

The EU and the Arctic Region a policy on the making

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European Commission RELEX DDG2
December 2009

Background

- Until 2008, the only EU external policy that covered the Arctic region was the Northern Dimension (ND), established in 2001
- However, the ND was from the beginning covering the European Arctic only, and focuses on NW Russia.
- Moreover, the ND was transformed in November 2006 into a common policy of the EU, Russia, Norway and Iceland.

Background (2)

- There was a need to provide a comprehensive framework with policy objectives to the various EU policies and programmes affecting the Arctic.
- Several of our ND partners and observers were encouraging the EU to have a circumpolar vision as well.
- Several Arctic countries have recently produced their Arctic strategies

Background documents

- The ND Framework Policy Document (ND Summit October 2006) recognizes the Arctic as a priority ND area and considers the Arctic Council as a ND key participant.
- October 2007 Communication and Blue Book on the EU Integrated Maritime Policy announced a document in 2008 on Arctic achievements.
- Joint policy paper, of the Commission and the HR for the CFSP to the European Council, on Climate change and international security of May 2008.
- October 2008 EP Resolution on Arctic Governance
- November 2008 Commission's Communication to the European Parliament and to the Council on the EU and the Arctic region.
- Dec 2008 & Dec 2009 General Affairs Council Conclusions on the Commission's Arctic Communication

Introduction

- The European Union is an Arctic entity: geography, history, economy, scientific achievements.
- Sami as “true Europeans without borders”.
- 3 EU MS — Denmark (Greenland), Finland and Sweden.

2 other Arctic states — Iceland and Norway — are EEA members.

These are 5 of the 8 Arctic States.

- Stress on international cooperation
- The EU is on the lead of diplomacy to fight climate change.

Introduction (2)

- EU policies, such as environment, fight against climate change, energy, research, transport and fisheries, have a direct effect on the Arctic.
- CBC programmes in the Arctic: Kolarctic (28,2mill, Karelia 23,2 mill; Northern Periphery Programme 35mill)
- EU- Greenland Partnership
- The EU has been the engine behind the 2007 UNGA Declaration on Indigenous Peoples' Rights
- Each sea-region is unique and needs individual attention, as a fundamental premise of the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy

General Content

- It establishes the first layer of an EU Arctic Policy (Communication was welcomed by the Council in December 2008 and awaits operational Conclusions for the end of 2009)
- It covers a wide range of issues and sectors, where the EU should take into consideration concerns, challenges and potential interests concerning this sensitive area of the world
- In each sector the Communication briefly describes the state of play, the policy objectives and several specific Commission's proposals.

General Content (2)

Its 3 main political objectives are:

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