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*Plenary sitting*

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**A8-0032/2017**

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# REPORT

on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic  
(2016/2228(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs  
Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Rapporteurs: Urmas Paet, Sirpa Pietikäinen

(Joint committee meetings – Rule 55 of the Rules of Procedure)

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic (2016/2228(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) concluded on 10 December 1982 and in force since 16 November 1994, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People of 13 September 2007<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the Agreement adopted in Paris at the 21st Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC of 12 December 2015 (the Paris Agreement), and to the vote in the European Parliament on the ratification of the Agreement on 4 October 2016,
- having regard to the Minamata Convention, the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, the Gothenburg Protocol, the Stockholm Convention, the Århus Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity,
- having regard to the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development and the outcome document adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, entitled ‘Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 16 November 1972,
- having regard to ILO Convention 169 and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,
- having regard to the Ilulissat Declaration announced on 28 May 2008 by the five coastal states of the Arctic Ocean at the Arctic Ocean Conference in Ilulissat, Greenland,
- having regard to the Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development Principles in Inuit Nunaat<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) 61/295 by the General Assembly on 13 December 2007,
- having regard to the Council Conclusions on Arctic issues, in particular those of 20 June 2016, 12 May 2014, 8 December 2009 and 8 December 2008,
- having regard to the EU Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy of June 2016 on ‘Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe’, as well as the ‘CFSP Report – Our priorities in 2016’, as endorsed by the Council on 17

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<sup>1</sup> UNGA 61/295/2007.

<sup>2</sup> UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/1.

<sup>3</sup>

[http://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/uploads/3/0/5/4/30542564/declaration\\_on\\_resource\\_development\\_a3\\_final.pdf](http://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/uploads/3/0/5/4/30542564/declaration_on_resource_development_a3_final.pdf).

October 2016,

- having regard to the joint communication by the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) of 27 April 2016 on ‘An Integrated European Union Policy for the Arctic’<sup>4</sup>, the joint communication by the Commission and the HR of 26 June 2012<sup>5</sup> on ‘Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region’ and the Commission communication of 20 November 2008 on ‘The EU and the Arctic region’,
- having regard to the national Arctic strategies of Arctic states, in particular those of the Kingdom of Denmark (2011), Sweden (2011) and Finland (2013), as well as those of other EU and other EEA Member States,
- having regard to the Council Decision 2014/137/EU of 14 March 2014 on relations between the European Union on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other,
- having regard to the Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council (AC) and to the current programme of the AC for 2015 to 2017 under US chairmanship,
- having regard to the Declaration on the 20th Anniversary of the Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation, issued in Kirkenes, Norway, on 3-4 June 2013,
- having regard to the statements of the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (CPAR) and of the Barents Parliamentary Conference (BPC), in particular the Conference Statement adopted at the 12th Conference of the CPAR in Ulan Ude, Russia, 14-16 June 2016,
- having regard to the joint statement of the third ministerial meeting of the renewed Northern Dimension, held in Brussels on 18 February 2013,
- having regard to the statement adopted at the Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum in Reykjavik, Iceland, in May 2015, in Archangelsk, Russia, in November 2013, in Tromsø, Norway, in February 2011 and in Brussels in September 2009,
- having regard to the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters adopted by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO),
- having regard to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL),
- having regard to the Oil Spill Convention, the Oil Spill Fund and the Supplementary Fund,
- having regard to its resolutions of 21 November 2013 on ‘The implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy’ (based on the Annual Report from the Council to the European Parliament on the Common Foreign and Security Policy)<sup>6</sup>, of 12

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<sup>4</sup> JOIN (2016)0021.

<sup>5</sup> JOIN (2012)0019.

<sup>6</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA (2013)0513.

- September 2013 on ‘The maritime dimension of the Common Security and Defence Policy’<sup>7</sup>, of 22 November 2012 on ‘The role of the Common Security and Defence Policy in case of climate-driven crises and natural disasters’<sup>8</sup>, and of 12 September 2012 on ‘The Annual Report from the Council to the European Parliament on the Common Foreign and Security Policy’<sup>9</sup>,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Arctic, in particular the resolutions of 12 March 2014 on ‘An EU Strategy for the Arctic’<sup>10</sup>, of 20 January 2011 on ‘A Sustainable EU Policy for the High North’<sup>11</sup> and of 9 October 2008 on ‘Arctic governance’<sup>12</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolutions of 2 February 2016 on ‘The mid-term review of the EU’s Biodiversity Strategy’<sup>13</sup> and of 12 May 2016 on the ‘Follow-up and review of the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals’<sup>14</sup>,
  - having regard to the relevant recommendations of the Delegation for relations with Switzerland and Norway and to the EU-Iceland Joint Parliamentary Committee and the European Economic Area Joint Parliamentary Committee (SINEAA Delegation),
  - having regard to the Space Strategy for Europe (COM(2016)0705), published by the Commission on 26 October 2016,
  - having regard to Regulation (EU) 2015/1775 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 October 2015 on trade in seal products,
  - having regard to Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the joint deliberations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety under Rule 55 of the Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the opinions of the Committee on International Trade, the Committee on Regional Development and the Committee on Fisheries (A8-0032/2017),
- A. whereas the EU is a global actor; whereas there has been a longstanding engagement of the EU in the Arctic based on history, geography, economy and research; whereas three of its Member States – Denmark, Finland and Sweden – are Arctic countries; whereas the Arctic is surrounded by international waters, and citizens and governments throughout the world, including the European Union, have a responsibility to support the protection of the Arctic;

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<sup>7</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA (2013)0380.

<sup>8</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2012)0458.

<sup>9</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2012)0334.

<sup>10</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2014)0236.

<sup>11</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0024.

<sup>12</sup> Texts adopted, P6\_TA(2008)0474.

<sup>13</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0034.

<sup>14</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0224.

- B. whereas the EU's engagement in the Northern region and in the Arctic began already in the early 1990s through its participation in the establishment of the Council of the Baltic Sea Region (CBSS), the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) and through the full membership of the Commission in these bodies;
- C. whereas the Northern Dimension (ND) policy, which affects both the EU's internal affairs and external relations, has developed into an equal partnership between the EU, Russia, Norway and Iceland; whereas, in addition to the ND partners, several other multilateral organisations participate in this joint policy, such as the AC, the CBSS and the BEAC, while Canada as well as the United States are observers; whereas the policy covers a broad geographical area and plays an important role through practical regional cooperation in sustainable development, public health and social well-being, culture, environmental protection, and logistics and transport;
- D. whereas the EU has gradually built and enhanced its Arctic policy; whereas the evolving engagement and common EU interests are best served by well-coordinated common means; whereas the challenges relating to the Arctic call for a joint regional and international response;
- E. whereas the Arctic faces unique social, environmental and economic challenges;
- F. whereas the European Arctic has sparse populations, spread over a wide area characterised by a lack of transport links such as road, rail and east-west flight connections; whereas the European Arctic suffers from underinvestment;
- G. whereas a broad international legal framework applies to the Arctic;
- H. whereas the AC is the primary forum for Arctic cooperation; whereas in its 20 years of existence, the AC has shown its ability to maintain cooperation in a constructive and positive spirit, and to adapt to new challenges and take on new responsibilities;
- I. whereas Arctic states have sovereignty and jurisdiction over their land and waters; whereas the rights of the people of the Arctic to pursue the sustainable use of their natural resources must be respected;
- J. whereas interest in the Arctic and its resources is increasing because of the changing environment of the area, and resource scarcity; whereas the region's geopolitical importance is growing; whereas climate change effects and growing competition for access to the Arctic and its natural resources, and increasing economic activities, have brought risks to the region, including challenges to the environment and human security, but also new opportunities, such as for a highly developed, sustainable bio-economy; whereas as a result of climate change, new navigation routes will open and new fishing grounds and natural resources could lead to increased human activity and environmental challenges in this region;
- K. whereas the Arctic has long been an area of constructive international cooperation and whereas there is a need to keep the Arctic as a low-tension area;
- L. whereas good accessibility, to better connect rural areas of the Northern region with the rest of the EU, is a prerequisite for the sustainable and competitive economic

development of Northern growth centres, given the increasing attention by investors and stakeholders in their untapped resources and their role as focal points of ecological concern;

- M. whereas by 2015, the Russian Federation had established at least six new bases north of the Arctic Circle, including six deep-water ports and 13 airfields, and has been increasing the presence of ground forces in the Arctic;
- N. whereas robust, healthy and sustainable Arctic ecosystems, inhabited by viable communities, is strategically important for the political and economic stability of Europe and the world; whereas the Arctic contains over half of the world's wetlands and plays a key role in the purification of water; whereas it contributes to the achievement of the objective of good water status in the European Union under the Water Framework Directive; whereas when it comes to preserving the Arctic socio-ecosystems, the costs of inaction are increasing exponentially;
- O. whereas Arctic sea ice has diminished significantly since 1981, the areas under permafrost are decreasing (with the risk of incidental releases of huge amounts of carbon dioxide<sup>15</sup> and methane into the atmosphere), the snow cover continues to decrease and the melting glaciers are contributing to globally rising sea levels; whereas it has been noticed that the sea ice is disappearing at an even faster pace than models predict, with the volume of sea ice present during the summer having fallen by more than 40 % in 35 years; whereas climate change is advancing at a double – and accelerating – pace in the polar regions, causing unknown and unpredictable changes to world ecosystems;
- P. whereas three EU Member States (Denmark, Finland and Sweden) and one Overseas Country and Territory (Greenland) are members of the eight-member AC, and seven other Member States (France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom) are observers; whereas the EU looks forward to the final implementation of its formal status as an observer in the AC;
- Q. whereas environmental protection and sustainable development are the two main tenets of the Ottawa declaration that laid the foundation for the AC in 1996;
- R. whereas some four million people live in the Arctic region, of which some 10 % are indigenous peoples; whereas the vulnerable Arctic environment, as well as the fundamental rights of indigenous peoples, must be respected and protected with more stringent safeguards; whereas the rights of indigenous peoples and local populations to approve, and to participate in decision-making affecting, the extraction of natural resources needs to be guaranteed; whereas the increase in pollutants and heavy metals in the Arctic has negative repercussions in the food chain owing to their presence in fauna and flora, in particular fish, and is an important health issue for local inhabitants as well as for consumers of fishery products elsewhere;
- S. whereas ecosystems in the Arctic, including its flora and fauna, are particularly vulnerable to disturbances, having relatively long recovery periods; whereas negative environmental consequences are often cumulative and irreversible, and often have

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<sup>15</sup> It is estimated that one and a half billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> is stored in the Arctic.

external geographical and ecological impacts (e.g. damage to oceanic ecosystems);

- T. whereas in the last decades, the temperature in the Arctic has been increasing at about twice the rate as the global average;
- U. whereas increased amount of greenhouse gases and air pollution in the atmosphere are contributing to the changing climate of the Arctic; whereas pollution appearing in the Arctic climate is mostly derived from Asian, North American and European emitters, so that the emission reduction measures in the EU play a great role in tackling the climate change of the Arctic;
- V. whereas the risks posed by the use of heavy fuel oil (HFO) in Arctic maritime transports are multiple: in the event of spills, the highly dense fuel emulsifies, sinks and can be transported extremely long distances if it gets trapped in ice; spilled HFO poses enormous risks for the food security of Arctic indigenous communities, whose subsistence depends on fishing and hunting; combustion of HFO produces sulphur oxides and heavy metals, as well as large amounts of black carbon, which, when deposited on Arctic ice, stimulates the absorption of heat into the ice mass, accelerating the melting process and the effects of climate change; whereas the transport and use of HFO is prohibited by the IMO in the waters surrounding the Antarctic;
- W. whereas the EU should play a leading role in discussions and negotiations in international fora with a view to ensuring that all parties concerned accept their responsibilities in terms of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases or pollutants, and face the growing challenges of sustainable resource management;
- X. whereas the risks derived from the use of nuclear power in ice breakers and coastal facilities should be taken into account and minimised in all activities related to preparedness and response;
- Y. whereas dumping of any sort of waste in the Arctic permafrost is under no circumstances a sustainable waste management solution, as demonstrated by recent findings at Camp Century in Greenland;
- Z. whereas the EU policy in the Arctic region should reflect more closely the Sustainable Development Goals that the EU has committed to achieving by 2030;
- AA. whereas science-informed decision-making, including local and indigenous knowledge, is key to safeguarding the fragile ecosystems of the Arctic, to reducing risks, to enabling adaptation of local communities and to promoting sustainable development; whereas the EU is the world's leading funder of Arctic research, and promotes the free exchange of its results;
- AB. whereas a balanced combination of Arctic industrial expertise and specialisation, on the one hand, and a commitment to environmentally friendly and sustainable development goals, on the other, have the potential to encourage ecological innovation, industrial symbioses and effective waste management in the Arctic area, and thereby to maintain both its pristine environment and its potential for new and emerging business opportunities, and for job growth, in the process contributing as well to youth employment and to resolving the challenge of its ageing population;

- AC. whereas the technical capabilities of existing satellite communications within the EU, along the lines of the services and infrastructure offered by Copernicus and Galileo, could meet the needs of users located in the Arctic region;
- AD. whereas the involvement of local communities is critical to the success of natural resource management and to building resilience in fragile ecosystems;
- AE. whereas it recognises the importance of considering traditional and local knowledge in decision-making in the Arctic;
- AF. whereas the Sami, Nenets, Khanty, Evenk, Chukchi, Aleut, Yupik and Inuit cultures need to be protected pursuant to the UNDRIP; whereas the indigenous populations of the Arctic have the right to use natural resources in their home areas and should therefore be parties to any future plans for commercial fishing;
- AG. whereas any fisheries activity in the Arctic region must take place in compliance with existing international agreements regulating the area, including the Spitsbergen Treaty of 1920 and, specifically, any rights of States Parties to that treaty, and also in compliance with any historical fishing rights;
1. Welcomes the joint communication as a positive step towards an integrated EU policy on Arctic matters, identifying specific areas of action, and towards developing a more coherent framework for EU action with a focus on the European Arctic; stresses the need for more coherence between the EU's internal and external policies as regards Arctic matters; calls on the Commission to establish concrete implementation and follow-up measures for its communication; reiterates its call for a comprehensive strategy and a concretised action plan on the EU's engagement in the Arctic, wherein the aim of preserving the vulnerable ecosystem of the Arctic should be the starting point;
  2. Welcomes the communication's three priority areas, namely climate change, sustainable development and international cooperation;
  3. Underlines the importance of UNCLOS in providing the essential multilateral legal framework for all ocean activities, including in the Arctic, for the delimitation of the Arctic continental shelf and for settling intra-Arctic sovereignty issues as regards territorial seas; notes that only very few unresolved issues of jurisdiction exist in the Arctic; considers respect for international law in the Arctic essential; points out that the waters around the North Pole are mostly international waters; advocates a strong role for the EU in promoting effective multilateral arrangements and a global, rules-based order through the strengthening and consistent implementation of relevant international, regional and bilateral agreements and frameworks; underlines that the EU should have a positive role in promoting and supporting agreements that strengthen the management of biodiversity and environment beyond national jurisdiction in the Arctic Ocean; notes that this does not concern navigation and traditional livelihoods; urges the EU to work closely with its Member States to support the preservation and protection of the environment in the region; stresses the important role of the AC for maintaining constructive cooperation, low tension, peace and stability in the Arctic region;
  4. Welcomes the ratification of the Paris Agreement by the European Union and its entry into force on 4 November 2016; calls for its swift and effective implementation by all

parties; encourages the Member States to ratify the Paris Agreement in order to proceed with the ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and measures on both the emission trading and effort-sharing sectors, bearing in mind the target of limiting the temperature increase to 1.5 °C by 2100;

5. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take a stronger role in the effective implementation of international conventions such as the Paris Agreement, the Minamata Convention, the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, the Gothenburg Protocol, the Stockholm Convention, the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); asks the Commission to pay special attention to the ongoing international process by the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee to further phase-out the use of persistent organic pollutants and black carbon; invites EU partner countries to do likewise;
6. Supports the development of a network of Arctic conservation areas and the protection of the international sea area around the North Pole beyond the economic zones of the coastal states;
7. Calls for any development of commercial fisheries in the Arctic region to be carried out in a way that is fully compatible with the sensitive and specific nature of the region; insists that, before any new commercial fisheries are started in the Arctic region, reliable and precautionary scientific stock assessments must be conducted in order to determine the levels of fishing that will conserve the targeted fish stocks above levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield, and that will not lead to depletion of other species or to serious damage to the marine environment; stresses that all fishing on the high seas must be regulated by a regional fisheries management organisation that respects scientific advice and has a robust control and surveillance programme to ensure compliance with management measures; points out that fishing within Exclusive Economic Zones must meet the same standards; calls for a moratorium on industrial-scale fishing, including bottom trawling, in the previously unfished waters of the Arctic;
8. Welcomes the ongoing negotiations on an international agreement between the Arctic coastal states and international parties with the aim of preventing unregulated fishing in the international waters of the Arctic, and calls on the Commission and the Member States to sign this declaration and to advocate making it binding on the signatories;
9. Calls on the Commission to support and encourage the Arctic countries to work further on extending the information and analysis that is available on all stocks in the region;
10. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to step up their efforts within the EU legislative framework by agreeing on ambitious reduction targets in the negotiations on the National Emission Ceilings Directive, by reducing local pollution levels through the Clean Air Package in order to reduce long-range pollution and particularly soot, and by negotiating ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and measures on both the emission trading and effort-sharing sectors, bearing in mind the target of limiting the temperature increase to 1.5 °C by 2100;
11. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that the UN ocean agreement for the protection of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) currently

being negotiated is strong and effective and can ensure a robust process for the identification, designation, management and enforcement of marine protected areas, including no-take marine reserves;

12. Encourages the Commission and the Member States to affirm their role in the efficient implementation of the CBD and related international agreements; considers it important that the strategic plan regarding the identification and prioritisation of harmful alien species that threaten ecosystems, and of their expansion routes, agreed upon in Article 10 of the Nagoya Protocol, be carried out, such that the most harmful invasive species are controlled or wiped out, and such that their expansion routes are targeted with a view to eliminating the transfer and invasion of such species, including to Arctic areas;
13. Calls on the Member States to ban fossil fuel subsidies that lower the cost of fossil fuel energy production, with a view to discouraging the exploitation and use of fossil fuels; urges the Commission and the Member States to work in international fora towards a future total ban on the extraction of Arctic oil and gas in order to achieve the goal of a low-carbon economy;
14. Calls on the EU to promote strict precautionary regulatory standards in the field of environmental protection and safety for oil exploration, prospection and production internationally; calls for a ban on oil drilling in the icy Arctic waters of the EU and the EEA and for promotion by the EU of comparable precautionary standards in the Arctic Council and for Arctic coastal states;
15. Stresses the importance for the EU of encouraging rapid ratification of the Minamata Convention with a view to preventing and reducing mercury emissions;
16. Welcomes the Commission's intention to channel European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) to measures to mainstream climate action in the Arctic, taking into account the local circumstances and special nature of the Arctic regions;
17. Stresses that the increasing use of natural resources in the Arctic should be conducted in a way that respects and benefits local populations and that takes full environmental responsibility for the fragile Arctic environment; believes that this strategic choice is integral to ensuring the legitimacy of, and local support for, the EU's Arctic engagement;
18. Calls on the Commission, and on those Member States that are members of or observers to the AC, to support the AC's ongoing work regarding environmental impact assessments (EIA) to preserve the vulnerable ecosystems of the Arctic in accordance with the lines of the Espoo Convention; emphasises the vital importance of EIAs for ensuring a sustainable development of economic activities and the protection of the Arctic's particularly vulnerable ecosystems and communities; draws attention to the following non-exhaustive criteria presented by the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) for evaluating projects taking place in the Arctic:
  - All potential environmental, socio-economic and cultural impacts, both during and after the project, including cumulative effects of current and future projects, must be considered.

- The precautionary principle and the polluter pays principle must be applied at all stages of project planning, assessment, implementation and reclamation.
  - Reclamation and recovery of habitat and affected lands must be thoroughly planned and fully funded in advance.
  - Project proposals for oil spill response must include a proven demonstration of the industry's ability to retrieve spilled oil in frozen, broken and refreezing ice conditions.
  - An international liability and compensation regime for contamination of lands, waters and marine areas resulting from offshore oil exploration and exploitation must be established;
19. Stresses the importance of finding mechanisms to incorporate corporate social responsibility (CSR) into the activities of companies doing business in the Arctic region, notably through cooperation with representatives of the business sector, such as the Arctic Economic Council; recommends that the potential of voluntary mechanisms be explored to encourage high industry standards in social and environmental performance, such as by highlighting 'best performances' in an Arctic Corporate Responsibility Index, based on e.g. the Arctic Business Investment Protocol and the UN Global Compact Initiative;
  20. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support all efforts made in the IMO to reach a global agreement on reducing emissions from shipping;
  21. Recognises the importance of continuous and sufficient funding for the Northern Sparsely Populated Areas in order to tackle permanent handicaps such as sparse population, harsh climate conditions and long distances;
  22. Encourages close cooperation between the EU Institutions and relevant Member States on Arctic issues; invites those Member States that are members of the AC to keep the other Member States and the HR informed of any matter of common interest in the AC in accordance with Article 34(2) TEU;
  23. Stresses the need for the EU to engage with all Arctic partners in policy dialogue, and calls for intensified cooperation between the EU, the AC in the framework of the Northern Dimension, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and other bodies involved in cooperation in the High North; underlines the important role of observers in the AC with great experience and long-time engagement in scientific and political cooperation in the Arctic; welcomes, in this regard, the ongoing dialogue between the observers and the AC Presidency;
  24. Strongly supports the granting of observer status to the EU in the AC; is convinced that the full implementation of the EU's status to formal observer would contribute positively to, and reinforce, the political and institutional role of the AC in dealing with Arctic matters;
  25. Welcomes the enhanced coordination between the Commission and the EEAS on Arctic issues; suggests that a unit for Northern policies be created within the EEAS, and that EEAS-Commission inter-service cooperation be strengthened, to ensure a coherent,

coordinated and integrated policy approach across the relevant key policy areas;

26. Notes the EU's capacity to contribute to the resolution of potential security challenges; calls on the EU to contribute, in partnership with its Member States and in cooperation with the Arctic countries, to the efforts to build civilian security mechanisms, and to enhance natural and man-made crisis and disaster management capacities as well as search and rescue infrastructures;
27. Draws attention to the fact that energy security is closely related to climate change; considers that energy security must be improved by reducing the EU's dependence on fossil fuels; highlights the fact that the transformation of the Arctic represents one major effect of climate change on EU security; stresses the need to address this risk multiplier through a reinforced EU strategy for the Arctic, and through an enhanced policy of EU-generated renewable energies and energy efficiency that significantly reduces the Union's reliance on external sources and thereby improves its security position;
28. Calls for the development of oiled wildlife response plans, in accordance with defined good practice, in all Arctic states, including an effective assessment of vulnerable species at risk, as well as feasible prevention and response strategies to ensure their protection;
29. Highlights the ongoing constructive and pragmatic cross-border cooperation within the ND, its partnerships and the Barents Cooperation;
30. Stresses the importance of continued engagement and dialogue with Russia within the framework of Arctic regional cooperation, particularly EU-Russia cross-border cooperation, notwithstanding the increase in the stationing of Russian military forces in the region, the building and reopening of Russian military bases and the creation of a Russian Arctic military district; underlines the need for the EU to further assert its interests towards Russia through the use of selective engagement and to seek progress on issues of common concern where there is ground for global solutions to common challenges and threats; urges that this issue be included in the EU strategy on the Arctic; underlines that the Arctic region is an integral part of environmental, economic and political spheres of international relations;
31. Is of the opinion that the ND policy serves as a successful model of stability, joint ownership and engagement in Arctic cooperation; underlines the importance of the ND sectorial partnerships, especially in environment and in infrastructure and logistics;
32. Notes that Arctic migration routes to the EU have formed; emphasises that migration routes and increased transport should be considered when drafting an EU Arctic strategy;
33. Reiterates its call on the EU and its Member States actively to uphold the principles of freedom of navigation and innocent passage;
34. Welcomes plans to create a European Arctic stakeholder forum; emphasises the need to enhance synergies between existing financing instruments in order to prevent possible duplications, and to maximise interaction between internal and external EU programmes; notes that Finland has offered to host the first forum, to be convened in

2017;

35. Emphasises the importance of including traditional and local knowledge in decision making in the Arctic;
36. Reaffirms the EU's support for the UNDRIP; recalls, in particular, Article 19 thereof, affirming that States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative and administrative measures that may affect them; calls for better and earlier involvement of indigenous peoples, in the making of a citizen-centred Arctic policy and into the work of the AC; stresses that their inclusion in decision-making would facilitate the sustainable management of natural resources in the Arctic; stresses the necessity to safeguard and promote their rights, cultures and languages; stresses the need to develop renewable energy resources in the Arctic region in a sustainable manner, that also respects the fragile environment, and with the full involvement of the indigenous peoples;
37. Pays special attention to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4.5, which includes ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for indigenous peoples, also in their own languages;
38. Stresses, that accessible, interconnected, safe and sustainable tourism in rural and scarcely populated areas in the European Arctic can contribute to increasing business activities, which may in turn increase the number of jobs in the small and medium-sized businesses and help the region's overall positive development; stresses, therefore, that tourism in the area should be promoted because of its related social and environmental implications for infrastructure and research, education and training;
39. Highlights the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in keeping the Arctic region viable and sustainable; calls on the Commission to focus on providing these communities with access to all relevant information on EU single market requirements, best practices and funding instruments; underlines the role of fluent transport, communication and electricity networks, as well as spatial geo-localisation and telecommunication technologies, in creating economic activity in the region; reminds the Commission of its obligations under Regulation 2015/1775/EU in terms of reporting and informing the public and the competent authorities of the provisions in the regulation; stresses the need to incorporate indigenous and local know-how as well as to ensure a closer involvement, acceptance and engagement of the indigenous and local communities in the decision-making processes; underlines the need of the necessary support and funding; suggests, in this context, an Arctic representation of indigenous peoples in Brussels to make their participation more visible; is of the view that the EU should support the deployment of innovative technologies in the Arctic, developing Arctic renewables sources;
40. Stresses that maintaining sustainably developed communities benefitting from the latest information technology in the Arctic with a high quality of life is of the utmost importance, and that the EU can play a vital role in the matter; reiterates the right of the people of the Arctic to determine their own livelihoods and recognises their wish for sustainable development of the region; asks the EEAS and the Commission to step up

the dialogue with them and to explore the possibility of providing funds for these associations and ensuring that their voices are taken into account in EU debates on the Arctic; welcomes the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the indigenous peoples, and that of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

41. Stresses that Arctic waters are vulnerable to the offshore drilling of fossil fuels, use of which will contribute and accelerate the climate change threatening the region; is of the view that the EU must cooperate with international partners to put an end to offshore drilling in the Arctic waters;
42. Stresses that science should be the underlying basis for policy-making in the Arctic when it comes to environmental protection and the fight against climate change;
43. Highlights the vital role of the ESIF in developing the European Arctic and in creating sustainable growth and quality jobs targeted towards future-oriented sectors; highlights as well the need for responsible and respectful development of the Arctic's natural resources; draws attention to the permanent handicaps that need to be offset (Article 174 TFEU); highlights the long-term importance of the strategy in different areas, such as the digital agenda, climate change, blue growth, etc.;
44. Underlines the importance of good accessibility of the Arctic region to the TEN-T network, its planned core network corridor extension of the North Sea-Baltic and Scandinavian-Mediterranean corridors, as well as second level access routes as the key transport structure to enable sustainable mobility of people and goods; recalls the potential of EU funding, such as the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), in financing infrastructure projects in the European Arctic; notes the prominent role of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in this regard; suggests that the Commission explore the potential for a broader international financial cooperation on the development of infrastructure and connectivity, including ICT systems;
45. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to at least maintaining the level of funding for Arctic research in Horizon 2020, and particularly its intention to support the deployment of innovative technologies; calls on the Commission to increase the EU funding for Arctic research in the post-2020 Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF); calls on the Commission to continue and reinforce the use of Horizon 2020 and other funding programmes for the purpose of studying the Arctic;
46. Notes that Arctic marine ecosystems are crucial for the preservation of global biodiversity; notes that the reduction of Arctic sea ice and other environmental changes in the Arctic, combined with the limited scientific knowledge about marine resources in this area, necessitates a precautionary approach aiming to establish appropriate international measures to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of resources in the Arctic high seas;
47. Encourages the promotion and facilitation of international scientific and research cooperation among all stakeholders active in the field of Arctic research, and in establishing research infrastructures, in the recognition that better knowledge of the Arctic is key to meeting all challenges in an adequate way; supports cooperation

between leading Arctic research institutions with a view to developing an integrated European polar research programme under the EU-PolarNet initiative that incorporates traditional and local knowledge; notes that the Commission has been invited to an international Arctic science conference to be held in Europe in 2018; underlines the importance of successful cooperation with Canada and the US through the Transatlantic Ocean Research Alliance;

48. Reiterates its call on the Commission to establish an EU Arctic Information Centre in the Arctic, with sufficient funds to ensure efficient access to Arctic information and knowledge, and to generate tourism; points out that such an EU Arctic Information Centre could be linked with already existing Arctic Centres or with some other Arctic institution as a means of crucially lowering costs;
49. Calls for more systematic and long-term gathering of data derived from Arctic research projects; regrets that the achievements of individual projects often disappear when passing from one funding period to another; calls on the Commission to aim at continuity when planning the post-2020 framework for Arctic research;
50. Welcomes the Commission's support for the establishment of marine protected areas in the Arctic; reminds the Commission and the Member States of the at least 10 % protection target of coastal and marine areas as part of the SDGs; notes, however, that any new proposal on these issues should be coherent with the outcome of the discussion by the Arctic states in the AC; stresses that marine protected areas are critically important to preserving Arctic ecosystems; recalls the necessity fully to involve local communities in the planning, realisation and management of these protected areas;
51. Points to the importance of space technologies and space-related research activities which are essential for safe shipping operations as well as for environmental monitoring and for observing climate change in the Arctic; encourages the Commission, in view of the changes in the Arctic region recognised in its Communication on a Space Strategy for Europe (COM2016(705)), to explore possibilities for increased use of EU future and current satellite programmes in the region, in cooperation with Arctic Council members, and to take into account the needs of users within the framework of the GOVSATCOM initiative; calls on all stakeholders to make full use of the potential of the Galileo satellite navigation and the Copernicus earth observation programmes in this respect;
52. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote and support the establishment of a marine protected area in the Arctic High Seas under the mandate of the OSPAR (Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic) Commission, prohibiting all extractive uses, including fisheries, in the international waters around the North Pole covered by OSPAR;
53. Calls on the Commission to support initiatives to ban the use of bottom trawling in Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) and on the Arctic high seas;
54. Calls for the conservation targets of the new common fisheries policy, and the quantitative target of restoring and maintaining stocks above levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield, to be the basis for any commercial fisheries in the region;

55. Calls on the EU to be a leader in the prevention of unregulated fishing in the Arctic; takes the view that it would have every right to do so, given that Member States are involved in all levels of governance in the Arctic region;
56. Stresses that EU fishing fleets must not threaten biodiversity in the region; welcomes the identification of EBSAs in the Arctic region under the CBD as an important process in ensuring the effective conservation of Arctic biodiversity, and stresses the importance of implementing an Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) approach in the coastal, marine and terrestrial environments of the Arctic, as highlighted by the Arctic Council EBM expert group; call on states to meet their obligations under the CBD and the UNCLOS by creating a network of marine protected areas and marine reserves in the Arctic Ocean;
57. Calls on the Commission to study and make proposals on the strengthening of the Arctic telecommunications infrastructure, including satellites, in order to help scientific research and climate monitoring, and to create local development, navigation and safety at sea;
58. Reiterates its 2014 call on the Commission and the Member States to take all necessary measures to facilitate actively the ban on the use and carriage of HFO as ship fuel in vessels navigating the Arctic seas through the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL Convention), and/or through port state control, as regulated in the waters surrounding Antarctica; invites the Commission to include the environmental and climate risks of the use of HFO in its study on the risks that the increase in navigation of the Northern Sea Route would bring; calls on the Commission, in the absence of adequate international measures, to put forward proposals on rules for vessels calling at EU ports subsequent to, or prior to, journeys through Arctic waters, with a view to prohibiting the use and carriage of HFO;
59. Looks forward to the entry into force of the IMO Polar Code in 2017 and 2018, which will make Arctic navigation safer; stresses the importance of developing a single escape, evacuation and rescue (EER) system for offshore personnel that can be applied to Arctic platforms and vessels;
60. Recalls that under the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement, Iceland and Norway have made commitments to preserve the quality of the environment and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, in line with relevant EU legislation;
61. Stresses China's growing interest in the Arctic region, especially as regards access to shipping routes and the availability of energy resources; takes note of the conclusion of a free trade agreement between Iceland and China, and calls on the Commission to monitor closely the effects this may have not only on the sustainable economic development of the Icelandic part of the Arctic region, but also on the EU's economy and internal market;
62. Recalls that under the 2007 EU-Greenland Fisheries Partnership Agreement, the EU grants Greenland financial support for securing responsible fishing and the sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources in the Greenlandic exclusive economic zone;
63. Calls for the rapid ratification and accession by the Member States of the 2010 Protocol

to the International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Noxious and Hazardous Substances by Sea (HNS Convention);

64. Considers parliamentary engagement and close interparliamentary cooperation on Arctic matters, in particular with national parliaments of relevant EU Member States, essential in the implementation of Arctic policies;
65. Invites the HR and the Commission to monitor climate, environmental protection, maritime, socio-economic and security developments in the Arctic closely, and to report back regularly to Parliament and to the Council, including on the implementation of the EU's Arctic policy;
66. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the governments and parliaments of the Arctic region states.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### **Geopolitics, international cooperation, security challenges and governance issues in the Arctic region**

The geopolitical importance of the Arctic region is growing. The climate change effects and growing competition for access to the Arctic, natural resources and increasing economic activities have brought both opportunities but also risks to the region, including challenges to security. The transformation of the Arctic will potentially open new navigation routes and the new fishing and natural resources grounds will become available resulting in the increase of human activity in the region.

The Arctic has long been an area of constructive international cooperation and it has remained a low-tension cooperative regional order in the world. It is of highest importance to continue to keep the Arctic a low-tension area. There is an extensive international legal framework that applies to the Arctic and UNCLOS as a complementary multilateral legal framework for the settling of intra-Arctic sovereignty issues is very important.

The EU has a longstanding engagement in the Arctic based on history, geography, economy and research. Three EU Member States (Denmark, Finland and Sweden) are full members of the eight-member Arctic Council, and seven others (France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom) are observers.

The EU has a pending observer status in the Arctic Council. As the EU is the world's leading funder in the Arctic it would only make sense that it could upgrade its status in the Arctic Council to become an observer.

The EU has gradually built and enhanced its Arctic policy. The Commissions' joint communication is a positive step towards a more integrated EU policy on Arctic matters. The EU Global Strategy for the EU Foreign and Security Policy of June 2016 on "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe" also addresses the security aspects in the Arctic, as opposed to the Commission joint communication. It has to be kept in mind that the geopolitical developments in the Arctic region also affect the security situation in Northern Europe and globally. There is a need to avoid the militarisation of the Arctic. The report foresees the need for a more coherent EU internal and external policy, an Arctic strategy and a concrete action plan on the EU's engagement in the Arctic taking into account all the aspects. This follows also from the fact that all of the EU Arctic Member States and also some other states have their own national Arctic strategies.

The EU has a capacity to contribute in multiple ways to the resolution of potential security challenges and the prevention of conflicts and the EU should contribute, in partnership with its Member States, in building civilian security mechanisms as well as in enhancing crisis and disaster management capacities, search and rescue infrastructure.

The report calls for a sustainable Arctic policy and draws attention to the fact that the EU considers essential the respect of international law in the Arctic and advocates a strong role for the EU in promoting effective multilateral arrangements and global rules-based order. It

also suggests to reinforce multilateral Arctic governance through the strengthening and consistent implementation of relevant international, regional and bilateral agreements, frameworks and arrangements.

### **A sustainable Arctic policy, local communities, environmental challenges and the need for climate action**

The Arctic region is especially pristine and sensitive area. The ultimate goal of the global community is to preserve and strengthen the ecosystem capacity of the Arctic. This capacity is under a pressure from several sources. The Arctic is a region with local communities seeking for sustainable economic growth, coastal countries exploring natural resources in the area, global companies interested in faster logistic routes and scientists researching the changing environment of the Arctic. All these interests are tightly connected with the utmost goal that all Arctic policies should be environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable, and aim at the moderation of the climate change by reducing human carbon footprint. The EU has committed to achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Sustainable development is the only feasible way of development in the Arctic region and therefore the EU Arctic policy should reflect better the requirements of individual SDGs in the Arctic context, with a special orientation on the preservation of ecosystems. SDGs provide a useful framework to holistically examine the ecosystem capacity which is under pressure from accumulating negative environmental effects, accelerated by climate change.

Anthropogenic contribution to climate change is indisputable. Environmental changes are taking place in the Arctic at a faster pace than anywhere else around the globe. The increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere in the last 50 years has increased the surface temperature in the Arctic 2° degrees more than elsewhere. The Arctic sea ice has diminished by 13.4 % by decade since 1981 and the snow cover continues to decrease every year.

Warming temperature and melting sea ice affect the ecosystems worldwide in the form of raising sea levels, changing composition of the sea mass and creation of unpredictable weather patterns. Without effective action, the pace of the climate change might accelerate even more in the future, affected by the melting of permafrost in the Arctic region. The areas under permafrost decrease cause a risk of incidental release of huge amounts of carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere.

The keys for effective climate action are not only in the in the hands of the Arctic countries but all states situated in mid-latitudes. Pollution appearing in the Arctic climate is mostly derived from Asian, North American and European emitters, hence the emission reduction measures in the EU play a great role in tackling the climate change of the Arctic.

The report calls for the Commission and the Member States to take a stronger role in the effective implementation of international conventions, such as Paris Agreement, Minamata Convention, Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, Gothenburg Protocol, Stockholm Convention, Århus Convention and Convention on Biological Diversity. The Commission should also use its enabling role in the on-going negotiations in the International Maritime Organisation to ban the use of heavy fuel oil and carriage as ship fuel in vessels navigating the Arctic seas through MARPOL of IMO.

Rapid action is needed. The costs of inaction increase with the time that passes. In order to reach the target set in the Paris Agreement, immediate and sharp emission reductions are necessary. In addition, negative environmental impacts on the Arctic are often accumulated and irreversible. The ecosystem, including its flora and fauna, in the Arctic is particularly vulnerable to abruptions.

Sustainable development of the Arctic consists of the combination of viable local communities and healthy ecosystem. The Commission's proposal to establish the Stakeholder Forum, with the local actors in its focus, is a very welcomed initiative and once in function, should evolve towards a more permanent structure. The forum has the potential to raise the awareness on the opportunities the EU has to offer in the area, e.g. for small- and medium sized enterprises, for improving transport, communication and electricity networks, and for innovating cleantech solutions for cold temperature conditions.

One additional way to establish more stringent safeguards for the vulnerable environment as well as for fundamental rights of indigenous people, is through an Arctic specific Environmental Impact Assessment that precedes the projects executed in the Arctic region.

7.12.2016

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic  
(2016/2228(INI))

Rapporteur: David Martin

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on International Trade calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committees responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that three EU Member States (Denmark, Finland and Sweden) and one Overseas Country and Territory (Greenland) are members of the eight-member Arctic Council, and seven others (France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom) are observers and that the EU is seeking to upgrade its status in the Arctic Council;
2. Takes note of the fact that the Arctic has long been an area of constructive international cooperation and that it should remain a low-tension area; is aware that interest in the Arctic is increasing because of a scarcity of resources and the changing environment;
3. Acknowledges that climate change is creating new opportunities for the economic development of the Arctic through the potential exploitation of energy resources such as oil and gas, which are still partially undiscovered and, for the creation of new shipping routes and the intensification of tourism activities, which would boost trade with, and investment in, the area over the long term; in this regard, stresses the importance of the EU trade policy as a tool to promote sustainable development and environmental objectives;
4. Calls for collaborative work to be intensified in the area of sustainability and adaptation to climate change in the Arctic;
5. Recommends strengthening environmental safety and sustainable economic cooperation among the Arctic states, regions and local communities in order to increase employment,

prosperity and quality of life while applying the highest environmental standards;

6. Recalls that all member states of the Arctic Council identify the protection of the environment as their priority goal for the region; is mindful that the EU's trade and economic interests should not jeopardise environmental protection measures in the region;
7. Recalls its resolution of 20 January 2011 on a sustainable EU policy for the North stressing the global impact of changes in the Arctic region and the important role that the EU and other industrial powers will have to play alongside the circumpolar nations in reducing pollution in the Arctic region caused by an increase in activities there; points out that climate changes in the Arctic will have a major impact on coastal regions globally, including coastal regions in the EU, and on climate-dependent sectors in Europe such as agriculture and fisheries, energy, reindeer herding, hunting, tourism, and transport;
8. Considers that any current or new economic activity should be carried out in a sustainable way in order not to undermine the Arctic's fragile ecosystem and natural heritage in particular regarding dangers posed by the potential for increased exploitation of fossil fuels, and with full respect for the Arctic Indigenous peoples and local communities;
9. Considers the EU a central strategic partner in supporting sustainable economic development in the Arctic; considers it essential that EU policy in the Arctic Region reflects the Sustainable Development Goals, which the EU has committed to achieving by 2030;
10. Underlines the need to involve the local Arctic communities in the development and implementation of the European Arctic policy, sustainable economic activities and decision-making processes in order to find the right balance between the preservation of the Arctic area and meeting economic development needs and avoiding radical changes in the living standards of local communities;
11. Takes note of the consultations by the Commission and the European External Action Service, which suggest that the European Arctic is suffering from underinvestment;
12. Welcomes the announcement of September 2016 by the Russian Government of a ten-year moratorium on new offshore oil and gas licences for drilling on the country's Arctic shelf;
13. Recalls the need for sustainable economic development, which requires investments in the environment and adaptation to climate change, renewable energy, transportation routes and relevant infrastructures, meteorological cooperation and sustainable tourism; to that end, calls on the Commission to explore wider international finance cooperation instruments and monitor the effects of new economic activities on the environment;
14. Welcomes the landmark decision of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) at its 70th session, held in London on 24-28 October 2016, the environment and human health, to confirm 1 January 2020 as the implementation date for a significant reduction in the sulphur content of the fuel oil used by ships in international maritime transport to a maximum of 0.50 % m/m (mass/mass); calls on the governments in the Arctic region to do their utmost to ensure the implementation of this decision for all transport using the Arctic passages, in line with the

clear commitment from the IMO to ensure that shipping meets its environmental obligations;

15. Calls on the Commission, the EU Member States and the other Arctic Council Members to strive for an international agreement to ban the use of the Arctic passages by ships powered by hazardous fuels, and to ban the use of the Arctic passages for international trade in hazardous goods;
16. Takes note of Canada's commitments in the trade and environment chapter of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), in particular on sustainable fisheries and trade in forest products; highlights the CETA chapters on international maritime transport services and on public procurement which will enhance the participation of European firms in Canada's procurement markets, particularly on building icebreakers; underlines that Canada and the EU have reaffirmed their commitments to strengthening their cooperation in the Arctic in the XVI Canada–EU Summit Joint Declaration of 30 October 2016;
17. Stresses that EU fishing fleets must not threaten biodiversity in the region; welcomes the identification of Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas in the Arctic region under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as an important process in ensuring the effective conservation of Arctic biodiversity and stresses the importance of implementing an Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) approach in the coastal, marine and terrestrial environments of the Arctic, as highlighted by the Arctic Council EBM expert group; call on states to meet their obligations under the CBD and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea by creating a network of marine protected areas and marine reserves in the Arctic Ocean;
18. Recalls that following the WTO challenge by Canada and Norway to the EU ban on seal products, the measure has been strengthened to bring it into line with the WTO Appellate Body ruling of 2014, and that its legitimacy can no longer be called into question; highlights that similar trade bans are in force, in particular in the US and Russia, and that these measures will contribute to preserving wildlife in the Arctic as seals are integral to their local ecosystem;
19. Calls on the Commission to include substantive trade and environmental provisions in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), once negotiations have resumed, which can contribute to preserving Alaska as well as the European Arctic's natural environment, including provisions on fisheries and forestry; considers that the inclusion of such provisions should become an integral part of any future free trade agreement (FTA) that the EU concludes with non-EU Arctic partners;
20. Recalls that under the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement, Iceland and Norway entered into commitments on preserving the quality of the environment and on the sustainable use of natural resources, in line with relevant EU legislation;
21. Stresses the rising interest of China in the Arctic region, especially in the access to shipping routes and its energy resources; takes note of the conclusion of a free trade agreement between Iceland and China, and calls on the Commission to closely monitor the effects it may have on the sustainable economic development not only of the Icelandic side of the Arctic but also on the EU's economy and internal market;

22. Recalls that no free trade agreement has been concluded between the EU and Russia, and that therefore the EU has no effective bilateral instrument with which to influence trade and investment in the Russian Arctic; stresses, however, that also within the framework of the EU-Russia PCA the dialogue on the Arctic is still open in the areas of environmental management and scientific cooperation;
23. Reiterates the call on the Commission to establish the EU Arctic Information Centre and to provide it with sufficient funds, in order to ensure efficient access to Arctic information and knowledge; points out that this kind of EU Arctic Information Centre could be linked with existing Arctic centres or with other Arctic institutions with a view to lowering costs;
24. Recalls that under the 2007 EU-Greenland Fisheries Partnership Agreement the EU grants Greenland financial support for securing responsible fishing and the sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources in the Greenlandic exclusive economic zone;
25. Stresses that companies operating in the Arctic should comply with binding corporate social responsibility standards which could be developed in cooperation with the Arctic Economic Council and which should be based, among other things, on the Arctic Investment Protocol and the UN Global Compact;
26. Recalls that shipping in the Arctic is subject to specific requirements established by the IMO, and welcomes the entry into force of the Polar Code expected on 1 January 2017.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	5.12.2016
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 20 -: 3 0: 5
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Maria Arena, Tiziana Beghin, Karoline Graswander-Hainz, Jude Kirton-Darling, Bernd Lange, Marine Le Pen, David Martin, Anne-Marie Mineur, Sorin Moisă, Alessia Maria Mosca, Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl, Viviane Reding, Inmaculada Rodríguez-Piñero Fernández, Tokia Saïfi, Marietje Schaake, Helmut Scholz, Joachim Schuster, Joachim Starbatty
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Bendt Bendtsen, Reimer Böge, Klaus Buchner, Edouard Ferrand, Agnes Jongerius, Sander Loones
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Mairead McGuinness, Molly Scott Cato, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso

7.12.2016

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic  
(2016/2228(INI))

Rapporteur: Jens Nilsson

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committees responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into the motion for a resolution:

1. Points out that European territorial cooperation, including cooperation across the EU's external borders, is important for the regions in the Arctic; highlights that EU funding supporting the cooperation creates added value and should be maintained post-2020; notes that this cooperation has, in addition to a regional impact, important geopolitical and security implications; therefore calls on the Commission to develop a full-fledged EU Arctic Strategy taking into account all aspects of the cooperation;
2. Calls for the EU to be granted full observer status in the Arctic Council, with the support of current EU Members, in order to reinforce Arctic cooperation and to tackle the common challenges affecting the Arctic; in this context, invites Russia and Canada, as Arctic states invested in, and dependent on, their Arctic regions for, inter alia, economic and strategic reasons, to be more forthcoming in ensuring the EU obtains full observer status; asks that Parliament be kept fully informed about this process;
3. Highlights the vital role the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) have in developing the European Arctic and in creating sustainable growth and quality jobs targeted towards future-oriented sectors, and the need for responsible and respectful development of the Arctic's natural resources; draws attention to the permanent handicaps that need to be offset (Article 174 TFEU); highlights the long-term importance of the strategy in different areas, such as the digital agenda, climate change, blue growth etc.;
4. Underlines that cooperating closely with the regions and sub-regions, including

overseas countries and territories, in the European Arctic is essential when building the EU-Arctic policy and EU funding for the area, as the regions, local communities and the indigenous population which are the final beneficiaries of policies relating to the Arctic, have strong expertise in the key topics; considers therefore that their views and opinions should be heard and taken into account;

5. Is of the opinion that a European Arctic stakeholder forum should be set up to enhance collaboration, coordination, complementarity and synergies between the different EU funding programmes and supports further efforts in this regard that could set an example also for other regions in and outside the EU; calls on the Commission to include within this forum all relevant regional organisations with the responsibility of delivering and monitoring the delivery of the ESI funding; furthermore, urges the Commission to ensure that the Arctic stakeholder forum's work is kept to schedule and within budget;
6. Notes that in the Arctic region, the EU cooperates in sensitive areas, such as environmental protection, energy, transport and fisheries; emphasises, at the same time that – despite serious challenges – there are also valuable opportunities and assets in the Arctic and, therefore, it should be seen as a place for research, ecotourism, sustainable industry, green technology and know-how, areas that have the potential to benefit many companies – especially SMEs – which thrive on innovative business models and innovative technologies; notes these opportunities, challenges and risks when investing in their current and potential socio-economic development;
7. Underlines that common challenges to the Arctic region, in particular the Arctic's fragile environment and the impact of climate change, can only be tackled in cooperation between all levels of governance, including the international one and by involving relevant stakeholders, in particular the civil society; recalls the responsibility taken by the Union in stepping up efforts to combat climate change; considers therefore that the Arctic region should contribute to sustainable development and mitigation of climate change in particular; stresses that ESIF should be used in this respect, taking into account the necessity of a faster transition towards a more sustainable development; recalls the effects of global warming on this region, and of changes in its ecosystem that will have consequences not only at a local but also on a global scale; underlines the need to closely monitor the effects of climate change in the region;
8. Stresses the importance of research cooperation in the Arctic, as it plays a key role, not only because it contributes to achieving a better understanding of the processes and phenomena taking place, but also because it serves, first of all, as a basis for developing proposals to adapt to the new situation; suggests, in this context, exploring the possibilities of developing cyber connectedness within the Arctic region and recalls that partnerships for research and innovation with regions in the Arctic should be enhanced; notes that – next to ESIF – financing instruments such as the EFSI, InnovFin, TEN-T or the Enterprise Europe Network could contribute to the identification of investment and research priorities in the region;
9. Stresses the importance of protecting the culture and fragile ecosystem for the inhabitants of the Arctic region; draws attention to the ongoing and direct impact of factors originating from inside and outside the region; calls for the Commission to

embrace the proposal for the creation of a sanctuary in the international waters of the Arctic aimed at avoiding any further exacerbation of environmental problems and protecting the biodiversity and endangered ecosystems in the Arctic region;

10. Notes the proposal to establish the EU Arctic Information Centre and reaffirms its support for it, with a permanent office in Rovaniemi, Finland, with the aim of making information on the Arctic more accessible and available in all Member States, including on the projects funded by the EU; calls on the Commission to take the necessary action to set up the centre.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	29.11.2016
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 33 -: 5 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Pascal Arimont, Franc Bogovič, Steeve Briois, Rosa D'Amato, Michela Giuffrida, Krzysztof Hetman, Ivan Jakovčić, Marc Joulaud, Constanze Krehl, Andrew Lewer, Louis-Joseph Manscour, Martina Michels, Iskra Mihaylova, Younous Omarjee, Konstantinos Papadakis, Mirosław Piotrowski, Stanislav Polčák, Julia Reid, Terry Reintke, Liliana Rodrigues, Fernando Ruas, Maria Spyraiki, Olaf Stuger, Ruža Tomašić, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, Matthijs van Miltenburg, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Derek Vaughan, Kerstin Westphal
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Daniel Buda, James Carver, Elena Gentile, Ivana Maletić, Dan Nica, James Nicholson, Bronis Ropè
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Vladimir Urutchev, Boris Zala

7.12.2016

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES**

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic  
(2016/2228(INI))

Rapporteur: Jarosław Wałęsa

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Fisheries calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committees responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) establishes a treaty regime to govern activities on the world's oceans; whereas the development of a framework regarding marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction under UNCLOS would and should include the Arctic region;
- B. whereas the Sami, Nenets, Khanty, Evenk, Chukchi, Aleut, Yupik and Inuit cultures need to be protected pursuant to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); whereas the indigenous population of the Arctic has the right to use natural resources in its home area and should thus be part of any future plans for commercial fishing;
- C. whereas climate change will make the Arctic region accessible to commercial fisheries in the next years, which, given the highly sensitive nature of this unique region, must be developed with the greatest care;
- D. whereas it is important to differentiate between the Arctic high seas in which no commercial fisheries activities are currently taking place, and the adjacent Arctic Region in which regional negotiation fora for fisheries management have already been established;
- E. whereas there are 633 fish species in the Arctic Ocean and Adjacent Seas (AOAS), of which only 58 are currently exploited by reason of environmental constraints but more might be added in the near future, which would increase the pressure on the environment;

- F. whereas the flora and fauna of the Arctic are common goods;
- G. whereas applying and respecting the rules and objectives of the common fisheries policy should be one of the most important aims for the EU Member States having territory in the Arctic region; whereas, additionally, the quantitative target of restoring and maintaining stocks above levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield should be part of any evaluation concerning the marine environment and fisheries in the region;
- H. whereas any fisheries activity in the Arctic region must take place in compliance with the existing international agreements regulating the area, including the Spitsbergen Treaty of 1920 and, specifically, any rights of States Parties to that treaty, and also in compliance with any historical fishing rights;
- I. whereas the specific nature of the Arctic region means that it is of the utmost importance that any development of commercial fisheries is based on the best available scientific advice and that monitoring and follow-up are carried out in a way that is commensurate with those aims;
- J. whereas the Arctic region has a particular biodiversity ecosystem and a great variety of habitats, which without further analysis and studies we cannot fully understand; whereas there are species which have been studied too little to permit full understanding of how their stocks adapt to climate change and recover for commercial fisheries;
- K. whereas the opening of commercial fisheries in a new region such as the Arctic may present opportunities for fisheries products to enter the EU with incorrect labelling or declaration of origin, either directly or under third parties' free trade arrangements;
- L. whereas the Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity 2011-2020, including Target 11, adopted by the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the 2016 United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda, Goal 14, aim to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources, including the target of protecting 10 % of marine areas by 2020; whereas the Parties to the CBD have recognised 77 Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) and 13 Super EBSAs that need particular precautionary management;
- M. whereas exploitation in a region like the Arctic should be carried out in a sustainable fashion based on the precautionary approach;
- N. whereas the Arctic countries should consider creating in the future a specific regional fisheries management organisation (RFMO) and marine protected areas (MPAs), following the models already in place;
- O. whereas the Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation represents a joint commitment by the EU, Canada and the US, inter alia to building a capacity to understand and predict major Atlantic and Arctic processes, as well as the changes and risks they may entail in relation to human activities and climate change;
- P. whereas institutions such as the European Marine Board, the European Polar Board and EurOcean are continually studying and disseminating information about the Arctic;

- Q. whereas Articles 4 and 5 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (Paris Agreement) require parties to sustainably manage and take action to conserve sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, including the oceans;
1. Recalls that Arctic changes have worldwide implications, particularly in view of the fact that adverse effects of global warming occur at a much faster pace in this vulnerable environment;
  2. Calls for any development of commercial fisheries in the Arctic region to be carried out in a way that is fully compatible with the sensitive and specific nature of the region; insists that before any new commercial fisheries are started in the Arctic region, reliable and precautionary scientific stock assessments must be conducted in order to determine the levels of fishing that will conserve the targeted fish stocks above levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield and not lead to depletion of other species or to serious damage to the marine environment; stresses that all fishing on the high seas must be regulated by a regional fisheries management organisation that respects scientific advice and has a robust control and surveillance programme to ensure compliance with management measures; points out that fishing within Exclusive Economic Zones must meet the same standards; calls for a moratorium on industrial-scale fishing, including bottom trawling, in the previously unfished waters of the Arctic;
  3. Welcomes the ongoing negotiations on an international agreement between the Arctic coastal states and international parties with the aim of preventing unregulated fishing in the international waters of the Arctic, and calls on the Commission and the Member States to sign this declaration and to advocate making it binding on the signatories;
  4. Calls on the Commission to support and encourage the Arctic countries to further work on extending the information and analysis available regarding all stocks in the region;
  5. Recalls that the rights to land and natural resources are an important part of the culture and survival of indigenous peoples in the Arctic and are vital to protect their traditional way of life;
  6. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote and support the establishment of a marine protected area in the Arctic High Seas under the mandate of the OSPAR Commission, prohibiting all extractive uses, including fisheries, in the international waters around the North Pole covered by OSPAR;
  7. Calls on the Commission to support initiatives to ban the use of bottom trawling in EBSAs and on the Arctic high seas;
  8. Calls for the conservation targets of the new common fisheries policy and the quantitative target of restoring and maintaining stocks above levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield to be the basis for any commercial fisheries in the region;
  9. Notes that Arctic marine ecosystems are crucial for the preservation of global biodiversity; considers that the reduction of Arctic sea ice and other environmental changes in the Arctic, combined with the limited nature of scientific knowledge about marine resources in this area, necessitate a precautionary approach in order to establish appropriate international measures to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable

use of resources on the Arctic high seas;

10. Advocates strongly that any further development of commercial fisheries in the Arctic region must take place in compliance with international agreements relating to the area, including the Spitsbergen Treaty of 1920, with the rights of any States Parties to such agreements, and with existing historical fishing rights;
11. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that the new UN ocean agreement for the protection of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) is strong and effective and can ensure a robust process for the identification, designation, management and enforcement of marine protected areas, including no-take marine reserves;
12. Calls on the EU to be a leader in the prevention of unregulated fishing in the Arctic; takes the view that it would have every right to do so, given that Member States are involved in all levels of governance in the Arctic region;
13. Highlights that marine protected areas are critically important for preserving Arctic ecosystems; recalls the need to fully involve local communities in the planning, realisation and management of such protected areas;
14. Supports the position that any development of commercial fishing must be carried out in compliance with all international agreements, including UNCLOS and the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA);
15. Calls on the Commission to continue and reinforce the use of Horizon 2020 and other funding programmes for purposes of studying the Arctic;
16. Calls on the Commission to ensure that sufficient scientific advice is available to support any steps to develop commercial fisheries in the Arctic region and that the necessary monitoring and follow-up measures are in place;
17. Points to the importance of the July 2015 declaration on fishing in the Arctic, signed by the five Arctic coastal states;
18. Calls on the Commission to monitor closely any fisheries products made available on the internal market originating from the Arctic region, to ensure that they comply fully with existing European legislation, particularly labelling rules;
19. Points to the importance of cohesion policy and to the need for more effective EU funding in these fields.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	5.12.2016
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 22 -: 1 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Marco Affronte, Clara Eugenia Aguilera García, Renata Briano, Richard Corbett, Linnéa Engström, Carlos Iturgaiz, António Marinho e Pinto, Gabriel Mato, Ulrike Rodust, Remo Sernagiotto, Isabelle Thomas, Ruža Tomašić, Peter van Dalen, Jarosław Wałęsa
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, José Blanco López, Ole Christensen, Ian Duncan, Anja Hazekamp, Maria Heubuch, Mike Hookem, Verónica Lope Fontagné, Francisco José Millán Mon, Piernicola Pedicini, Maria Lidia Senra Rodríguez

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

<b>Date adopted</b>	31.1.2017
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 111 -: 8 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Louis Aliot, Francisco Assis, Margrete Auken, Petras Auštrevičius, Amjad Bashir, Bas Belder, Ivo Belet, Goffredo Maria Bettini, Simona Bonafè, Mario Borghezio, Biljana Borzan, Victor Boștinaru, Paul Brannen, Elmar Brok, Klaus Buchner, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Nessa Childers, Birgit Collin-Langen, Javier Couso Permuy, Andi Cristea, Mireille D'Ornano, Miriam Dalli, Arnaud Danjean, Angélique Delahaye, Ian Duncan, Stefan Eck, Bas Eickhout, Georgios Epitideios, José Inácio Faria, Knut Fleckenstein, Karl-Heinz Florenz, Anna Elżbieta Fotyga, Eugen Freund, Michael Gahler, Francesc Gambús, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Jens Gieseke, Julie Girling, Sylvie Goddyn, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, György Hölvényi, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Benedek Jávor, Karin Kadenbach, Sandra Kalniete, Manolis Kefalogiannis, Tunne Kelam, Afzal Khan, Kateřina Konečná, Janusz Korwin-Mikke, Andrey Kovatchev, Urszula Krupa, Eduard Kukan, Giovanni La Via, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Jo Leinen, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Barbara Lochbihler, Andrejs Mamikins, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Alex Mayer, Valentinas Mazuronis, David McAllister, Susanne Melior, Tamás Meszerics, Francisco José Millán Mon, Demetris Papadakis, Ioan Mircea Pașcu, Tonino Picula, Pavel Poc, Cristian Dan Preda, Jozo Radoš, Julia Reid, Michèle Rivasi, Sofia Sakorafa, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Alyn Smith, Jordi Solé, Jaromír Štětina, Dubravka Šuica, Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu, László Tőkés, Ivica Tolić, Estefanía Torres Martínez, Ivo Vajgl, Adina-Ioana Vălean, Hilde Vautmans, Anders Primdahl Vistisen, Damiano Zoffoli
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Nedzhmi Ali, Zigmantas Balčytis, Jørn Dohrmann, Fredrick Federley, Neena Gill, Takis Hadjigeorgiou, Mike Hookem, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Peter Jahr, Merja Kyllönen, Javi López, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Gesine Meissner, Norica Nicolai, Urmas Paet, Miroslav Poche, Soraya Post, Gabriele Preuß, Christel Schaldemose, György Schöpflin, Igor Šoltés, Bart Staes, Bodil Valero, Tiemo Wölken, Janusz Zemke, Željana Zovko
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Jiří Maštálka, Jens Nilsson, Jasenko Selimovic