and institutions around three main policy objectives:

- Protecting and preserving the Arctic in unison with its population
- Promoting sustainable use of resources
- Contributing to enhanced Arctic multilateral governance

themes of **use** and **protection**

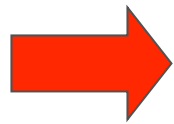


- commercial shipping
- extraction of hydrocarbons (energy supply security)
- fishing beyond the limits of EEZs



- climate change

Arctic multilateral governance



apprehension about Declaration of Ilulissat

In May 2008 five Arctic Ocean coastal states adopted a Declaration stating that they remain committed to the legal framework in place and to the orderly settlement of any overlapping claims. Since then, several of them have announced steps extending or affirming their national jurisdiction and strengthening their Arctic presence.

...

The EU should promote broad dialogue and negotiated solutions and not support arrangements which exclude any of the Arctic EU Member States or Arctic EEA EFTA countries.

continued:

Proposals for action:

- Assess the effectiveness of Arctic-relevant multilateral agreements to determine whether additional initiatives or measures are needed. Closely follow the processes of maritime delimitation and of the establishment of the outer limits of the continental shelves to assess their impacts on EU interests. ...
- Enhance input to the Arctic Council in accordance with the Community's role and potential. As a first step, the Commission will apply for permanent observer status in the Arctic Council.



governance

- North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission*
- UNCLOS*
- IMO
- Arctic Council

“Given the profound links between the Arctic and the outside world, it makes no sense to relegate outsiders (for example Britain, China, France, Germany, the European Union) to the status of observers who seldom even get to speak at council sessions. Since the actions of these states are critical to efforts to regulate global processes (for example climate change, globalisation) that will affect the Arctic profoundly, any procedure that leaves these actors increasingly frustrated and unhappy in their dealings with the council will be counterproductive.”

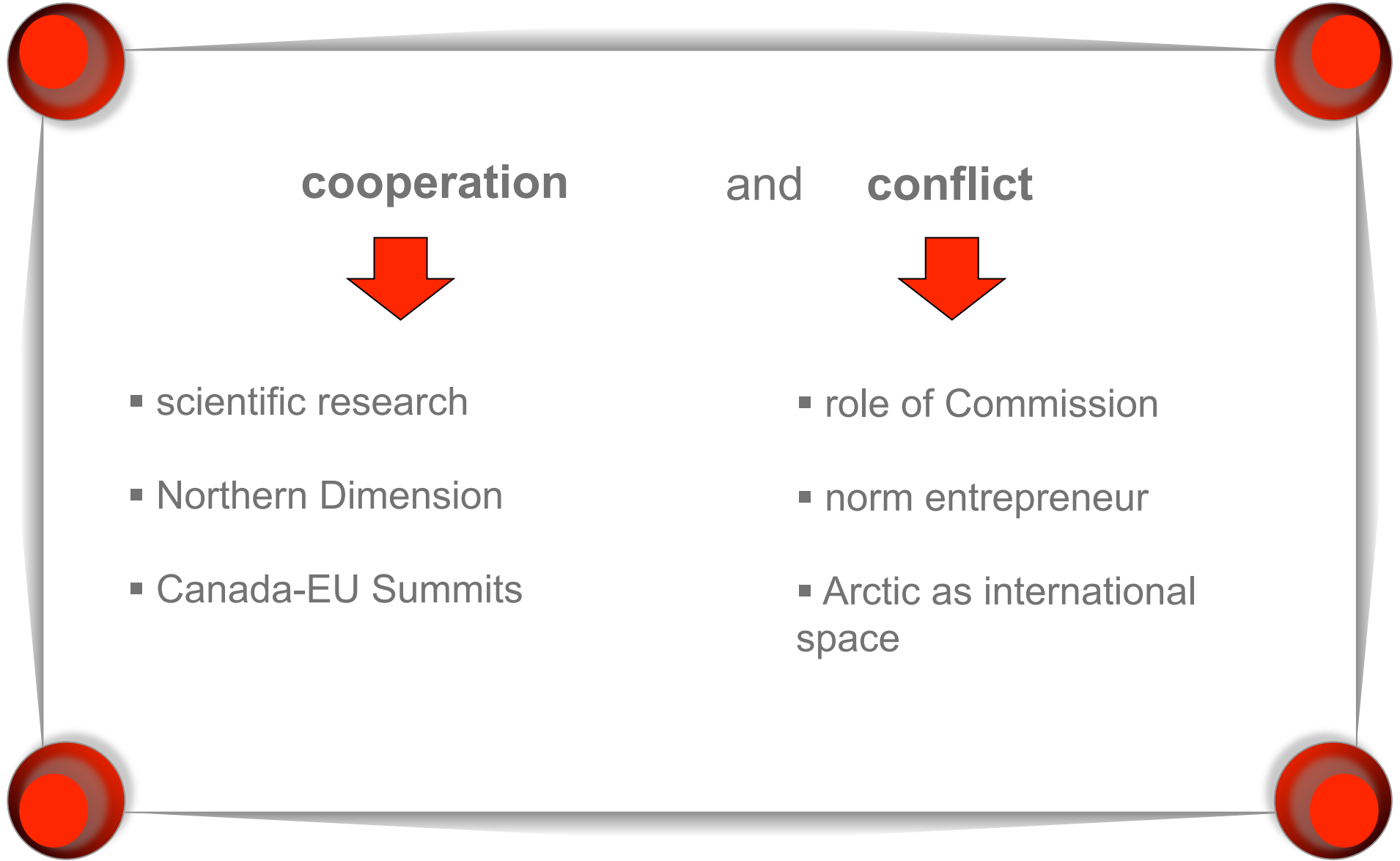
Oran R. Young, 2009

Council Conclusions, 8 December 2008

“Le Conseil s’est félicité de la décision de la Commission de demander le statut d’observateur permanent afin de représenter la Communauté européenne au sein du Conseil de l’Arctique.”

“It is clear, however, that the EU’s leading role in climate change mitigation efforts – whether in international negotiations or by domestic action – is of significant value to the Arctic. Where some circumpolar countries are reluctant or outright opposed to take the necessary commitments, the EU may even become the **main interpreter of Arctic concerns.**”

Airoldi Report



Arctic as global commons?

- climate change is global issue
- UNEP: Arctic as climate change barometer (2003/2008)
- animal welfare: IWC and seal hunt