

Country: Kingdom of Norway

Issue: Geopolitics of the Melting Arctic

Committee: Legal Committee 2

ISSUE AND POSITION:

The rapid warming of the Arctic is endangering species and ecosystems that are dependent on ice and snow, and also poses a threat to local communities (Norway's Arctic Policy, 2021). Some 9% of the Norwegian population lives north of the Arctic circle, a greater proportion than any other country, and 35% of Norwegian land is in the Arctic Circle (Arctic Institute, 2020). Norway is increasingly invested in the global precautions surrounding the melting arctic and natural resource rush (NMFA, 2017) due to its direct contact with the drastically changing climate. Norway seeks to honor its sustainable approach towards the changing Arctic climate by setting an example for environmental protection and emergency preparedness for the future of the Arctic circle.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Arctic temperature is rising three times faster than the global annual average(AC, 2022). Without the urgent cut to greenhouse gas emissions, the world will continue to feel the effects of a warming Arctic: rising sea level, changes in climate and precipitation patterns, increasing severe weather events, and loss of fish stock, birds, and marine mammals. These changes could be devastating not only for the Arctic, but for the global environment and economy.

Norway, a founding member of the Arctic council since 1996, signed a legally binding agreement in 2013, on cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic with its co-chairs, Russia and the United States (AC, 2022). This agreement is one of the many signed by Norway in the push for increased climate precaution and defense. On July 1st, 2021 Norway replaced Lithuania for the 2021-22 presidency of The Council of the Baltic Sea States, an intergovernmental political forum, supporting regional perspectives on global changes. The Norwegian presidency will focus on three overall aims; accelerating cooperation on the green transition, with an emphasis on clean energy and circular economy, fostering regional identity and cooperation, and supporting the current mandates on civil protection (CBSS, 2021). Norway gives high priority to cooperation in the Arctic Council, the Baltic Sea cooperation, and the Northern Dimension.

ACTION ON THE ISSUE:

More knowledge and new approaches are needed to minimize the impacts of human activity on the Arctic environment. The Norwegian government will maintain its engagement in broad-based, proactive international cooperation in the north and in global areas where the Arctic is discussed. This includes facilitating cross-border local and regional cooperation in the north. Norway will include its participation of both resources and expertise of relevance to the EU's European Green Deal, including in the areas of blue-green technology and green transformation (Norway's Arctic Policy, 2021).

Resources:

https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/arctic_policy/id2830120/

<https://www.barentscooperation.org/>

<https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/countries/norway/#:~:text=As%20one%20third%20of%20Norway's,national%20security%20and%20defence%20policies.>

https://arctic.noaa.gov/Portals/7/ArcticReportCard/Documents/ArcticReportCard_full_report2020.pdf

<https://arctic-council.org/about/states/norway/>

<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/fad46f0404e14b2a9b551ca7359c1000/arctic-strategy.pdf>

<https://arcticwwf.org/work/climate/>