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**TITLE**

**European cooperation: Poland as strategic link to ensure Arctic governance**

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29 **ABSTRACT**

30

31 Although the Arctic remains one of the most vulnerable ecosystems around the world,  
 32 its governance faces today its greatest challenges, and it is the "European cooperation",  
 33 which requires not only the common agreement of the member states, but also a good  
 34 lobby for the influence of the world powers. First of all, an agreement among the  
 35 member states of the European Union strengthens the identity of each member state and  
 36 its own visions of governance in order to arrive at this new stage of integral collective  
 37 governance. Secondly, the influence of third states, such as the United States, Russia  
 38 and China in its global geopolitical relations with each of the member states of the  
 39 European Union, poses a threat to full collective governance. In this moment we need to  
 40 focus on the importance of international geopolitical relations aiming at full cooperation  
 41 in the European Union which will enable collective governance of Arctic. In this regard,  
 42 the analysis goes on to take the example of Poland and its articulating role for European  
 43 cooperation in the prevention and precaution of conflicts with other states and thus work  
 44 together towards Arctic governance. Would Poland contribute to the requirements of  
 45 European cooperation to ensure the more effective Arctic governance?

46 **Keywords:** European cooperation; Poland; strategic link; Arctic governance.

47

48 **1. INTRODUCTION**

49

50 The Arctic area involves the various riparian territories and "constitutes the scenario of  
 51 strategic importance, both from an economic, political and military point of view"  
 52 (Grenoble École de management, 2013), this not only for these riparian territories but  
 53 for all of the world's political and economic powers of the 21st century, because it is  
 54 one of the most vulnerable ecosystems around the world (WWF-Global. *Arctic climate*  
 55 *change*, 2018).

56 In the same way, the environment in the Arctic region is now changing significantly  
 57 due to increased air, water temperature and others changes. Such changes have global  
 58 and regional implications including extreme weather, sea level change, coastal erosion,  
 59 natural hazards and changes in the ecosystem (INTAROS , 2016). To illustrate, *the*  
 60 *timing of the sea ice retreat is becoming earlier, and it may induce an altered timing of*  
 61 *primary production with other biological phenology, but its impact against the*  
 62 *population is high* (Marie Maekakuchi, and others , 2017).

63 In other hand, the decrease of Arctic sea ice is attributed to the effects of "global  
 64 warming" (National Academy of Sciences, 1977, p.4). Although global surface air-  
 65 temperature is predicted to increase with an average of 2-3°C (Yun Gao, XiangGao,  
 66 Xiaohua Zhang , 2017, p.1), *it is said that the surface air-temperature in the Arctic will*  
 67 *rise as much as 4-12°C. In other words, warming in the Arctic will proceed more than*  
 68 *twice as fast as the global average* (Takeshi Kawano, 2018). What happens when Arctic  
 69 sea ice disappears? And what rules should we follow? To have the answers we need to  
 70 understand the International geopolitical context, because it will influent to international  
 71 collaboration and then in Arctic governance.

72 Correspondingly, about the international collaboration it starts by pursuing international  
 73 cooperative and collaborative research ( as PACES, APPOSITE, ASOF, CMIP, DBO,  
 74 ESSAS, FAMOS, IPCC, IABP, IASC, IASOA, PAG, PCPI, RACArctic, WCRP) with  
 75 all the Arctic governance actors, and making strategic use of their research (Institute of  
 76 Arctic Climate and Environment Research , 2017).

77 What about the actors in Arctic governance? Arctic governance is the result of influence  
 78 of the eight Arctic nations (The Ottawa Declaration named eight members of the Arctic

79 Council: Canada, Russia, Norway, Denmark -Denmark; representing Greenland and  
80 Faroe Islands-, Iceland, the United States, Sweden and Finland), other influential  
81 countries such as China and European Union countries, the intergovernmental structures  
82 and International Organizations, NGOs, indigenous people, and academic researchers.

83 The case of Poland is a good example with regard to the regional and global geopolitics  
84 of the European Union.

85 This country, although it may contribute less to the Defense Fund launched by the  
86 European Union on 22 June 2017 ([https://sansapriori.net/2017/07/09/1994-initiative-  
87 des-trois-mers-trump-soutient-le-projet-a-varsovie/](https://sansapriori.net/2017/07/09/1994-initiative-des-trois-mers-trump-soutient-le-projet-a-varsovie/) ), is one of the four European  
88 NATO countries that achieved the goal of spending more than 2% of its GDP (gross  
89 domestic product) on the military, as required by the US in 2014 (Reiterated by the  
90 Atlantic Alliance at the Newport Summit in Wales in September 2014). It is not a  
91 coincidence that during his official visit to Poland on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 President Donald  
92 Trump acknowledged this Baltic country as the "faithful ally of NATO and one of  
93 America's closest friends". Is it therefore a country that meets the requirements of  
94 European defense mandates or does it rather seek to build a strategic position in  
95 European cooperation including the maritime domain? The Three Seas Initiative,  
96 spearheaded by Poland and concerning the countries of the Visegrad Group (Poland,  
97 Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary) to Baltic Sea, Adriatic Sea and Black Sea,  
98 highlights the need for full European cooperation. These are surely unavoidable  
99 questions for the current regional geopolitics, Central Europe and its relations with its  
100 big neighbors.

101

## 102 **2. ARCTIC COOPERATION, A COMPLEX NETWORK**

103

104 For the conservation of the Arctic, the active participation of all states and all actors is  
105 necessary because the effects of their deterioration affect everyone.

106 However, the States most concerned are those that have a coastline in the Arctic. In this  
107 way they have created the Arctic Council ([http://www.arctic-  
108 council.org/index.php/en/about-us/member-states](http://www.arctic-council.org/index.php/en/about-us/member-states)). The Arctic Council is a high-level  
109 intergovernmental forum which addresses issues faced by the Arctic governments and  
110 people living in the Arctic region (with the AEPS, as first step in 1991).

111 We need to highlight that the Arctic cooperation and policy are partially – but not  
112 exclusively - coordinated via the Arctic Council. There are several other stakeholders  
113 from different sectors. One of them is the indigenous people; specifically the Permanent  
114 participants are these six indigenous groups: Inuit Circumpolar Council – ICC (Founded  
115 in 1977 Ref: <http://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/>), Gwich'in Council International – GCI  
116 (it was established as a non-profit organization in 1999 by the Gwich'in Tribal Council  
117 in Inuvik, Ref: [https://arctic-council.org/index.php/en/about-us/permanent-  
118 participants/gci](https://arctic-council.org/index.php/en/about-us/permanent-participants/gci)), Aleut International Association – AIA ([https://www.aleut-  
119 international.org/about/](https://www.aleut-international.org/about/)), Saami Council (Since 1956, the Saami Council is a voluntary  
120 Saami organization, <http://www.saamicouncil.net/en/about-saami-council/> ), Arctic  
121 Athabaskan Council – AAC  
122 ([https://web.archive.org/web/20110224190430/http://www.arcticathabaskancouncil.co  
123 m/aboutus](https://web.archive.org/web/20110224190430/http://www.arcticathabaskancouncil.com/aboutus)), and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North – RAIPON  
124 (since 1990, it evaluated two more times in 1993 and in 1999 Ref:  
125 <http://raipon.info/activity/>).

126 The Arctic policies are conducted through agencies and national strategies of the eight  
127 Arctic nations, but also by other countries like China and EU Member States. That is

128 why the geopolitics among these countries is one of the most important links to ensure  
129 the cooperation to healthy Arctic governance.

130 But also local indigenous people, NGOs and academic researchers play an important  
131 role when it comes to Arctic policies. All of them contribute with the different  
132 intergovernmental structures and International Organizations like the United Nations  
133 and NATO in the same way to the outcomes of Arctic governance.

134

### 135 **3. EUROPEAN COOPERATION TO GUARANTEE THE ARCTIC** 136 **GOVERNANCE**

137

138 The practice of the Arctic governance is based on the following principles: peace,  
139 sovereignty and defense, resource development, shipping routes and environmental  
140 protection. With regard to all of them, cooperation is the best mean to achieve the  
141 collective goals (Barnett, M. & Sikkink K, 2010, p. 62). To know more about the Arctic  
142 Ocean and sea ice, we need new technology and innovation (GRENE , 2011), but to  
143 guarantee the Arctic governance we need the cooperation of all States.

144 In this context, the European Union's relationship with other countries as China, Russia,  
145 and the United States is the central point.

146 However, the articulation and implementation of these principles requires a Common  
147 Security and Defense Policy – CSDP (Ref: Fact Sheet 6.1.1 on the foreign policy of the  
148 European Union, Title V) as an integral part of the European Union's – EU, Common  
149 Foreign and Security Policy – CFSP aims to strengthen the EU's role in the international  
150 management of military and civilian crises in a complementary and coordinated way  
151 with NATO (The 2016 EU Global Strategy sets the CSDP strategy, while the Lisbon  
152 Treaty provides for the institutional aspects and strengthens the role of the European  
153 Parliament. Reference: Official website of the European Parliament  
154 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu>).

155

### 156 **4. DISCUSSION**

157

#### 158 **4.1 Why is Poland important to ensure the European cooperation for** 159 **Arctic governance?**

160

161 For some time now, the world has witnessed the rise in strategic value that Poland is  
162 experiencing with regard to geopolitical programs such as Russia, China and the United  
163 States. Poland has been a member of the EU since 1 May 2004 (Ref:  
164 [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/poland\\_fr](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/poland_fr)) and  
165 it cooperates with all European defense initiatives, including maritime initiatives,  
166 focusing on its five foreign policy priorities: the security of the European Union, the  
167 resilience of states and societies in the eastern and southern neighborhood of the Union,  
168 development of a coordinated conflict strategy, regional cooperation orders and global  
169 governance in the 21st century (Jérôme LEGRAND , 2017, p.3).

170 In this sense, European foreign policy is manifested through the conclusions of the  
171 European Council of 22 and 23 June 2017, notably on security and defense, foreign  
172 affairs, climate change, the economy, trade and migration (European Council meetings  
173 of 22 and 23 June 2017), all in a spirit of mutual cooperation, one of the critical nodes  
174 in relation to the nature of the cooperation that can be envisaged in this context.

175 Rightly, EU member states have the opportunity to come together in small groups in  
176 order to establish a so-called enhanced cooperation in a number of areas, and it is with  
177 the Lisbon Treaty that this type of cooperation opens up to the field of defense (As

178 defined in Article I-44 of the Treaty on European Union, enhanced cooperation allows  
179 Member States wishing to deepen their cooperation in the non-exclusive fields of  
180 competence of the Union to do so within the framework of the Community institutions.  
181 Enhanced cooperation is thus a way of differentiating the pace of participation of the  
182 Member States in the deepening of the European Union in line with the arts. 43-45  
183 TEU, arts. 326-334 TFEU).

184 Alongside multinational forces (Eurocorps, Eurofor) there is a "permanent structured  
185 cooperation" reserved for the states whose defense efforts are the most important within  
186 the framework of the Union, Member States are brought together based on the criterion  
187 of the military capabilities necessary to fulfill "more demanding"  
188 (<https://www.senat.fr/rap/r04-340/r04-340.html>) mission under the scope of the  
189 European Defense Agency. In addition to that, the Council of the Union may entrust a  
190 military mission to a group of member states if they wish.

191 The question is what kind of cooperation that the EU wants to develop in order to  
192 guarantee European governance, and what types of cooperation can its members find in  
193 their international relations with the East (China) and the West (United States)?

194 In this regard, Poland remains a good example of analysis with its Three Seas Initiative  
195 (I3M), one of the main points of its foreign policy. During a meeting between Polish  
196 president Andrzej Duda and the Foreign Affairs Advisers of the Three Seas countries on  
197 May 4<sup>th</sup> 2017 in Warsaw, it was communicated that the initiative already advanced in its  
198 cooperation objectives (the 3 countries are: Pologne, Hongrie, Czech Republic and  
199 Slovakia). Situated "between the energy and military pressure of Moscow in the east  
200 and the economic and ideological pressure of Brussels, Berlin and Paris in the west,  
201 Poland, accompanied by eleven other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, takes  
202 part the Three Seas Initiative (Baltic Sea, Adriatic Sea and Black Sea) to strengthen  
203 regional cooperation and infrastructure in the field of transport, telecommunications,  
204 energy and the environment" (Olivier BAULT Ref: <https://visegradpost.com/fr/le-13-mai-2017>). Can this kind of example contribute to build a better European cooperation  
206 in Arctic Governance? And which threats and challenges are there for Europe?

207 The discussion should focus on common challenges to strengthen economic and  
208 political cooperation, and especially energy cooperation, inside the European Union, but  
209 at the same time one must consider the relationship between the European Union and  
210 other countries that are influential in Arctic governance, such as USA, Russia, and  
211 China.

212 At this point, a very important task is to take advantage of the interest that the US,  
213 Russia and China have with Poland to ensure good cooperation between these countries  
214 and the European Union with the aim of fostering Arctic governance.

215 How can relations between Poland and the United States, or Russia, or China,  
216 contribute to the governance of the Arctic?

217

## 218 **4.2 How interesting is Poland for the USA, Russia and China?**

219

220 Faced with the demands and great challenges of the European reality, namely  
221 emigration (*for this analysis the meaning of migration alludes to nationals from Central*  
222 *European countries to other countries, only refugees from the Middle East and Africa to*  
223 *the southern countries of the European Union), as well as efforts to promote the*  
224 *plurality of energy sources, the United States turns its eyes towards this side of the*  
225 *Baltic to offer its support to the project of the Three Seas. US President Donald Trump*  
226 *said in Warsaw "America is looking forward to expanding our partnership with you... ..*  
227 *we are committed to securing your access to other sources of energy so that Poland and*

228 *its neighbors never again be held hostage to a single energy supplier*", referring to  
229 Russia's former gas monopoly (Ref: posted on-line, on July 8, 2017, at newspaper:  
230 [https://visegradpost.com/fr/le 8 juillet 2017](https://visegradpost.com/fr/le-8-juillet-2017)) and highlighting the US's ambition to  
231 exploit shale gas in the region, sharing the hit list with Russia and China.

232 Russia enjoys dual access to the Baltic Sea (Russia's dual access to the Baltic Sea is to  
233 the north with the port terminals in the St. Petersburg region and to the southeast with  
234 the enclave of Kaliningrad) and has an economic particularly concerning oil reserves  
235 and the possible exploitation of gas in the region. Thus, Russia has also a military  
236 interest in the Arctic region, particularly in function of "*d'une base russe sur la*  
237 *Baltique et (des routes en Arctique) dont l'importance stratégique s'est accrue depuis la*  
238 *perte par Moscou des pays Baltés, perte qui a entraîné pour la flotte russe de la*  
239 *Baltique la fermeture de six bases militaires*" (Aymeric CHAUPRADE, 2012 ), and  
240 more of that, the oil exploitation intentions are present.

241 Russia, with all its historical evolution of military power and global diplomatic presence  
242 (Edgar MORIN , 1983), which in this first decade of the twenty-first century has already  
243 arrived to raise great geopolitical challenges after the cold war fixes its presence while  
244 delimiting or modifying the road map of the international community.

245 China, being already in the scenario of European geopolitical failures, proposes a  
246 "strategic" economic partnership with Poland (<http://www.lahautemer.org/appel/>),  
247 viewing it as "the gateway to China in Europe". In particular, Chinese President Xi  
248 Jinping sees Poland as a "crossroad" of its geostrategic expansion pattern through the  
249 new Silk Road, which China seeks to revive to assert its economic and political  
250 hegemony over the Eurasian space (Ref: Justine CANONNE, published in  
251 [https://www.scienceshumaines.com/vers-une-nouvelle-route-de-la-soie\\_fr\\_38303.html](https://www.scienceshumaines.com/vers-une-nouvelle-route-de-la-soie_fr_38303.html)).

252

## 253 5. CONCLUSION

254

255 The best way to protect the Arctic is with a common objective, and cooperation among  
256 all countries. To know more about the Arctic Ocean and sea ice, we need new  
257 technology, innovation and participation of all the people.

258 As supported by Catherine Chabaud "only shared, transparent and democratic  
259 international governance will safeguard and sustainably manage the wealth of this  
260 unique common good".

261 With its Three Seas Initiative (I3M), Poland remains a good example of analysis  
262 concerning the contribution to European cooperation, so it is an important step to ensure  
263 the Arctic cooperation among all actors. The relations between the European Union and  
264 USA, Russia and China are a big opportunity to guarantee the Arctic cooperation. In  
265 geopolitics, the European Union can ask these three special countries for help regarding  
266 Arctic conservation in exchange for better commercial terms.

267 It is becoming more and more common for the participants from China, the United  
268 States and Russia to take part in European regional negotiations and, with some groups  
269 from the Member States more than with others, drawing our attention to the question  
270 whether China, the United States and Russia are betting on the break-up of the  
271 European Union. This is why, in order to avoid a Brexit with Polish *touche* (polestix), or  
272 a possible geopolitical polarization of the EU, it must set common objectives with all its  
273 members. It is essential to find the way to articulate, in a more structural way, a genuine  
274 full cooperation of the Member States of the European Union.

275 Finally, an integrated Pan-Arctic cooperation system is required to address  
276 environmental and climate change challenges, but also to ensure Arctic governance.

277

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279

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