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The Canary in the Coal Mine

Governance and Security Discourses in the EU's Arctic Policy

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Abstract

The Arctic Ocean is experiencing an un-preceded melting caused by climate change, affecting the socio-economic, geopolitical, and environmental context in the Arctic region. The ongoing developments in the Arctic have attracted the attention of a variety of actors and the effects of climate change are adding a new dimension to the relationship between them. Environmental concerns link security and governance in the Arctic and in a very short time, Arctic governance has become a part of the EU's agenda.

Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a convergence between traditional national security reasoning and environmental protection and policy development. This thesis employs the Copenhagen's School theory of securitization and critical discourse analysis to perform a textual analysis of the concepts of environmental security and environmental conflict in the EU's developing Arctic policy. Depending on who is to be secured, and how environmental change threatens a given actor, environmental change can be considered as a security issue. The purpose of this thesis is to discuss what the consequences for the EU as an external actor in Arctic governance may be when the environment is defined as a security issue.

This thesis finds environmental security in the EU Arctic policy documents, but the EU has a soft security approach in terms of specific measures towards geopolitical governance in the region. Though the discourse on governance emphasizes cooperation, a governance gap exists in terms of traditional security. Because security contexts change and the melting Arctic give rise to economic opportunities, there remains a risk for conflict between both Arctic actors and emerging non-Arctic actors over resources, transport routes and the Arctic environment.

Keywords: Arctic, environmental security, securitization, governance, EU

Words: 21 383

Contents

Abbreviations

AC	Arctic Council
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CS	Copenhagen School
EC	European Commission
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IR	International Relations
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1. Introduction

1.1   *Climate Change and Security in the Arctic*

The Arctic is the canary in the coal mine of climate change. In recent years the melting of the Artic sea ice has reached record high numbers, and driven both Arctic and non-Arctic actors to re-evaluate their commitments and strategic interests in the region. Global climate change is often considered to be one of the most important challenges facing the international community today and the global environmental crisis has led to a re-conceptualization of international relations, especially in regard to security. That human activity is causing environmental degradation has a broad consensus among scientists and policy-makers. Increasing economic activities and rapid environmental changes challenges governance strategies and threatens regional and global security. As Simon Dalby notes:

> [i]n light of concerns over ozone holes, climate change, biodiversity, and related matters, the traditional geopolitical themes of great power rivalries, access to resource supplies, and governance at the largest scale are now extended to encompass environmental themes in the policy-making institutions in Washington, Brussels, and elsewhere.[1]

1.2   *Arctic Actors*

The Arctic region is first and foremost associated with the eight Arctic states: Canada, the United States, the Russian Federation, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland. In the last decade other external actors, such as environmental organizations, non-Arctic states, multilateral organisations, and businesses have also begun to state their interest in the region (*e.g.* Graczyk and Koivurova 2013; Pieper et al 2011; Young 2009). Thus the Arctic region has come to be characterized by several ambivalent interests of Arctic states' national priorities and the concerns of external actors in regard to energy resources, shipping, fishing, indigenous people's rights, and protection of the environment. As the interests of non-Arctic actors in the region has exploded, the sovereign space has been challenged by the differences between existing imaginaries of ownership and emerging geophysical and social realities of the region, consequently complicating the policy-making in the region (Berkman and Young 2009).

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[1] Dalby 2009:xix-xx

The European Union (EU) has emerged as a key global actor in shaping global environmental policy and in the last decade the EU has increasingly turned its eye towards the north. When considering that external actors might attempt to influence the future of the region, a need presents itself for more knowledge about the EU's Arctic ambitions.

1.3 *Climate Change and Security on the Political Agenda*

The threat of climate change has risen to the top of policy-makers agenda and environmental degradation has become a part of the international security discourse. Environmental security is a way for scholars and policy-makers to link the concepts of security and environment. An issue within International Relations (IR) discourse becomes securitized when "leaders begin to talk about them" (Buzan 1997:13-14). During a visit in Indonesia, the United States Secretary of State John Kerry made climate change as an important issue as traditional military threats when he professed that:

> When I think about the array of global climate – of global threats – think about this: terrorism, epidemics, poverty, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction – all challenges that know no border. The reality is that climate change ranks right up there with every single one of them.[2]

The symptoms of a warmer planet are known in all corners of the world, especially noticeable with the floods, droughts, and storms that have affected many countries, communities and natural habitats. Environmental stressors in Syria are likely to have been the igniting spark to the 2011 conflict (Plumer 2013-09-10). With regard to the severe floods in Great Britain in the beginning of 2014, the Labour party leader Ed Miliband said that climate change has become an issue of national security, which not only may cause conflict between regions in the world, but also destroy the homes, livelihoods, and businesses of millions of British people (Holm 2014-02-15). With the politicization and securitization of climate change and environmental issues, a need has developed for the international community to cooperate and address environmental problems with transboundary or global consequences. The concept of environmental security attempts to address that need.

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[2] Extract from speech given by John Kerry 2014-02-16

1.4   *The EU: Global Environmental Leadership and Arctic Ambitions*

The issue of climate change has been an important aspect of the EU's policy objectives since the 1980's. It is a significant feature of the EU's external cohesion policy, due to the global impact climate change has, and the EU has been expanding its international security agenda to address non-traditional security issues, including climate change. The EU is widely recognized as a leader in international environmental policy due to its advocacy of strong environmentally friendly measures (Delreux 2011). Through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the EU has sought binding international commitments to prevent the global temperature rising above 2 degrees Celsius (Depledge and Feakin 2012). Javier Solana, the former High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, tried to re-position the EU's security mission requiring climate change to be mainstreamed through the EU foreign and security policy (Depledge and Feakin 2012). As a consequence of climate change, conflicts in the world are becoming more internationalized, leading to climate change becoming an area of concern for international institutions such as the EU, as it shoulders responsibility for managing international security on behalf of its Members (*ibid*.). The EU's activity in global climate negotiations was especially noticed during the negotiations and ratification of the Kyoto protocol, however even with climate change becoming a key area of EU foreign policy, the EU has been unsuccessful to influence the global climate regime, often illustrated with the unsatisfactory 2009 UN climate summit in Copenhagen (van Schaik and Schunz 2011). There is a discrepancy within the EU as internal differences regarding security and foreign policy has made it difficult for the EU to expand its security mandate, however the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) is a step in the right direction, according to Depledge and Feakin (2012).

The ongoing climate debate and recent focus on the Arctic has resulted in the EU taking steps towards creating its own Arctic policy. Since 2007, the EU has been approaching Arctic governance and stating a clear interest in the region (Molenaar et al 2014). The different EU institutions have released (however not yet developed or adopted a final Arctic strategy) proposals for what an Arctic strategy should include, thus shaping the EU discourse on Arctic governance. Kristine Offerdal finds that that the EU Arctic policy is not a result of wide public concern about Arctic issues, nor a result of interest across the EU, but a result of the commitment of a small group of particularly interested individuals and lobby groups in the EU system (Offerdal 2011). Still, the EU's Arctic ambitions are based on the view of the EU

being a global environmental leader, with both responsibilities and specific interest in the Arctic region. To become an observer to the Arctic Council , the main international forum for cooperation on Arctic issues, has been an important objective to the EU, as such status is viewed crucial for its legitimacy in the region and is of great symbolic value (Offerdal 2011). Legitimacy in the Arctic can then be translated into access, influence, economic opportunities, and political power.

1.5   *Disposition*

The subsequent section (Chapter 2) presents previous research on the concept and evolution of environmental security, as well as scholarly publications in regard to the Arctic environment, governance and the EU's role in the region. The theoretical chapter (Chapter 3) holds the theoretical framework based on the theory of securitization, developed by the Copenhagen School of thought. Chapter 4 introduces the aim of the thesis and the research questions, and the following chapter (5) explains the methodological approach and choices. With the help of critical discourse analysis, this thesis analyses the concepts of environmental security and environmental conflict in the EU's Arctic policy in order to understand what the consequences for the EU as an actor in Arctic governance may be when the environment is defined as a security issue. Chapter 6 introduces the materials chosen for the analysis and the thesis then continues with presenting the analysis and main results of the EU documents (Chapter 7). The following chapter (8) discusses the results from the analysis. The final chapter (9) entails the conclusion and suggests future research areas.

2. Previous Research

The following chapter discusses the previous research in two areas. One area is the concept of environmental security in general, and the second is the Arctic and the governance challenges the region faces as a result of climate change.

In the literature, the relationship between security and environment is found to relate to two main concerns: environmental conflict and environmental security. In respect to the challenges facing the region, there are three main representations of the Arctic region found in the literature. The first is a geopolitical representation, which discusses whether the region is dominated by a discourse of conflict or collaboration. The second, a geo-economic description, views the region in the context of the global economy and discusses the benefits and challenges of the development of commercial activities. This representation can be related to the global notion of sustainable development. The third and final representation of the Arctic views it as the most powerful and representative image of climate change, and discusses what actors are central in mitigating the effects. This third image can be called the environmental representation of the Arctic.

2.1 *Environment and Security*

2.1.1 A Traditional Approach to Security

The paradigm which dominated the international relations discourse during the Cold War period was the classical realist theory, emphasizing the use of force as a mean to resolve conflicts between states and placing national security interests and ideology at the forefront in domestic and international politics (Barnett 2001). One of the most influential classical realist theorists, Kenneth Waltz, viewed the international relations system as a constant struggle for power and wealth among sovereign actors in a state of anarchy between nation states (Waltz 1979). Such view of security is generally about to keep a balance of powers in the international system. Hence, according to realists, the behavior of actors is affected by external physical forces (Adler 1997). Realists describe the international state system as anarchical - without government - thus no supranational regulating regime governs the relationship between states. Without any global law-enforcement body and with no effective global institutions to manage international conflicts, there is no supplier of security to states

(Miller 2001). Realists are therefore mainly interested in states' national security interests. Kenneth Waltz explains that:

> In anarchy, security is the highest end. Only if survival is assured can states seek such other goals as tranquility, profit, and power.[3]

Miller lists five main dimensions of traditional (national) security logic: first of all, threats origin from other states, secondly the military capabilities define the nature of threats, such as increase of offensive capabilities or joining an alliance. The third dimension applies to how an actor responds to threats, and the fourth concerns the lack of a global security re-enforcer. The fifth and final dimension of traditional security logic is the core values of states: sovereignty, national independence, territorial integrity, and sanctity of boundaries (Miller 2001). Environment is not considered to be of particular interest to realists, who tend to view environmental issues as belonging to the area of "low politics" in contrast to security, which is placed in the realm of "high politics" (Trombetta 2008:587).

2.1.2   From State-Centrism to a Multi-Sector Approach

The political shift, which occurred in conjunction with the end of the Cold War, created a security vacuum generating a need for new approaches to security. Consequently, in the early 1990's, security studies moved away from the traditional concept of national security fears, such as arms control, military alliances, or nuclear deterrence, and introduced new ideas which widened the concept of security (Buzan *et al* 1998). Graeger asserts that because the realist paradigm gives little attention to environmental issues, it is problematic when bringing the traditional security perspective together with environmental issues as:

> [t]he transboundary character of most environmental problems makes it difficult for them to fit into the state-centered ideology of security policies.[4]

Since the end of the Cold War, the environment has increasingly become an area which has been linked with the security domain and thus security studies have moved away from a state-centred approach (Buzan *et al* 1998).

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[3] Waltz 1979
[4] Graeger 1996:112

2.2   *Environment on the Security Agenda: An Conceptual Analysis*

Conceptualizing the relationship between security and the environment can be done in several different ways. Based on an analysis of the literature relating to security and environment, two main themes have been detected: environmental conflict and environmental security. Though both discourses have certain similarities, they differ in how they emphasize certain features of security and how it is linked to the environment. Environmental conflict is often labelled as environmental security; however the difference lies in how it constructs a different understanding of the security implications.

2.2.1   Environmental Conflict

Much of the literature suggests that different types of conflicts, caused by changes in the physical environment, may emerge in the future or have already been a source of conflict. A more traditional security logic is applied to the construction of threat scenarios. This is mainly manifested by the emphasis on how states, groups, and individuals become more inclined to engage in violent actions due to scarcity of natural resources caused by climate change.

There is a significant corpus of academic literature and scientific reports establishing the link between climate change and its impact on social and ecological systems (*e.g.* IPCC 2013; Graeger 1996; Podesta and Ogden 2007). The risks are regarded to be so profound, that these changes are defined as a threat to security and many scholars claim that climate change increases the possibility of violent conflict (*e.g.* Barnett 2001; Homer-Dixon 1999). The difficult issue of maintaining and distributing common global resources was pointed out by Mathews already in 1989:

> […] natural resource[s] […] such as coal, oil and minerals—are in fact inexhaustible, while so-called renewable resources can be finite. As a nonrenewable resource becomes scarce and more expensive, demand falls, and substitutes and alternative technologies appear. For that reason we will never pump the last barrel of oil or anything close to it. On the other hand, a fishery fished beyond a certain point will not recover, a species driven to extinction will not reappear, and eroded topsoil cannot be replaced (except over geological time). There are, thus, thresholds effects for renewable resources that belie the name given them, with unfortunate consequences for policy.[5]

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[5] Mathews 1989:164

In addition to scarcity of resources being viewed as a contributing factor to violent conflicts, the state is also often featured in the environmental conflict discourse. Most often the security of the state, and not security of the people living in the state, is highlighted.

The effects of environmental degradation on social outcomes have been thorough studied by Thomas Homer-Dixon. In the early 1990's, Homer-Dixon was one of the main contributors to the research field as he and his group of researchers confirmed a positive linkage between environmental change and conflict (Deligiannis 2012). In his book *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (1999), Homer-Dixon presents a wide display of empirical work connecting environmental degradation with violent outcomes, and does so through a primary theoretical framework to describe these linkages. Still the link between environmental scarcity and violence, is neither simple nor linear. Homer-Dixon argues that resources, together with other factors, can result in violence:

> […] there are many conflicts around the world in which environmental scarcity plays little role; and, when it does play a role, it always interacts with other contextual factors […] to generate violence.[6]

Instead it is pointed out that scarcity in combination with other factors such as inequality, migration and the absence of functioning institutions may result in violent outcomes. Societies must adapt in response to resource scarcity to avoid this potential violence. In brief, they can do so in two ways, according to Homer-Dixon. They can either use their resources more efficiently or they can decrease their reliance on the said resources. The empirical cases given by Homer-Dixon are all examples from the global South. However, it is rather obvious that these are not the only societies experiencing environmental scarcity. Even so, Homer-Dixon's discussion lacks any reference to the growing debate about the global commons, nor is the North's consumerism discussed in relation to developing countries. The international system as a factor is also omitted. In 2009, Burke *et al* came to similar conclusions as Homer-Dixon in the article *Warming Increases the Risk of Civil War in Africa*, which links rising global temperatures in sub-Saharan Africa with more wars on the continent. The article estimates that nearly 400 000 people will die as a result of climate-induced conflict by 2030 if global warming continues at the same rate as it does today (Burke *et al* 2009). However, it is

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[6] Homer-Dixon 1999:7

worth noting that Burke et al do not include other factors in their calculations other than climate change.

Yet scarcity of resources may not be the only origin of violence. Abundance of resources can also be an igniting spark for potential conflict (Barnett 2003). However, Barnett finds it difficult to link abundance of resources with environmental-driven conflict, especially due to lack of any well-documented cases (Barnett 2003).

Though there exists little evidence that contemporary conflicts arise *only* from environmental changes (Barnett 2001; Barnett 2003), a link between security threats and climate change may still be established. Åtland claims that climate change under specific conditions may lead to rising tensions in a country or region. The more politically stable and economically prosperous a region is, the lesser the risk is for a conflict to start (Åtland 2013).

2.2.2   Environmental Security

As a whole, the literature about environmental security is broader than the literature about environmental conflict. Environmental conflict can, as previously mentioned, be integrated into the discourse of environmental security; hence conflict becomes yet another aspect linked to environmental issues. If defined too broadly, the concept of environmental security risks the same fate as "sustainable development" – it becomes a buzzword used by everyone to achieve anything (Graeger 1996). The concept of environmental security is derived from the understanding of security in its traditional sense – national security. That generates the question what should be secured and from whom it should be secured (Barnett 2001). Securitization of an issue is a form of politicization, even if it is occasionally in a more extreme form and an issue which may be presented as of extreme priority (Buzan 1997).

In 1994, the concept of human security was introduced in the *Human Development Report*, which listed seven essential dimensions of human security - environment being one of them (Paris 2001). In the academic literature, environmental security refers to how climate change directly impact human beings and is thus connected to the concept of human security. Proponents of redefining environmental security in terms of human security (*e.g.* Barnett 2001) highlight the importance of asking questions about equity, justice, vulnerability, power

relations, and in particular whose security is actually threatened by climate change. However, as a new conceptualization of security, human security is quite vague (Paris 2001).

Barnett (2001), in contrast to Homer-Dixon, suggests that instead of focusing on conflict over resources and its prevention at state level, the concept of security ought to be understood in terms of environmental justice since "peace is the best means to achieve environmental security" (Barnett 2001:159). Moreover, Barnett understands environmental security in terms of how environmental degradation threatens the security of individuals, and the root of the problem lies in structural inequalities represented by a North-South divide. The overconsumption and absence of redistribution in the developed world "produces a double insecurity whereby longstanding vulnerabilities arising from underdevelopment and impoverishment are compounded by an intensifying suite of risks associated with environmental degradation" (Barnett 2001:20).

Graeger (1996) believes that because the issue of environmental security is transboundary in its nature, the question of environmental security ought to be posed at the regional and global level and focusing on individuals. Mathews also notes that environmental issues are problematic for states to deal with, because of the issues being transboundary:

> Environmental strains that transcend national borders are already beginning
> to break down the sacred boundaries of national sovereignty [...][7]

The link between environmental scarcity and national security is challenged by Deudney (1990). Firstly, Deudney argues that the traditional focus of national security is quite different from the environmental threats. Secondly, he argues it can be counterproductive to describe environmental degradation as a security threat, as it can be difficult to mobilize action among different actors. The final argument against linking environmental degradation and national security is that it is unlikely that environmental degradation will cause war between nation-states.

Because a multilevel security perspective is both wide-ranging and globally applicable, the defining of states as global actors as well entities of regional and local actors, gives a more forceful frame of reference than sovereign nation-states (Graeger 1996). International organizations which merge sovereignty at regional level, such as the European Union, and

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[7] Mathews 1989:162

who also have binding environmental legislation in force, are perhaps the best representation of the international system in the present day. The securitization discourse of environment and climate change is also reinforced by the UN. In an address to the Security Council, the United Nation Environment Programme's (UNEP's) director highlighted the importance of international cooperation in response to climate change:

> There can be little doubt today that climate change has potentially far-reaching implications for global stability and security in economic, social and environmental terms which will increasingly transcend the capacity of individual nation States to manage. In that context the sustainable development paths of individual nations will increasingly be predicated upon the ability of the international community to act collectively in addressing these developments.[8]

The above quote illustrates how the concept of security not only has broadened in theoretical terms, but has been popularized and become a part of the discursive practice of international organizations. It becomes more recognized that environmental protection needs coordinated responses at a global level and it becomes increasingly recognized that these issues cannot only be handled by national governments. Hence, it can be concluded that the state level is not the most applicable unit of analysis when examining environmental security. The point is not to disregard the importance states have for international security. However, security today is better described as a mosaic of various actors, rather than superpowers. Cooperation between states and other actors better defines the environment-security nexus of today.

2.3   *Governance in the Circumpolar North*

2.3.1   International Arrangements

The Arctic is not a continent but primarily an ice-covered ocean and definitions of the Arctic varies across disciplines and between different stakeholders (Pieper *et al* 2011). The Arctic, however, inhabits over four million people, whereof 10 percent are indigenous people (Young 2005:10). The circumpolar coastline of the Arctic Ocean is 45,389 km long and five states have a coast to the Arctic Ocean: the Russian Federation, the United States, Canada, Denmark, and Norway. The remaining three Arctic states, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland, only have territorial claims (Åtland 2013). The region is administered according to the national laws and regulations of each Arctic state. However, it is also subjected to bilateral, regional, and international agreements. The overarching legal framework governing the Arctic is the

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[8] Extract from speech given by UNEP: s Executive Director Achim Steiner 2011-07-20

1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which is emphasized by all Arctic states as an essential instrument for resolving jurisdictional disputes in a peaceful manner (Åtland 2013). As stated in UNCLOS, the littoral states have the exclusive rights to their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) up to two hundred nautical miles their territorial sea baseline (Holmes 2008). Unlike Antarctica, a non-militarized scientific and nature reserve, the Arctic has no international treaty to govern it[9]. In a declaration by the five Arctic coastal states, the Ilulissat Declaration, it is established that there is "no need to develop a new comprehensive international legal regime to govern the Arctic Ocean" (Ilulissat Declaration 2008:2). Bellinger discards the idea of an Arctic regime similar to the Antarctic Treaty and considers it to be "unnecessary and inappropriate" as the context of the two regions are very dissimilar (Bellinger 2008-06-23). Young (2009), in line with Bellinger, agrees and views an Artic Treaty a non-issue. Young also suggests that the current regime governance ought to be expanded and deepened beyond UNCLOS, IMO and the Arctic Council, in order for future disagreements to be negotiated and settled (Young 2009).

The transboundary nature of climate change does not only have positive implication for international relations in terms of more international cooperation, but it also can mean that certain actors take advantage of the implications of climate change, such as extraction of natural resources, leading to a potential competition over resources by a range of stakeholders besides the Arctic states.. Involved institutions in Arctic governance therefore can gain more (or less) legitimacy through their activities in the region.

Russian leaders have continually emphasized the importance of the Arctic as a strategic resource base for modern Russia (Blunden 2009). Russia has in recent years strengthened its presence in the Arctic, best illustrated by the planting of the Russian flag on North Pole's sea bed (Nilsen 2014-03-28), an event that gained global attention in 2007 and was by many viewed as the start of an Arctic "race for resources" (Holmes 2008:323). However, other Arctic nations have also made claims for the energy-rich region. In December 2013, it was

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[9] The Antarctic Treaty is a legally binding treaty, signed in 1959 and accompanied by the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (1991), and two separate conventions on the Conservation of Antarctic Seals (1972) and the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (1980) and additional 200 recommendations adopted at the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings. The Antarctic Treaty emphasizes that Antarctica should be exclusively used for peaceful purposes, and promotes scientific research and international cooperation. The 1991 protocol principally designates the region as a nature reserve, prohibiting claims to mineral deposits, and regulating waste management and marine pollution (Stoessel et al 2014:58-59).

reported that Canada was planning to file with the United Nations a claim to the North Pole and surrounding Arctic waters (Harding 2013-12-10).

2.3.2   The Arctic Council

The eight Arctic states, together with six indigenous people's organizations and some thirty observers, form the Arctic Council. Established through the 1996 Ottawa Declaration, the Arctic Council's central aim is to promote cooperation and collaboration, specifically regarding "issues of sustainable development and environmental protection" (Arctic Council 1996 article 1a). With six working groups and several expert groups and task forces, the Arctic Council is chaired by one of the Arctic states, a chairmanship which is rotated on a biannual basis (Molenaar el at 2014). Full membership, including voting rights, is restricted to the eight countries with territory in the region, but non-arctic states and organizations may apply for observer status. By many, the Arctic Council is regarded to be the core institution for environmental governance of the Arctic, especially due to the role rendered to the organizations of indigenous peoples (Young 2009). Those who support the work and vision of the Council, view it is the embodiment of peaceful cooperation, regional integration, and environmental governance. Olav Schram Stokke notes that:

> [t]he political stability inherent in a clear jurisdictional allocation is supported by the political determination among Arctic states to deal with potentially contentious issues cooperatively and peacefully.[10]

Even though Stokke supports the role of the Arctic Council, he proposes an expansion of the governance regime. Due to its soft-law approach, the Arctic Council:

> […] with its narrow membership, can play only a modest role in efforts to combat this essentially global problem.[11]

Though security has arisen as one of the primary concerns among scholars, the Arctic Council does not engage in security issues (Ottawa Declaration 1996). It is criticized to do little or nothing to prevent conflict between Arctic stakeholders. Paul Berkman stressed in a New York Times article that there "has been little effort to develop legal mechanisms to prevent or adjudicate conflict" (Berkman 2013-03-12).

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[10] Stokke 2011:840
[11] Stokke 2011:843

2.3.3   The EU in the Arctic

Three of the Arctic states are both members of the EU and the Arctic Council: Sweden, Finland, and Denmark. For these three states the Arctic is equally an area of domestic as of foreign policy. As Wegge states, "it is reasonable to expect Arctic states to be the most important external actors in the EU's pursuit of the High North" (2012:11). However, the EU has also used its internal policies to justify interference in "Arctic matters". When the EU introduced a ban on imports of seal products[12], it became a backlash to the EU's efforts to approach the Arctic Council. With the regulation the EU indirectly tried to enforce regulatory legislation on the Arctic using internal policies (Pieper *et al* 2011). Moreover, the indigenous people's organizations were concerned with the EU's lack of understanding of their traditional way of life and caused considerable tension between the EU and the Arctic states, in particular Canada (Graczyk and Koivurova 2013; Koivurova *et al* 2012).

Despite the EU's interest and commitment in the Arctic, it has not been enough to make it a legitimate actor and the EU's road to the Arctic Council has not been without setbacks. The European Union, represented by the European Commission, applied for observer status for the first time in 2009, but was denied both in 2009 and 2011. During the last ministerial meeting in May 2013, the EU was admitted affirmatively due to the continuing disagreement with Canada on the ban of seal products (Arctic Council Kiruna Declaration 2013). However, observer status in the Arctic Council is more symbolic than carrying any real weight (Graczyk and Koivurova 2013). What it does, is to accept external actors into the "inner Arctic circle", giving the EU more legitimacy in the Arctic. Nonetheless, existing observers and applicants are evaluated depending on how they are perceived as a challenge to Arctic states' and indigenous organization's regional interests (Graczyk and Koivurova 2013).

Some scholars point at the EU's energy dependency and the great untapped gas and oil resources under the Arctic ice sheet to be an important geo-economic aspect of the EU's interest in the region (Pieper *et al* 2011; Stokke 2011). Moreover, the melting ice also opens up for shorter shipping routes, which is a great economic incentive for the maritime dependent EU (Weber and Romanyshyn 2011).

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[12] EC Regulation No 10007/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of 16 September 2009 on trade in seal products. Accessed 2014-05-11 from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009R1007

2.3.4   Security Implications

In the bipolar political reality during the Cold War, the Arctic region was a focal point for competition between military regimes. Huebert *et al* explain that due to the balance of powers between the Soviet Union on one side, and the NATO countries on the other, deterrence policy required each side to be able to monitor the actions of the others in the northern hemisphere. If deterrence would fail, then the Arctic would become a transit zone for missile attacks between the two superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union (Huebert *et al* 2012). In the 1990's, Palosaari and Möller (2004) note, the Arctic lost its position as a prominent military base. While there has been substantial effort to develop a cooperative governance regime based on goodwill and shared interests between the Arctic states, they also have begun to strengthen and expand their military and security capabilities in the Arctic, often advanced in terms of environmental security (Huebert *et al* 2012; Palosaari and Möller 2004). In the context of a an individual-based approach to security, environmental threats can be understood as threats to indigenous people's way of life. The indigenous people are also more exposed to the pollution in air and water which in turn has serious health consequences because: "indigenous cultures are closely linked with the Arctic environment and will be subject to impacts that will influence the loss of traditional culture and way of life in the Arctic" (Potts and Schofield 2008:169). The state is often criticized from the individual-based perspective as it is viewed to put its own interests before the individuals. However, the state still plays a significant role in order to secure the security of the individual (Barnett 2001).

The harsh Arctic climate has until recently been deemed too challenging for domestic or international conflict to occur, and in the 1990's the region was neglected "as the attention of the former belligerents focused elsewhere" (Huebert *et al* 2012:15). However, the warmer climate has begun to test that assumption. A consequence of the melting Arctic is that the Northern states as well as external actors view the region in more economic terms. However, a more accessible Arctic also raises new concerns about security in the Arctic (*ibid.*). Wezeman states that remilitarization of the Arctic is quite limited, with the exception of Russia, and has more to do with controlling national territories and modernization then a military build-up over Arctic resources (Wezeman 2012). Still, some scholars are concerned that energy dependency may over-power the current cooperative state that has defined and shaped the governance of the Arctic in recent years (Huebert *et al* 2012; Weber and Romanyshyn 2011).

A warmer Arctic has several security implications. The potentiality of Arctic's natural resources has driven the coastal states to modernize their security strategies. Barnett claims that since sovereignty over delimited territory is the basis of national security, then physical processes such as rising sea-levels poses a considerable security threat (Barnett 2003). Of the littoral states, Russia has both the largest coastline as well as the largest Arctic population and the retreating ice is giving the Russian Arctic increased strategic importance (Blunden 2009).

The competition over resources, shipping routes, and other commercial benefits which can be achieved through the accessibility of the region will jeopardize the fragile environment. As Huebert *et al* declares: "[a]lthough the Arctic states invariably emphasize their desire to maintain a cooperative environment, several have stated that they will defend their national interests in the region if necessary" (2012:1). The Arctic nations have however certain shared environmental concerns, for instance to protect endangered species.

2.3.5   Melting Arctic and Rising Tensions

Rising global temperatures causes the ice to retreat in the Arctic, which in turn leads to the opening up of new shipping routes and new Arctic spaces for resource extraction. The implication may however also be competition between states and other stakeholders and rise of military issues that subsequently raises questions of governance in the region.

Since the 1980's, the Arctic has lost about 40 per cent of its sea ice cover. A majority of the scientific community is certain that the Arctic could be entirely ice-free in the summers by the middle of the century, or possibly even sooner. As stated by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the retreat of summer sea ice has in the last years been "unprecedented" and "[i]t is very likely that the Arctic sea ice cover will continue to shrink and thin and that Northern Hemisphere spring snow cover will decrease during the 21st century as global mean surface temperature rises" (2013:17).

The Arctic is experiencing the rate of global warming twice as fast than any other region in the world, and the IPCC emphasizes the Arctic as being subjected "to very high risks with additional warming of 2°C" (IPCC 2013:14). The region is also being pointed out as an ecological tipping point "experiencing irreversible regime shifts" (*ibid*). Rising temperatures affects not only the Arctic environment, but has a global impact. Young has for instance addressed the impact of globalization on the Arctic. He concludes that because of lack of

knowledge about Arctic matters amongst southern policy-makers and the economic vulnerability of many Arctic communities, the region and its communities is more exposed to the threats of globalization then others (Young 2005).

Alarmist reports from the scientific community about the effects of human induced climate change has made the environmental issue to rise to the top of policy-makers agendas. The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment report (ACIA) from 2004 documented the widespread melting of glaciers and sea ice, a development having dire consequences not only to Arctic wildlife and but also to its communities. Simultaneously, as most of the studies, reports, prognoses, and analyses suggest, there may also be economic benefits from shrinking sea ice and warmer air and water temperatures. However, these economic benefits may also be potential sources of conflict. The opening up of the Arctic raises strategic questions about protecting littoral states' national sovereignty, economic interests, and sea-lanes and access to areas of the region which does not lie under any national jurisdiction. These economic opportunities and security challenges include territorial issues, hydrocarbon exploitation, and the shipping sector (Chatham House 2012; Ernst and Young 2013; Åtland 2013).

Conflict Area 1: Natural Resources

The Arctic has been known to contain oil and gas for over two centuries; however commercial development is a much more recent issue (Chatham House 2012). It is estimated that the Arctic holds about 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil reserves and up to 30 percent of the world's undiscovered natural gas reserves (Ernst & Young 2013). These natural resources become increasingly accessible as the Arctic is becoming ice-free. There is a predisposition among several of the Arctic states to view their neighbors as potential competitors in the pursuit for oil and gas resources in the Arctic (Åtland 2013). However, most of the known and extractable oil and gas resources are located in areas of undisputed national jurisdiction. Because of the harsh weather conditions it would not be economically, or politically, feasible to extract the resources in waters far from the any coastal area (*ibid.*).

Conflict Area 2: Shipping Lanes

New transport routes shifts the political and economic power of an actor (Blunden 2012). The opening up the Northern Sea route and Northwest passage, would redirect the current transport routes to the High North, giving economic power and political influence to the

actors controlling those seaways (*ibid.*).There are some remaining disagreements between certain Arctic states about the legal status of the two main maritime transport corridors: the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route (Molenaar *et al* 2014). The disagreements mainly relate to borders of international waters, and the right of transit passage. Shorter trade routes affects, for instance export-driven nations as well as having extensive and significant global climatic and environmental implications. For Canada and Russia, who controls the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route respectively, the opening up of the shipping lanes creates new legal and safety concerns and could deprive both countries of prestige, regulatory power, and sources of income (Åtland 2013).

Conflict Area 3: Jurisdictional Areas

UNCLOS and the UN framework convention on climate change (UNFCCC) play central roles in the legal regulations and definition in the Arctic, and renewed attention from Arctic and non-Arctic actors occur simultaneously while certain expansion of the rule-of-law principle in the international arena is taking place (Fossum and Roussel 2011). However, current legal differences may gain in importance in the coming years and could lead to a military build-up in the region (Åtland 2013). Strong national energy interests, combined with a lack of overarching political and legal structures, can open up to a remilitarization of the region (Huebert *et al* 2012). Scott Borgenson's article *Arctic Meltdown* (2008) is one of the most prominent papers on the subject and emphasizes that the absence of a legal international regime could potentially lead to an armed conflict.

At the same time, there have been instances of cooperation on territorial disputes. In 2010, Russia and Norway managed to resolve a long lasting disagreement about the Barents Sea (Harding 2010-09-15; Stokke 2011). This is often accredited to the nature of cooperation that defines relations in the High North (Koiruvoa 2012). Stokke concludes that the stability in the region and determination of the Arctic states to cooperate, does not pose a threat to the region's environment, as the "[s]hifts in resource accessibility are slow and ambiguous, providing adequate time to devise appropriate responses" (Stokke 2011:843).

2.4   *Conclusions from Previous Research*

The Arctic is hot, both literally and figuratively. External elements, global warming above all, affects the Arctic region which sequentially will have significance outside the region. As the Arctic is melting, the region has become a focal point in the international debate. Berkman (2012) compares the shrinking ice-cap of the Arctic ocean with removing the ceiling of a room full of people; it fundamentally alters the behaviour of everyone inside it. In the Arctic room, there are multiple stakeholders, all with diverse, or sometimes cross-cutting, interests.

It is apparent that the potential economic benefits from a more accessible Arctic are considerable. Still, the region faces fundamental physical changes which will among other things affect international shipping routes and hydrocarbon reserves. However, the strategic importance of the Arctic may generate competition between actors wanting to secure the resources and revenues for themselves. Even with formal legal structures such as the UNCLOS in place, the rising global temperature generates new, basically ungoverned, areas in the Arctic. With existing (and potential) territorial disputes there is a risk of violent confrontation between the Arctic stakeholders. However, the Arctic context is more multidimensional than that, as the region is also regarded as a role model within international cooperation. There are several reservations for stating just how, how much and when climate change will change the security dynamics and security policies in the Arctic. Nonetheless, the changes in the environment are already offering a wide-range display of challenges to policy-makers, both on a regional as on an international level.

This chapter on previous research has showed that there is a wide-ranging debate about environmental security and environmental conflict, however the debate generally focuses on regions affected by resource scarcity in the global South. In addition, the literature makes a distinction between how the state-level and individual-level suffers from the effects of climate change. The Arctic is rarely discussed in term of environmental security; instead the region is most often discussed in terms of governance arrangements, environmental challenges, economic opportunities, and - to a certain extent - traditional security threats. External actors in the Arctic are also an area which is beginning to be researched more and more, however the EU's role as a securitizing actor is seldom mentioned. There exists therefore a certain gap in the literature in regard to the EU's role as an external actor in Arctic governance, analysed

from a security perspective. This thesis will hopefully somewhat contribute to this field of research.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1   *The Copenhagen School*

The security discourse evolved in the post-Cold War period, and Wilkinson (2007) maintain that it intensified once again after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001. One of the most successful redefinitions of the concept "security" has been done by the Copenhagen School, which challenges the traditional realist paradigm of security and identifies the politicized process of "achieving" security. Securitization can be viewed as a more extreme version of politization and the issue which is then securitized has a very broad definition (Buzan *et al* 2008).

According to Barry Buzan (1997), one of the founders of the Copenhagen School, there are three main strands within security studies: traditionalists (as described in terms of realists), wideners, who wants to expand the security agenda (proponents of the Copenhagen School), and finally Critical Security Studies, which questions the framework of security studies (see the three schools schematically outlined in figure 1 on page 27). According to Browning and McDonald (2013), the Copenhagen School can be viewed as a strand within Critical Security Studies, as certain themes overlap. One example of criticism to the securitization of different issues is given by Barnett, who says:

> […] that environmental security securitizes environmental problems, thereby making them more important than other mainstream political issues. This is a double-edged sword, for while securitizing environmental issues risks state cooption, colonization and emptying of the environmental agenda, it can also contest the legitimacy of the prevailing approach to security and highlight its contradictions.[13]

The theoretical approach in this thesis is securitization, as defined by the wideners of the Copenhagen School. The approach to security can be defined by three main components: firstly, it expanded the concept of security to include a mulyi-sector approach. In addition to military threats, security was expanded to cover environmental, economic, social, and political sectors. Secondly, the Copenhagen School developed a regional focus to security

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[13] Barnett 2001:156

studies, thus moving beyond the traditional state-centred view of security and viewing multilateralism as a solution to a security problem (Buzan *et al* 1998). Lastly, the Copenhagen School put the concept of security in a social constructivist tradition and thus gave it a more conceptual and discursive understanding (Watson 2012).
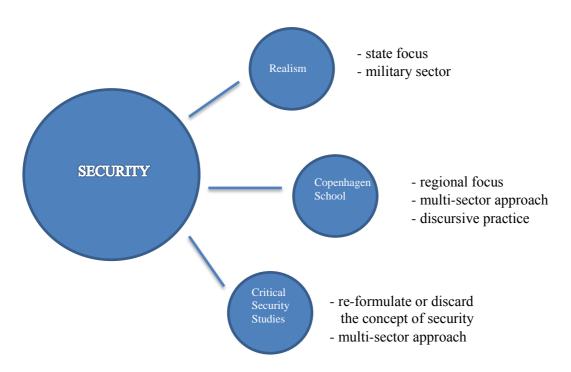
Figure 1: The Concept of Security in Security Studies

The model illustrates how the concept of security is broadly defined by the three main schools within security studies.

3.2   *Securitization*

In *Security – a New Framework for Analysis* (1998), Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde define security to involve threats to a highly valued referent object. The objects can be varied, ranging from states, non-state actors, sets of theoretical principles, to the environment. Securitizing actors are defined as "actors who securitize issues by declaring something—a referent object—existentially threatened". Referent objects are understood as "things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival" (Buzan *et al* 1998:36). For the Copenhagen School, issues become security issues, or threats, through language. The term *speech act* encompasses the idea of language becoming security in the sense that specific forms of language, written or spoken, establishes security. The act is a part of the securitization process and is defined as "constituted by the intersubjective

establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects" (Buzan 1997:25). Such characterization means that when an issue becomes securitized, it has political consequences.

Security threats are however subjective, and are placed on the security agenda first when a securitizing actor states that a particular referent object's existence is threatened, and will then claim the right to take extraordinary measures to ensure the referent object's survival – which is also known as a securitizing move. The issue is then moved from the sphere of normal politics to the realm of emergency politics. Securitization is more about successful securitization because they constitute the currently valid specific meaning of security (Buzan *et al* 1998). In other words, the definition of securitizing actors depends on their capacity to effectively achieve securitization. Referent objects are related to the practice of securitization: security is defined by discourse and it is through discourse actors manifest their position and capability. Referent objects must establish security legitimacy in terms of a claim to survival.

The Copenhagen School expanded the understanding of who the referent object is. Traditionally it was the state, however the Copenhagen School's main contribution to IR field was to recognize that other sectors, besides the military, also have different referent objects (Wilkinson 2007). This does not mean that one can assume that there are no limitations to what a referent object can be: "[s]ecurity action is usually taken on behalf of, or in reference to, a collectivity" (Buzan *et al* 1998:36). Some environmental groups are using security logic where the threat to environment is posed as an existential threat, therefore taking priority over all other threats, "because if the environment is degraded to the point of no return all other issues will lose their meaning" (Buzan *et al* 1998:38). This may be interpreted as the environment itself being a referent object. Furthermore, the collective survival is vital in understanding the broadening of Copenhagen School's view of securitization:

> [i]f we place the survival of collective units and principles – the politics of existential threat – as the defining core of security studies, we have the basis for applying security analysis to variety of sectors without losing the essential quality of the concept. This is the answer to those who hold that security studies cannot expand its agenda beyond the traditional military-political one without debasing the concept of security itself.[14]

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[14] Buzan *et al* 1998:27

The referent objects of security include, besides the state, the individual, the global, the local, and/or specific groups according to Floyd (2007). In other words, by placing security in a broader framework, the concept becomes more legitimate to use by other actors other than the state, for instance by international or supranational organizations. When security becomes appropriated by various interested parties with various agendas, it affects the dynamics between the different actors and their motivations and aims. This more inclusive understanding of the security discourse also strengthens other actors' claims to have a security discourse in environmental governance. The wider understanding of securitization thus entitles actors such as the EU to incorporate security in other areas of its policy then traditional security politics, such as regional policies with a predominantly environmental agenda.

4. Aim and Research Questions

The point of departure of this thesis is that the melting Arctic constitutes one of the main challenges to Arctic governance. There are economic advantages of a melting Arctic, at the same time it is widely recognized that a warmer climate also entails a threat to states existence and human lives. How international institutions respond to such challenges, for instance through environmental security, is likely to inform policies significantly. Fossum and Roussel (2011) note that the EU is the key manifestation of the intensified presence of non-Arctic actors in the region, as it is the world's first supranational actor with a clear democratic agenda.

With the help of critical discourse analysis, this thesis analyses the concepts of environmental security and environmental conflict in the EU's Arctic policy in order to understand what the consequences for the EU as an actor in Arctic governance may be when the environment is defined as a security issue. The aim of this thesis is therefore two-folded. Firstly it is to critically analyse the link between security, environment, and governance in the EU's Arctic discourse. A critical analysis of the EU's policy documents may help to better comprehend the environmental security concept and to understand the governance challenges for the EU in the Arctic. The effects of climate change and the subsequent accessibility to natural resources give rise to competition over resources and may potentially lead to conflict, a scenario problematizing governance of the region. Secondly, since power over resources is central to possible conflict, and a reason for applying security logic to environmental policy, the second objective is to study the discourse of securitization in the EU's Arctic policy.

This thesis therefore reflects upon the urgency of environmental problems in the Arctic region, and gives emphasis to how the EU, in the role of a global environmental actor, relates to governance challenges and environmental security in its developing Arctic policy.

The three research questions are thus as follows:
- How is security, environment, and governance interrelated in the EU's Arctic policy?

- How does an environmental security discourse resonate in the EU's Arctic policy?

- In what way is securitization in the EU's Arctic policy constructed discursively?

5. Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

The following chapter outlines the methodological aspects of the thesis and subsequently motivates the methodological choices, evaluation criteria, and ethical reflections.

A complete discussion on ontological and epistemological perspectives is beyond the scope of this thesis; however, section 5.2 gives a brief overview on the ontological standpoint and its implications for the thesis. Critical discourse analysis is then introduced as the main analytical tool. However, the chapter starts with revisiting the theory of securitization and how it is applicable as a discursive method in textual analysis.

5.1 *Securitization as an Analytical Tool*

In social research, discourse analysis is viewed as both a theory and a method (Bergström and Boréus 2005). According to Buzan *et al* (1998) discourse analysis is an adequate tool for performing textual analysis in search for security discourse. The main analytical tool in this thesis is the concept of securitization, which conceptualizes the process of invoking security for certain referent objects (Wilkinson 2007). The Copenhagen School attempts to demonstrate, through a securitization approach, that environmental issues can receive security status intersubjectively. Moreover, securitization conceptualizes security as a speech-act: "[i]t is not interesting as a sign referring to something more real; it is the utterance itself that is the act" (Buzan *et al* 1998:26). In other words, when a securitizing actor states that something is a security issue, then it becomes one.

Securitization is about how the language of security is constructed and in security discourse an issue becomes exaggerated and presented as of being of the highest priority. The defining criterion of security is textual: a specific rhetorical structure that has to be located in discourse. Security does not have to entail the word security, the important thing is that "the designation of an existential threat requiring emergency action or special measures and the acceptance of that designation by a significant audience" (Buzan *et al* 1998:27).

5.2 *Ontological Concerns*

In line with the securitization theory, this thesis takes on a social constructivist approach, a "middle-ground" approach within International Relations, as described by Emanuel Adler (1997). According to Adler:

> [c]onstructivism is the view that the manner in which the material world
> shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on dynamic
> normative and epistemic interpretations of the world.[15]

Thus, the EU's Arctic ambitions are understood as a socially constructed reality. As the EU has no legal claim to the Arctic region, but bases its (geopolitical) strategic interest on several other factors and assumptions, the reality is that the EU's Arctic agenda exists as an intersubjective understanding, which is constructed by interpretations, assumptions, and specific meaning. The social and physical reality is facilitated by social practices, for instance language practices.

With this framework in mind, the thesis analyses the social construction and discursive development of the EU's Arctic policy. In that way the thesis focuses on social practices, more specifically on linguistic practices and analyses it on a textual and discursive level. The analysis follows the model of critical discourse analysis (CDA), as construed by one of the method's founders Norman Fairclough.

5.3   *Critical Discourse Analysis*

The term "discourse" has many epithets, as Bergström and Boréus (2005) note, and Hajer defines it:

> […] as an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning
> is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and
> reproduced through an identifiable set of practices.[16]

Though often used as an umbrella term, discourse analysis finds unity in the description of language. Language reveals subjective meaning, highlights contradictions, and what is being said, or more importantly, what is not being said (Bergström and Boréus 2005). The use of discourse analysis in this thesis is primary applied as a method, but also as a theoretical framework along with the securitization theory. A common starting point for any type of discourse analysis is the question of power, recognized through the significance of language (Fairclough 2013). "Language has the capacity to make politics" Hajer states (2005:300), and the study of the EU's discourse may illustrate whether the rhetorical structure of

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[15] Adler 1997:322
[16] Hajer 2005:300

environmental security is distinctive from a more traditional understanding of security, hence implying what kind of environmental governance the EU aims at exerting both regionally and globally.

Discourse is thus an instrument of power and control, and *critical discourse analysis* (CDA), examines, reveals, and explains how power and certain values are inscribed in and mediated through the linguistic system. Securitization is also a discursive practice, and combining the two together hopefully gives a solid platform for the forthcoming analysis. The focal point of CDA is that certain dimensions relate to one another: language, discourse, and social structures. Also, CDA uncovers ways in which social structure relates to discourse patterns, such as power (Blommaert 2005).

Fairclough studies how discursive practice is ideologically shaped by power relations and the struggle over power (Peräkyla and Ruusuvuori 2011). However, CDA "does not simply describe and evaluate existing realities but seeks to explain them" (Fairclough 2013:178). When referring to the term discourse, Fairclough primarily refers to the spoken or written language. While referring to language as a discourse, he considers language to be a form of social practice, implying that language is both socially reproductive and socially shaping.

In Blommaert (2005:29-31) Fairclough's three dimensional model of understanding and analysing discourse is presented. Discourse can according to Fairclough be analysed as:

- a text
- a discursive practice
- a social practice

The first dimension analyses texts through linguistic features and organization of words (*e.g.* grammatical structures). The second dimension examines discourse through how it is produced, distributed, and consumed in a society. Speech-act, coherence, and intertextuality links the discourse to a social context. The third dimension relates to social and institutional relations and how they result in ideological and hegemonic practices.

Within academia, the concepts of reliability and validity are usually the benchmark for a well-executed research. Yet, within the discipline of CDA:

> […] the CDA researchers have to be aware that their own work is driven by social, economic and political motives like any other academic work […][17]

The bias elements of CDA is subject of debate among scholars according to Blommaert (2005), and therefore transparency is an important aspect of how the analysis is performed. By explicitly stating the research interest, being consistent about the ontological standpoints as well as being clear about the analytical process, the thesis can show transparency and reduce the biased effect. A common aspect of CDA is the frequent use of quotations, a method also applied in thesis for the purpose of transparency.

5.4   *Limitations*

There are many functional actors in the Arctic which play key roles in shaping an Arctic discourse and who are crucial for the governance of the region. Though sometimes overlapping, Buzan *et al* (2008) make a distinction between two agendas in the environmental sector: the scientific agenda and the political agenda. Scientific-based data is imperative for Arctic research, and often has a major impact in shaping environmental policy. However, this thesis centers on the political actors that set the political agenda; hence the analysis focuses solely on the EU, due to the aim of the thesis and because of the limited scope. As the purpose is to analyse the EU Arctic discourse, other political actors in the region have been excluded from the analysis. There is a substantial body of literature concerning the Arctic states and their relations, as well as the EU's relationship with the Arctic states. Deligiannis claim that the field of qualitative environment-conflict research has stalled "because level of analysis adopted by most of this work - the state level – is inadequate to capture the empirical complexity of environment-conflict links on the ground" (Deligiannis 2012:79). As Deligiannis notes, most qualitative researchers have failed to move beyond the scope of using states as the units of analysis. Therefore, even though it is inevitable to do certain comparisons, the Arctic states are not included and compared with the EU as a political actor in the analysis. Instead, the EU as an external security actor in Arctic governance is the focus of this thesis.

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[17] Meyer and Wodak 2009:7

6. Research Materials

The focal point of this study is to highlight how the discourse – on environmental security and conflict – resonates in the EU's developing policy on Arctic matters. In this study, the materials used for the analysis are the following five documents:

- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: *The European Union and the Arctic region*, issued on March 20th 2008 (12 pages).
- Council of the European Union: *Council Conclusions on Arctic issues*, issued December 8th 2009 (5 pages).
- European Parliament resolution: *A sustainable EU policy for the High North*, issued January 20th 2011 (14 pages).
- Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: *Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: progress since 2008 and next steps*, issued June 26th 2012 (18 pages).
- Joint Motion for a Resolution by the European Parliamentary groups S&D, ALDE, ECR, and PPE: *The EU strategy for the Arctic*, issued March 10th 2014 (11 pages).

All documents are retrieved through European Union External Action Service's website about the Arctic region: www.eeas.europa.eu/arctic_region. These documents cover a period of five and a half years, from November 2008 to March 2014, thus representing the evolution of the EU's Arctic policy. However, the five documents originate from three different EU institutions and are in different degrees authoritative for EU's Arctic policy, the Communications from the European Commission being the key documents. Nonetheless all five texts collectively form the current official discourse on Arctic governance and the EU discourse of developing a cohesive EU Arctic policy. None of the five documents are legally binding, but in addition to binding acts the EU institutions can give suggest guidelines for coordination or administrative practices, for instance an EU Arctic policy.

The European Commission represents the EU's interest as a whole and can issue non-binding suggestions for policy – a Communication (Ec.europa.eu 2014a). A Communication is a policy document with no binding authority and the Commission takes the initiative of

publishing a Communication when it wishes to set out its own opinion regarding a certain issue (Ec.europa.eu 2014b). The Council and the European Parliament can adopt resolutions, proposing a certain direction within a given policy area (Europa.eu 2014a; Europa.eu 2014b). A resolution is an expression of opinion, usually after voting. Though non-binding, the resolutions have certain indirect influence.

6.1 *Data Analysis*

The data - the selected documents - are analysed through critical discourse, therefore building representativeness and reliability of the conclusions. The thesis examines the discursive components of the EU's official Arctic policy, and by identifying the speech-act. As presented in the theory chapter, the process of securitization contains three main elements: an existential threat, referent objects and extraordinary measures (Buzan *et al* 1998). Consequently, with the help of discourse analysis, the thesis pinpoints current properties under each of the three types. CDA serves as a method for finding patterns of securitizing acts from the context of the texts. It analyses the texts through linguistic features: speech-act, coherence, intertextuality, and how the texts function as a social practice. Intertextuality is an especially important aspect of CDA and is highlighted in the analysis, since the analysis intends to find how the EU discourse on environmental security and governance has changed over time.

6.2 *Validity, Reliability and Ethical Considerations*

The performed document analysis is valid since all materials represent the official standpoint of the EU institutions. Since the documents cover a period of over five years, a comparison of the changes in texts over time is feasible. Reliability is ensured by consistency throughout the thesis in terms of how certain concepts are understood and used. It is also ensured by the very method of performing a document analysis, which in itself assures reliability of the study as it can be replicated and the materials are easy to access. The concept of environmental conflict is sometimes referred to as environmental security, however environmental conflict is often a consequence of environmental security (or insecurity) and therefore sometimes the terminology is used interchangeably. Overall, several systems of reliability have been employed together with a self-reflective understanding of that this thesis does not attempt to incorporate all aspects and challenges of environmental security in the Arctic. It recognizes that the complexity of the issue is beyond the scope of this thesis.

7. Analysis and Results

The following chapter presents the analysis and results of the empirical materials. The analysed documents follow in a chronological order (for the purpose of tracing intertextuality) and all five documents are then summarized in the end of the chapter. The results are elaborated upon and discussed in the subsequent chapter.

The first objective of the discourse analysis is to critically analyse how security, governance, and the environment are intermediated in the five EU Arctic texts. This is done by analysing the linguistic and discursive practices in the EU policy documents. The second objective is to analyse the discourse of securitization. There are three key features of the concept of securitization within the Copenhagen School: security as a speech-act, the intersubjectivity of securitization, and the "specific rhetorical structure" (Buzan *et al* 1998:26). The analysis is accomplished through three steps: firstly an issue, in this case environmental degradation, must be defined as an issue which needs to be securitized by the European Union. The referent object is the EU and what is being analysed is whether the discourse focuses on the urgency of the issue or not. Secondly, the existence of a threat towards the referent objects is found and the analysis finds who the other referent objects are, besides the EU. The other referent objects become more relevant when discussed in a broader social, political and economic context, as it shows priorities and policy-objectives. Thirdly, according to the theory of securitization, extraordinary measures actions proposed by the securitizing actors protect key referent objects by opposing the existential threat. Hence, the analysis identifies what actions are taken or are proposed to be taken towards the defined threat.

7.1   *The European Union and the Arctic Region – 2008 Communication*

In November 2008 the Commission submitted its first Arctic Communication to the European Parliament and the Council. It is considered to be the "first layer of an Arctic policy for the European Union" (European Commission 2008:12). The Commission formulates quite ambitious goal for an Arctic policy: "[t]his Communication sets out EU interests and proposes action for EU Member States and institutions" (European Commission 2008:1). The Commission focuses on three main policy intentions:

- protecting and preserving the Arctic in unison with its population;

- promoting a sustainable use of resources;
- contributing to the enhanced Arctic multilateral governance (European Commission 2008:1).

The presented objectives in this first policy proposal for the EU's involvement in the Arctic give the EU a quite prominent leadership position. For instance, the Commission claims that "[t]he EU is a leader in fighting climate change" (2008:3), and that "EU Member States and the European Community are major contributors to Arctic research" (2008:5). Furthermore the Commission states that "[t]he EU's main objective is to ensure exploitation of Arctic fisheries" resources at sustainable levels whilst respecting the right of local of local communities (2008:7), a statement which reflects the EU's position of a key stakeholder with both interests and responsibilities in the region.

Though underlining cooperation, the Commission states several reasons to how the EU as an environmental leader and as a contributor and polluter of the region should approach the Arctic. Especially the balancing act of mitigating the effects of climate change and the need for the sustainable use of resources is highlighted throughout the Communication. The EU defines the environmental changes occurring in the Arctic as an existential threat:

> […] environmental changes are altering the geo-strategic dynamics of the Arctic with potential consequences for international stability and European security interests […][18]

> […] the root causes of Arctic changes require a global response. Impacts resulting from climate change represent a challenge of paramount importance for the region at present and also for the future.[19]

The above quotes illustrate a discourse of security by framing the issue as an issue of survival, not only for the Member States, but also for the entire world. The urgency is stressed through the use if the phrasing "paramount importance" both for now and for the future. If nothing is done soon to prevent the impacts of climate change, the EC maintain that it may very well be too late, because the current changes in the Arctic:

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[18] European Commission 2008:2
[19] European Commission 2008:3

> […] have significant repercussions on the life of European citizens for generations to come.[20]

The threat also has a regional impact and constitutes a threat towards the indigenous population who is "particularly vulnerable" (European Commission 2008:4).

To summarize, environmental degradation exemplified through a melting Arctic, is defined as an existential threat towards the main referent object – the European Union and its citizens. This is a security move: a discourse which presents something as an existential threat to a referent object (Buzan *et al* 1998). Moreover, the EU expands the threat to concern not only itself, but also to have a regional and global impact. Hence the Communication is a first step towards a successful securitization of the Arctic environment.

In the Communication, the construction of securitization continues with the identification of several referent objects in addition to the securitizing actor. The Arctic environment is, for understandable reasons, maintained as a referent object:

> […] Arctic remains one of the most pristine areas on Earth, it will be increasingly at risk from the combined effects of climate change and increased human activity.[21]

Europe's citizens are also mentioned as a specific group exposed to the security threat, as well as indigenous people (European Commission 2008:2; 4). The Commission's text also expresses a concern over animal welfare, specifically seals and whales. However they as a category are more regarded as victims of human activity than climate change. On the other hand it can be argued that because of the changing climate, the hunting areas have changed as well as the natural habitats for the Arctic wildlife, thus leading for instance to smaller animal populations or habitats. However this is not a point raised in the Communication.

Beyond climate change being described to have "consequences for international stability" (European Commission 2008:2), the global community is not defined further as a referent object.

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[20] European Commission 2008:2
[21] European Commission 2008:2

According to the theory of securitization, the extraordinary actions proposed by the securitizing actor protect key referent objects by opposing the existential threat (Buzan *et al* 1998). In the 2008 Communication, several different actions to combat climate change and to establish the EU as a governing actor in the Arctic are presented. These actions range from support of current governance structures, to implementing more Arctic related research. In this analysis, extraordinary actions are understood as those activities proposed that *specifically* are an answer to climate change and environmental issues in the Arctic. The discourse on the extraordinary actions in the Communication is mainly developed through a high prioritization of the need for reforms and unity. However, all these activities are vaguely described, and no strong commitment can be detected from the EU to take action. The proposals for action that the Commission calls for, use phrasings such as "strengthen cooperation", without giving an explicit reference to how the strengthening should be achieved (2008:4) or "encourage environmentally friendly tourism" (2008:9), an objective which sounds good, but does neither indicate a commitment nor concrete action.

Although maintaining current frameworks is not an extraordinary measure by definition, the maintenance of current policies reforms also means to take a certain position. The EU states that it will continue its "efforts ensuring effective protection of whales especially within the framework of the International Whaling Commission" while conducting a dialogue with indigenous communities. At the same time, the Commission considers introducing a ban on seal products. In hindsight the EU did announce a ban on seal products, however with the exception of products resulting from hunts traditionally conducted by Inuit and other indigenous communities[22]. In retrospect the statement by the Commission cost the EU its observer status in the Arctic Council twice. When the EU was admitted as an observer in 2013, it was only so affirmatively due to the restrictions on import of seal products (Koivurova *et al* 2012). Also Inuit organizations are in the process of appealing to the World Trade Organization to repeal the ban (Quinn 2014-03-17).

7.2   *Council Arctic Conclusions - 2009*

The Council Conclusions represent the view of the Member States, in contrast to the Commission which represents the EU as a whole. Also, the Council is the first EU institution

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[22] EC Regulation No 10007/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 on trade in seal products. Accessed [2014-05-11] from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009R1007

giving a longer comment of the first Arctic policy text. Because the existential threat was stated and justified in the 2008 Communication, which the Conclusions are a based on, it is less clearly formulated in the Conclusions. The document does however note that the Council recognizes "the particular vulnerability of the Arctic region and its crucial importance to the world climate system" (Council of the European Union 2009:2). The challenges of climate change are viewed to have global implications and should be dealt with in a systematic and coordinated manner.

In addition to the European Union falling victim to the effects of climate change in the Arctic, the Council also point at other referent objects affected by the environmental changes:

> […] in particular the sensitivities of ecosystems and their biodiversity as well
> as the needs and rights of Arctic residents, including the indigenous
> peoples.[23]

The Council also considers that an EU policy on Arctic issues should be based on an "effective implementation by the international community […] to mitigate climate changes that are required to preserve the unique characteristics of the Arctic region" (Council of the European Union 2009:1). This implicitly can be understood as cooperation on environmental issues in the region ought to be handled by other additional actors than the Arctic, including external actors on a global level. Because the Council refers to regional cooperation being an important aspect of Arctic governance ("the Council recognises the Arctic Council as the primary competent body for circumpolar regional cooperation" (Council of the European Union 2009:4)), the "international community" hence refers to global actors, including the EU, to play an active role in the environmental governance of the Arctic.

The Council presents how an EU Arctic policy should be reinforced, emphasizing the EU's responsibilities in the region:

> Formulating and implementing EU actions and policies that impact on the
> Arctic with respect for its unique characteristics […][24]

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[23] Council of the European Union 2009:1
[24] Council of the European Union 2009:1

The view on the system of governance is elaborated upon in the Council Conclusions. The Conclusions approve the three policy objectives proposed by the Commission, however it adds to the third objective:

> Contributing to enhanced Arctic multilateral governance *through implementation of relevant agreements, frameworks and arrangements, and their further development* [emphasis added].[25]

This indicates that the Member States wish to remain within and in agreement with existing governance frameworks, above all UNCLOS. It also indicates that the Council will not attempt to push for the development of new legal regulations applicable to the region.

The Conclusions then continue with several considerations and innovations for actions to be taken for the "next step towards the formulation of an overarching approach to EU policy on Arctic issues" (Council of the European Union 2009:2). The different actions reflect the complexity of the issue to reach an understanding on a comprehensive Arctic policy, not counting the different concerns of different Member States taking into consideration. The extraordinary measures that the Council proposes to protect the environment mostly concerns cooperation with relevant Arctic actors and continuing on with strengthening current regulatory frameworks:

> Member States […] should continuously promote and monitor the full implementation and further improvement of existing rules […] derived from the applicable international conventions in the Arctic […][26]

The Council also suggests developing a new regulatory framework protecting the marine environment, hence displaying a commitment for more involved governance:

> The Council expresses its readiness to consider a proposal to put in place a regulatory framework for the part of the seas not yet covered by an international conservation system […][27]

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[25] Council of the European Union 2009:1
[26] Council of the European Union 2009:4
[27] Council of the European Union 2009:3

7.3   *European Parliament resolution on a sustainable EU policy for the High North – 2011*

The European Parliament represents the European public and the Parliament's resolution re-affirms much of the Commission's Communication and Council Conclusions. However, the Parliament puts the strongest emphasis on the EU's interests and rights in the Arctic through the recognition of the Arctic Council as the most appropriate fora for Arctic governance. The existential threat towards the EU and is not very explicit, however the Parliament stresses that "the Arctic ecosystem is currently going through massive climate-related changes" (European Parliament 2011:M), and "points out that the climatic changes in the Arctic will have a major impact on coastal regions in Europe and elsewhere". The EU is portrayed as having a "special responsibility" in the Arctic and must play a leading role in fighting climate change (European Parliament 2011:24). The Parliament also requests the Commission to be guided by the principle that "the sensitive Arctic ecosystem must be protected" (European Parliament 2011:57), thus describing the Arctic environment as an object threatened by climate changes in the region.

However, the European Parliament recognises the EU to be a major contributor to pollution with negative climate effects, as it:

> [a]cknowledges that the EU, like other developed areas of the world, contributes substantially to climate change… […][28]

> [r]ecognises the disproportionately large Arctic warming impact caused by black carbon emissions from the EU and other regions in the northern hemisphere […][29]

The resolution also puts a strong emphasis on the EU's role as a legitimate actor in the EU:

> […] three EU Member States – Denmark, Finland and Sweden – are Arctic States; acknowledges that the EU has no Arctic Ocean coastline so far; reaffirms the legitimate interest of the EU and other third countries as stakeholders by virtue of their rights and obligations under international law […][30]

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[28] Council of the European Union 2009:24
[29] Council of the European Union 2009:27
[30] European Parliament 2011: 1

The expression "so far" is an indicator that the EU is aware of its role as an outsider, also because of the absence of an Arctic coastline. The European Parliament describes the Arctic Council as an important aspect of regional governance as it "[r]ecognises the important role of the AC as the foremost regional forum for cooperation for the whole Arctic region". Much emphasis is put on how and what difference the EU an contribute with, if accepted as an observer to the Arctic Council. Also, Iceland is highlighted as a potentially new Member of the EU:

> […]Iceland's application to join the EU will increase the need for the EU to
> take account of the Arctic region in its geopolitical perspective.[31]

It seems that there is confidence that Iceland will become an EU member thus letting the EU in to the inner circle of Arctic governance:

> […] through its Northern Member States and candidate countries the EU is
> affected by Arctic policies and likewise has an impact on Arctic policies […][32]

Moreover there are additional referent objects than the EU in the text. Climate change in the Arctic is "global and should therefore include all relevant actors" (European Parliament 2011:46). The resolution also recognizes that the reduction of climate change and its effects and the rights of the indigenous peoples is also a question of human rights (2011:35) and highlights that indigenous people are the most affected by climate change:

> […] the effects of the melting ice and milder temperatures are not only
> displacing indigenous populations and thereby threatening the indigenous
> way of life […][33]

The Parliament states that "the EU is committed to devising its policy responses in the Arctic on the basis of the best available scientific knowledge and understanding of the processes affecting the Arctic" (European Parliament 2011:4), indicating that the Parliament is ready to take concrete action if necessary. However, the formulations of proposed actions are dependent on other actors than the EU itself, which makes the actions not very tangible. The emphasis is on cooperation and on how to uphold current regulations, but the Parliament do

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[31] European Parliament 2011:D
[32] European Parliament 2011: 2
[33] European Parliament 2011: 31

not propose any new ways of acting as a key actor in the region, besides becoming an observer to the Arctic Council.

7.4   *Developing a EU Policy towards the Arctic Region: Progress since 2008 and Next Steps - 2012 Joint Communication*

In 2012 the EU Commission, together with the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, published a Joint Communication which was a follow-up to the first Commission Communication from in 2008, a response to the 2009 Council Conclusions on Arctic issues, and to the 2011 European Parliament resolution. The Communication discusses what the EU's contribution to the Arctic has been since the Communication in 2008, and outlines what needs to be done in the future along three main categories: "knowledge, responsibility, and engagement" (2012:6). Using the terminology of the 2008 Communication, the Joint Communication is supposed to signify a "second layer" of an Arctic policy for the EU. The Communication presents a summary of the EU's involvement in Arctic matters since 2008. The purpose of the EU's participation in the region remains the same in relation to the 2008 Communication, including addressing the challenges of environmental and climate changes in the Arctic; economic development based on sustainable management of the region; and commitment to and dialogue with Arctic states and indigenous peoples. The Communication also proposes to increase the EU's funding for Arctic research within the Horizon 2020 framework.

This second Arctic Communication, since it is based upon the 2008 Communication, displays a strong intertextual link with the 2008 Communication as well as with the analysed Resolution and Conclusion. The Communication states that protection of the environment remains "a cornerstone of the EU's Arctic policy" (2012:5) and that climate change is causing irrevocable changes to the Arctic environment is a stated fact, and these changes pose a threat to the EU because of its extra-regional significance:

> The melting of the Arctic sea ice is progressing rapidly, resulting in self-accelerating global warming […][34]

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[34] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:2

Hence in the second Communication from the European Commission, a discourse of securitizing the environment is detected. The speed of environmental changes gives the EU in turn the mandate to act because:

> [...] the rapidity of change in the Arctic provides a strong rationale for the
> EU's commitment to environmental protection and the fight against climate
> change.[35]

The EU's intentions for the Arctic were in the Communication from 2008 somewhat unclear, yet the key argument remains the same: the balance act between economic development and environmental protection is the most important challenge for the governance of the region:

> The European Union should step up its engagement with its Arctic partners to
> jointly meet the challenge of safeguarding the environment while ensuring
> the sustainable development of the Arctic region.[36]

The Joint Communication points to the Arctic as being a region of growing strategic importance and underlines the seemingly important role the EU plays in supporting successful international cooperation. It also describes the EU as "the world's strongest proponent of greater international efforts to fight climate change" (European Commission and the High Representative 2012:3) and as a potential member of the Arctic Council on account of its three (potentially four with Iceland) Member States: Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. Therefore the Commission wants to:

> [...] engage more with Arctic partners to increase its awareness of their
> concerns and to address common challenges in a collaborative manner.[37]

The EU perceives itself as a significant actor in the region, being a "key supporter of the Arctic region" as well as an actor raising "awareness of the impact it has on the Arctic environment" (2012:2). Besides that the ongoing developments in the Arctic can "affect the life of European citizens in future generations" (European Commission and the High Representative 2012:8), other referent objects mentioned are indigenous people and local communities, the EU Member States, and the Arctic States.

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[35] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:2
[36] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:2
[37] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:3

However, the Joint Communication does not provide new dimensions to the EU's Arctic policy development. Most of the content refers to familiar statements, such as that the region offers economic "challenges as well as opportunities" or that legal mechanisms in the form of UNCLOS and regional institutions such as the Arctic Council are in place to govern the Arctic in a peaceful an cooperative manner (European Commission and the High Representative 2012:8;11:3).

The Commission's aim is also to present the EU as a strong and important actor to the Arctic Council which was going to take a decision about admitting new observers in May 2013. The Communication repeats the EU's application for observer status to the Arctic Council, indicating that such a role would help the EU to increase its understanding of its Arctic partners:

> Observer status, as defined by the Arctic Council itself, would allow the EU
> to intensify cooperation and make a positive contribution to the work of the
> Council. It would allow the European Union to gain detailed understanding
> of the concerns of Arctic partners, which will be important when developing
> its own internal policies.[38]

With one exemption, the Galileo satellite system which can help implement the Arctic Council's Search and Rescue (SAR) agreement (2012:9), the EU presents a weak discourse on what the EU can do in the Arctic to prevent further security implications from climate change. The proposed actions in the Joint Communication are quite ambiguous. That the EU is a strong and committed actor to the fight of climate change, that the EU is dedicated to scientific research on climate change, and has the ambition to strengthen international, bilateral, and regional relations with other Arctic actors and indigenous people, is a repetition of well-known EU Arctic objectives. Yet either of these measures present a concrete plan on how to fulfil these aims. The language used in the document reveals a rather vague positioning when it comes to concrete measures. The EU "supports", "explores", "pursues", and "continues" with its Arctic aims. For instance the EU:

> […] *continue[s]* [emphasis added] its outreach […][39]

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[38] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:11
[39] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:6

> […] *supports* [emphasis added] the development of a mandatory 'Polar
> Code' by the IMO […] [40]

> […] *explore[s]* [emphasis added] further potential for innovative economic
> activities […][41]

In the Communication, there are sections called "Proposals for action", however the actions suggested by the Commission do not transmit any concrete commitments in regard to how the EU actively can contribute and become more incorporated in Arctic governance. The commitments are expressed in quite general terms:

> The EU's engagement in Arctic matters will *be further enhanced* [emphasis
> added] by Iceland's prospective EU membership […][42]

> The EU will *pursue* [emphasis added] its involvement within relevant
> international frameworks on Arctic issues[43].

7.5 *EU Strategy for the Arctic -2014 Joint Motion for Resolution*

The most recent document from the EU[44] is a joint motion for a resolution from four (out of seven in total) political groups in the European Parliament. Even though not yet adopted, it is an indicator of the Parliaments current stand on Arctic issues. It views the 2012 Communication as an "important building block" for the development of an EU Arctic policy (European Parliament 2014:1). The Motion suggests a change of course in the Parliament's approach to the Arctic. It stresses the need to develop an Arctic strategy and a more concrete plan for the Arctic, as the motion:

> [r]eiterates its call for a united EU policy on the Arctic, as well as a coherent
> strategy and a concretised action plan on the EU's engagement on the Arctic,
> with a focus on socio-economic and environmental issues; believes that this

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[40] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:9
[41] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:10
[42] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:11
[43] European Commission and the High Representative 2012:12
[44] On May 12 2014 the Council of the European Union issued "Conclusions on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic region", however due to the scope of the thesis and the proximity to the thesis deadline, the Conclusions were not included here. The Conclusions can be found at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/142554.pdf [2014-05-16]

strategic choice is integral in ensuring legitimacy and local support for the EU's Arctic engagement.[45]

Though focus is stated to be on "socio-economic and environmental issues", the Joint Motion primarily focuses on different economic and industrial opportunities and "recognises their impact and importance both in the region and in Europe as a whole, highlighting the engagement of European actors from business, research and development" (European Parliament 2014:4). Consequently, it differs from the previous texts as the framing of an external threat is absent and the economic actors are not regarded as threatened by the environmental changes. However, the Motion does take into regard and refer to all other previous EU Arctic related documents and it therefore can be argued that the existential threat in terms of environmental degradation in the Arctic is present in the as well. One aspect the Parliament highlights is the legitimate claim to the region:

> […] the EU has an interest in the Arctic by virtue of its rights and obligations under international law, its commitment to environmental and climate and other policies and its funding, and research activities, as well as economic interests.[46]

The importance of cooperation with Arctic actors is also stressed:

> […] the active involvement of these regions in the development of the EU-Arctic policy is essential for ensuring legitimacy, mutual understanding and local support for the EU's Arctic engagement.[47]

The Motion calls for the Commission to actively prioritise the Arctic, for instance through following-up on the unresolved issue about the ban on seal products, (2014:6) and:

> […] requests the Commission and the EEAS to maintain good relations and develop closer cooperation with Iceland in fields of common interest […] making full use of existing instruments and encouraging Arctic cooperation between EU-based and Icelandic actors and ensuring that European interests do not suffer in this strategically important region.[48]

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[45] European Parliament 2014:2
[46] European Parliament 2014:A
[47] European Parliament 2014:H
[48] European Parliament 2014:20

A central theme in the Joint Motion is rather to stress the significance of the European Parliament in the EU-Arctic relations. Perhaps the resolution from March 2014 comes very timely for the upcoming elections to the European Parliament (held in May 2014) and is a way to remind the other institutions in the EU system about the importance of the Parliament's consultative role, and perhaps a motivation for certain Parliamentarians to demonstrate to their constituents that the Arctic is still on the EU agenda.

7.6   *Summary of EU's Arctic Policy*

The Arctic is undergoing a comprehensive transformation caused by climate change and globalization, resulting in closer economic, geopolitical, and environmental links between the region and the rest of the world. The key document is the 2008 Communication which outlines the EU's Arctic ambitions, and all other documents build on this first Arctic policy document. The five policy documents, which together form the EU Arctic discourse, all observe that climate change has adverse effects in the Arctic and is causing the Arctic to melt with broad local, regional, and global consequences. It is also stated that through these developments the Arctic is becoming more accessible for commercial development.

The EU approaches Arctic security from a governance and environmental security perspective. The main interest is outlined in the context of ensuring that the region should be opened up to non-Arctic actors and that the existing governance instruments are intended to take account of the interest of the EU. The Arctic policy puts a strong emphasis on protection of the environment and places the EU as an actor who contributes to pollution and global climate change, but which also has the means to mitigate the effects.

The three categories in the process of securitization (existential threat, referent objects, and extraordinary actions) are summarized in text and referent objects and extraordinary measures are also summarized in two descriptive tables. Each Arctic policy document has been analysed separately, however what can be said about the relationship between security, governance, and environment in the EU's Arctic policy, if all the documents are seen as a representation of the overall EU discourse on Arctic matters?

In the five analysed documents there is clear definition of environmental changes in the Arctic caused by climate change, posing an existential threat on a global, EU and individual level

(EU citizens and indigenous people). The existential threat towards the EU is formulated in the original document from 2008; however less clearly defined in the Council Conclusions and the 2014 Joint Motion from the Parliament, which overall have a greater focus on economic issues.

The security discourse in the documents relates firstly to the effects of climate change on the Arctic environment as a security threat towards the EU and its citizens. Though most noticeably defined in the first 2008 Communication, the effects of climate change on the Arctic environment (and on other parts of the world as well) is a securitized issue, making the EU a securitizing actor in the environmental sector. Hence the EU's Arctic discourse rests upon the idea that climate change is a potential security threat to the European Union. In the EU policy documents, the existential threat is not only a concerns for the EU, but the effects of a melting Arctic are presented to affect (to a varying degree) other main actors as well: the international community, the Arctic region and states, and to individuals, both European citizens and indigenous peoples. By expanding the threat to include other actors the threat becomes more imminent and of greater concern and value to the securitizing actor: the EU.

Table 1: Representations of "referent object" in the EU's Arctic Policy

Referent object	2008	2009	2011	2012	2014
ecosystem	X	X	(X)	(X)	
international organizations	X	X	X	X	X
non-Arctic states	(X)		X		X
EU states			X		X
Arctic region/states	X	X	X	X	X
Arctic Council	X	X	X	X	X
EU citizens	X				(X)
indigenous peoples	X	X	X	X	X

After establishing that there is an existential threat, there are several referent objects in the documents. The referent objects can be divided into two groups: individual level and state or international level. The two first Arctic documents reveal a discourse relating directly to the ecosystem; however this discourse becomes weaker in the subsequent texts (and is non-

existent in the 2014 Motion). The rights of indigenous peoples are strongly emphasized in all analysed texts. The Arctic region and the Arctic states are also highlighted in each document. The referent objects can be divided into two groups: individual level and state or – international level. The two first Arctic documents reveal a discourse relating direct to the ecosystem; however this discourse is lost in the subsequent texts. The right of indigenous peoples are strongly emphasized in all analysed documents. The Arctic region and the Arctic States are also highlighted in each document.

Even though the EU refers to states as referent objects, which are key actors when analysing security through the lens of realism, the EU still broadens the concept of security by including other referent objects as well, the indigenous people on an individual level, and international organizations such as the Arctic Council to regulate the relationship between states and other actors.

A power move, to assert a leadership role in the Arctic governance, would have been to propose to develop entirely new regulation, yet in none of the texts such a proposal was found. Why the EU's approach to the regional governance is more "soft", is discussed in the following chapter. Instead the documents emphasizes cooperation and strengthening existing regulations. Both the Parliament and the Council refer to other non-Arctic states role in the Arctic, such as China, however the Commission do not mention other states by name, other than stating that international cooperation and the global community are important.

Table 2: Representation of "extraordinary actions" in EU's Arctic Policy

Extraordinary actions	2008	2009	2011	2012	2014
reforming existing EU regulations		X	X		
strengthening current regulations	X	X	X	X	
unity/cooperation	X	X	X	X	X
strengthening/establishing multilateral governance	X	X	X	(X)	X
research activities	X	X	X	X	X

Security in the traditional sense is a non-issue in the EU's Arctic discourse. Through the securitization of the Arctic environment the EU justifies its role as an actor in Arctic

governance, emphasizing its potential contributions to the region as well as legitimate right, through for instance its Arctic Member States.

Environmental security is quite strongly emphasized in all of the documents, as both the risks and opportunities generated by climate changes are highlighted in the EU's discourse. The EU also has a clear multi-sector outlook when approaching environmental security, recognizing that the transboundary effects of climate-related issues ought to be dealt with through international cooperation.

9. Discussion

This section is a discussion and reflection of the analysis and the results. Mostly the EU documents are discussed together; however the discussion highlights certain documents more than others, especially the two Communications as they are the main documents reflecting the EU's common position towards the Arctic.

Because all five analysed documents are based on the 2008 Communication, they display a strong intertextual link and repeat the key message: that the EU is a legitimate actor in the Arctic, that the EU has added-value to the development of the region and that the environmental degradation of the region affects the European continent, thus making the Arctic issue an EU issue. The texts also draw upon legal documents, in particular UNCLOS. Hence, the texts reflect the EU's position on climate change and environmental challenges in the Arctic, but they rely on international agreed standards which are already in place. In other words, the texts stand for themselves but are not challenging existing notions of environmental governance of the Arctic. Moreover, there is a normative tendency in all the EU documents, confirming the EU as an environmental leader with responsibilities stretching beyond the European community.

In the 2008 Communication, there is a headline titled "Contributing to Enhanced Multilateral Governance" (European Commission 2008:9) and in the 2012 Communication "multilateral governance" has been replaced with "international cooperation" (European Commission 2012:17). This rephrasing shows a re-orientation of the Commission's approach. Multilateral governance indicates that the EU wants a well-defined role as an Arctic actor, as the wording is more assertive. Renaming multilateral governance to international cooperation indicates a softer approach, which is in line with the entire 2012 Communication – which has a more modest tone. Deudney (1990) claims that framing environmental degradation as a security threat may be a disservice as definite action can be difficult to mobilize among different actors. Given that viewpoint, the EU's soft securitization of environmental issues deems reasonable and the reorientation in the 2012 Communication would confirm the more cooperative intentions of the EU.

The language in the Arctic policy alters throughout the five years and international cooperation is increasingly emphasized. The most salient difference between the 2008 and

2012 Communications, is the attention given to cooperation in the 2012 document. The underlying message is that the EU has an significant understanding of the region, but most importantly, the EU is capable of improve its understanding of the Arctic. This is displayed with focus on cooperation:

> The EU intends to refine its developing Arctic policy in close cooperation with its Member States, the five non-EU Arctic states as well as local inhabitants, including indigenous peoples. Arctic states play a primary role in the region, both individually as well as in regional bodies.[49]

The traditional view of security is more applied in the literature about states as main actors, whilst the literature about governance or the EU as a global actor has a multidimensional approach to governance. If comparing with the previous literature about Arctic governance, a distinction between the academic position and the EU's policy is that many scholars see Arctic governance in terms of confrontation, whilst the EU's documents consistently (especially over the course of time) emphasize cooperation and international law as a basis for governance of the region. Confrontation in the previous literature is represented by the different ideas of how the region should be governed, for instance the main forum for cooperation (the AC) has specifically no military capabilities, and at the same time certain military presence is re-established in the region and what is more, the five Arctic coastal states have formed an additional forum for cooperation through the Iluissat declaration.

When linking all five documents together, there is an ambition detected to become a more influential actor in Arctic governance. Even though the scientific involvement in terms of research is a distinctive way for the EU to contribute to the region, the ambition to have a stronger geopolitical significance can be detected across all Arctic policy documents. As a result of the EU's limited geopolitical connection to the region, the textual analysis reveals an emphasis on connecting the EU with the Arctic in order to legitimize it as a relevant Arctic actor. The territorial claims through the Member States Sweden, Denmark, and Finland are highlighted as well the prospect of Iceland becoming an EU Member. However, none of these entities have a coastline to the Arctic Ocean, and it is the Arctic Ocean which stands out as the main potential zone of conflict in the future due to the abundance of natural resources and none—regulated spaces. Though the first 2008 Communication was somewhat

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[49] European Commissions 2012:10

confrontational, the EU changed its position towards how governance should be organized in the region. By defining environment as a security issue, the EU not only becomes an actor with a security agenda in a region which is defined by its cooperation, but it also reflects its concerns and justifies its self-given mandate as an Arctic actor. The EU actively uses a broader definition of security (also due to EU's supranational structure) to claim more legitimacy in Arctic governance. Through legitimacy in the region the EU gains access to the deposits of natural resources, transport routes, and political power.

The international presence of the EU as an global environmental actor does not only come from the EU's commitment to certain values, but the EU has protected and implemented particular values and norms in its Arctic policy through for instance promoting the rights of indigenous people and multilateral governance of the region. Multilateral governance and the protection of human rights is key for the EU as an Arctic stakeholder in the analysed documents, however there remains a focus on states, which could be an indication of Arctic geopolitics returning to a traditional approach to security. Assuming that the EU is a normative power in environmental governance, it can be argued that the normatively inspired leadership may decrease the EU's chances of influencing Arctic policy. The EU needs to understand other actors' interests better, even if they do not coincide with its own values or interests. Hence, the EU made a mistake when introducing a ban on seal products: it was viewed as a let-down towards the indigenous communities, their traditions, culture, and livelihoods. The EU put itself above the interests of the Inuit communities and created a situation which has made it more difficult for the EU to become a more involved actor in Arctic governance. Instead the EU should, especially in areas which it has little or none claim to, build coalitions; not only with the Inuit communities but with other Arctic actors as well. Such actors should be those who are prepared to undertake more steps towards environmental protection in line with the EU's own climate goals in form of climate partnerships. However, a change of path might on the other hand go against what the EU stands for as a community, yet it might be an essential step in order to develop its environmental and climate policies on a global scale.

If a third party actor, such as the EU, establishes a substantial presence in the region, it could potentially lead to conflicts within the established community of Arctic governance. Hence the involvement of external actors - whether it is the EU, China, or any other major actor - in the competition over Arctic's resources in disputed areas could have a disrupting effect on the

relationship among the Arctic states. Comparing a traditionalist's position with the Copenhagen School, the EU Arctic discourse displays a widened approach to security and governance since cooperation and multilateralism is notable in the EU documents. Therefore, the emphasis on cooperation and multilateral governance in the EU's Arctic policy seem valid. Managing the effects of climate change in Europe is also a socio-economic issue, as poorer states tend to have fewer resources to take preventive action as well as fewer resources to manage the consequences of, for instance, droughts, floods, or storms caused by a warmer climate. In turn, this can lead to a gap between richer and poorer Member States and create conflict. However, the conflict in likely to be of traditional military nature, but rather a political conflict. Moreover, climate change affects resource scarcity across the globe, which may lead to a more environmental refugees. Some of these refugees would most probably seek refuge in Europe and increase the pressure on refugee centres as well as causing political and economic pressure on the EU. Hence, mitigating effects of climate change, both regionally and globally, is an issue of internal security for the EU.

Is then securitizing the environmental changes in the Arctic a successful securitization? The answer is both yes and no. The EU is ambivalent in its rhetoric of protecting the environment and exploiting it. On the one hand it wants to be an environmental leader, and highlights the importance to mitigate the effects of climate change in the region. In that respect, the EU shows commitment to the fight of climate change regionally and globally, as there is a rhetorical recurrence of the EU's commitment to protect the Arctic environment and that the EU maintains itself as an important environmental actor, the Commission states that: "the EU is a leader in fighting climate change" (European Commission 2008:3). However, the prospects of economic opportunities attract the EU to also have commercial ambitions in the region. The very same document highlights the EU's dependence on energy resources: "Arctic resources could contribute to enhancing the EU's security of supply concerning energy and raw materials in general", despite of the existing "multiple environmental risks" (European Commission 2008:6). Such environmental risks include oil spills in icy waters, which have major consequences "due to the sensitivity of the fragile Arctic environment, remoteness of the area, harsh environmental conditions and difficulties in conducting oil spill clean-up operations" (AMSA 2009:119). The EU's dichotomy in regard to Arctic's natural resources lowers the credibility of the EU as an environmental leader. At the same time by *not* pushing for stricter regulations the EU proves to be more of an economically-driven actor than an environmental actor.

Most of the Arctic has not been exposed to commercial activities; however there is a distinct desire in all of the EU's Arctic texts, to take part in the economic potential of the region. At the same time it lies in the EU's interest to protect the Arctic environment: it lies in its security interest as well as in its role as a legitimate and credible actor. The EU presents itself as a leader in fighting global climate change. By actively pushing for partaking in any activities which can be harmful to the environment it lowers its credibility as an environmental leader. At the same time, to be left out from the economic development of the region equals with less political power in the Arctic.

The EU is seeking a new role in the Arctic and attempts to come to terms with what Arctic security is and what consequences it has for the European Union. It is embedded within the concept of environmental security that threats rising from environmental issues and competition over resources may result in violent conflict. It is the same perception of a potential conflict that calls for taking extraordinary action in the Arctic. The environmental changes in the Arctic are extending the capabilities beyond the existing regimes. In line with the theory of securitization, the extraordinary actions proposed by the securitizing actor are to protect the important referent objects against the existential threat (Buzan et al 1998). The EU's discourse on extraordinary measures is established by highlighting the need for international cooperation and unity. Still the actions in themselves are not very specific. With reference to securitization theory, the EU should promote emergency actions in order to justify actions which go beyond the normal bound of political procedure. However, the proposed actions are in general not very specific and essentially emphasize cooperation and multilateral governance. This position taken by the EU can be understood as way of conforming to the existing governance regime in the region (the AC) by not proposing drastic actions in the region. This would most likely be an intended move to please the Arctic states in order to increasingly become more included in the regional governance. Alternatively the softer approach can be understood in a broad way of the EU defining its Arctic interests, especially as the actions focus on mitigation of climate change and pollution and protection of indigenous people's rights.

The case for finding environmental conflict in the EU securitizing move is quite weak. In theory, a conflict over resource scarcity or resource affluence could lead to potential conflict. Resource scarcity is not a very valid point in regard to the Arctic, however several scholars

warn for increasing tensions in the region when competition over resource extraction and marine transport routes increases. One must also put the specific context of the Arctic in the right light: the previous research emphasises conflict over resources as a consequence of inequality and absence of functioning institutions. However, the Arctic is scarcely populated and finds itself in the setting of a functioning institutions multi-governance framework. Arctic states. Together with other major stakeholders, cooperate in the high-level forum of the Arctic Council. Because the Arctic Council does specifically not deal with traditional security issues, there is a governance gap in terms of hard security, a vacuum which the EU does not address in its Arctic policy.

The Arctic context, which is increasingly dominated by international actors, makes remilitarization and potential conflict more likely, despite of the emphasis on cooperation revealed in the EU's Arctic discourse. At the same time, the EU is increasing its dialogue and cooperation with key partners on Arctic matters. Though the current EU policy focuses on scientific contributions, there is no evidence that further securitization of the environment would have a negative impact. Quite the opposite, securitization could make the climate issue to go beyond political rhetoric and become an issue requiring an emergency response. The issue would then not only be on the top of the policy agendas internationally, but would also require an emergency response.

The EU's interest in the region brings a new dynamic to the political and security concerns in the region as the EU seek to be a global power. Only because the level of conflict is currently low, does not have to mean that international security developments will not affect the region's future. On the contrary, it has been a region of high level of conflict during the Cold War, and with the United States and Russia as both Arctic states and major players in international relations, and the more powerful economies such as China and India developing Arctic strategies and ambitions, the region may become once again a hot spot for international conflict. The annexation of parts of Ukraine by Russia in the spring of 2014 is a stark reminder that security perspectives change. Russia has showed that it is not a paper tiger; it is prepared to use military force to satisfy its territorial ambitions. Nothing would hinder Russia, which is the Arctic country with the longest Arctic coast line, embarking upon a more aggressive and non-cooperative path in Arctic governance. Moreover, signs of Russia's ambition in the Arctic have been evident since it sent a submarine to plant a flag on the sea-bed beneath the North Pole in 2007. Since then, the Putin regime has steadily increased its

military capability. Foreign interests, whether coming from governments, commercial or environmental groups has been viewed as hostile by the Russian administration. This was for instance demonstrated by the storming of a Greenpeace's ship on international waters and the imprisonment of activists in September 2013 (Walker 2013-10-17). The measures taken against Greenpeace, which was protesting oil drilling in the Arctic, is representative of Russia's stance on Arctic issues: it reliant on the prospects of the region and protectionist against external intruders.

The framing of environmental degradation and climate change in the Arctic as a security threat marks the EU as a securitizing actor within the environmental sector. Nevertheless, securitization of climate change does not result in the adoption of traditional security measures by the EU, rather it strengthens and expands its environmental actions. As the EU's environmental commitments have been linked to security interests, this thesis draws the conclusion that considering the way that the EU's Arctic policy securitizes environmental degradation and climate change, it is causative to the transformation of the discourse and policy-related activities of security practices.

10. Conclusions

Like a canary in the coal mine, the un-preceded melting of the Arctic ice-cap has given priority to consider how environmental change may alter the geopolitical map of the world. The sensitive region is at the front line of environmental change, warning the rest of the world of the effects of climate change to the planet and to those inhabiting it. The ongoing developments also highlight the issue of potential conflict over resources between the different stakeholders, as the melting ice opens up new Arctic spaces. The environmental changes raise questions about environmental security and environmental conflict and while other regions in the world may experience climate change threatening their stability, the Arctic context is different as it suffers from a resource "curse", rather than resource scarcity.

Climate change is changing the dynamics and preconditions of the actors involved in Arctic governance. With its recent activities, the EU has become an actor with wide-ranging interests in the region, a commitment which began with the formulation of the first Arctic policy in 2008. The EU has limited legal claim to the Arctic and bases its geopolitical strategic interest on socially constructed elements; mainly on its own role as an environmental leader, having certain interests, responsibilities, and authority through its Arctic Member States. By presenting itself as an important actor in Arctic governance, the EU links its significance with its role as a global environmental leader and presents climate change in the region as a security threat locally, regionally, and globally.

The intensified debate about climate change as a global security threat and the Arctic becoming a hotspot in the international debate, redefines the environmental sector to be integrated within the realm of high politics, making it a highly politicized issue. The EU's discourse on governance and security illustrates how the EU defines the Arctic environmental changes as a security threat. The securitization of the environment by external security actors also calls for a multilateral response, which makes institutions such as the European Union even more important in the regional governance of the Arctic. It is worth noting that the EU itself initially was seen as a peace project and an extension of the EU's interests to the north can therefore be viewed as a security action.

Though the analysis showed that multilateral governance and protection of individual's rights are key for the EU as an Arctic stakeholder, there is a persistency of a state-centred logic. Is Arctic geo-politics returning to a traditional approach to security? The dynamics shaping the international discourse during the Cold War are not of relevance today, though the argument can be made that the current Russian military activities domestically and internationally could suggest a return of the former bi-polarity. Still, the traditional security logic does not quite fit with threat scenario presently facing the Arctic. However if the balance of powers and security context alters, then the risk of new scenarios arises in which the regional stability may be threatened. It is therefore important for external actors, such as the EU, to have confidence in what policy it wants to pursue and how to relate to more traditional security threats.

The Arctic states have so far been cooperating peacefully in the region and are open for dialogue with both the indigenous communities and external Arctic actors within the framework of the Arctic Council. Then again, certain investments in offensive capabilities (in particular by Canada and Russia) are occurring, and there are certain areas in the region which may become disputed in the not so distant future due to an absence of a comprehensive legal framework as well as an authority to exercise control over the non-sovereign areas.

Somewhat surprising, the EU does not have a very aggressive approach in terms of extraordinary action, as the Copenhagen School's securitization theory would suggest. On the other hand, the EU Arctic policy is still in the emerging phase and what future direction the EU institutions will take in their Arctic approach will depend on many factors, for instance how the EU's foreign policy will develop, the state of regional security, or a possible acceleration of environmental changes in the Arctic. Then maybe the EU will take on a more aggressive approach in order to protect Europe from the impact of climate change. Therefore mitigating the effects of climate change, not only in the Arctic but globally, is an issue of internal security for the EU.

Climate change does not only affect the Arctic, nonetheless the region is the focal point of current environmental changes. The centrality of the region in terms of geopolitics, geo-economics and environmental considerations, makes it the focus of international relations discourse and an important external area for the EU. The paradox of the relationship between

environmental security and economic opportunities, and cooperation and peaceful governance is a telling image of the geo-political Arctic context in which the EU is trying to find its place.

This thesis has analysed the relationship between governance, environment, and security in the EU Arctic discourse. It has found that there is a securitization of the environmental sector by the EU, yet few extraordinary actions has been taken to meet the challenge of climate change. This can be explained by the economic motives displayed in the Arctic discourse or by the need to declare legitimacy in the region. Because the Arctic has become a focal point in international discourse and external actors are increasingly becoming more engaged and involved in Arctic governance, there exists a string need to understand the motivations behind their Arctic strategies. The EU is still in the development phase of its Arctic strategy, however the current discourse in the existing Arctic policy documents resonates how one of the most influential and powerful environmental actors reasons in terms of Arctic governance and security.

Because of the limited scope of the thesis only the documents directly relating to the European Union's Arctic policy where analysed. For future research, the conclusions drawn from this thesis could be used as a starting point for a more comprehensive analysis of the EU discourse on Arctic governance and security. For the Arctic, it would however be interesting to analyse all EU Arctic related material, including for instance the *Integrated Maritime Policy*, to have a the most comprehensive understanding of the shaping of the EU Arctic discourse, and a discourse analysis could for instance also include speeches by key EU representatives in order to gain a fuller picture. Moreover, it would be valuable to consider, in order to understand the EU as a securitizing actor, to compare the security and governance discourse with the discourse in other EU regional policies, for instance the Eastern Partnership or the Northern Dimension.

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