

Arctic and North. 2022. No. 49. Pp. 107–130.

Original article

UDC: 327(470+481)(045)

doi: 10.37482/issn2221-2698.2022.49.125

The International Dimension of Norwegian Arctic Policy and the Accumulated Capital of Russian-Norwegian Cooperation

Ilya A. Stepanov^{1✉}, Cand. Sci. (Econ.), Researcher

Elizaveta V. Smolovik², Research Assistant

Anna A. Kazakovtseva³, Research Assistant

^{1, 2, 3} National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE University), ul. Malaya Ordynka, 17, Moscow, 119017, Russia

¹ iastepanov@hse.ru ✉, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4303-3745>

² esmolovik@hse.ru, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6075-6393>

³ akazakovtseva@hse.ru, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9965-057X>

Abstract. This article presents an analysis of Norway's cooperation with Arctic and non-Arctic states in the Arctic over the past decade. The paper focuses on the priorities of the country's new Arctic strategy adopted in 2020 in the areas of environmental protection, social and economic development, and improving the quality of life of indigenous peoples and residents of the northern regions. The paper aims at systematization of Norway's experience of participation in various projects both under the aegis of international organizations in the region (the Arctic Council, the Barents-Euro-Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers, etc.) and in bilateral format with the Arctic countries. A special emphasis is placed on the analysis of Norwegian-Russian cooperation in the Arctic in the fields of environmental protection, fisheries, energy, joint operations to prevent and eliminate the consequences of oil spills and other environmental disasters, and social and cultural interaction. In addition, cooperation of Norway and Russia in multilateral formats in various sectors is examined. The current crisis in Russia-Western relations and its impact on the implementation of joint Russian-Norwegian projects and initiatives and the development of cooperation in the Arctic are analyzed.

Keywords: Norway, Arctic, international cooperation in the Arctic, Arctic Council, Russian-Norwegian cooperation, Barents region

Acknowledgments and funding

The study was carried out within the framework of the Basic Research Program of the National Research University Higher School of Economics, as well as with grant support from the Faculty of World Economy and World Politics of the National Research University Higher School of Economics.

Introduction

The strategic importance of the Arctic region in the development of Norway is due to a combination of historical, economic and geographical factors [1, Dzyuban V.V., p. 6]. About half of the country's territory is located to the north of the Polar Circle, and, therefore, since the 12th–13th centuries, the inhabitants of these territories were primarily engaged in fishing and

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For citation: Stepanov I.A., Smolovik E.V., Kazakovtseva A.A. The International Dimension of Norwegian Arctic Policy and the Accumulated Capital of Russian-Norwegian Cooperation. *Arktika i Sever* [Arctic and North], 2022, no. 49, pp. 125–151. DOI: 10.37482/issn2221-2698.2022.49.125

hunting in the Arctic [2, Perdikaris S., p. 395]. Currently, in addition to fisheries, mineral resources are of great importance for the Norwegian economy [3, Noreng Ø., p. 396], such as oil and gas reserves in the Arctic, mainly on the continental shelf. In 2020, Norway adopted a new Arctic strategy, updating its policy priorities in the region.

The Arctic region is playing an increasingly important role in the international arena due to the preserved energy potential and the growing importance of the problem of global climate change, which entails the melting of ice and the subsequent increase in climate risks for Norway with its large Arctic area [4, Martinson D.G., Pitman W.C., p. 254; 5, Makarov I.A., Sokolova A., Stepanov I.A., p. 451]. Due to the emergence of common problems and challenges for the Arctic states in the region, the countries have intensified cooperation both in bilateral and multilateral formats [6, Ellingsen I.H. et al., p. 160]. Norway is interested in exchanging experience and knowledge, as well as conducting joint research with other countries in the Arctic region for a better understanding of the climatic and environmental situation there.

The importance of the Arctic region for Norway is reflected in the works of foreign researchers who consider not only historical and economic aspects [2, Perdikaris S.; 3, Noreng Ø.], but also ecological and climatic ones, paying particular attention to the multilateral cooperation of countries in the Arctic [4; 6; 5]. The main trends and directions of cooperation between Russia and Norway, such as environmental protection, fisheries, energy, etc., have received wide attention in the works of Russian and foreign authors [1, Dzyuban V.V.; 7, Alexandrov O.B., Kirgizov-Barskiy A.V.; 8, Jensen L.C.; 9, Krivorotov A.K.].

By now, the capital of the Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the Arctic is considerable: the long-term experience of cooperation between countries in the region made it possible to establish various institutions, such as bilateral working commissions, as well as to implement projects in a wide range of fields and sectors. The countries are stimulated by their common land and long maritime border, which opens up many areas for bilateral cooperation: fisheries, environmental protection, energy, etc. Over the past decades, Russia and Norway have launched a large number of bilateral projects in different directions; a solidcreation of an international Secretariat of the Council regulatory and legal framework for cooperation was built, contributing to the implementation of the mutual interests of the two countries [7, Alexandrov O.B., Kirgizov-Barskiy A.V., p. 86]. The current political crisis has had a sharply negative impact on the development of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the Arctic, and all the accumulated capital of cooperation between the two countries in the coming years risks remaining unclaimed.

The purpose of this article is to systematize the experience of Norway's participation in various projects, both under the auspices of international organizations in the region (the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers, etc.), and in a bilateral format. The article is divided into three parts. The first part looks at Norway's new Arctic strategy and its main priorities. The second part presents an analysis of Norway's multilateral and bilateral

cooperation with other Arctic states in the region. The third part describes the main areas of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the region, as well as an assessment of the prospects for their development.

Arctic policy of Norway

For a long time, the Arctic has been an area of major strategic national interest for Norway [8, Jensen L.C., p. 2]. Norway's special area of national interest is the Barents Sea, which is one of the largest maritime zones on the Norwegian continental shelf with huge potential for oil and gas production, as well as bioresources.

Norway's Arctic policy focuses on the development of the Northern Norway region, and its priority is international cooperation in the Arctic, which includes relations with neighboring countries in the Barents Sea region and Northern Norway, including Russia. The main objectives of Norway's state policy in the Arctic are ¹:

- peace, stability and predictability;
- international cooperation and international legal order;
- integrated ecosystem management;
- increasing the number of jobs and creating added value;
- closer cooperation between the business sector and think tanks;
- effective social assistance programs and initiatives to make Northern Norway an attractive place to live.

In 2020, Norway adopted a new Arctic strategy that emphasizes the importance of bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation with neighboring countries and its partners in the Arctic. Many of the provisions of the Strategy can be correlated with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). The main priorities identified in Strategy 2020 are: 1) an integrated approach to climate and environmental change in the Arctic, 2) social development in the Arctic region, 3) value added and competency development, 4) development of infrastructure, transport and communications. Norway's previous Arctic Strategy of 2017 ² focused on similar areas, but while environmental protection and climate change were previously an integral part of other areas, the current strategy emphasizes them as a separate priority.

The new strategy focuses on the first area, environmental protection, as the rapid warming of the Arctic threatens both some Arctic flora and fauna and entire ecosystems that depend on ice and snow, as well as posing serious risks to local communities and the way of life of indigenous peoples. As before, combating climate change remains one of Norway's top priorities. The country is a member of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, has ratified the Paris Agree-

¹ The Norwegian Government's Arctic Policy // Government.no. URL: https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/arctic_policy/id2830120/ (accessed 22 February 2022).

² Arctic Strategy // Government.no. URL: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/arctic-strategy/id2550081/> (accessed 17 August 2022).

ment, and therefore continues to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with national goals and international obligations. In the current strategy, Norway emphasizes its contribution to the achievement of the Arctic Council's goal of reducing black carbon emissions³ (a target of 25% black carbon reduction by 2025 compared to 2013 levels), and its actions to monitor climate change processes, including ocean acidification. In addition, with regard to environmental protection, the 2020 Strategy also indicates the goal set back in 2017 to deepen research on the Arctic ecosystem.

As before, in line with the 2020 Strategy, Norway continues to strive to develop the knowledge base needed for ecosystem-based management of the natural environment in Northern Norway and for climate change adaptation in the maritime industries and dependent on ocean sectors of society. In addition, Norway wants to create decent living conditions that would be attractive to the population of the country, especially young people. It is also planned to develop a strategy for small towns and urban centers and support regional cooperation between the business sector, districts and municipalities, as well as universities and colleges to promote the development of flexible learning programs — a goal set by the Norwegian government in 2017.

For the first time, reindeer husbandry was given a special place in the 2020 Strategy. This is an important livelihood within the region, and it is necessary for Norway to provide favorable conditions for this type of economic activity. Thus, Norway takes into account the need to develop all sectors of the country's economy and provides them with support. At the same time, the state has been striving for years to establish communications and connections between various economic agents, which include state, municipal, and even private actors.

Saami, their way of life, etc. — an integral part of the Norwegian identity and culture, and it is therefore planned that the Norwegian government will participate in consultations with the Saami Parliament of Norway to compare existing experience in the field of the Saami language and culture and to develop knowledge in this area. Norway recognizes the need for regulatory and legal changes in the framework of the policy aimed at supporting the Saami, including adjustments to the legislative framework governing this area. The 2017 Strategy also reflected these goals in one form or another, indicating the historical continuity of Norwegian policy to support the indigenous people of the North.

In the 2020 Strategy, Norway pays special attention to the sustainable development of the region, including the promotion of environmental innovation, entrepreneurship and start-ups in Northern Norway. Norway is also committed to:

³ Black carbon is one of the greenhouse gases that contribute to global climate change. Its formation occurs as a result of the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, biomass and biofuels. When black carbon is deposited on snow and ice, it absorbs sunlight, releasing heat, which leads to heating of air and snow with ice. Thus, black carbon emissions are especially critical for the Arctic, as they lead to acceleration in the melting of Arctic ice. In turn, this could lead to faster global warming and climate change. What is Black Carbon? // Center for Climate and Energy Solutions. URL: <https://www.c2es.org/document/what-is-black-carbon/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

- sustainable development of the maritime industry and ensuring its “blue growth” (Norway aims to improve resource control in the context of sustainable management of fish stocks);
- sustainable development of the energy industry (Norway, as an energy-abundant country, intends to increase oil and gas production, as well as develop offshore wind power, for example, off the coast of Helgeland in Nordland province);
- strengthening economic cooperation in national and international policies (Norway plans to encourage cooperation between individual institutions and even sectors in the field of recruitment and development of talents in Northern Norway, to promote closer cooperation between employers, the business sector and institutions of higher education to meet society's needs for skills and knowledge, and to take steps to involve Norwegian economic operators in the Copernicus programme⁴ to improve the modeling of climate processes in the Arctic);
- sustainable and profitable mining (one of the objectives, for example, is to promote exploration and deep sea mining).

The 2017 Strategy set goals only to strengthen cooperation between the business sector and other actors, while the maritime industry, energy and mineral resource development were not considered as priority areas at that time⁵. However, they were still mentioned in the 2017 Arctic Strategy⁶, which indicates their increased importance for the country by 2020.

For the development of infrastructure, transport and communications in 2020, the task was to conceptually assess the future transport solutions of the region (for example, the proposed new railway section from Feuske to Tromsø). Norway intends to continue to allocate significant financial resources to the development of the road network in its northern part: in 2017, the Norwegian government allocated NOK 40 billion to invest in transport projects in the northern parts of Norway⁶. In addition, the Norwegian strategy for 2020 includes a number of measures in the field of infrastructure, transport and communications, which are also aimed at combating climate change. It is planned to continue testing and phased introduction of aircraft with low and zero greenhouse gas emissions, as well as the development of projects to improve navigation conditions, including the development of port infrastructure.

Separately, in both strategies, Norway emphasizes the importance of responding to environmental disasters, in particular through the implementation of agreements on preparedness and response to acute pollution in the Arctic, as well as the development of the Norwegian Marine

⁴ The Copernicus Program is an Earth observation program of the European Union that aims to study the planet and its environment. The data obtained contribute to improving the quality of life of European citizens and the rest of the world's population. About Copernicus // Copernicus. URL: <https://www.copernicus.eu/en/about-copernicus> (accessed 16.02.2022).

⁵ Arctic Strategy // Government.no. URL: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/arctic-strategy/id2550081/> (accessed 17 August 2022).

⁶ Ibid.

Litter Center (Senter mot marin forsøpling, formerly the Norwegian Centre for Oil Spill Prevention and Marine Environment Protection). Since 2017, the goal of strengthening cooperation with Russia for joint oil spill response operations has been maintained in the Arctic strategy⁷.

Despite the continuity of most of the provisions of the new Arctic strategy, some of the goals and directions were prioritised in 2020 for the first time, such as environmental protection, sustainable energy, marine industry, reindeer herding and others. This indicates that for 3 years, the value of these areas for Norway has increased greatly. Also, according to the text of the new strategy, there was an increase in the importance of China as a partner for Norway in the Arctic region, cooperation with which was emphasized in a separate block in 2020. Norway began to consider new opportunities for interaction in the region, more clearly formulating goals for sustainable development and focusing primarily on it.

Mechanisms and formats of international cooperation in Norway in the field of sustainable development of the Arctic region.

Multilateral formats

The leading platforms for advancing the Arctic agenda for Norway are the Arctic Council (AC) and the Arctic Economic Council (AEC), the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), as well as the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Norway is a member of the Arctic Council, has chaired it only once, from 2007 to 2009, and will replace Russia in this capacity in 2023⁸. During Norway's AC chairmanship, resource management in fisheries, maritime transport, oil production and mining were a priority. Other issues on the agenda were pollution and climate change, climate change monitoring and assessment, biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development⁹.

Currently, most of the projects in which Norway is involved in the Arctic Council now take place within the Working Group on the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME). Examples include a project on recovery and recycling of marine litter and microplastics^{10,11}, a project to assess the damage of low sulfur fuels to Arctic ecosystems¹², a project to protect biodiversity in Arctic waters¹³, and projects in the field of shipping¹⁴.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Norway // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/about/states/norway/> (accessed 16 February 2022).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Regional action plan on marine litter // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/regional-action-plan-on-marine-litter/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

¹¹ Arctic coastal cleanup // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/arctic-coastal-cleanup/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

¹² New low sulphur fuels, fate, and behavior in cold water conditions // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/new-low-sulphur-fuels-fate-and-behavior-in-cold-water-conditions/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

¹³ Marine invasive alien species in Arctic Waters // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/marine-invasive-alien-species-in-arctic-waters/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

¹⁴ Arctic ship traffic data // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/arctic-ship-traffic-data-astd/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

In addition, Norway is involved in projects to develop a sustainable blue economy¹⁵, waste management^{16,17} and assess the impact of climate change on Arctic ecosystems¹⁸.

Norway hosts the Arctic Council Secretariat in Tromsø, which since 2016 includes the Secretariat of Indigenous Peoples. In the Arctic Council, Norway pays special attention to combating climate change, developing sustainable transport and energy, as well as supporting the indigenous peoples of the North¹⁹.

Norway attaches great importance to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, where the country chaired from 2019 to 2021. Norway is the initiator of its creation and further institutionalization, including the establishing of an international Secretariat of the Council in Kirkenes and the Barents Institute — the think tank of the Council. Climate change has become a key focus of Norway's agenda during its chairmanship, which led to an updated Climate Change Action Plan for cooperation in the region in 2021 as part of the Nordic Council of Ministers²⁰. Furthermore, maintaining stability and peace in the Arctic region is a key task for Norway in its foreign policy. In this regard, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Anniken Huitfeldt, notes that in the conditions of international tension, dialogue and synergy of the agendas of the Arctic Council, the Council of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, the Nordic Council and the Council of the Baltic Sea States are required²¹.

Although Norway is not a member of the European Union, it is active in international projects that are supervised and funded by the EU. The most successful track is cross-border cooperation programs (CBC). Since 2014, Norway, along with Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Ireland and Denmark (Greenland and the Faroe Islands), has been implementing the "Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic" project²², in which the regions of Tren-delag, Nur-Norge and Svalbard are involved from Norway. Russia does not take part in the project, but is its observer²³. The purpose of this

¹⁵ Blue bioeconomy in the Arctic region // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/blue-bioeconomy-in-the-arctic-region/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

¹⁶ Kola waste project // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/kola-waste-project/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

¹⁷ Arctic marine microplastics and litter // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/arctic-marine-microplastics-and-litter/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

¹⁸ Understanding climate change impacts on Arctic ecosystems and associated climate feedbacks // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/understanding-climate-change-impacts-on-arctic-ecosystems-and-associated-climate-feedbacks/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

¹⁹ Interview with Morten Høglund, Norway's senior Arctic official // Arctic Council. 20.10.2021. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/ru/news/interview-with-morten-hoglund-norways-senior-arctic-official/> (accessed 16.02.2022).

²⁰ Obnovlenie Plana deystviy po voprosam izmeneniya klimata dlya Barentseva sotrudnichestva [Update of the Action Plan on Climate Change for the Barents Cooperation] // The Barents Euro-Arctic Council. 2021. URL: https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/2021_11_01_Barents_Action_Plan_on_Climate_Change_RU.pdf (accessed 16 February 2022).

²¹ Interview with the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs on the outgoing BEAC Chairmanship // The Barents Euro-Arctic Council. 25.10.2021. URL: <https://www.barents-council.org/news/interview-with-the-norwegian-minister-of-foreign-affairs-on-the-outgoing-beac-chairmanship> (accessed 16 February 2022).

²² Interreg northern periphery and Arctic // Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2014 — 2020. URL: <https://www.interreg-npa.eu/interreg-npa-2021-2027/> (accessed 16 February 2022).

²³ RF i ES gotovyat sem' programm prigranichnogo sotrudnichestva na 2021–2027 gody [Russia and the EU are preparing seven cross-border cooperation programs for 2021–2027] // TASS. 27.01.2020. URL: <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/7618139> (accessed 16 February 2022).

project is to strengthen cooperation between the regions of the Euro-Arctic zone in the socio-economic sphere, as well as in the field of environmental protection.

Norway is also a member of the Nordic Council of Ministers, where the portfolio of projects in the field of achieving the UN SDGs is expanding every year. Within the framework of the Council of Ministers of the Nordic countries, with the support of Nordforsk²⁴ and Nordregio²⁵, projects are being implemented to develop human capital, healthcare, environmental protection and adaptation to climate change (including projects to maintain biodiversity, waste management), develop the bioeconomy, as well as building infrastructure in the Arctic²⁶.

Norway also actively participates in the work of the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, which brings together the states of the Arctic Council for search and rescue in the Arctic and joint local emergency response²⁷. Norway also pays great attention to the fight against crime in the fishing industry, for which satellite monitoring technologies is being developed in order to carefully monitor the situation in the regions of Northern Norway, which is difficult without modern technologies²⁸.

Bilateral formats

Norway implements deep bilateral cooperation in the Arctic with Sweden and Finland. Norway's projects with Finland focus on the oil and gas industry, and a wind farm in Finland, which will supply Norwegian oil and gas production²⁹, has also been completed by 2022³⁰. The cooperation of these countries is also aimed at building links between business and educational institutions³¹, for example, through international business forums in the Arctic (Arctic Business Corridor³²). Norway and Sweden cooperate in the area of renewable energy³³, i.e. the countries have developed a joint electronic certificate system for renewable energy³⁴. The priority areas of cooper-

²⁴ NordForsk Funding Opportunities // NordForsk. URL: <https://www.nordforsk.org> (accessed 16 February 2022).

²⁵ Arctic issues // Nordregio. URL: <https://nordregio.org/research-topics/arctic-issues/#> (accessed 16 February 2022).

²⁶ Sustainable Development Action — The Nordic Way // Nordic Council of Ministers. URL: <https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1092868/FULLTEXT01.pdf> (accessed 16 February 2022).

²⁷ Beregovye okhrany stran Arktiki prinjali Rukovodstvo po provedeniyu sovместnykh operatsiy [Arctic coast guards adopt joint operations guidelines] // TASS. 25.03.2017. URL: <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/4125460> (accessed 16 February 2022).

²⁸ Norway's integrated ocean management plans // Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment. 2021. URL: <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/5570db2543234b8a9834606c33caa900/en-gb/pdfs/stm201920200020000engpdfs.pdf> (accessed 16 February 2022).

²⁹ Telegina E., Morgunova M. Finland's strategy in the Arctic Region // Finland's strategy in the Arctic Region. 3.09.2012. URL: <https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/analytics/finland-s-strategy-in-the-arctic-region/> (accessed 16 February 2022).

³⁰ Metsälamminkangas wind farm // Sval. URL: <https://sval-energi.no/assets/metsalamminkangas-wind-farm/> (accessed 16 February 2022).

³¹ Finnish-Norwegian Arctic Partnership strengthened by a state visit // Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. 6.09.2016. URL: https://um.fi/current-affairs/-/asset_publisher/gc654PySnjTX/content/valtiovierailu-vahvistaa-norjan-ja-suomen-arktista-kumppanuutta (accessed 16 February 2022).

³² Growth through Arctic resources. A rising cross-border economic area // Arctic Corridor. URL: <https://arcticcorridor.fi> (accessed 16 February 2022).

³³ Buil N. Nordic region // Agora Energiewende. URL: <https://www.agora-energiwende.de/en/global/nordic-region/> (accessed 16 February 2022).

³⁴ Sweden, Norway seal end of joint green subsidy scheme in 2035 // Reuters. 18.09.2020. URL: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-norway-sweden-electricity-idUSKBN26922B> (accessed 16 February 2022).

ation between Norway, Finland and Sweden are transport and logistics, digital services and labor market integration³⁵. Indigenous issues and their representation in international forums such as the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council are also of great importance in Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish relations. Furthermore, in 2018, the three countries signed a Trilateral Statement of Intent to deepen and improve defense cooperation³⁶. Norway's cooperation with the United States in the Arctic touches on maritime issues, including oil spill response³⁷, and scientific dialogue between American and Norwegian research centers. Norway and Iceland are also developing a scientific dialogue between universities and research centers^{38,39}.

Norway also promotes Arctic cooperation with China, especially in research. For example, the first Chinese polar station Huanghe was opened on Svalbard in 2004⁴⁰. Norway conducts joint scientific research in the Arctic with India: in 2007, the first Indian scientific expedition was launched in Norway, and in 2008, the Himadri research station was opened in Svalbard⁴¹.

Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the field of sustainable development of the Arctic region. Bilateral Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the Arctic

The legal framework for cooperation between Russia and Norway is enshrined in numerous bilateral treaties and documents, which were previously constantly updated and amended. One of the main documents that resolved most of the existing territorial claims between countries was the Treaty on the delimitation of maritime spaces and cooperation in the Barents Sea, signed in 2010⁴². The established areas of cooperation were security in maritime and air space, environmental protection, fishing, energy, environmental protection, joint operations to prevent and eliminate the consequences of oil spills and other environmental disasters and socio-cultural interaction [9, Krivorotov A.K., p. 268]. However, due to the aggravation of relations between Russia and Western countries in February 2022, cooperation within the framework of the vast majority of projects and initiatives was suspended.

³⁵ The Norwegian Government's Arctic Policy // Government of Norway. 26.01.2021. URL: https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/arctic_policy/id2830120/ (accessed 16 February 2022).

³⁶ SShA, Finlyandiya i Shvetsiya: Trekhstoronnee zayavlenie o namereniyakh v sfere oboronnykh interesov [USA, Finland and Sweden: tripartite declaration of intent on defense interests] // RKK ICDS. 25.05.2018. URL: <https://icds.ee/ru/ssha-finljandija-i-shvecija-trehstoronnee/> (accessed 16 February 2022).

³⁷ Neptune // Arctic Council. URL: <https://epr.org/projects/neptune/> (accessed 16 February 2022).

³⁸ Cooperation in the Field of Arctic Studies between Iceland and Norway: Two Announcements // UArctic. 25.11.2019. URL: <https://www.uarctic.org/news/2019/11/cooperation-in-the-field-of-arctic-studies-between-iceland-and-norway-two-announcements/> (accessed 16 February 2022).

³⁹ Review of the cooperation between Iceland and Norway in the field of Arctic scientific research // Nordregio. 1.06.2018. URL: <https://nordregio.org/research/review-of-the-cooperation-between-iceland-and-norway-in-the-field-of-arctic-scientific-research/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁴⁰ Konyshhev V.N., Sergunin A.A. Strategii inostrannykh gosudarstv v Arktike: obshchee i osobennoe [Strategies of Foreign States in the Arctic: General and Special] // RIAC. 2013. URL: <https://russiancouncil.ru/common/upload/Arctic%20Anthology%20Vol%201-2.pdf> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁴¹ Himadri station // National Center for Polar and Ocean Research. URL: <https://ncpor.res.in/app/webroot/pages/view/340-himadri-station> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁴² Rossiya i Norvegiya podelili sporny uchastok dna v Arktike [Russia and Norway share a disputed seabed in the Arctic] // BBC. URL: https://www.bbc.com/russian/international/2010/09/100915_russia_norway_arctic_sea_border (accessed 25 February 2022).

Environmental protection

An important area of cooperation between Russia and Norway was environmental protection. The basis for Russian-Norwegian cooperation was the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway on cooperation in the field of environmental protection of September 3, 1992⁴³. Under this Agreement, a Joint Norwegian-Russian Commission on Environmental Protection was established. Both at the level of the Joint Commission and at the level of working groups, meetings of officials were held regularly, which reflected the aspirations of both states to deepen cooperation in the field of environmental protection and sustainable development.

In 2019, at the 20th meeting of the Joint Commission, the Working Program of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the field of environmental protection for 2019–2021 was approved. This was the result of a positive experience of cooperation and successful implementation of projects in the Barents Sea region in the field of environmental protection in 2016–2018⁴⁴.

The Joint Commission included several working groups that aim to cooperate in the following areas: protection of the marine environment, biodiversity, reduction and control of environmental pollution, radioactive contamination, as well as in specific areas, such as cross-border cooperation and protection of natural and cultural heritage. In 2022, there was no cooperation between states within the framework of the Joint Commission and working groups.

Environmental pollution control

An active dialogue on cooperation between Norway and Russia on reducing environmental pollution began in 2018. The problem is relevant for both countries, because due to the common maritime border, garbage is transported with currents and winds between states, negatively affecting the marine and coastal environment in both Russia and Norway, as well as certain sectors of the economy and human health. At a bilateral meeting of the Minister of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation Dmitriy Kobylkin and the Minister of Climate and Environmental Protection of Norway Ola Elvestuen on February 26, 2018, the parties identified the main issues⁴⁵

⁴³ O podpisanii Soglasheniya mezhdru Pravitel'stvom Rossiyskoy Federatsii i Pravitel'stvom Korolevstva Norvegiya o sotrudnichestve v oblasti okhrany okruzhayushchey sredy ot 03 avgusta 1992 g. [On the signing of the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway on cooperation in the field of environmental protection dated August 03, 1992] // Kodeks. URL: <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/901603203> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁴⁴ Glava Minprirody Rossii i Ministr klimata i okruzhayushchey sredy Korolevstva Norveгии utverdili rabochuyu programmu sotrudnichestva do 2021 g. [The head of the Ministry of Natural Resources of Russia and the Minister of Climate and Environment of the Kingdom of Norway approved a working program of cooperation up to 2021] // Ministry of Natural Resources. URL: http://www.mnr.gov.ru/press/news/glava_minprirody_rossii_i_ministr_klimata_i_okruzhayushchey_sredy_korolevstva_norveгии_utverdili_rab/?sphrase_id=426961 (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁴⁵ Voprosy bor'by s zagryazneniem morskoy sredy obsudili Glava Minprirody Rossii i Ministr zashchity klimata i okhrany okruzhayushchey sredy Norveгии [The issues of combating marine pollution were discussed by the Head of the Ministry of Natural Resources of Russia and the Minister of Climate Protection and Environmental Protection of Norway] // Ministry of Natural Resources. URL:

that require mutual attention. These included combating marine debris pollution, reducing pollution in border regions and the problem of offshore disposal of waste from coastal industries.

The basis for cooperation in this area was the exchange of experience on this problem and the measures already taken to solve it. One of the first steps was the Russian-Norwegian seminar on combating pollution of the Barents Sea with marine debris and microplastics, which took place in November 2018⁴⁶. Thanks to this initiative, experts from both countries were able to share their knowledge and identify prospects for cooperation on this issue for sustainable development.

Several projects between Russia and Norway in the framework of the fight against pollution have been enshrined in the Work Program for cooperation between countries: waste management in Murmansk; introduction of the best available technologies (BAT) at the enterprises of the northern regions, taking into account the Norwegian experience; reduction of pollution in the Barents Sea⁴⁷. In order to work on these projects, the parties have carried out joint activities. For example, a regular meeting of experts from both countries on marine litter and microplastics in the Barents Sea took place in 2020. The event marked the beginning of the preparation of a joint report on the pollution of the Barents Sea with marine debris and microplastics, which will provide a systematic basis of knowledge and recommendations on this issue⁴⁸. There have also been local activities that aim to exchange data in this area, such as on methodologies for assessing the impact of pollution on the environment⁴⁹.

In addition, specific campaigns and projects aimed at cleaning up the coastline were carried out. In May 2021, the results of the Norwegian-Russian projects MALINOR (Mapping marine litter in the Norwegian and Russian Arctic Seas), DIMARC (Detecting, identifying and mapping plastic in the Arctic using robotics and digital solutions) and ArcToMal (Arctic tourism in the Barents Sea — awareness and participation for marine litter prevention)⁵⁰. All three projects were spon-

http://www.mnr.gov.ru/press/news/voprosy_borby_s_zagryazneniem_morskoy_sredy_obsudili_glava_minprirody_rossii_i_ministr_zashchity_kli/?sphrase_id=426961 (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁴⁶ V Minprirody Rossii sostoyalsya rossiysko-norvezhskiy seminar po bor'be s zagryazneniem Barentseva morya morskim musorom i mikroplastikom [The Ministry of Natural Resources of Russia hosted a Russian-Norwegian seminar on combating pollution of the Barents Sea with marine debris and microplastics] // Ministry of Natural Resources. URL: http://www.mnr.gov.ru/press/news/v_minprirody_rossii_sostoyalsya_rossiysko_norvezhskiy_seminar_po_borbe_s_zagryazneniem_barentseva_mo/?sphrase_id=426961 (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁴⁷ Rabochaya programma rossiysko-norvezhskogo sotrudnichestva v oblasti okhrany okruzhayushchey sredy na 2019-2021 gg. [Working program of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the field of environmental protection for 2019-2021] // Joint Russian-Norwegian Commission for Environmental Protection. URL: http://www.kolgimet.ru/fileadmin/user_upload/Files/prog_ru_nor.pdf (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁴⁸ V Minprirody Rossii obsudili voprosy rossiysko-norvezhskogo sotrudnichestva v oblasti bor'by s zagryazneniem Barentseva moray [Issues of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the field of combating pollution in the Barents Sea were discussed at the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources] // Ministry of Natural Resources. URL: http://www.mnr.gov.ru/press/news/v_minprirody_rossii_obsudili_voprosy_rossiysko_norvezhskogo_sotrudnichestva_v_oblasti_borby_s_zagrya/?sphrase_id=426961 (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Rossiysko-norvezhskiy vebinar «Problema morskogo musora v Barentsevom more: sostoyanie i istochniki» [Russian-Norwegian webinar "The problem of marine debris in the Barents Sea: state and sources"] // Arctic Fund. URL: https://arctic.narf.ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1734:rossijsko-norvezhskij-vebinar-problema-morskogo-musora-v-barentsevom-more-sostoyanie-i-istochniki&catid=8&lang=ru&Itemid=548 (accessed 25 February 2022).

sored by Norway under the leadership of Akvaplan-niva⁵¹ and aimed at reducing the pollution of the Barents Sea coastlines from garbage: the first two projects were devoted to mapping marine debris using innovative solutions, and the last one was to attract tourists and tour operators in the Arctic to scientific research marine debris⁵².

Marine environmental management

As Russia and Norway share a border in the Barents Sea, both countries have equal and mutual responsibility to protect the marine ecosystem and to preserve all plant and animal species found in the region. This cooperation started in 1994 with the signing of the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway on cooperation in combating oil pollution in the Barents Sea⁵³.

Until 2022, the main cooperation between the countries took place within the framework of the Russian-Norwegian Working Group on the Marine Environment. In 2019, at the 16th meeting, the main vectors of cooperation in this direction established by the Work Program were fixed. In particular, cooperation in the field of the marine environment was aimed at developing an integrated ecosystem approach to management (ecosystem-based management) of the Barents Sea⁵⁴. On the Norwegian side, a plan for such management in the region of the Barents Sea and the Lofoten Islands has already been developed. It is based on ensuring a balance between environmental protection and commercial activities in the region (fishing, shipping, oil production)⁵⁵. Russia has set the key task of developing a similar integrated management plan for the Russian part of the Barents Sea based on the Norwegian experience, as well as developing a pilot project for integrated environmental management in the Arctic seas and its implementation in the Russian part of the Barents Sea.

In addition, one of the projects of the Work Program within the framework of marine environment management is the operation of the Barentsportal⁵⁶, which contains environmental data on the Barents Sea. This website is a joint project between Norway and Russia and aims to ex-

⁵¹ Akvaplan-niva is a subsidiary of the Norwegian Research Institute for Water Resources (Norsk institutt for vannforskning (NIVA)), which cooperated with Russia in the field of marine and freshwater ecosystem research, environmental monitoring, navigation analysis, and training of young scientists.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Rossiysko-Norvezhskoe sotrudnichestvo po bor'be s zagryazneniem neft'yu [Russian-Norwegian cooperation to combat oil pollution] // Sistemy promyshlennoy bezopasnosti [Systems of industrial safety]. URL: <https://www.spbecolog.com/sotrudnichestvo/mezhdunarodnye-ucheniya/rossiysko-norvezhskoe-sotrudnichestvo-po-borbe-s-zagryazneniem-neftyu/> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁵⁴ Rabochaya programma rossiysko-norvezhskogo sotrudnichestva v oblasti okhrany okruzhayushchey sredy na 2019-2021 gg. [Working program of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the field of environmental protection for 2019-2021] // Joint Russian-Norwegian Commission for Environmental Protection. URL: http://www.kolgimet.ru/fileadmin/user_upload/Files/prog_ru_nor.pdf (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁵⁵ Norwegian-Russian cooperation on the marine environment // Norwegian Polar Institute. URL: <https://www.npolar.no/en/themes/international-cooperation-in-the-arctic/norwegian-russian-cooperation-on-the-marine-environment/> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁵⁶ Barentsportal // Joint Norwegian-Russian Environmental Status Reporting for Barents Sea. URL: <https://www.barentsportal.com/barentsportal/index.php/ru/> (accessed 25 February 2022).

change information related to the integrated environmental management of the Barents Sea and sustainable development in the region. As part of this, Norway and Russia are prioritizing exchange of information, experience and expertise on various sustainable development issues⁵⁷. However, at the moment, further updating of the web portal is suspended.

Biodiversity conservation

Another focus of cooperation between Norway and the Russian Federation in the field of nature conservation is biodiversity conservation. Cooperation took place within the framework of the Russian-Norwegian working group on cooperation in the field of biodiversity; its meetings were held annually.

As a result of interaction within the framework of the Work Program of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the field of environmental protection for 2016-2018, Norway and Russia have made significant progress in implementing several projects focused on the joint collection of data on the state of populations, their study and the preparation of recommendations for eliminating possible risks for them. These include the projects “Seabird population in the Barents Sea region”, “Vulnerable and endangered bird species in the Barents Sea region”, “Populations of marine mammals in the Barents Sea region”. At the meeting of the Working Group in 2019, the parties noted the success in cooperation within the framework of all three projects⁵⁸, and these projects were extended as part of the work program of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the field of environmental protection 2019–2021⁵⁹.

In addition, the scientific centers of both states not only jointly studied ecosystems and biodiversity, but also carried out specific activities to protect and study the environment. One example of such interaction was the joint work of the Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (Nibio) and the Karelian Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences⁶⁰. These research centers have been cooperating for many years, the main area of common interest was the study

⁵⁷ Zaversheno 16-e zasedanie Rossiysko-norvezhskoy Rabochey gruppy po morskoy srede: rabota po sovmestnomu eko-monitoringu Barentseva morya budet prodolzhen [The 16th meeting of the Russian-Norwegian Working Group on the Marine Environment is completed: work on joint eco-monitoring of the Barents Sea will be continued] // Ministry of Natural Resources. URL: http://www.mnr.gov.ru/press/news/zaversheno_16_e_zasedanie_rossiysko_norvezhskoy_rabochey_gruppy_po_morskoy_srede_rabota_po_sovmestno/?special_version=Y (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁵⁸ V Norvegii sostoyalos' tret'e zasedanie rossiysko-norvezhskoy Rabochey gruppy po sotrudnichestvu v oblasti bioraznobraziya [The third meeting of the Russian-Norwegian Working Group on cooperation in the field of biodiversity was held in Norway] // Ministry of Natural Resources. URL: http://www.mnr.gov.ru/press/news/v_norvegii_sostoyalos_trete_zasedanie_rossiysko_norvezhskoy_rabochey_gruppy_po_sotrudnichestvu_v_obl/?sphrase_id=426961 (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁵⁹ Rabochaya programma rossiysko-norvezhskogo sotrudnichestva v oblasti okhrany okruzhayushchey sredy na 2019-2021 gg. [Working program of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the field of environmental protection for 2019-2021] // Joint Russian-Norwegian Commission for Environmental Protection. URL: http://www.kolgimet.ru/fileadmin/user_upload/Files/prog_ru_nor.pdf (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁶⁰ Bye H.G. Strengthening Northern Research Cooperation between Norway and Russia // High North news. URL: <https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/strengthening-northern-research-cooperation-between-norway-and-russia> (accessed 25 February 2022).

of brown bears in the Svanhovd region. The interaction regarding research in the border areas was especially intensive.

Thus, Norway sought to strengthen cooperation with Russia and expand the joint initiative on transboundary research in the field of biodiversity conservation.

Joint operations to prevent and eliminate the consequences of oil spills and other environmental disasters

The legal framework for cooperation between countries on oil spill response and the elimination of the consequences of other environmental disasters is based on three documents: Memorandum on strengthening Norwegian-Russian cooperation in the field of maritime safety in the Barents Sea 2006, the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway on cooperation in combating oil pollution in the Barents Sea, 1994, as well as the Joint Contingency Plan in the event of oil pollution in the Barents Sea, which was signed simultaneously with the Agreement⁶¹.

For 20 years, with some exceptions (as in 2020 due to COVID-19), Norway and Russia have been conducting joint maritime search and rescue and oil spill response exercises in the Barents Sea⁶². It is important to note that the countries have repeatedly cooperated in carrying out operations to prevent and eliminate the consequences of oil spills. For the Norwegian side, cooperation in this area was seen as the basis for sustainable development in the Arctic, which ensures security in the Barents Sea⁶³.

Fisheries

In the framework of cooperation in the field of sustainable development, the fisheries sector deserves special attention. Norway and Russia have a long maritime border, which was demarcated in 2010. The states signed an agreement “On the delimitation of maritime spaces and cooperation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean”, which was ratified by the Russian side in 2011. According to this document, the disputed territory with an area of 175 thousand km² was equally divided between the countries as a result of a compromise reached. The treaty strengthened bilateral relations between the countries, which moved to a new level, since almost all territorial claims between Norway and Russia were resolved and there were no longer any barriers to cooperation. The Norwegian side proposed the idea of creating in the future the so-called “Pomor zone”, which would become the Norwegian-Russian industrial and economic cooperation zone in the border area of both countries.

⁶¹ Agreements regarding maritime transport // BarentsPortal. URL: <https://www.barentsportal.com/barentsportal/index.php/ru/status-2016/284-affiliated-topics-data-from-2013/adopting-and-adapting-an-ecosystem-approach-to-management/993-agreements-regarding-maritime-transport> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁶² Bye T-G. Norway and Russia Exercising Together in the Barents Sea // High North news. URL: <https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/norway-and-russia-exercising-together-barents-sea> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁶³ Ibid.

In the last quarter of the 20th century, the Joint Norwegian-Russian Fisheries Commission was created, within the framework of which the countries successfully interacted. Their cooperation ensured a sustainable fishery in the region as the countries made joint decisions on: the level of total allowable catch (TAC), TAC distribution between Russia and Norway, technical measures regarding fishing gear; they also introduced systems to ensure that the fishing industry complied with all regulations⁶⁴.

Every year, the countries agreed on the TAC, paying attention to the state of stocks of each of the species⁶⁵. Since 2018, the commercial capelin fishery has stopped due to the low level of spawning stock⁶⁶, which was resumed in 2022⁶⁷. This became possible as a result of the exchange of knowledge and research between Norwegian and Russian scientists, on the basis of which they concluded that there is a sufficient stock of capelin for continuation of its commercial trade.

Energy. Oil and gas

Cooperation in the field of oil and gas production was of particular interest to Russia and Norway. To intensify cooperation in this area, a Working Group on Oil and Gas, a Working Group on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources and an Expert Group were established as part of a bilateral dialogue on the use of oil and gas resources and the environment⁶⁸.

As part of the energy dialogue between the countries, an Agreement on the exchange of seismic data in the Barents Sea was signed in 2016, and in 2018 — an Intergovernmental Agreement on the procedure for collecting seismic data up to and along the demarcation line on the continental shelf in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean⁶⁹.

One of the longest examples of cooperation between Norway and Russia in the field of oil and gas is the cooperation of the Norwegian oil and gas state concern Equinor (Statoil until 2018) with PJSC Rosneft. Initially, Equinor State Concern has been involved in the development of the Kharyaginskoye oil field since 1996. In 2012, strategic cooperation with PJSC Rosneft Oil Company began. The cooperation of the two companies included many projects that were implemented not

⁶⁴ Joint Norwegian-Russian Fisheries Commission // BarentsPortal. URL: <https://www.barentsportal.com/barentsportal/index.php/ru/status-2016/284-affiliated-topics-data-from-2013/adopting-and-adapting-an-ecosystem-approach-to-management/994-joint-norwegian-russian-fisheries-commission> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁶⁵ Rossiya i Norvegiya soglasovali usloviya promysla obshchikh zapasov na 2020 god [Russia and Norway agreed on the terms of fishing for common stocks for 2020] // Federal Agency for Fishery. URL: <https://fish.gov.ru/news/2019/10/17/rossiya-i-norvegiya-soglasovali-usloviya-promysla-obshchikh-zapasov-na-2020-god/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁶⁶ RF i Norvegiya mogut vozobnovit' promysel moyvy ne ran'she 2022 g. [The Russian Federation and Norway may resume capelin fishing earlier than 2022] // Federal Agency for Fishery. URL: <https://fish.gov.ru/obzorsmi/2020/10/20/rf-i-norvegiya-mogut-vozobnovit-promysel-mojvy-ne-ranshe-2022-g-rosrybolovstvo/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁶⁷ Bates Q. Russia and Norway strike 2022 fisheries agreement // FiskerForum. URL: <https://fiskerforum.com/russia-and-norway-strike-2022-fisheries-agreement/> (accessed 15 July 2022).

⁶⁸ Energetics // Embassy of the Russian Federation in Norway. URL: <https://norway.mid.ru/ru/countries/energetika/> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

only in the Arctic region⁷⁰. Equinor, under the Production Sharing Agreement, owned 30% of the Kharyaginskoye oil field, which made the company the second largest investor in the project⁷¹. In addition, the Russian company Novatek planned to supply LNG to the Norwegian Equinor⁷². However, due to the current crisis, cooperation between the two companies ceased due to the departure of Equinor from Russia⁷³.

Russian companies have participated in tenders for licenses to develop the Norwegian shelf, which are organized by the Norwegian government for both national and international companies. In 2015, for example, Lukoil Overseas North Shelf AS applied for participation in the 23rd round of license distribution, which resulted in the approval to develop a certain block⁷⁴.

In addition, the cooperation of the Norwegian oil and gas state concern Equinor with PJSC OC Rosneft was also aimed at combating climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which led to the signing of an Agreement between them on cooperation in the field of greenhouse gas emissions management in 2021⁷⁵. The partners agreed not only to reduce methane and CO₂ emissions as part of their joint oil and gas projects in Russia, but also to consider alternative energy sources, such as wind turbines, and to try to introduce carbon capture and storage technologies⁷⁶.

Nuclear power

For decades, cooperation in the field of nuclear energy and nuclear safety was carried out within the framework of the bilateral commission on nuclear and radiation safety, which operated for 25 years. In June 2021, the 24th meeting of the commission was held, which was focused on cooperation in preparedness, environmental monitoring and safety in Russian nuclear power plants⁷⁷. In addition, it is important to note that cooperation between the Norwegian Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority and the state nuclear energy corporation Rosatom has deepened over the past two years. In 2019, Norway provided financial support for the extraction and trans-

⁷⁰ Russia // Equinor. URL: <https://www.equinor.com/en/where-we-are/russia.html> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Postavki SPG «Novateka» v Norvegiyu usilili pozitsiyu RF na mirovom rynke gaza [Novatek's LNG supplies to Norway have strengthened Russia's position on the global gas market] // Ekonomika segodnya [Economics Today]. 10.08.2021. URL: <https://rueconomics.ru/510940-postavki-spg-novateka-v-norvegiyu-usilili-pozitsiyu-rf-na-mirovom-rynke-gaza> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁷³ Norvezhskaya Equinor vyshla iz chetyrekh sovместnykh predpriyatij s «Rosneft'yu» [Norwegian Equinor withdraws from four joint ventures with Rosneft] // Forbes. URL: <https://www.forbes.ru/biznes/466675-norvezskaa-equinor-vysla-iz-chetyreh-sovmestnykh-predpriyatij-s-rosneft-u> (accessed 16 July 2022).

⁷⁴ Norvegiya ob'yavila o nachale 24-go raunda raspredeleniya litsenziy na pravo razrabotki shel'fa [Norway announced the start of the 24th round of distribution of licenses for the right to develop the shelf] // PRO-ARCTIC. URL: <https://pro-arctic.ru/29/08/2016/news/22950> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁷⁵ Adomaitis N. Equinor, Rosneft to cooperate in cutting emissions in Russia // Reuters. 2021. URL: <https://www.reuters.com/business/sustainable-business/equinor-rosneft-cooperate-cutting-emissions-russia-2021-09-29/> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Russia and Norway meet on issues of nuclear safety // Bellona. URL: <https://bellona.org/news/nuclear-issues/2021-06-russia-and-norway-meet-on-issue-of-nuclear-safety> (accessed 25 February 2022).

portation of spent nuclear fuel from Andreev Bay⁷⁸. Norway has invested in safety upgrading programs at Kola NPP in Murmansk Region⁷⁹, in particular, supporting the Russian Federation in decommissioning old reactors at Kola NPP⁸⁰, an important step towards sustainable development. However, since Norway joined the anti-Russian sanctions, Russia has suspended its cooperation in the field of nuclear energy and nuclear safety⁸¹.

Sociocultural cooperation

The sociocultural interaction between Norway and Russia was based on the Agreement on cooperation in the field of culture, education and scientific research of 1994, the Action Plan for cooperation in the field of culture in the Far North of 2009 and the Program of cooperation in the field of culture for the period 2019–2021. The last document was adopted in 2019 and included nine projects with a total funding of NOK 2.9 million (about 20.5 million rubles). Five of these projects were dedicated to the performing arts, including the Samovar Theater in Kirkenes and the Norwegian-Russian Theater RuNo in Tromsø, while the other four were aimed at promoting and preserving the culture of indigenous peoples, mainly the Saami. There is no current information about upcoming performances and other events within these projects.

In addition, within the framework of the Work Program of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the field of environmental protection for 2019–2021, two projects were implemented between the countries: Conservation, preparation of cultural monuments on the Kola Peninsula and the Nordland Railway project: Conditions in captivity and forced labor performed by Soviet prisoners of war during the Second World War. As part of the second project, the Norwegian side erected a new monument to Russian prisoners near the former POW camp, and Russian scientists developed the map “Blood Road: a map of facilities built by Soviet prisoners of war along the Nordland railway in 1943–1945”⁸².

Cooperation in the cultural sphere also took the form of various events that were held on a reciprocal basis. In 2019, for example, there was an exhibition of works from the State Tretyakov

⁷⁸ Danilov F.P. Nuclear Safety is Still a High Priority in Norway’s Cooperation with Russia // High North news. URL: <https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/nuclear-safety-still-high-priority-norways-cooperation-russia> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁷⁹ Norvegiya vlozhila 644 tysyachi evro v povyshenie bezopasnosti Kol'skoy AES [Norway has invested 644 thousand euros in improving the safety of the Kola NPP] // RIA Novosti. URL: <https://ria.ru/20151110/1318071304.html> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁸⁰ Kireeva A. Russia and Norway meet on issues of nuclear safety // Bellona. URL: <https://bellona.org/news/nuclear-issues/2021-06-russia-and-norway-meet-on-issue-of-nuclear-safety> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁸¹ Rossiya zamorozila sotrudnichestvo s Norvegiy v sfere yadernoy bezopasnosti [Russia freezes cooperation with Norway in the field of nuclear safety] // RIA Novosti. URL: <https://ria.ru/20220603/norvegiya-1792855782.html> (accessed 16 July 2022).

⁸² Sostoyalsya norvezhsko-rossiyskiy veb-seminar, posvyashchenny sokhraneniyu pamyati o sovetskikh voennoplennykh [A Norwegian-Russian webinar dedicated to preserving the memory of Soviet prisoners of war took place] // Likhachev Russian Research Institute for Cultural and Natural Heritage. URL: https://heritage-institute.ru/?tribe_events=cotrudniki-instituta-naslediya-prinyali-uchastie-v-norvezhsko-rossijskom-veb-seminare-posvyashhyonnom-sohraneniyu-pamyati-sovetskikh-voennoplennykh (accessed 16 July 2022).

Gallery's collection at the Munch Museum in Oslo, followed by an exhibition of works by E. Munch at the Tretyakov Gallery in the same year.

Many of these events were held as part of cross-border cooperation. In 2018, for the first time in the city of Kirkenes, the Murmansk Arctic State University (MASU) organized the Day of the Russian Language and Culture, the purpose of which was to promote the Russian language and literature⁸³. Another event that has been held for several years is the Russian-Norwegian Forum. In 2021, the program of the forum was dedicated to the dialogue of cultures: "Russia and Norway at the crossroads of eras and cultures", and a scientific and practical conference, open lectures, film screenings, creative meetings were held in Murmansk with video broadcast in social media⁸⁴.

Another initiative in the framework of cross-border cooperation between Norway and Russia is the development of the Pasvik-Inari program. The Pasvik-Inari Park is located on the territories of Norway, Russia and Finland. As part of bilateral cooperation, Norway and Russia not only assessed the state and jointly monitored water and terrestrial ecosystems in the park, but also developed tourist routes. In 2021, a new tour route was opened near the waterfall on the Shuonijoki River, available to the citizens of Norway and Russia⁸⁵.

Citizens of the Russian Federation could also cross the Norwegian border without a visa or stamps in their passport. This opportunity was available to Russians who lived in the municipalities of Nikel, Pechenga, Zapolyarniy or Korzunovo for three years: if this condition is met, you can get a border resident certificate that allows you to travel to Norway an unlimited number of times, but for a limited term (no more than 15 days per trip)⁸⁶. In the summer of 2022, the Norwegian Consulate General in Murmansk was temporarily closed, which led to the suspension of the issuance of residence permits in the border area⁸⁷.

In addition, Russia and Norway sought to develop inter-university cooperation. This interaction took place, in particular, within the framework of the Russian-Norwegian working group on cooperation in the field of education. At the beginning of 2022, about 140 cooperation agreements were in force between Russian and Norwegian universities and more than 40 joint scientific

⁸³ MAGU provel v Kirkenese Dni russkogo yazyka i kul'tury [MASU held Days of Russian Language and Culture in Kirkenes] // Khibiny. URL: <https://www.khibiny.com/news/archive/160816/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁸⁴ V Murmanske otkrylsya rossiysko-norvezhskiy kul'turnyy forum [Russian-Norwegian cultural forum was opened in Murmansk] // Government of the Murmansk Oblast. URL: <https://gov-murman.ru/info/news/401581/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁸⁵ Otkryt novyy turmarshrut na granitse Rossii i Norvegii [A new tourist route was opened on the border between Russia and Norway] // Ministry of Natural Resources of Russia. URL: http://www.mnr.gov.ru/press/news/otkryt_novyy_turmarshrut_na_granitse_rossii_i_norvegii_/index.php?sphrase_id=426961 (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁸⁶ Border resident certificate // Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway in Moscow. URL: <https://www.norway.no/ru/russia/service-info/visitors-visa-res-permit/1/> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁸⁷ Vremennoe zakrytie General'nogo konsul'stva v Murmanske [Temporary closure of the Consulate General in Murmansk] // Embassy of Norway in Russia. URL: <https://www.norway.no/ru/russia/norway-russia/news-events2/----/> (accessed 16 July 2022).

projects were carried out⁸⁸. One example of cooperation in the field of higher education is the Russian-Norwegian master's program "International oil and gas business" in management field in MGIMO⁸⁹. As of July 2022, there was no statement about the termination of inter-university cooperation between the countries.

Cooperation between Russia and Norway in multilateral formats

Until now, the Arctic Council has been the main platform for cooperation between Russia and Norway in the field of sustainable development of the Arctic region, since it unites all the Arctic and subarctic states and creates a basis for fruitful joint work. The work in the Arctic Council was carried out within the framework of several working groups, most of the projects involving Russia and Norway were implemented within the framework of the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG). For example, Russia and Norway, together with Canada, the Athabaskan Arctic Council, the Aleut International Association and the Saami Union, worked on the project "Indigenous youth, food knowledge and Arctic change (EALLU)"⁹⁰ in 2019–2023, the purpose of which is to develop sustainable reindeer husbandry in the Arctic region, as well as to share knowledge about the food culture among indigenous peoples and reindeer herders.

In addition, in 2021, the SDWG launched the Arctic community representatives on COVID-19 and public health: a multi-site case study⁹¹, which was devoted to assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the population of the Arctic, on the level of healthcare in the region⁹².

The SDWG has been implementing the Arctic demography index project⁹³, which was launched in 2020. Russia, Norway and Canada acted as project coordinators. The main goal of the project was to develop a methodology for calculating the demographic index based on three parameters: natural increase and decrease in the population and migration flows. Within the framework of the project, it was planned to calculate the demographic index in 19 Arctic regions, including 9 regions in Russia, 2 in Norway, 3 in Finland, 2 in Sweden and 3 in Canada.

⁸⁸ Rossiya i Norvegiya prodolzhayut razvivat' mezhvuzovskoe sotrudnichestvo [Russia and Norway continue to develop interuniversity cooperation] // Ministry of Education and Science of Russia. URL: https://minobrnauki.gov.ru/press-center/news/?ELEMENT_ID=32412 (accessed 09 March 2022).

⁸⁹ Rossiysko-norvezhskaya masterskaya programma «Mezhdunarodnyy neftegazovyy biznes» po napravleniyu «Menedzhment» [Russian-Norwegian master's program "International oil and gas business" on the discipline of "Management"] // MGIMO. URL: <http://www.miep.mgimo.ru/page/view/id/49> (accessed 01 March 2022).

⁹⁰ Indigenous youth, food knowledge and Arctic change // Sustainable Development Working Group. URL: <https://sdwg.org/what-we-do/projects/indigenous-youth-food-knowledge-arctic-change-eallu-i/> (accessed 20 February 2022).

⁹¹ Arctic community representatives on COVID-19 and public health: a multi-site case study // Sustainable Development Working Group. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/projects/arctic-community-perspectives-on-covid-19-and-public-health-a-multi-site-case-study/> (accessed 20 February 2022).

⁹² Arctic Community Perspectives on Covid-19 and Public Health: A Multi-Site Case Study Project Proposal // Arctic Council. URL: <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/2731> (accessed 20 February 2022).

⁹³ Arctic demography index // Sustainable Development Working Group. URL: <https://sdwg.org/what-we-do/projects/arctic-demography-index/> (accessed 20 February 2022).

From 2021 to 2023, under the leadership of Russia and Norway and within the framework of the SDWG, it was planned to implement the Preserving Arctic Architectural Heritage project⁹⁴, the purpose of which is to create a digital database of cultural heritage objects in the Arctic, using 3D-modelling technology for online tours.

Since 2020, Russia, with support of the SDWG, has begun to create an international autonomous Arctic station “Snezhinka”⁹⁵. It is a research center for experimentation, monitoring, technology development and implementation, primarily in the field of climate change⁹⁶. Norway, as a member of the Arctic Council, expressed interest in this project.

Since 2015, Russia and Norway, within the framework of the working group on the implementation of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP), have been coordinating a project to assess radiation activity in the Arctic⁹⁷ in the context of global climate change and accelerated economic development of the Arctic. Within the framework of the project, the tasks were set to identify the sources of radiation activity and what effect climate change has on the level of radioactivity. However, at present, the Arctic Council and all its working groups have temporarily suspended work, and the Arctic states have refused to cooperate with Russia on common projects⁹⁸.

Norway takes part in cross-border cooperation programs (CBC) with the European Union. Norway participated in the Kolarctic CBC together with Russia. The phase from 2014 to 2020 was successfully completed, and the project was extended to a new phase from 2021 to 2027. On the part of Russia, the Murmansk and Arkhangelsk oblasts, as well as the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, were involved in the project, on the part of Norway — the county of Nurlan and Troms-og-Finnmark.

Among the sustainable development projects in the Arctic involving Russia and Norway within the framework of the Kolarctic CBC, the project Cross-border innovations in Arctic aquaculture can be singled out⁹⁹, which was launched in 2019 and was supposed to be completed by the end of 2022. The main objective of the project was to promote sustainable aquaculture development in the Arctic region by identifying and studying the factors that limit the introduction of fish species such as Arctic charr (*Salvelinus alpinus*), catfish (*Anarhichas minor*), whitefish (*Coregonus lavaretus*) and nelma

⁹⁴ SDWG Project Proposal — Preserving Arctic Architectural Heritage // Arctic Council. URL: <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/2745> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁹⁵ Arctic Hydrogen Energy Applications and Demonstrations (AHEAD) // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/ru/projects/arctic-hydrogen-energy-applications-and-demonstrations-ahead/> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁹⁶ The Snowflake International Arctic Station — A hub for energy innovation and cultural exchange // Arctic Council. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/news/the-snowflake-international-arctic-station-a-hub-for-energy-innovation-and-cultural-exchange/> (accessed 25 February 2022).

⁹⁷ Radioactivity in the Arctic // AMAP. URL: <https://radioactivity.amap.no> (accessed 20 February 2022).

⁹⁸ ARCTIC COUNCIL // The Arctic Council URL: <https://www.arctic-council.org/> (accessed 17 July 2022).

⁹⁹ Cross-Border Innovations in Arctic Aquaculture // Kolarctic. URL: <https://blogg.nord.no/arctaqua/> (accessed 23 February 2022).

(*Stenodus leucichthys nelma*), the breeding of which is more profitable and suitable for Arctic conditions¹⁰⁰.

In addition, the Arctic Railway Infrastructure in Kolarctic (ARINKA) project (2014-2021) was implemented under the Kolarctic program¹⁰¹, the main objectives of which included sharing of advanced solutions and knowledge in railway construction to increase railway network capacity in the Kolarctic program region, as well as developing recommendations for monitoring the railway network. In the field of transport, a trilateral project (Russia, Norway and Finland) “Barents on schedule” was implemented, which resulted in the development of a platform¹⁰² with information on cross-border public transport and on the main tourist routes. It is important that within the framework of the Kolarctic CBC, the border checkpoint Borisoglebsk, located on the Russian-Norwegian border, was reconstructed¹⁰³. However, Russia’s participation in the CBC is currently suspended¹⁰⁴.

Russia and Norway cooperated through the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, which Norway chaired from 2019 to 2021. At the 18th ministerial session of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov stressed the importance of maintaining a political dialogue with the Nordic countries on developing the Arctic region, including through summit meetings¹⁰⁵. However, cooperation with Russia within the framework of this platform was also put on hold¹⁰⁶.

In addition, Russia, together with Norway, Iceland and the EU, created the Northern Dimension partnership¹⁰⁷, which facilitated Nordic cooperation in areas such as the environment, health, transport, logistics and culture.

Russia was a member of the Nordic Council of Ministers, of which Norway is also a member. The Nordic Council of Ministers has seven working areas, including higher education and research, health and climate protection. Within the framework of the Council, the interaction between Russia and Norway took place mainly on climate issues, for example, from 2019 to 2020, the countries participated in a project called Strengthening Nordic-Russian network in promotion of climate change mitigation for local development, the main goal of which was to develop NCO on climate change issues¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ ARINKA Project // Kolarctic CBC. URL: <https://arinka.eu/> (accessed 22 February 2022).

¹⁰² Barents on time // Kolarctic CBC. URL: <https://barentsontime.com/ru/> (accessed 22 February 2022).

¹⁰³ Programma prigranichnogo sotrudnichestva Kolarktiki 2014–2020 gg. [Cross-border cooperation program Kolarctic 2014–2020] // Kolarctic. URL: <https://narfu.ru/upload/medialibrary/10e/sovместnyy-programmnyy-dokument-pps-kolarktiki.pdf> (accessed 22 February 2022).

¹⁰⁴ CBC Kolarctic 2014–2020 // Kolarctic. URL: <https://kolarctic.info/ru/kolarctic-2014-2020-ru-2/> (accessed 27 May 2022).

¹⁰⁵ Sergey Lavrov's interview before the 18th BEAC Ministerial Session // BEAC. 22.10.2021. URL: <https://www.barents-council.org/news/sergey-lavrovs-interview-before-the-18th-ministerial-session-of-the-barents-euro-arctic-council> (accessed 22 February 2022).

¹⁰⁶ Sovet Barentseva / Evroarkticheskogo regiona priostanovil sotrudnichestvo s Rossiey [Barents Euro-Arctic Council suspends cooperation with Russia] // Interfax. URL: <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/827077> (accessed 19 July 2022).

¹⁰⁷ The Northern Dimension Partnerships // The Northern Dimension. URL: <https://northerndimension.info/about-northern-dimension/> (accessed 23 February 2022).

¹⁰⁸ Strengthening Nordic-Russian network in promotion of climate change mitigation for local development // Nordic Co-operation. 22.11.2019. URL: <https://www.norden.org/en/project/ukreplenie-seti-vzaimodeystviya-severnoykh-stran-i-rossii-po-sodeystviyu-smyagcheniyu> (accessed 23 February 2022).

In March 2022, cooperation with Russia within the framework of the Nordic Council of Ministers and within the framework of the Northern Dimension partnership was suspended ¹⁰⁹.

Conclusion

The Arctic strategy of Norway in 2020 and the country's participation in a large number of projects in the Arctic demonstrate the geopolitical and geo-economic importance of the region for the state. First of all, Norway pays special attention to the values and goals of the international community, which it includes in its Arctic agenda. At the same time, the state forms the Arctic policy, based on the characteristics of the social, economic, environmental and climatic conditions of its northern region, striving to ensure national interests through international cooperation.

The multilateral cooperation projects, in which Norway has participated, especially since 2020, are consistent with the goals and objectives specified in the new Arctic strategy of the state. This conclusion was made on the basis of Norway's participation in the projects of the Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Kolarctic CBC, as well as the state's chairmanship of the Barents/Euro-Arctic Council, under which, for example, measures were taken in line with the objectives of the Norwegian Strategy for the Protection environment, namely addressing climate change.

In general, the priority of environmental protection over other areas of Arctic policy in Norway has been noted. This is confirmed by the active participation of the state in the projects of the working group on the protection of the Arctic marine environment of the Arctic Council, as well as the abundance of multilateral and bilateral measures already implemented in this area. In particular, this can be seen in cooperation with Russia, where Norway has not only carried out joint projects on pollution control, biodiversity conservation and marine environmental management, but has also strengthened the institutional framework accompanying this cooperation. The existence of an extended Working Program for Russian-Norwegian environmental cooperation in 2019–2021 and working groups in this area demonstrates the integrated and responsible approach of both Norway and Russia to protecting the region's environment.

The experience of cooperation with Russia in recent years demonstrates its qualitative and quantitative results in the form of projects already fully or partially implemented, as well as new agreements and the creation of additional institutions of interaction. One noteworthy example of this is Norway's willingness to support Russia in its own Arctic projects, which are not directly linked to a common land and sea border or multilateral cooperation formats, such as Norwegian support for nuclear power in Russia, namely the safety of the Kola nuclear power plant. Over the past three years, Norway has demonstrated its willingness to share its own experience and knowledge with Russia, as well as to contribute to the development and introduction of new measures and policies that are already being implemented in Norway, including ecosystem management of the environment.

¹⁰⁹ Nordic Council of Ministers suspends all co-operation with Russia // Nordic Co-operation URL: <https://www.norden.org/en/news/nordic-council-ministers-suspends-all-co-operation-russia> (accessed 17 July 2022).

Thus, Norway and Russia accumulated a huge potential for cooperation in various fields: from the economy to culture. At the same time, the implementation of many projects, due to their peculiarities, depends on the continuity of the process of cooperation between the two countries. Despite the difficult geopolitical situation after 2014, as well as Norway's membership in NATO, the Norwegian side has repeatedly stressed the importance and necessity of dialogue and cooperation with Russia in the Arctic to ensure the integrated development of this unique region. This was confirmed by the persistence of cooperation projects even in the energy sector, which is closely linked to the national interests of states and which is strongly influenced by political tensions in the international arena.

However, due to the events of February 2022, Norway suspended cooperation with Russia in multilateral and bilateral formats. At the beginning of the summer of 2022, the Norwegian government did not announce the possibility of resuming existing projects and organizing new ones. The aggravation of relations between Russia and Western countries has a critical impact on the state of cooperation between the Arctic states in the region. Most joint projects between Norway and Russia have been suspended, new meetings within the framework of bilateral working groups are not held, and part of the interaction has been completely stopped, as, for example, in the energy sector due to the departure of the Norwegian Equinor from Russia. There is no information in the public domain about the current status of cooperation in some projects, but it can be assumed that the lack of data indicates a suspension of bilateral cooperation. In the multilateral formats of cooperation between Norway and Russia, a similar trend can be traced, as Norway has put on pause all joint projects with Russia and, in general, interaction with it within the framework of the Arctic Council, the Council of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Northern Dimension partnership and all CBC, in particular, Kolarctic CBC.

The implementation of the accumulated capital of the Norwegian-Russian cooperation in the Arctic largely depends on the possibility of overcoming the foreign policy crisis in the coming years. Otherwise, the rich experience of interaction in the region in various fields will be lost, as well as opportunities for future cooperation. In addition, a break in relations can have a critical impact on the state of the Arctic ecosystems, which are extremely vulnerable to global climate change and local pollution, requiring collective action by all countries in the region [10, Makarov I.A., Stepanov I.A., p. 136].

However, the experience of scientific cooperation between Norway and the USSR during the acute geopolitical crisis during the years of the Cold War testifies to the reality of overcoming difficulties and tensions in bilateral relations in order to continue cooperation in the Arctic. In 1958, meetings of Soviet and Norwegian oceanologists were held, and in 1965, three years after the Caribbean crisis, the first joint expedition of the countries was carried out in the Barents Sea to study fish stocks, which testifies to the understanding by states of the importance of developing cooperation to protect the environment and implementation of sustainable economic activity in the Arctic ¹¹⁰. The signing by the

¹¹⁰ 60 let rossiysko-norvezhskogo nauchnogo sotrudnichestva: pripodnyali zheleznyy zanaves radi obshchego morya [60 years of Russian-Norwegian scientific cooperation: the iron curtain was lifted for the sake of a common sea] // Fishnews.ru. URL: <https://fishnews.ru/rubric/krupnyim-planom/11069> (accessed 18 August 2022).

USSR, Norway, Denmark, Canada and the USA of the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears (1973) also indicates the priority of international cooperation in the field of environmental protection in the Arctic. The past experience of overcoming crisis situations and the rich history of relations between the two countries should form the basis for the resumption of dialogue, the preservation and enhancement of the accumulated capital of Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the Arctic.

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The article was submitted 26.07.2022; approved after reviewing 27.07.2022; accepted for publication 25.08.2022.

Contribution of the authors: the authors contributed equally to this article.

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.