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## EUROPEAN UNION ECOLOGICAL SECURITY POLICY TOWARDS THE ARCTIC

### Introduction

The development of civilization is one of the causes of the ecological problem. In turn, the harmony and the limitations of natural resources define the specifics of its security. As early as the 1970s attention was drawn to the threats of globalization, in hopes of prompting states to closer cooperation to find solutions. The actions undertaken in the international arena by these countries were to be a prerequisite for a more permanent coexistence and even reconciliation between the feuding blocs. By the end of the 1980s, it was difficult to notice the effects of international cooperation on issues such as the nuclear threat, the depletion of natural resources and threats to the natural environment. The reasons for lack of success can be found in ideological antagonisms and strategic rivalry between the superpowers<sup>1</sup>. When the concept of globalization developed in the early 1990s, it was expected that the international community would begin to work together, thereby controlling or limiting the effects of environmental problems. That has not happened, which in turn has caused the global ecosystem to continue to deteriorate. The reasons for the failure should be seen as a problem in the international environment. In this context, the Arctic region is important due to the changes taking place in the geographical environment in this part of the world. It should be noted that the entire Arctic region is going through profound transformation, caused by both climate change and globalization. In the face of threats to the environment, which the international community must confront, it is interesting to approach this problem in terms of international relations. The article analyzes the problem of ecological security in the Arctic from the perspective of the European Union. The aim of the study is to answer the question: in the near future with what challenges must the international community deal with in governing the Arctic? This paper consists of three parts analyzing the European Union's efforts to protect the environment of the Arctic region and discusses the most important documents in which the EU has out-

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<sup>1</sup> Zob. szerzej: R. Kuźniar, *Globalizacja, polityka i porządek międzynarodowy*, [in:] *Globalizacja a stosunki międzynarodowe*, eds. E. Halizak, R. Kuźniar, J. Symonides, Bydgoszcz-Warszawa 2004, p. 164-165.

lined its goals, priorities, possible modes of action, and international cooperation in the circum polar region.

### **Environmental security and the status of the Arctic**

Environmental safety is a relatively new but significant dimension of international security. Within the dynamism of international relations, the concept of safety, its scope and domain, is changing. Therefore, what do we mean in terms of security? As indicated by J. S. Nye, it can be identified as security, protection against something. In other words, security means an absence of threat and protection against the threat<sup>2</sup>. Traditionally, it has been identified with military and political issues, which was the result of tensions in East - West relations. This conflict so strongly influenced deliberations on ensuring national security that it ignored other kinds of threats such as environmental problems. The term environmental security is not clearly defined. In the literature of international relations, there is some discrepancy in its interpretation depending on the criterion adopted by the author. This is due to the fact that, along with the dynamics of international relations, the spatial extent of interest in security issues has changed as a result of the diverse nature of the threats and dependencies arising between them. As indicated by M. Pietraś, by understanding ecological security as a “state of social relations, including the content, forms and methods of organization of international relations, which not only reduces and eliminates environmental hazards, but also promotes positive action, enabling the realization of the value essential for the existence and development of nations and States”<sup>3</sup>. M. Ciszek defines it as “ecological liquidation or minimizing threats to health and life, the source of which is the environment”<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, it could be treated as a permanent and continuous process aimed at achieving the desired ecological status, securing a peaceful and healthy existence of all elements of the ecosystem, using various means consistent with the principles of the internal coexistence of the state and the international community<sup>5</sup>. The advantage of this approach is to highlight the efforts of the international community, leading to the avoidance of any threat. The selected definitions do not cover the complexity of the problem, but allow us to focus on the global nature of the environmental problem. Its essence is the existence of threats both at local, regional and global levels<sup>6</sup>. This stems from a situation where the whole human population has become an “internally integrated living species in the global ecosystem. Although the existence of every person on Earth occurs in a specific and local ecosystem and its existence is

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<sup>2</sup> J. Nye, *Neorealism and neoliberalism*, „World Politics” 1988, vol. 40, p. 235-251.

<sup>3</sup> M. Pietraś, *Bezpieczeństwo ekologiczne w Europie. Studium politologiczne*, Lublin, p 85.

<sup>4</sup> M. Ciszek, *Bezpieczeństwo ekologiczne i zrównoważony rozwój w aspekcie Strategii Bezpieczeństwa Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, „Studia Ecologiae et Bioethicae” no 10(2012)1, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>6</sup> J. Czaputowicz, *Bezpieczeństwo w teoriach stosunków międzynarodowych*, [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe, teoria i praktyka*, ed. K. Żukrowska, Warszawa 2006, p. 75-76.

conditional upon to the integrity of the global system”<sup>7</sup>. From this perspective the matter of environmental protection of the Arctic region is interesting. This is due to its unique, highly sensitive ecosystem which attracts entities from around the world. We can talk about the activities of people, countries, international organizations or multinational corporations. However, none of them is free of liability for the consequences of activities in the Arctic. The fact that there are no international regulations<sup>8</sup> contributes to fueling conflict in this crucial area<sup>9</sup>. Regions located more than 200 nautical miles from the coast of Arctic countries are considered to be international waters and international seabed. However Arctic states arrogate to themselves the right to this territory, trying to facilitate fuel corporations to start oil extraction projects in the Arctic Ocean. It should be noted that extremely low temperatures, the threat of passing icebergs, poor visibility and the distance from human settlements greatly increase the risk of an environmental disaster. Given the potential financial benefits resulting from the extraction of oil in the Arctic, environmental security issues go by the wayside, with the possibility of destroying a unique ecosystem and its dependent local communities. The Arctic is an area known for its harsh climate. However, for several decades the air temperature has been increasing, turning landscapes. As explained by scientific research, the Polar Regions warm the fastest in the whole world. While the average rise in temperature since the beginning of the industrial revolution on a global scale amounted to about 0.9°C, in the Arctic, this figure was twice as high. Forecasts indicate that in the future, the increase in temperature may be further accelerated, and according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) until the end of the century could rise by 2–9°C<sup>10</sup>

### European Union development interests of Arctic area

The European Union became interested in Arctic affairs rather late, but it seems to be the right institution to "contribute to improving the situation in the Arctic region, because for many years it remained a world leader in promoting ambitious climate policy”<sup>11</sup>. The reasons for this interest in the Arctic was stated by Ferrero-Waldner, former EU Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighborhood Policy in 2008: The Arctic is a unique and vulnerable region located in the immediate vicinity of

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<sup>7</sup> T. Klementewicz, *Wojny klimatyczne. Niesprawność w relacjach gospodarka – przyroda: ochrona globalnego ekosystemu*, [in:] *Geopolityka trwałego rozwoju. Ewolucja cywilizacji państwa w trakcie dziejotwórczych kryzysów*, Warszawa 2013, p. 376.

J. Symonides, *Status prawny i roszczenia do Arktyki oraz Bieguna Północnego*, „Państwo i Prawo” No 1/2008, p. 31-45.

<sup>9</sup> K. Kubiak, *Interesy i spory państw w Arktyce*, Wrocław 2009.

<sup>10</sup> IPCC, *Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science basis. Summary for Policymakers*, <http://climatechange2013.org> [18.04.2015].

<sup>11</sup> K. Doświad-Borysiak, *Wielopoziomowe zarządzanie a zmiany klimatu w regionie arktycznym*, [in:] *Arktyka na początku XXI wieku. Między współpracą a rywalizacją*, ed. M. Łuszczuk, Lublin 2013, p. 187.

Europe. Its evolution will have significant repercussions on the life of the next generations of European citizens. Enhancing European Union cooperation with the Arctic will open new prospects for relations with the Arctic states. The EU is ready to work with them to increase stability, improve Arctic multilateral governance through existing legal provisions, as well as to keep the right balance between the priority goal of preserving the environment, and the need for sustainable use of natural resources. In this statement Ferrero-Waldner indicated that the mandate of the EU is to address issues related to the Arctic because of Sweden, Finland, Denmark, EU member located partly in the Arctic, as well as the other Nordic countries, Norway and Iceland, associated with it through the European Economic Area. Furthermore, Canada, Russia and the United States are strategic partners of the EU.

The European Parliament expressed deep concern over the consequences posed by climate change on the lives of the indigenous peoples of the Arctic for the first time on October 9, 2008. It also addressed the problem of endangered fauna and flora, both in terms of general environmental aspects (melting ice caps and permafrost, rising sea levels and flooding) and the natural habitat (the retreating ice cap pose problems for polar bears' and other animals feeding habits). Parliament stressed that all international decisions on the Arctic should take into account the interests of the peoples of this region and the position of Arctic states. Thus considered, the time of diagnosis has passed and it is time for action<sup>12</sup>. The European Parliament urged the European Commission to propose suitable subjects and joint working procedures for the EU and the Arctic countries in the fields of climate change, sustainable development, energy security and safety at sea.

It should be emphasized that the EU supports rather than competes with the Arctic Council on its activities in the international arena. The Parliament stressed that it is the most important institution that strives to maintain the Arctic as a region of low tension open to international research cooperation and also takes into account possibilities for the full development of the region's potential as a future energy supplier, while maintaining environmental sustainability. However, it also is recognized as disturbing for continuing the race for natural resources in the Arctic region, which may lead to security threats for the EU and overall international instability.

Therefore, the Parliament called on the Commission to play an active role in the Arctic and requested that the first manifestation should be at least observer status in the Arctic Council, and the establishment of a specialized unit for the Arctic. He suggested that the Commission should be prepared to pursue the opening of international negotiations designed to lead to the adoption of an international treaty to protect the Arctic, similar to the Antarctic Treaty, as supplemented by the Madrid Protocol signed in 1991, but respecting the fundamental differences represented by the populated nature of the Arctic and the resulting rights and needs of the peoples and countries of the Arc-

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<sup>12</sup> European Parliament, *European Parliament resolution of 9 October 2008 on Arctic governance*, No P6\_TA(2008)0474, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2008-0474&language=EN>. [20.04.2015].

tic region. He stated that the beginning of such a treaty could include at least the unpopulated area in the middle of the Arctic Ocean, to which no party lays claim<sup>13</sup>.

In response to the position of the European Parliament on November 20, the European Commission adopted the Communication 'The European Union and the Arctic region'<sup>14</sup>, in which it presented the effects of climate change and human activities in the Arctic. It identifies EU interests and the objectives of the policy it is pursuing and proposes systematic and coordinated action in response to the rapidly emerging challenges. In this way, the EU Communication has made a step towards the Arctic policy and has significantly contributed to the implementation of the integrated sea policy. This Communication highlights the close links between the European Union and the Arctic. It identifies three main policy objectives: protecting and preserving the Arctic in unison with its population; promoting sustainable use of resources; contributing to enhanced Arctic multilateral governance<sup>15</sup>.

On January 20, 2011 the European Union took further action in this regard by adopting a Resolution on a sustainable EU policy for the Far North<sup>16</sup>. Parliament agreed that the EU, like other developed parts of the world, greatly contributed to climate change and hence bears responsibility for it. Therefore, it should play a leading role in the fight against this phenomenon. European Parliament acknowledges that the best protection for the Arctic is a long-term and ambitious agreement on climate change. In addition, due to the rapid warming of the Arctic, it proposes the elaboration of additional measures to limit the effects of warming in this area. Furthermore, it stresses the important role the EU and the circumpolar countries have to play in the reduction of pollution which enters the Arctic region as a result of, among other things, long-range transport and shipping. He noted that climate change in the Arctic will have the impact on coastal regions in Europe and other parts of the world and on climate-dependent sectors such as agriculture and fisheries, renewable energy, reindeer herding, hunting, tourism and transport.

The European Union is aware of the increasing interest in the exploitation of resources. That is why in this context, it points to the need for a broad comprehensive

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<sup>13</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>14</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – The European Union and the arctic region, No COM/2008/0763 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52008DC0763> [10.05.2015].

<sup>15</sup> See: *Arktyka zasługuje na uwagę Unii Europejskiej – pierwszy krok w kierunku polityki UE wobec Arktyki*, Brussels 20.11.2008, [https://www.google.pl/search?q=Arktyka+zas%C5%82uguje+na+uwag%C4%99+Unii+Europejskiej+%E2%80%93+pierwszy+krok+w+kierunku+polityki+UE+wobec+Arktyki&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws\\_rd=cr&ei=EeP8VszbFsXa6ASNhriYAw](https://www.google.pl/search?q=Arktyka+zas%C5%82uguje+na+uwag%C4%99+Unii+Europejskiej+%E2%80%93+pierwszy+krok+w+kierunku+polityki+UE+wobec+Arktyki&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws_rd=cr&ei=EeP8VszbFsXa6ASNhriYAw) [10.03.2015]. M. Tomala, *Wymiar Północny Unii Europejskiej wobec problemów Arktyki*, [in:] *Arktyka na początku XXI wieku. Między współpracą a rywalizacją*, ed. M. Łuszczuk, Lublin 2013, p. 557-572.

<sup>16</sup> European Parliament, *European Parliament resolution of 20 January 2011 on a sustainable EU policy for the High North*, No P7\_TA(2011)0024, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0024+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>. [30.04.2015].

ecosystem approach, that will effectively address climate related challenges in the Arctic: shipping, environmental hazards and contaminants, fisheries and other human activities. In no other area of climate change are they as visible as in the Arctic. Therefore, the Commission and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy dated June 26, 2012 presented a Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council for shaping the policy pursued by the European Union in the Arctic region: the progress achieved since 2008 and further action<sup>17</sup>. It presents arguments for increased EU engagement in Arctic issues. It should be noted that this has been done in view of the EU applying for permanent observer status in the Arctic Council in March 2012. Fast-paced changes in the region provide a strong argument for the EU's commitment to environmental protection and the fight against climate change. They require the involvement of many international entities and an increased investment in research carried out in the Arctic on climate change. The EU plays an important role in this regard in order to promote cooperation and challenges undertaken in the region, as well as in the most determined way increase efforts to fight against climate change by developing alternative energy sources, resource efficiency and research.

The activities of the European Union for the benefit of Arctic include the following:

- Counteract climate change;
- Study the Arctic environment;
- Invest in sustainable development in the North;
- Reduce uncertainty concerning future development and monitoring changes in the Arctic region;
- Ensure the safety of navigation and safety at sea.

On April 17, 2013, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) adopted an opinion on the EU Arctic policy in the context of the new global challenges in the region. He noted that the Arctic is undergoing profound changes that have a significant impact on global warming and melting ice caps. These factors influence the weather and environmental changes around the world. They affect the global economy, as the Arctic creates business opportunities in the region abundant in resources. Hence, there has been the increased interest in the Arctic area in international relations, which may also lead to geopolitical challenges in the near future. This is taken into account in the arguments mentioned by Economic and Social Committee, which called on the EU to develop a strategy towards the Arctic and a credible commitment to working with Arctic countries. This decision will allow it to participate as a reliable and constructive entity, and serve as a precursor to cooperation in the Arctic region. The EU should show its commitment in the affairs of the Arctic. The Committee stressed that empha-

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<sup>17</sup> European Commission, *High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs And Security Policy (2012) Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: progress since 2008 and next steps*, Brussels, June 26, [http://eeas.europa.eu/arctic\\_region/docs/join\\_2012\\_19.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/arctic_region/docs/join_2012_19.pdf). [20.05.2015].

sis should be placed on the northern part of the Arctic EU Member States and strengthen cooperation with Arctic countries, mainly from neighboring countries lying in Europe, including Greenland. It is necessary to focus European Union resources intended for the Arctic in one place or ensure their effective coordination, including the budget line of the EU's Arctic region to guarantee a reliable implementation of policies/EU Strategy for the Arctic<sup>18</sup>.

Currently, climate change and its effects have reached a point where almost no one can stop them<sup>19</sup>. Therefore, greater emphasis should be put on research into the behavior of the Arctic environment and the sustainable management of natural resources, as well as adjusting to the socio-economic effects of climate change. Research activities and results should be made public, and research should cover all aspects of an issue, it should be transparent and open to civil society and researchers from all EU countries.

The Committee expressed the opinion that it is important to ensure a balance between environmental protection and economic activities in the Arctic region. The EU should make determined efforts to help Arctic members achieve this balance, due to the particular sensitivity of this ecosystem. Activity in the Arctic should be in line with the highest international standards of sustainable development. Corporate social responsibility in this case is crucial, as in the case of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, which should act responsibly and with caution, especially in areas of outstanding natural beauty. The fisheries sector should also exhibit responsibility and care about ensuring the sustainable exploitation of deep-sea fish stocks based on EU rules for ocean fishing. The Committee supported a proposal presented by the Commission in 2008 to establish an EU Arctic Information Centre, which was also confirmed by the Council of Ministers in 2009<sup>20</sup>, and then by the European Parliament<sup>21</sup>. This center would be primarily responsible for providing information on the results of research and other activities related to cooperation in the Arctic region. This initiative is important, especially in terms of increasing transparency of the activities in this area. The European Commission opened the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland to carry out the task of preparatory work in the center. The information center

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<sup>18</sup> European Economic and Social Committee, *Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on EU Arctic Policy to address globally emerging interests in the region – a view of the civil society*, Brussels, April 17, No REX/371 – CES2179-2012\_00\_00\_TRA\_AC, <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.rex-opinions.26809>. [10.05.2015].

<sup>19</sup> Norsk Polarinstitutt, [www.npolar.no](http://www.npolar.no) [10.05.2015] oraz J. Matthews, *The Encyclopedia of Environmental Change*, Sage, Londyn 2013.

<sup>20</sup> Council of the European Union, *Council conclusions on Arctic issues*, No 2985th Foreign Affairs Council meeting, Brussels, 8 December 2009, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/111814.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/111814.pdf). [10.05.2015].

<sup>21</sup> European Parliament, *European Parliament resolution of 20 January 2011 on a sustainable EU policy for the High North*, No P7\_TA(2011)0024, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0024+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>. [30.04.2015].

could operate as a network with the participation of Arctic research bodies for communication between Europe and other parts of the world.

### **The European Union strategy towards the Arctic**

On March 12, 2014, the European Parliament submitted a resolution on the EU strategy for the Arctic<sup>22</sup>. The Arctic matters to the EU. Therefore, the European Parliament has commissioned the establishment of a mechanism to conduct regular exchanges and consultations on the Arctic with regional, local and indigenous stakeholders of its European part. Despite the negative decision on obtaining observer status in the Arctic Council, it recalled the status of active members of other important institutions, such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO), which addresses matters of the Arctic. It stressed the need to refer once again to EU activities in those areas, which relate to political, environmental or economic interests of the European Union and its Member States, in particular, the need to take into account the interests of the EU and European countries and regions of the Arctic in the use, change and development of programs or EU policies, which have or may have an impact on the Arctic. It considered it important to establish a binding instrument for the prevention of oil pollution. It also stressed the need for active EU involvement in the activities of all relevant working groups in the Arctic Council or appropriate regional or international organizations such as the IMO and the Convention on Biological Diversity. It reiterated EU support for the appointment of an EU Arctic Information Centre and urged the Commission to implement this project in the form of a network structure with a permanent office in Rovaniemi in the framework of preparatory action for a strategic evaluation of the environmental impact of development in the Arctic. The aim of this project is to obtain effective access to information.

Arctic dialogue should continue at all levels of communication, to assist the use of information and knowledge for the benefit for the sustainable nature of the Arctic. It appealed to the Commission to develop and present a visionary, coherent and sustainable socio-economic and environmental strategy for EU involvement in the Arctic, which would take into account the interests of the EU and European countries, as well as Arctic regions whenever policy on the Arctic would develop, change or update. In this regard, it stressed the importance of some priorities for the Arctic, such as well-functioning infrastructure and logistics, the development of the Arctic region, encouraging investments in knowledge about climate cooling and appropriate environmentally friendly technologies, as well as support for regional and rural entrepreneurship, particularly for small and medium companies. It appealed to the EU to take greater efforts to integrate these priorities for the Arctic into its “Europe 2020” strategy for

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<sup>22</sup> European Parliament, *European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2014 on the EU strategy for the Arctic*, no P7\_TA(2014)0236, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P7-TA-2014-0236>. [13.05.2015].



economic growth, as well as into programs such as Horizon 2020 and the Innovation Union, alongside other EU research programs.

In the area of sustainable socio-economic development and climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Arctic region, the European Parliament pointed to the global effects of changes in the Arctic region and the important role that the EU and other industrial centers, along with circumpolar countries, will have to play in the reduction of pollution caused by future industrial development. Climate change in the Arctic will have a major impact on coastal regions in Europe and other parts of the world, as well as on climate-dependent sectors in Europe such as agriculture and fisheries, energy, reindeer breeding, hunting, tourism and transport. With regard to the risks and consequences for the environment and ecosystem during the extraction of oil and gas in the Arctic, the European Parliament emphasized that gas and oil drilling in the Arctic are associated with unique challenges, which should not be underestimated. It noted ongoing discussions between Arctic states on the ban on oil and gas drilling in some areas of the Arctic. In view of the emerging threats to the Arctic, additional information is needed on marine ecosystems, climate change and the impact of drilling for oil and gas on the unique species found in the Arctic Ocean before planning further exploitation of oil and gas there. Parliament asked that institutions, organizations and agencies possessing the appropriate expertise to carry out a re-evaluation of the conditions in which further drilling can be conducted before continuing the research and drilling of wells. It admitted that the effects of the melting ice and mild temperatures not only causes a risk of movement of the peoples of the Arctic, thus threatening the native lifestyle, but also create opportunities for economic development in the Arctic region. He appealed to the EU to take all possible efforts to reconcile sustainable business with cost-effective socio-ecological and environmental protection because the maintenance of developed and sustainable communities in the Arctic and a high quality of life is essential<sup>23</sup>.

Therefore, it urged the EU to intensify work in areas of ecosystem management, multilateral cooperation, knowledge-based decision making and close cooperation with local residents and indigenous peoples. It recognizes the desire of residents and the authorities of the Arctic region with sovereign rights and responsibilities to continue to pursue sustainable development and the simultaneous protection of traditional livelihoods of indigenous communities and the very sensitive Arctic ecosystems. It also admitted that the waters around the North Pole are international waters.

## Summary

The increase in threats to the Arctic environment resulting from the warming of the Earth's climate contributes to the development of regional cooperation in this area.

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<sup>23</sup> Council of the European Union, *Council conclusions on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region Foreign Affairs*, Council meeting Brussels, 12 May 2014, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/142554.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/142554.pdf). [19.04.2015].

In view of the emerging aspirations of some countries (such as Russia, Canada, and Norway), which have a chance to make use of energy resources located in the Arctic Ocean, there is a need to integrate the international community to balance possible profits of extracting oil or gas and the protection of environment. In the documents on EU Arctic policy discussed in the article, it is possible to observe a steady increase in EU involvement in the Arctic region's problems. It is worth emphasizing the EU proposal for the creation of the territory of the Arctic modeled on the Antarctic Treaty. Lack of such a document contributes to increasing threats such as exploitation of raw materials and increased pollution. Ensuring safety in the Arctic is a challenge that Arctic countries cannot cope with if they remain in isolation; therefore, legislation such as monitoring and oversight of the entire ecosystem of the Arctic appears necessary. In response to the security challenges in the Arctic, it should be noted that the inclusion of the EU in the process of building international regulations on Arctic governance stems from fear of a situation in which the exploitation of oil and gas resources would be subject to the jurisdiction of individual states rather than international law. The analysis contained in the article shows that environmental security has become the basis for engagement in the Arctic.

The European Union, together with its constituent countries do not treat the Arctic solely in terms of profits from the exploitation of natural resources. It should be emphasized that the EU has a neutral attitude to the changes taking place in the ecosystem of the Arctic. Particularly important is her approach to the problem of global warming and the melting of the ice cap in the region. The weather conditions in the Arctic affect environmental change around the world. In turn, for Arctic states, it is primarily a chance for business development, as climate change creates opportunities for extracting natural resources in the resource-rich region. From the above arguments, it follows that the Arctic ecosystem and the people living there need proper protection and the attention of an impartial institution that will have more than its own interests in mind and also consider the interests of the region.

### **Summary**

#### **EUROPEAN UNION ECOLOGICAL SECURITY POLICY TOWARDS THE ARCTIC**

The melting of the ice caps in the Arctic at a rate not previously recorded in history is the signal to the international community that it should initiate actions to protect it. This unique area is vulnerable to contamination and, out of all oceans, it is the least protected one. That is why the Arctic is the best example of climate change on Earth. In the context of global warming in this part of the world, the geopolitical situation becomes very interesting. Countries bordering the Arctic who are co-operating in the Arctic Council, such as Canada, Greenland, Russia, Norway, and the United States, are interested in appropriating valuable resources beyond their respective territories, and are trying to extend their polar seabed boundaries. Both fuel corporations and their

governments perceive the Arctic as an opportunity to profit from the extraction of oil or gas. For these countries environmental protection or the establishment of a nature reserve is a second priority. EU countries which do not have economic interests in the region have a much better understanding of the environmental hazards in the Arctic. They are represented in the Arctic Council by Sweden, Finland and Denmark. Within the EU, attention has been drawn rather late to the problems of the Arctic; however, the EU's involvement in solving its problems is becoming increasingly apparent.

**Keywords:** security, ecology, Arctic, European Union

### Streszczenie

#### UNIA EUROPEJSKA WOBEC BEZPIECZEŃSTWA EKOLOGICZNEGO W ARKTYCE

Tempo topnienia pokrywy lodowej w Arktyce jest sygnałem dla społeczności międzynarodowej do podjęcia działań w celu jej ochrony. Ten unikatowy obszar jest narażony na zanieczyszczenia, a spośród wszystkich oceanów jest najmniej chroniony. Dlatego Arktyka jest najlepszym przykładem zmian klimatu na Ziemi. W kontekście globalnego ocieplenia w tej części świata sytuacja geopolityczna staje się bardzo interesująca. Kraje, które współpracują w Radzie Arktycznej, takie jak: Kanada, Grenlandia, Rosja, Norwegia i Stany Zjednoczone, są zainteresowane przywłaszczeniem cennych zasobów spoza ich jurysdykcji. Zarówno koncerny paliwowe, jak i ich rządy postrzegają Arktykę jako okazję do wydobycia ropy naftowej lub gazu. Dla tych krajów ochrona środowiska lub utworzenie rezerwatu przyrody jest sprawą drugorzędną. Z kolei państwa UE nie mają interesów gospodarczych w regionie, dlatego mają znacznie lepsze zrozumienie zagrożeń środowiskowych w Arktyce. Są one reprezentowane w Radzie Arktycznej dzięki Szwecji, Finlandii i Danii. W ramach UE zwrócono uwagę na problemy Arktyki, co sprawia, że zaangażowanie UE w rozwiązywanie problemów Arktyki staje się coraz bardziej widoczne.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Bezpieczeństwo, ekologia, Arktyka, Unia Europejska

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