



The High North

Visions and strategies

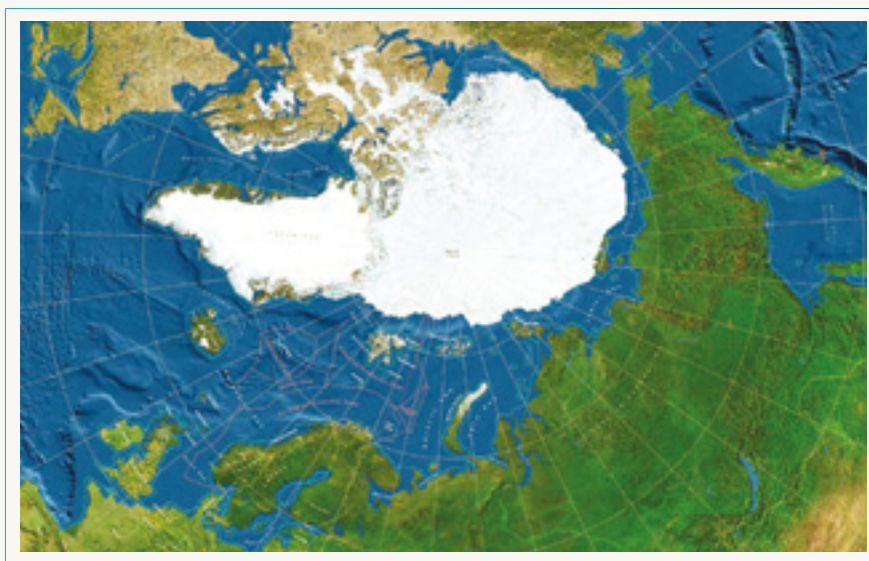






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Artscape Nordland, Leirfjord municipality. "Around" by Waltercio Caldas of Brazil

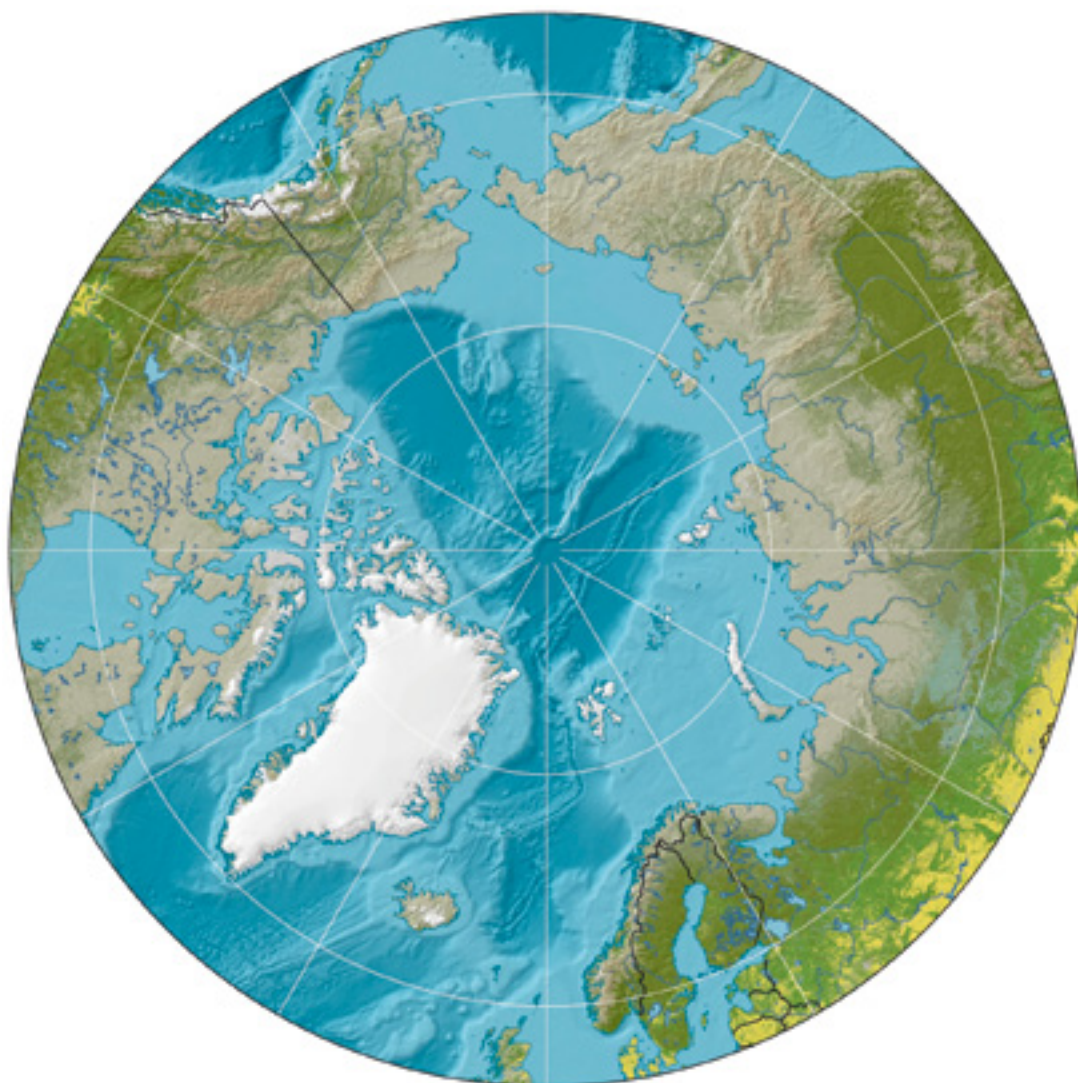
Foreword

by Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre





Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard





JONAS GAHR STØRE
Minister of Foreign Affairs

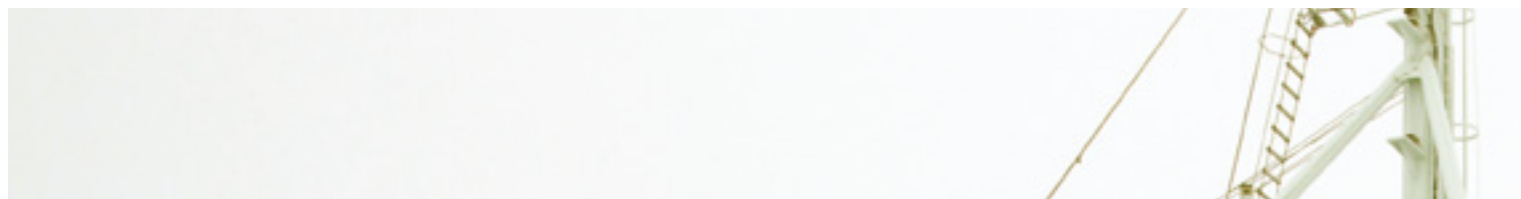
The High North is Norway's number one foreign policy priority, as set out in the Government's first and second policy platforms. The Government launched its High North Strategy in 2006, and followed it up with the report *New Building Blocks in the North* in 2009 – setting out its priorities for the next 10–15 years.

In this white paper, *The High North. Vision and policy instruments*, the Government presents a coherent, long-term Norwegian policy for dealing with the challenges and opportunities we are facing in the High North. This edited short version provides an overview of the main points discussed in the white paper. I hope that it will spark a greater interest in developments in the High North and inspire you to read more about Norway's High North policy.

Oslo/Bodø, 18 November 2011

Jonas Gahr Støre

The full text of the white paper can be downloaded at:
<http://www.regjeringen.no>



MFA
The High North 2011



Achievements in Norway's High North policy The way forward and overall objectives





The research vessel *Lance* on a cruise to Svalbard, 2010



PHOTO: SVERIN LUKH, SCOWPIH

Austfonna, Svalbard

FROM THE VANTAGE POINT of 2011, we can look back and identify some of the main features of developments in the High North up to today. Our policy provides guidelines for both domestic and foreign policy initiatives through planning documents, increased use of resources and active interaction with private actors, regional and local partners and other countries. The High North has become a recognisable framework for Norwegian policy – both domestic and foreign policy.

Now that a framework has been established through a broad range of national, regional, local and international initiatives, we can look ahead and consider which areas are likely to be in focus in the next 20 years.

1990–2010: THE HIGH NORTH POLICY TAKES SHAPE

Norway's High North policy in its present form has been developed since the end of the Cold War, but is also based on experience gained many years ago. Since 2005, our explicit political ambition has been to strengthen Norwegian policy to promote knowledge of, and activity and presence in, the High North. Practically every ministry and a wide range of public and private actors set themselves goals in this area, and are involved in formulating and implementing our High North policy. Over the years, seven major themes have emerged as key elements in the development of our current High North policy.

1) Deepening and renewal of cooperation with Russia

Our relations with Russia are one of the mainstays of Norway's High North policy. In the course of two decades, the nature of these relations has changed from one of confrontation, as was the case during the Cold War, to one of greater confidence, a wider range of contacts and closer cooperation.

During this period, the mistrust that marked the Cold War years has to a great extent been replaced by normal, good neighbourly relations. In addition to their role as regional forums, the Barents Cooperation and the Arctic Council have become important meeting places for Norway and Russia, where our countries are finding common interests in more and more areas. Through people-to-people cooperation in the High North, contacts have been established in most areas and new networks are constantly being developed. This gives Norway's relations with Russia a whole new dimension.

The bilateral relations between Norway and Russia are good, and have been improving steadily in recent years. Nonetheless, we still encounter demanding challenges because of differences between our respective political and administrative cultures. Russia is facing a number of challenges in relation to its political system, democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and the framework for the business sector. These are issues Norway

has to deal with while developing even closer cooperation with this neighbour and major power to the East.

Our membership of NATO has helped to provide stability and predictability in our neighbouring areas.

2) Development of broad-based High North diplomacy

When Norway took the initiative for the establishment of the Barents Cooperation in 1993, it was considered important to include countries outside the region as well. The idea was that this would make it easier to deal with political and economic challenges in the region.

The Barents Cooperation has become one of the mainstays of the formal regional cooperation in the north. Close ties between people in North Norway and northwestern Russia have been an important supplement, and at times a corrective, to the diplomacy practised in the capitals. These ties have also facilitated economic growth and helped to strengthen people-to-people contact.

The Arctic Council was established in 1996 as a forum for circumpolar cooperation throughout the Arctic. The successor to the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, the Arctic Council was initially a forum for environmental cooperation, and has since been expanded to include sustainable development as well. This cooperation is increasingly focusing on climate change and the serious impacts it

may have in the Arctic. Today, cooperation within the Arctic Council encompasses shipping, integrated management of resources, oil and gas, tourism, education, research, health, and economic and cultural issues in addition to climate change and the environment. The Arctic Council is the only circumpolar body and the leading political body for Arctic issues.

Norway has systematically sought to maintain and further develop ties with countries outside the Arctic region as well, for example through a series of High North dialogues. The Norwegian authorities have used these dialogues to inform key partners on a regular basis about Norway's views and assessments and discuss challenges and opportunities.

Previously, there were few countries or major economic actors outside the region that were engaged in Arctic areas. This is changing. The EU, key EU countries and several Asian countries are now developing their own Arctic policy, as all the countries that border directly on the Arctic Ocean have already done. At the turn of the millennium, there were few countries outside the Arctic that had the expertise and resources needed to operate in the north. Now, on the other hand, we see that an increasing number of countries are focusing on the region, and are therefore building the necessary expertise and capacity to do so. International organisations and commercial actors are doing the same.

“ The Arctic Council is the only circumpolar body and the leading political body for Arctic issues.”

3) Knowledge of the alarming pace of climate change

Climate issues were placed firmly on the international political agenda in the 1990s with the negotiation of the Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. As a result of the focus on global climate change, the High North also received more attention. The reason for this was firstly that change was apparent in the Arctic earlier than elsewhere and was more rapid, and secondly that change in the Arctic would influence the global climate system. A major Arctic Council assessment of climate change in the Arctic (ACIA) improved knowledge of the interactions between regional and global climate change and provided an important contribution to the Fourth Assessment Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which was published in 2007.

Climate change is putting growing pressure on the flora and fauna and entire ecosystems, and making it difficult for indigenous peoples to maintain their traditional way of life and livelihoods. However, the impacts of the changes we are observing in the north may be at least as severe and have very serious consequences for people's living conditions in other parts of the world. For example, rising sea levels

caused by the melting of inland ice sheets will have a major global impact.

At the same time, the melting ice is providing greater access to resources in the High North and opening up new opportunities for shipping. This in turn is leading to growing interest in exploiting resources in the Arctic and an increase in maritime activity. For centuries, the Arctic Ocean has been shrouded in mystery and only explored by the boldest Arctic travellers. In recent years, we have seen ships make the first commercial journeys along the Northeast Passage, carrying goods between Europe and Asia.

The rapid pace of climate change and growing economic activity mean that it will be even more important to integrate environmental policy into all sectors.

4) Integrated marine management has safeguarded resources

The management plan for the Barents Sea–Lofoten area was the first management plan developed for a Norwegian sea area. It was a ground-breaking effort, putting the concept of an integrated, ecosystem-based management regime into practice and finding a balance between different user interests within this framework. Norway chose to develop the plan for the Barents Sea–Lofoten area first because it is a rich, clean area of sea where considerable new activity was anticipated. The plan has provided a starting point for work on integrated management plans for other Norwegian sea areas. Our work on integrated management plans has attracted considerable international attention, and provides a model for regional cooperation on marine management in the High North.

Norway is responsible for managing vast sea areas that are home to some of the world's most abundant fish stocks. Marine resources have always been an important basis for viable local communities and settlement along the Norwegian coast. And the further north you go, the richer the marine resources.

There have been major structural changes in the fisheries sector in recent decades, including the discontinuation of various government financed support schemes. The resource base is robust as a result of long-term management in accordance with the principles of sustainable harvesting. The conventional fisheries are now a modern, thriving and profitable industry. There has also been huge growth in the aquaculture industry since the 1970s and 1980s.

The fisheries sector is Norway's second largest export industry, after the oil and gas industry. And for many years, Norway has been among the world's top two or three exporters of fish and fish products. In 2010, the export value of Norwegian seafood was NOK 53.8 billion, setting a new record for the seventh year in a row.

Today the Barents Sea is home to the world's largest cod stock, the haddock stock is at a record level, and the capelin stock is also strong. During the past 10–12 years, close cooperation on long-term management strategies for the shared Norwegian–Russian fish stocks based on the precautionary approach has given very good results. In the past few years, Norway and Russia have also completed the harmonisation of regulatory measures for the fisheries on both sides of the border.

The Norwegian and Russian authorities have made a concerted effort to combat

illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Barents and Norwegian Seas in recent years.

At the same time new knowledge about marine organisms offers exciting future opportunities for sustainable value creation based on marine bioprospecting.



Norway is responsible for managing vast sea areas that are home to some of the world's most abundant fish stocks. ”

5) The contours of a new oil and gas province

Estimates indicating that a large share of the world's undiscovered oil and gas resources is to be found in Arctic areas are an important reason for the growing interest in the region.

The Barents Sea is one of the areas where considerable petroleum resources are expected to be found. In 1986, large discoveries were made in the Shtokman field in Russian waters. The Snøhvit field in Norwegian waters was discovered in 1980, and this was the first field to be developed in the Barents Sea, starting in 2001. The Skrugard and Norvarg fields were discovered in 2011, which further heightened expectations.

Previously, the unresolved issue of the maritime delimitation between Norway and Russia prevented exploration activities in parts of the Barents Sea. Following the

entry into force of the treaty on maritime delimitation between Norway and Russia on 7 July, 2011, new possibilities for oil and gas exploration in the southern Barents Sea opened up. There are many opportunities for cooperation between Norway and Russia. However, growing oil and gas activity will entail new environmental challenges in marine areas with vulnerable ecosystems.

In response to the prospects of oil and gas production in the north, large parts of the Norwegian offshore and supply industry have been building up expertise and making strategic investments. This has also sparked a broad public debate on the spin-off effects that can be expected for local communities and the business sector in North Norway.

6) Acceptance for the principles of the Law of the Sea

In recent decades, important issues concerning jurisdiction in the Norwegian Sea, the Barents Sea, and the Arctic Ocean that affect Norway have been clarified. For all practical purposes, the outstanding issues concerning the maritime delimitation of areas under Norwegian jurisdiction have now been resolved. In the Southern Part of the Banana Hole of the Northeast Atlantic, the final delimitation will be determined in accordance with the arrangements made in 2006 once the neighbouring states (Iceland and Denmark/the Faroe Islands) have received the final recommendations on the outer limits of their continental shelves from the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.

Norway is the first of the Arctic states to have had the outer limits of its continental shelf clarified in accordance with the UN



PHOTO: MARI TERRE

The population of Svalbard is also growing.

Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Thus, for the first time we know the full extent of the geographical scope of the Kingdom of Norway – on land, at sea and on the seabed. Norway is responsible for a marine area seven times larger than its total land area. The five states bordering on the Arctic Ocean confirmed, in a ministerial declaration (the Ilulissat Declaration) in 2008, that the Law of the Sea provides the legal framework for clarifying issues related to jurisdiction and management in the Arctic sea areas. This is very important.

The Ilulissat Declaration corrected the notion held by certain key actors that the Arctic was an unregulated area where open conflict on resources could be expected. Its emphasis on the applicability of the Law of the Sea in the Arctic Ocean lays the foundation for orderly, predictable relations between the coastal states, while at the same time signalling to the rest of the world that the coastal states are taking their responsibility seriously. One of the Government's primary aims has been to play a part in bringing about this clarification.

The Law of the Sea gives Norway jurisdiction over substantial resources. This also means that Norway has a major responsibility for sound management of these areas. There is general agreement that in order to develop a sound management regime, we must first have adequate knowledge of the resources and environment on the seabed, in the water column, and on the surface of the sea. Integrated management plans are important as they provide a basis for increased use of resources within an environmentally sustainable framework.

“ For all practical purposes, the outstanding issues concerning the maritime delimitation of areas under Norwegian jurisdiction have now been resolved. ”

7) A cooperation network is taking shape

Since the end of the Cold War, a number of cooperation forums have emerged in the north, both the circumpolar Arctic Council and regional forums such as the Barents Euro-Arctic Council.

Relations between Norway and Russia have been developed bilaterally, as well as through the Barents Cooperation and the Arctic Council. The traditional Nordic cooperation has also focused more attention on High North issues since the 1990s, when developments in the Baltic Sea region dominated the agenda. Indigenous issues are a key area of cooperation within the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Northern Dimension, and in the bilateral High North dialogues with Russia and Canada. The Sami Parliament (Sámediggi) has representatives in the Norwegian delegations to the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, and plays an active part in the Indigenous People's Research Network.

In the past few years there has been renewed interest in closer cooperation between the Nordic countries on foreign

and security policy, which has resulted in clear guidelines for policy development in the High North. The 2009 Stoltenberg Report, *Nordic Cooperation on Foreign and Security Policy*, outlines specific proposals for cooperation in 12 different areas and for a Nordic declaration of solidarity. The Nordic Foreign Ministers endorsed the proposals set out in the report, and they are now being followed up in a number of areas.

The Northern Dimension is a partnership between the EU, Russia, Norway and Iceland. It was originally developed in connection with the northern EU countries' efforts to strengthen the EU's engagement in the north. This cooperation has served to intensify the EU's political and economic engagement in the north, just as the EU's participation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council ensures close contact with the EU. It consists of partnerships in various priority sectors (e.g. environment, transport, health, culture). A number of jointly financed projects have been carried out under the Northern Dimension, for example on improving environmental and health conditions for the inhabitants of the region.

There are close ties between the various cooperation forums. They all take a pragmatic approach, and give priority to dealing with tasks of importance for the economy, the environment, transport and cooperation between countries and regions in the north.

2011–2030: THE WAY FORWARD AND OVERALL OBJECTIVES

There have been rapid developments in the High North over the past 20 years. Nevertheless, 2011 may well go down in history as the first year of the High North decade. In the Government's view, developments in the High North have great potential for strengthening the long-term basis for employment and economic activity not only in North Norway but in the rest of the country as well.

One of Norway's overall objectives is to provide a framework for increased value creation in the High North. This must be done in a way that takes account of the environment, climate and interests of indigenous peoples. We must therefore facilitate the coexistence of different industries and interests within an environmentally sustainable framework. This will require knowledge, expertise and, not least, a close dialogue between the various parties.

During the past few decades, political initiatives have helped to ensure peace and stability, clarify and confirm the legal framework for national jurisdiction and activity in the High North, and develop sound political cooperation structures and extensive people-to-people cooperation. With all this firmly in place, the Government considers that a foundation has been laid that makes it appropriate to focus even more on those parts of the cooperation that will increase value creation and improve the lives of the inhabitants of the region.

In order to succeed in this, we have to mobilise knowledge, individual actors, centres of expertise and capital. We must forge fruitful partnerships between public

and private actors. Cooperation between central government, regional and local authorities must be further developed. And we must develop networks between Norwegian and foreign actors.

Knowledge is at the core of our High North policy. It is people's knowledge and day-to-day work that make it possible to exploit and develop the potential that lies in the north in a sustainable, far-sighted way to the benefit of society. The Government has taken concrete steps to promote the systematic building of knowledge and knowledge infrastructure at the universities, university colleges and other knowledge institutions, for example by providing annual grants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Barents 2020 programme. The Government considers it important to consolidate and further develop these and other knowledge communities. Division of labour, cooperation, critical mass and quality are keywords. In the Government's view, it is important to engage with knowledge institutions in other countries and facilitate staff exchanges with innovative companies and institutions in relevant fields.

The Government views Norway's High North efforts in a generational perspective. Specific projects will be developed on an ongoing basis through new plans and annual budgets. But we also need a wider horizon that defines our direction and our overriding aims – in relation to both the trends we believe will determine the way forward and the aims we are seeking to achieve.

On this basis, the Government has outlined seven development trends that will shape the initiatives and priorities of Norwegian High North policy.

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1) *A new energy province in Europe*

The Barents Sea seems likely to become an important European energy province. How rapidly it will develop and how important it becomes will depend on market conditions, technological developments, the size of any commercially viable discoveries of oil and gas, and how fast renewable energy sources are developed. The development of oil and gas activities must also be weighed against considerations of other industries and interests within the framework of integrated, ecosystem-based management. Oil and gas deliveries from this region can improve European energy security and make an important contribution to global energy supplies, and at the same time provide a basis for developing industry and services in North Norway. This has important economic and foreign policy implications.

There is also a potential for renewable energy developments in this region,

including hydropower, and wind and wave power. Long distances, market-related issues, the need for new infrastructure and environmental and safety issues will pose challenges. All the evidence suggests that the energy dimension will be the most important driver of increased interest in this region in political and business circles in other parts of the world.

In our contacts with other states and foreign commercial interests, issues related to access to energy and energy security will become increasingly important both in themselves and as part of foreign and security policy. Environmental standards, technology, the protection of particularly valuable areas, and emergency response systems will be particularly important, as will opportunities and challenges related to the development of technology for Arctic waters.

Norway has geographical advantages and extensive experience and knowledge of energy production at sea, and the Government intends to build on this. The Government considers it important to enable Norwegian knowledge institutions and companies to play a leading role in developing the new energy province.

Norway and Russia are, as coastal states, responsible for regulating activity on their continental shelf areas in the Barents Sea. The Government will boost the potential of this energy province through the development of closer cooperation between the authorities in the two countries and between industry and supplier industries and knowledge institutions.

Gas from the Barents Sea may become an important European energy resource. Both the EU and individual countries in Europe are drawing up plans for further

development of energy supplies in the period up to 2050. Common features are the development of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency measures. At the same time, there is general recognition that there will be a considerable need for other energy sources as well during this period. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has highlighted the advantages of making more use of natural gas as a replacement for coal. Norway and Europe are long-term gas partners. We will continue exploration for gas – particularly in the High North.

If new major discoveries are made in the Barents Sea and market conditions are suitable, we will consider the potential for the profitable use of gas in onshore industries and look at how new infrastructure can be developed.

Expectations of rising activity levels may pave the way for extensive Norwegian–Russian offshore cooperation. The petroleum potential of the Barents Sea also provides a basis for building up knowledge clusters that can contribute to value creation, employment and spin-off effects in northern parts of Norway and Russia.

“ Norway has geographical advantages and extensive experience and knowledge of energy production at sea, and the Government intends to build on this. ”

2) A new industrial age in the High North

The natural resources of the High North have been there since time immemorial; it is knowledge and the growing demand that is making it possible to utilise them. The Government will give priority to the development of knowledge relating to new opportunities for industry, value creation and employment in the High North.

Sound use of oil and gas resources offers a particularly great potential. The Government's aim is for development of the oil and gas industry to open up opportunities for local value creation and development.

Sustainable management of fisheries resources will continue to be a key element of industrial development in the north. New aquaculture opportunities are likely to emerge in the years ahead. Through its focus on marine bioprospecting, the Government is promoting industrial development based on new knowledge about marine organisms. New products and processes will be developed, with a potential for value creation and employment.

With rising oil and gas production and mineral extraction and a convenient location in relation to new transport routes, it may become more attractive to establish other types of industry in the High North as well. As indicated in the white paper on Norway's petroleum activities, the Government will facilitate increased industrial use of gas in Norway. The alternative value of the gas is its market price. Industrial use of gas in Norway must therefore be profitable, with market-based gas purchase agreements. The Government's point of departure is that the industry is developed in an environmentally sound way and within the framework of Norwegian climate policy.



The Fram Centre, Tromsø

Sustainable management of fisheries resources will continue to be a key element of industrial development in the north.”

The potential for increased industrial activity makes it even more interesting to develop economic cooperation with Russia, Sweden and Finland in the north.

The Government will facilitate close, broad-based industrial cooperation with Russia. In addition to industrial cooperation, steps to reduce practical barriers relating to visas, labour migration, customs duties, taxation, border procedures, legal issues and property rights will be of key importance.

At the same time, there are exciting opportunities for closer cooperation between the Nordic countries on industrial development in the north. The Government will seek to further develop business cooperation, particularly with neighbouring areas of Sweden and Finland, but also with other countries in and outside the High North. It will also be necessary to increase cooperation with other countries to assess the impacts of new activities and identify environmentally sound solutions for joint projects.

The Government will maintain close contact with the regional authorities and the Sami Parliament on these issues.

3) Pioneering work on integrated marine management

There is already extensive cooperation on environmental protection and sustainable management of living marine resources in the north. We have put in place management plans to ensure long-term integrated management of Norway's sea areas and encourage value creation within a framework that maintains the structure, functioning and productivity of their ecosystems. The Government's ambition is to be at the forefront of developments in this field in the years ahead.

Climate change, ocean acidification and increasing levels of activity will give rise to new challenges for the authorities responsible for environmental and natural resource management, and they will have to meet new demands for knowledge and adaptation. Norway must therefore develop its knowledge-based environmental and resource management regime. We need to succeed in this so that the inevitable processes of change do not cause degradation of important habitats and ecosystems or depletion of living resources that we need as a basis for development and welfare in the future.

Sound environmental and natural resource management also requires closer cooperation between the Arctic states and with other states and actors that are engaged in activities in the High North. Cooperation within the framework of the Arctic Council and further development of cooperation with Russia on fisheries and marine management in the Barents Sea are of key importance here. This cooperation will be important for harmonisation of standards

and legislation on sound management of the northern sea areas.

4) The growing attraction of the Arctic Ocean

At some point in the future, ice may no longer be a barrier to transport between Asia, North America and Europe through the Arctic Ocean.

There is no immediate prospect of year-round shipping in these waters, where harsh weather and ice will continue to cause difficulties. But even today, merchant ships operating under normal commercial conditions are using the Northeast Passage to cut travel times and costs.

There is reason to believe that the volume of shipping will increase. Russia will face a number of challenges in connection with traffic along a coastline where little infrastructure has been developed. Norway will have to deal with the risks involved in increased traffic along its coast, but will also have opportunities to provide services for these ships.

In the near future, however, transport to and from Russia and petroleum-related activities are expected to account for most of the increase in transport volume. Increasing activity will make it necessary to develop cooperation between Norway and Russia on improving the safety and efficiency of maritime activities.

These developments will have geopolitical consequences. Countries such as China, Japan, South Korea and Singapore are also showing interest in the possibilities of using Arctic sea routes, and a new window of opportunity is opening up for cooperation and exchange with these countries. This will give considerable room for developing expertise, infrastructure

and networks that make spin-off effects in Norway more likely. Shorter transport distances and lower prices may improve the competitive position of Norwegian actors in Asian markets.

All these trends combined will increase the strategic importance of Norway's coastline and port capacity.

Growing activity may increase the need for regulation in the northern sea areas and may have implications for search and rescue capacity and oil pollution emergency response systems.

5) Source of knowledge about the environment and climate change

The High North is a crucial source of knowledge about the Arctic environment and climate, which has implications far beyond the region itself.

Knowledge about the Arctic climate is important for global climate policy and for taking the decisions needed to reduce global warming. Knowledge gained in the Arctic is already of crucial importance for understanding the functioning of the climate system at global as well as regional level. At the same time, knowledge about climate change and ocean acidification and the impacts these will have in the High North is an essential basis for management of the environment and natural resources and for adaptation of future activities in the region.

Norway has systematically built up centres of expertise that are well placed to develop and disseminate new knowledge. The Centre for Climate Dynamics at the Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, the research communities associated with the University of Tromsø and the Fram Centre, the University of Nordland, CICERO (the

Center for International Climate and Environmental Research – Oslo) and other leading research groups put Norway in a good position to play a prominent role in international research cooperation on the Arctic climate and the impacts of climate change. The Government considers it very important to support these knowledge communities so that they can maintain their position as internationally leading centres of expertise.

Svalbard is a unique platform for national and international polar research, with advanced scientific infrastructure in Ny-Ålesund and at the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS). In the years ahead, Svalbard will be further developed and strengthened as a platform for research, higher education and monitoring.

The recent establishment of a permanent secretariat for the Arctic Council in Tromsø will put Norwegian centres of expertise in an even better position to play a part in setting the agenda for international climate diplomacy in the future.

The environment of the High North is very vulnerable, and there are serious problems related to inputs of long-range pollutants and to hazardous waste, including nuclear waste, on the Russian side of the border. The situation has been improved through international cooperation, but a clear focus on these problems must be maintained in the years ahead to ensure that economic and industrial activity is within safe ecological limits.

6) Close and innovative cooperation in the High North

The system of regional cooperation in the High North is pragmatic and focuses on resolving practical cross-border challenges.

The Government's aim is for the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Northern Dimension to be further developed and strengthened. Many challenges can best be addressed through close cooperation, and all the countries involved have expressed a desire to strengthen cooperation. The Government wishes Norway to continue to play a leading role in deepening and expanding this cooperation, with open channels to non-Arctic states and partners outside the region.

Contact and cooperation between academic and other knowledge institutions across national borders in the north have resulted in the development of a stronger network that has also helped to bring about sound political solutions between states. In the years ahead, the Government will promote the expansion and strengthening of knowledge networks between Norway and neighbouring countries, and North American, other European and Asian countries.

While the management of petroleum resources and the determination of conditions for exploration and extraction

“ The Government's aim is for the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Northern Dimension to be further developed and strengthened.”

activities are a national responsibility, the development of knowledge regarding the environment and security is a field where international cooperation is advantageous.

Norway and Russia have started cooperation on establishing a joint environmental monitoring programme and developing the basis for an integrated management plan for the Russian part of the Barents Sea, based on the same principles as the Norwegian plan.

Cooperation under the Arctic Council has been steadily expanded over the years, and the Council has helped to put important issues on the agenda, especially as regards the environment and climate change, but also in areas such as shipping, oil and gas, and tourism. In 2011, this was supplemented when the member states concluded the Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement, the first legally binding agreement to be negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council. More such agreements can be expected in the years ahead. In autumn 2011, the member states started negotiations on oil spill response in Arctic areas, led by Norway, the US and Russia.

It is important to respond consistently and predictably to the increasing interest in the Arctic on the part of states and actors outside the region. Norway recognises other states' legitimate interests in the Arctic and welcomes new permanent observers to the Arctic Council provided that they meet the criteria that have been established.

The situation of indigenous people will always figure prominently in regional cooperation in the north. Bodies such as the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council are forums where indigenous peoples' interests can be safeguarded

and further developed in a large geographical area across national borders.

The Barents Cooperation will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2013, during Norway's chairmanship. A great deal has happened and extensive experience has been gained, both regionally and globally, since the Kirkenes declaration in 1993. Now it is natural to look ahead, and Norway will take the initiative for a new declaration that sets out the visions and direction for cooperation over the next 20 years. A number of suitable areas for closer cooperation are emerging: development of the mineral industry, closer people-to-people contacts, gradual labour market integration, education, environmental protection and research, and other areas of significance for the environment, living conditions and business development. Regional authorities, indigenous peoples' organisations and the Barents Secretariat are important drivers of this cooperation.

7) New geopolitical centre of gravity in the High North

For more than 40 years, strategic and geopolitical interest in the High North was shaped by the logic of the Cold War and the region's inaccessibility.

The High North is still an area of strategic military interest, among other things because a large proportion of Russia's nuclear forces are located there and the region is used as a site for military exercises involving important aircraft and naval units. In NATO, Norway has promoted a renewed focus on the Alliance's core areas – including those in the north – based on long experience that a clear security policy creates stability and predictability for all parties.

Norway considers it important to continue the development of close, predictable cooperation with Russia in the north. Our vision is to develop our neighbourly relations to the same level of openness and trust we enjoy with our Nordic neighbours.

The Norwegian National Joint Headquarters has been moved to Bodø, and the focus of the Armed Forces' resources and activities has been moved northwards. This is not a response to a military threat; rather it was a natural way of underscoring the responsibility Norway has in the north by virtue of its geographical location. In the time ahead, the armed forces will focus increasingly on their tasks in the north.

In the years ahead Norway will continue its long tradition of hosting Allied exercises in our territory, also in the north. It will also be natural to further develop cooperation between Norway and Russia in the military field and as regards fisher-

“ It will continue to be important for Norway to ensure compliance with fundamental principles of international law and respect for the special rights and responsibilities of coastal states. ”



PHOTO: M.B. HAGA, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Fishermen in Tromsø, January 2011

“ Climate change, greater access to natural resources and growing human activity suggest that the High North will be a region of considerable geopolitical interest.”

ies control in the Barents Sea.

At the same time, the strategic picture is changing: the traditional climate of confrontation between East and West is giving way to greater cooperation with, and signs of interest from, more actors – North American, European and Asian. They are interested in new transport routes, access to resources and knowledge about climate change, the melting ice and changes in the marine environment.

Northern waters are becoming more accessible due to the melting ice and new transport and surveillance technology. There will be an increase in commercial activity in waters where there was previously scarcely any traffic, and we must be prepared for both desirable and undesirable traffic. There will be a greater need to maintain order in our northern sea areas and greater demands on the search and rescue capacity of coastal states.

It will continue to be important for Norway to ensure compliance with fundamental principles of international law and respect for the special rights

and responsibilities of coastal states. The fact that the coastal states agree on the international rules is a good starting point. It will be important for Norway to further strengthen and consolidate this consensus internationally through its High North diplomacy.

The Government has used the catchphrase “High North – low tension” in developing its High North policy and presenting the main features of this policy internationally. During the Cold War, the High North was marked by the risk of confrontation between the major powers. Nonetheless, Norway and Russia were able to resolve practical problems in a pragmatic way. Close, pragmatic cooperation between Norway and Russia will continue to be an important priority in the years ahead.

Climate change, greater access to natural resources and growing human activity suggest that the High North will be a region of considerable geopolitical interest. The Government’s overall objective is to make use of the opportunities this offers, and at the same time manage the environment and natural resources sustainably, and maintain the High North as a peaceful and stable region. Norway will therefore continue to exercise sovereignty in a consistent and predictable manner in the years ahead, and will be a driving force for cooperation with other countries in a spirit of openness and trust.



MFA
The High North 2011

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Strategic priorities and results



PHOTO: DESTINATION NORUOK © 2008



A train carrying iron ore on the Ofoten railway line



PHOTO: JOHN WILDHAGEN/WWW.VISITNORLUND.COM

Nordkapp, Finnmark

THE KEY policy objectives of Norway's High North policy are:

- to safeguard peace and stability and provide predictability;
- to ensure an integrated, ecosystem-based management regime that safeguards biodiversity and provides a basis for sustainable use of resources;
- to strengthen international cooperation and the international legal order;
- to strengthen the basis for employment, value creation and welfare throughout the country by means of a regional and national effort in cooperation with partners from other countries and relevant indigenous groups.

The Government's High North strategy can be summed up in three words: *knowledge, activity and presence*.¹

KNOWLEDGE: The Government's ambition is for Norway to be a leader in the field of knowledge in and about the High North. Knowledge is defined as being at the core of Norway's High North policy.

ACTIVITY: The Government's ambition is for Norway to be at the top of the league in key areas of economic activity and the best steward of the environment and natural resources in the north. This requires close cooperation between national, regional and local authorities, and businesses and relevant research communities.

PRESENCE: The Government's ambition is for Norway to have a presence in all parts of Norwegian territory and in Norwegian sea areas in the High North through policies to encourage settlement, value creation, nature management, employment and culture in North Norway, both by using civilian capacities and by maintaining a military presence.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND RESULTS

In order to achieve the main objectives of its High North policy, the Government has identified a number of strategic priori-

ties that can be summarised in 15 points. The following is an overview of the most important results achieved so far and the Government's future priorities for each of the 15 areas.

1. The Government will seek to ensure that Norway is a leader in the field of knowledge in and about the High North

Results:

- A considerable boost for climate and environmental research. The Fram Centre (High North Research Centre for Climate and the Environment), based in Tromsø, is a leading international research hub that was opened in 2010. It consists of 19 institutions, including the Norwegian Polar Institute's Centre for Ice, Climate and Ecosystems (ICE). These institutions are cooperating on research in five priority areas involving about 500 scientists.
- Substantial annual funding to close gaps in knowledge so that we can address challenges and take advantage of opportunities in the High North. The grant scheme Barents 2020 was established in 2006. From the first payments in 2007 and up to and including 2012, a total of NOK 303 million has been allocated to 56 projects.
- A new polar research programme under the Research Council of Norway

¹ *The Government's High North Strategy (2006).*



PHOTO: NORLENSE

Testing oil booms

was established in 2011 with an allocation of NOK 45 million.

- Norway played an active role in the establishment of the world's largest ever polar research programme, the International Polar Year (IPY 2007–2008). The Storting allocated NOK 330 million to Norwegian efforts under IPY, including 27 Norwegian research projects and research cruises with the vessel *G.O. Sars* in the Southern Ocean.
- Research projects on geopolitics in the High North and Asia's role in the High North have been established under the Research Council, and are being supported via Barents 2020, with grants totalling NOK 28 million over a five-year period and NOK 15 million over a three-year period, respectively.
- Closer educational and research cooperation with Russia, Canada and the US, including 196 High North grants awarded since the scheme was established in 2007.
- Active follow-up of labour and trade associations and education and research institutions to build up knowledge about challenges and opportunities in the High North.
- Strong North Norwegian networks have been established through closer cooperation between institutions in the region as part of Norway's general policy for improving higher education and research.

- Focus on research through the establishment of a system of regional research funds. In North Norway, projects on climate change adaptation, regional welfare and cross-border regional developments have been given priority.
- Development of centres of expertise in Svalbard, including improvements to research infrastructure and capacity at the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS). The Universities of Tromsø and Nordland increased the number of student places in 2009 and 2011.
- International research activity in Svalbard has reached record levels. Ten nations have research stations in Ny-Ålesund, and almost half the students at UNIS are foreign nationals.
- Norway has initiated the establishment of the Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System (SIOS), a unique system in which almost 20 countries are involved.

Future priorities:

- Further develop the institutions involved in the Fram Centre in Tromsø so that they can maintain their position as internationally leading centres of expertise in climate and environmental research in the High North.
- The Government intends to acquire a new ice-class research vessel based in Tromsø. More information about the timing of this acquisition will be given later.

- Increase the involvement of research groups in North Norway by ensuring that at least 50% of grant funding through the Barents 2020 scheme goes to projects in which such research groups are included.
- Initiate a survey of the performance of Norwegian knowledge institutions in education and research related to the High North, with a view to developing closer cooperation and coordination between them, and finding a sound division of responsibilities to ensure high quality and good use of resources.
- Research and higher education will continue to be one of the pillars of Norwegian activity in Svalbard.

2. The Government will ensure that Norway exercises its sovereignty and authority in the High North in a credible, consistent and predictable manner

Results:

- The focus of the armed forces has been shifted northwards: the National Joint Headquarters has been moved from Stavanger to Bodø, and the headquarters of the Coast Guard will be located in Sortland from 1 January 2012.
- The Government has strengthened Norway's capacity to exercise sovereignty and authority in the north by increasing operational activity.

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- Five new frigates have been purchased, improving Norway's capacity in the vast sea areas in the north.
 - The Coast Guard's fleet structure has been updated through the purchase of modern multi-purpose vessels. In particular, surveillance capacity and mobility have been improved, and will be improved further as NH-90 helicopters are phased in for use on helicopter-capable vessels.
 - Entered into an agreement on cooperation in the field of security, defence and preparedness with Iceland (2007), which encompasses cooperation on search and rescue services, civil emergency preparedness and defence activities.
- Future priorities:*
- The helicopter base at Bardufoss will be further developed by concentrating helicopter capacity for maritime operations at the air station there.
 - Exercise activities in the north with allies and also with other important partner countries will be further developed.
 - The army is planning to expand its exercise activities in 2011 and 2012. Much of this activity will take place in the north.
 - The Coast Guard gives priority to the northern seas, and according to plan will dedicate almost 2 500 patrol days a year to these areas in 2011 and 2012.
- The activity of the Coastal Squadron (frigates, Skjold-class corvettes, mine-clearance vessels, submarines) in the north is rising steadily as new vessels are phased in. Sailing time (days) is expected to double from 2008 to 2012.
 - The NH-90 helicopters will continue to be phased in.
 - In 2012, construction of the first of two new border stations for the border guards on the Norwegian–Russian border will be started.
 - Military cooperation with Russia will be further developed.
- 3. The Government will seek to ensure that Norway is the best steward of the environment and the natural resources in the High North**
- Results:*
- A management plan for the Norwegian Sea and an updated management plan for the marine environment of the Barents Sea–Lofoten area have been drawn up. The management plans have attracted international attention and are resulting in a greater focus on resource management in the High North.
 - Jan Mayen and its territorial waters have been protected as a nature reserve, and the Bjørnøya nature reserve has been extended to the 12-nautical-mile territorial limit.
- A prohibition on the use of heavy bunker oil by ships sailing in the protected areas in Svalbard has been introduced.
 - The new Act relating to the management of biological, geological and landscape diversity (the Nature Diversity Act) has been passed.
 - 53 000 km² of the seabed has been mapped under the MAREANO programme in the Barents Sea–Lofoten management plan area.
 - The research initiative on the impacts of climate change on fish stocks, ecosystems and aquaculture has been continued, for example within the framework of a research programme under the Institute of Marine Research.
 - Efforts to build up knowledge on the management of wild living marine resources within the framework of broad-based cooperation programmes involving various institutions have been intensified.
 - A joint Norwegian–Russian report on the status of the environment in the Barents Sea has been drawn up, and work has started on joint Norwegian–Russian environmental monitoring activities for the Barents Sea.
- Future priorities:*
- Follow up national targets and international commitments related to the climate and environment, and continue to set high environmental and safety standards for commercial activities, based on the precautionary principle,

the principle that cumulative environmental effects must be assessed, the provisions of the Nature Diversity Act on conservation and sustainable use, and the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act.

- Continue to play a leading role in developing an integrated, ecosystem-based marine management regime, and encourage all countries with jurisdiction over sea areas adjacent to Norwegian areas to develop integrated management plans.
- Work towards the inclusion of climate change adaptation as a key topic for the Arctic Council and other cooperation forums in the High North, and towards the development of Arctic climate change adaptation strategies.
- Establish targeted global and regional cooperation to ensure protection of particularly vulnerable areas and species.
- Take steps to reduce emissions of short-lived climate forcers in the High North.
- Seek to ensure that knowledge about climate change in the High North is disseminated and is given priority in the international climate negotiations.
- Strengthen cooperation with Russia on the marine environment with a view to establishing an integrated Norwegian–Russian monitoring programme for the Barents Sea.

- Aim to complete mapping of the seabed in the Barents Sea–Lofoten area by 2020.

- Cooperate with Finland on measures for sustainable fisheries and to rebuild the weak salmon stocks in the Tana river system.

4. The Government will improve monitoring, emergency response and maritime safety systems in northern sea areas

Results:

- A vessel traffic service centre was established in Vardø in 2010. This is a national centre of expertise on maritime safety, oil spill response and monitoring.
- Substantial strengthening of oil spill response capacity through systematic replacement of oil spill equipment since 2006.
- Barents Online: the Norwegian National Coastal Administration is coordinating work on the maritime surveillance and information system BarentsWatch, which is designed to provide reliable services for both public and private users.
- Norway has been at the forefront of efforts to draw up the first internationally binding agreement to be negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council – the Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement, which was signed at the ministerial meeting in Nuuk in May

2011. The agreement sets out the geographical area for which each country is responsible.

Future priorities:

- The BarentsWatch public information portal will come into operation in 2012, and work on the closed system will be continued in close cooperation with government agencies that have operational responsibility at sea. The operation and development of the public information portal will be based in Tromsø.
- Norway is at the forefront of efforts to develop binding rules for shipping in polar waters (the Polar Code) under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
- Further development of the oil spill response system.
- Norway will promote closer regional cooperation on oil spill response through the Arctic Council.
- Improving maritime safety:
 - Start operation of the new meteorological radar at Gednje on Varangerhalvøya.
 - The introduction of pilot services in Svalbard has been proposed.
- Stronger presence:
 - Continue work on the acquisition of new rescue helicopters with a view to having them in place by 2020.
- Strengthened capacity in Svalbard:
 - As of 2014, the Governor's helicopter



PHOTO: HELGE HANSEN/STATOIL

Arctic Princess docks at Melkøya

service is to have two large helicopters and better response time.²

- High level of preparedness:
 - Continue efforts to improve maritime safety and the emergency response system for acute pollution in the High North.
- Better knowledge:
 - Continue charting activities based on priority needs for research and transport in the region, for example through the cooperation on Arctic nautical charting.

5. The Government will strengthen and further develop cooperation with Russia

Results:

- After 40 years of negotiations, a historic agreement has been concluded with Russia on maritime delimitation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean. The clarification of the delimitation line is a milestone and opens up new opportunities for cooperation. Norway and Russia now have a land border from 1826 and a maritime boundary from 2011.
- Trade has increased from NOK 13.6 billion in 2005 to NOK 17 billion in 2010.
- Substantial increase in cross-border contact. The number of border crossings at Storskog has increased from around 8 000 in 1990 to 107 000 in

2005, and is expected to be around 190 000 in 2011.

- After a slow start, economic cooperation in the north has increased considerably: 40 Norwegian companies have now established operations in Murmansk.
- An honorary consulate was re-established in Arkhangelsk in September 2010.
- Norway's diplomatic presence in Russia has been strengthened through a reallocation of resources in the Foreign Service.
- An agreement has been negotiated on local border traffic permits that facilitate cross-border contact for those who live near the Norwegian–Russian border.
- A strategic energy partnership has been developed on the basis of an extensive energy dialogue with Russia that includes follow-up of the delimitation agreement with regard to any offshore oil and gas discoveries that extend across the delimitation line.
- Extensive contact has been established between Norwegian and Russian forces in the north. Joint Norwegian–Russian maritime exercises – the “Pomor exercises” – were carried out in 2010 and 2011.
- Important steps have been taken to make things easier for businesses and individuals involved in cross-border

cooperation with Russia, for example through the provision of work permits for unskilled labour and simpler visa procedures (the “Pomor visa”).

- The Barents Secretariat's cross-border projects (3 200 projects since 1993) have contributed to a considerable strengthening of people-to-people cooperation with Russia.
- Norwegian–Russian cooperation in areas such as education, environment, health, fisheries management and business operations has been strengthened.
- Support has been provided for Norwegian fisheries organisations' cooperation and dialogue with their sister organisations in Russia.
- Nuclear cooperation in northwestern Russia: Norway has contributed to the dismantlement of five decommissioned nuclear submarines, one of these together with the UK. All of the 180 radioactive power sources for lighthouses have been removed and replaced by solar panels.
- Substantial increase in the number of Russian students in Norway – from 526 in 2005 to 1 175 in 2010.
- The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and the Russian Ministry of Education and Science have signed an MoU on cooperation in the field of higher education.
- Environmental cooperation with Russia has been strengthened in the areas

² See Prop. 146 S (2010–2011).

of integrated marine management, biodiversity and environmental monitoring in the border areas, as well as responsible management of hazardous substances.

- Broad cooperation has been established in the field of health, for example on infectious diseases, coordination of primary and specialist health services and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.
- Extensive cooperation has been established through the multilateral programme *Children and Youth at Risk in the Barents Region (CYAR)*.

Future priorities:

- The Government intends to build a new border station at Storskog in Sør-Varanger. More information about the timing of this measure will be provided at a later stage.
- Capacity at the border control station at Storskog will be increased through immediate measures to be implemented during the winter 2011/2012. These include increasing the number of in-coming and out-going lanes and control booths, installing equipment for electronic passport control and language training. An increased police presence at Storskog in 2012 has been proposed.
- The Government will review the visa application process with a view to further easing visa procedures for Russian citizens within the framework of the Schengen cooperation during the current parliamentary term.

- The Government aims to implement the local border traffic system in the first half of 2012.
- The Government will continue to advocate and work towards stopping the major emissions from nickel production in the Pechenga region of the Kola Peninsula.
- The Government will follow up the many concrete proposals for cross-border cooperation set out in the joint declaration on cross-border cooperation³ and the work plan for strengthening Norwegian–Russian cross-border cooperation for the period 2011–2015.⁴
- A strategy for business sector cooperation with Russia will be presented in 2012.
- Efforts will be made to further increase labour mobility between Norway and Russia.

³ Joint declaration by the Norwegian and Russian foreign ministers on strengthening Norwegian–Russian cooperation (2 November 2010).

⁴ Work plan to create favourable legal, trade, economic and other conditions for strengthening Norwegian–Russian cross-border cooperation, 2011–2015 (February 2011).

6. The Government will strengthen and further develop cooperation with the other Arctic countries and intensify dialogue with other partners who share our interests in the region

Results:

- Through our High North diplomacy, Norway has helped to increase international attention on and understanding of developments in the north.
- Norway has strengthened its position as a key player in the High North.
- We have established extensive High North dialogues with the member states of the Arctic Council, and we have held dialogues with emphasis on energy with Germany, France, the UK, Spain, Poland, the Netherlands and Italy.
- We have started dialogues with certain Asian countries (China, Japan, South Korea) on issues relating to the High North.
- We have entered into a cooperation agreement with Iceland on High North-related research, and have established a three-year guest professorship at the University of Akureyri.
- Norway maintains close contact with various EU bodies on developments in the High North.
- We have signed a declaration on cooperation with the Home Rule Government of Greenland (Naalakkersuisut).

Future priorities:

- Help to shape the agenda and promote Norwegian views and interests in the High North and the Arctic.
- Establish a coordination forum for the leaders of Nordland, Troms and Finnmark county councils and the President of the Sami Parliament to exchange information and facilitate the implementation of large-scale projects. This is to be led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- Continue existing dialogues with emphasis on developing concrete cooperation projects with other countries.
- Enter into an agreement with the UK on closer cooperation on polar research and cultural heritage.
- Intensify the dialogue with the countries and organisations that are seeking permanent observer status in the Arctic Council (China, Japan, South Korea, Italy, the European Commission).
- Strengthen concrete cooperation with North Sweden and North Finland.

7. The Government will seek to strengthen cooperation in the Arctic Council and in regional forums such as the Barents Cooperation and the Northern Dimension

Results:

- A permanent secretariat for the Arctic Council will be established in Tromsø by 2013. This will strengthen coopera-

tion in the Arctic Council as well as Norway's position in Arctic cooperation and policy development.

- The first legally binding agreement between the member states of the Arctic Council has been entered into (the Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement).
- The Arctic Council's global role has been strengthened through the establishment of criteria for the admission of permanent observers.
- Partnerships in the areas of environment, health, transport and logistics, and culture have been established through the Northern Dimension (cooperation between the EU, Iceland, Norway and Russia).

Future priorities:

- Norway is to be a driving force in strengthening the Arctic Council and is to work for more binding cooperation on relevant areas between members and observers.
- Negotiations on oil spill response in Arctic areas. A report on the status of this work is to be presented at the Arctic Council's ministerial meeting in 2013.
- We will work for the admission of more countries as permanent observers to the Arctic Council.
- The Barents Cooperation will be further developed through Norway's chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council in 2011–2013. The main priority is to promote the Barents region as a region

for innovation and environmentally sound management of resources based on knowledge.

- A new, updated political declaration is to be drawn up for the 20th anniversary of the Barents Cooperation in 2013 outlining our future cooperation.
- We will promote closer coordination of and synergy between the various regional forums for cooperation.
- We will seek to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of Arctic cooperation.

8. The Government will continue to promote implementation of the Law of the Sea and to further develop standards and legislation in relevant areas

Results:

- Through its active High North diplomacy, Norway has contributed to the understanding of the fact that the Law of the Sea constitutes the overall legal framework for the Arctic Ocean.
- At a meeting in Oslo in October 2007 between the five coastal states bordering the Arctic Ocean a common understanding was reached regarding the basic legal principles governing the Arctic.
- Norway participated actively in the development of the Ilulissat Declaration (2008), which sets out that the five coastal states bordering the Arctic Ocean (Canada, Denmark, Russia, the



PHOTO: FFI/NASA/NORWEGIAN SPACE CENTRE

Norwegian AISSat-1 has improved surveillance of maritime activities in the High North.

US and Norway) recognise that the Law of the Sea provides the framework for national measures and cooperation in the Arctic Ocean, and that they remain committed to the orderly settlement of any possible overlapping claims.

- Final clarification of the extent of our continental shelf. Norway is the first Arctic state to receive recommendations from the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.
- The maritime delimitation treaty with Russia entered into force on 7 July 2011.

Future priorities:

- The Government will continue to work for full implementation of the Law of the Sea and to help to increase respect and support for its principles through active diplomacy.
- The Government will contribute to the development of binding requirements for shipping and maritime operations in Arctic waters through the establishment of the Polar Code under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

9. The Government will facilitate the further development of a sustainable fisheries and aquaculture industry in the High North

Results:

- Large-scale illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing) has been eliminated in the Barents Sea

through successful cooperation with Russia. In 2009 and 2010, no IUU fishing of cod or haddock was registered.

- A national strategy for marine bioprospecting was launched in 2009. The Government will promote innovative value creation through targeted work on marine bioprospecting,
- The Government has been involved in the establishment of a breeding centre for cod, an aquaculture research station and fish health laboratory in the Tromsø area and a national centre for capture-based aquaculture at Nofima in Tromsø.

Future priorities:

- Continue the close Norwegian-Russian cooperation on management of the fish stocks in the Barents Sea, and seek to develop cooperation with other countries and relevant organisations to improve the management regime further.
- Encourage further restructuring and innovation in the seafood industry.
- Facilitate growth of the aquaculture industry in North Norway within environmentally sustainable limits.
- Enhance expertise in the seafood industry, and strengthen recruitment.
- Implement the national strategy for marine bioprospecting.

- Continue monitoring of contaminants in fish from the northern sea areas and farmed fish.

- Continue the cod breeding programme run by Nofima.

10. The Government will facilitate the sound utilisation of the oil and gas resources in the High North

Results:

- A record level of oil and gas activity has been reached in the north, and new areas have been opened up for exploration. The framework for petroleum activities is set out in the white paper on petroleum activities and the updated management plan for the Barents Sea-Lofoten area.
- Geological surveys of the area west of the delimitation line between Norway and Russia in the Barents Sea have been started.
- The opening process and environmental impact assessment for the Jan Mayen area have been initiated. Seismic surveys have been started.
- Survey of the suitability of ports in eastern Finnmark for a new oil terminal. Several ports have been assessed, but Kirkenes is the only existing port that meets the requirements.

Future priorities:

- Facilitate expansion of oil and gas activities in the Norwegian part of the southern Barents Sea, among other

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- things by initiating an impact assessment in accordance with the Petroleum Act, with a view to granting production licences for the previously disputed area west of the delimitation line in the southern part of the Barents Sea (south of 74°30' N).
- If this is justified by the conclusions of the impact assessment, the Government will present a white paper recommending that these areas should be opened for petroleum activity.
 - Build up knowledge about potential impacts of petroleum activities in the unopened parts of Nordland IV, V, VI, VII and Troms II and collect geological data on the unopened parts of Nordland IV.
 - Facilitate increased activity that will have spin-off effects in North Norway, including boosting employment and building up knowledge clusters.
 - Ensure that new discoveries result in maximum value creation for society and promote local and regional spin-off effects.
 - Promote the development of expertise and cooperation so that Norwegian companies can take part in the expected activity on areas of the continental shelf under other countries' jurisdiction in the High North.
- If major new discoveries are made, consider the potential for the profitable use of gas in onshore industries and look at how new infrastructure can be developed.
 - Play a part in the development of health, environment and safety standards for Arctic oil and gas activities.
- 11. The Government will facilitate safe maritime transport and maritime business activities in the High North**
- Results:*
- The Centre for High North Logistics (CHNL) has been established as an international knowledge hub for businesses, research institutions and authorities so that they can develop effective and sustainable logistics solutions for northern sea areas.
 - Concerted effort to boost maritime education in North Norway:
 - Maritime education programmes at the University of Tromsø and a number of North Norwegian technical colleges have been strengthened.
 - A professorship in sustainable maritime transport has been established at the Department of Marine Technology at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).
 - A bachelor programme in international preparedness has been started at the Norwegian Fire Protection Training Institute, in cooperation with Narvik and Harstad University Colleges.
- The Government's maritime strategy has resulted in the allocation of substantial funding for the development of expertise on maritime activities in the High North.
- Future priorities:*
- Northern marine and coastal areas are becoming increasingly accessible for shipping. The Government will establish a group of experts to examine how Norwegian interests can best be safeguarded in the light of this.
 - Norway will play an active role in the development of international rules, industry standards and knowledge and in information sharing to reduce the risk of accidents and acute pollution.
 - The Government's maritime strategy and MARKOM2020, which is a cooperation project within higher maritime education, will be implemented.
 - Allocations for building up expertise will be continued.
- 12. The Government will promote onshore business development in the High North**
- Results:*
- We have ensured that the scheme for differentiated employers' national insurance contributions can be continued in agreement with the EU.
 - We have initiated a survey of mineral resources in Nordland, Troms and Finnmark (by the Geological Survey

of Norway (NGU)) with a view to possible industrial development and value creation.

- Nordnorsk Reiseliv AS has been established to strengthen the profile of the tourism and travel industry and international marketing of North Norway.
- Support has been provided for studies on the importance of the mineral industry for the High North and the potential for Nordic cooperation.
- Support has been provided for the establishment of a professorship in economic geology at the University of Tromsø.

Future priorities:

- We will facilitate increased value creation and human activity in the north while ensuring that environmental value and biodiversity are maintained.
- The Government announced in the white paper on state ownership that it would put forward a proposal on the establishment of a number of new country-wide seed money funds. One of these will be established in North Norway.
- We will facilitate the utilisation of mineral resources in the High North through the presentation of a strategy for the mineral industry in spring 2012.
- The mineral sector will be one of the main priorities of the Norwegian chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council in 2011–2013.

→ Continue the five-year programme (NGU) to survey mineral resources in the High North, 2011–2015.

- Continue development of the knowledge base for incorporating environmental concerns into onshore business development.
- Further develop business cooperation with Russia, between North Norway and neighbouring areas of Sweden and Finland, and with other countries within and outside the High North.
- Continue efforts to promote entrepreneurship and innovation among young people, giving priority to travel and tourism and Arctic technology.

→ Maintain focus on the travel and tourism industry in North Norway and Svalbard.

- Promote further cooperation and coordination between actors in the travel and tourism industry, and support the development of Nordnorsk Reiseliv AS as a tool in this work.

13. The Government will further develop infrastructure in the High North, both independently and in cooperation with our neighbouring countries, with a view to supporting business development

Results:

- Considerable increase in investment in new roads and maintenance of the road network in North Norway.

→ The project on infrastructure in the north, *Ny infrastruktur i nord*, has submitted its report and proposed a number of measures to improve infrastructure in the north. The report was commissioned in connection with the preparation of a new national transport plan for 2014–2023.

→ The space-related infrastructure has been further strengthened with the launch in 2010 of the first Norwegian satellite (AISSat-1), designed to receive AIS signals from ships.

→ The AIS satellite has improved surveillance of maritime activities in northern waters.

→ Norway has participated in the development of the European satellite navigation system Galileo.

Future priorities:

- Follow up the National Transport Plan 2010–2019, which includes a number of projects of major strategic importance for the development of the High North.
- Work to establish transport infrastructure between Norway and our neighbouring countries to link different parts of the Barents region more closely together.
- Follow up proposals for concrete improvements to the transport infrastructure in the north in connection with the National Transport Plan 2014–2023.

- Further develop the electricity infrastructure in the north with a view to improving security of supply and meeting growing energy needs. This will be done both by upgrading the transmission grid between southern Norway and North Norway and through cooperation with our neighbouring countries.
- Maintain focus on space-related activity in the High North.
- Continue Norwegian participation in the development of the European satellite navigation system Galileo.
- Clarify whether there is a commercial basis for upgrading the Ofoten iron ore railway line and an interest on the part of the mineral-based industry in other measures, and intensify cooperation with our neighbouring countries on the Ofoten Line.

14. The Government will seek to ensure that Norway's High North policy continues to safeguard the culture and livelihood of indigenous peoples

Results:

- Regular meetings have been held with the Sami Parliament (Sámediggi) on High North-related matters. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has regular half-yearly consultations with the Sami Parliament at political level.
- Grant schemes have been introduced to enable representatives of indigenous peoples to participate and have a say

in the regional political processes in the Arctic Council and the Barents Cooperation.

- It has become established practice for the President of the Sami Parliament to deliver part of the Norwegian statement at ministerial meetings in the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council.
- Norway and Russia signed a joint declaration in 2010 where the focus is inter alia on strengthening contacts between indigenous groups, revitalising and preserving indigenous peoples' traditional culture and livelihoods and safeguarding their quality of life.
- We have helped to ensure that Sami culture and indigenous culture are one of five focus areas in the three-year cultural cooperation programme between Norway and Russia for the period 2010–2012.
- The Sami Science Centre in Kautokeino has been completed. We have implemented measures to strengthen tuition in the Sami languages and improve recruitment to Sami teacher training programmes.
- A pilot project entitled Árbiediehtu has been started at the Sami University College on documentation, preservation and use of traditional Sami knowledge.
- We have provided support for a number of measures aimed at promoting the culture and livelihoods of indigenous people.

- The International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry (ICR) has been established to strengthen international cooperation on reindeer husbandry in Arctic areas in cooperation with reindeer herders and their organisations.
- The Centre for Northern Peoples opened in Kåfjord in Nord-Troms in 2011.

Future priorities:

- Ensure that representatives of indigenous peoples' organisations are given sufficient opportunity to participate in processes and decisions that affect indigenous peoples.
- Intensify international cooperation on research on the impact of climate change on indigenous peoples' livelihoods.
- Ensure that business activities that affect indigenous peoples' interests are carried out in a sustainable way, and that there is a close dialogue between the companies, authorities and indigenous people's organisations concerned. Seek to ensure that increased industrial activity in indigenous peoples' areas also creates jobs for the indigenous population.
- Initiate a cross-border regional project to document traditional Sami knowledge in the Nordic countries and Russia.
- Start developing ethical guidelines for economic activities in the north.

15. The Government will further develop cultural and people-to-people cooperation in the High North

Results:

- The BarentsKult fund has been established to provide support for a large number of Norwegian–Russian cultural projects.
- A large number of people-to-people projects have been supported by the Barents Secretariat.
- Active support has been provided for various cultural festivals: the Northern Lights Festival and Tiff in Tromsø and Barents Spektakel in Kirkenes. Efforts are being made to strengthen these festivals' international networks.
- Support has been provided for voluntary initiatives with a view to fostering broad engagement and strengthening civil society in the region.
- Through the Barents Euro-Arctic Council's working group on youth policy cooperation, close cooperation has been established to promote and provide administrative and economic support for exchanges of groups of children and young people in the Barents region. Funding is also provided for other multilateral projects for children and young people.
- Support will be provided for Russian civil society and environmental and human rights organisations, and for efforts to promote a free press. Support will also be provided for Norwegian–Russian trade union cooperation.
- Greater emphasis will be given to measures to strengthen economic ties and growth with a view to strengthening the basis for employment and settlement.
- Support for cultural projects in the Barents region will be continued.

Future priorities:

- Support will continue to be provided for people-to-people projects through the Barents Secretariat.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In order to achieve the main objectives set out in the High North policy, the Government has drawn up a number of overall strategic priorities. These can be summed up in the following 15 points:

1 The Government will seek to ensure that Norway is a leader in the field of knowledge in and about the High North.

2 The Government will ensure that Norway exercises its sovereignty and authority in the High North in a credible, consistent and predictable manner.

3 The Government will seek to ensure that Norway is the best steward of the environment and the natural resources in the High North.

4 The Government will improve monitoring, emergency response and maritime safety systems in northern sea areas.

5 The Government will strengthen and further develop cooperation with Russia.

6 The Government will strengthen and further develop cooperation with the

other Arctic countries and intensify dialogue with other partners who share our interests in the region.

7 The Government will seek to strengthen cooperation in the Arctic Council and in regional forums such as the Barents Cooperation and the Northern Dimension.

8 The Government will continue to promote implementation of the Law of the Sea and to further develop standards and legislation in relevant areas.

9 The Government will facilitate the further development of a sustainable fisheries and aquaculture industry in the High North.

10 The Government will facilitate the sound utilisation of the oil and gas resources in the High North.

11 The Government will facilitate safe maritime transport and maritime business activities in the High North.

12 The Government will promote onshore business development in the High North.

13 The Government will further develop infrastructure in the High North, both independently and in cooperation with our neighbouring countries, with a view to supporting business development.

14 The Government will seek to ensure that Norway's High North policy continues to safeguard the culture and livelihood of indigenous peoples.

15 The Government will further develop cultural and people-to-people cooperation in the High North.

MFA
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