



EU-ARCTIC-Newsletter

*News on Arctic Issues from a
Brussels Perspective
by the EU-ARCTIC-Forum
in the European Parliament*



December 2010

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- Chair: EU-Arctic Forum
- Vice-Coordinator EEP in Deve-Committee
- ENVI/DEVE Committee
- Former Vice Prime Minister of Hamburg
- Former Senator of Social Affairs



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- Rapporteur EU-Arctic Report
- Coordinator EPP Security and Defense Committee
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- Committee on Constitutional Affairs [See]
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- Committee on Foreign Affairs [See]
- Subcommittee on Security and Defence [See]
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- Special committee on the policy challenges and budgetary resources for a sustainable European Union after 2013 [See]
- Delegation for relations with South Africa [See]

1. From the Editor

We are delighted to be able to inform you with this EU-ARCTIC-Newsletter shortly before Christmas about recent developments in European Politics on the Arctic, the Parliaments Report in particular as well as on forthcoming Arctic events in Brussels.

An important step to define an EU Arctic Policy was accomplished in the last months work on the European Parliaments Report on the High North. As the shadow rapporteur from the Greens Indrek Tarand MEP stated in the debate in the parliament "We will be considered the founding fathers of a European Policy on the Arctic, the Icebreakers for the Arctic in the EU".

This newsletter intends to inform about activities with regard to the Arctic in Brussels as well as latest activities and developments in the Arctic Region which are of importance to the European Union.

In particular the Newsletter provides information about the activities of the EU-ARCTIC-Forum, the European Parliament's cross party platform on all Arctic Issues, and on the progress of the development of an EU Policy on the Arctic. We openly welcome input and comments from MEPs, other EU or international institutions as well as from stakeholders and experts in the Arctic Region to contribute to an informed and balanced debate.

After a busy and successful year of working for the Arctic in Brussels we want to look forward to the next steps to be taken in 2011 and would like to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas, Glædelig Jul, Pozdrevlyayu s prazdnikom Rozhdestva, Buorrit Juovllat, Gledilig Jol, Jutdlime pivdluarit ukiortame pivdluaritlo, God Jul, Frohe Weihnachten, Joyeux Noel, Gledhilig jol, Hyvaa joulua, Buone Feste Natalizie, Feliz Navidad, Kung His Hsin Nien bing Chu Shen Tan, Zalig Kerstfeast, Shinnen omedeto, Kurisumasu Omedeto, Sung Tan Chuk Ha, Wesolych Swiat Bozego Narodzenia!

3. Who are we? About the EU-ARCTIC-Forum in the European Parliament

What is the function of the EU-Arctic-Forum?

The EU-Arctic-Forum was constructed to provide the European Parliament with a cross-party platform to foster a better understanding of changes in the Arctic Region and its implication for Europeans citizens and businesses, to facilitate a well informed and balanced debate, as well as to bolster the development of a coherent European Policy with regard to the Arctic Region.

The EU-ARCTIC-Forum is the European Parliament's only platform on all Issues with regard to the Arctic, providing not only for exchange and input of information but to interlink the so far too often fragmented debates on the Arctic.

Who are the participants and how can you contribute?

The EU-ARCTIC-Forum is involving a number of MEP's from all major political groups and several committees, Delegations and Intergroups such as the Committees on Foreign Affairs, Environment, Transport, Industry, Research and Energy, Development and Transport.

Thus the EU-ARCTIC-Forum works as the European Parliaments platform interlinking all issues regarding the Arctic Region.

It invites on a regular basis speakers from the scientific community, business, NGOs, and international institutions in the format of breakfast briefings, seminars or dinner speeches.

Future Meetings are already organized and interest to participate was already expressed by several Commissioners and other High Officials, Foreign Ministers and Ambassadors of several Arctic States, as well as high profile leaders of the international or European Institutions such as the European Environmental Agency, the International Maritime Organisation and the Nordic Council of Ministers, but also from Civil society, NGOs and the energy, fishing and shipping industry as well by leading academics in the field.

Call for Contributions

In light of the ambition to stimulate and contribute to an informed debate, we hereby issue a call for contributions to the EU-ARCTIC-Newsletter by all interested participants and readers. We want to invite you to share your insights and opinions with the politicians, experts and stakeholders whose work will be

addressed by this newsletter. The editor of the EU-Arctic-Newsletter and the organizers of the EU-ARCTIC-Forum look forward to your valuable comments and contributions and would like to draw your attention in particular to the forthcoming debates on the European Parliaments Arctic Report in Brussels such as the presentation of the EPs Report on 7. December!

Birgit Schnieber-Jastram
Chair of the EU-ARCTIC-Forum

Steffen Weber
Secretary General EU-ARCTIC-Forum

4. Commentary by the Norwegian State Secretary

Lahnstein: "Managing the Arctic – Norway's views"

Changes are taking place in the Arctic. We have a responsibility to make sure that the Arctic remains a peaceful region and to conduct our activities in a safe and environmentally sound way to ensure sustainable development in the region. The Arctic Council is the nucleus of the region's cooperative framework. In Norway's view, the EU should play a more active role in the Arctic Council. However, a particular responsibility rests with the coastal states bordering the Arctic Ocean.

Predictable frameworks for sustainable development

The Law of the Sea forms the legal basis for all activities in the Arctic Ocean. Norway's view is that existing international law provides a predictable framework for handling present and foreseeable challenges in the Arctic. The Arctic Ocean is an ocean surrounded by land under national jurisdiction, and the Law of the Sea already provides a relevant legal framework that regulates activities in the Arctic Ocean. Consequently, calls for a specific treaty to regulate activities in the Arctic are unjustified.

There are few unresolved issues of jurisdiction in the Arctic. In the Ilulissat Declaration (28 May, 2008) the five coastal states bordering the Arctic Ocean stated their continued commitment to the legal framework in the Arctic Ocean and to the orderly settlement of possible overlapping claims.

The prospects of increased activity in the Arctic Ocean require stronger presence

on the part of coastal states in order to exercise jurisdiction, sovereign rights and authority in a credible, consistent and predictable manner. Norway is increasing its capacity to this end, and participates actively in the negotiations on a legally binding agreement on search and rescue in the Arctic within the framework of the Arctic Council.

The fish stocks mainly stay within the national zones of the coastal states, and large-scale commercial fisheries in the central Arctic Ocean are not foreseen in the near future. Regarding shipping, Norway has been a driving force behind the development of a mandatory polar code in the IMO, and we invite European and other nations to close cooperation on this matter.

Circumpolar and regional cooperation is well developed and steadily increasing. The Arctic Council is the most important forum to address issues related to the Arctic region. The indigenous peoples of the High North have been given their rightful place as permanent participants.

In order to further adapt to new challenges in the region, Norway believes that the Arctic Council needs to make more binding decisions, where appropriate. It also needs to enhance its organisational capacity by establishing a permanent secretariat and to further broaden its discussions by including new permanent observers such as the European Commission.

Integrated ocean management

Norway takes an ecosystem-based approach to resource management. Integrated management plans for all relevant sea areas are among our most important tools. Based on ambitious goals, these plans establish a holistic framework for all activities in the relevant sea areas. Our ultimate ambition is that all activities should be managed within a single context, ensuring that the total environmental pressure does not threaten the structure, functioning or productivity of the ecosystems.

Responsible management of all living marine resources based on scientific knowledge is a key Norwegian objective. Regional cooperation is essential to achieve this. Petroleum activities on the Norwegian continental shelf are subject to the highest safety and environmental standards.

Norway welcomes the development of Arctic strategies by Arctic states and other interested parties, including the EU. We are looking forward to continued fruitful

cooperation within a bilateral and a regional context.

More information about Norway's High North policy can be found at website of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Upcoming events

January 17, 2011

Debate and vote on the European Parliaments' Report on the High North
European Parliament, Strasbourg

January 17, 2011

Polar View Progress Meeting
Brussels

www.polarview.org

January 17 - 18, 2011

SAON Steering Group Meeting
Oslo, Norway

January, 2011

EU-ARCTIC-Forum: Seminar on Oil and Gas Exploration in the Arctic
European Parliament, Brussels

January 22 - 23, 2011

PAME Workshop on Ecosystem Approach to Management
Tromsø, Norway

January 23 - 29, 2011

Arctic Frontiers 5th Annual Conference: "Arctic Tipping Points"
Tromsø, Norway

[more](#)

January 26, 2011

Meeting of Barents Regional Committee
Tromsø, Norway

January 31 - February 3, 2011

Jokkmokk Winter Conference: "Pathways to Sustainable Northern Communities"
Jokkmokk, Norrbotten, Sweden

[more](#)

February 1 - 3, 2011

CAFF Biennial 2011
Akureyri, Iceland

February 22 - 23, 2011

Second Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum
Tromsø, Norway

[more](#)

March 16 - 17, 2011

Meeting of the Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs)
Copenhagen, Denmark

March 27 - April 1, 2011

Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW) 2011
Seoul, Korea

April 14 - 15, 2011

18th Meeting of the Committee of Senior Representatives
Oslo, Norway

May 12, 2011

Arctic Council: Ministerial Meeting
Nuuk, Greenland

5. This months Arctic Highlight in Brussels

Debate and Vote of the Draft Report "A sustainable EU Policy for the High North" in the European Parliaments Committee on Foreign Affairs

After an intense period of organised hearings, meetings and preparations by the European Parliaments Rapporteur Michael Gahler MEP and the EU-ARCTIC-Forum, the Draft of the European Parliaments Report on "A sustainable EU Policy for the High North" was debated and voted in the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

After hammering out a number of successful compromise amendments the report was accepted by the committee without a single objection vote!

The consolidated version of the amended report can be downloaded from the EU-ARCTIC-Forums webpage [here](#).

The day before the vote in the committee on foreign affairs on 9. December, the EU-ARCTIC-Forum hosted a debate with the rapporteur Michael Gahler and the shadow rapporteurs Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Indrek Tarand and Konrad Szymanski, who are also active in the EU-ARCTIC-Forum.

Participants discussing the report and the EU's policy were among others several MEPs, the Chair of the "Parliamentarians of the Arctic" and also of the Arctic Committee of the Norwegian Parliament Morten Höglund, diplomats and ambassadors from Norway, Iceland, Finland, the US, Canada and Russia, several officials from the EU Commission, among them the Head of the Arctic Unit in DG MARE Paul Nemitz, several think tanks and NGO's as well as representatives from major research institutes and business.

The EU-ARCTIC-Forum in the European Parliament hosted this debate to ensure the proper involvement of stakeholders and continues its work to facilitate and bolster a well informed debate on Arctic Issues in Brussels and to interlink debates on Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Resources, World Trade Routes, Security, Sustainable Development etc, that are important in the Arctic context.

The Consideration of Amendments has taken place on 18. November and can be watched at

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/...>

(Starting at 11.10)

The Draft Report can be downloaded in all EU languages [here](#).

The Report undertakes to assess the existing legal and political framework in the Arctic as well as to establish a clear set of priorities of the European Union with regard to the Arctic. In the last part the Report is formulating suggestions and requests to the European Commission and the Council and offering close cooperation to the Arctic states and stakeholders.

The Draft Report is clearly stating that the Arctic Region is not a legal vacuum, but has a developed set of rules which nevertheless need to be further developed due to changing circumstances.

Main priorities of the EU in the Arctic set out are:

- The road to a sustainable socio-economic development and environmental protection
- The potential of new world transport routes and their vital importance to the EU member's states
- The potential of developing resources like Hydrocarbons, Minerals, fish and biogenetic resources

With regard to a sustainable socio-economic development the Eco-System based management approach as applied in the Barents today is recognised.

The Report makes a clear statement as to the responsibility of the EU as one of the main contributors to pollution and climate change.

In its conclusion the Report requests the Commission to set up a permanent Inter service on the Arctic and likewise in the future EEAS. Requests and suggestions are made as to a new circumpolar co-funding and co-programming research programme. Finally the importance of EU engagement in the further development of Northern Sea Routes is highlighted and suggestions as to the Galileo project are made.

Updated Timeline of the Report on "A Sustainable EU policy for the High North" by Rapporteur Michael Gahler MEP

During the EU-ARCTIC-Forum Board Meeting, our member Michael Gahler, the European Parliaments Rapporteur, presented an outline of the Reports structure, the main issues to be covered as well as his views on the future role of the EU in the Arctic region.

Request on details of the ongoing work or Suggestions for Amendments should be submitted to the Adviser on the Arctic Report:

Mr. Steffen Weber. (Steffen.Weber@europarl.europa.eu)

6. Recent events

EU Arctic Footprint and Policy Assessment - Final Expert Workshop

On 18 November Diana Wallis, Vice President of the European Parliament addressed the participants of the EU-Arctic Footprint Conference in

Brussels. Steffen Weber, Adviser on the European Parliaments Report on the High North, spoke about the Parliaments Report and the new approach towards the Arctic region.

[Workshop agenda](#) (PDF)

The synthesis report and our final project reports will be available in January 2011 at the following link: <http://arctic-footprint.eu>

Scientific Briefing "Understanding the Arctic Region and Assessing Future Developments"

October 28, 2010

The EU-ARCTIC-Forum and the German Marine Research Consortium (KDM) hosted a lunch-time scientific briefing on:

"Understanding the Arctic Region and Assessing Future Developments: Scientific Contributions to the European Arctic Policy"

The outstanding Arctic event which was hosted by the EU-ARCTIC-Forum and opened by Birgit Schnieber-Jastram MEP, who presented a current status of EP deliberations on the Arctic, involved several leading scientists EP and Commission officials and MEPs from all major groups.

Among them the moderator Carlo Alberto Ricci, Chair of the *European Polar Board and University of Siena* who focused on "European Polar Research: Major Initiatives and Current Developments". The following speaker, Paul Nemitz, Head of Unit of the DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in European Commission was represented by Zuzanna Bieniuk who presented his statement. The scientific input was given by Karin Lochte, Director and Chair of the *Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research* who gave a lecture on the "Melting Ice Sheets and Sea Level Rise: Threats to Coastal Systems". Yves Frenot, Director of the *French Polar Institute Paul Emile Victor*, was presenting a speech concerning "Understanding the Arctic and the Role of Observation Systems" which was finally terminated by Jan-Gunnar Winther, Director of the *Norwegian Polar Institute* on "Changes in Sea Ice: Effects on the Arctic Environment and Shipping".

Among the numerous participants during the lunch briefing in the EP's member salon were several MEPs, members of DG Research, DG Maritime Affairs, DG Expo, DG External Relations, DG Energy of the European Commission as well as members of the permanent representation of Germany, Greenland and Iceland.

Konsortium Deutsche Meeresforschung/ German Marine Research Consortium:
<http://www.deutsche-meeresforschung.de/index.php?sp=de&id=home>

[Handout](#) (PDF)

Briefing of Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy

October 25, 2010

Birgit Schnieber-Jastram MEP chair of the EU-ARCTIC-Forum and the Mission of Canada to the European Union were hosting this roundtable discussion of challenges faced in the Arctic. Sheila Riordon, Canada's Senior Arctic Official and Ross Hornby, Ambassador of Canada to the European Union, were presenting their insights to a exclusive circle of participants. Among them were Giles Norman, Director of the Canadian International Centre for the Arctic Region, several Commission and EP officials and MEPs from all major political groups.

Opening of the photo exhibition "Visions of Canada's North"

October 11, 2010

[Report](#) (PDF)

Breakfast Briefing with Prof. Jacqueline McGlade, September 15th

September 15, 2010

The EU-ARCTIC-Forum chaired by MEP Birgit Schnieber-Jastram hosted a briefing with one of Europe's most well know experts on the Arctic - Prof. Jacqueline McGlade, the Director of the European Environmental Agency.

Birgit Schnieber-Jastram, MEP from Hamburg opened the meeting offering a more active role for the EU in the Arctic Region. She pointed out Europe's special responsibility as a main contributor to the pollution in the Arctic, but also its already today active engagement in the Arctic context, in fields from research to environmental issues.

Prof. Jacqueline McGlade, the Director of the European Environmental Agency, presented the audience with an overview of the EU's role and already today widespread engagement in the Arctic and pointed out the chances entailed in developing a holistic and sustainable Policy of the Union on the Arctic, which must integrate environmental issues with strategic developments in the shipping sector,

in issues of living and carbon-hydro resources as well as others.

In the debate between the MEP's and several MPs and experts, participating in the Conference of the Arctic Parliamentarians- hosted by the European Parliament, the upcoming report of the European Parliament on the High North and its implications were discussed.

European Environmental Agency
<http://www.eea.europa.eu/>

9th Conference of Parliamentarians from the Arctic Region

September 13 - 15, 2010

The conference was attended by representatives of national parliaments from the eight Arctic states - Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the USA - and representatives of the European Parliament. Observers also participated from governments and inter-parliamentary organizations as well as from observer states and relevant international organizations.

Retreating Arctic ice that could open up new oil and gas reserves and fisheries and hence require stronger international governance, Arctic wildlife management, and the impact of the 19 August European Court of Justice preliminary ruling suspending the EU ban on seal product imports, took centre stage at a meeting of MEPs and MPs in Brussels on 13-15 September.

The conference was opened at 15.00 on 13 September by Vice President of the European Parliament, Diana Wallis MEP and was also featured a speech by European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Maria Damanaki. Each of the three days was also hosted one thematic session followed by a discussion.

On the first day the session was entitled, 'Sustainable use of living resources in the Arctic', on the second day this was 'Cooperation in education and research: the legacy of IPY' and on the final day, the session was entitled 'The melting ice - consequences', with the latter two both started at 09.30.

Core questions/ quotations:

1. Could retreating Arctic ice open up new oil and gas reserves and if so, who

- would govern them?
2. How should Arctic wildlife be managed?
 3. What is the impact of the suspension of the EU ban on sealskin imports?

[Web site](#)

Video steam: [1](#)

Committee on Foreign Affairs

A Sustainable EU Policy for the High North

September 2, 2010

Speakers: Gabriele Albertini, Prof. Willy Østreng, Dr. Antje Neuman, Prof. Valur Ingimundarson, Jamie Reynolds, Michael Gahler

The European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee hosted a hearing organised by the staff of the European Parliaments Rapporteur Michael Gahler on the High North. Leading experts from Institutes and Think Tanks presented and discussed with the Parliamentarians and the Commission about the geopolitical consequences of changes in the Arctic regarding resources and energy, new world transport routes, climate change and environment with a view on Europe's position and future role in the Arctic.

Prof. Willy Östreng from Oslo coined the Arctic "as the Ocean that will be connecting the developed and emerging economies of the world".

Prof. Valur Ingimundarsson from Reykjavik presented on the potential of resources, not only oil and gas but also rare earth elements and living resources in the Arctic. Both the experts and the Commission representatives discussed the legal status of the Arctic and defeated the idea of an Arctic treaty as a possible way for governance, stating the political and legal situation o the Arctic being very different from Antarctica.

[Draft programme](#) (PDF)

Video streams:

[1](#) [2](#)

7. Arctic Frontiers

Arctic Frontiers celebrates its 5th anniversary and marks the occasion by addressing the role of research for sustainable development of the Arctic. The EU-

ARCTIC-Forum will represent the position of the EU on the Arctic and contribute to the conference.

January 23 - 28, 2011

Arctic Frontiers 2011

Tromsø, Norway

[more](#) (PDF)

Learn more about the Arctic Frontiers, visit www.arcticfrontiers.com

8. The Barents Regional Council and EU Arctic Policy

The Barents Regional Council, the regional level of the Barents Euro Arctic Cooperation, which consists of the highest decision makers of the northern regions of Finland, Norway, Russian Federation, and Sweden, unites 13 member counties and a representative of the indigenous peoples.

At the same time as the Barents-Euro Arctic Cooperation (BEAC) was established in 1993 by the signing of the Kirkenes Declaration, the regional representatives, together with the indigenous peoples signed a cooperation protocol that established the Regional Council for the Barents Euro-Arctic Region with the same objectives as the BEAC - to support and promote co-operation and development in the Barents Region. The protocol determines the structure and the general aims of the regional cooperation. It is well worth to notice that this structure with a formal multi level governance structure is unique in its kind.

The Barents region consist of the land mass of the European Arctic region and includes two EU member states (Sweden and Finland), one EEA Country (Norway) and Russia. The region has a huge potential with its recourses in knowledge based industries and in raw materials like minerals, forest and fish. Outside the coast of the Barents regions of Norway and Russia you will find major part of claimed Arctic shelf. The regions will also play an important role in developing and facilitating for new Arctic transport routes such as the Northern Sea Route and possibilities for freight corridors from China to the European Arctic.

The Barents Regional council is constantly striving to put regional issues and interests in focus. This is in order to secure that the region will continue to be a good place of living and make sure that the available rich natural and human

ressources are used building a strong and sustainable economy, transport infrastructure and an industry serving both the local communities and the external markets.

On this background the Barents Regional Council should be considered as a significant stakeholder in shaping policy for the Arctic. At the Barents Regional Council meeting in Kajaani, Finland, the Council therefore adopted the following statements to the European parliaments EU Arctic forum draft report on a sustainable EI policy for the high north. The Barents Regional Council is also hoping for a good cooperation with the EU Arctic-Forum in the future and are among other things planning a seminar on Arctic Policy in cooperation with the EU-Arctic Forum in the spring next year.

[Link to the statement](#)

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