THE TRANS-ARCTIC AGENDA 2014: CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABILITY; COOPERATION AND GOVERNANCE

A high-level international seminar at Reykjavik, 28-29 October 2014

Organized by the Centre for Arctic Policy Studies (CAPS), University of Iceland
Introduction
The second annual Trans Arctic Agenda seminar was designed to focus on the governance and management of the Arctic region following the Arctic Council meeting in Kiruna of 2013. Furthermore the 2014 Trans Arctic Agenda seminar created a link into two other high level Arctic conferences that took place in Iceland the same week – namely Gender equality in the Arctic (Akureyri 30 October) and the Arctic Circle (Reykjavík 31 October-2. November).

The seminar focused on the rapid changes that climate change and increased international attention bring to the circumpolar Arctic region. These changes offer new opportunities for resource exploitation, human settlement and travel, but they can also disrupt the present natural conditions and living environment for all concerned in the High North. Prudent, cooperative and sustainable handling of the challenges involved will be crucial for gleaning as much as possible from the positive effects of change while minimizing the potential damage.

With the main focus on the governance and management of the Arctic region following the Arctic Council meeting in Kiruna of 2013, the focus was not only on the perspectives of the circumpolar states, but also on the influence of different actors, state, non-state and corporate; permanent participants; and observers. This was achieved by looking at different perceptions and policies, how they are formed and what actors have a voice strong enough to influence policy making. This involved examining the interplay of business development and environmental protection, emerging sub-regions and the possibilities and limitations of Arctic governance. The seminar offered both a retrospective and a forward-looking perspective on North American leadership in the Arctic Council with the US taking over from Canada in 2015.

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The Trans-Arctic Agenda conference for 2014 began with an opening session where Dr. Kristín Ingólfsdóttir, Rector of the University of Iceland, welcomed everyone on the behalf of the University and the Centre for Arctic Policy Studies (CAPS). She reiterated the importance of interdisciplinarity in the study of Arctic policy issues and commended the conference’s agenda for focusing on current issues of recent development, governance and management in the Arctic region - and in particular, the challenges of sustainability and cooperation – against the background of climate change. She welcomed H.E. Ólafur Ragnar Grimsson, President of Iceland to the podium for his opening remarks.

The President welcomed the high-level participation demonstrated by this conference in the important topical discourse on the transformation of the Arctic. The issue might be approached from many directions, but the President stressed the importance of recalling that the Arctic had only recently become a territory of cooperation and dialogue. He saw no other
case in human history where a major part of the world had in such a short time become the concern of so many leading powers in different continents. In the early years of the 20th century the Arctic was still far away. The indigenous peoples had of course been there for thousands of years, but Europeans and the Western world were relative newcomers to the territory. Even Iceland, the United States and Russia, perhaps not the Norwegian Kingdom, but all the other Arctic states were relatively young entities compared to the indigenous communities who had lived for so long in the Arctic.

In the second half of the 20th century, when the world of science, research and politics were gradually becoming aware of the Arctic, the Cold War caused the region to become the most militarized territory in the world, with every form of military technology created being placed somewhere around the Pole. Relatively soon after the Cold War, however, the world came together in active, constructive cooperation on the Arctic. This was an almost unbelievable achievement, especially for those who knew how difficult politics and international relations could be. Despite the disappointments and frustrations often expressed over Arctic cooperation in the last 20 years, President Grímsson viewed the building of Arctic cooperation as perhaps the most outstanding example of positive political achievement in the world during that period. The eight Arctic states and the active community of scientists, activists, environmentalists and indigenous peoples were able to transform the Arctic not only into a territory of positive dialogue and discussion, but ultimately into a space for creating treaties, rules and regulations.

Referring to the challenge of climate change, President Grímsson welcomed the states who had been newly admitted (in May 13) to the Arctic Council as observers. Their involvement gave an opportunity for further action on tackling climate change. China's interest in the Arctic was understandable, especially as the melting of the ice was the primary cause of colossal disasters occurring all over Chinese territory. Such interest in Arctic affairs was natural, should be welcomed and could create extraordinary prospects for concerted action. He trusted that the newly arrived states to the Arctic Council would observe what he called the House Rules, and maintain the culture of open dialogue, formal deliberation and mutual respect that had made Arctic cooperation so successful in recent years.

Secondly, the President emphasized the pre-eminent role of science and research in Arctic policymaking, which must be carefully preserved. Thirdly and within this process, a profound respect should be maintained for indigenous peoples, their history, human rights, their communities, culture and their traditions. This was their land, their future and their faith that we were dealing with. As newcomers to their homeland, other actors should show profound respect when entering their land and mingling with their culture.

He concluded that there was no fixed pathway for moving ahead. The Arctic's future represented a responsibility without precedent in human history and offered an opportunity to create a successful road-map for this large part of the planet Earth.

First Plenary: Arctic and Foreign Policies of the Arctic States
During the first plenary, eight speakers from the eight Arctic Council’s member states presented their respective nations’ Arctic policies.
The first strategy to be analyzed was that of Canada, Chair of the Arctic Council from May 2013 to April 2015. From the Cold War onwards, Canadian approaches to international relations had shifted away from continentalism – i.e. convergence with US policy and a focus on free trade – towards a wider internationalism. This created the popular image of Canada as a “peace nation”, always working multilaterally, and emphasizing responsibility on the world stage. Since the entrance of the Harper government, however, a shift could be seen towards what might be called neo-continentalism, which echoed the previous continentalism in its neo-conservative values but with an added focus on security. Further, the present foreign policy sought to “restore” Canada’s international influence by moving from multilateral frameworks back to bilateralism with the American neighbours. Hence, although the Arctic was seen as strategically important, the cooperation mechanisms of the Arctic Council were less of a focus in the capital, Ottawa, than previously.

The USA would be taking over as Arctic Council Chair for two years from April 2015. Its Arctic policy was of keen interest to many but was described as somewhat elusive. Historical US engagement in the region began with the purchase of Alaska from the Russians in 1867, designed to keep Europeans away from the American continent. The USA became an important actor in the polar space during the Cold War, aiming for strategic reasons to demonstrate the “control of things” in the Arctic. The first US strategy for the Arctic was issued by President Clinton, but its content was kept a secret. The second George W. Bush Administration published its Arctic strategy during its last week of office, stating among other things that it considered a broad Arctic treaty unnecessary. Interestingly, it also recommended that the USA accede to UNCLOS III. Aside from a flurry of bureaucratic activity, the strategy did not result in any new appropriations or reallocation of forces to the Arctic, and the complex command structure remained unchanged. The ultimate result of the strategy was what the Quadrennial Defense Review in 2010 called “Domain Awareness”: Americans were now saying “we know it’s there”.

The most recent Administration, under President Obama, had released a strategy stressing the role of Alaska, thus apparently delegating discussion and engagement from federal to state level. Reflecting the USA’s other foreign policy priorities such as Asia and Middle East, the strategy failed to set time-lines or to assign new responsibilities. As the US Chairmanship of the Arctic Council approached, the US intelligence assessment was that there was little likelihood of actual conflict in the Arctic, but a greater chance of what could be called “constabulary” issues, such as the need to deal with smuggling and polluting activities. The US government would approach this i.a. through search and rescue cooperation. It could not realistically be expected that the USA would ratify UNCLOS III or fund major infrastructure developments. This relative US inaction could only be challenged in future by China’s behaviour in the Arctic: “The Chinese preoccupation with the Arctic will have a greater impact on the United States than any other single development in coming decades”.

Russian Arctic policy could best be understood as a part of the Russian Grand Strategy. A large portion of Russia’s landmass lay North of the Arctic Circle, so Russian Arctic policy was just as much about domestic as foreign policy. Russia had not only a geopolitical interest but a strong economic one, given the abundance of natural resources in the area. This made the...
North a high national priority and an important focus for necessary cooperation with both Arctic and other non-Arctic states. The evolution of Russian relations with Arctic partners had therefore largely been positive, although it was yet to be seen what would be the spill-over effects of the Ukraine crisis upon Arctic cooperation.

Norway’s approach to the High North had been guided by a sense of entitlement developed throughout history, making Norway an active player in what might be called the ongoing “slow-motion scramble for the Arctic”. In modern terms, Norway’s Arctic goals were first defined by the previous Labour Party Government, where former Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre was strongly involved personally in the ambitious “High North effort”. All the different interest constituencies in Norway were invited to add their wishes to the strategy, leaving the policy document with as many as 20 different “priorities”. In fact, many objectives that would otherwise have fallen under other Ministries or policies were inserted into this new setting. Inevitably, with so many dimensions and priorities, the policy process became somewhat overburdened and under-driven. Even so, some notable achievements could be seen, such as the successful resolution of final issues on the maritime boundary with Russia, the “environmentalisation” of Svalbard, and the domestic focus on Northern Norway.

Less successful was the implicit assumption that by treating Russia as Sweden, i.e. simply ignoring the particular challenges posed by the ex-Soviet neighbour, it would also act in a Swedish way – that had clearly not happened. Hence, as the new Government and Minister of Foreign Affairs Børge Brende sought to continue Norway’s established High North policy, the primary challenge would be how to maintain the nation’s successful co-existence with Russia in the Arctic and beyond.

Denmark was an Arctic state only by virtue of Greenland, and Danish foreign policy in the Arctic should be seen in the perspective of relations with the latter. There were three pivotal dates in recent history: 1953, when Greenland went from being a colony to a recognised nation; 1979, when it achieved the Home Rule Agreement; and 2009, when the Self-Government Agreement was signed with Copenhagen. Nowadays Greenland held legislative, executive and judicial power within the fields where responsibility had been transferred and within those limits, it had its own foreign policy. It was also in Greenland’s hands whether to request full sovereignty in future, meaning that as things stood, it only remained “under” Denmark by choice. While this lasted, however, Denmark still had responsibility for foreign policy in general and for defence/security issues. This gave scope for controversy insofar as there was no definition of these exempted areas, and practice was developed in response to case by case challenges – which could mean a high level of ambiguity in the context of Arctic affairs. For example, the extraction of uranium was often cited as an issue hampering Greenland from exploiting its own domestic resources, due to Denmark’s policy position that uranium was a security matter. Further, even if able to determine its foreign policy on issues not directly affecting Denmark, Greenland would more often than not be affected by treaties and agreements that the Danish Government signed.

In the event of full independence, Greenland’s lack of armed forces would raise the question whether there might be a “power vacuum”, where the new state would be “unable to display sovereignty”. Paradoxically, however, in order to maintain unity in the present
relationship, Denmark needed to support Greenland on the path towards independence if that was truly what the Greenlandic people wished. It might finally lead to the end of a colonial-like relationship, and the creation of two fully equal partners.

Finland’s place in the Arctic might be queried as it did not have an outlet to the Arctic seas, and could be considered non-Arctic on various other scientific grounds. However, since 2010 Finland had self-identified itself as an Arctic nation in its first “Strategy for the Arctic Region”. Even if climatologically sub-Arctic, it did have territory north of the Arctic Circle, thereby legitimising its active involvement in Arctic Council cooperation. The Finnish strategy document recognized four main substantial policy areas - fragile Arctic nature, economic activities and know-how, transport and infrastructure and indigenous peoples - that were equally relevant to the Finnish foreign policy. In 2013 Finland adopted a new Strategy for the Arctic Region, which did not prioritize between these sectorial issues and pledged itself to pursue them equally - but without a clear plan of funding.

Similarly to Finland, Iceland’s relationship with the Arctic had been marked by ambiguity around definitions and rights. Despite not having continental shelf claims in the Arctic Ocean per se, Iceland’s oceanic areas did border on the Arctic Ocean, thus leading some to argue that Iceland ought to be included among the region’s littoral, “core” states. For Iceland as a small state, Arctic multilateralism brought an opportunity to strengthen bilateral relations, i.a. with the US. Icelandic foreign policy in general was guided by a sense of exceptionalism, which in turn led to a sense of holding a unique role in the cooperation. In the Arctic context, Icelandic successes on e.g. human rights, gender, and minority equality matched well with an emphasis on indigenous peoples’ rights. In this and other ways Iceland sought to dovetail with the interests of other Arctic states in order to promote national interests, and to establish itself as a kind of hot-spot for Arctic activities.

Sweden was the previous Arctic Council Chair before Canada took over in 2013. Although lacking a coastline on the polar sea, a fifth of Swedish territory could be classed as Arctic. These areas were sparsely populated, but held highly valuable resources for the country including iron ore mining and energy generation. Beyond this, Sweden saw special importance in Arctic science and research, which demanded cross-border collaboration and which had become one of the region’s major international successes – as the President earlier stressed. In Sweden’s view, while the Arctic might present many future “opportunities”, the most important of all was the opportunity for cooperation.

Second Plenary: Arctic Council Observers, the “Near-Arctic” and the High North
At the second plenary, presenters focused on issues involving the Arctic Council observer states and their position in the Arctic region and its governance. The session began with a presentation of the Arctic policy of the European Union, still a candidate for formal recognition of its observer status.

EU policy had evolved over time, gradually becoming more inclusive. By now, the EU had become the biggest contributor to research in the Arctic in a variety of fields. Its current Arctic policy was concentrated on three components, namely, knowledge, responsibility and
engagement. Knowledge concerned the sharing of scientific competence in polar research and the fostering of ties between researchers from the EU and other countries. Responsibility called for the responsible management of Arctic resources and for environment-friendly, low-risk technology that could be used by extracting and shipping industries in the light of accelerating climate change. Engagement was aimed at promoting cooperation with Arctic partners on research, environmental protection and last but not least on economic development, with a special focus on Canada, the United States and Norway as key partners. Gaining observer status in the Arctic Council was crucial for further enhancing the EU's contribution to Arctic cooperation, and the EU hoped that a solution could be found in the nearest future.

The general issue of institutionalization of the Arctic and its implications were the focus of the next presentation. The main political purpose of the Arctic Council could be seen as the international recognition of the Arctic as belonging to the Arctic coastal states. Accepting other countries as observers was one way for the permanent member states to gain legitimacy in their claims. In order to keep the status quo, the Arctic Council had shown that it was able to work beyond its initial limits in signing agreements between its full members such as that of 2013 on marine oil spills (prevention, preparedness and response) in the Arctic. However, the areas subject to this growing institutionalization were ones that could be considered 'soft' policy: economy, transport, tourism and science. By contrast, there was a lack of specifically Arctic institutionalization in the fields of political and military security.

The importance of the Arctic Council as an institution was pursued in the next presentation, which focused on the 'old' observer states at the Arctic Council and specifically on the UK, Germany and France. The number of further applications for observer status showed the growing importance of the Arctic region, as this status offered the only way to gain formal recognition and access to Arctic modes of governance. In 2013, the UK and Germany became the first observer countries to publish their Arctic policies. The British appeared somewhat reluctant in publishing their Arctic Policy Framework, which defined the UK as the Arctic's nearest neighbour but was careful to omit any controversial stance that might upset the Arctic countries. The document did not touch on security issues and throughout, used an appeasing tone which was in contrast to the German Arctic policy paper. The latter was more explicit and controversial vis-a-vis the Arctic states, as Germany's economic interests were very clearly laid out at some points in the text. The document stressed the importance of bilateral agreements, and interestingly Germany mentioned China as a partner for discussing Arctic affairs. The German paper also highlighted concerns over the extended national claims being made to the Arctic sea-bed which could limit the freedom of navigation and scientific research. It saw UNCLOS as too limited in scope for handling such problems. Germany supported the EU's Arctic policy and would like to see the EU's observer status confirmed. Finally, an official French Arctic road-map was expected to be published shortly, following an initiative by M. Roccard, France's ambassador for the Arctic and Antarctica. This was likely to strengthen the European message towards the Arctic countries.

Taken together, the release of such Arctic documents by non-Arctic states confirmed the growing significance of the Arctic region, both politically and scientifically. Since governance
should serve the goal of sustainability, it was important that the Arctic states should work towards a more substantial engagement of the observers in the Arctic Council. The substance of governance was not fixed but should evolve as a function of the context and the invited actors. Lastly, while the Arctic used to be defined largely in territorial terms, a change might be emerging in this regard. Today the Arctic was defined increasingly in relational terms and it was important to include non-Arctic states, in particular in the Arctic Council.

The next speakers looked further at the background to the UK's national perspective on the Arctic. Traditionally the UK had viewed the Arctic as an empty stage, with its small populations and unique nature. The Arctic could not offer generic lessons for political science, but did present interesting insights and could provide some generic security, political and cultural lessons. For example, the rich traditions of the indigenous peoples, their struggle for political autonomy, and their evolving governance could be an example for the 200 million people living in similar communities around the world. The Arctic was also interesting for political science in the context of sovereignty and the rising nationalism in some of the region's great powers. It was worth watching how actors from different political and socio-economic contexts were pursuing their interests in the Arctic. The Arctic was also a test-case to observe, on the one hand, how far international cooperation could trump antagonism, and on the other hand, how continuing international rivalry might limit international cooperation.

Antarctica had already provided a great example of international cooperation, being a treaty region and demilitarized territory with no allowance for any exploitation or economic development. It was reserved for scientific endeavours and to preserve a unique environment for humankind. The Arctic was quite a different story, as an "opening sea", and thus presented a much greater challenge for the international community than Antarctica. One aspect was highlighted by the Global Ocean Commission's report 'From Decline to Recovery: A Rescue Package for the Global Ocean', which identified five drivers of decline in the world's oceans; a rising need for resources, technological advances in marine exploitation, decline of fish stocks, climate change, and the human factor of weakness in high seas governance. There was a danger that these drivers of decline would be extended to the new Arctic sea as it opened up.

One way for observer states to achieve greater presence in the Arctic was through engagement with indigenous peoples (IPs). The next presentation suggested that this could bring mutual benefits for both parties. One the one hand, such engagement could reinforce the position of the indigenous groups as Permanent Participants (PPs) in the Arctic Council. It could touch on issues of real concern for the indigenous peoples, as the external actors in question had an important environmental and economic footprint in terms of climate change, pollutants, resource extraction and investments, and were in a position to influence relevant international developments. The EU had been engaging with the indigenous peoples (IPs) through its Arctic policy documents and through direct contacts in the form of Arctic Dialogues. A special case was the EU decision to exempt IPs' seal products from its policy of a ban on trade in such products. The EU was also thinking through the possibility of a permanent indigenous/Sami presence in Brussels. For its part, China had yet to make a comprehensive Arctic policy statement and had said little on IPs in existing statements. Chinese research in the region placed emphasis on earth sciences rather than social sciences. One example of
engagement with the Arctic IPs was, however, provided by the Chinese Institute for Maritime Affairs research project on Arctic IPs. Generally speaking, all Arctic Council observers seemed to have difficulty in finding ways to express respect and support for Arctic IPs, and to engage in talks, while the IP organizations themselves were not sure what to expect and what such support would look like.

Indigeneity in China was seen as an outcome of European colonization and for this reason there were no officially recognized IPs in China, despite the Evenki in Mongolia. The Arctic IPs were also subject to European colonization. China offered strong international support for indigenous rights in the framework of international organizations, and provided relevant guidelines especially connected with the Chinese investments abroad – these guidelines did not mention IPs per se, but some aspects of them were relevant also for the IPs.

The next presentation looked at international media coverage of the Arctic Council up to and including the 2013 Kiruna ministerial meeting. Media interest had been predominantly low from 2000 to 2007, but there was growing interest around the Kiruna ministerial meeting due to the marine oil pollution agreement (and protests surrounding it), the Greenland boycott of the meeting, and the controversies over the admission of the permanent observer candidates. These topics drove news organizations around the world to dedicate time to the Arctic and its governance. In the Kiruna case, national and regional media in all three categories of countries were forced to articulate their country's relationship to the Arctic and also other countries' relationship to the Arctic, posing the question: what is the Arctic and why does it matter?

Media coverage is important to analyse as it has a crucial role in shaping and reflecting the public debate. It normalizes political geographies; it also reflects the past in covering the present, and projects it on the future. In a project that analysed 280 stories around Kiruna, it was found that reports in Arctic Council member states were structured in two different narratives, protectionism and internationalism. Northern protectionism – the idea of the Arctic as a national territory where only Arctic territorial states had legitimate interests - was dominant in Canadian and Russian coverage. On the other hand, Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish and US coverage was focused more on the global interconnectedness of the Arctic, highlighting its significance in relation to such issues as climate change, resource extraction and shipping routes. Non-Arctic states were viewed as legitimate stakeholders as the Arctic ice melting also affected them through rising sea-levels and changes in the food production. In the states who were applying for observer status, governments had to explain their presence in the Arctic debates and the media focused on the Arctic as an area of international importance due to the effects of ice melting. The coverage consisted of such topics as climate research, global shipping, and resource extraction. Various observer states showed either a suspicious or an understanding approach towards Chinese intentions.

In general, the media coverage was framed around hyperbolic headlines using terms such as scrambles, races, war, and economic and geopolitical rivalry. All reports focused on the hot topics such as resource opportunities, shipping, and challenges such as climate change and international competition. All in all, the media shared a sense of anticipated importance and the significance of national positioning for future developments. In other words, the Arctic was seen to matter not so much for what it was, as for what it might become.
China's position of the Arctic was next considered in more depth. As already mentioned, China had yet to release a white paper on its Arctic strategy. This might however happen soon, given the level of international debate surrounding China's interests in the region. Should a Chinese Arctic strategy be published, it was likely to focus on scientific research, access to Northern resources, access to Arctic Sea routes and the strategy for a greater role within the Arctic Council.

China was accepted as a formal observer to the Arctic Council in 2013, but was also an emerging actor in legal affairs and regional governance in the Arctic. Its main interests in the Arctic were definitely linked to the economic opportunities the region might present. To this end, China, along with other Asian states, was seeking potential joint development projects in the North, including oil and gas development in the North Atlantic, on the Siberian coast and in Canada. Moreover, China was one of many states looking at Greenland with great interest, in particular regarding metals and minerals. It was interested in fishing access, tourism and “eco-tourism” in Iceland and Norway, as well as in the possibility of a free-trade agreement with Iceland, and possibly Canada and Norway.

The issue of Arctic sea routes was an area where China's presence had been greatly felt. Although China was currently seeking to rebalance its economy, faster access to Western markets remained a priority. Currently, the country had only one icebreaker, but was preparing to launch a more modern icebreaking craft. In mid-2013, a Chinese cargo vessel travelled through the Northeast Passage (ie Russia's Northern Sea Route, NSR) from Dalian to Rotterdam in 33 days, about two weeks faster than the usual route through the Indian Ocean. Beijing was hoping to send more cargo ships through the NSR but would need help from Russia for the purpose. Moreover, there were still many complications in the way of utilizing the Northeast Passage, and the perspective for increased shipping in these waterways was rather long-term. Yet China definitely wanted to be involved, and any route designed to improve Chinese shipping would be of great interest.

So far, China had accepted and was in favour of the Arctic Council's guidelines, and had complied with the UNCLOS. In the choice between cooperation or competition for resources and diplomatic influence in the Arctic, China was currently leaning more towards cooperation which it saw as good for its interests. Indeed, if the behaviour of Arctic economies became more zero-sum due to increased non-Arctic state interests and possible Russian/Western tensions, China would be at a disadvantage. One might ask in this context, at what point would the Arctic become more economically crucial for the world, and what would be the effects upon politics, security and the environment?

China was not the only Asian country interested in the Arctic region, nor was climate change the only driver behind Arctic transformation and the growing East Asian interest. Transformation in the Arctic was also based on modernization, such as technological advances and demographic changes, and on continuing processes of globalization or internationalization. The Arctic transformation was attracting global interest in the region because of the consequences of climate change, but also because of more specific environmental changes, resources, transport, geopolitical strategy and security. A redefining or inventing of Arctic policies and strategies could be observed, combined with changes in
Arctic governance in terms of multidimensional challenges, governance structures, the range of actors involved and the setting of rules in the region, and with spill-over effects from other conflicts to the Arctic.

Current East Asian interests in the Arctic were mainly related to the consequences of climate change, Arctic shipping (shorter routes, ship building), access to energy resources, and issues of international position and prestige. Most Asian states were seeking the same things in the Arctic, which raised the question whether this would promote cooperation between them or not. So far, there was not much talk about collaboration and the chances were that the Asian states would compete for resources and to position themselves in the region. As seen from the Nordic region, there were differences in local states’ approaches to East Asian involvement. Finland recognized that the Arctic had become a focal point in the global economy, and focused on the business aspect of East Asian involvement in the region, concluding that these new interests needed to be taken into account and new actors should also be involved in the Arctic Council. Norway saw the interest of East Asian states as a window of opportunity, notably in relation to research projects. It wanted to establish close cooperation with these states and, like Finland, was open to their Arctic involvement. Denmark was a little more hesitant but recognized the presence of these actors and was open for more discussion their involvement in Arctic cooperation. Iceland and Sweden, however, did not mention East Asian states in their policy documents. In practical terms, oil drilling, scientific collaboration, and tourism were areas of ongoing cooperation.

To sum up: the transformation of the Arctic offered a new and interesting opportunity for the development of Nordic–East Asian cooperation. The interests of the two sides seemed to be converging as of now. One way or the other, the development of this cooperation would have an increasing impact on the functioning of the Arctic region in years ahead.

A further presentation looked more specifically at Iceland’s position on the Asian players. Since the mid-2000s there had been an increasing interest in the part of Icelandic elites to engage with Asian governments, companies and investors. Little was previously known, however, about how the average Icelander viewed these emerging collaborations. A new and still ongoing research project on this topic had identified certain themes. First, diplomatic and scientific ties with Asian countries were viewed neutrally or positively. Secondly, trade with Asian countries and companies were seen as an opportunity to sell Icelandic products on new markets, in particular fish, or to save money for consumers. Thirdly, Asian foreign direct investment (FDI) into Iceland was viewed more cautiously.

China stood apart among Asian countries in the Icelandic public imagination, and other countries besides China were not very visible. There was an attitude of caution over developing economic relationships with the Chinese government, companies and investors: partly due to low familiarity with Chinese culture, but also to general suspicion towards the Chinese government, and strong suspicions about Chinese motives on Iceland and in the Arctic – why should China focus on such a small country? Icelanders were very cognizant of the difference in size and economic power between the two states. They were also generally opposed to foreign investments in Icelandic land, fisheries or energy, which were seen as a threat to sovereignty, and aroused deep-seated resistance from the Icelandic psyche and
national character. Another important theme that came up several times during the research was that scale matters. People were more concerned when large land purchases were in question, and China was considered a greater threat than smaller states in this regard. Another reason for Icelandic caution involved China’s culture of long-term strategic thinking, while Iceland had a culture for short-term, opportunistic thinking. This caused Iceland to feel vulnerable and to fear it would be taken advantage of when dealing with the Chinese.

An important question was whether the Icelandic legislative framework was sufficiently developed to protect Icelandic interests when making deals with China. Political and business elites claimed that it was, although the legislation might need some clarification, while others claimed that it was not – the rules were in practice fragile and vulnerable to special deals. One challenge in this regard was Iceland’s tradition of “borrowing” formulations from other countries. A further recurring theme in the research was a profound lack of trust in the will and ability of Icelandic political and business establishments to act in Iceland’s best interests. Finally, the Iceland-China relationship was relatively new, and Icelanders were not sure where leading figures are taking it. China’s size and power were seen as making it especially capable of demanding special conditions.

The research had also revealed some differences in geography. In Reykjavik, people generally showed greater caution and more concern about the environment and China’s human rights record. In contrast, people living in smaller and more remote communities had a stronger desire for economic development and jobs, which tended to create more enthusiasm towards a potential Iceland-China economic relationship. In this respect, national and municipal interests appeared to be in conflict with each other, and there was concern about the lack of coordination between national and municipal levels in terms of attracting foreign direct investments, including from China.

In sum, most Icelanders saw benefits to engaging with China in diplomacy, science and trade. This could lead to an improved diplomatic relationship with a rising power, the chance to bring extra capacity into Arctic science, and the opportunity to participate in a larger market for selling Icelandic products, especially fish. However, there was still also caution about an economic relationship with China, especially regarding projects on Icelandic soil. The results pointed to a need for greater Icelandic understanding of Chinese culture; for a multi-level, cross-sectorial dialogue about the goals for the Icelandic-Chinese relationship; and for the development of a coordinated national strategy for attracting foreign direct investment from China to Iceland.

Following the first two plenaries, the conference was divided into three break-out sessions running in parallel.

Breakout session: the Polar Code and the Law of the Sea
This session focused on two important legal instruments, namely the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the Polar Code for shipping being prepared at the International Maritime Organization (IMO). (Note: This Code was finally adopted in November 2015.) UNCLOS is an international treaty that provides a regulatory framework for
the use of the world's seas and oceans, aiming to ensure the conservation and equitable usage of resources and the marine environment and to ensure the protection and preservation of the living resources of the sea. UNCLOS also addresses other matters such as sovereignty, rights of usage in maritime zones, and navigational rights. In the context of the Arctic, UNCLOS provides an essential road-map for identifying and managing issues in all the related fields.

The session's first presentation highlighted issues related to the jurisdictional zones of the coastal states, namely the delimitation of their maritime boundaries and the proposals for extension of the continental shelf. UNCLOS defines four particular zones: internal waters, territorial waters, exclusive economic zones and the continental shelf. Where the zones of one coastal state meet the zones of another coastal state, there is a need for maritime boundary delimitation, which is decided by bilateral agreements between the concerned countries. In the Arctic, Norway and Russia agreed upon a delimitation line in 2010, the USA and Russia made an agreement in 1990, and Svalbard/Norway and Greenland agreed upon a line in 2006. The boundaries still not decided are the lines between Greenland–Canada and USA–Canada.

With the proposed extension of the continental shelf of various countries in the Arctic, the boundaries will - sooner rather than later - meet at the North Pole. The extension of the continental shelf of coastal states is provided for under article 76 in UNCLOS. Several Arctic countries have submitted claims for such extension to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. Two criteria are applied to evaluating such claims: 1) the shape of the shelf, and 2) the submission made to the Commission. Russia made its first such submission in 2001, but was told it did not meet the Commission's standards. Norway claimed extensions in 2006 and 2009 and became the only Arctic state to successfully claim extension to a small area – north of Svalbard. It is considered only a matter of time before Denmark (for Greenland) and Canada also submit claims on an extended continental shelf to the Commission.

The USA remains the only Arctic state that is not party to UNCLOS, and – as remarked by an earlier speaker – cannot be expected to accede in the near future. Could it nevertheless find a way to extend its continental shelf for another 400 miles beyond the current 200 nautical miles? US lawyers are looking at options involving customary international law as applied to the use of the sea. If other Arctic states accepted such an extension, the USA could 1) make a public declaration about US entitlement and its exact location of its outer limits; 2) establish the extended continental shelf under domestic US law; 3) deposit charts and other relevant information with the Secretary-General of the UN; 4) make the scientific evidence for US entitlement accessible; and 5) wait for possible challenges from other states. In addition the US would need to draw the mutual continental shelf boundary with Canada.

UNCLOS does not cover all the issues involved in managing the Arctic seas, and other instruments need to be adopted. The IMO's draft Polar Code is a new comprehensive instrument for safe shipping operations, security and pollution prevention in the polar areas. There are already two established polar codes, but these are fragmentary and only provide guidelines. The new Polar Code is designed to be mandatory: flag states party to the SOLAS and MarPol conventions would be obliged to implement and abide by it. UNCLOS gives port states great sovereign power in their internal waters, i.a. for efforts to ensure shipping safety when ships engage in innocent passage close to the coastline. Existing conventions may however be
inadequate for the security task, since in the zone of territorial waters the powers of coastal states are more limited and only include environmental protection. The implementation of the Code would make reference to a set of generally accepted rules and standards to be followed in these areas. In the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) the regulatory power of the coastal states is even more limited, which makes the Polar Code more important. In the areas defined as High Seas the coastal states have no jurisdiction, and thus the implementation of the Polar Code becomes crucial – this is equally important for the continental shelf.

The present draft Code does not cover essential parts of safety such as availability of search and rescue, navigational aids and liability and insurance. Despite this, experts have judged the scope of the Polar Code to be adequate, appropriate, and a positive improvement in the development of the law of the sea.

Breakout session: The Balance between Business Developments and Environmental Protection in the Arctic

The second breakout session aimed to tackle the issue of climate change's consequences, and possible solutions, in the spheres of the environment, local communities, and the overall safety and security of the Arctic region.

This is a time of unprecedented change in the Arctic, when conditions are changing faster than at any time in the past one thousand years. Arctic communities are experiencing rapid social and environmental changes, the latter outpacing environmental modelling. These remote, largely rural locations are complex systems where people and environment are tightly bound together. The conditions in such regions are dynamic and not entirely understood, and the key components of people's livelihoods (e.g. jobs, subsistence, schooling) are highly interdependent.

Scenarios need to be developed for these highly uncertain conditions in order to support and empower local control. They can help each region to identify key variables that are important for tracking success in creating healthy sustainable communities; to prioritize among them and plan accordingly; and to create new communities of practice among knowledge holders, who do not normally strategize together for more effective planning. In general, the scenarios process should allow regional stakeholders to plan for, respond to and shape plausible futures in a setting that fosters broad participation. It also builds capacity to deal with rapid and complex changes within communities, allowing the locals to respond in a proactive and creative rather than passive and reactive way. Diagnosing present problems and anticipating future needs is the key to shaping the future.

As regards resources, the Arctic Ocean is a unique, fragile environment, where 30% of the world's undiscovered oil and gas has been estimated to lie. Pressure has been increasing for companies to drill offshore into ever deeper and riskier frontier waters of the Arctic. But the waters are ice-covered for eight to nine months of the year, and in almost complete darkness for nearly three of those months. Even during summer, when the ice pack has mostly receded, the Arctic experiences high seas, wind, freezing temperature, dense fog and floating ice hazards. Even more challenging is the lack of major highways, airports, and ports. In terms of pollution risks, the clean-up technology has not improved much in the last 25 years and operational assets are often far away – 1000 miles in the case of the nearest US
Coast Guard station. The quality of oil spill clean-up technologies and systems, especially for such unfamiliar cold conditions, is doubtful. To be prepared for the danger of such a spill, there is first a need for a comprehensive environmental impact assessment for all activities. Secondly, an international action programme on mitigation measures is needed and thirdly, a plan on how to prevent the spill in the first place.

Increasing activity in the Arctic - also visible in the increasing number of ships in the North-east passage between Asia and Europe - presents a more general challenge to local states' ability to respond to emergencies and safety problems, given the harsh climate, vast area, sparse population, limited infrastructure and poor communication. This has led to initiatives such as the Polar Code and enhanced inter-state cooperation through multilateral agreements and joint exercises. The question however remains: while the Northern route is by no means the fastest way, is it also the safest? It was argued that the region needs special, higher than usual safety standards for operators, with emphasis on the redundancy of safety factors. Much more is still needed than the existing agreements. Hoping for luck is not enough and the region cannot afford a disaster.

Breakout session: The West Nordic Region
The West Nordic region extends across the North Atlantic from Iceland to the Faroe Islands and Greenland, the latter two being parts of the Kingdom of Denmark. This area faces growing international attention in view of its strategic location, natural resources, and proximity to the EU, Canada and Russia. What representation and what roles do the three West Nordic nations have in regional and international fora? There have been many debates over this in the past, starting in the 1960s and reappearing in the 1980s and mid-2000s. The Nordic Council, established in 1952, was initially a cooperation between the five Nordic countries: Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland. In 1971 the Faroe Islands and the Åland islands became members and Greenland, having gained Home Rule 1979, entered the club in 1983. There was much debate about the autonomous territories' role in the Nordic Council and its committees, but it was eventually decided that each should have two seats in the Council. The Nordic Council is a forum for proposals, discussions and negotiations on a broad range of issues, but it adopts recommendations rather than binding decisions. Such decisions are reserved for the Nordic Council of Ministers, established in 1971.

In 1985 a new institutional framework where common interests could be expressed among Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Iceland was formed at Nuuk (Greenland). The West Nordic Parliamentarian Council of Cooperation, later re-named as the West Nordic Council (WNC), was established with the aim to "cooperate on common problems and to conduct positive and constructive cooperation regarding West Nordic, or North Atlantic issues with the Nordic Council as well as other organizations". It has hitherto focused on cultural, social, political and economic cooperation and adopts recommendations on various issues to its governments, to the Nordic Council and others.

Economic cooperation is an important theme for WNC members, as all three nations participating are small (or micro-) states with inherently fragile economies. This explains
the current efforts for a West Nordic Free Trade Zone, which would strengthen the regional economy and global export capabilities. More particularly, seafood products are essential to all three economies and account for a significant share of West Nordic merchandise exports. One area for building seafood/fisheries cooperation is to optimize fish catches in a sustainable and economic manner. Such cooperation could promote the regions’ seafood jointly in international markets and improve the processing of seafood in the region.

This is not the only area where WNC members could cooperate. Another topic is a joint West Nordic stance towards international conflicts. Further fields to explore include transport and infrastructure, energy, search and rescue capabilities, and last but not least tourism. The region as a whole can gain from joint marketing efforts, to raise its image and international awareness, and from closer cooperation on aviation.

At the same time, there is reason to question the level of local power in setting the course for political action in the West Nordic region. Paradoxically, in policy discussions about the region’s future, the three WNC nations are sometimes poorly represented or even missing. One example is the Arctic Five (the group of ‘littoral’ states within the AC’s members), which excludes all three nations as well as Sweden and Finland. Greenland and the Faroes also face difficulties in becoming part of international regimes, which in turn may call in question the accountability and legitimacy of the international institutions involved. Failing to recognize the locals’ competence to help manage Arctic challenges may be unwise, given their skills notably in dealing with nature. The reason for the exclusion of WNC nations, where it occurs, may be found in the opposition from “gatekeepers” entrenched in the traditional institutions of Europe and the Euro-Atlantic area. These traditions are no longer sufficient: new institutional settings are needed for successful policy making and for coordinating the different interests at stake in a fair and legitimate way.

Third Plenary: North American Leadership in the Arctic Council

The third and the last plenary session was dedicated to the ongoing Canadian and upcoming US leadership of the Arctic Council. After hearing rapporteurs’ summaries of the findings of the three breakout sessions, the plenary continued with presentations on the USA’s perspectives and strategic policy making for the Arctic region, and on the diversity of approaches among Arctic countries.

A clear set of expectations and hopes were expressed for the USA’s impending chairmanship of the Arctic Council. First, the US should demonstrate a real commitment to the two inter-state agreements negotiated in the AC in 2011 and 2013 respectively, on search and rescue and on oil-spill preparedness and response. It would be good to create protocols defining relevant commitments, such as the provision and basing of long-range search and rescue helicopters in places where they could reach Arctic locations without refuelling. The USA could take the lead in seeking a further agreement focusing on oil-spill prevention, which might include for instance the removal of liability caps to induce companies to take all possible safety measures in Arctic exploration, including requirements for same-season relief wells. Another multilateral agreement might put a stop to the erosion of existing environmental
standards, dealing with black carbon pollution and the Arctic haze. A US initiative for a regional seas agreement it would be a good way to coordinate measures taken within national jurisdiction around the Arctic, and to build on these for measures in international waters. There was scope to develop part 2 of the Polar Code, and to explore a regional fisheries management organization. There should also be measures in place involving non-Arctic states with vested interests in the Arctic, and a clear legal framework around the North-West Passage and the straits connecting with the Northern Sea Route. The boldest idea would be for the US to consider leading an initiative to demilitarize the surface of the Arctic Ocean, as a way of checking the current trend to an ever-growing military presence.

What are the chances that the US will actually pursue such aims, in the light of its present and future US grand strategies and their relevance for Arctic policy? One strategic scenario involves neo-isolationism, which focuses on the protection of US security, liberty and property. Sovereignty is the key, which results in minimal intervention abroad: the US is not seen as responsible for world order and economic well-being is best left to the private sector. Promotion of American values abroad is dangerous, and there should be no “crusades” that merely breed resentment. This strategic option would imply a minimal Arctic agenda, mostly focusing on Alaska and domestic politics.

A second strategic option could be called selective engagement, with the main concern as the risk of great-power war, making a balance of power with Russia and other great powers a key focus. As pointed out by neo-isolationist critics, this option requires the USA to maintain a substantial military force, conveying a threat of war in order to prevent it. This strategy would imply a sharper concern about Russian Arctic moves and possibly about the Chinese gaining access to Arctic resources. It would lead to a permanent securitization of the Arctic.

Under a potential Republican Administration following President Obama’s term, the aim might be defined as primacy, i.e. the constraining or containment of all the USAs political adversaries, in the belief that only a preponderance of US power ensures peace. The Arctic region would be framed primarily as a strategic region. The Arctic Council could continue to work as a functional/low politics policy arena but overall there would be little expansion of its role.

The alternative strategy of cooperative security can be defined as that of the present Administration, and in the speaker’s view offers the best chance of enhancing US interests and participation in Arctic Council and other regional institutions. It looks for collective action through international institutions - democracies working together in cooperative security regimes - and envisions further regime-building in critical policy areas such as UNCLOS, climate, and sustainable development. It stresses the reality of strategic interdependence, since the security of the US is connected to a host of global problems that cannot be ignored. To tackle them, the threat of collective action must be made credible, and that credibility must be maintained.

As reflected in the updated National Strategy for the Arctic of 2013, current US policy focuses on three priorities. The first is to protect US national interests and homeland security interests. The second is to promote responsible stewardship and protect the Arctic
environment, and the third, to foster and strengthen international cooperation. On this basis, the USA’s Arctic agenda for 2015-2016 may be expected to cover several critical issues such as climate change; the promotion of sustainable and stable inter-state relationships in the Arctic; and services to global security by minimizing potential conflicts. The main obstacle to Arctic engagement in the USA is the lack of public interest and awareness. There is generally a low level of attention in the media, following the US public’s habit of losing interest once an issue is explained. There is no champion of the Arctic agenda in Congress, but a polarization in the policy process there. There are also competing interest groups, oil and resource industries versus environmentalists.

Divergent views inside a country on Arctic policy may, more generally, help to understand the division of opinions inside the Arctic Council. Despite the outward appearance of AC consensus, a speaker reported that there had been difficulties during the Canadian chairmanship so far, including Canada’s pursuit of its own agenda, its top-down approach, and the privileging of local – versus global – indigenous peoples. The issue of development for the people of the North was contentious within Canada as well as between nations. There were perceptions of a dictatorial style of leadership from Ottawa, seeking to impose its own ideas of what an Arctic organization should look like. Many non-Canadians with a stake in the Arctic felt excluded as a result of the privileged attention given to the Nunavut region and the Inuit homeland. There had been a more genuine Arctic consensus between 2008-11: national strategy documents were homogenous, talking about the environment, economic development, indigenous peoples, oil and gas and science and cooperation. That consensus fell short nowadays because people were demanding more concrete activity, and engaging in specifics gave more room for disagreement – or even conflicting approaches.

The relevant cleavages could be found at many levels; Global vs Regional, Resource Exploitation vs Poverty Reduction, Dependence vs. Self-Determination, and The Arctic vs The High North - to name but a few. These cleavages seemed to be particularly prominent between Canada and the Nordics, or Europe more generally. They were also, however, occurring internally in the United States. People focusing on climate change tended to have a global perspective, while someone living in the North would rather stress economic development, mental health, jobs, schools and education. Thinking of the Arctic as homogenous was, in short, conflating too many opposites. The territorial “High North” and the Arctic did not have the same issues at all. In the US case, major internal cleavages could be found between Alaska and Washington. Alaska wanted more jobs, fewer suicides and less mental illness. Washington on the other hand saw the Arctic as an ocean, not as a “homeland” in the same way. In the case of Russia, the outside world only heard Moscow’s perspective, while presumably there was a whole regional perspective that – problematically – never came to the attention of the English-speaking world.

Against this background, the Arctic Council seemed better placed to work on environmental and oceanic issues as a regional governance forum, while development issues were primarily national, domestic and local challenges. However, the Council could and should play a role in shifting the dominant vision of the Arctic region away from that of a fragile system in need of saving, to one of a homeland with local residents who have
rights and responsibilities. The previous (2011-13) Swedish AC Chairmanship, despite limited involvement in the Arctic, had acted neutrally and thus competently without imposing its own vision of the Arctic upon the world. The Canadian agenda, in contrast, was to shift the Council towards thinking like Canadians: an ambitious goal but very poorly implemented. The lesson for the future was to move away from such large-scale, domestic-oriented agendas and towards a stronger AC secretariat and a stronger organisational vision and leadership. There were currently no signs that the upcoming US chairmanship would be any different.

In general, when talking about grand challenges like sustainable development and environmental protection in the abstract, it is easy for everyone to agree. The entire epistemic community has been calling out for converting science into policy and action, and it is a healthy sign when people start to think about how these are going to be implemented. More tension and more cleavages can be seen as a healthy part of a process whereby the Arctic Council is moving towards a more proactive and action-oriented forum.

A further speaker developed the theme by suggesting that the Trans-Arctic agenda must recognize the tremendous diversity of distinctive Arctic regions, and acknowledge that there is no single, homogenous Arctic. Rather it is a place remarkably diverse in climate, geography and development. To address the threat of climate change, and to implement effective protections for the conservation and development of Arctic resources, will demand a variety of approaches, standards and agreements applied differentially to the various regions of the Arctic. Agreements like the AC's Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Agreement are great contributions to the collective efforts of nations to cooperate in the Arctic. However, all such documents approach the Arctic as a single tactical and logistical domain. North American responders face a physical, inhuman landscape that is uniquely austere, and makes effective response all but impossible even with the most aggressive investment in infrastructure and preparedness. Therefore, prevention and deterrence rather than response capability is the best approach to Arctic security from a North American perspective. The USA, Canada and Denmark on behalf of Greenland need to approach their international obligations in a manner different from that of European colleagues. Europe for its part must allow for this difference in the implementation of the relevant agreements.

The conference ended with a suggestion that if Arctic is to be adequately protected and its various vulnerabilities addressed, the Arctic Council and other multilateral entities should move away from the current practice of uniform international standards and obligations, toward a more targeted and continent-specific approach.
Tuesday 28 October

15:00 Welcome and Opening Session
Main conference room
Dr. Kristín Ingólfsdóttir, Rector of the University of Iceland
H.E. Mr. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, President of Iceland

15:30 First Plenary: Arctic and Foreign Policies of the Arctic States
Main conference room
Chaired by Alyson Bailes, Adjunct Lecturer, University of Iceland

i) Canada’s Foreign Policy: Looking for the Arctic
   Joël Plouffe, Research Fellow, Center for Interuniversity Research on the International Relations of Canada and Québec (CIRRICQ)

ii) The US in the Arctic: Superpower or Spectator?
    Dr. Michael Corgan, Associate Professor of International Relations, Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University

iii) Russian Perspectives on the Arctic
     Dr. Jakub M. Godzimirski, Research Professor, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI)

iv) Norway and the ‘High North’: Visions and Revisions
    Dr. Asle Toje, Research Director, Norwegian Nobel Institute

v) Danish Strategy in the Arctic: Who gets to do what?
   Alexander Hviid, Research Assistant, Institute for Strategy, Royal Danish Defence College

vi) Finland as an Arctic Nation, and its Contradictory Policy Interests in the Arctic
    Dr. Lassi Heininen, Professor of Arctic Politics, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Lapland

vii) Staking a Claim or Claiming a Stake: Iceland’s Interests and Actions in the Arctic
     Silja Bára Ómarsdóttir, Adjunct Lecturer, Faculty of Political Science, University of Iceland

viii) Sweden’s Foreign and Arctic Policy
      Bosse Hedberg, Ambassador of Sweden to Iceland

17:30 Discussions

18:15 End of first day

Wednesday 29 October

09:00 Second Plenary: Arctic Council Observers, the “Near-Arctic” and the High North
Main conference room
Chaired by Dr. Lassi Heininen, Professor of Arctic Politics, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Lapland

i) The Arctic Policy of the European Union
    Ambassador Matthias Brinkmann, Delegation of the European Union to Iceland

ii) The Arctic: Common Good or National Interests?
    Johannes Riber Nordby, Analyst, Royal Danish Defence College

iii) New Voices of ‘old’ Observer States to the Arctic Council
     Malgorzata Smieszek, Researcher, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

iv) The UK and the Challenges of the High North
    Dr. Caroline Kennedy, Professor of War Studies, University of Hull and Admiral Nick Lambert

v) Incentives, Practices and Opportunities for Arctic External Actors’ Engagement with Indigenous Peoples: China and the European Union
    Adam Stepień, Researcher, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

10:30-10:45 Coffee and tea break

vi) A Natural Experiment in Arctic Awareness: Media Coverage and the 2013 Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting
    Dr. Philip E. Steinberg, Professor of Political Geography, Durham University, Ingrid A. Medby, Doctoral Researcher, Durham University, and Johanne M. Bruun, Doctoral Researcher, Durham University

vii) China Looks North: Emerging Arctic Diplomacy and Economic Thinking
    Dr. Marc Lanteigne, Senior Research Fellow, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI)

viii) Development of the East Asia-Nordic Cooperation in Arctic Affairs
     Dr. Michal Luszczuk, Post-doctoral NCN Fellow, Department of the Northern European Countries, Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, Poland

ix) The Rise of Asia in a Changing Arctic: The View from Iceland
    Dr. Jesse Hastings, Lecturer, National University of Singapore
12:15-13:15 Informal lunch at the conference venue

13:15-14:45 Discussions in three parallel workshops:
The West Nordic Region, Polar Code and Law of the Sea, and The Balance Between Business Developments and Environmental Protection in the Arctic

The West Nordic Region  
*Conference room I*  
Chaired by Áudur H Ingólfsdóttir, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Social Science, Bifröst University

i) Local Government Institutions in the West Nordic Region under Pressure  
   Dr. Beinta í Jakubsstovu, Associate Professor in Political Science, Molde University College, Norway

ii) Cooperation in a Nordic and West Nordic Context: The Case of Greenland  
   Dr. Maria Ackrén, Associate Professor in Political Science, Ilisimatusarfik/University of Greenland

iii) Report on Economic West Nordic Arctic Cooperation  
   Egill Þór Níelsson, Visiting Scholar, Polar Research Institute of China (PRIC)

Polar Code and Law of the Sea  
*Conference room II*  
Chaired by Helgi Áss Grétarsson, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Iceland

i) The Polar Code and the Law of the Sea  
   Dr. Erik Røsæg, Professor, University of Oslo

ii) Arctic Maritime Boundary Delimitations  
   Dr. Coalter G Lathrop, Lecturing Fellow, Duke University

iii) The Pathway for the United States to Establish the Continental Shelf Beyond 200 Nautical Miles in the Arctic Ocean Without Becoming a Party to UNCLOS  
   Dr. Bjarni Már Magnússon, Assistant Professor, University of Reykjavik

The Balance Between Business Developments and Environmental Protection in the Arctic  
*Conference room III*  
Chaired by Dr. Brynhildur Davíðsdóttir, Professor, Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Iceland

i) The Value of Scenarios for Arctic Futures: Facilitating Expert Dialogue Across Scales and Interests  
   Dr. Amy Lauren Lovecraft, Professor of Political Science, University of Alaska, Fairbanks

ii) Environmental Aspects of Hydrocarbon Exploration in the Arctic  
   Dr. Stephen Macko, Professor of Isotope and Organic Geochemistry, Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Virginia

iii) Safety and Security in the High North: Responsibilities and Opportunities  
   Lt. Snorre Greil, Icelandic Coast Guard

14:45-15:15 Coffee and tea break

15:15 Third Plenary: North-American Leadership in the Arctic Council  
*Main conference room*

Chaired by Dr. Anna Karlsdóttir, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography and Tourism Studies, University of Iceland

i) Summaries from the three workshops by rapporteurs

ii) All Hands on Deck: US Leadership of the Arctic Council  
   Dr. Michael Byers, Professor, University of British Columbia, Vancouver and Canada’s Research Chair in Global Politics and International Law

iii) Searching for a New U.S. Grand Strategy: Is There a Place for Arctic Cooperation?  
   Dr. Steven L. Lamy, Professor and Vice Dean of Academic Programs, University of Southern California

iv) What Does Sustainability Mean in the Arctic? Schisms between Canadian and Nordic Perceptions  
   Dr. Heather Exner-Pirot, Strategist, University of Saskatchewan

v) Impact of Geography Affecting Security and Disaster Response Capabilities between the North American and European Arctic  
   Harry Bader, Associate Professor of Security Studies, University of Alaska, Fairbanks

General discussion

17:30 Closing remarks

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The Centre for Arctic Policy Studies (CAPS) is a forum for interdisciplinary collaboration in the field of Arctic research with emphasis on the role and policies of states and institutions, non-state and corporate actors, and broader aspects of governance, culture and society in the High North. CAPS organizes conferences, seminars and lectures on Arctic issues as well as supporting learning in this important field of study. The Centre also publishes books and papers and introduces new research activities in the interdisciplinary field of Arctic studies.

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