DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

BLUE GOVERNANCE: INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION IN THE ARCTIC REGION

- *Arctic environmental management and the constitution of regimes concerning rules, norms and governance*

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Abstract

It has for a long time been called ‘the earth’s last frontier’ and its harsh environment has discouraged heavy investments in the region, up until now when all attention is directed towards the white dot on the map, the Arctic. By melting ices and permafrost, the natural resources of the Arctic have been made visible and actors are now preparing to exploit its assets. Without any explicit regime-structure, the Arctic is facing a scenario in which national territorial self-claims will incuse the agenda as well as aspects of ‘creeping sovereignty’. The aim of this dissertation is to explain the Arctic national strategies concerning the eight Arctic states and how the strategies have evolved since the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012. To analyse different forms of transnational cooperation, I draw on the theories of governance and regime theory, as well as developing the concept of ‘Blue Governance’. The empirical study investigates the establishment of regimes in the Arctic, concerning aspects of rules, norms and governance. Using a qualitative approach and the method of content analysis, data is based on Arctic national strategies and documents. The results show that there has been a development towards more ‘green’ or ‘blue’ geopolitics but also that national self-interests regarding resource exploitation seem to affect current Arctic environmental cooperation. The results also indicate that Arctic regimes now are more influenced by environmental norms and rules than earlier. Still, the absence of common Arctic regulations or guidelines constantly risk disturbing the Arctic legal order.

KEYWORDS: The Arctic, Cooperation, Governance, Environment, Blue Economy

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1. Introduction

The post-Cold War era has been witnessing a boom in the interest of Arctic affairs. This applies to both international and national politics and is portrayed in practical politics as well as in academic research. With new international regimes targeting Arctic environmental concerns at both global and regional levels, the High North seems to play an increasingly salient part in the domestic and foreign policies of the Arctic states (Stokke & Hønneland, 2007). Notably, all land areas in the Arctic are - to some extent - subject to the sovereignty of one of the eight countries concerned in the region, and there is no palpable possibility to discover new pieces of land which might generate geopolitical fragmentation. Yet, this is not the case considering sea areas. In the current debate, the phenomenon of "creeping sovereignty" - which is the situation where states claim rights in adjacent sea areas - has engendered environmental policy problems (Dunbar & Barr, 2019). Specifically, boundary lines at sea which divides two countries exclusive economic zones (EEZ) are not in every case jointly agreed upon (Ostenso et al, 2019). Thus, the Arctic Ocean is subject of external political pressures and actors of power repeatedly make more or less delicate self-claims. More, the Arctic is a region characterized by few executive regimes and lacks transnational agreements. Instead of long-term policy processes, the politics is rather incused by military interests, resource exploitation and financial trading routes. On such account, cooperation in the region has not been far reaching and the only sign of any kind of international cooperation is linked to scientific causes, which has led to a selection of informal collaborations. All in all, the core issues in the Arctic is to be derived from climate changes and the increased interest in Arctic natural assets. The fragile nature and the malignant global environmental development risks to fully eradicate the integrated marine fauna of the region. If transnational cooperative policy solutions are not implemented within the nearest future the aquatic life of the Arctic will most likely be impoverished.

Thus, sustainable development in the Arctic is crucial in order to preserve the diverse ecosystem in the area. As a direct answer to this, the Arctic Council was established in 1996 as "[...] 'a high-level forum' for cooperation on common Arctic issues, including environmental protection" (Tennberg, 2017). While temperatures in the Arctic continue to rise at more than twice the global annual average, effects are palpable across the high latitudes and beyond – with environmental, economic and social implications. Acknowledging the scope of the issues, the Working Groups within the Council commits to work closely together on environmental matters such as the effects of climate change, marine litter and microplastics, adaptation and

resilience, and the protection of biodiversity and sustainable use of living resources. Further, marine environmental transnational cooperation in the Arctic has been a hot topic since Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev announced that "[...] the North of the globe, the Arctic, [should] become a zone of peace"(Gorbachev, 1987) and since Oran Young noted the start of "the age of the Arctic" (Oroshenko & Young, 1989). Yet, established research is more or less exclusively focused on depicting how cooperation is possible through the framework of the Arctic Council, despite the fact that the role of the Council concerning Arctic Ocean affairs to some extent is limited. While some argue that the Council works as a forum with no authority and little importance of Arctic geopolitics, others consider it as an intergovernmental regime which plays a decisive part in polar politics. Such conflicting reflections originates from different theoretical traditions within the field of international relations studies (Pedersen, 2012:146). Schools explaining conflicts between and among states rejects the assumption that intergovernmental forums or regimes– such as the Arctic Council - can act as a legal regime leader and believes that only governments can determine the rules of cooperation in the long term. Conversely, international regime theorist argues that regimes need an independent role in international affair to generate sustainable international cooperation. This said, how do Arctic states interact with regional interests and to which extent does these interests affect prospects of 'blue' cooperative governance?

The purpose of this dissertation is to study environmental transnational cooperation in the Arctic region, focusing on how mainly the Arctic eight have managed environmental collective action problems since the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) in 2012. Since the 'Arctic eight' is a group - consisting of conflicting state interests and ambitions concerning aspects such as natural resources, military activity and environmental cooperation – the collective action problem is immediate in the High North. Notably, a vast majority of the established research on regional collaboration is fixed on illustrating national policy procedures, structural foundations and legitimacy frameworks. However, less work has been done on environmental or 'blue' areas such as the Arctic Ocean. In this dissertation, I develop the concept 'Blue Governance' in an attempt to explore various forms of transnational cooperation in the Arctic region. I examine both formal and informal processes of collective-action problems and transnational environmental cooperation concerning the Arctic, as well as aspects of sustainability in governance structures. Thus, governance theory will be used in order to examine the overall interplay between both states, organizations and institutions, as well as more efficiently answer the given research questions. Also, governance theory is used as a tool

to support and develop the concept of Blue Governance. Regime theory will also be utilized as to answer how regime-building in the Arctic has facilitated prospects of environmental transnational cooperation in the High North. Krasner's (1982) definition on rules and norms are used as analytical definition standards to further discuss Arctic regime-building and the concept 'Blue Governance' and how it functions with obligations and rights concerning transnational cooperation.

The paper will be structured s follows. First a background on the current Arctic situation is described concerning environmental transnational cooperation, geopolitical issues and the concept of Blue Economy. Secondly, the related research on Arctic cooperation, regime-building and governance will be presented. This is followed by the research questions of the study, the theoretical framework - which is based on governance and regime theory – and the conceptualisation of 'Blue Governance'. After this, the research design, methodological approach and operationalisation is introduced, describing case selection and data analysis. Next, the results will be presented, including the development of national Arctic strategies since 2012, Arctic regime-development and the marine environmental directives of the Arctic eight. Lastly, a discussion will be held on the result and its implications on theory and research, followed by the conclusion of the study.

2. Background

In this section, I will present a description on the current Arctic situation concerning environmental transnational cooperation and which geopolitical difficulties there is. In order to discuss current trends, this section explains historical and political events which has affected Arctic governance and cooperation. More, the environmental status of the Arctic is discussed, in an attempt to further clarify in what sense Arctic collective actions problems have emerged. With this background the idea is to explicitly define the area of research and which factors and events that has formed it.

Historically, attempts to establish consensus-building settlements or regimes in the Arctic region has been insufficient. Arctic cooperation has up till now been hard to implement, mostly due to the harsh environment that is the Arctic but also due to political fragmentation and geopolitical differences. Maritime issues are especially a complex matter, as a result of territorial tensions, continental claims and specific national resource interests. On such account, I will in this segment present a wide depiction on the current situation in the Arctic region, with a special focus on maritime issues and how transnational collaboration functions in the High North. Further, the chapter handles both historical and currents events, which all - to some extent - has affected the political outcome of today. The race for the Arctic is immediate and we are entering a geopolitical time in which states are jockeying for legal and political control over natural resource development, shipping routes and marine interests. Geopolitics is in this case defined as the method of studying foreign policy in order to explain and understand international political behaviour via geographical variables such as climate, natural resources, energy and territorial waters and land territory (Evans, 1998**)**. In recent time there has been a growth in marine traffic within the Arctic Northern Sea Route due to the fact that the sea corridor between China and Europe cuts travels by up to 40% compared to sailing via the Suez Canal, or 60% shorter compared to the Cape of Good Hope route (Arctic Bulk, 2020). Historically - and especially during the Cold War - the Arctic has been an arena of interest for the Soviet Union and the United States due to the fact that control over the Arctic is equal to unlimited ascendancy of the shortest route between Washington and Moscow. This said, the current geopolitical importance of the region is not at the same levels as during the Cold War. Still, the environmental development in the Arctic is increasingly targeted as a geopolitical important subject, mostly due to rapid climate changes and the decline of the Arctic sea ice. Indeed, an ice-free Arctic ocean will lay open shorter and more easily accessible shipping routes

as well as empowering for resource development. Thus, the changing landscape and seascape has generated in an enhanced eager to unlock new economic opportunities and to achieve strategic advantages. Or as US Secretary of state Mike Pompeo said at an Arctic Council Meeting in 2019: "The region has become an arena for power and for competition" (Sengupta, 2019). Mainly, the 'Arctic eight' – consisting of Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the U.S – is a dominant group linked to the race of the Arctic due their specific capacitates. More specific, the setup of the group is important, including both small and big states, different types of regions and political systems as well as governance structures. This makes the Arctic eight key-actors in the discussion of Arctic environmental development.

Importantly, the Arctic region is a well-known source of natural resources and Arctic minerals has been exploited during the 20th century which has strengthened the economic sector in the region due to increased levels of tourism. However, marine resources such as oil, gas and fish are still the most important economic resources in the Arctic. In line with the industrial development and with higher global demands for oil and gas, the environment in the region is becoming more and more hostile. For instance, the Beaufort Sea stock of petroleum, and the Svalbard regions deposits of minerals and oil are economic key-functions for major global actors and states. The Arctic's ecological integrity is thereby jeopardized by the apparent and accelerated extraction of resources, the industrial enlargement and various polluting activities. The environmental development and climate changes - with melting sea ices as an explicit result - makes it easier to access the region's natural resources. Or as Pålsson (2008) notes: "The prospect of new shipping routes, expanded oil and gas development and commercial fishing are also examples of such new opportunities that are likely to pose novel management challenges for the Arctic states". Thus, marine environmental concerns are mostly linked to land-based marine pollution (Rothwell & Joyner, 2000:149). The industrial development in the region - in addition with the increased levels of pollution from mostly mining, industrial activities and military presence - is an explicit threat to the maritime resources. Moreover, the Arctic has been and still is - an incorporated part of the international system and with systematic progresses the region is heavily influenced by external events and actions. More precise, the systemic context for marine governance in the Arctic is to some extent linked to an emerging Asian economy which sets a gradual transition of power from Western to Eastern actors. Above all, the U.S. and China's interests in governing Arctic marine resources is of significant meaning as "[...] Arctic Ocean coastal state/status quo power and fishing nation/rising power" (Bertelsen, 2019).

Thus, collaboration and co-creating of marine knowledge and epistemic communities are essential for the Arctic status quo.

The Arctic holds nearly thirty percent of the world's remaining undeveloped gas, up to thirteen percent of the world's remaining undeveloped oil and around eighty-four percent of the energy resources are located offshore (Gratz, 2012). Consequently, the eyes of investors are now directed towards the region's natural assets. Despite this, there is no apparent conflict in the Arctic, mostly because investments in the region is expensive. This does not mean per se that conflict can be ruled out completely. Au contraire, disputes concerning continental shelf claims and pretensions on transit routes and energy opportunities in the region will most truly incuse tomorrows geopolitical agenda. Also, it is - according to WWF - estimated that up to US$1 trillion could be invested in the Arctic in the upcoming decades, which will have an evidential impact on the region's vulnerable ecosystems (WWF, 2018). Scott Minerd, chief investment officer of US-based investment firm Guggenheim Partners, has said: "From an investment standpoint, the average economic rate of growth in the Arctic region is the highest in the world, relative to any country, or any continent [...] the best investment opportunity of the last 12,000 years." (WWF, 2018). Since such malignant and non-sustainable development is inevitable, it is decisive to implement policy factors which seeks to conserve the fragile ecosystem of the Arctic and enhance transnational cooperation in the region.

2.1 Blue Economy

In order to fully depict the marine development in the Arctic and the governance structure within, this research takes off from the notion 'Blue Economy' where "blue" includes offshore and aquatic concerns. Key-functions of the concepts is to be clarified, reviewed and problematized. Accordingly, this research will deliver both theoretical and empirical findings on Blue Economy and aspects of governance, which all in all will be collated to the concept of *Blue Governance*.

Initially, the concept of Blue economy - or "Oceans Economy" - is a fairly newly incorporated term within geopolitics. With its origins from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, the concept is mostly a "[...] separation of socio-economic development from environmental degradation, which is how it has traditionally been seen as a global status quo" (Smith-Godfrey, 2016:59). The core-principles

of Blue Economy is aligned with activities linked to economic and trade and is born out of the need to integrate conservation in the management of the maritime domain. More, marine ecology and biodiversity can be included within the framework of the concept. Considering marine sustainable development, the Blue Economy also discusses aspects which makes provision on the inclusion for activities founded on societal patterns of consumption and material replenishment. Further, countries with coastlines - which land-based resources are increasingly becoming depleted - resources located in or under the water are more and more viewed as attractive assets to governments. This makes the Arctic Region a hotspot for governmental actors to exploit natural resources in the surge of melting ices and exposed natural resources. This generates new economic purposes for the surrounding states, which also tests the countries geopolitical and environmental eager to preserve the oceans in the Arctic. Nonetheless, most of the countries with a coastline has some form of Blue Economy or Blue Growth Policy, program or declaration (WWF, 2018).

In the report "The Blue Economy: Growth, Opportunity and a Sustainable Ocean Economy" (2015) the concept of Blue Economy is defined as "A sustainable ocean economy emerges when economic activity is in balance with the long term capacity of ocean ecosystems to support this activity and remain resilient and healthy" (Goddard, 2015). Linear to this, the Complexity in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) paper to the World Bank defines the concept as follows: "Blue Economy is a marine-based economic development that leads to improved human wellbeing and social equality, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities" (Everest-Philipps, 2014). Both these definitions are portraying an economic structure which main goal is to achieve marine sustainability through further global and regional cooperation and through the implementation of legitimate and reasonable blue policy solutions. Thereof, it is fair to state that Blue economy - to some extent - is the sustainable industrialization of the oceans, to the benefit of us all (Smith-Godfrey, 2016:60). Blue Economy is developed as a world initiative relevant to all coastal states and countries which possesses an interest in waters beyond national jurisdiction. The conceptualization of the oceans as "Development Spaces" in which spatial planning integrates with conservation is central within the approach. Renewed emphasizes is also taken to more critically addressing marine issues which international communities shall seek to promote in order to efficiently manage maritime resources One could therefore state that the approach strives for further development and refinement of international law and ocean governance mechanisms.

Human development activities have severely taxed the resilience of the marine and coastal resource base. According to data of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) nearly 87% of global fish stocks are overexploited (FAO, 2012). With increasing pollution and the unsustainable coastal development which explicitly affects the natural biodiversity and ecological functions there are reasons for concern. Undoubtedly, climate changes of today threatens to remove fundamentals within the coastal development, whilst rising atmospheric CO2 levels undermines vital functions of the marine ecosystems via ocean acidification (IGBP, IOC & SCOR, 2013). This said, the importance of oceans and a "Blue Economy" or "Blue growth" for sustainable development has been on the geopolitical agenda since the start of the environmental process through Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and reaffirmed in the outcome document of the Rio+20 conference (UN, 2014). Indeed, it is essential to promote aspects of marine protection and the approach of Blue Economy pinpoints the importance of implementing regulatory systems or frameworks which favours aspects of transboundary cooperation. To curb the environmental decay is something that all individuals should bear in mind, but most of all the executives of the Arctic state of affairs. On such account, the concept of Blue Economy is important in order to broaden the general picture of maritime issues and cooperation and - linked to this study – to develop ideas and discussions on 'Blue Governance', which concerns aspects of marine collective decision-making and policymaking between states. Since this dissertation seeks to illustrate environmental cooperation between the Arctic eight and how transnational cooperation has been formed and developed since 2012, Blue Economy also helps to problematize environmental and geopolitical concerns.

2.2 Current geopolitical issues

The Arctic region is subject to multiple elements of friction. On one hand, the Northwest Passage has a minor conflict over the designation, whereas the U.S. argues that the passage is an international trait and while Canada regards it as their internal water. However, it is highly unlikely that the U.S. will meet Canada's claim hence it would favour Russia's incentives to claim the Northern Sea Route, China's claim to the South China Seas and for Iran to claim the Strait of Hormuz as internal waters (Huebert, 2009). Further, there are palpable disputed regarding the Bering Sea due to its position as a hub for Russian and American fishing industries. Notably, in 2006 the area was worth $600 billion for the Russians, and approximately $1 billion for the U.S. In addition, the effects which hydrocarbons and maritime

natural resources plays in the Bering Sea - as well as in the East Siberian and Chukchi Seas - regarding aspects such as continental shelves claim are not agreed upon. Notwithstanding, the Bering Sea will - in the nearest future - remain a conflict-free area due to apparent difficulties to manage and combine natural resources and transits in a legitim and economically justifiable way. There are far gone fishing disputes between Norway and Russia concerning Spitsbergen which is the largest and only permanently populated island of the Svalbard archipelago. Mainly, Norway requires a 200-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around Spitsbergen and considers Russian fishing in the region as poaching. Despite this conflict, three major actors of energy - Russia's Gazprom, Norway's Statoil and France's Total - have signed an agreement which is about to form the 'Shtokman Development AG Company' in order to further develop one of the world's largest natural gas fields, the Shtokman field in the north-western parts of the South Barents Basin. Interestingly, despite the existence of a fishing dispute the coherent need for energy encouraged cooperation and transnational stability resulted in regional development On such account, Spitsbergen seems to remain a zone of non-conflict, characterized by economic development and transnational consensus-building beyond Norwegian and Russian diplomacy. Yet, tensions in the Arctic will rise if states can't solve territorial and resource disputes diplomatically. In the current situation, states are not sufficiently emphasizing their regional conflicts while using Arctic institutions and international law as a tool to mitigate conflict.

Apart from national self-claims and territorial conflict, the key issues of the Arctic region are linked to the malignant environmental development. Initially, the Arctic can be described as a "[...] global sink for contaminant discharged form industry, energy production, agriculture and other human activities" (European Commission, 2020). Of special concern is the persistent organic pollutants and mercury which damages the ecological foundation. Thus, long range transport of pollution contaminates the Arctic fauna. The biodiversity and arctic ecosystems are thereby apparently at risk. Importantly, hundreds of endemic species specially adapted for life beneath the sea and on the sea, ice will be reduced in numbers. In the end, this directly affects the European aquatic life due to its dependency on high productive migrating species from the Arctic ecosystems in order to maintain a viable chain of reproduction. More, it is possible to pinpoint the environmental impact on the economic development. With increasing amounts of oil, gas and mineral exploration instances such as the European Commission notes that shipping and tourism puts pressure on the vulnerable marine Arctic environment (European Commission, 2020). This itself, makes it even more important to implement clearer and more effective policies in order to reduce such risks.

3. Previous research

Environmental concerns and political effects of climate changes is a recurrent topic within social science. Established research indicates that there is a grand amount of studies on how environmental changes directs policy procedures and how its ecological footprint explicitly affects cooperative guidelines. Surely this might be the case, but the fact is that there exists an apparent empirical gap when it comes to cooperative measures of the Arctic. Studies on environmental collaboration is inadequate in discussing Arctic environmental cooperation and there is a need for further research on how 'blue' concerns appears on the political radar. However, in the following section I will introduce the most important and relevant research which relates to the overarching research questions and aim of the study. The field of research is grouped by first presenting studies on mainly Arctic cooperation, governance and cooperative security and then discussing research on both regime-building and how cooperation between the Arctic nations has been constituted. Additionally, ideas concerning environmental development and the role of the Arctic Council is introduced in order to further broaden the empirical background of the study.

In the paper "Arctic Security: The Race for the Arctic through the Prism of International Relations Theory" the Arctic development is described as function mainly driven by Russian interests (Gregory & Trujillo, 2019:88). Specifically, the study notes that every state have declared the need for diplomacy and international law, although Russian and the U.S. have stated that they are willing to use force when necessary in order to obtain their geopolitical goals or ambitions. Consequently, the region's lack of governance structure will not stop great powers under the anarchic system (Staun, 2017). On a similar note, Wegge (2010) applies classical IR theory and investigates how some crucial analytical factors could be related to the political order in the Arctic. Mainly, Wegge depicts that - on a systematic level - the power structure of the Arctic is multipolar. Since it is hard to fully assess what actor or actors which gains or losses the most due to the current geopolitical order in the Arctic, the effects of multipolarity and the effects of institutionalized cooperation should be addressed. When examining these effects, it becomes easier to present a truer and more complex picture regarding positions of power and which actors who actually do exploits the natural resources the most (Wegge, 2010:174).

Concerning the relationships between cooperative security considerations and natural resources in the northern regions, Monica Tennberg (2017) notes that this relationship seems more like an obstacle rather than a source of international cooperation (Tennberg, 2017).Also, the use and importance of natural resources in issues of security has been widely illustrated by Bergesen, Moe and Østreng (1987) Archer and Scrivener (1989). Regarding the environment, there has been a shared concern on how the climate develops in the Arctic by all the Arctic states which has new grounds for cooperation since the late 1980's. In depth, Bröms, Eriksson and Svensson (1994) discusses the importance of collective environmental security in the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation (Tennberg, 2017). Historically, scholars have noted the absence of transnational cooperation in the Arctic, however, according to Franklyn Griffith (1988) and Oran Young (1993) the Arctic is a region on the march due to increased levels of cooperation (Griffith, 1988:11; Young, 1993:4). Thus, concerning collective security aspects of the Arctic, the trend is mostly towards increased cooperation. The main fault line seems to exist between high and low politics. Continued focus on low politics may enable sustainable subregional governance but it is dependent on a stable setting of high politics (Rynning, 2013:11). The Arctic security order can best arise via a collateral promotion of low and high political alignment. The civil society and private companies have the potential to forge cross-border relationships, but statesmen must aim to ensure the convergence of national interests (Rynning, 2013). Onwards, the environmental protection of the Arctic is more or less dependent on regional cooperation. Yet, human habitation generates dual purposes for the Arctic legal regime, mainly to balance environmental issues, concerns and human development. Therefore, it is important with regional cooperation in order to achieve coherent frameworks for marine environmental protection in the Arctic. Active regulatory elements on several levels could perhaps work as a lubricator within the complex set of domestic legislations, international instruments and principles which manages maritime issues. Or as Pålsson (2008) notes; "In the very best of worlds, a regional treaty for the purposes of Arctic marine environmental protection would contain a similar provision regarding reservations, as this would eliminate the risks of states trying to create loopholes or otherwise shirk any obligations that would seem too far-reaching" (Pålsson, 2008:53).

Alternative research examines the opportunities of a regime complex in the Arctic, in order to promote aspects of transnational cooperation. As Young (2012) claims, the High North is currently undergoing a transition towards more regime-based politics concerning jurisdiction, environmental protection, oil and gas development and arms control (Young, 2012:396). Yet,

these transformative changes also raise the prospects that new needs for governance will surpass the attempts to create and implement additional regime elements. Most of all, Young means that Arctic regime complex and regime-building lacks an explicit directive discourse which has the potential to generate an overarching cognitive framework in which regimes can prosper and develop effective initiative to Arctic governance (Young, 2012:402). Further, Elana Wilson and Indra Øverland - in Stokke & Hønneland (2007) - investigates the impact of Arctic regimes on environmental and indigenous issues, focusing on the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR). Importantly, they note that Arctic regime-building may represent an arena for forcing new relationships and cooperation between states and indigenous organisations. Above all, Wilson and Øverland argues that it is evident that "[…] the prominent positions of indigenous organizations in the Arctic creates a situation in which it is advantageous for state representatives to develop and maintain indigenous allies" (Stokke & Hønneland, 2007:39).

Established research on cooperation between the eight Arctic states is scant. Nevertheless, Hoel (2007) examines how Arctic nations are responding to climate issues and discusses potential impacts of such responses. Hoel mentions that the collectively and common interest in confronting climate challenges - within the global climate regime - brings together the nations as well as enhances cooperative possibilities. Thus, the Arctic countries seems to be strong supporters of this regime. This said, the performance of the Arctic eight is not to any extent sufficient and great improvements are according to Hoel not to be seen in the foreseeable future hence the USA is highly unlikely to become a fixed part of the global regime. Regional cooperation in the circumpolar north is in this regard more possible to function via the European Union (Hoel, 2007:132). Levels of Arctic cooperation is dependent on work related to climate changes and serves – at its best – as a tool of enhancement to broaden the general knowledge of environmental problems and its impact on ecosystems, societies and politics. In line with Hoel, Donald R. Rothwell (1996) states that it could be argued that "[…] concerns over sovereignty and resource ownership can be an incentive for the Arctic states to eventually reach agreement on the need for a comprehensive Arctic environmental protection regime" (Rothwell, 1996:100). The large number of environmental issues in the Arctic can most efficiently be dealt with by greater bilateral and multilateral Arctic cooperation. For instance, as a consequence of political developments – such as the end of the Cold War and the progress towards more stable relations between the former Soviet Union and the West – there have appeared more regional cooperation since the late 1980s (Kudrya, 1991:11). Consequently,

Alexei Roginko and Matthew LaMaurie (1992) identified three core-incentives for Arctic environmental cooperation; "[…] a) the need to cooperate to avoid losses to shared ecosystems; b) that sharing information regarding the protection of the Arctic environment prevented duplication of expensive research programs; and c) the relative lack of expertise on Arctic environmental problems suggested greater expediency in the sharing of resources" (Rothwell, 1996:100; Roginko & LaMaurie, 1992:265).

According to Kankaanpää & Young (2012) there are no doubt that the Arctic Council has played an important role while trying to preserve and generate more sustainable policy incentives. The efficiency of the council has been better than most observers anticipated at the outset, above all in the realms of knowledge generation, issue framing and agenda setting. However, this does not mean that the council will continue to be effective nor be more effective. One interesting finding is that the Arctic Council "[...] seems to be locked in old positions about how to organize itself and work. Since its creation, the AC has been a shotgun, firing in every direction at once" (Kankaanpää & Young, 2012:13). To solve such negative development, it is important to integrate new actors into the activities of the council and to enhance its ability to communicate broader. This said, others should seek to address external issues of the Arctic region, most of all concerning the challenges of finding suitable ways of expanding the scope of the Council's work, as well as re-engaging interests of regional and local constituencies along with prominent non-Arctic states. Additionally, Pedersen (2012) argues that the Arctic Council is here to stay. Nonetheless, while some members look to the Council in an attempt to promote its role in Arctic politics - allowing it to be a key-forum for moulding policies - others sees the Council as more of a dilution of its current position or as "[...] a potential annoyance within their own spheres of influence, or an unwanted potential player in issues that are essentially bilateral" (Pedersen, 2012:153). In spite of new attempts to strengthen the Arctic Council, the states of the Arctic seem to have negative attitudes towards agreeing upon new measures which seeks to transform the Council into something completely different from the neighbourly and non-binding forum that it is today.

Yet, research on environmental transnational cooperation in the Arctic is limited and further research is required on various areas, including how regimes and transnational cooperation in the region has developed since the UNCSD in 2012. The established research does not examine current geopolitical trends or patterns, nor the development of the Arctic national strategies. More, the current literature is highly focused on US-Russia relations, which dismisses the

general objectives within the Arctic region and how Arctic environmental cooperation functions and develops. This noted, this dissertation will work cumulatively with the established research in order to single out explanations or expectations on outcomes which derives from different research directions. Specifically, previous research on environmental cooperation will – to some extent – work as a guide to further develop and discuss the theoretical concept of 'Blue Governance'.

4. Research question

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the development of environmental transnational cooperation since the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 and the introduction of the term 'Blue Economy'. Specifically, focus is to review how mainly the Arctic eight have developed and constituted their strategies regarding environmental collaboration in the Arctic region. Thus, the study intends to fill a theoretical gap concerning Blue Economy and Arctic transnational cooperation by developing the concept 'Blue governance'. Since most of the established research on marine conceptualisation and sustainable development in the Arctic to a large extent is focused on environmental statistic instruments, it is important to examine aspects which instead seek to highlight aspects of transnational governance and cooperation.

RQ I: *How has environmental transnational cooperation evolved in the Arctic since the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012?*

RQ II: *How has regime-building in the High North developed since the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 concerning rules and norms?*

RQ III: *How has the Arctic eight handled marine environmental concerns in line with the assumptions of Blue Governance?*

5. Theoretical framework

Since this research is on environmental cooperation within a geopolitical frail and grim region, it is essential to base reflective notions and ideas on a theory or theories which constitutes and problematizes issues that is to be derived from aspects of policy organisation, sustainable development and collective action problems. While discussing the environmental situation in the Arctic, it is also inescapable to circumvent the presence of epistemic communities. Thereby, the study shall seek to address key concepts of both governance theory and regime theory. By implementing such specific approaches, I will be able to utilize an analytical section which is grounded on an established theoretical scope and that focuses on key-aspects from both strands. Specifically, this research highlights the importance of understanding the impact of collective choices, regimes, transnational cooperation and governance as a whole and blue governance as a variation.

5.1 Governance Theory

Mainly, the core-concept of governance is associated to ideas concerning collective choices. In order to fully function, societies need collective choices for a massive range of issues which cannot be covered only via individual actions. It is now important to understand the impact of collective decisions since societies are facing increasing numbers of challenges such as climate changes and resource impoverishing which by time may results in collective harm. Principally, collective action emerges when more than one single individual is required to contribute to an effort in order to achieve an outcome. Thus, people who lives in rural areas and uses natural resources do engage in collective action daily when, for example harvesting food together, uses common facilities for marketing products or maintaining local irrigation systems. Yet, most often it is difficult to rule out non-participants from benefiting from the collective action of others. In that case, a collective action problem is created, when individuals "[...] seek out short-term benefits for themselves alone, they are better off when others contribute to the collective action and they do not." (Ostrom, 2004). Many theoretical research notes that individuals are incapable of overcoming the lure to pursue selfish advantages. Effective collective action can thereby only be reached if external policymakers impose governments or private proprietorship. Indeed, it is fair to state that suitable designed property rights systems can - to some extent - assist individuals to overcome problems of collective, but such systems do not automatically

have to involve external governments. Attempts by national governments to appoint uniform rules on extensive regions of land involving various ecological and sociological systems have led to a scenario in which natural resource conditions actually has been worsened rather than improved (Ostrom, 2004). One possible course of action to reduce the impact of collective action problems is to create a public good environment by increasing the number of participants to bring additional resources which potentially can provide a common benefit that will be jointly spent. Or as Marwell and Oliver (1993) states: "[...] when a good has pure jointness of supply, group size has a positive effect on the probability that it will be provided" (Ostrom, 2009:5). Although, this puts pressure on legislative actors and organisations to single out which individuals or groups that are accountable for creating public straits.

The governance perspective also highlights the interplay between different actors and how they can correlate within a specific context. It is not solely state actors which constitute policy frameworks and presents cooperative solutions on transnational matters. Instead, environmental collaboration is - according to the governance structure - in need of a varied set of actors, based on both national, institutional, intergovernmental, organisational and non-state incentives in order to achieve functionable alternatives. Above all, it is of great interest to pinpoint the fact that governance as a theoretical approach lets the researcher investigate overlapping governance structures which highlights the interplay between different kinds of actors. Accordingly, it is not only state actors which are being scrutinized but also institutions, NGOs as well as the role of epistemic communities. This alone was a key-factor in the theoretical selection process. More particularly, realism theory would also have been a suitable approach to this study, especially due to its intellectual junctions with governance theory. However, a realistic approach regarding international cooperation is to an excessive degree focused on only the state as an important actor while governance theory seeks to open up for other external actors. Since also cooperative measures are vital while trying to establish new or developing already existing geopolitical procedures, important actors shall foremost seek to focus on issues which explicitly are linked to common collective action problems. Onwards, the development towards a more global and inclusive world - which has emerged in recent history - forces the political structure to be more tolerant and effective in the adaptation of factors concerning global governance. Specifically, it is important to apply rules and accompanying regulatory processes to "[...] jurisdictions and constituencies of a planetary scale" (Scholte, 2011). Scholte argues that - like any other domain of social life - global spheres are in need of governance regulations in order to bring clarity, sustainability and possibilities of deliberated and directed alteration. Thus, it is fair to state that

most of the regulations linked to global issues in fact transpires via regional, national and local institutions. Since global affairs and effective transnational regulations requires central and coherent global geopolitical devices one should take into consideration that, without legitim regimes, potential beneficial outcomes of contemporary globalization may be implemented as well as negative prospects can be missed (Scholte, 2011:110). On a different note, scholars of environmental governance proclaim that global environmental governance (GEG) is the sum of organizations, policy instruments, financing mechanisms, rules, procedures and norms which regulates the protections of a sustainable global environmental development (Najam et al, 2006). Ever since environmental issues entered the international agenda in the 1970s, most environmental policies have been objectives of development. According to researchers on environmental governance - such as Jasanoff & Martelo (2004) and Speth & Haas (2007) - there is today a widely spread awareness of environmental threats and issues which also is being handled more carefully by geopolitical actors. However, there is a risk that the structural body of the GEG system will become outdated regarding its main intentions. Thus, global environmental governance - with its high maintenance needs, internal redundancies and inherent inefficiencies - may lead to a scenario where its core-ambitions to curb a non-sustainable environmental development is being neglected. This said, measures of accountability are crucial within the term of governance (Peters, 2012). Actors involved in setting and implementing policy goals - whether through public service or private action - should be held accountable for actions which directly affects the society as a whole. If not, the legitimacy and validity of the societal structure erodes. In the current policy-oriented political debate the concept of governance is widely recognized as one of the most commonly referred term within the field of political science. Additionally, governance is to a large extent used by both policymakers and various international organisations, aiming to improve general geopolitical conditions. One of the most interesting features of the concept of governance is that it can be moulded to suit to the intellectual preferences of the individual. As Sartori's (1971) mention, governance is frequently weak on intention but strong on extension.

Interestingly, governance in the arctic region seems to be less dependent on structural hierarchies and is more decentralized than conventional forms of governance. Perhaps the most protrusive angle of Arctic governance is the role played by the epistemic communities in both policy development but also regarding decision-making. More precisely, Arctic epistemic communities include everything from scientist, environmentalist and NGOs which combined generates regional consensus concerning sustainable conservation (Heininen et al, 2015). This

is important not only for networking and achieving long-term geopolitical policies but also to ease political fragmentation in a region with extreme conditions and valuable natural resources. Yet, there appears to exist an inclusive approach towards decision-making which has resulted in a flattened hierarchy where "[...] an unusually diverse collection of stakeholders, not just indigenous and state governments, have had agency in decision-making processes" (Heininen et al, 2015). Accordingly, climate changes and globalization have transformed not only the Arctic environment but also the structure of governance. Global warming and melting ices in the Arctic have eased the access to natural resources as well as opening up new maritime routes in the region. As soon as national governments, international institutions and non-state actors examines approaches to Arctic governance, researcher Zhao Long (2018) means that "[...] a cohesive regime complex - a set of functionally specific regimes that together serve as a foundation for efficient governance - that integrates existing framework could help address the environmental, economic, sociocultural and geopolitical challenges the region faces" (Long, 2018). Indeed, the role of state actors - particularly in global governance - is central and by its capability to combine actors into intergovernmental organisations, states have generated global institutionalised bodies to tackle prevailing green issues. Their inherited form of varied composition and internal hierarchies may also benefit particular interests in advance for other more suitable options in implementing policies. Of interest, International NGOs are not subject to the same amount of parochialism which ties state actors nor the limits facing intergovernmental organisations. Thereof, NGOs can more easily promote interests of global concern as well as - by representing global interests in a structural form - serve as an important social counterbalance to the economic efficiency drivers behind various actions of multinational enterprises (MNE) (Kamat, 2003). Alongside this, NGOs may also - by advocating for private firms to include social interests in their decision-making processes - promote "[...] social welfare alongside economic value creation." (Teegen et al, 2004). Although, such activity can also lead to negative consequences and repercussions due to the fact that NGO activism tends to drive multinational actors out of important regions, causing political inertia.

Relinked to the race of the natural resources in the Arctic, environmental governance (EG) has appeared as an alternative option while trying to highlight factors of importance concerning transnational consensus-forming. Mainly, it is fair to state that environmental governance aims to change environment-related incentives, knowledge, institutions, decision-making procedures and behavioural patterns (Lemos & Agrawal, 2006:298). Theoretical assumptions of EG is interrelated and referred to various sets of regulatory processes, organizations and mechanisms

that political actors use to increase their impact on environmental actions, issues and outcomes. Thus, the key-forms of EG are "[...] the political-economic relationships which institutions embody and how these relationships shape identities, actions, and outcomes (Lemos & Agrawal, 2006:299). On an international level, certain types of cross-boarding accords, national policies and legislation, regional decision-making frameworks, transnational institutions and "Green" or "Blue" NGOs are samples of forms in which environmental governance emerges. Since governance also may be created and preserved via non-organisational institutional parameters - such as incentives of the market and other self-regulatory processes - it is hard to evade it for all actors or individuals that is concerned about the environmentally sustainable development. Or as Lemos & Agrawal (2006) notes: "Environmental governance is varied in form, critical in importance, and near ubiquitous in spread" (Lemos & Agrawal, 2006:300).

5.2 Regime Theory

While discussing theoretical terminologies of international relations it soon becomes clear there exists a wide range of similar and conflicting frameworks. In transnational cooperation the concern of functional regimes is central, and it is of great importance to depict how regimes and states act to overcome collective action problems. Accordingly, various schools of thought within international relations have occurred and there exist several diverse approaches within the regime theory. Yet, usually regime theory is related to neoliberal institutionalism which is based on the assumption that regimes are vital while trying to facilitate international cooperation. This said, the term 'regime theory' is frequently referred to and used interchangeably with 'institutionalism' (Litta, 2011:45). But what is actually an international regime and what mechanisms constituting its presence? According to Krasner (1983) regimes are "[...] sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations" (Krasner, 1983:2). Thus, this study will use the definition of *norms* as the standards of behaviour which are defined in terms of obligations and right, *rules* as the explicit prescriptions for action and *decision-making procedures* as the prevailing practices for creating and implementing collective choice (Krasner, 1982:186).

This definition of regime theory argues that regimes are not only a set of rules. In order to fully function Krasner notes that a certain grade of institutionalization is required. Additionally, regimes possess a considerable amount of cognitive content. Principles of regimes may for

example include theories of causation acknowledged by actors in issue areas or concepts of rights and obligations (Mueller et al, 2007:242). Norms are in Krasner's definition judgements or prescriptions for performance and conduct. However, this a relatively vague description of the concept and there exists a need for conceptual development. In line with Young (1986), the main problem of Krasner's definition is that is does not allow one as a researcher to identify regimes with accurate precision nor to have the opportunity to separate regimes easily from the rest of international relations. Instead, one could argue that international regimes are social institutions which are acknowledged as practices consisting of easily identifiable roles (Young, 1986:107). Thus - and despite the presence of some sort of definitional consensus - there is no single coherent regime theory and the established research on the topic may be looked upon as a set of analyses which aims to illustrate how and why norm-governed international cooperation arises (Humphrey, 1996:91). Moreover, regime theory is also funded upon different normative commitments. Yet, the normative dimension has historically been academically dismissed despite its high importance as an empirical element. In fact, the regime is a crucial institutional piece in order to achieve a durable market society. In line with Stone (1987), the core normative incentive or objective within regime theory should be to build more inclusive regimes, aiming to improve aspect of inequality. Such ideas go straight in line with the neo-pluralist understanding of regime theory which argues that cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors is required to obtain suitable governance outputs (Davies, 2002). Stone also argues that political institutions have normative consequences: "In principle, they embody an approximation of justice. Some notion of how citizens ought to be related to another" (Stone; 1987:295). In this context, normative issues are well-embedded in regime analysis.

This said, how is the regime concept applicable to maritime issues and environmental cooperation in the arctic region? Speaking of definitional variations, one possibility is to divide the definition of regimes into three different approaches, depending on what explicit purpose they have, whether being *strategic*, *adaptive* or *symbolic*. Environmental regimes are most commonly described as regimes with an *adaptive* character, that means that they are created through new developments in the world economy or geopolitical changes (Lukic, 2007). Today, such regimes are frequently distinguished, and their general goal is to protect issues concerning global environmental problems. Accordingly, environmental regimes seek to comprise issues such as overfishing, marine acidification and toxic waste. Anyhow, it is not likely to state that the most of them will be full-blown regimes (or perfect regimes), instead it is an apparent danger that they will turn into so called dead-letter regimes - regimes existing only on the paper but

not actually working in reality (Vogler, 2000:152). Specifically, states and their delegations most often makes various types of compromises and concessions in the process of negotiations, only to later dismiss the agreed issues as well as not implementing them. The inherent anarchical society within environmental regimes also favours a development in which there is no true possibility for states to force other states to follow rules nor agreed negotiations.

5.3 Conceptualisation of 'Blue Governance'

Mainly, Blue Governance is a complex mix between elements from both governance theory and the more general concept of Blue Economy. Importantly, governance in this case refers to the set of institutions and actors which are both drawn from and beyond government. In an attempt to clearly illustrate marine transnational cooperation in the Arctic I will intertwine ideas on cooperation and the view on actors of the governance theory with the marine focus of Blue Economy. In line with this study's core incentive, blue governance is to be defined as a concept which emphasizes the importance of collective decision making concerning marine issues and whether cooperation is possible through multiple levels of policymaking between not only state actors but also institutions, NGOs and epistemic communities. Thus, the apparent collective action problem which blue governance seeks to manage is the maritime effects of climate changes, the exploitation of natural resources and how to overcome national special interests in advance for sustainable blue solutions. Specifically, I define blue governance as both the formal and informal structures of collective decision-making as well as the capacity building by governmental, institutional, non-governmental, market and society actors associated with coastal environments. In this sense, blue governance is used as a conceptual tool in order to address problems of sustainability in governance and aspects of legitimacy. More, the concept shall also function as a facilitating means to improve the understanding of marine strategies used by various actors in response to environmental and political changes.

6. Research design

In the chapter that follows I start with describing the method of choice. More, I also discuss the selection of cases and the specific analytical steps which drives the study forward. Beyond this, I will explain how the theoretical framework is linked to the analysis, the collection of data and aspects of operationalization.

6.1 Method

The framework of this study is based on Content analysis (CTA). CTA is commonly associated with the study of inscription contained in published documents, reports, journals and other forms of documentation. In line with Berelson (1952), references to the method of content analysis also relates to the examination of published political speeches and statements. Thereby, such method of choice eases the process of finding empirical interesting findings. It is also possible to explain the concept as "[...] an approach to the analysis of documents and texts, that seek to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories (Bryman, 2008:274). Or as Babbie (2013) and Weber (1990) argues, content analysis is the study of recorded human communication and a method which make valid inferences from text. Standard research on CTA often refers to it as a "non-reactive" method of investigation. Yet, it is rather a method of *analysis* than of data collection. Notably, this study is a variation on both qualitative and quantitative measures in that sense that specific keywords are to be quantified and tested within a fixed qualitative set of data. Wherein, the use of CTA has to be integrated into broader circumstances or frames of research which includes systematic forms of data collection. Thus, it is important to establish routine strategies for sampling data that are based on factors which enables the researcher to identify a suitable range of materials (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

6.2 Approach

This study will take on a qualitative approach in terms of a content analysis of a set amount of data concerning environmental cooperation in the Arctic. A qualitative approach is highly appropriate given the research questions nature, which requires in-depth understanding and knowledges in order to reveal and examine the most relevant aspects of interest. More, a qualitative approach was used since the aim and research questions of the study requires a broad gathering of extensive data regarding environmental cooperation in the High North. To get a thorough understanding of such complex topic, it was needed to utilize a qualitative approach

that allows the researcher to comprehend a wide span of material, but still examine Arctic environmental and cooperative measures in detail. Additionally, it was relevant given the study's explanatory character. Furthermore, the reasoning of the study will be inductive, with no previous hypothesis guiding the process and aim of the study (Patel & Davidsson, 2011). This is due to the exploratory nature of the research questions, which in itself gains on an open-minded and reflective approach since the goal is to extend the overall understanding of environmental cooperation in the Arctic. Consequently, an open-minded approach eases the prospects for the methodological approach to gradually expand and adapt throughout the research process.

6.4 Case selection

For qualitative research, it is important to base the analytical section on a carefully chosen and legitim selection of cases or actors. In this dissertation, focus is to highlight Arctic actions of both national, transnational and institutional actors, epistemic communities and NGOs. Thereby, the actors that are to be examined shall - in some way or another - discuss and problematize the environmental development in the High North. All actors in this study are to be involved in the maintenance of Arctic sustainability as well as promoting differential solutions to obtain such result. By combining and comparing contrasting course of actions concerning marine and cooperative issues, the research will be grounded on a mix set of actors with dissimilar policy structures. Mainly, national strategies of the 'Arctic eight' – consisting of Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the U.S – will be examined. This group is vital to examine due to its complex construction of different Arctic interests, incentives and ambitions. The Arctic eight may also be seen as the key-actor concerning Arctic transnational cooperation and the region is directly affected by the national strategies of the Arctic states. Thus, the status of the Arctic eight is in this research of great significance in order to illustrate the Arctic development and tendencies regarding environmental aspects, governance structure and cooperative policymaking.

To further broaden the study and to more efficiently answer questions on rules, norms and regime-building in the High North, the Arctic Council is discussed as a vital intergovernmental actor which addresses key issues of the eight Arctic nations and how to solve upcoming environmental effects of climate changes. The Protection of Arctic Marine Environment working group (PAME) and the Arctic Economic Council (AEC) are examined as clear

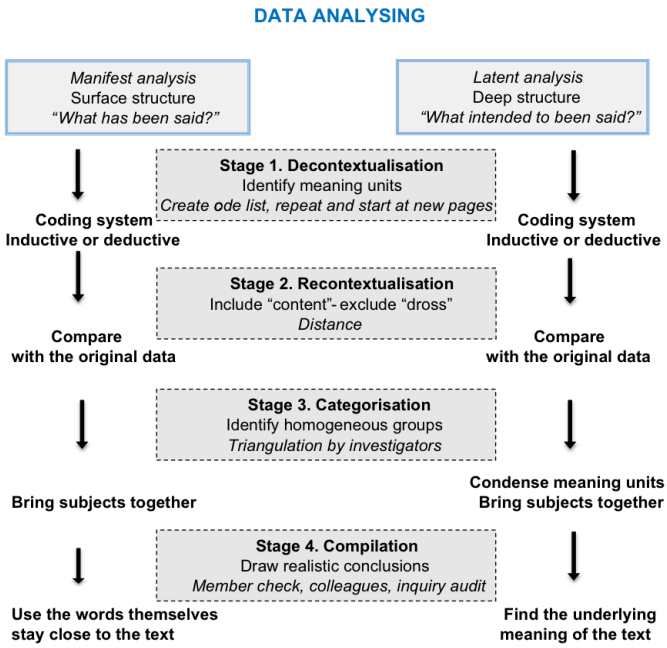
examples of epistemic communities in the Arctic and they do both seek to unfold palpable problems of cooperation which makes them of great research interest. More - and in order to present aspects outside the given regulatory frames - the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) are examined due to their status as non-governmental actors. On such account, the research has the potential to illustrate potential differences between several actors that all have different or similar interests in the Arctic flora and fauna. Appendix A presents all the actors which were probed for documents, as well as short descriptions.

In this specific case, the amount of data is - to some extent - limited which makes it even more important to distinguish data with both normative and objective variations. On this note, the framing of time is set to stretch from the introduction of the concept 'Blue Economy' or "Blue Growth' in 2012 by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), leading up to 2020. With this type of distinction, the main aim is to present a descriptive analytical section which seeks to unfold general trends and tendencies within the current geopolitical debate concerning Arctic environmental cooperation.

6.5 Data analysis

In order to conduct a strict research, the data is analysed via four steps of coding which is presented in table 1.0. By using these different steps. the validity and reliability of the study is secured and the risk to end up with an angled or biased final product is being reduced (Bengtsson, 2016:11).

Table 1.0 - Data Analysing



(Bengtsson, 2016:9)

These four steps are used consistently throughout the whole analysis and are a vital tool to achieve generalizable and reliable analytical findings. The deconstruction of the data analysis consisted mostly by dividing the documents into particles for document analysis, which in turn was deconstructed into codes. Accordingly, the interpretation of the data and codes from the document analysis were examined and relations between codes and various sub-codes were settled. Thus, it is important to determine the level at which you as a researcher will analyse the chosen data, this means defining the units of meaning that will be coded and which set of categories that will be used for coding (Berg, 2001). Thus, to ensure that all texts are coded consistently the data is fixed by an explicated set of rules for coding based on the keyword's *environment*, *cooperation*, *blue economy* and *the Arctic*. This was followed by the reconstruction of data, in which the data was merged into new analytical themes. Lastly, the compilation of the data was conducted by drawing realistic conclusions or reasonings on the data.

The theoretical framework is linked to the analysis by the codification of norms, rules and interests which the different actors pursues. I will speak of *norms* as an operational indicator that helps me to investigate standards of behaviour in terms of rights and obligations. Specifically, norms will be analysed through subcodes such as international law, political

coherence and collective security. Thus, I will discuss and illustrate Arctic norms linked to the extent of transnational cooperation and how actors of interest have affected the common picture of the region. More, Arctic state attempts to sustain and strengthen the rules-based order in the High North will be central in order to see how national interests changes fixed norms in the region. The analysis will also be based on both formal and informal norms, where formal rules refer to instrumental features of the organizations – such as laws and written rules - and informal norms are to be associated with ideas which determine the suitability of specific structures and actions. *Rules*, is operationalized by examining logical areas in which strong prescriptive rules exists. In this case, the Arctic Council is coded as an important institutional actor which guides the legislation of the Arctic region. To study rules further, subcodes such as legislation, regulation, regional restriction, transnational coordination and defence cooperation are to be used. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), will also be important in order to discuss the establishment of rules governing all uses of Arctic oceans and their resources. Besides this, national Arctic interests on environmental protection, military presence, infrastructure, regional development and natural resources also facilitates for analytical argumentation as regards to the creation of norms, rules and regimes.

The concept of 'Blue Governance' is analytically important concerning if and how the result presents findings which suggest that Arctic governance and transnational cooperation are incused by marine issues. Aspects of collective decision-making is thereby crucial in order to be able to discuss and explain the possible existence or deficiency of Blue Governance. Explanatory factors such as sustainability, political changes, marine strategies, transnational policymaking, blue growth, environmental development and resource exploitation are by that means essential to fully elaborate on the concept.

6.5.1 Document analysis

As stated earlier, the examined actors included – but were not limited to – the Arctic eight, the Arctic council, the Protection of Arctic Marine Environment working group (PAME), the Arctic Economic Council (AEC) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Initially, the document analysis started from the research questions (Elo et al, 2014). As the research questions handles the environment and aspects of cooperation within the Arctic region, the search was conducted using code words such as "Arctic transnational cooperation", "Environmental cooperation Arctic", "Arctic Blue Economy", "UNCSD 2012" and "Arctic regimes". In the first hand,

Google was used to research relevant documents, followed by examining sites of relevant actors attached to the Arctic environment and transnational cooperation.

Specifically, the analysis is conducted through *three* analytical steps (see table 2.0) which each seeks to detect hidden patterns of Arctic environmental cooperation and whether there have been improvements concerning marine protection and collective decision-making or not.

Table 2.0 - Operalizational procedure of document analysis

Step I	Step II	Step III
Identify national Arctic strategies and investigate how environmental transnational cooperation has evolved since the UNCSD in 2012.	Examine the establishment of regimes in the Arctic concerning rules, norms and governance	Draw theoretical conclusions regarding blue governance and marine environmental cooperation in the Arctic.
Compare strategies and measure Arctic priority aspects.	Highlight theoretical assumptions of regime and governance theory within the context of the Arctic and discuss the influence of specific actors.	Review of the environmental adaptation in the region and potential upcoming collective-action problems.

More, tables (Table 4.0 and 5.0) on the national Arctic strategy development will be presented. The tables are constructed via different colours indicating the degree of priority. Arrows within the columns will further clarify in what direction the eight Arctic states seems to lean. Green boxes indicate that the topic has high priority, yellow boxes indicates that the topic has medium priority and red boxes indicates that the topic has low priority. Crossed grey boxes may also occur, indicating that the topic has no relevance to Arctic policy or that the specific government does not mention the topic in any new Arctic directive.

The study's primary ambition is to examine the development in environmental transnational cooperation in the Arctic since the United Nations Conference on Sustainability in 2012. By addressing key-issues of the Arctic - such as climate changes, natural exploitation, marine pollution and dysfunctional collaboration - this part of the analysis will highlight the importance of collective choices and how aspects of governance can help one understand the current geopolitical situation in the Arctic. Moreover, I will compare these national strategies and see

if there is any obvious correlation between them. On such account, the data is to be limited by using ten different search words (see table 3.0), which all will help to more clearly present how Arctic policy procedures have been structured. That said, this analytical section is influenced by the categorisation of Schultze (2017) and his conceptualisation of various topics. Thus, the analysis of the Arctic national strategies will be handled by a precise selection of keywords which are introduced in table 3.0.

Table 3.0 - Definitions on central topics concerning national Arctic strategies, as defined by Schulze (2017).

Topic	Definition
Environmental Protection	All measures at national and international level to reduce greenhouse gases, preserve biodiversity and protect the Arctic Ocean from pollution. Also, the designation of protected areas, building networks of particularly sensitive regions in the Arctic and working towards global agreements are part of the environmental protection.
Regional Development	Increasing social, cultural and political living standards in rural areas. Strengthening local self-administration.
International Law	Conflict and conflicting interests should be settled based on international law in force. To guarantee a stable, safe and peaceful Arctic, the development of international law is being pursued. This includes the strengthening of existing institutions, the creation of new rules and the enhancement of the law of the Sea.
Infrastructure	Includes the expansion of technical infrastructure such as energy supply, communication and financial services, but the social infrastructure such as educational and health institutions, authorities and cultural institutions as well.
Transport	Expansion of regional and transregional transport routes to link the region to other parts of the country. This includes roads, railways, local transport systems and air transports and the development of airports.
Shipping	Development of new shipping routes and the intensification of maritime traffic on the Northern Sea Routes as well as the Transpolar route. Includes icebreakers, modern marine technology and the expansion of the maritime infrastructure.
Fisheries	Exploration and exploitation of existing and new fishing grounds for marine resources. This includes both deep-sea fishing as well as aquaculture of fish and shellfish.
Military Presence	To cover security issues as sovereignty and free access to resources, the military presence in the region will be increased. This means both relocation of troops and military material to the Arctic as well as the formation of specific Arctic forces and investments in the armed forces.

Oil & Gas	Exploration and exploitation of oil and gas in the Arctic. Likewise, the expansion of the required off-and onshore infrastructure.
Technology & Innovation	Promotion of the development of technologies and business models. Focal points are the digitalization and communication technologies. Furthermore, the development of specific Arctic services, e.g. big-data-management, will be promoted.

Thereby, a comparison between national strategies prior to 2012 and strategies up to 2020 will be executed in order to present a valid analytical discussion on the environmental development and the eventual increased marine awareness in the Arctic. The data is managed by examining how often the topics in table 3.0 occurs in the strategies. A higher word-frequency signals that the topic has higher strategic priority and vice versa. However, it is of great importance that the various topics are discussed in a problematizing manner as well as giving explicit suggestions on how to most efficiently handle Arctic issues.

The results will also be presented in a table (table 6.0) illustrating the regime-type development in the Arctic. The table is based on the topics described in table 3.0 in order to clearly outline how and in which specific direction Arctic regimes are going. Importantly, the results are based on the findings in table 4.0 and table 5.0. In order to measure the development, I will grade the different colours the following; Red 0, Yellow 5 and Green 10. For example, the variable "Fishieries – prior to 2012" will be given the total sum of 25, due to the given results in table 4.0; three yellow equals 15 and one green equals 10. This being said, this analytical section will also examine intergovernmental organisations, NGOs and epistemic communities such as the Arctic Council, the Protection of Arctic Marine Environment working group (PAME), the Arctic Economic Council, the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) and WWF in an attempt to illustrate which regime that is central in the Arctic, concerning norms and rules. Analytically, I will combine theoretical assumptions of both regime and governance theory to highlight correlated explanations on how regimes appear in environmentally fragile regions, or in this case specifically the Arctic. Further, I will critically develop theoretical ideas concerning rules, norms and governance linked to transnational policy processes in the Arctic. Specifically, maritime issues are in focus and I will seek to clarify the instruments of rules, norms and governance as well as depicture how the structure of transnational cooperation is formed. In order to outline an analytical discussion on blue governance it is important to pinpoint which factors that have led to the current environmental situation and how Arctic regimes have emerged. Thus, the data is primarily based on national marine directives of the Arctic eight, in

addition with a mix of policy documents, international agreements, scientific reports, and governmental investigations. The material is also limited by only reviewing data that addresses issues concerning the Arctic marine environment. All of the documents which were examined are presented in Appendix B.

7. Results

In this chapter I present the overall results of the study. Firstly, I will discuss the eight different national Arctic strategies and illustrate whether there has been a strategic shift or development since 2012 considering specific topics of interest. The tables presented will be the basis of the discussion on blue governance and how environmental cooperation has evolved since 2012. Next, I present results regarding regime-building in the Arctic and how regime-types have been developed and affected by national strategies.

7.1 National strategies of the Arctic and the High North

In the presence of melting Arctic ices and an overexploitation of natural resources in the region, states should now more than ever try to investigate potential sustainable system solutions and political rearrangement of the High North. During the last decades it has been a shift in power dynamics within the states of the Arctic. The geopolitical development is more and more becoming incused by the impact of climate change and an overall awareness of the actual environmental decline has led to efficient strategic processes of implementation. Notwithstanding, there is still a lack of consensus on how to manage marine protection and sustainability principles in the Arctic. In fact, regional cooperation is based on grand legislatives which are stipulated by inflexible bureaucratic officials located miles away from the melting ices. Effectual policy procedures are not tools that are to be crafted with short-term interests in sight but rather an aim to produce coherent frameworks that sets the foundation for future tenable actions. The basics of the Arctic ecosystem is built on fragile and slow developing species which also makes it of great importance to generate strategies conducted by states in collaboration, in order to not risk the survival of the biodiversity in the region. Indeed, states have published Arctic Strategies and implemented them into their foreign domestic policies and albeit there are geopolitical similarities, there are also opposing national interests and motives to engage in the Arctic. The protection of the Arctic ocean is a complex matter and various global actors and organisations have looked to raise awareness of the negative development with increased levels of oceans acidification and deteriorated conditions for the aquatic life. Still, it is hard to fully grasp the magnitude of work on how to handle the blue growth of the Arctic ocean and how environmental cooperation is possible within such fragmented region. In order to bring clarity on the topic of Arctic marine and regional development, the following section will highlight which geopolitical factors that has been in particular focus before and after the introduction of the concept ‘Blue Economy’ at the UNCSD-meeting in 2012. Thus,

this episode describes the results concerning the development of Arctic national strategies.

7.1.1 Strategic development since the UNCSD

Through the launch of the concept Blue Economy the geopolitical agenda was supposed to be initiated by an increased awareness of the maritime biodiversity and its fragile environmental position. Above all, state, organisational and institutional actors could use the concept as a tool to ease the strategic work on how to implement more *blue* governmental measures. However, prior to the Rio+20-meeting in 2012 national strategies lacked general knowledge on how to efficiently address maritime issues and how the aquatic life affects the socioeconomic dimension. The eight bordering states, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the U.S. have historically been poor while trying to establish sustainable marine policy solutions in the Arctic and there is evidently a variation on which specific measure that is to be the most focused on. In table 4.0 I present a survey on which topics that had the highest priority and relevance for the different states prior to the UNCSD-meeting in 2012. The matrix also illustrates differences and tendencies within and between countries with specific interests in the Arctic region.

Table 4.0 - Priority indicators of national Arctic strategies prior to 2012

<2012	Transport	Fisheries	Environmental Protection	Regional Development	International Law	Shipping	Infrastructure	Technology & Innovation	Military Prescence	Cooperation	Oil & Gas
Canada	→	→	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	↑	→	↑	↑
Denmark	↑	→	↑	↓	↑	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	→
Finland	↑	↓	↑	↑	↓	→	↑	↑	↓	↑	↓
Iceland	↓	→	→	→	↑	→	↓	↓	↓	↑	→
Norway	↑	↑	→	→	→	↑	↑	↑	↓	↑	↑
Russia	→	↓	→	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	↑
Sweden	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	→	↑	↑	↓	↑	→
USA	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	→	→	×	→	→	↑

↑ This topic has high priority: it is a guideline and the center of Arctic Policy.
→ This Topic has medium priority: It is a part of the Arctic Policy and the government is aware of new developments.
↓ This topic has low priority: It is an indirect part of the Arctic Policy and the government recognizes its relevance. No stronger engagement is envisaged.
× This topic has no relevance for the Arctic Policy.

In big terms, the figure illustrates a non-linear relationship between the eight countries. It is hard to depict any clear pattern that highlight in which specific direction the geopolitical focus is aimed. Notably, topics such as fisheries, regional development and military presence seems

to divide the actors despite the fact that nearly all the states raise cooperation as a key tool in order to achieve sustainable policy procedures. To establish environmental arrangement and solutions linked to just mentioned factors it is crucial to explicitly interact with other actors which strives for similar goals and means. Concerning marine conservation, the focus - which should be on developing shipping routes, transport legislatives, fishing limitations, oil and gas regulations and environmental protection - was before 2012 evidently unsettled. For instance, Canada mostly saw the Arctic as an internal matter with its focal point on regional development, natural resources and the expansion of infrastructure (Government of Canada, 2009). Countries such as Norway, Finland and Sweden were however more eager to promote aspects of eco-friendly transport routines and in research and development of technologies (Government offices of Sweden, 2011; Regjeringen, 2009; Prime Minister's office Finland, 2010). The Arctic strategic action plan of Denmark from 2011 was focused on the use of resources and how to invest in research and education facilities. More, the Danish goal was to expand renewable energies in an attempt strengthen Arctic resources (Kingdom of Denmark, 2011). Icelandic Arctic strategies was - before 2012 - mainly about pursuing objectives of security and economic policy as well as being an active part in the development of international law, in order to ensure the own security. Economically, Iceland was focused on tourism and fishing (National Parliament of Iceland, 2011).

Concerning Russia, the Russian Arctic strategy is more or less an exposition on the positioning of Russia as the leading force in the Arctic and how the Russian economic should be fully developed in the Arctic. Consequently, prior to 2012 the Russian strategic was characterized by investments in the enhancement of the military presence, border controls and marine infrastructure as well as optimizing the exploitation of natural resources such as oil-and-gas and fishing (Russian Federation Policy, 2008). Thus, despite the fact that Russia's Arctic policy actually has developed over the last decade, its main strategy has remained focused on maintaining regional sovereignty and economic development. Or as President Punt self puts it: "Russia has consistently been increasing its presence in the Arctic. This is natural for the largest Arctic state" (NATOStratcom, 2018:4). On another side, the US is to be considered as a market-oriented actor prior to 2012, striving to secure free trade and cooperation funded on established transnational institutions and international law. In line with Russia, Norway and Canada, the US Arctic strategy or directive is pinpointing the use and investment of oil-and-gas and mineral resources in the Arctic as crucial (National Security Presidential Directive 66, 2009; Russian Federation Policy, 2008; Regjeringen, 2009). Most of all the matrix illustrates a situation in

which all the countries set cooperation high on the Arctic agenda. In another aspect - and beyond the situation described in table 4.0 - the EU is an important political body and is constituted as a geopolitical observer. The EU highlights the importance of developing sustainable regulations concerning the climate and environmental protection as well as international cooperation. Since, the EU thoroughly represent concerns of the European Arctic in international forums it is important to note the influence which the Union has on not only NGOs but also national actors.

Onwards, in table 5.0 I present the development of the most up-to-date national strategies and policy frameworks. In line with table 4.0, the table illustrates topical interests of the eight Arctic states as well as highlighting differences and tendencies within and between countries with specific interests in the Arctic region.

Table 5.0 - Priority indicators of national Strategies after 2012

>2012	Transport	Fisheries	Environmental Protection	Regional Development	International Law	Shipping	Infrastructure	Technology & Innovation	Military Prescence	Cooperation	Oil & Gas
Canada	→	→	↑	→	↑	↑	→	→	↓	↑	→
*Denmark	↑	→	↑	×	×	↑	×	→	→	↑	→
Finland	↑	→	↑	→	↓	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	→
*Iceland	→	↓	↑	↑	→	×	↑	×	↓	↑	→
Norway	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	↑
Russia	↑	↓	↓	→	↓	→	→	→	↑	→	↑
Sweden	→	↑	↑	→	↑	↓	→	→	↓	↑	→
USA	→	↓	↑	→	↑	→	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑

*No new national Arctic strategy nor guidelines exists. The analysis is based on more general directives after 2012.

By glancing at the results in table 5.0, the development has been partially climate-friendly, with more focus on environmental protection, fisheries and to some extent also the transport and shipping sector. Transnational cooperation between both Arctic and non-Arctic states seems also to be more important than earlier in order to manage both environmental concerns and Russian military advances in the region. Innovative solutions and high-tech science are to some degree dismissed in advance for aspects of regional development, international law and infrastructure. For instance, Canada now – even more than before – promotes aspects which refers to the strengthening of rule-based international order in the Arctic. Canada seeks to ensure that the region remains both peaceful and stable in times of conflicts as well as aiming

to minimize the risk of a static Arctic international order. Additionally, Canada aims to more clearly define Canada's Arctic boundaries and marine areas, broaden the country's international Arctic engagement, enhance bilateral cooperation as well as implementing the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated Fishing in the Central Arctic Open (Government of Canada, 2019). Further, Norway directs focus with their new Arctic policy from 2014 on creating environmental value, sustainable use of natural resources, managing climate changes and fostering knowledge in the Arctic. Most of all, Norway emphasises the importance of science and technology in order to achieve sustainable development. However, the Norwegian government highlights international cooperation, business development, infrastructure and environmental protection as particularly highly prioritized areas (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). Thus, Norway is – at least formally – undergoing some form of 'greening' of their Arctic policy framework and seeks to facilitate a sustainable development via increased transnational cooperation regarding aspects such as marine transport and international law. Concerning Arctic security, Norway points out the NATO-membership and the transatlantic security community as cornerstones of Norway's security policy, which also is Norway's utter defence towards increased Russian military activity in the Arctic (Norwegian Ministries, 2017:18). Onwards, Finland and Sweden are partially following the same geopolitical pattern concerning the Arctic. This does not mean that they have the same Arctic strategic targets nor objectives but rather that they share common interests. Explicitly, both Finland and Sweden identify stronger climate efforts, better protection of biodiversity and ecosystems and more sustainable use of resources as key-priorities to a greater environmental protection of the Arctic (Regeringskansliet Sweden, 2016; Prime Minister's Office Finland, 2016). While Sweden notes the importance of the "Polar Code" adopted in November 2014 - regarding shipping regulations, marine environmental considerations, and construction requirements – Finland also puts Arctic foreign and EU policy, sustainable tourism, infrastructure and the development of marketing expertise in the Arctic as areas of certain interest (Regeringskansliet Sweden, 2016; Prime Minister's Office Finland, 2016).

The new Russian Arctic strategy - or the Kremlin decree "On the Basics of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the Period Until 2035" – is more or less about an industrialization of the region. Focus is on natural resource exploitation and how to most efficiently win the race of the Northern Sea Route. Above all, by the time of 2035 Russia intends to have built approximately 40 Arctic vessels, developed railways, seaports and 4 regional airports all in order to ease the processes of exploit Arctic natural resources such as gas, oil,

fisheries and mining. More the Russian strategy also discusses plans to create an underwater fibre-optic communication cable via the Northern Sea Route. The strategy outlines how to drill for more fossil fuels in the High North by simply giving tax breaks to investors interested in Arctic energy project (The Kremlin Decree, 2020). Specifically, Russia seeks to further strengthen the national sovereignty and territorial integrity by increasing beneficial partnerships, improved infrastructure and higher standards of technology in the Arctic. Yet, aspects of environmental protection, international law or fisheries are dismissed in advance for military activity and transport allocation (Brzozowski, 2020). Concerning the US, the White House and the Obama government presented a new national strategy for the Arctic region in May 2013. The strategy highlights changing climate conditions as the most alarming trend regarding the Arctic. Nonetheless, the focus is on how to advance United States security interests in the region, how to pursue responsible Arctic region stewardship, how to strengthen international cooperation and how to evolve Arctic infrastructure and strategic capabilities (The White House, 2013). This stated, the 2013 US Arctic strategy is about protecting the Arctic environment and conserve natural resources as well as establish and institutionalize integrated Arctic management framework. International cooperation is sought to be developed by working through bilateral relationships and multilateral bodies, such as the Arctic Council (The White House, 2013). Besides the new strategy, the Department of Defence (DoD) outlined a report to congress regarding three strategic ways in support of the desired Arctic end-state: Building Arctic awareness; Enhancing Arctic Operations; and, Strengthening the rules-based order in the Arctic (Department of Defence U.S.A., 2019)

Neither Denmark or Iceland have any new Arctic strategy or policy which seeks to develop national incentives in the region. Primarily, the analysis is based on general maritime directives outlined by the two separate states. Thus, the results which are linked to these countries are to be viewed upon in a slightly different way. Importantly, it is hard to draw any grand conclusions on how they seek to develop the Arctic region. Yet, it is possible to see that Denmark does not highlight nor mention aspects of international law or technology and innovation to a high degree in their more general maritime strategies. Environmental protection and cooperation are still vital topics for the Danish government (The Danish Government, 2018). Regarding Iceland, the analysis is based on their goals to achieve while holding the chairmanship of the Arctic Council 2019-2021. Shortly, Iceland's Arctic focus is to reach for a more sustainable Arctic region, the protection of the Arctic marine environment as well as producing green energy

solutions and increase the conditions for people and communities of the Arctic (Government of Iceland, 2019).

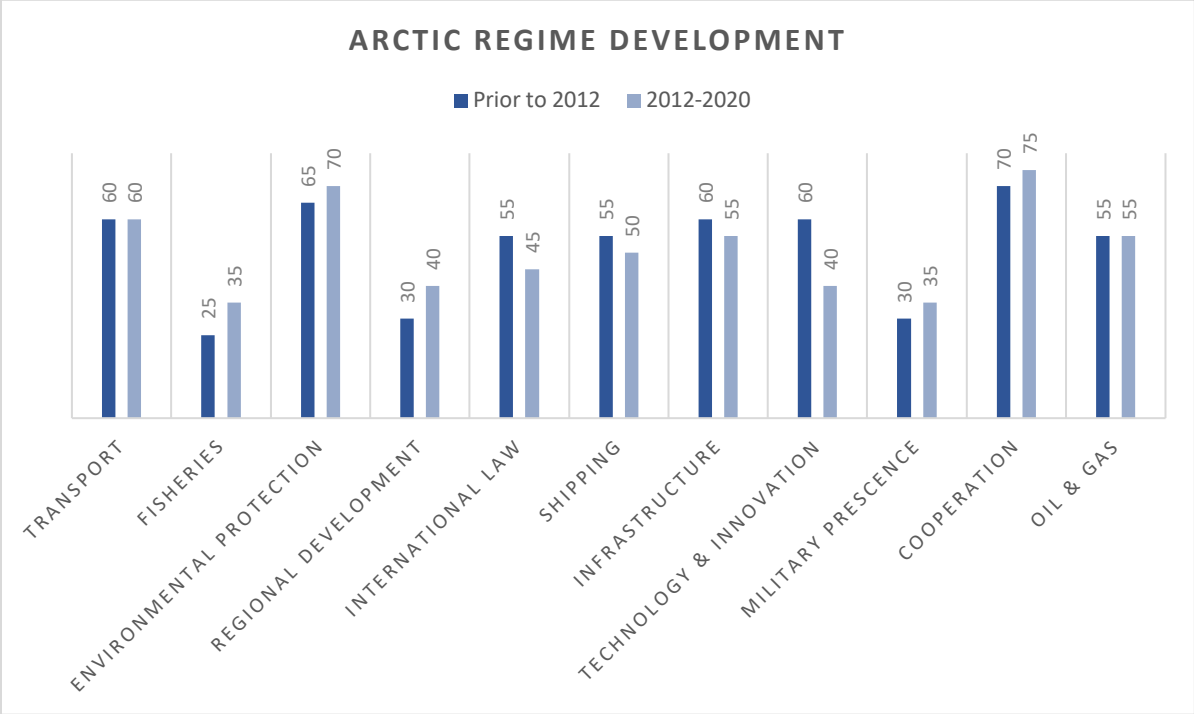
7.2 Regime-building in the Arctic

Initially - in order for a regime to be established – an issue area is needed. In time, both states and other actors will intertwine within the specific issue area, which then will generate incentives for regime formation (Rothwell, 1996:14). Concerning the Arctic, international law has been characterized not only by coastal states' rights but also through regions or actors beyond the traditional national jurisdiction. This noted, the Arctic is more or less constructed upon a mix of massive marine areas and land masses which all falls under the sovereignty of one of the eight Arctic states. More, the Arctic is – to a large extent – governed by an internationally established regime which rests on soft laws of the Arctic Council intergovernmental cooperation and the UN Conventions on the Law of the Sea (Arctic Council, 2019). Despite the absence of any legal personality or authority to expand nor develop regulatory arrangements, the AC is the only arena in which Arctic states has the potential to communicate diplomatic and political standings. Other international organizations, epistemic communities and NGOs – such as PAME, WWF and IASC – applies mainly as observers, in such sense that they gather the Arctic states in relation to norm-making, legislation or cooperation (WWF, 2020; IASC, 2013, PAME, 2020). The Arctic Council is to be viewed as a unique cooperation regime in terms of political representation, including representatives from the Arctic eight (Arctic Council, 2016). Most of all, the mandate of the Council is based on regime concepts concerning environmental stability and sustainable development. With the Arctic Economic Council – which facilitate a responsible business and economic development of the Arctic as well as provide advices concerning Blue Economy and market accessibility to the AC – the it is possible to state that the Arctic Council in fact acts as form of legal regime (Arctic Economic Council, 2020). However, the AC is limited and has a low impact on normative aspects as well as regulatory binding power. It is a regime where decisions are being made rather than producing norms and rules (Arctic Council, 2016). In the end is the Arctic Council – as the prominent environmental regime in the region – based on state interests of the Arctic eight, which thereof constitute the Arctic regime-building of the Council. This was further extended due to the Ilulissat Declaration in 2008 when the five Arctic Coastal states – Canada Denmark, Norway, Russia and the U.S – noted that there is "[…] no need to develop a

comprehensive international legal regime to govern the Arctic Ocean" (Ilulisat Declaration, 2008; European Parliament, 2015).

On such account, domestic regulations and legislations of the Arctic are crucial while trying to depict an Arctic legitim regime. However – and besides the fact that national legislations are widespread in the region – there seems to have emerged some form of international law regime in the Arctic region side by side with the Arctic Council. Arctic states seem more eager to govern and target Arctic policy goals by international law influences and principles such as environmental protection, cooperation and resource management (Rothwell, 1996:156). Below, in table 6.0 the Arctic regime development since 2012 is illustrated:

Table 6.0 - Arctic regime development since 2012



Through the findings in table 6.0 (based on table 4.0 and 5.0), it is possible to depict an Arctic development regarding regime-type which tends to move towards a more environmental approach. As the Arctic eight controls the Arctic regime via the Arctic Council, their national strategies directly affect how the Arctic regime-building development is structured. Thus, at the same time as topics such as environmental protection and fisheries increases in awareness, Arctic regime-building becomes more incused by sustainable measures in order to reduce the levels of melting sea ices, marine litter and ocean acidification (Regeringskansliet Sweden, 2016; Prime Minister's Office Finland, 2016; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014;

The Danish Government, 2018; Government of Iceland, 2019). The results also show that there is more focus on military activity and aspects of security as well as on transnational cooperation and regional development (Government of Canada, 2019; Department of Defence USA, 2018; The Kremlin Decree, 2020;). Yet, there is simultaneously a decreasing trend on topics such as international law, shipping, infrastructure and technological innovations (Government of Canada, 2019; Regeringskansliet Sweden, 2016; The Kremlin Decree, 2020). Whether Arctic regime types are more prone to be incused by soft or hard law is by the results hard to fully determine. For instance, environmental regimes tend to be based on soft law regulations and security regimes on hard law etc.

7.3 Marine environmental directives of the Arctic eight

The result shows that there are non-correlated tendencies between national Arctic marine directives. It is hard to depict any clear trend on why national Arctic interests differs and how they intend to handle environmental concerns in the region. Arctic governance – or in this case blue governance – is characterized by a mixed variation of national incentives which all in all ends up in different approaches towards how to efficiently manage offshore issues. The development illustrated in table 4.0 and 5.0 is in this case used as a measurement to more categorially depict and compare how the eight Arctic states have adopted current climate issues.

Starting with Canada, they have lowered their investments in large-scale infrastructure and paused the planning of new drilling leases. Yet, Canada have scaled up in intensity regarding plans on deep-water Arctic ports and instalment of new coastguard and navy ships whereas a country like Denmark still invests in the massive Arctic fishing industry as well as expanding the number of ports and airports. Mainly, most of Canada's strategies or priorities are situated close to the goals of the Agenda 2030 which outlines an action plan on how to protect maritime resources (WWF, 2018). The key-findings of the Canadian Government regarding cooperation or co-management is the handling of shorelines and community monitoring on fish and the environment (Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2019:31). Onwards, Denmark aims to activate new sustainable hydropower facilities but also to build new coastal mines. Denmark has also created an action plan focused on the five P's: Planet, Prosperity, People, Partnerships and Peace which concerning the Arctic, will manage marine litter and toxic waste from the transport and shipping sector (The Danish government, 2017). Norway, grants for new licences for oil and gas exploitation as well as expanding Arctic aquaculture and investigating possibilities for future

seafloor mining activity. The sea-resource reliant nation, Norway also uses high-tech innovations to monitor the amount and levels of micro plastic and ocean acidification in the Arctic. In 2017 Norway also led the work which resulted in an agreement within the UN Environment Assembly on a zero-release vision of plastics in the Arctic Ocean. In addition to this, Norway has established a more general high-level panel on building a Sustainable Ocean Economy in order to increase knowledge on the interaction between healthy oceans, sustainable use of ocean resources and economic growth (Norwegian Ministry of Finance and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014).

The 'giant in the East' Russia, propagates for non-blue policy procedures. Specifically, Russia intends to increase the levels of oil and gas extraction, develop up to 10 new airfields, rebuild several military camps, expand more than 10 Arctic ports and construct larger icebreakers which can more efficiently harvest the marine ecosystem (WWF, 2018). This happens at the same time as the US via Alaska declines interests in Arctic energy investments under the Trump administration and freezes the development on regional infrastructure. The US trend regarding the Arctic marine environment is pointing in a direction in which more drilling facilities and ports are to be constructed as well as effects of overfishing is overlooked in advance for military presence (WWF, 2018). Pretty soon it becomes clear that blue variables of cooperation or governance does not function parallel to the environmental ambitions of the Arctic five. In regard to the remaining three arctic nations, Iceland has handled blue concerns by expanding aspects of aquaculture, investments of infrastructure and the potential of oil and gas development (WWF, 2018; Arctic Council, 2012). Sweden works to ensure that the upcoming extractions of natural resources and the use of renewable resources is managed in a sustainable way as well as monitoring the fragile marine environment even more. Further, Sweden intends to establish a sustainable Arctic marine situation heavily influenced by the environmental impact assessments (Governments Offices of Sweden, 2011:30. Sweden also highlights the importance of a shared sea and air surveillance which can contribute to greener or more blue shipping and as stated earlier, the development of a "Polar Code" concerning maritime safety in Arctic waters (Regeringskansliet Sweden, 2016). Due to the fact that Sweden is no coastal Arctic state the country does not have any direct national energy interests in the High north and does not interact nor take any palpable part in Arctic energy policy cooperation. Lastly, Finland has managed the increasing amount of environmental concerns by further stretch the significance of technological innovations in regard to marine factors such as icebreakers and ships (Prime Minister's Office of Finland, 2016). Finland seeks to decrease spills from

especially cargo ships and the oil and gas industry in order to protect the Arctic marine environment. Cooperative measures are also of great interest, however not that clear nor well-developed.

8. Discussion

In this chapter I will discuss the results in relation to the research questions. Initially, I will elaborate on how national Arctic strategies and environmental transnational cooperation have evolved since 2012 as well as discuss the impact of geopolitical events and problematize whether the development is valid or not. Thereafter, I discuss how transnational and institutional actors have been part in the establishment of regimes in the Hight North as well as the significance of epistemic communities and NGOs. Lastly, I present an analytical exposition on blue governance and the current development regarding marine environmental cooperation in the Arctic.

Concerning the first research question of this study and when observing the results in table 4.0 and 5.0, the key-finding is the development towards what seems to be a more environmental and sustainable direction. How and why this is, is a complex matter but one possible explanation may be the increased focus on environmental aspects in news coverage which per se affects Arctic geopolitics. Nations that does not apply to current trends or tendencies risk to lose the race on common resources or even worse, lean towards malign anti-consensus policy structures. Such scenario is not palpable, however, Russia's aversion to implement climate-friendly and sustainable directives in the Arctic may in time result in a conflict-affected High North with more differential regional goal and means. If so, collective action problems may thrive instead of achieving coherent regional agreements, all in line with the ideas of Ostrom (2004) concerning governance. But it is not fair to state that a full-blown conflict in the Arctic is at the doorstep but rather a remote possibility. Yet, as old and new geopolitical contestants will interact in the region, a smooth transition is improbable. The retreat of sea ice which will expose offshores resources such as natural gas and fish may also lead to difficulties and competition while trying to claim shared self-interests. In accordance with Ostrom (2009) and Marwell & Oliver (1993), one possible solution to reduce the impact of such collective action problems would to establish a public good environment based on an increased number of participants in order to bring more resources to the table. Thus, when resources or a good of some form are to be supplied, the size of the group matters. Hence, a larger group increases the probability that it will be provided.

In concern of shipping, the result illustrates small differences since the UNCSD in 2012 and the countries does not implement measures to regulate shipping even though there is a clear

need for better governance and coordination (WWW, 2018). Interestingly, all eight arctic countries seem to be more biased towards aspects of regional development and infrastructure. This can be seen as an effect of saturation regarding the Arctic and that the spotlight to some extent has been redirected. This said, regional development is still an important topic, but the findings may imply that the progress rather enhances security aspects and cooperation instead of increased actions on infrastructure. This is an interesting finding in two ways. First, how is highly prioritized transnational collaboration compatible with the lack of commitment regarding for example fisheries and regional development? How come does it not exist any explicit regulatory systems concerning natural resources if cooperation was to be that well-balanced as the strategies suggests? Secondly, in what way does the countries want to address environmental issues and military activity between each other? In fact, the environmental development testifies to another reality in which national self-interests seems to block or counteract climate-smart and secure policy solutions. In order to curb such development – and in line with Heininen et al (2015) and Kamat (2003). - it is important to include Arctic epistemic communities and NGOs such as PAME, AEC and WWF in order to increase aspects of networking, to achieve long-term geopolitical policies, discuss global interests and to reduce political fragmentation. The race for the Arctic is immediate and the main actors should raise awareness on how to manage events such as melting Arctic ices and permafrost instead of developing more efficient alternatives to exploit natural resources. Transnational environmental cooperation in the Arctic is characterized by discord but with a mutual desire to improvement. All strategies are still targeting collaboration as a key-mean, but they do also highlight diverse approaches in order to achieve a legitim conversion of the Arctic. If aspects of cooperation actually would have been that well-developed, would it not have produced more unitary Arctic guidelines at this point? Of course, to establish functional regulations and jurisdictions in complex regions that is to be accepted and implemented by all actors is hard. But if almost all states – at least formally – promotes aspects of cooperation one could argue that the number of collective-action problems would have been reduced if they at an earlier stage had conciliated on a common Arctic policy strategy.

Nonetheless, Arctic geopolitics do evolve and today it is possible to witness one of the most apparent shifts in Arctic management since the end of the Cold War, when cooperation became the central approach instead of confrontation. More specifically, climate changes during the 2010s have resulted in more climate-oriented strategies which aim to handle the Arctic environment. This given, the eight Arctic nations does not to a large extent collaborate while

defining objectives and means of sustainable development. Instead, Arctic cooperation seems to occur when speaking in terms of infrastructure and scientific innovations. This may be explained due to the harmful nature of the topics. States have more to offer when the self-risks are not that high and when the implications of actions in fact produces common benefits. When discussing transnational cooperation, cooperation should include aspects of environmental protection, marine pollution, shipping, transport and military activity, not only how to engender new high-tech procedures or gadgets in order to increase mining and the exploitation of oil, gas and fish. In line with the development presented in table 4.0 and 5.0, military presence is becoming more important for more Arctic states. Interestingly, national military reformation in the High North is not a sign of an arms race but rather an attempt to strengthen territorial borders and to reduce Russia's self-claim on common pool resources. When Russian President Vladimir Putin quoted and modernized the 18th- century Russian scientist Mikhail Lomonosov by stating that "[…] now Russia should expand through the Arctic" (Spohr, 2018) the other Arctic states seem to have increased their attention towards the region in order to secure regional development. In fact, competition is already intense as Russia, Canada, Norway and Denmark all have interests in the Lomonosov Ridge, which is an underwater mountain chain in which almost a quarter of the Earth's remaining fossil fuel resources are to be found. However, at this point only Russia and Denmark have submitted claims to the Lomonosov Ridge. More, Paul Zukunft of the US Coast Guard has stated that there must be a Western response to the Russian military expansion in the Arctic. On such account, it is fair to say that there is a slow-motion fight between the West and Russia concerning the exploitation of Arctic's energy reserves.

In agreement with Lemos & Agrawal (2006), on an international level – and since governance and cooperation also may be created via non-organisational institutional factors such as incentives of the market, observer states interest and other self-regulatory processes – it is important to see the extent of global affection on Arctic environmental cooperation. Upcoming international environmental cooperation in the Arctic may be influenced by the impact of another superpower, namely China. China notes the advancement of Russia in the Arctic and by that, depicting a possibility to increase the Chinese global influence by developing a Sino-Russian Arctic Alliance. This is not solely an effect of closer and more repetitive dialogues between Russia and China, but also an offspring of realpolitik in that sense that the inauguration of US President Donald Trump in 2017 intensified the longing of Moscow and Beijing to displace the US as an Arctic hegemon. The Chinese Arctic strategy of 2018 "Polar Silk Road" highlights the importance of cooperation regarding Arctic transport and shipping (Woon, 2020).

By increased Sino-Russian cooperative measures on such topics, it may appear a polarized situation in which the 'Western' countries take a stand against Eastern power and claims. If so, the Arctic – or as more recently called 'the last frontier' – will be facing distinct geopolitical challenges and national collaborative incentives can no longer exist only on paper but should rather be expressed explicit. The Arctic Council is thereby at a crossroad. One alternative is to include China permanently within the Council - and not only as an observer state - and try to socialize and integrate China as a responsible stakeholder in the region or exclude China in order to preserve own territorial powers.

Onwards, transformative socioeconomics and climate changes now affecting the Arctic are creating new urges for governance in the High North. In order to manage such challenge, an introduction of a comprehensive Arctic treaty would facilitate such progress. However, the body of Artic regimes is complex, and is heavily influenced by external events and actions. Thereof, rules and norms of actors in power in the region plays a decisive role when examining how various types of regimes arises and expands in the circumpolar north. The Arctic does not possess an explicit regional framing nor structure which can facilitate the progress of promoting aspects of cooperation. Instead, and in order to geopolitically manage the Arctic - regarding both bilateral and regional concerns - the UN's convention on the Law of the Sea is being used as a key-tool to develop legally intreated goals and means. Nonetheless, issues related to the Law of the Sea are not solely of interest to the Arctic eight and the legal regime but also to other global regimes, specifically interested in environmental protection. Therefore, the Arctic states must be aware of global interests in the region and develop frameworks and multilateral agreement concerning fishery, acidification, marine environmental cooperative measures and natural exploitations.

In detail, the 1991 "*Declaration on the Protection of the Arctic Environment*" and the "*Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy*" (AEPS) constitutes the grounding principles of the Arctic environmental regime, providing the Arctic with non-binding soft law regulations in order to accommodate as many domestic policies as possible (Lukic, 2007:5). Thus, the Arctic legal regime is based on domestic laws and influenced by international rules and norms. The eight Arctic countries affects the Arctic regime by proclaiming their own norm patterns and traditions regarding transnational governance and cooperation. Thus, the Arctic is constituted by a wide and complex variation of norms – in accordance with Krasner (1983) - which makes it hard to fully comprehend its true nature hence, rules and norms are factors in constant motion. Also, it

is hard to depict an explicit Arctic 'regime' in legal terms due to the fact that there are no solidary or general guidelines for the management of Arctic sea and land areas. In accordance to Mueller's et al (2007) theories of causation, regime principles of the Arctic are to be acknowledged by mainly the Arctic states due to their regional rights and obligations concerning cooperation and governance. As stated earlier, the governance of Arctic regime is politically based on overlapping incentives of the eight Arctic countries. Yet, it is important to constantly investigate Arctic regimes in order to see if they have turned into what Vogler (2000) calls as 'dead-letter regimes'. Such regimes – which exist only on the paper and does not work in reality – may slow down the process of Arctic development and instead favour inactive and outdated state interests.

The first attempt to generate a pan-Arctic system for cooperation resulted in the adoption of the AEPS. Due to it's not legally binding structure and it's soft-law status, the AEPS was capable of including far-reaching environmental objectives, including the marine Arctic pollution. Through the integration of the AEPS into the Arctic Council in 1996, intergovernmental cooperation seems to have become more accessible and not only outlined by strategic calculations between Russia and the US (Koivurova, 2008:146). Characterised by soft law, the Arctic Council and the current regime has efficiently addressed critical issues. Thus, intergovernmental cooperation has been successful in the Arctic region. Yet, the "International Union for Conservation of Nature and Nature Protection" and other organisations suggests that a more legally binding regime for the Arctic could be formed. This said - and in line with Stokke (1983) - there already exists a legal Arctic regime - but it is not a binding one that can be enlarged. The Arctic regime is thereby still a combination of soft law and the Law of the Sea convention. The growth of environmental norms and normative learning in the High North may also be a result of the amount of adaptive learning at play in the region. In regard to this and the processes of Arctic regime-building, the most central epistemic community in the Arctic is the PAME working group. The PAME working group have produced the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment of 2009 which eased the process of addressing uncoherent policy goals by combining domestic legislatives, rules and norms. This solely has been an important factor in the construction of the Arctic legal regime. On another note, the Arctic Economic Council is a vital access regarding governance in the Arctic due to its capacity of bringing private sector actors and indigenous groups together in order to achieve and shape governances of economic activities in the Arctic (Shibata et al, 2019). Currently, the Arctic regime is being influenced more and more by NGOs. Conforming to Davies (2002) and the neo-pluralist understanding of

regime theory, cooperation between governmental and NGOs is in fact required in the Arctic to achieve sustainable governance outcomes. For example, the WWF has sought to develop an international arctic environmental maritime regime. The WWF has affected the Arctic regime in such sense that is has pinpointed the importance of international arctic marine cooperation and the significance of developing political will, process and the substance of a new Arctic treaty (Huebert, 2008:29). More, the council of the IASC -which is the policy and decision-making body of the IASC – ensure an input of a big span of scientific and technological knowledge which promotes norms of innovation and development. In that sense, the IASC also affect the regime-building in the Arctic by setting science high on the agenda in the race against climate changes and an upcoming environmental decay. The Arctic legal regime is in need of the knowledge which the scientists and administrators of the NGO's possesses in order to fulfil regional and transnational commitments.

The results show that Arctic states have started to increase military activity and security capabilities in the Arctic, as being presented in table 6.0. By using regime theory, it becomes easier to explain such progress and illustrate how regime formation is evident in the Arctic. An interesting example is the signing of the Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement in 2011, which was the first binding framework ratified by all the Arctic nations. Mainly, the treaty seeks to 'strengthen aeronautical and maritime search and rescue cooperation and coordination in the Arctic' and is a palpable example for regime theory linked to the Arctic region. Specifically, while states are dubious to cooperate in fragile areas that may risk the own national interests, they simultaneously seem to be more successful in forming a regime in areas in which interests unite. This may best be described via the assumption of Stone (1987) that shared ideas on norms and decision-making are efficient while trying to establish regimes in dynamic and complex regions (Stone, 1987). Still, it is not sufficient for Arctic members to only join multilateral regimes, but they must also seek to renew national commitments in order to comply with existing obligations. Correspondingly, the Arctic Council aims to assure a sustainable development and has managed to maintain an important forum in which some of the most common Arctic issues can be solved. Nevertheless, the Arctic Council has no explicit legal authority or personality to initiate binding measures in regard to political issues. Following this, the formation of legal and political regimes is sometimes achieved beyond the Arctic Council. For instance, the Barents Sea Treaty – signed by the governments of Norway and Russia in 2010 – was an amicable dispute resolution regarding the Arctic Ocean. Moreover, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is – as an

intergovernmental organization – also an evident example on how regimes can coexist besides the Arctic Council. Since its establishment, it has been responsible for the management of fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas. By examining the different actors and their role within the Arctic context, it is possible to state that some form political and environmental regimes have been settled. More specific, in line with that the Arctic states have been more aware of that the impact of transboundary processes and climate change will affect their own interests and security. This newly developed national awareness has resulted in a growing number of environmental regimes. But once again, at this time it does not exist a legally binding regime which can mitigate the exploitation of natural resources in the Arctic. To solve this, one possible solution would be to construct an international regime based on the same principles as the Antarctic Treaty which states that the Antarctica should be an area of peace and prohibiting territorial claims to sovereignty. If so, the jockeying for Arctic sovereignty would be framed and the market-oriented influences of non-Arctic states such as China would be limited. The Arctic ocean needs to be protected through sustainable agreements in order to survive. Melting ices and permafrost should not be an indicator of increased natural exploitation but rather to ensure that the region remains stable for decades and centuries. Environmental concerns have resulted in a regime-less Arctic region, where national interests are not compatible with a functional legal regime as to the definitions of Krasner (1983) and Young (1986). The establishment of the Arctic council marked the starting point for regime-building in the Arctic but the last decades of transnational policymaking have resulted in fragmentation and more focus on self-interests rather than the strengthening of cooperative solutions. It seems that the Arctic will remain a region built on soft law regulations. As long as there are no sovereign governing bodies of the Arctic, international law will succeed in advance for a comprehensive legal Arctic treaty. Through the Arctic Council and the AEPS, rules of sovereignty cracks into practices of power, which puts the faith of Arctic regime-building in the hands of the states.

In line with above reasoning and relinked to the third research question, Arctic or blue governance is hard to grasp and there does not exist any clear guidelines regarding how to obtain viable policy structures. The fragile environment of the region and its massive ocean makes it difficult for actors to outline what specific sector that provides the highest return. Since 2012 and the Rio+20-meeting, the eight Arctic nations have managed marine or ‘blue’ environmental concerns in various ways. Importantly, it seems that the “Arctic five” – Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the US – are keener to take a leading role in the Arctic marine development. Au contraire, Finland, Iceland and Sweden does almost exclusively follow the

directives of the Arctic council. This may best be explained by the fact that none of these three have essential interests in the Arctic Ocean. Of course, all actors have beneficial claims regarding fisheries and natural resources, but the Arctic five's geographic and economic positions make them more accountable in the endeavours to reverse a negative aquatic development and to promote aspects of blue governance. The results show that there is a slightly positive development regarding environmental protection and the Arctic countries do in fact highlight the maritime situation as an important factor in order to achieve certain geopolitics in the region. But the results are also ambiguous. While Russia, USA and Norway all have strong incentives to exploit and invest in oil and gas in the Arctic, countries like Sweden and Finland strongly endorses marine restraint and to follow aspects of the Blue Economy. At the same time Denmark and Canada advocates for more investments in the shipping industry and to promote cooperative measures even further. Thus, the idea of Blue governance in the Arctic is fragmented. As there does not exist any clear regulations on how to manage the Arctic aquatic life nor how Arctic cooperation is to be structured, 'blue' concerns are unmanageable at this point. Arctic transnational environmental collaboration may be divided into two different groups where the first – including Russia, the US and to some extent Canada - focuses on security and military activities whilst the other group – including Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden - seeks to solve environmental solutions through scientific solutions and domestic regulations. However, I argue that national interest – which shapes normative aspects of cooperation – shall further be incused by the concept of Blue governance in order to strengthen the sustainable development. Arctic governance would benefit on not only problematizing domestic Arctic ambitions or national self-interest, but also – in line with Ostrom (2004) - incorporate aspects of collective decision-making concerning marine issues and cooperation through multiple levels of policymaking. In fact, all Arctic states shares the same interest in the Arctic Ocean and if future Arctic governance is to be successful all must promote marine strategies and regulations, if not at least to increase the own probabilities to secure natural resource in the long term. Also, if institutions, epistemic communities and NGOs seeks to promote 'blue' aspects of cooperation and development, the Arctic regime has the potential to be a forerunner in the fight against climate changes. To overcome national interests and to generate more sustainable norms, rules and blue solutions concerning Arctic environmental governance, there must occur some form of 'geopolitical awakening' concerning the blue collective action problem. Thus, in accordance with Scholte (2011) global spheres – in this case the Arctic regime– are in need of governance regulations to foster sustainable policy solutions. Also, the Arctic states should be held accountable for their strategies and actions on

common pool resources. In line with Peters (2012), Arctic states and institutions shall be aware of the effects that their policy implementation has on the global society as a whole and regional regime in particular, in order to preserve the environment and enhance transnational cooperation. Both formal and informal processes of collective decision-making shall be incused by new normative aspects which promotes and secures the sustainability of the Arctic Ocean. If or when national Arctic interests' changes, we will see new prospects of norm creation in the region, which hopefully by time will result in a revised and more up-to-date legal Arctic regime, based on the 'blue' premises of the Arctic eight.

Since 2012, it is clear that superpowers such as the US and Russia have started to increase their efforts in order to win the race for Arctic's natural resources and transit routes. Environmental protection is still crucial for all Arctic nations but as long as more money is being spent on new ports, airports, mines and drilling facilities in the Arctic Ocean, marine environmental improvements are not in sight (WWF, 2018). The Arctic Council's function as a uniting force may work at this time, but in the long run – when national self-interests will succeed collective decision-making procedures – there might be a need for a new regime-leader. As a suggestion, a new Arctic regime - based on a combination of soft law and hard law regulations - may have the potential to solve complex matters such as territorial claims, natural exploitation and marine pollution. By giving states and international actors binding responsibilities and rights concerning environmental protection, aspects of cooperation and governing of the Arctic region would potentially improve. An Arctic treaty would be the first step to establish consensus regarding sustainable development. However, levels of blue governance in the Arctic do exist and it is possible to mark a 'greening' or 'blueing' trend in the Arctic in which an acceptance towards such norms are being more conventional. In order to manage Arctic collective action problems – and in line with governance theory (Ostrom, 2004) - all actors must contribute to make a difference. Blue concerns of the Arctic are not a problem for any single country nor continent but is rather a common threat to our survival. Climate changes leads to higher temperatures which leads to melting polar ices, melting polar ices lead to exploitation of natural resources and the extinction of species and so on. Thereby, it is crucial that aspects of blue governance are implemented within national, regional and institutional strategies and regulations concerning the Arctic. The Arctic blue will not heal itself and heavy efforts are needed to reduce the pace of the current environmental decay.

9. Conclusion

The Arctic is in fact the earth's last frontier and one of the least humanly affected places on earth. However, the maritime situation in the Arctic is becoming more untenable and this study suggests that all types of actors needs to implement coherent frameworks which seeks to curb the current malign environmental development. Initially, this dissertation set out to investigate whether there has been a shift in how Arctic national strategies are constituted or not since the introduction of the concept 'Blue Economy' in 2012 as well as examining Arctic regime-type development and how marine environmental concerns are managed by the Arctic states. More, the study intended to the fill the theoretical gap concerning blue economy and transnational cooperation by developing the concept 'Blue governance'. Using CTA, the study found clear evidences on that Arctic national strategies are more environmentally friendly than before the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development or the Rio+20-meeting. The Arctic nations outlines greater guidelines to handle the effects of current and upcoming climate changes. However, the results also highlight a maritime strategic development affected by an increased level of military activity in the Arctic. Thus, a form of arms race is taking shape and the chase for Arctic natural resources is in the offing. The results note that Arctic regimes are more or less solely constructed by soft law regulations and that Arctic regime-building of today inevitably is incused by environmental issues such as melting sea ices, marine litter and ocean acidification. In order to efficiently adapt to climate changes, this study discusses potential benefits of establishing an Artic treaty based on a mixed setup of soft and hard law regulations. This said, the results need further confirmation through data with even better coverage and variations in order to receive more generalizable findings. In that sense, future research should start by elaborating on the impact of other tangible topics on the Arctic as well as dealing with the construction of domestic legislation and how they differ and affects each other. Future research could also gain from focusing on only a few transnational, institutional or intergovernmental actors identified in the material. To conclude, the Arctic region seems to be in a transit towards more sustainable policy procedures in which both international and regional regimes are incused by environmental concerns. Parallelly, there is an upsurge of military activity in the High North, expanding from both the West and the East. That being said, it is not a question of whether there will be conflicting territorially disputes concerning the Arctic flora and fauna but rather about when and how.

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Appendix A

Description of organizations represented in document analysis

Organization	Description
'The Arctic eight'	The eight countries with sovereignty over the lands within the Arctic circle constitute the members of the Council: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States.
The Arctic Council	A high-level intergovernmental forum which addresses issues faced by the Arctic governments and the indigenous people of the Arctic.
PAME	The Protection of Arctic Marine Environment working group. Operates across the domains of Arctic shipping, maritime pollutions, ecosystem approaches to management, marine protected areas, resource exploitation and development, and associations with the marine environment.
The European Union (EU)	A political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe.
The European Commission	The executive branch of the European Union.
The Arctic Economic Council (AEC)	An independent organization which facilitates Arctic business-to-business activities and responsible economic development through the sharing of best practises, technological solutions and standards.
The World Wildlife Fund (WWF)	The world's leading conservation organisation which develop and deliver solution that protect communities, wildlife and the places in which they render.
The United Nations (UN)	An intergovernmental organization which seeks to maintain and preserve international peace, security and prosperity as well as develop relations among nations and achieve international cooperation.
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 European and North American nations.
IASC	The International Arctic Science Committee is a non-governmental organization that is composed by various international science groups participating in Arctic science research.
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization. An agency of the UN specialized at leading international efforts to delete hunger and improve food security.

Appendix B

Summary of the documents from the document analysis

Title	Organization	Year
Report to Congress: Department of Defence Arctic Strategy	Department of Defence, United States of America	2019
Canada's Oceans Now: Arctic Ecosystems	Ministers of Fisheries and Oceans Canada	2019
Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Future, Our Heritage	Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Government of Canada	2009
Arctic and Northern Policy Framework	Government of Canada	2019
Sweden's strategy for the Arctic region	Regeringskansliet, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government Offices of Sweden	2011
The Changing Arctic Environment	the European Commission, EU	2020
The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture	FAO	2012
On the Basics of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the Period Until 2035	The Russian Federation State Policy, Kremlin Decree	2020
Arctic Region Policy	National Security Presidential Directive 66, NSPD-66, Washington.	2009
Norway's Arctic Policy: Creating Value, Managing resources, confronting climate change and fostering knowledge. Developments in the Arctic concern us all.	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2014
Norway's Arctic Strategy: Between geopolitics and social development	Norwegian Ministries	2017
Russia's Arctic Strategy: Arctic Narratives and Political Values	NATO, Stratcom	2018
Government Policy Regarding the Priorities In the Updated Arctic Strategy	Prime Minister's Office of Finland	2016
New Swedish Environmental policy for the Arctic	Ministry of the Environment and Energy, Sweden	2016
Russian Federation Policy for the Arctic to 2020	The Russian Federation	2008
Icelandic Chairmanship: Together Towards a Sustainable Arctic	The Arctic Council	2020
Statement of Principles and Practices for Arctic Data Management	International Arctic Science Committee	2013
Maritime Denmark: A global, maritime power Hub	The Ministry of industry, Business and Financial Affairs, Denmark	2018
National Strategy for the Arctic Region	the White House, Washington	2013

Title	Organization	Year
Blue Economy Concept Paper	United Nations	2014
Getting it right in a new ocean: Bringing Sustainable Blue Economy Principles to the Arctic	WWF Arctic Programme	2018
How we work: The Arctic	WWF Arctic Programme	2020
State of the Arctic Strategies and Policies	Arctic Council, Arctic Yearbook	2012
The Strength of Flexibility: The Arctic Council in the Arctic Norm-Setting Process	Arctic Council, Arctic Yearbook	2016
Redefining Arctic Security	Arctic Council, Arctic Yearbook	2019
The Arctic Economic Council's Working Groups	Arctic Economic Council	2020
Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020	Kingdom of Denmark	2011
New Building Blocks in the North: the next Step in the Norwegian Government's High North Strategy	Regjeringen, Government of Norway	2009
Arctic Ocean Conference	Ilulisat Declaration	2008
Arctic Council: navigating global change	European Parliament	2015
About PAME	The Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group	2020
A Parliamentary Resolution on Iceland's Arctic Policy	Parliament of Iceland	2011
Iceland's Chairmanship of the Arctic Council 2019-2021	Government of Iceland	2019
Canadian Arctic and Northern Policy Framework	Government of Canada	2019