

The New Middle Way

*The Confluence of Petroleum and the
Environment in Official Norwegian
Discourses on the High North 2004-2006*

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Abstract

This thesis explores the confluence of petroleum interests and environmental concerns in official Norwegian discourses in the High North from 2004 to 2006. By retrofitting Marquis Childs' seminal Middle Way concept for use in the post-Cold War Norwegian context as the New Middle Way, I find that Norwegian officials adopted a pragmatic balance between petroleum and environmental interests to create a discourse that could be tailored to specific actors, creating win-win situations conducive to both cooperation and the advancement of Norwegian interests. In addition, the discourse was employed to both promote the Norwegian oil industry as an “environmentally friendly” alternative globally, while at the same time allowing Norway to retain its role as an environmental norm entrepreneur. The New Middle Way discourse, furthermore, played an important role in Norwegian attempts to prevent its own marginalization surrounded by three powerful geopolitical actors, Russia, the United States, and the European Union. In sum, this thesis finds that while the New Middle Way discourse furthered cooperation, the main aim of the discourse nevertheless remained the promotion of Norwegian economic interests and environmental norm entrepreneurship through a patchwork of bilateral relationships, transnational economic networks, and intergovernmental organizations.

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1 Introduction

The clash of diametrically opposed ideals has often played a significant role in contemporary history. The conflict between capitalism and communism came to define the 20th century, embroiling the world in a multifaceted geopolitical conflict between East and West. With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the paradigm collapsed, only to be replaced by another with a similarly global reach, the conflict between environmental and economic interests. In no place has this new paradigm been more pronounced than in the Arctic. The accelerated pace of climate change in the region, dramatically represented by a somber menagerie of collapsing icebergs and struggling wildlife in media broadcasts around the world, has captured the world's attention and raised the environmental stakes in the region to unforeseen levels. At the same time, however, for both the region's historically impoverished communities and large, transnational economic interests, a changing climate has presented new economic opportunities. Tourism, fishing, shipping, and petroleum interests have increasingly shifted their attention North, looking to cash in on the new economic opportunities of the "New Arctic."¹ The conflict to balance the region's economic potential with its environmental importance would thus come to define the region's rapidly developing history.

It is in this paradox that the eight Arctic states, in particular the five littoral ones, found themselves in the 2000s.² At that time, the Arctic, territorially speaking, remained largely undefined. For decades, the region had been of little interest outside of the region's small population, save for the region's strategic importance in the context of the Cold War. In the 2000s, however, new geological assessments claimed significant petroleum reserves possibly existed under the region's rapidly melting ice cover.³ Simultaneously, geopolitical conflicts

¹ The term "New Arctic" refers to the contemporary Arctic where, "climate change has heightened international interest in northern navigation routes and mineral exploitation," as in Doel, Ronald E., Urban Wråkberg, and Suzanne Zeller. "Science, Environment, and the New Arctic." *Journal of Historical Geography* 44 (2014): 2-14. doi:10.1016/j.jhg.2013.12.003, 2

² The five littoral states, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia, and the United States, are sometimes referred to as the Arctic Five to differentiate them from the eight states that make up the Arctic Council. Sweden, Finland, and Iceland are the three additional Arctic Council members often included in the wide term "the Arctic states."

³ For a nuanced insight into these assessments, most notably the 2000 U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) World Petroleum Assessment 2000 and 2008 Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal, see Raspotnik, Andreas. *The European Union and the Geopolitics of the Arctic*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2018. January 26, 2018. Accessed May 20, 2018.

and other supply disruptions saw the price of oil skyrocket. While the term seems hyperbolic today, many at the time believed these conditions had led to a “scramble for the Arctic” as the Arctic states looked to establish their claims on the region’s prospective resource wealth.⁴ Therefore, the five littoral Arctic states realized it was time to define the region in terms of governance. Per the terms of the 1982 United Nation’s Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Arctic states began to submit territorial claims to the United Nation’s Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) for the first time.⁷ These claims formed part of a wider web of bilateral relationships, transnational economic networks, and intergovernmental organizations that would systematically begin to define the region in the 2000s.

In order to systematically understand how different actors approached spaces for competition and cooperation in the region, it is critical to explore the discourses that accompanied the region’s rapidly changing geopolitical landscape. In the Arctic States, discursive narratives often played a key component in shaping their respective approaches and strategies in the region. In Norway, the discourse was defined by the struggle to balance the competing concepts of utilitarian capitalism and pioneer environmentalism that had come to define the Norwegian debate around its petroleum industry.⁹ It was a debate that naturally tracked North as the industry looked to further expand operations in the Barents Sea.

It is this debate that serves as the point of departure for this thesis. I argue that this balancing act constitutes the development of a *New Middle Way*, a retrofitting of Marquis Child’s seminal concept describing Sweden for a uniquely Norwegian context. Instead of

https://books.google.no/books?id=Rh1HDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT65&lpg=PT65&dq=USGS 2000arctic&source=bl&ots=BdfqB47j_X&sig=XaK7UOjd4YLLqGu1GSAi_vRAIgA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjx2fylkZXbAhUNJ1AKHdALCiMQ6AEIeDAI#v=onepage&q=USGS 2000 arctic&f=false.

⁴ See Financial Times. “Scramble for the Arctic.” Financial Times. August 19, 2007. Accessed May 01, 2018. <https://www.ft.com/content/65b9692c-4e6f-11dc-85e7-0000779fd2ac>; Alternatively, the perception of the race for resources in the region has also been termed the “Arctic Gold Rush” by authors such as such as Roger Howard, see Howard, Roger. *The Arctic Gold Rush the New Race for Tomorrows Natural Resources*. London: Continuum, 2009.

⁷ Russia made the first submission of the littoral Arctic States in 2001. Norway would follow suit in 2006, followed by Denmark and Iceland in 2009. For further information on the processes behind UNCLOS and the CLCS, see Kesitalo, E. C. H. *Negotiating the Arctic: The Construction of an International Region*. New York: Routledge, 2011; Byers, Michael. *Who Owns the Arctic?: Understanding Sovereignty Disputes in the North*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2009; Byers, Michael. *International Law and the Arctic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Cambridge University Press Online Books.

⁹ Anker, Peder. "A Pioneer Country? A History of Norwegian Climate Politics." *Climatic Change*, 2016. doi:10.1007/s10584-016-1653-x, 1.

balancing the diametrically opposed systems of communism and capitalism, the basis for Child's original Middle Way concept, I employ the New Middle Way as an umbrella term to describe the various analogous discourses by which Norwegian officials sought to balance economic interests and environmental concerns related to petroleum development. The conceptual development of the term the New Middle Way and its foundation in Norwegian and Scandinavian historical narratives will be covered in depth in following chapter. I argue this New Middle Way discourse emerged out of the conflicts between environmental groups, the government, and petroleum interests around petroleum activity on the Norwegian Continental Shelf (NCS) in the 1970s and 1980s. The discourse would come to be institutionalized in various capacities by Norwegian officials in the 1990s, before shifting North to the Barents when economic and geopolitical conditions conducive to petroleum activity in the region emerged in 2000s. From that point forward, the New Middle Way would profoundly influence Norwegian official discourse, promoting Norwegian economic interests and environmental norm entrepreneurship through bilateral relationships, transnational economic networks, and intergovernmental organizations.¹⁰

This project will therefore answer the following question:

How did "New Middle Way" thinking influence official Norwegian discourses in spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North from 2004-2006?

I define *spaces for competition and cooperation* as areas in which actors can either cooperate or compete in order to secure economic development in contested, disputed, or unclaimed areas, particularly in areas characterized by natural resource wealth. In terms of its historical analysis, this thesis focuses on speeches given by officials in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, and Office of the Prime Minister in relation to the High North from 2004-2006. Particular focus will be given to Norwegian relations with Russia, the United States, Canada, and Europe.

¹⁰ For a further discussion of the conceptualization of Scandinavian states as "environmental norm entrepreneurs," see Ingebritsen, Christine. "Norm Entrepreneurs." *Cooperation and Conflict* 37, no. 1 (2002): 11-23. doi:10.1177/0010836702037001689, 14-16.

In terms of intergovernmental organizations, which formed a critical component of Norwegian High North strategy during this period, I will focus on the Arctic Council and the Barents Cooperation. In terms of the High North, I employ Rolf Tamnes' definition of the High North as, "The Barents region, The Norwegian Sea, The Barents Sea, and the Arctic Sea in the direction of the North Pole," as shown in the map below.¹¹



Figure 1 Map of Northern Europe with the area defined by the Norwegian government as the High North circled.¹²

In addition to High North, this thesis will additionally cover Arctic intergovernmental organizations whose work affects the High North, but also operate outside of the region in the broader Circumpolar North. The Arctic Council covers the Arctic region in its entirety, whereas the Barents Cooperation covers the administrative districts denoted on the following page.

¹¹ Tamnes, Rolf. "Et Større Norge." In *Vendepunkter I Norsk Utenrikspolitikk: Nye Internasjonale Vilkår Etter Den Kalde Krigen*. Oslo: Unipub, 2009, 260

¹² Johnsen, Arve. *Barents 2020. Report*. Oslo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006. Accessed May 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/ud/vedlegg/barents2020e.pdf>.

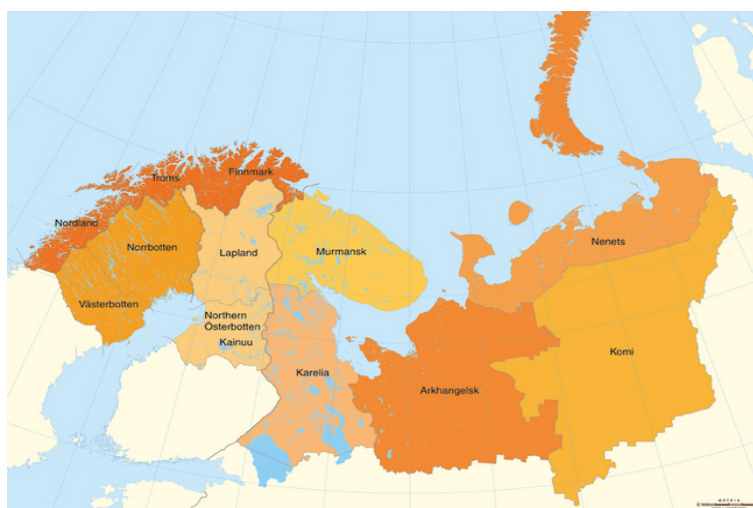


Figure 2 Map of the administrative regions included in the Barents Cooperation.¹³

The time period, 2004-2006, was selected for two reasons. Firstly, the timeline of events in the region over the course of the 2000s. 2004 represented the first whole year the Barents Sea had been open for petroleum activity since all activity was stopped while the government conducted an evaluation of petroleum activity in the region from June 2002 to July 2003.¹⁴ Over the course of the period from 2004 to 2006, global oil prices would rise significantly, geopolitical events across the globe would enhance the importance of energy security, and a series of scientific reports would heighten the environmental stakes in the region. Secondly, 2006 would see the Norwegian government submit its first and only proposal to CLCS for claims in Arctic waters, in addition to launching its first comprehensive High North strategy, *The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy*. Thus, in this period, Norway went from having a general focus on the region to developing a sophisticated, future oriented strategy that effectively institutionalized the New Middle Way in the country's approach to the High North.

¹³ Barents Secretariat. "Maps of the Barents Region." Barents Secretariat. March 02, 2016. Accessed May 15, 2018. <https://barents.no/nb/maps-of-barents-region>.

¹⁴ Ministry of Petroleum and Energy. *Utredning Av Konsekvenser Av Helårig Petroleumsvirksomhet I Området Lofoten - Barentshavet*. Report. Accessed May 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/kilde/oed/hdk/2002/0004/ddd/pdfv/183140-utredning_oed_3_juli_100_dpi.pdf.

1.1 Historiography

In the past decade, the amount of historical work in regard to the contemporary Arctic has rapidly proliferated. In the interest of brevity, this historiographical section will focus most intently on literature concerning the Norwegian High North, in addition to literature located in Nordic contexts relevant to this work.¹⁷

1.1.1 The Nordic States, the Arctic, and the Scandinavian Welfare State

In terms of approaches bringing together the Nordic region, the Arctic, Europe, and the world at large, the historical literature has expanded considerably since the mid-2000s. In the context of the Nordic region and Europe, Musiał 2009 and Østergård 2002 are key works linking the region to the broader construction of Europe, offering an understanding into how the Nordic region fits into the broader European context.²⁰ Shadian 2016, on the other hand, addresses the Nordic-E.U. relationship in the Arctic context, noting Brussels increased interest in the Arctic region.²¹ These works together posit an interesting perspective on the analysis found in this thesis. The clear connection between the Norwegian High North strategy and the Norway's European strategy in the discourses of Norwegian officials, insofar as particular discourses were leveraged to maintain Norwegian influence in Brussels, provides an interesting perspective in the context of the evolution of the Nordic-E.U. relationship.²²

In addition, the broad historical body of work on various "brands" or "frames" associated with the Nordic region is an interdisciplinary area within Nordic and/or Arctic studies which has influenced this thesis. Carl Marklund finds the Nordic States have long engaged in active efforts to promote certain "brands" attached to the region in the global

¹⁷ For a thorough historiography in regard to contemporary Arctic history covering the entire Arctic region, see Martin-Nielsen, Janet. "Re-Conceptualizing the North: A Historiographic Discussion." *Journal Of Northern Studies* 9, no. 1 (2015): 51-68.

²⁰ Musiał, Kazimierz. "Reconstructing Nordic Significance in Europe on the Threshold of the 21st Century." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 34, no. 3 (2009): 286-306; Østergård, Uffe. "Europa I Norden." *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, no. 03-04 (2004): 382-98.

²¹ Shadian, Jessica M. "The Arctic Gaze: Redefining the Boundaries of the Nordic Region." In *Science, Geopolitics and Culture in the Polar Region: Norden Beyond Borders*. Routledge, 2016. Accessed May 08, 2018. https://books.google.no/books?id=x73eCwAAQBAJ&pg=PT322&lpg=PT322&dq=The Arctic gaze : redefining the boundaries of the Nordic region&source=bl&ots=VH5WATYuaE&sig=_9Apslj5pIJ97Wxtg5x5-vW8jDM&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiNoeyP74TbAhVklZoKHUJaC-oQ6AEIKTAA#v=onepage&q=The Arctic gaze : redefining the boundaries of the Nordic region&f=false.

²² In the context of Norwegian concern with evolving European security structures, see Børresen, Jacob, Gullow Gjeseth, and Rolf Tamnes. *Norsk Forsvarshistorie. 1970-2000: Allianseforsvar I Endring*. Vol. 5. 5 vols. Stavanger: Eide, 2004, 376-378

perspective.²⁴ Marklund's views are particularly interesting in light of Ingebritsen's treatment of Scandinavia as norm entrepreneurs and de Carvalho & Neumann's work highlighting Norway as a status seeking small power.²⁵ This thesis finds Norwegian officials leveraged discourses with a variety of actors in order to institutionalize Norwegian normative standards beyond Norway, particularly standards aligned with the New Middle Way discourse. In part, it could be argued, this was done in part inside the Nordic brand framework described by Marklund. Thus, this thesis additionally contributes to the growing field of research exploring how the Nordic states have historically utilized various, "positive" attributes or brands to "punch above their weight" as small states in global geopolitical circles.²⁶

1.1.2 Relevance of this Work in the Norwegian Historiographical Perspective

This thesis, with its explicit focus on Norway, seeks to add a number of valuable perspectives to the expanding Norwegian historiography in terms of the contemporary High North. Furthermore, the thesis aims to add new perspectives to the interdisciplinary dialogue between political scientists, international relations theorists, and historians, making a case for more contemporary historical work in fields such as Arctic studies.

In terms of the historical, few historians have had as prominent a role in defining the contemporary High North as Rolf Tamnes. His works highlight the evolution of the region from a place of tremendous strategic importance during the Cold War to a dynamic, international region on the move during the mid-2000s.²⁷ Tamnes' work posits three themes of interest in the context of this project. The first is the connection between the early 1990s and the 2000s in terms of developments in the Norwegian policy in the High North. During both periods, Tamnes notes that in the center of this connection rested a desire to contribute to "normalization and development" in the region.²⁸ This thesis deepens that connection by

²⁴ Marklund, Carl. "The Social Laboratory, the Middle Way and the Swedish Model: Three Frames for the Image of Sweden." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 34, no. 3 (2009): 264-85. doi:10.1080/03468750903134715.

²⁵ de Carvalho, Benjamin, and Iver B. Neumann, eds. *Small State Status Seeking: Norway's Quest for International Standing*. Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2015; Ingebritsen, Christine. "Norm Entrepreneurs." *Cooperation and Conflict* 37, no. 1 (2002): 11-23. doi:10.1177/0010836702037001689.

²⁶ U.S. President Barack Obama as quoted in de Carvalho, Benjamin, and Jon Harald Sande Lie. "A Great Power Performance." In *Small State Status Seeking: Norway's Quest for International Standing*, 56-62. New York: Routledge, 2015, 56.

²⁷ These works include, Tamnes, Rolf. *The United States and the Cold War in the High North*. Oslo: Ad Notam, 1991; Tamnes, Rolf. *Oljealder: 1965-1995*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1997; and Tamnes, Rolf. "Et Større Norge."

²⁸ Tamnes, "Et større Norge," 304.

seeing the New Middle Way as a bridge between these two periods, with the 1990s representing the emergence of the New Middle Way in Norway and the 2000s representing its adaption and use in the High North. The second theme, regards the employment of “politics of engagement,” in particular similarities between Norwegian approaches to countries in the Global South and Norwegian approaches to other countries in the High North.²⁹ This thesis again corroborates Tamnes in this regard, finding Norwegian officials discursively employed actor specific adaptations of the New Middle Way in High North Dialogues with strategic partners in order to better engage them and, at the same time, bring them closer to preferred Norwegian policy positions. Additionally, in terms of the connection between High North policy and that in the Global South, it is indeed of great interest that the launch of the Integrated Management Plan for the Barents Sea, in addition to attempts to promote it in various dialogues with other Arctic actors occurred at the same time Tamnes notes Norway launched its Oil for Development policy, a policy that emphasized sustainable resource management in the countries in the Global South.³¹ Lastly, Tamnes also finds the connections between Norway’s petroleum policy, climate policy, and politics of engagement.³² In sum, Tamnes noted that, “Politics of engagement serve Norwegian interests, above all by being a door opener for the Norwegian oil industry,” going further to argue that, “Special interests and the common good go hand in hand also in Norwegian petroleum and climate policy.”³³ This thesis, with its discursive exploration of how Norwegian officials managed to use Norway’s strict environmental regulations to market Norwegian petroleum companies abroad, further adds to Tamnes’ notion.

In addition, Tamnes’ argument shows the utility of the New Middle Way term as an umbrella concept that can bring together analogous historical narratives highlighting the attempts of Norwegian officials to justify petroleum activity. Other historians, though not always in a High North context, have also noted similar connections between Norwegian petroleum, climate, and, at times, foreign policy. Peder Anker refers to it as a balance between “utilitarian capitalism” and “a longing to showcase Norway as an environmental pioneer country in the world.”³⁴ Charles Emmerson terms it, “an equilibrium between national,

²⁹ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 262.

³² Ibid., 262-263.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Anker, Peder. "A Pioneer Country?" 2.

commercial, state and environmental interests.³⁵ All of these narratives reflect Tamnes' notion that Norwegian authorities sought to build bridges, "between self-interest and the common interest, between the ambition for increased income and the wish for a better climate."³⁶

Thus, the New Middle Way term embodies a narrative popular amongst historians who study Norway, serving to unite these analogous arguments under an umbrella that allows them to be easily compared, contextualized, disseminated, and debated. It offers a fresh, new perspective on how these narratives adapted and evolved over time to suit changing political climates, in addition to the overall Norwegian and High North historiography.

This work will also contribute to the broader field of literature in the interdisciplinary field of Arctic studies, particularly in its ability to add context or new interpretations to the findings of political scientists and international relations theorists. The contribution of history in this field is desperately needed. While the number of contemporary Arctic histories has increased, they still represent a minority in comparison to the proliferation of political science work in the area, particularly in the Norwegian context. Leif Christian Jensen, Kristian Åtland, Øyvind Østerud, Helge Blakkisrud, and Geir Hønneland represent notable political scientists and international relations theorists who have largely contributed to the field of Arctic studies.

In particular, Leif Christian Jensen occupies a central place in the literature. An avid proponent of discourse analysis, Jensen's findings present an interesting basis for comparison in terms of the findings in this thesis, highlighting the different perspectives offered by history and political science, respectively. My thesis in large part complements Jensen's, however, its historical approach and focus on Norwegian officials offers a fresh, new perspective on the evolution of High North discourses in Norway. These differences yield some interesting points of agreement and contrast. Jensen argues that seven main discourses appeared around the petroleum debate in the High North in the early to mid-2000s.⁴³ Of these discourses, Jensen's analysis found that the "drilling for the environment" discourse was the most prominent in his analysis of the Norwegian press.⁴⁴ Jensen defines this discourse as the belief

³⁵ Emmerson, Charles. *The Future History of the Arctic: How Climate, Resources and Geopolitics Are Reshaping the North, and Why It Matters to the World*. London: Vintage, 2011, 277.

³⁶ Tamnes, Rolf. *Oljealder*, 218.

⁴³ Jensen, Leif Christian. *Boring for Miljøet: Russland Og Miljø I Den Norske Petroleumsdiskursen*. Report. February 2006. Accessed May 08, 2018. <https://www.fni.no/getfile.php/131687-1469868959/Filer/Publikasjoner/FNI-R0206.pdf>, 30-40.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

that, “Norway should not back away from extracting oil and gas from the Barents Sea because of the environment. On the contrary Norway should get a move on and help the Russians operate in a more environmentally friendly way.”⁴⁵ In contrast, however, this thesis finds that discourses similar to others Jensen noted, particularly the discourses on “strategic resources and new alliances” and “energy appetite and new alliances,” played a greater role in the discourses presented by Norwegian officials between 2004-2006.⁴⁶ Additionally, elements of the “power of example and competency transfer” discourse were also often evoked by Norwegian officials, not just in the Russia context, but the world at large in an attempt to brand the Norwegian petroleum industry as highly skilled and environmentally friendly.⁴⁷

The findings in this thesis, however, cast doubt on Jensen’s notion that, “[The drilling for the environment] discourse emerged – and grew in strength to become undeniable – without anyone actually sitting down to plan its conception, diffusion and, not least, influence.”⁵² Furthermore, Jensen argues that, “It would be totally impossible for one or more stakeholders to decide to establish and sustain a ‘drilling for the environment’ discourse given the sheer amount of text, time, and complexity involved.”⁵³ If one decouples the “drilling for the environment” themed discourse from just being used in the Russian context, historians such as Sejersted, Anker, and Tamnes all point to the emergence of analogous, “drilling for the environment” discourses in the late 1980s and early 1990s.⁵⁴ Anker, furthermore, puts forth a pathway by which these discourses were institutionalized into the Norwegian government in the early 1990s, an institutionalization which Tamnes additionally corroborates.⁵⁵ In short, there is a historical basis for the argument that the “drilling for the environment” emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s and was developed by the petroleum industry and institutionalized by the government during that time, therefore making it likely such discourses, aggregated under the umbrella of the New Middle Way discourse, were planned and controlled by various actors in Norway in terms of their “conception, diffusion,

⁴⁵ Jensen, Leif Christian. "Norwegian Petroleum Extraction in Arctic Waters to save the Environment: Introducing 'discourse Co-optation' as a New Analytical Term." *Critical Discourse Studies* 9, no. 1 (2012): 29-38. doi:10.1080/17405904.2011.632138, 33.

⁴⁶ Jensen, *Boring for Miljøet*, 34-38.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁵² Jensen, “Norwegian Petroleum Extraction in Arctic Waters,” 36.

⁵³ Jensen, “Norwegian Petroleum Extraction in Arctic Waters,” 35.

⁵⁴ Anker, “A Pioneer Country?”; Tamnes, *Oljealder*; Sejersted, Francis. *Sosialdemokratiets Tidsalder: Norge Og Sverige I Det 20. Århundre*. Oslo: Pax Forlag A/S, 2005.

⁵⁵ Anker, “A Pioneer Country?”; Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 218.

and influence.”⁵⁶ This thesis, in its analysis, further corroborates the basis for this argument in the High North context, finding that Norwegian officials actively disseminated New Middle Way discourses in support of petroleum activity in the region from 2004-2006, going as far as to publicly state that the petroleum industry needed better press and increasing funds for press coverage of petroleum related projects in the Barents Sea.

1.2 Methodology

The field of contemporary history has historically engendered methodological and epistemological debate within the broader academic discipline. While authors dating back to Alexis de Tocqueville have highlighted the benefits of contemporary histories, others, “traditionalists,” have argued that there is an inherent danger in such endeavors, a danger that the author loses sight of the historical in favor of the current.⁶⁷ Contemporary historians, however, must not be dissuaded by such critiques. An arbitrary passage of time is in and of itself not grounds for the constitution of increased objectivity or historical insight.⁶⁸ Historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. argued that contemporary historians must not be dissuaded by such critiques, noting an increase in what he termed the “velocity of history,” a notion that, “The ‘present’ becomes the ‘past’ more swiftly than ever before.”⁶⁹ Schlesinger, however, expressed these sentiments in 1967.⁷⁰ The advent of the information age and with it the proliferation of digital archives has since led to an even more awesome increase in the velocity of history. Historical data has simply never been easier to access and historical interpretation never easier to circulate.⁷¹ Thus, it is not an arbitrary passage of time makes a work “more” or “less” historical, but rather the methodology one employs and the historical debates one situates themselves in that constitute “history.” Therefore, today’s contemporary historian must possess a methodological repertoire that not only demonstrates sufficient

⁵⁶ Jensen, “Norwegian Petroleum Extraction in Arctic Waters,” 36.

⁶⁷ Schlesinger, Arthur, Jr. "On the Writing of Contemporary History." *The Atlantic*. Accessed February 26, 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1967/03/on-the-writing-of-contemporary-history/305731/>.

⁶⁸ Dewey, John. *Logic the theory of inquiry*. Read Books Ltd., 2013 in Schlesinger, Arthur, Jr. "On the Writing of Contemporary History." *The Atlantic*, March 1967. Accessed February 26, 2018.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1967/03/on-the-writing-of-contemporary-history/305731/>.

⁶⁹ Schlesinger, Arthur, Jr. "On the Writing of Contemporary History."

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Tanaka, Stefan. "Pasts in a Digital Age." 2013. Accessed February 26, 2018.

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/dh/12230987.0001.001/1:4/--writing-history-in-the-digital-age?g=dculture;rgn=div1;view=fulltext;xc=1#4.2>.

control of the field's, "traditional forms and conventions," but a fluency in the emergent trends of its digital future.⁷²

For the contemporary historian, the ability to further leverage this methodological repertoire to delineate the historical from the current is critical. In his 2015 work *Linguistic Turn and Discourse Analysis in History*, Canadian historian John E. Toews conceptualizes this idea as the "otherness of the past."⁷⁶ Toews argues that the historian can use discourse analysis to, "establish the otherness of the past...by recognizing the strangeness, the alien character of the 'voices' or 'traces' from the past deposited in the archival record."⁷⁷ By delineating discursive discrepancies between the past and present and recognizing the "otherness of the past" in question, the contemporary historian can therefore, "Produce a very concrete historical consciousness, an awareness of the contingent historicity of present existence."⁷⁹

In terms of the practical aspects of conducting discourse analysis, Toews notes that the historian must first, "Identify a discourse within a given body of evidence, to map out its boundaries, and reconstruct its inner logic or structures."⁸² In this work, the New Middle Way discourse is the *identified discourse*, defined as the discourse by which Norwegian officials sought to balance economic interest and environmental concerns related to petroleum development in the High North. The *discursive body* refers to the official Norwegian dialogue on the High North as constituted by the speeches of Norwegian government officials and complementary archival material from the Norwegian Oil and Gas Association, the Barents Cooperation, and the Arctic Council. The discursive boundaries, furthermore, have been identified as spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North. The last step in Toews' progression, *the reconstruction of a discourse's inner logic or structures*, will be treated by situating the New Middle Way discourse in the High North, noting the discourse's long roots back to the 1980s. Therefore, instead of treating the emergence of the New Middle Way discourse as a purely Arctic phenomenon, separate from existing discourses in the Norwegian petroleum debate, this thesis' analysis will interpret it as a part of Norway's long-running discursive narrative on petroleum activity.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷⁶Toews, John E. "Linguistic Turn and Discourse Analysis in History." *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2015, 202-07. doi:10.1016/b978-0-08-097086-8.62143-8, 203.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 204

1.3 Primary Sources

Key to the discourse analysis featured in this project is the extensive number of primary sources used and consulted in the course of developing this project. 60 speeches and statements from officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, and the Office of the Prime Minister compose the main body of primary sources in terms of this thesis. All of these sources were taken from the digital historical archive of the Norwegian government. In addition, other, pertinent complementary sources were taken from the government's digital archives, in addition to the digital archives of the Norwegian Oil and Gas Association, the Barents Cooperation, and the Arctic Council. This aggregation of sources was compiled to ensure a considerable breath of relevant primary documents were included. I attempted to source all primary sources used in this thesis in English. In the case that a source was not available in English, the Norwegian source was consulted. All translations are my own, unless otherwise specified.

In regard to the speeches from Norwegian government digital archives central to this thesis' analysis, the search term *high north** was used. This resulted in 56 hits for the search field *Bondevik's 2nd Government* with date range *2002-2004*, with additional 22 hits for the search field *Bondevik's 2nd Government* with the date range *2005*, and, lastly, 40 hits for the search field *Stoltenberg's 2nd Government* with the date range *2006*. This yielded a total of 118 results, which were then sorted through by date, in order to eliminate speeches from 2002-2003 found in the first search, then by department, and finally by relevance to yield 60 speech transcripts. In regard to the government documents used in the course of this thesis, a search using the Norwegian term *nordområdene** (the northern regions) was used in the online archives of the Norwegian parliament. The choice was made to use the Norwegian term due to the fact that only some government white papers from this period are available in English, therefore the Norwegian was employed in order to ensure as comprehensive a search as possible. This search yielded 23 results combined for the two search time periods that corresponded to this project 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. These results were then sorted by department and prevalence in the discourse to yield the papers used in the course of this project.

These sources, however, present limitations. All of the sources comprise publicly released documents or publically made speeches. Thus, it is pertinent to note Trachtenberg's

caveat on public sources, in which he argues, “There is a limit to how far you can go just using published sources.”⁸⁶ What Trachtenberg means is that the public sources do not include, for example, internal correspondences between officials, policymakers, and various individuals in the private sector that could give more insight as to the exact means by which certain information or arguments entered the discourse. Therefore this analysis, while considerable, cannot be considered to represent the full spectrum of discourse amongst relevant actors during the time period. In addition, its limited scope, concerning only government officials, leaves out important actors in the press, petroleum industry, and environmental movement who also heavily influence discourses in the region.

1.4 Outline

In the second chapter, the construction of the New Middle Way term will be explored. First, an overview of social democratic commonalities in Scandinavia will be presented to give a *raison d'être* for the adaptation of the Middle Way concept into the Norwegian context as the New Middle Way. From that point, the term itself, as Marquis Childs constructed it, will be analyzed and thereafter extrapolated from the Swedish to the Norwegian context. To conclude the chapter, an overview of the New Middle Way's inception and evolution in Norway from 1969-2004 will be presented.

The next three chapters comprise the main body of analysis in this thesis. Chapter three covers the Bondevik II government from 2004-2005, whereas chapters four and five cover the Stoltenberg II government from 2005-2006. The Stoltenberg II period covers two chapters due to the large amount of primary source material available.

The two periods, nevertheless, are structured in the same way. A short introduction is followed by an analysis of relevant petroleum and environmental discourses. The confluence of these discourses serves as a springboard into the next section, where their influence in spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North is analyzed. These sections are divided off into sections corresponding to three relationship areas (Russia, Europe, and North America) and two intergovernmental sections (the Barents Cooperation and the Arctic Council). In regard to chapters four and five, chapter four represents petroleum and

⁸⁶ Trachtenberg, Marc. *The Craft of International History a Guide to Method*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006, 142.

environmental discourses under the Stoltenberg II government, whereas chapter five represents the discourse in regard to the different regions and intergovernmental organizations noted above. These sections, when deemed pertinent, include subsections intended to highlight special aspects of the respective discourse or dialogue. Chapters three, four, and five all end with conclusions that summarize and contextualize the chapter's findings in terms of the entirety of the thesis.

The sixth and final chapter is comprised of the conclusion, divided into three parts. The first offers conclusions on the entire body of analysis presented in this thesis. The second takes these conclusions and reframes them in the context of the historiographical debates featured in Chapter 1.1, and the last section looks at avenues for further research.

2 The Emergence of the New Middle Way

To understand the effects of the “New Nordic Middle Way” in the High North, an understanding of the term itself and how it came into existence is essential. The following chapter provides a brief overview of the conceptualization of “the middle way” in the Scandinavian context and then, via an exploration of its emergence in Norway during the 1980s and 1990s, the influence of the New Middle Way discourse in the Norwegian political sphere will be established.

2.1 Establishing Commonality: The Validity of Employing Middle Way Terminology in the Norwegian Context

Despite the fact that the middle way term has rarely been used in the Norwegian context, the base concept behind Childs’ “Middle Way” term, the balance between two diametrically opposed points of view, is highly applicable to Norway post 1989 given its reinterpretation as the New Middle Way. The use of the term in the Norwegian context, however, is grounded in more than just this basic conceptual foundation. The shared social democratic heritage of Scandinavia and its long history of promoting brands such as the “Middle Way” or the “Nordic Model” form a conceptual framework that further legitimizes the use of the concept in terms of Norway.

According to Francis Sejersted, this common social democratic development differentiates Scandinavia from the rest of the West. In his book *Sosialdemokratiets Tidsalder: Norge og Sverige I det 20. Århundre*, he notes that, “If we remove ourselves from the great abstractions, we see that Scandinavia has a common development that in certain respects otherwise differentiates itself from the Western world.”⁹⁰ Hilde Sandvik argues social democratic, “middle way” development in Scandinavia occurred across four distinct historical periods: “the rural background of the old politics (up until about 1850); the social liberal efforts of 1850-1920; the interwar crises followed by the social democratic governments of 1920-40; and finally, and only very briefly, the post-war discussions on social

⁹⁰ Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*, 13.

citizenship that led to the establishment of national insurance schemes (1945-65).”⁹¹ In reference to the connection specifically between Norway and Sweden, the two countries’ social democratic or labor parties both grew out of Marxist parties at the end of the 1800s.⁹³ From that point, Norway’s labor party was started in 1887, with the Swedish version following two years later in 1889.⁹⁴ The Norwegian Labor Commission, established 1885, followed a similar model to the corresponding Swedish organization implemented a year earlier.⁹⁵ Furthermore, several scholars have also posited that the regions shared strand of Protestantism, Lutheranism, also helped in facilitate the development of social democratic organs in Scandinavia.⁹⁶

In the course of the next fifty years, the Norwegian and Swedish labor parties rose to “hegemonic positions” in their respective countries.⁹⁷ In both countries, this was fueled by the formation of “Red-Green” coalitions between labor movements and farmers.⁹⁸ This shared rise to prominence naturally led to, “Close Nordic cooperation within the field of social policy throughout the twentieth century.”⁹⁹ In essence, the development of similar systems of governance. Danish historian Klaus Petersen notes this led to the establishment of “institutions for knowledge transfers between the five countries,” that were, “ideologically important in constructing a shared Nordic welfare state identity.”¹⁰⁰ Therefore, middle way conceptualizations of balance and adaptability were not just representative of the Swedish governance, but that of Denmark and Norway’s. From the mid-twentieth century, the

⁹¹ Sandvik, Hilde. "From Local Citizenship to the Politics of Universal Welfare: Scandinavian Insights." In *Reinventing Social Democratic Development – Insights from Indian and Scandinavian Comparisons*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2016

⁹³ Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*, 13.

⁹⁴ Sandvik, "From Local Citizenship to the Politics of Universal Welfare," 95.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 96

⁹⁶ Hilson, Mary. *The Nordic Model: Scandinavia since 1945*. London: Reaktion Books, 2008, 93; Bjørnson, Øyvind. "The Social Democrats and the Norwegian Welfare State: Some Perspectives." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 26, no. 3 (2001): 197-223. doi:10.1080/034687501750303855., 198-205

⁹⁷ Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*, 13.

⁹⁸ See Hilson, *The Nordic Model*, 92; Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.

Capitalism. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990, 30; and Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*.

⁹⁹ Petersen, Klaus. "National, Nordic, and Trans-Nordic: Transnational Perspectives on the History of the Nordic Welfare State." In Petersen, Klaus. "National, Nordic, and Trans-Nordic: Transnational Perspectives on the History of the Nordic Welfare State." In *Beyond Welfare State Models: Transnational Historical Perspectives in Social Policy*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2011, 42

¹⁰⁰ Petersen, "National, Nordic and Trans-Nordic," 42.

Scandinavian states would begin to actively collaborate to maintain certain images or “brands” representative of the Scandinavian model of governance.¹⁰¹

In sum, while the concept of the Middle Way is indeed most associated with Sweden, it is not alien to Norway and thus its adaptation to the New Middle Way in this thesis is grounded in the shared social democratic history of the two countries. Therefore, the New Middle Way term is not arbitrary, but deliberate, situating this thesis not only in existing historical narratives on the High North or Norway, but that of Scandinavia and the greater Nordic region as a whole.

2.2 Defining the Middle Way

The original concept of the “Middle Way” originates from a 1936 book by American journalist Marquis Childs titled *Sweden: The Middle Way*. Childs argues that Sweden has developed a system that took a middle way between, “the absolute socialization of Russia and the end development of capitalism in America.”¹⁰² Childs thought the Swedes to be the “ultimate pragmatists” of time, able to bring together a, “Mixed economy, collective bargaining, and social policy, reflecting a set of progressive social-liberal values,” to create a welfare state structured for the betterment of society as a whole.¹⁰³ Key to this conceptualization is the willingness of the Swedes to “adjust, to compromise, to meet what appears to be reality.”¹⁰⁵ In sum, the balance between two, seemingly diametrically opposed ideas forms the conceptual foundation of Child’s Middle Way concept, with a sense for pragmatism, adaptability, and compromise making up its defining characteristics in terms of its evolution.

In terms of the Swedish conceptualization, the collapse of the Soviet Union effectively rendered the term ideologically obsolete. The disappearance of the globally-oriented socialism the Soviet Union had represented eliminated one of the extremes the model relied upon in its construction. As Swedish journalist and author Per Ohlsson noted in a talk given at Columbia

¹⁰¹ Marklund, Carl. "The Nordic Model on the Global Market of Ideas: The Welfare State as Scandinavia's Best Brand." *Geopolitics* 22, no. 3 (2016): 623-39. doi:10.1080/14650045.2016.1251906

¹⁰² Childs, Marquis W. *Sweden: The Middle Way*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1936, quoted in as in Marklund, “The Social Laboratory, the Middle Way and the Swedish Model,” 268.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

University in 2006, “One cannot be in the middle between something and nothing.”¹¹⁵ Lastly, poor economic situations in Sweden in the 1970s and 1980s effectively put the concept on “trial.”¹¹⁶ In 1994, “the jewel [was] taken out of the crown” of the Swedish welfare state, when the Riksdagen was forced to make drastic cuts to the “allmänna tilläggspensjonen” (ATP).¹¹⁷ Its “removal” represented the end of an era and the arguable end of the Middle Way’s relevance in the Swedish context.

The conceptual framework and characteristics of Child’s original Middle Way concept, however, lived on in another Scandinavian state, Norway. In the Norwegian context, it was not a balance between capitalism and communism, but rather economic and environmental interests that defined its unique reinterpretation of the Middle Way, a New Middle Way for a post-Cold War era. As the Middle Way’s relevance deteriorated in Sweden, a confluence of events in the late 1980s, culminating in the 1989 Norwegian parliamentary election, would drive the New Middle Way to the fore of Norwegian politics. From that point forward, Norwegian government officials would strive to balance economic interests for the betterment of the Norwegian society, shrewdly adapting the New Middle Way to fit shifting geopolitical sands, market conditions, and, not least, growing awareness about the effects of climate change. Thus, the New Middle Way evoked the same characteristics of pragmatism, adaptability, and compromise Childs set out in his original Middle Way framework several decades before.

2.3 The Emergence of a New Middle Way in Norway 1969-2004

As Norwegian historian Rolf Tamnes puts it in his seminal work *Oljealder 1965-1995*, “Oil changed the Norwegian society, quickly and, partly, dramatically...Norway became a very rich country, thanks to oil money.”¹²² After the discovery of oil in 1969, Norway became an “oil nation,” vulnerable, both politically and economically, to fluctuations in oil prices.¹²³ Yet, despite the dangers of Norway’s growing economic dependence on petroleum resources, petroleum revenue played a significant role in Norwegian societal development and Norway

¹¹⁵ Ohlsson, Per T. "Sweden: Still the Middle Way?" Lecture, Columbia University, New York City, September 28, 2006. Accessed May 9, 2018. www.columbia.edu/cu/swedish/events/fall06/PTOChilds92806Web.doc

¹¹⁶ Childs, Marquis William. *Sweden: The Middle Way on Trial*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980.

¹¹⁷ Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*, 416.

¹²² Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 186.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

experienced a strong, growing economy during a time when its neighbors, in particular Sweden, began to struggle.¹²⁴ Despite these economic benefits, however, conflicts between environmental concerns and the Norwegian government also quickly emerged, most notably between then Minister of the Environment Gro Harlem Brundtland and a group of leftist intellectuals called the Deep Ecologists in the 1970s and 80s.¹²⁷ Brundtland, however, saw the growing conflict an opportunity to implement the Labor Party's own tradition of technocratic, macroeconomic solutions to societal and political problems that would seek to balance the continued economic promise of Norwegian petroleum resources with growing environmental concerns.¹²⁸ These efforts culminated in Brundtland's chairmanship of the United Nations World Commission on Development and the Environment that led a report titled *Our Common Future*.¹³⁰ *Our Common Future* played a critical role in the emergence of "sustainable development" as a buzzword in global affairs and the concept would quickly come to play an important role Norwegian and Scandinavian foreign policy, particularly in regard to attempts to spur economic development in the Global South.¹³¹ Critical to this formulation was the concept that the field of technology is constantly evolving and thus, contrary to the her environmental opponents, technological development would allow for safe resource extraction, generating the wealth necessary to sustain the state while at the same time not causing environmental damage. To labor party circles, this view was decidedly more palatable than the zero-growth proposal ventured by the Deep Ecologists.

Yet, while Brundtland was considerably friendlier to business interests than the Deep Ecologists, the 1989 election showed that even Brundtland's moderate environmental ambitions enjoyed limited support. Hoping to seize on momentum from Brundtland's role in the authoring of *Our Common Future*, the Labor Party attempted to make the 1989 Norwegian parliamentary election about the environment.¹³³ Despite Brundtland's brand as the "world's environmental protection minister," however, the Labor Party lost support as a result of the election. While Brundtland held on to the prime minister's office, the Labor Party, "found it was not able to follow [Brundtland's] radical line in climate policy."¹³⁴

¹²⁴ Tamnes, *Oljelder*, 186-187; Sejerstad, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*, 407.

¹²⁷ Anker, "A Pioneer Country?" 2.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 5-6.

¹³¹ Anker, "A Pioneer Country?" 6-11.

¹³³ Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*, 372.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

The election, Sejersted noted, “Showed it was difficult to be both an oil nation and a climate pioneer.”¹³⁵ Brundtland and the Labor Party had no choice but to compromise with petroleum and business interests. What happened next was a move towards what Anker describes as “technocracy and cost-benefit economics,” reflecting both, “a post-Cold War turn to utilitarian capitalism,” and “a longing to showcase Norway as an environmental pioneer country to the world.”¹³⁶ In many regards it was the petroleum industry, flush with a newfound sense of confidence following the election, that would begin to formulate a new way forward in the aftermath of the election. NorskHydro’s then general director, Torvild Aakvaag, put forth an important element of the emerging New Middle Way discourse, the “so-called gas argument.”¹³⁷ Aakvaag argued that the, “Considerable export of Norwegian gas was to be considered an emission reducing instrument due to the fact that the natural gas would replace the far more polluting coal fired power plants which were one of the most important energy sources on the European continent.”¹³⁸ It was the first of a series of analogous arguments or “moral alibies,” to borrow a term from Sejersted, that aimed to chart a way forward that balanced the seemingly paradoxical desire to maintain petroleum fueled economic growth and the country’s position as a “pioneer nation” in the environmental field.¹³⁹

It was within this context that the New Middle Way became a political discourse in Norway, a discourse that became increasingly institutionalized in the early 1990s though the efforts of think tanks Brundtland herself helped found, particularly the Center for International Climate Environmental Research, Oslo (CICERO).¹⁴⁰ CICERO reflected a tightening nexus of academics, Labor Party officials, and petroleum executives centered around New Middle Way thinking. CICERO’s first chairman, Henrik Ager-Hansen, was a twenty-four year Statoil veteran who had served as the company’s Vice President.¹⁴¹ Its first director, Ted Hanisch, was close with Brundtland via Norway’s Labor Party.¹⁴² Ager-Hansen and Hanisch’s leadership roles within the organization in many ways reflected a belief that the petroleum industry, the government, and environmentalists could work together to promote

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Anker, “A Pioneer Country?” 2.

¹³⁷ Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets Tidsalder*, 372.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid. The term “moral alibies” is how Sejersted refers to the growing effort to justify petroleum activity by juxtaposing it with various positives, such as Aakvaag’s gas argument.

¹⁴⁰ Anker, “A Pioneer Country?” 7.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

sustainable development in the world, in a way that “would not undermine the nation’s booming petroleum industry.”¹⁴³ It also reflected a belief that economic growth and sustainability were decidedly compatible, given the right technology.¹⁴⁴ It was not long before Norwegian officials themselves echoed Aakvaag and, “claimed with force that the increased use of natural gas would contribute to a more environmentally friendly continent,” by replacing other, more polluting sources of power.¹⁴⁵ Therefore, this coalescence of academics, government officials, and petroleum industry executives represented the institutionalization of the New Middle Way. In a similar fashion to how Sweden took a “fairly well defined middle course...between the absolute socialization of Russia and the end development of capitalism in America,”¹⁴⁶ Norway had, “built bridges between one’s own self-interest and the common good, between the ambition for increased income and the desire for a better climate.”¹⁴⁷

The increasing impact of the New Middle Way discourse in the 1990s had a profound effect on several Norwegian politicians who would come to play decisive roles regarding the High North in the years covered by this thesis, 2004-2006. In the course of the decade, both Jens Stoltenberg and Jonas Gahr Støre, who would serve as Norway’s prime minister and foreign minister respectively from 2006 onwards, served key roles in the Brundtland administration.¹⁴⁸ Kjell Magne Bondevik, who would serve his second term as prime minister from 2001 to 2005, had his first term as prime minister abruptly ended in large part due to a political battle around the construction of gas plants.

Few people were indeed as close to the genesis of the New Middle Way discourse and its institutionalization as Jens Stoltenberg. The son of Thorvald Stoltenberg, Brundtland’s foreign minister from 1990-1993, the younger Stoltenberg also found a role in the third Brundtland government as a State Secretary in the Ministry of the Environment three years after he completed his master’s degree in economics at the University of Oslo in 1987.¹⁴⁹ From the beginning, Stoltenberg was destined to have an outside impact on the how Norway

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Anker, “A Pioneer Country?” 7.

¹⁴⁵ Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 218.

¹⁴⁶ Childs, *Sweden: The Middle Way*, quoted in “The Social Laboratory, the Middle Way and the Swedish Model,” 268.

¹⁴⁷ Tamnes, *Oljealder*, 218.

¹⁴⁸ Stortinget. “Stoltenberg, Jens (1959-).” Stortinget. Accessed February 27, 2018.

<https://www.stortinget.no/no/Representanter-og-komiteer/Representantene/Representantfordeling/Representant/?perid=JES>; Stortinget. “Støre, Jonas Gahr (1960-).” Stortinget. Accessed February 27, 2018. <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Representanter-og-komiteer/Representantene/Representantfordeling/Representant/?perid=JGS>.

¹⁴⁹ Anker, “A Pioneer Country?”; Stortinget. “Stoltenberg, Jens (1959-).”

would approach the New Middle Way. His master's thesis *Makroøkonomisk planlegging under usikkerhet. En empirisk analyse*, which conceptually tied together revenue from the petroleum industry and the Norwegian pension system, is widely considered the foundation for the Government Pension Fund of Norway.¹⁵⁰ As a State Secretary in the Ministry of the environment from 1990-1991 and as Minister of the Commerce and Energy Department from 1993-1996, Stoltenberg played a significant role in institutionalizing the New Middle Way discourse, particularly in the global context.¹⁵¹ In particular, Stoltenberg, with help from former associates at the Department of Economics at the University of Oslo and CICERO, developed a series of "technocratic" and "macroeconomic" measures to help combat climate change while allowing for the continued growth of the petroleum industry.¹⁵² These measures included carbon capture and storage (CCS), Clean Development Mechanisms (CDMs), and tradable energy quotas (TEQs).¹⁵³ Norway would, in the course of the 1990s, attempt to normatively institutionalize these measures internationally.¹⁵⁴ Led by Stoltenberg's father, Norway tried to institutionalize TEQs at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, though the attempt, however, failed.¹⁵⁵ Norway would, however, continue to work towards greater acceptance for TEQs and CDMs among countries in the Global South and these efforts represented an interesting synergy between the New Middle Way and Norway's desire during the 1990s to be labeled a "humanitarian superpower."¹⁵⁶ In the end, they were successful. Both TEQs and CDMs were included in the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.¹⁵⁷

The Labor Party, however, was not in office when these measures were finally institutionalized. While the third Brundtland government, in addition to the short-lived Jagland government in which Stoltenberg served as finance minister, had fiercely advocated for their inclusion in such agreements, it would be Kjell Magne Bondevik and his governing coalition of the Christian People's Party, the Centre Party, and the Liberal Party, with

¹⁵⁰ Anker, "A Pioneer Country?" 9.

¹⁵¹ Stortinget. "Stoltenberg, Jens (1959-)."

¹⁵² Anker, "A Pioneer Country?" 8-9.

¹⁵³ Anker, "A Pioneer Country?" 9-10.

¹⁵⁴ For more on the institutionalization of various Norwegian climate measures, see Nilsen, Yngve. *En Felles Plattform? : Norsk Oljeindustri Og Klimadebatten I Norge Fram Til 1998*. PhD diss., UiO TMV Senter, 2001. Oslo, 2001; Asdal, Kristin. *Politikkens Natur: Naturens Politikk*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2011; Stryken, Ame Chr. *Klimahistorie & Klimapolitikk*. Oslo: Dreyers Forl., 2012; Martiniussen, Erik. *Drivhuseffekten: Klimapolitikk Som Forsvant*. Oslo: Manifest, 2011.

¹⁵⁵ Anker, "A Pioneer Country?," 9.

¹⁵⁶ For example Norway ended up building solar plants in Burkina Faso (Anker 2016, 10). For more on Norway's ambitions to become a humanitarian superpower and its effect on Norwegian foreign policy in the 1990s, see Østerud, Øyvind. "Lite Land Som Humanitær Stormakt?" *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift* 23, no. 4 (2006): 303-16.

¹⁵⁷ Anker, "A Pioneer Country?" 10.

parliamentary support from the Conservative Party and the Progress Party, that saw their final implementation.¹⁵⁸ It would not take long, however, for Bondevik's first government to become embroiled in a political fight not particularly dissimilar from that which Brundtland found herself in in the run up to the 1989 election.

In 1998, Torvild Aakvaag's successor at NorskHydro, Egil Myklebust, issued a statement that the company had both the desire and the ability to establish gas producing facilities that would be "emissions free."¹⁵⁹ It was soon realized that these facilities, while technologically possible, were economically unfeasible.¹⁶⁰ The fact that NorskHydro still wanted to build these facilities with lower, most economically feasible environmental standards led to an increasingly contentious debate in Norwegian politics.¹⁶¹ Bondevik and his coalition partners, in what became known as the "gasskraftsak," instituted more stringent regulations that would prevent the building of these plants.¹⁶² Bondevik's decision, however, led to a coalition of strange bedfellows forcing his government to resign. In March 2000, the Conservative Party, the Progress Party, and the Labor Party, via a vote of no confidence, forced Bondevik's out of office.¹⁶³

It was Jens Stoltenberg who took over in Bondevik's stead. While Stoltenberg's first term as prime minister only lasted from March 17th, 2000 to October 19th, 2001, he set in motion two important processes that had implications for the New Middle Way discourse and the High North. Firstly, Stoltenberg quickly reversed the strict emissions requirements the Bondevik II government had established, entrenching the difficulty of shifting away from the balance of the New Middle Way represented to a more environmentally oriented position.¹⁶⁴ Secondly, Stoltenberg's desire to reform Norway's pension system saw the long term viability of the Norwegian welfare state further connected to the fortunes of the petroleum industry, a fact that added an additional domestic dimension to New Middle Way discourse going into 2004.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁸ Anker, "A Pioneer Country?" 10; Regjeringen. "Kjell Magne Bondeviks Første Regjering." Government.no. Accessed May 21, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/om-regjeringa/tidligere-regjeringer-og-historie/sok-i-regjeringer-siden-1814/historiske-regjeringer/regjeringer/kjell-magne-bondeviks-forste-regjering-1/id438733/>.

¹⁵⁹ Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets Tidsalder*, 372-373.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ The so called "Pension Commission" was established by a royal resolution March 30th 2001. See Johnsen, Sigbjørn, Eva Birkeland, Terje Johansen, Sverre Myrli, Hilde Olsen, Trond Reinertsen, Asbjørn Rødseth, Endre

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter began with the establishment of the applicability of “middle way” terminology in the Norwegian, rather than Swedish, context. This applicability built upon a mutual social democratic heritage in the Scandinavian countries that stretched back to the 1850s. In addition, the conscientious effort by the Scandinavia states to manage various Scandinavian or Nordic brands was presented, showing that the legacy of cooperation around social democratic structures in the region continued from the 1930s onwards. Thus, there is wide base of “Nordic brands,” brands that, despite the fact that some of these brands have been used in reference to some countries more than others, retain a certain degree of generalizability across the Nordic region. From that point, the conceptual basis of the Middle Way term was discussed, establishing a bridge from Child’s Swedish conceptualization to the Norwegian conceptualization employed in this thesis. Lastly, the evolution of the New Middle Way in Norway from 1969-2004 was explored. From the 1970s, Norwegian officials have struggled to balance environmental concerns with the economic benefits of the petroleum industry. Efforts to achieve this sought-after balance led to the evolution of various analogous “sub-discourses,” the most notable of which being Torvild Aaakvaag’s gas argument, that together form the New Middle Way discourse. Over the course of the 1990s, the institutionalization of the discourse became manifest, with figures such as Stoltenberg and Støre serving in various positions with the Brundtland government. The interaction these figures had with the discourse, in particular learning the political risk of going against it in a more environmental direction, is a useful conceptualization in terms of understanding why various government officials wary of staying too far to the environmental side of things.

3 A Region in Flux: The Bondevik II Government's High North Discourse 2004-2005

*“Arctic exploration in earlier times was perhaps more competitive than co-operative. But today co-operation is the only answer to the challenges of the region. And it is also the most fruitful means of taking advantage of its opportunities”*¹⁹⁰

-Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Petersen

In his foreign policy address to the Storting in February 2005, Foreign Minister Jan Petersen recounted a recent trip through Russia. Taking a route that included Moscow, St. Petersburg, and the Arctic cities of Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, Petersen learned locals on both sides of the border believed their respective politicians were not prepared to deal with the rapid changes occurring in the High North.¹⁹¹ Petersen also noted, however, “A strong belief in the opportunities for development that will be opened up by oil and gas exploitation in the northern parts of both [Norway and Russia].”¹⁹² It was an optimism that likely stemmed from the reopening of the region to petroleum activity in December 2003.¹⁹³ In order to conduct a consequence evaluation of the industry’s effect on the region, the Bondevik II government effectively closed the High North to any further petroleum activity from 2001-2003.¹⁹⁴ With the reopening of the region to petroleum activity, however, the Bondevik II government would embrace petroleum activity as a critical part of its approach to the High North.

The reopening of the region to petroleum activity and the added emphasis Bondevik officials were putting on the region coincided with a confluence of domestic and international

¹⁹⁰ Petersen, Jan. "Spitzbergen and the Arctic - A Norwegian Perspective." Speech, 57th Rose-Roth Seminar, Svalbard, August 06, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2004.

https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/spitzbergen_and_the_arctic_a/id268736/

¹⁹¹ Petersen, Jan. "Statement to the Storting on Foreign Policy." Speech, Statement to the Storting on Foreign Policy, Stortinget, Oslo, February 15, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2018.

[https://www.regjeringen.no/en/historical-archive/id115322/?isfilteropen=True&to=31.12.2005&from=01.01.2005&documenttype=aktuelt/talerogartikler&governement=134643&term=statement to the storting on foreign policy.](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/historical-archive/id115322/?isfilteropen=True&to=31.12.2005&from=01.01.2005&documenttype=aktuelt/talerogartikler&governement=134643&term=statement%20to%20the%20storting%20on%20foreign%20policy)

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Larsen, Lars-Henrik, and Salve Dahle. *Olje Og Miljø I Barentsregionen – Veien Videre*. Report. Tromsø: Akvaplan-niva for Oljeindustriens Landforening, 2004. November 01, 2004. Accessed January 30, 2018. <https://www.norskoljeoggass.no/miljo/fagrapporter/miljo/olje-og-miljo-i-barentsregionen/>, 20.

¹⁹⁴ Ministry of Petroleum and Energy. *Utredning Av Konsekvenser Av Helårig Petroleumsvirksomhet I Området Lofoten – Barentshavet*.

events that would further influence the government's approach to the High North. Domestically, the commission on pension reform begun by the Stoltenberg I government in 2001 came back with its findings. The report noted, "Even when one takes into account the extra freedom the oil income and petroleum fund give, Norway has a large imbalance in public financing in the long term."¹⁹⁵ Given Norway's demographics, it was clear Norway's pension expenses would increase considerably, even double, by 2050.¹⁹⁶ By 2004, a government white paper on pension reform took the connection the commission established between petroleum income and pensions a step further. In order to equitably spread the burden of pension reform over multiple generations, Norway would need to save as much petroleum income as possible going forward.¹⁹⁷ At the same time, however, the report noted income from established petroleum operations would drop.¹⁹⁸ While environmental opposition was mounting to petroleum activity, it was likely clear to many government officials that the High North's petroleum resources represented a way to avoid the drastic welfare cuts seen in Sweden some ten years before.¹⁹⁹

Internationally, a confluence of events conspired to push petroleum activity in the High North further up the global agenda. Geopolitical instability had contributed to rising petroleum prices and security of supply problems in major markets such as the United States and Europe. The region's increasing geopolitical relevance brought challenges and opportunities that increasingly began to shape the region's dialogue. Norway saw the High North and its petroleum resources as a means by which it could assert itself as a small power trapped between the United States, the European Union, and Russia. Afraid that ongoing dialogue between the United States and European Union in relation to a collaborative framework between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) would marginalize Norway's role in the transatlantic relationship, Norway sought enhance its relevance in the security debate by showcasing the

¹⁹⁵ Johsen et al., *Modernisert Folketrygd*.

¹⁹⁶ Finansdepartementet, *Pensjonsreform – Trygghet for Pensjonene*. Report no. 12. Oslo: Finansdepartementet, 2004. Accessed May 03, 2018.

<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/14a7ff21027e4eeca18426a60f5716e3/no/pdfs/stm200420050012000ddpdfs.pdf>, 7-8.

¹⁹⁷ Finansdepartementet, *Pensjonsreform – Trygghet for Pensjonene*, 15.

¹⁹⁸ Johsen et al., *Modernisert Folketrygd*, 15.

¹⁹⁹ Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets Tidsalder*, 420.

value of its strong relationship with Russia to the United States and the European Union.²⁰⁰ In an argument that sought to make Norway an important intermediary between Brussels, Washington, and Moscow, Bondevik officials looked to cast Northern Norway as a “gateway to Northwestern Russia” and, by extension, a critical gateway between Russia and the West.²⁰¹

3.1 Petroleum Discourse 2004-2005

In 2004, the Bondevik II government began to discuss the development of the petroleum industry in the High North in definitive terms. “We have moved our petroleum industry further north,” declared Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik at a Norwegian-German Industrial Seminar held in Oslo that year.²⁰² It was an interesting moment for Norway in the context of what is often referred to as the “Norwegian petroleum adventure.” As production levels in traditional areas began to drop, the High North and its petroleum resources were increasingly looked at as the next phase of petroleum production on the Norwegian Continental Shelf (NCS). “The development of petroleum resources in the High North is taking place at a time when production on other parts of the NCS is reaching its peak,” noted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a white paper on the High North released in 2005.²⁰³ As reserves in other areas began to dwindle, officials therefore believed that Norway’s petroleum industry would have to incrementally move north if it was to remain a crucial part of the Norwegian economy.²⁰⁴

The “tremendous energy potential” of the High North had additionally given the region a heightened sense of geopolitical complexity. Norwegian officials therefore began to see the region’s potential as a geopolitical bargaining chip and took care to increasingly insert

²⁰⁰ Petersen. "Foreign Minister Jan Petersen's Statement to the Storting on Foreign Policy." Speech, Stortinget, Oslo, January 27, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2018.

²⁰¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Opportunities and Challenges in the North. Report no. 30. Oslo: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2005. Accessed March 08, 2018. [https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/report_no-30_to_the_storting_2004-2005/id198406/?q=challenges and opportunities](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/report_no-30_to_the_storting_2004-2005/id198406/?q=challenges+and+opportunities), 6.

²⁰² Bondevik, Kjell Magne. "Speech at Norwegian-German Industrial Seminar." Speech, Norwegian-German Industrial Seminar, Government Guest House, Oslo, September 28, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/speech_at_industrial_seminar/id268901/.

²⁰³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Opportunities and Challenges, 6.

²⁰⁴ Ulseth, Oluf. "Developing Arctic Petroleum Resources in Norway." Speech, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Sub-regional Conference, Tromsø, May 13, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/kilde/oed/tar/2005/0004/ddd/pdfv/246645-tromso_oluf_ulseth_mai_05.pdf, Slide 7.

the High North into international dialogues. The region quickly became a central feature of the Norwegian foreign policy discourse and Foreign Minister Petersen himself took particular care to create a perception of the area as Europe's next petroleum province. In Germany, Petersen would argue, "The strategic importance of the [High North] is no longer primarily military, it is instead related to the vast supply of renewable marine and nonrenewable fossil energy resources, and naturally has the potential to become an important source of energy, not least for Europe."²⁰⁵

It was a sentiment that coincided with both the expansion of the E.U. and the further deregulation of its gas markets in 2004.²⁰⁶ Other oil producing regions were either experiencing geopolitical instability or, in the case of two other European producers, the United Kingdom and Russia, production declines.²⁰⁷ Norwegian officials thus sensed a unique opportunity to capture market share on the continent in the long term and the New Middle Way discourse would form a critical component of Norway's efforts to do just that. At the 2005 International Oil Summit in Paris, Petroleum Minister Widvey contrasted the High North with other, conflict-prone petroleum producing regions, by touting the geopolitical stability of the Barents region.²⁰⁸ At the same time, Norwegian officials noted the fact that global demand growth, particularly in countries such as India and China, was "just at the beginning," citing a recent International Energy Agency (IEA) report that predicted that energy demand would increase by 60% towards 2030.²⁰⁹ The IEA, officials noted, believed upwards of USD 6 trillion would have to be invested in the petroleum industry by 2030 in

²⁰⁵ Petersen, Jan. "Challenges in the Northern Areas — A Norwegian Perspective." Speech, Amerikanisch-Europäischer Freundschaftsclub E.V., Heidelberg, October 24, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/challenges_in_the_northern_areas/id268886/.

²⁰⁶ European Commission. "Liberalisation of the Electricity and Gas Markets." *Energy and Environment*, European Commission, 16 Apr. 2012, ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/energy/overview_en.html.

²⁰⁷ Widvey, Thorhild. "Norway - Policies to Remain the Leading European Energy Supplier." Speech, 2005 Sanderstølen Conference, Sanderstølen Hotell, February 04, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/norway_policies_to_remain_leading/id269575/.

²⁰⁸ Widvey, "Norway Leading European Energy Supplier.,"; Widvey, Thorhild. "Higher Oil Price Environment. How Are Government and Industry Responding?" Speech, International Oil Summit, Paris, April 21, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/historical-archive/id115322/?isfilteropen=True&to=31.12.2005&from=01.01.2005&documenttype=aktuelt/talerogartikler&governement=134643&term=higher+oil+price+environemnt>.

²⁰⁹ Ulseth, "The Norwegian Oil Industry and Cooperation with Iran,,"; Widvey, Thorhild. "Arctic and Cold Regions - Prospects and Challenges." Speech, US-Norway Oil and Gas Industry Summit, Houstonian Hotel, Houston, March 02, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2005. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/arctic_and_cold_regions_-_prospects/id269585/.

order to meet this growth in demand.²¹⁰ Norwegian officials hoped to attract a significant portion of that sum to jump start petroleum production in the region. These points together allowed Norwegian officials to position the High North as an ideal location for long-term petroleum investment. As Petroleum Minister Widvey noted at a conference in Kirkenes attended by significant government officials from Russia and the United States, it was time “to look past the Middle East” in order to meet the world’s growing energy demand.²¹¹ What Widvey really meant, was that it was time to look North.²¹²

In this regard, Norwegian officials were determined to create an image of the High North, not as place where development would one day happen, but, a place where development was happening. It was a clear attempt to shift perceptions away from long standing notions of Arctic drilling as expensive, unprofitable, and unsustainable. At a U.S. – Norway Oil and Gas Industry Summit in Houston, Petroleum Minister Widvey noted the limiting factor for drilling on the NCS would not be demand, but rather the availability of drilling rigs.²¹³ Officials highlighted the fact that natural gas production had already begun to increase rapidly, from 71 billion cubic meters (BCM) to 76 BCM, an increase of 7% in 2004 alone.²¹⁴ In front of European officials, future forecasts were argued to be even brighter. At a lunch for E.U. ambassadors in Oslo Widvey noted, “Production is expected to rise in the short to medium term and a sales level of 120 BCM a year is a possible scenario within this decade.”²¹⁵

The figure was indicative of a growing and successful effort by the Bondevik II government to reach out to various European governments and petroleum companies. The numbers likely reflected Widvey’s recent success in negotiating Norwegian gas delivery with the United Kingdom. In April, Widvey signed a treaty with her British counterpart, Minister of State for E-commerce, Energy & Competitiveness Mike O’Brien, that would significantly

²¹⁰ Ulseth, Oluf. "A Strong Relationship within the Petroleum Sector between Norway and Italy." Speech, INTSOK Seminar at ENI E&P, Milan, March 14, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/a_strong_relationship_within_the/id269602/;

²¹¹ Widvey, Thorhild. "The Arctic Energy Agenda." Speech, Arctic Energy Agenda, Kirkenes, July 07, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2005. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the_arctic_energy_agenda/id269727/.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Widvey, Thorhild. "Arctic and Cold Regions - Prospects and Challenges." Speech, US-Norway Oil and Gas Industry Summit, Houstonian Hotel, Houston, March 02, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2005. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/arctic_and_cold_regions_prospects/id269585/.

²¹⁴ Widvey, Thorhild. "Norway and Energy - From the North Sea to the Barents Sea." Speech, E.U.- Ambassadors Lunch, Oslo, April 13, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/norway_and_energy_from_the_north/id269699/;

Widvey, “Norway Leading European Energy Supplier.”

²¹⁵ Widvey, “Norway and Energy.”

increase Norwegian gas imports to Britain.²¹⁶ Norwegian officials were also making inroads in Italy. In March 2005, State Secretary Ulseth reported in a presentation to executives of Italian energy giant Eni in Milan that three wells were in the process of being drilled or had been drilled in the Barents so far in 2005, all by Norwegian companies.²¹⁷ Ulseth, however, also highlighted the fact that, “ENI is planning a campaign of three wells [in the Barents Sea],” a development that was quite welcome in terms of Norwegian attempts to attract foreign international oil companies to the High North.²¹⁸ Norwegian officials noted an increasing flow of foreign investment into Norwegian petroleum projects, giving Norwegian officials confidence that 2005 would be a record year for investment in the Norwegian petroleum industry “in the range of USD 15 billion.”²¹⁹ In addition, investment forecasts for the next five years made by the Bondevik II government in April were nearly USD 10 billion higher than what the government had expected six months before.²²⁰ The Bondevik II government itself planned to further incentivize growth within the industry by announcing a NOK 300 million increase in petroleum research funding and the announcement of new licensing rounds with a focus on “frontier areas” in the High North.²²¹ In particular, the 19th licensing round was seen as indicative of increased interest in the region. The fact that the Norwegian government had received nominations from nineteen companies in February 2005 showed, according to Petroleum Minister Widvey, “That there is a strong interest in the industry for exploring for oil and gas in the Barents Sea.”²²²

While deregulation had opened up the European energy market in 2004, growing environmental sentiment on the continent simultaneously made it important that petroleum producers also paid attention to their environmental profiles. Norway saw that fact it had, “Some of the world’s strictest conditions for petroleum exploration and production in the

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ulseth, Oluf. "A Strong Relationship within the Petroleum Sector between Norway and Italy."

²¹⁸ Ulseth, Oluf. "A Strong Relationship within the Petroleum Sector between Norway and Italy."

²¹⁹ Ulseth "The Norwegian Oil Industry and Cooperation with Iran."

²²⁰ Widvey, Thorhild. "Higher Oil Price Environment. How Are Government and Industry Responding?"

Speech, International Oil Summit, Paris, April 21, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2018.

[https://www.regjeringen.no/en/historical-](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/historical-archive/id115322/?isfilteropen=True&to=31.12.2005&from=01.01.2005&documenttype=aktuelt/talerogartikler)

[archive/id115322/?isfilteropen=True&to=31.12.2005&from=01.01.2005&documenttype=aktuelt/talerogartikler](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/historical-archive/id115322/?isfilteropen=True&to=31.12.2005&from=01.01.2005&documenttype=aktuelt/talerogartikler) &governement=134643&term=higher oil price environemnt. Widvey "Norway - Policies to Remain the Leading European Energy Supplier."

²²¹ Widvey, “Norway Leading European Energy Supplier.”

²²² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Opportunities and Challenges, 61; Widvey, Thorhild. "Higher Oil Price Environment."

Barents Sea,” as a valuable asset for differentiating Norwegian producers from their peers.²²³ By employing long established New Middle Way discourses dating back to the 1990s, the Norwegian government understood how to translate this sentiment into an opportunity to differentiate Norwegian producers from international competitors by branding Norwegian petroleum companies as more environmentally friendly. Thus, regulations were turned from a liability into a strength. In a speech at the petroleum industry’s annual Sanderstølen conference in 2004, Widvey made this concept clear, “We have introduced a flexible regulatory system. The regulations are based on expected technological progress that will benefit the industry and society as a whole. I believe that all these measures have been and will be necessary in order to achieve or earn the public opinion’s acceptance to operate in these areas.”²²⁴ It was a clear manifestation of the New Middle Way in the official discourse. In a seminar held in Oslo, attended by German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, Bondevik made another New Middle Way argument that closely mimicked the “gas argument” former NorskHydro General Director Torvild Aakvaag ventured in 1989.²²⁵ Bondevik declared natural gas, “the most environmentally friendly of the fossil fuels,” before going on to further argue that, “When consumption of natural gas increases at the expense of oil, and particularly of coal, it will have a positive impact on the environment. Therefore, a change from coal to gas consumption should be encouraged.”²²⁶ Gas was presumed to be a significant part of the High North’s petroleum reserves and, thus, if gas was a positive for the environment, so too was petroleum production in the region.

In sum, Norwegian officials understood that environmental regulations and environmental arguments for drilling were critical to maintaining positive public opinion on offshore petroleum activity in Norway. By holding a petroleum dialogue that argued environmental regulation could actually make companies more competitive internationally given growing environmental awareness, Norway could steer the regional discourse around its version of sustainable management, with the hope that other countries would adopt similar standpoints to Norway’s. Norwegian officials knew that it would be Norway, Russia, and the other Arctic nations that, “must jointly lay the foundation for the future sustainable

²²³ Widvey, “The Arctic Energy Agenda.”

²²⁴ Widvey, “Norway Leading European Energy Supplier.”

²²⁵ Sejersted, *Sosialdemokratiets tidsalder*, 372.

²²⁶ Bondevik, “Speech at Norwegian-German Industrial Seminar.”

management of Arctic areas.”²²⁷ Therefore, it was critical that the Bondevik II government create a perception of expertise within the field to influence the other Arctic states to adopt positions Norway itself desired.

3.2 Environmental Discourse 2004-2005

At an International Seminar on Climate Change held on Svalbard in June 2005, Prime Minister Bondevik quoted his counterpart in Britain, Tony Blair, when he declared “Climate change is probably the single most important long-term issue we face as a global community.”²²⁸ As Foreign Minister Petersen put it during his annual statement to the Storting, it was up to Norway to “put climate change in the Arctic on the political agenda both at home and abroad.”²²⁹ It was clear, however, that growing petroleum ambitions in the High North would not sideline Norwegian environmental ambitions in official discourses. Bondevik officials would instead put forth an environmental vision for the High North that would balance economic and environmental interests, invoking the New Middle Way by arguing it was possible to “utilize the rich resources and huge human and economic potential [of the High North] without damaging fragile habitats.”²³⁰ It marked the beginning of a two year long process to create an integrated management plan for the Barents Sea, a clear manifestation of New Middle Way discourse into concrete policy formation in the High North that Norwegian officials would try to export abroad, even outside of the Arctic to the Global South.²³¹

While it would take until 2006 for the integrated management plan to be released, the accelerating pace of developments in the High North and climate change necessitated additional action. In Washington, Foreign Minister Petersen would note that, “In the near future we will complete the regulation of almost all sources of greenhouse gas emission in

²²⁷ Widvey, “The Arctic Energy Agenda.”

²²⁸ Bondevik, Kjell Magne. "International Seminar on Climate Change." Lecture, International Seminar on Climate Change, Ny Ålesund, June 02, 2005. Accessed June 02, 2005. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/international_seminar_on_climate/id269846/.

²²⁹ Petersen, Jan. "Statement to the Storting on Foreign Policy 2005."

²³⁰ Petersen, Jan. "Spitzbergen and the Arctic - A Norwegian Perspective." Speech, 57th Rose-Roth Seminar, Svalbard, August 06, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2004.

https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/spitzbergen_and_the_arctic_a/id268736/

²³¹ This is a reference to a collaborative partnership between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, and Ministry of the Environment to launch the “Oil for Development” program in 2005. For more on the program, see: Utenriksdepartementet. "Olje for Utvikling." NoradDev. September 02, 2005. Accessed May 12, 2018. <https://www.norad.no/en/aktuelt/nyheter/2005/olje-for-utvikling>.

Norway by the means of climate policy instruments. These include green taxes, a special CO₂ tax and a national emissions trading system for greenhouse gases.”²³² These measures were also in addition to the strict requirements on petroleum activity in the Barents Sea and the Lofoten-Vesterålen area the Bondevik II government had put into place.²³³

In the discourse, however, these domestic efforts largely took a backseat to the efforts of Norwegian officials in advocating for international climate change regimes. Norwegian officials contended that these efforts would be all for naught without a “continued and more extensive co-operation” amongst Arctic states in regard to climate change.²³⁴ Norwegian officials called on other countries, in particular the U.S., to reconsider opposition to initiatives such as the Kyoto Protocol.²³⁵ It would represent what would become a long-term effort to institutionalize Norwegian resource management norms in the High North internationally, with efforts aimed in particular at industrialized countries Norwegian officials argued had the “main responsibility for causing climate change.”²³⁶ Of these industrialized countries, however, Prime Minister Bondevik argued the Arctic States had an even greater duty to act in a speech given at an International Seminar on Climate Change in June 2005, noting “All countries in the Arctic Region have a special responsibility to continue observation and research activities in relation to climate change and its effects in this particularly vulnerable region.”²³⁷

In the High North context, intergovernmental organizations such as the Arctic Council were described as critical organs for the implementation of environmental measures.²³⁸ Of particular note in this regard was the Arctic Council and the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) report it issued in 2004. The Bondevik II government had been an ardent supporter of the project and hailed its completion as a “landmark achievement.”²³⁹ The report itself noted that Arctic was warming rapidly, a trend that would inevitably lead to “much

²³² Petersen, “Climate Challenge in the Arctic.”

²³³ Petersen, Jan. “Strengthening of the Environmental Effort in the Arctic.” The Fourth Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, Reykjavik, November 24, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/strengthening_of_the_environmental/id268941/.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Traavik, Kim. “How Does EU Policy Affect a Non-member State?” Speech, Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions, Stavanger, September 24, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/how_does_eu_policy_affect_a_non-member/id268818/.

²³⁶ Hareide, Knut Arild. “The Future Role for Carbon Capture and Storage in a Climate Perspective.” Speech, Oslo, April 26, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the_future_role_for_carbon_capture/id269626/.

²³⁷ Bondevik, “Seminar on Climate Change.”

²³⁸ Traavik, “EU Policy Non-member State.”

²³⁹ Traavik, Kim. “Meeting the Climate and Energy Challenge: Norway’s Approach.” Second Trans-Atlantic Co-operative Research Conference, Washington D.C., October 05, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2004. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/meeting_the_climate_and_energy/id268853/.

larger changes” that would dramatically affect the region’s ecosystem.²⁴⁰ These trends would eventually present challenges to economic growth. Infrastructure would be damaged, traditional livelihoods based off commodities such as fish and reindeer would be damaged, and new challenges would arise from new economic opportunities tied to Arctic ice melt, such as shipping.²⁴¹

Bondevik officials, furthermore, would use the ACIA’s findings in dialogues with various actors, noting that its findings were “cause for concern.”²⁴² In particular, officials would echo the ACIA’s findings in an effort to recast environmental issues as “more threatening” economic issues. For example, in a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Oslo in September 2004, Foreign Minister Petersen argued that, “We must be prepared for the fact that climate change and natural resource management in the Arctic will have an increasing impact on the entire planet. It may also have enormous economic consequences.”²⁴³ Norwegian officials also sought to place climate change higher on the global geopolitical agenda by incorporating it into regional and global security discourses. at a Seminar on Transatlantic Efforts for Peace and Security in Washington, Foreign Minister Petersen would opt to use the security argument. “New security challenges related to climate change, environment and resource management,” began the foreign minister, “Are now high on the geopolitical agenda.”²⁴⁴ These arguments represented the ability and desire of Norwegian officials to recast environmental arguments in terms more appealing or alarming to various actors, in addition to a growing synergy between environmental work carried out in organizations such as the Arctic Council and long-term economic planning in the High North.

²⁴⁰ Hassol, Susan Joy. *Arctic Climate Impact Assessment: Impacts of a Warming Arctic*. Report. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. April 30, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2018.

<https://www.amap.no/documents/doc/impacts-of-a-warming-arctic-2004/786>, 10-11.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 10-11

²⁴² Traavik, “Meeting the Climate and Energy Challenge.”

²⁴³ Petersen, Jan. "Statement at the Meeting of the Standing Committee." Speech, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Meeting of the Standing Committee, Oslo, September 07, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/statement_at_the_meeting_of_the/id268766/.

²⁴⁴ Petersen, Jan. "Address at Seminar on Transatlantic Efforts for Peace and Security." Address, Seminar on Transatlantic Efforts for Peace and Security, Carnegie Institution, Washington D.C., March 04, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/address_at_seminar_on_transatlantic/id269835/.

3.3 Russia 2004-2005

As the largest Arctic state and Norway's neighbor in the Barents Sea, Russia was naturally a critical component of the Bondevik II government's approach to the High North. In the mid-2000s, Russia was a country still unsure of its place in the post-Cold War world. Therefore, the first decade of the new millennium, served as a critical time in terms of the evolution of Moscow's approach to the world. At the center of it all was Russian President Vladimir Putin. The former Soviet intelligence officer coasted to reelection in March, with 71.31% of the vote.²⁴⁵ In part, his reelection was a reflection of his successful four-year campaign against Russia's oligarchs, a group of extraordinarily wealthy businessmen who thrived under the kleptocratic economic mismanagement of the Yeltsin administration.²⁴⁶ These domestic developments helped give Putin the strongest political hand of any Russian leader since the fall of the Soviet Union. It was a development to which Norway attached both hope and worry. In February 2004, Foreign Minister Petersen stated he believed, "Putin will use the political room for maneuver that the election has given him to continue the economic reforms and close cooperation with the West."²⁴⁷ Bondevik himself nearly echoed his foreign minister word-for-word in a speech at the Institute of European Affairs in Dublin weeks later.²⁴⁸ By October of that year, however, it seemed Putin's predilection for centralization had given some pause in Oslo. Foreign Minister Petersen, in a decidedly less optimistic tone than he had in February, admitted that, "Recent developments in Russia give us cause for concern."²⁴⁹ Putin's desire for centralization had, in Petersen's opinion, begun to exert pressure on democratic and market reforms.²⁵⁰

Officials still believed, however, that the Norway's relationship with Russia was going in the right direction. In the same speech where Petersen noted his concern with recent developments in Russia, the foreign minister characterized Norway's relationship with

²⁴⁵ OSCE. *Russian Federation Presidential Election 14 March 2004 OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Report*. Report. Warsaw: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2004. Accessed May 21, 2018. <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/russia/33101?download=true>, 26.

²⁴⁶ Sakwa, Richard. *Putin: Russias Choice*. Routledge, 2008, 143-150.

²⁴⁷ Petersen, Jan. "Statement to the Storting 2004."

https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/foreign_minister_jan_petersens_statement/id268198/.

²⁴⁸ Bondevik, Kjell Magne. "Speech at Institute of European Affairs." Institute of European Affairs, Dublin, February 06, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2004.

https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/speech_at_the_institute_of_european/id268128/.

²⁴⁹ Petersen, "Challenges in the Northern Areas."

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

Russia, “As two or three steps forward – one step back.”²⁵¹ It was a statement particularly evocative of Norwegian attempts to get Russia to sign international environmental regimes such as the Kyoto Protocol. Despite previous attempts by Norwegian officials to get Moscow to ratify the Protocol, the Russians dithered – frustrating Norwegian officials such as then Minister of the Environment Børge Brende, who argued the Russian lack of progress “[justified] impatience” in 2003.²⁵² Though Russia would eventually go on to sign the agreement in 2004, Russia’s lack of transparency left Norwegian officials unimpressed.²⁵³ What was clear, however, according Foreign Minister Petersen, was “that economic arguments [played] a central part [in the process].”²⁵⁴ It was not necessarily a new experience for Norwegian officials. Russian officials had hinted in the past that they would only act environmentally if it was in accordance with its own, decidedly economic, interests.²⁵⁵

Norwegian officials, however, were frustrated by the slow pace of development of their economic interests in Russia. Economic ties between the two countries, in the opinion of Petersen, “had fallen short of original expectations.”²⁵⁶ Norway lagged behind both Denmark and Sweden in terms of trade with Russia in 2003.²⁵⁷ Further “hampering” development efforts, according to Norwegian officials, was the inability of the two countries to resolve a long running boundary dispute in the Barents Sea.²⁵⁸ As petroleum prices rose, however,

²⁵¹ Petersen, “Challenges in the Northern Areas.”

²⁵² Brende, Børge. “Effective Regime to Mitigate Climate Change.” Speech, Moscow World Climate Change Conference, Moscow, October 01, 2003. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/effective_regime_to_mitigate_climate/id266776/.

²⁵³ Petersen, “Challenges in the Northern Areas.”

²⁵⁴ Petersen, “Challenges in the Northern Areas.”

²⁵⁵ In the meeting notes from the 2000 Arctic Council Ministerial in Barrow, Alaska, the Russian delegation sharply responded to Norwegian comments about pollution coming from Russia. The Russians believed the Council’s environmental work focused almost exclusively on Russia and not the other members, leading the Russian delegation to argue that, “The format is not a good model for interaction of the working groups within the Council. Russia must re-examine the 2001 Partnership Conference to make sure the results will be in our interest.” The comment drew responses from both Sweden and Denmark, respectively expressing surprise and frustration with the Russian response. See Arctic Council. Report of Senior Arctic Officials to Arctic Council Ministers. Report. Barrow, AK: Arctic Council, 2000. Accessed January 30, 2018. https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/1551/ACMM02_Barrow_2000_SAO_Report_to_Ministers_En.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 10-11

²⁵⁶ Petersen, Jan. “The Wider Europe Initiative and Future EU-EFTA Relations within the EEA Framework.” Speech, European Parliament, Brussels, March 17, 2004. Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the_wider_europe_initiative_and/id268360/.

²⁵⁷ Norway. Statens Forvaltningstjeneste Informasjonsforvaltning. Mot Nord! Utfordringer Og Muligheter I Nordområdene. By Olav Orheim, Ingvild Broch, Else Grete Broderstad, Tor Fjæran, Leif Forsell, Rasmus Hansson, Ellen Inga O. Hætta, Ivan Kristoffersen, Knut Læg Reid, Lars Otto Reiersen, Vigdis Stordahl, and Willy Østreng. 32nd ed. Vol. 2003. Norges Offentlige Utredninger. Oslo: Statens Forvaltningstjeneste Informasjonsforvaltning, 2003. Accessed January 30, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/28ed358f13704ed2bb3c2a7f13a02be9/no/pdfs/nou200320030032000ddpdfs.pdf>, 52.

²⁵⁸ Petersen, “Spitzbergen and the Arctic.”

Norwegian officials saw petroleum cooperation as the key to reversing lackluster trade between the two countries, securing an eventual delimitation treaty, and generally laying the foundation for better relationship for the two Arctic powers.

3.3.1 Russian-Norwegian Petroleum Cooperation

Petroleum cooperation was seen by Norwegian officials as the key to building a uniquely strong relationship with Russia. Thus, the New Middle Way discourse emerged from its primarily domestic use since the 1990s to become an increasingly useful tool to further cooperation with Russia, both environmentally and economically. The combination of Russia's interest in developing its resources in the Barents and the increased centralization of power under Putin in Moscow gave officials "every indication" that the Russian petroleum sector, "[would] become increasingly influential in the years to come."²⁵⁹ In 2002, Russia had opened new areas up for petroleum activity licensing in the Russian East Barents Sea, additionally allowing non-Russian companies to apply.²⁶⁰ At the same time, Russia was having high level discussions with both the United States and the European Union concerning "long-term energy deliveries" that would likely eventually include petroleum products extracted from the Russian Arctic, contracts that could form the basis for long term petroleum development in the region.²⁶¹ Norwegian officials openly wanted to get in on the action. In his address to the Storting, Petersen noted that, "Any future exploration of oil and gas deposits on land and offshore in the Barents Sea could unleash a great potential for economic co-operation."²⁶² Petroleum Minister Widvey was even more optimistic, noting, "A huge potential for creating value through different forms of cooperation between Russia and Norway in the field of oil and gas."²⁶³ With the Shtokman find, referred to as the world's largest offshore gas field in the government white paper *Opportunities and Challenges in the High North*, included in Russia's portion of the Barents Sea, it was easy to see why Norwegian officials were so eager to get involved.²⁶⁴

Given this Russian interest, Norwegian officials and the Norwegian oil industry hoped to utilize the fact, "The Russian petroleum industry had traditionally not been particularly

²⁵⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Opportunities and Challenges*, 12.

²⁶⁰ Larsen & Dahle. *Olje Og Miljø I Barentsregionen – Veien Videre*.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

²⁶² Petersen, "Statement to the Storting 2005."

²⁶³ Widvey, "Norway Leading European Energy Supplier."

²⁶⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Opportunities and Challenges*, 14.

environmentally conscious, did not have access to the best technology, and had very limited experience with offshore production,” as a gateway for Norwegian companies to get involved in Russian projects in the Barents Sea.²⁶⁵ Russian needs, as previously noted, were seen by the industry as an opportunity to appeal to Russian self-interest while at the same time giving the industry new opportunities in Russian markets and a chance for Norwegian companies to further their “environmentally friendly” branding:

“In recent years, an interesting development has occurred within the Russian oil industry. Several of the large Russian companies want to get an evaluation of their businesses that reflect the enormous resources of oil and gas they own. In order to achieve this, they are interested in becoming noted on Western stock exchanges. Several Russian companies have also wished to bring in international interests and minority owners. In order to increase the values of the companies, it is important to have an environmental profile. Russian oil and gas companies have thus an economic interest in operating in a more environmentally conscious fashion. This is an important factor to take along when we on the Norwegian side seek to contribute to that Russian exploration and production of oil and gas is as environmentally friendly as possible.”²⁶⁶

The Bondevik II government therefore argued Norwegian companies held the key to helping Russia tap into their massive offshore reserves in the Arctic and argued, furthermore, they had “A competitive advantage as regards participation in operations on the Russian shelf,” in comparison to other foreign petroleum companies interested in the region.²⁶⁷ It was not long before this argument developed an environmental component. Norwegian officials believed, “Norwegian-Russian co-operation in this area [would] pave the way for the use of the advanced, environmentally friendly Norwegian offshore technology that has been developed to meet the needs of petroleum production in the harsh weather conditions of the North Sea.”²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 27.

²⁶⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Opportunities and Challenges*, 27.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 14.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 8.

It was not, however, just the size of the potential reserves or the ability of Norwegian companies to help their Russian counterparts that sparked optimism in Oslo and Moscow. While other petroleum provinces in the Middle East and Africa were plagued by geopolitical instability, the Barents Region, in contrast, was one of the “most peaceful corners of Europe” and, by extension, the world.²⁶⁹ The combination of the region’s relative geopolitical stability and increasing oil prices made exploration and production in the region progressively more attractive, “Other countries are showing a growing interest in Norwegian and Russian petroleum resources... This makes the High North more interesting than many other areas that are rich in energy sources.”²⁷⁰ It was an interest that, in combination with the needs of the Russian petroleum industry, the Bondevik II government hoped would “provide new activities for Norwegian oil companies, the contractor industry, and local businesses in Northern Norway,” leading to more jobs and prosperity in the region.²⁷¹ It was an opportunity that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs threw itself fully behind in *Opportunities and Challenges in the High North*:

“The Government will make active efforts to promote Norwegian participation on a commercial basis in the development of Russian oil and gas fields in the North. This will also increase the competitiveness of the Norwegian petroleum industry at the international level, especially as regards offshore development and production methods that maintain high environmental and safety standards. The Government will therefore actively support the dialogue Norwegian companies are conducting with their Russian partners and other actors on cooperation on oil and gas production in the Norwegian and Russian sectors.”²⁷²

It was not long before Bondevik officials began to highlight the growing success of Norway’s cooperative efforts in the official discourse. The building of cooperative structures between the Norwegian and Russian petroleum sectors had already begun in earnest. The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, Ministry of the Environment, the Norwegian Pollution Control Authority, and the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources established a cooperation group on geology, oil resources, and the environment in 2003 and the organization continued

²⁶⁹ Petersen, “Opportunities and Challenges.”

²⁷⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Opportunities and Challenges*, 7.

²⁷¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Opportunities and Challenges*, 14.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 37

its work into 2004.²⁷³ The collaboration also included Norwegian and Russian oil companies, in addition to various other relevant parts of the petroleum industry in the two countries.²⁷⁴ Petroleum Minister Enoksen, in Houston in March 2005, highlighted NorskHydro's Supplier Development Program, which aimed to prepare companies in the Russian part of the Barents region for "future large-scale offshore development in the Arctic Region."²⁷⁵ In sum, these efforts, according to officials in both the Norwegian government and petroleum industry, were a "very important factor in contributing to increased environmental consciousness in the Russian petroleum industry."²⁷⁶

Officials on both sides believed these collaborative efforts would lay the groundwork necessary for a profitable, environmentally sustainable, and close collaboration between Moscow and Oslo in the Barents Sea for decades to come. This was evidenced by two major breakthroughs in the Norwegian-Russian relationship in 2005. In April, Norwegian officials announced, "A military exercise on Russian soil with Norwegian participation will be carried out for the first time."²⁷⁷ Two months later, in June, President Putin himself told Prime Minister Bondevik, "*Russia has chosen Norway as a strategic partner in the development of petroleum resources in the High North.*"²⁷⁸ With petroleum at the nexus of the relationship, Norwegian officials were proud to relay to other countries, particularly in Europe, the ability of Norway to engage and collaborate with Russia. The Bondevik II government was keen to use the increasingly close relationship between Moscow and Oslo to create an image of the Barents Region as a bastion of stability, a conduit for cooperation, and an important part of the solution to the growing question of energy security in the United States and Europe.

3.4 Europe and North America 2004-2005

Shifting political sands in Europe were of increasing concern to officials in the Bondevik II government. The addition of ten, largely Eastern European states to the E.U. in 2004 made it an even more important actor on the continent, giving Norway an added incentive to find ways to increase its influence in Brussels. Growing discussions of European defense plans, particularly in the Transatlantic context, further heightened Norwegian fears of

²⁷³ Larsen and Dahle, *Olje Og Miljø I Barentsregionen*, 28-29.

²⁷⁴ Larsen and Dahle, *Olje Og Miljø I Barentsregionen*, 28

²⁷⁵ Enoksen, "Developments Arctic and Cold Regions."

²⁷⁶ Enoksen, "Developments Arctic and Cold Regions.;" Larsen and Dahle, *Olje Og Miljø I Barentsregionen*, 28.

²⁷⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Opportunities and Challenges*, 37.

²⁷⁸ Petersen, "Opportunities and Challenges."

marginalization in Europe. In particular, Norwegian officials argued “A situation where the main part of the transatlantic dialogue takes place directly between the EU and USA would pose significant challenges to Norway. We could risk being further marginalized.”²⁷⁹ With energy prices on the rise, however, Norwegian officials began to see the High North and its petroleum resources not just as a tool for securing better relations with Russia or the long-term prosperity domestically, but as a geopolitical bargaining chip to secure Norwegian relevance in European capitals and Washington. Foreign Minister Petersen noted that Norway wanted to, “Intensify our dialogue particularly with United States and key partner countries – like Canada, Germany, France and the United Kingdom – on High North issues – in order to promote a common understanding of the complexity of the situation.”²⁸⁰

In terms of the United States, Petersen, however, seem resigned to the fact that the American-Norwegian High North dialogue would struggle to find a high place in the American agenda. “There are other issues of increasing urgency and global importance that we need to deal with,” noted Petersen in a June speech to the Transatlantic Symposium in Washington.²⁸¹ Norway, however, believed in could engage Washington in terms of the High North by pivoting to the longstanding American effort in the cleaning up of Russian nuclear sites on the Kola Peninsula.²⁸² Decidedly more difficult, however, was the fact that the United States needed to be engaged on climate change.²⁸³ Petroleum, on the other hand, seemed to be more natural area for cooperation between Oslo and Washington. In Houston, the oil capital of the United States, Widvey, in a speech to the annual U.S.-Norway Oil and Gas Industry Summit, announced that the United States and Norway had signed a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding on energy “focused on expanding joint research of petroleum and energy fields.”²⁸⁴

In terms of the E.U., 2005 marked the beginning of the Norwegian attempt to reestablish itself as an important channel between European interests and those in Moscow. Government White Paper 30 noted that, “The wider scope of the European Union’s relations with Russia, and the significance of Northwest Russia in the context of these relation, are

²⁷⁹ Petersen, “Statement to the Storting 2005.”

²⁸⁰ Petersen, “Climate Challenge in the Arctic.”

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Widvey, “Arctic and Cold Regions.”

important in this connection [with the E.U.].”²⁸⁵ Therefore, in many ways, Norway’s European policy was “closely linked with its High North policy.”²⁸⁶ No event was more evocative of this standpoint than the 2005 Arctic Energy Agenda Round Table Petroleum Minister Widvey hosted in Kirkenes in July of that year. With important delegates including United States Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman, Russian Minister of Natural Resources Jury Trutnev, Russian Minister of Industry and Energy Viktor Khristenko, and European Union energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, Widvey hoped to “establish a sustainable energy agenda for the Arctic,” in addition to cooperating to establish the region’s, “highest level of safety and strictest environmental requirements for the conduct of petroleum activities.”²⁸⁷ The event, furthermore, reflected the ability of petroleum and the New Middle Way discourse to get Norway a place at the table, on its own terms, with the great powers that surrounded it.

3.5 The Barents Cooperation 2004-2005

Norwegian officials believed networks such as the Barents Cooperation were not only networks to further interregional trade, but could lay the foundation necessary to support extensive petroleum collaboration in the region. In addition, officials saw the Cooperation’s framework as something it could export to Europe, another means by which the Bondevik II government could link its High North and European policies. In the European context, the Bondevik II government continued to heap praise on the Barents Cooperation, with Petersen boasting that it was “a model for co-operation in Europe” and that the organization had “contributed to stability and political and economic progress in the region.”²⁸⁸ In Brussels, Foreign Minister Petersen gave a great example of the emergence of this discursive linkage between the High North and Europe, noting in Brussels that he believed, “[Norway’s] experience with the Barents model of transnational and interregional co-operation could be useful in the further development of the E.U.’s European Neighbourhood Policy.”²⁸⁹ In particular, Norwegian officials believed the Cooperation to be an innovative method of fusing these transnational and interregional contexts, such as Finland and the Russian Republic of

²⁸⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Opportunities and Challenges*, 12

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

²⁸⁷ Widvey, “Norway and Energy.”

²⁸⁸ Petersen, “Climate Challenge in the Arctic.”; Petersen, Jan. “The Wider Europe Initiative and Future EU-EFTA Relations within the EEA Framework.” Speech, European Parliament, Brussels, March 17, 2004.

Accessed February 12, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the_wider_europe_initiative_and/id268360/.

²⁸⁹ Petersen, “The Wider Europe Initiative.”

Karelia's joint chairmanship in the Cooperation's working group on health cooperation.²⁹⁰ Thus, the Barents Cooperation was another High North-based normative standard Norway was interested to see adapted in the European context, furthering Norway's influence in the growing E.U. as a non-member state.

Despite Norway's desire to highlight the Barents Cooperation in European dialogues, Norwegian officials admitted that the Cooperation had struggled to deliver on promises of jobs and economic growth. "When the Barents Co-Operation was launched in 1993, we had high expectations," stated Foreign Minister Petersen at a NATO Parliamentary Assembly held on Svalbard in August 2004, before concluding that, "Unfortunately these hopes have not materialized. Trade and investment are lagging behind."²⁹¹ Put simply, "The Barents Region had yet to fulfil its potential as an arena of dynamic, sustained and sustainable growth."²⁹² Bondevik, however, saw business as the solution and believed that via the Barents Cooperation, petroleum production could help increase economic development throughout the region.²⁹³ Incentives for developing Barents industrial partnerships in forestry, mining, and offshore oil and gas became a key initiative for Norwegian officials from 2004-2005. Offshore oil and gas, in particular, would take a central role in this dialogue, "The exploitation of these resources could and should generate regional service and supply industries, in partnership with the oil companies in governments."²⁹⁴ Highlighting the fact that the Snøhvit Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plant generated EUR 200 million for industries servicing the facility in Barents region, Bondevik noted that he "Hoped this trend [of investment] [would] continue, so that companies find it just as natural to purchase equipment and services in northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia as in other countries."²⁹⁵ Therefore, petroleum reserves in the Barents were increasingly seen to be the spark necessary to drive the economic growth the Cooperation had so far struggled to achieve. In this way, the organization increasingly became a discursive instrument to highlight the positive economic benefits expanded petroleum activity in the Barents Sea could have on the region.

²⁹⁰ Petersen, "The Wider Europe Initiative."

²⁹¹ Petersen, "Spitzbergen and the Arctic."

²⁹² Traavik, "3rd Barents Industrial Partnership Meeting."

²⁹³ Bondevik, "Oulu Chamber of Commerce."

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

3.6 The Arctic Council 2004-2005

While Norway looked to the Barents Cooperation to take a key role in promoting interregional economic ties, it looked to the Arctic Council as the Arctic's preeminent intergovernmental institution, as Foreign Minister Petersen noted in Washington in June 2005, "Norway will continue to be a committed participant in the Arctic Council, and we will work together [with the other member states] to further strengthen the Council as the main body for circumpolar cooperation."²⁹⁶ Norwegian officials made it clear that they saw Council as a critical tool for "placing circumpolar [Arctic] high on the geopolitical agenda," particular through work such as the ACIA.²⁹⁷

In the short term, Norway would continue to build upon its legacy of leadership in the Council. Norway had provided significant support to the Arctic Human Development Report (ADHR) from 2002-2004.²⁹⁸ The report, per the Council's Reykjavik Declaration, would be used by the organization's Sustainable Development Working Group.²⁹⁹ In addition, Norway would continue to play a critical lead role in the Council's Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) working group and was only second to the United States in the number of projects it would support going forward to the next ministerial in 2006.³⁰⁰ 2004 also marked the beginning of Norwegian calls for the Arctic Council to have a permanent secretariat and a more reliable source of funding, with Foreign Minister Petersen noting that, "If effectiveness and practical results are valued, we must consider moving from the ad hoc organization of today to a firm and forward looking system."³⁰¹

To achieve this type of system, however, Norway increasingly insisted that the Council found a permanent secretariat. Petersen stated in Washington that Norway was, "in favor of establishing a permanent secretariat and a more reliable system for financing," for the Council.³⁰² What the Bondevik II government really meant, however, was that it would, "Seek to ensure that such a secretariat is established in Tromsø."³⁰³ Perhaps as a tactic to further that

²⁹⁶ Petersen, "Climate Challenge in the Arctic."

²⁹⁷ Petersen, "Challenges in the Northern Areas."

²⁹⁸ AC SAO Report 2004, 7

²⁹⁹ Arctic Council. Reykjavik Declaration. November 24, 2004. https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/89/04_reykjavik_declaration_2004_signed.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, Reykjavik, 3

³⁰⁰ SAO Report 2004, 24-25.

³⁰¹ Petersen, "Environmental Effort in the Arctic."

³⁰² Petersen, "Climate Challenge in the Arctic."

³⁰³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Opportunities and Challenges, 39

process along, Norway, “established a secretariat at the Norwegian Polar Institute in Tromsø for co-ordinating our national follow-up to the ACIA,” in 2004³⁰⁴

3.7 Conclusion: A Region in Flux 2004-2005

2004 and 2005 represented a rapid evolution of High North dialogues and New Middle Discourses. The region’s petroleum resources not only represented an avenue for continued prosperity in the midst of pension reform, but also an ability for Norway to assert its geopolitical relevance in rapidly shifting sands abroad. Furthermore, there was a clear attempt to portray the region as a petroleum province about to take off, with officials highlighting expanding activity and growing international interest in the region’s petroleum interests to solicit further investment. The petroleum discourse increasingly adapted to the specter of growing environmental awareness. Norwegian officials were cognizant that it would need “to achieve or earn the public opinion’s acceptance to operate in [the High North].”⁴⁶⁹ In this regard, the adaptive characteristics of the New Middle Way discourse were truly put on display. Regulations were discursively rebranded from liabilities to assets and shrewdly operationalized in order to create a global perspective of the Norwegian petroleum industry as technologically advanced and environmentally friendly.

Petroleum ambitions, however, did not prevent the Bondevik II government from putting forth a clear environmental vision from 2004-2005. International regimes, rather than domestic adjustments, composed the main focus for Norway, giving Oslo a discursive platform from which it could influence the global environmental debate in a way that still made room petroleum activity on the NCS.

In terms of Norway’s relations with Europe, the United States, and Russia, Bondevik officials showcased the utility of the New Middle Way discourse. In particular, the relationship with Russia had seen petroleum cooperation take the budding friendship between the two Barents Sea powers to new heights. In the European context, officials began to further tie Norway’s High North and European strategies together, hoping that the region’s strategically important petroleum resources would inspire Europeans to invest in the region.

³⁰⁴ Petersen, “Climate Challenge in the Arctic.”

⁴⁶⁹ Widvey, “Norway Leading European Energy Supplier.”

The U.S. remained a complicated sticking point as Norwegian officials struggled to find traction necessary to truly engage their American counterparts. Norwegian officials simply did not have the same leverage in Washington as it had other places.

On the intergovernmental level, the Arctic Council and the Barents Cooperation were seen as instruments for cooperation, albeit cooperation that often happened to serve Norwegian self-interest. Though it had struggled to jumpstart the region's economy in the past, the Bondevik government hoped petroleum production was the spark the Barents Cooperation needed to turn the economy around and into a shining example of cooperation for Europe. The Arctic Council did not factor quite as strong in terms of the New Middle Way discourse, however, though it was clear Norway saw opportunities to take leadership roles within the organization as an important part of contributing to a greater knowledge base in terms of regional affairs, particularly in regard to the effects of climate change.

4 Unlimited Possibilities: High North Petroleum and Environmental Discourses under the Stoltenberg II Government 2005-2006

“We still need to increase hydrocarbon production, while at the same time reducing carbon dioxide emissions and developing even safer and cleaner ways of utilizing fossil fuels. The promising fact is that all of this is possible”⁴⁷⁰
-Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre

As oil and gas prices marched higher, global climate change awareness hit fever pitch. These developments would form the backdrop for a period in which the Norwegian government would tender its submission for adjudication of territorial claims to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) on various delamination questions in the Arctic and in addition, would publish both its long awaited integrated management plan for the Barents-Lofoten Area and the most comprehensive Norwegian High North political document to date, *The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy*. In many ways, 2006 would be one of the most influential years in the contemporary history of the Arctic.

It would not, however, be the Bondevik II government that would lead Norway into this exciting new era in the High North. On September 12th, 2005, Norway went to the polls. The result was clear. Bondevik and his conservative governing coalition were out. Jens Stoltenberg, at the helm of a Red-Green coalition government made up of Stoltenberg's Labor Party, the Center Party, and the Socialist Left Party, would become Norway's new prime minister. The new government believed that perspectives in the region were indeed changing and it was critical that Norway kept up with these shifting realities in the High North. “I believe,” began Foreign Minister Støre at a speech in London, “that our greatest challenge is to alter our perspective, to acknowledge that the policy parameters for the High North have

⁴⁷⁰ Støre, Jonas Gahr. "The Emergence of the Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province: Implications for Norway and Europe." Speech, EPC Policy Briefing, Brussels, October 10, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the-emergence-of-the-barents-sea-as-a-pe/id420883/>.

changed so fundamentally in the space of such a short time.”⁴⁸⁴ Norway, they believed, needed a new, comprehensive, assertive, and future-oriented Arctic policy. A policy that would offer a long-term perspective, a perspective for, “not just for a year, but for a generation.”⁴⁸⁶

The beginnings of this policy were laid out in the Soria Moria Declaration, the foundational document for the Red-Green governing coalition between the Labor Party, the Center Party, and the Socialist Left Party. It was a document that gave priority to the High North, calling it, “Norway’s most important strategic focus area in the coming years.”⁴⁸⁷ The document declared that the government’s key focus points in the region were increased cooperation, the release of the “Action Plan for Management and Environmental Cooperation” for the Barents Sea, the development of common economic standards, and a clear focus on asserting sovereignty in the region.⁴⁸⁸ Many of the points included in the document, however, echoed those of the previous government. The new government wanted the Norwegian petroleum industry to be “world leaders” environmentally.⁴⁸⁹ The importance of getting in on the ground floor of petroleum development on the Russian side of the Barents was another shared ambition and Norwegian officials hoped to leverage the above competencies to make Norwegian companies attractive partners for Russian projects.⁴⁹⁰ Lastly, the new government sought to continue the strict regulatory schemes the Bondevik II government had put in place in the High North as a result of the 2002-2003 consequence evaluation, regulations that officials would seek to promote not only in an environmental fashion, but also in terms of highlighting the green credentials of the Norwegian petroleum industry.⁴⁹¹

In contrast from the Bondevik II government, however, the Stoltenberg II government would be more assertive in its language regarding Norway’s sovereignty in the region, representing the addition of a clear competitive element to the discourse in the High North. Norway would seek to continue to lead cooperative efforts in the region, but the point was

⁴⁸⁴ Støre, Jonas Gahr. "Norwegian Foreign Policy Priorities." Speech, London School of Economics (LSE), London, October 26, 2005. Accessed February 12, 2006. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/norwegian-foreign-policy-priorities/id420708/>.

⁴⁸⁶ Støre, Jonas Gahr. "The Norwegian Chairmanship of the Arctic Council." Speech, Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, Oslo, November 22, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the-norwegian-chairmanship-of-the-arctic/id436983/>.

⁴⁸⁷ Stoltenberg, Jens, Kristin Halvorsen, Åslaug Haga, Hill-Marta Solberg, Øystein Djupedal, Marit Arnstad, Martin Kolberg, Henriette Westhrin, and Magnhild Meltveit Kleppa. Plattform for Regjeringssamarbeidet Mellom Arbeiderpartiet, Sosialistisk Venstreparti Og Senterpartiet. 2005. Accessed January 30, 2018. https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/smk/vedlegg/2005/regjeringsplattform_soriamoria.pdf, 6.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 6-7

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 60

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*

made that the “safeguarding of Norwegian economic, environmental, and security policy interests in the north will be highly prioritized and be seen in a close relationship.”⁴⁹² It was a statement that showed the ability of the New Middle Way discourse to incorporate a security dynamic as increased global interest in the region led to greater challenges to Norwegian sovereignty. In another change from the Bondevik II government, the Stoltenberg II government desired to give more support to the press and other media outlets in order increase the visibility of the High North issues both domestically and abroad. Of particular focus was the government’s Barents 2020 initiative. The program itself was a tool for implementing Norwegian run cooperation projects with Russian and Western partners, a program that aimed to, “function as a link between international centres of expertise, academic institutions and business and industry in countries that are interested in the High North.”⁴⁹³ In contrast to previous, future oriented initiatives on technology development in the Norwegian petroleum industry, Barents 2020 had a, “stronger focus on environmental questions and on the management of the sea’s living resources.”⁴⁹⁴ All five of the projects highlighted in the Barents 2020 report had significant environmental components.⁴⁹⁵ In many regards, it reflected a nexus of actors, blending of academics, government officials, and petroleum industry executives in some ways similar to that behind CICERO in the early 1990s. In part to promote the initiative, the Stoltenberg II government aimed to increase the allocation for press, culture, and information by NOK 20 million.⁴⁹⁶ Of that sum, five million would go to Barents 2020 for “an information campaign targeted at decision makers and key groups in important countries.”⁴⁹⁷ In contrast, according to Foreign Minister Støre, the Bondevik II government had proposed a 40% cut.⁴⁹⁸

In addition to increasing allocations for dissemination, government officials significantly increased the time and geographical scope in which they discussed High North issues abroad. Within the first few months of the new government, several Norwegian officials would visit Russia. Government officials would give speeches across the world, from Dublin to Mumbai, in an attempt to make the High North a truly global issue.⁴⁹⁹ To complete

⁴⁹² Ibid., 6

⁴⁹³ Barents 2020, 3.

⁴⁹⁴ Johnsen, Barents 2020, 14.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid., 27-36.

⁴⁹⁶ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁹ Officials in the Stoltenberg II government, in the course of the first year of the Stoltenberg II government, would make speeches concerning the high north in Washington D.C., Paris, Dublin, London, Berlin, Brussels, Mumbai, Beijing, Copenhagen, Montreal, and several cities in Russia.

the ambitious vision the government had for the High North in its first year in power, Stoltenberg appointed a commission headed by Støre to draft Norway's most comprehensive High North strategy to date. The commission, made up of the ministers of eight government departments, would seek to "clarify how we together can coordinate all these areas so that we are pulling in the same direction."⁵⁰⁰ Over the course of the Stoltenberg II government's first year in office, it was clear, at least in discursive terms, that that direction would closely align with the New Middle Way Discourse.

2006 was therefore a critical year in the development of the contemporary Arctic. Due to the sheer number of events and large amount of primary material from the first year of the Stoltenberg II government, I have decided to cover it in the course of two chapters. The remainder of this chapter will handle the Stoltenberg II government's approach to petroleum activities and environmental interests in the High North from October 2005 to December 2006. The following chapter will go on to extrapolate these developments into the foreign policy context, noting how petroleum and environmental discourses continued to influence Norwegian policy in spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North via the New Middle Way Discourse.

4.1 Petroleum 2005-2006

"The energy chapter in High North is just being opened," proclaimed foreign minister Støre, in a speech given at the Institute of European Affairs in Dublin in September 2006.⁵⁰¹ The continued increase of petroleum prices, in combination with long lasting geopolitical instability in other petroleum producing regions, gave the Stoltenberg II government confidence that the High North was a region on the move. Støre, in a speech made in Tromsø, argued, "The High North is Europe's new energy region," adding later that the Barents Sea, "may become Europe's most important energy province in the foreseeable future."⁵⁰² Under the new government, however, Norway's sights were on more than just the European market. The Stoltenberg II government was a strong advocate of liquefied natural gas (LNG), a development that would allow Norwegian gas to be shipped around the world. Norway, with

⁵⁰⁰ Støre, "A Sea of Opportunities."

⁵⁰¹ Støre, Jonas Gahr. "The High North - Top of the World - Top of the E.U. Agenda?" Speech, Institute of European Affairs, Dublin, September 18, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the-high-north-top-of-the-world-top-of-t/id420872/>.

⁵⁰² Støre, "A Sea of Opportunities."; Støre, Jonas Gahr. "German-Norwegian Dialogue on the High North." Speech, Deutsche Gesellschaft Für Aussenpolitik (DGAP), Berlin, January 26, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/german----norwegian-dialogue-on-the-high/id420750/>.

its growing focus on developing LNG facilities, would soon be ready to “take part in the globalization of gas markets.”⁵⁰³

The central focus of the government’s LNG ambitions was the High North, at the Snøhvit natural gas field in the Barents Sea. “Snøhvit LNG makes it possible to also supply markets outside Europe,” stated Petroleum and Energy Minister Enoksen at the Norwegian petroleum industry’s annual Sanderstølen conference.⁵⁰⁴ Støre, Enoksen, and the rest of the Stoltenberg II government made it clear, however, that “long-term strategic planning” would be a critical component to ensuring Norwegian success in a globalized gas market.⁵⁰⁶ The industry’s future development in the region would therefore require considerable foresight in regard to market dynamics and environmental strategies. Key to tying these two components together would be the New Middle Way Discourse. As Oil and Petroleum Minister Enoksen made clear at Sanderstølen, Norway needed to, “establish a sustainable energy agenda for the North,” that went hand-in-hand with given the region’s potential as “a new petroleum province in Europe.”⁵⁰⁷

4.1.1 Global Market Dynamics and Petroleum in the High North

In 2006, the concept of security of supply and energy security had become omnipresent in geopolitical circles. As Støre noted during a trip to Washington in June 2006, “Energy security, energy supply, energy dependence – all these issues are now regarded as key foreign policy and security interests for consumers and producers alike.”⁵⁰⁸ Central to the energy security question was the relationship between high prices, geopolitical turmoil, and supply disruptions. In 2005, officials in the Bondevik II government wondered if prices north of USD 40 per barrel would last long.⁵⁰⁹ Towards the end of 2005 and in to 2006, it was clear

⁵⁰³ Enoksen, Odd Roger. "Sanderstølen February 2006." Speech, Sanderstølen Conference 2006, Sanderstølen Hotel, February 03, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/sanderstolen-february-2006/id420727/>.

⁵⁰⁴ Enoksen, “Sanderstølen 2006.”

⁵⁰⁶ Støre, “German-Norwegian Dialogue High North.”

⁵⁰⁷ Enoksen, “Sanderstølen 2006.”

⁵⁰⁸ Støre, Jonas Gahr. "The High North - Top of the World - Top of the Agenda." Speech, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington D.C., June 15, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the-high-north---top-of-the-world---top-/id420855/>.

⁵⁰⁹ Widvey, “Norway Leading European Energy Supplier.”

those estimates were conservative. Prices continued to rapidly increase – by January 2006, the Brent Spot Price was nearing USD 65.⁵¹⁰

Oil and gas prices

Monthly figures. USD/MMBtu. January 1997 - March 2012.
Broken lines indicate futures prices April 2012 – January 2015¹⁾

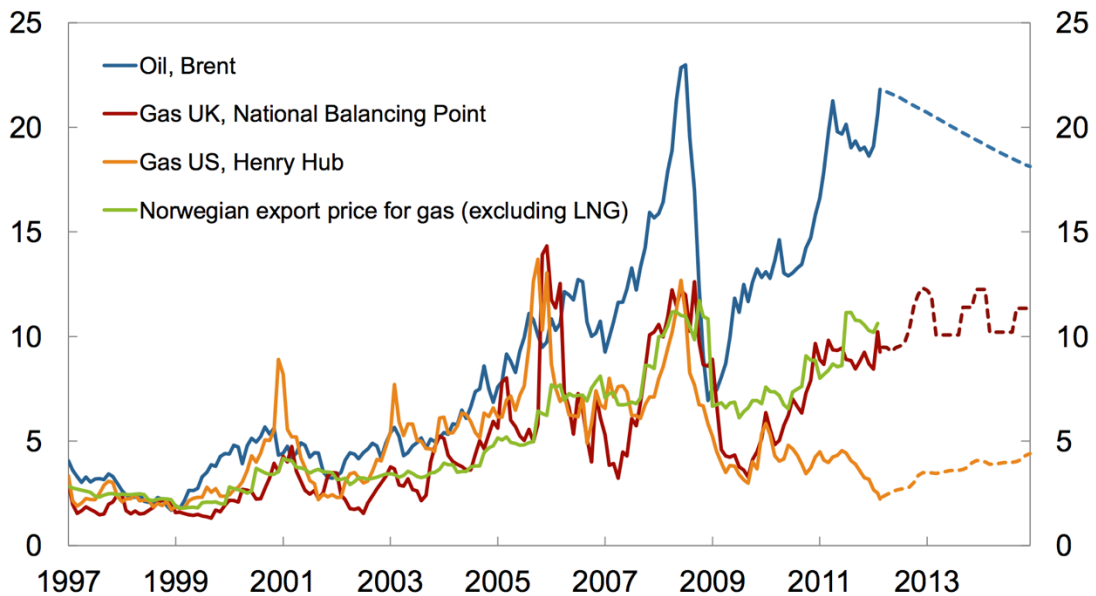


Figure 3 Prices of various Norwegian affiliated petroleum products from 1997-2013. Note in particular the steady rise in prices from 2001-2006. N.B. Prices above not USD per barrel, but rather USD per one million British Thermal Units.⁵¹¹

Geopolitical strife and other, unexpected supply disruptions played a key role. Long running conflicts in the Middle East coupled with increasing tensions in oil producing states in Africa ensured that global petroleum production remained both considerably more expensive and less predictable.⁵¹² Instability was not, however, limited to producers in Africa and the Middle East. While Norway and Russia continued to get along relatively well, Russia's relationships with former Soviet Republics, many of whom had just joined the European Union or NATO, or had aspirations to join, became increasingly complicated. This was particularly true in the case of Ukraine. In the wake of the country's Orange Revolution, in which a pro-Russian presidential candidate, Viktor Yanukovich, lost to a pro-European candidate, Viktor Yushchenko, Russian gas provider Gazprom ended its practice of

⁵¹⁰ EIA. "Europe Brent Spot Price FOB (Dollars per Barrel)." EIA. May 16, 2018. Accessed May 21, 2018. <https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/LeafHandler.ashx?n=PET&s=RB RTE&f=M>.

⁵¹¹ Winje, Pål. "Oil and Natural Gas Analysis at Norges Bank." Lecture, Workshop on Modeling and Forecasting Oil Prices, March 22, 2012. Accessed May 19, 2018. <https://www.norges-bank.no/globalassets/upload/konferanser/2012-03-22/winje.pdf>.

⁵¹² Støre, "Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province."

subsidizing Ukrainian gas imports, a move that effectively quadrupled the price.⁵¹⁴ Ukraine refused to pay the higher price, which created a chain reaction that saw gas supplies in countries such as France and Italy drop by over twenty percent.⁵¹⁵

By 2020, according to Norwegian officials, fifty percent of global petroleum demand would be met by “countries that pose a high risk of domestic instability”.⁵¹⁶ The consequences of this trend, Norwegian officials argued, was an increased need for Norway and its resources to contribute to global energy security:

“The foreign policy side of the development is more important today than previously as a consequence of that energy in an increasing degree is perceived and used an instrument of power in relationships between states, especially because of the scarcity of energy resources. This is leading to a larger competition and consequently increased political interest for developing the resources in the High North. Long term energy scarcity will be perceived as a part of countries’ security policy.”⁵¹⁷

It was argument bolstered by the influence of energy security problems on the European Union’s *Green Paper on Sustainable, Competitive, and Secure Energy*, a paper that set out, “very clearly the challenges Europe is facing [in terms of energy security].”⁵¹⁸ The paper identified priorities for both the upgrading and construction of infrastructure in order to ensure the security of E.U. energy supplies. The proposed upgrades to Europe’s energy infrastructure included, “new gas and oil pipelines and liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals,” a development that certainly pleased officials in Oslo.⁵¹⁹ The Stoltenberg II government understood that Brussels was looking to Norway for long-term security of supply and the High North, the center of Norway’s emerging LNG industry, would thus be well positioned play a key role in satisfying demand on the continent.

⁵¹⁴ Parfitt, Tom. "Ukraine and Russia Go to Brink over Huge Gas Price Rise." *The Guardian*. December 27, 2005. Accessed April 11, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/dec/27/russia.ukraine>.

⁵¹⁵ BBC News. "Ukraine 'stealing Europe's Gas'." *BBC News*. January 02, 2006. Accessed May 21, 2018. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4574630.stm>.

⁵¹⁶ Støre, “Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province.”

⁵¹⁷ Johnsen, Arve. *Barents 2020*. Report. Oslo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006. Accessed May 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/ud/vedlegg/barents2020e.pdf>, 9.

⁵¹⁸ Støre, “Top of the E.U. Agenda.”

⁵¹⁹ European Commission of the European Communities. *A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy*. 2006. Accessed April 11, 2018. http://europa.eu/documents/comm/green_papers/pdf/com2006_105_en.pdf, 15.

Geopolitically oriented energy security issues, however, were not the only market dynamics working in Norway's favor. In the United States, accidents in Texas and Prudhoe Bay in Alaska would disrupt American oil supplies, while hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico had further disrupted various aspects of the upstream, midstream, and downstream sectors of the petroleum sector in North America, driving global prices even higher.⁵²² In addition, strong, growing demand for petroleum products outside of the OECD, particularly in countries such as China and India, continued unabated, a point that Norwegian officials were keen to point out in dialogues with other actors.⁵²³ Officials were also interested in pointing out that growing non-OECD demand went beyond India and China. As Petroleum Minister Enoksen termed it at the Offshore North Sea Conference in Stavanger in August 2006, there were "important reasons for welcoming the increase in energy consumption," amongst states in the Global South.⁵²⁴ The curious, if not politically convenient, merger of Norwegian petroleum, environmental, and aid policy was only thus continued under the Stoltenberg II government, building off the implementation of the Oil for Development Program under the Bondevik government in 2005. "Economic growth is a precondition to combat poverty," stated Enoksen, "And energy is needed to fuel economic growth in developing countries."⁵²⁶ Put simply, the confluence of these trends in 2006 meant that world needed energy and, as Enoksen would point out in Stavanger, the IEA predicted energy demand would increase between fifty and sixty percent by 2030, with an increasing proportion of that demand being gas.⁵²⁸ Thus, the conclusion for the Stoltenberg II government was simple, "The market needs more gas supplies and a considerable part of the growth will come from Norway."⁵³²

Under the Stoltenberg II government, Norwegian officials continued to leverage favorable conditions as conduit for long-term investment in petroleum projects in the High North. While the rapid escalation of prices in 2006 incentivized the move north by increasing the financial viability of projects in the region, officials wanted to insulate Norway from the

⁵²² Støre, "Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province." (Events happened late 2005 and 2006 with reference to Hurricane Katrina and Prudhoe Bay, respectively)

⁵²³ Enoksen, "Sanderstølen 2006."

⁵²⁴ Enoksen, Odd Roger. "Bridging the Energy Gap - The Norwegian Contribution." Speech, ONS Conference, Stavanger, August 23, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/bridging-the-energy-gap--the-norwegian-c/id420792/>.

⁵²⁶ Enoksen, "Bridging the Energy Gap."

⁵²⁸ Stubholt 2006.05.11, note that Enoksen, "Bridging the Energy Gap." said 50%. Check IEA. Enoksen, "Bridging the Energy Gap."

⁵³² Enoksen, "Sanderstølen 2006."

negative effects of price volatility in the long term.⁵³³ This led to a discursive pairing of European energy security dynamics and the need for “predictable and non-discriminating investment regimes” to ensure the sustainability of projects undertaken in the region.⁵³⁴ Officials also noted a need on the state-to-state level for more long-term contracts such as the one Enoksen’s predecessor Widvey had secured with the United Kingdom.⁵³⁷ Thus, in order to produce the long-term security of supply Europe wanted, Norwegian officials looked for more European companies to invest in the High North, while at the same time encouraging their home countries to enter into long term gas contracts that would secure the future viability of projects in the region.⁵³⁸ This endeavor, discursively speaking, would also build off the efforts of former petroleum minister Widvey in rendering the High North a petroleum province of the present. Adding to the news regarding ENI a year prior, officials would additionally highlight the commitment of French multinationals Total and Gaz de France to regional projects.⁵⁴⁰ Additionally, Stoltenberg officials saw Russia as more than just a desirable destination for Norwegian oil companies, but a possible investor in the Norwegian half of the Barents Sea. In Moscow, Enoksen would state, “Russian companies are more than welcome to invest and compete in Norway on the same terms and conditions as other international companies.”⁵⁴²

4.1.2 Market Differentiation: The Synergy Between Norwegian Petroleum and the Environment Takes Off

“As an energy producing country – and an Arctic nation – we take the warning signals [of climate change] very seriously. Climate and environmental policy is therefore treated as an integrated dimension of Norway’s energy policy,” remarked Foreign Minister Støre at a speech at the Institute of European Affairs in Dublin.⁵⁴³ This, however, did not mean that the Stoltenberg II government would seek a more “environmental” path than the Bondevik II

⁵³³ Enoksen, “Sanderstølen 2006.”

⁵³⁴ Støre, “Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province.”

⁵³⁷ Støre, “Top of the E.U. Agenda.”

⁵³⁸ Enoksen, “Sanderstølen 2006.”CHECK QUOTE AT HOME

⁵⁴⁰ Støre, Jonas Gahr. ”Conference on “Voulez-vous My French Brand.”” Speech, La Chambre De Commerce Franco-Norvégienne, Oslo, October 13, 2006. Accessed October 13, 2006.

<https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/opening-address-at-conference-on-voulez-/id420869/>; Ulseth, Oluf. "A Strong Relationship within the Petroleum Sector between Norway and Italy."

⁵⁴² Enoksen, Odd Roger. "Oil and Gas Offshore Developments in Arctic and Cold Regions." Speech, INTSOK Seminar, Radisson SAS Slavyanskaya Hotel, Moscow, January 25, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018.

<https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/oil-and-gas-offshore-developments-in-arc/id420747/>.Contrasts sharply with Jensen’s other of Russia narrative.

⁵⁴³ Støre, “Top of the E.U. Agenda.”

government. If anything, the Stoltenberg II government had an even stronger belief in the idea it was possible to have the best of both worlds. “We still need to increase hydrocarbon production, while at the same time reducing carbon dioxide emissions and developing even safer and cleaner ways of utilizing fossil fuels,” said Støre in Brussels, before claiming, rather ambitiously, that, “The promising fact is that all of this is possible.”⁵⁴⁴ This synergy of fossil fuels and environmentally oriented technology was another key component in the High North petroleum pitch Norwegian officials were making globally. In a global petroleum market that was beginning to “pay attention to environmental issues,” Norwegian officials knew that market dynamics were not enough to garner the long-term investment projects in the High North needed.⁵⁴⁵ The government, therefore, sought to ensure that High North projects were situated in a context that mitigated long term political risk of “overregulation” and presented a “green image” that could serve as a bulwark against environmental criticism in the long run. Thus, the discourse began to adapt to reflect, “The need to further increase sustainable and environmentally good oil and gas activities and thereby also contributing [sic] to improve the political and public perception of the oil and gas sector,” as Petroleum Minister Enoksen pointed out at the petroleum industry’s annual Sanderstølen Conference in February 2006.⁵⁴⁶ In Brussels, State Secretary Stubholt made it clear that Norway, “Must make sure that exploitation of energy resources is based on stringent environmental standards and the most advanced technology standards and the most advanced technology available.”⁵⁴⁷ It was an argument that brought to mind earlier arguments in the Norwegian petroleum debate under Brundtland where technology and regulation were employed to convey the sustainability of the Norwegian petroleum industry.

The Stoltenberg II government, however, was not simply employing the New Middle Way discourse to secure Norwegian and/or European public opinion on petroleum activity in the High North. The Stoltenberg II government managed to turn what in other contexts might be considered overregulation into a springboard for promoting Norwegian petroleum industry as the “environmentally friendly” petroleum alternative abroad. The fact that the, “The Norwegian petroleum industry [had] been schooled in sustainable development for more than three decades already,” was therefore not a hindrance, but a catalyst for technological

⁵⁴⁴ Støre, “Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province.”

⁵⁴⁵ Støre, Jonas Gahr. “Norway - A Cooperation Partner in the High North.” Speech, Moscow State University (MGU), Moscow, February 17, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/norway--a-cooperation-partner-in-the-hig/id420790/>.

⁵⁴⁶ Enoksen, “Sanderstølen 2006.”

⁵⁴⁷ Bargem Stubholt, “Arctic Climate Change.”

innovation that differentiated Norwegian companies globally.⁵⁴⁸ In a visit to Mumbai, Enoksen noted that he believed the technical and environmental competence of the Norwegian oil industry “could be of use also in other petroleum provinces in the world.”⁵⁴⁹ Norwegian companies such as Statoil and NorskHydro were marketed by officials as climate pioneers within the petroleum industry, companies that had the technology and know how to get things done in the toughest environments. It was argument that was often directed towards Russia. As Støre would argue in a speech at Moscow State University, “No one can match the Norwegian experience of petroleum production in rough northern waters under extreme conditions,” adding further that, “Our constant emphasis on developing new expertise means that we have state-of-the-art knowledge and technology with all areas of offshore exploration and production.”⁵⁵² Beyond Russia, in speeches in Canada, the United States, and other countries, various government officials would reiterate this sentiment in an attempt to brand the Norwegian petroleum industry as technical experts with an environmental conscience. In comparison to large British and American petroleum companies that had recently experienced significant environmental incidents, it was indeed an attractive argument.

4.2 Environment 2005-2006

“Let’s be clear about it,” began Foreign Minister Støre at a speech on the High North at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, “Climate change is taking place on our doorstep. The time for asking the ‘if’ questions has passed. We are now facing with the ‘how-to-respond’ questions.”⁵⁵⁵ While the new government argued that, “Global warming is without a doubt the most pressing issue on the Arctic environmental agenda,” a full-throated stop of the petroleum industry would simply not be in the cards.⁵⁵⁶ Norwegian environmental efforts would instead focus on international cooperation, rather than further regulating Norway’s own petroleum industry. It was position summed up by

⁵⁴⁸ Støre, “Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province.”

⁵⁴⁹ Enoksen, Odd Roger. "Capabilities of the Norwegian Oil and Gas Industries. How Can We Increase Cooperation between India and Norway." Speech, Indo-Norwegian Business Cooperation in the Oil and Gas and Maritime Sector Seminar, Mumbai, October 30, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/capabilities-of-the-norwegian-oil-and-ga/id425665/>.

⁵⁵² Støre, “Norway-A Cooperation Partner.”

⁵⁵⁵ Støre, “Top of the Agenda.”

⁵⁵⁶ Bargem Stubholt, Liv Monica. "Arctic Climate Change." Seminar in the European Parliament, The European Parliament, Strasbourg, March 08, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/arctic-climate-change/id420825/>.

Støre in a speech in Brussels, “I believe that international cooperation is vital if we are to achieve the necessary emission reduction and avoid dangerous climate change.”⁵⁵⁷

In forums such as the Twelfth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 12) in Nairobi, Kenya, Norwegian officials made it clear that they were “disappointed” in international efforts to date.⁵⁵⁸ Officials believed that by fostering, “a common understanding of these major [environmental] challenges,” however, the world would be, “able to respond in a coordinated and adequate way.”⁵⁵⁹ Discursively, Norwegian officials would attempt to do this in two ways. Firstly, officials would often present an alarming array of scientific findings, many with a decidedly Arctic orientation, in their speeches abroad. State Secretary Stubholt, at a seminar on Arctic climate change at the European Parliament in Brussels, noted that, “Summer ice extent was at its minimum in recorded history in 2005, and current estimates indicate that the entire summer ice sheet may entirely disappear.”⁵⁶⁰ In a speech on Spitsbergen, State Secretary in the Ministry of the Environment Henriette Westhrin noted that, “[Spitsbergen] has broken all previous temperature records [this year]. The mean temperature in January was 13 degrees Celsius above the normal mean temperature.”⁵⁶¹ Støre and the foreign ministry were also fond of citing recent research, the former noting at the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting that, “A recent study from the US space agency NASA,” had found that, “the Earth is now reaching the warmest levels in the current interglacial period, which has lasted nearly 12,000 years.”⁵⁶² The second component was simple. Norwegian officials wanted to get officials from other countries, in particular the United States and Europe, to visit the High North to see the impact of climate change in the region first hand.⁵⁶³

Though Norway’s overriding environmental ambition in the first year of the Stoltenberg II government was to “see more ambitious commitments” globally, Norway was

⁵⁵⁷ Westhrin, “Changes in the Arctic.”

⁵⁵⁸ Bjørnøy, Helen. “Deep Emission Cuts Urgent.” Speech, 12th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Nairobi, November 11, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2006. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/deep-emission-cuts-urgent/id430220/>.

⁵⁵⁹ Westhrin, “Changes in the Arctic.”

⁵⁶⁰ Bargem Stubholt, “Arctic Climate Change.”

⁵⁶¹ Westhrin, “Changes in the Arctic.”

⁵⁶² Støre, Jonas Gahr. “Main Address at Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting.” Address, Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, Salekhard, October 26, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2006. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/main-address-at-arctic-council-ministeri/id420890/>.

⁵⁶³ These efforts will be covered in further detail in the next chapter, as the argumentation behind them was adapted to the specific discourses Norway was having with the U.S. and E.U. respectively.

ready, according to Støre, “to take our share [of environmental commitments].”⁵⁶⁵ As previously noted, this did not mean that Norway wished to stop petroleum activity in the High North or otherwise on the NCS. Instead, two domestically oriented solutions that officials believed allowed Norway to make significant contributions to the international movement against climate change were put forth. The solutions, one technological in orientation, the other regulatory, very much embodied New Middle Way thought. They would allow the economic benefits of petroleum activity to continue, while at the same Norway would promote these innovative solutions internationally to maintain Norway’s desired image as an environmental pioneer.

The first of these strategies was Climate Capture and Storage (CCS).⁵⁶⁶ Norwegian officials argued that it was in fact possible, theoretically speaking, to feed the entirety of CO₂ emissions in Western Europe into formations on the NCS for 400 years, a development that would drastically lower emissions.⁵⁶⁷ The Stoltenberg II government’s belief in CCS was itself a reflection of a deep-seated belief that emerged under Brundtland some fifteen years prior. Technology like CCS, officials believed, could strike, “A balance between industrial activity and environmental concerns.”⁵⁶⁸ The problem, however, in the case of CCS, was the technology was quite expensive.⁵⁷⁸ In the context of petroleum projects in the High North, CCS was simply another massive cost potential operators would have to contend with. While Petroleum Minister Enoksen noted, “We support demonstration and pilot projects, and spend about 18 million euros annually to keep up research, development, and demonstration of such technologies,” neither the government’s lofty rhetoric nor the bull petroleum market of the mid-2000s could ensure the economic feasibility CCS implementation, particularly in the High North.⁵⁷⁹

More feasible and less technological, however, was the Integrated Management Plan for Barents-Lofoten Sea Area. The plan was released via Government White Paper Number 8 by the Ministry of the Environment, on March 31st, 2006.⁵⁸⁶ The plans main goal was to both,

⁵⁶⁵ Støre, “Main Address Arctic Council Ministerial.”

⁵⁶⁶ For a more extensive overview of the politics behind CCS, see Tjernshaugen, Andreas. *Fossil Interests and Environmental Institutions: The Politics of CO₂ Capture and Storage*. PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2010. Oslo, 2010.

⁵⁶⁷ Enoksen, “Bridging the Energy Gap.”

⁵⁶⁸ Støre, “Address to the Storting.”

⁵⁷⁸ Enoksen, “Bridging the Energy Gap.”

⁵⁷⁹ Enoksen, “Bridging the Energy Gap.”

⁵⁸⁶ Ministry of the Environment. *Helhetlig Forvaltning Av Det Marine Miljø I Barentshavet Og Havområdene Utenfor Lofoten (forvaltningsplan)*. Report. 8th ed. Vol. 2005-2006. 2006. Accessed January 29, 2018.

“Arrange for value creation through sustainable use of resources and goods in the Barents Sea and the sea areas outside of Lofoten, in addition to simultaneously maintaining the ecosystem structure, function, and productivity [of these areas].”⁵⁸⁷ In many regards, it was a crowning achievement of the New Middle Way discourse, a representation of the institutionalization of the general principles of the discourse in a document with a long term orientation. Government officials were immensely proud of the plan and believed that it could be of use to other countries looking to economically benefit from natural resources situated in vulnerable environments, particularly those situated in the Arctic.⁵⁹²

4.3 Conclusion: Unlimited Possibilities 2005-2006

If 2004 and 2005 represented the emergence of the sustainable development terminology in the High North, 2006 represented the year in which it was extensively codified into Norwegian foreign policy in the region. The continued rise in oil prices combined with a series of geopolitical events to make petroleum activities in the Barents Sea and other Arctic areas more feasible than ever before. In many European capitals, the development of Norwegian petroleum assets in the High North was becoming increasingly desirable politically, offering an alternative to Russian energy dependence. Barents 2020 was indicative of a petroleum industry and nation increasingly more self-aware of the increasingly negative perception of petroleum activities in the world, a plan that aimed to leverage international cooperation in the High North to develop initiatives to facilitate more environmentally friendly oil production. It was indeed part of an effort to leverage the New Middle Way to position the Norwegian petroleum industry for the future, a future in which growing environmental standards would harm companies unable to adapt to progressively stricter regulatory schemes and reward companies that had the skill set to meet the demands of greener future.

Norwegian officials thus saw 2006 as a unique opportunity to fuse economic and environmentally interests into appealing package for international export. Officials in the

<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/f0f38e6b95224570ba44da87b1093d03/no/pdfs/stm200520060008000ddpdfs.pdf>, 89.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁹² The Stoltenberg II government’s efforts to export the integrated management plan will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Stoltenberg II government would use the High North as a starting point to export Norwegian environmental policy, as well as Norwegian petroleum companies, abroad. Norwegian businesses could remain competitive in the international context by touting their environmentally abilities, while, at the same time, the Norwegian state would continue to enjoy the growing international prestige that came with becoming an environmental norm entrepreneur. It was indeed the international level, particularly in spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North, where the unique effect of this New Middle Way policy would be felt. This New Middle Way had not only resulted in the intertwining of Norwegian energy and environmental policy, particularly during the first year of the Stoltenberg II government, but would largely redefined the parameters by which Norway would conduct itself in an ever more global Arctic.

5 A Global High North: Bilateral Relationships & Intergovernmental Networks under the Stoltenberg II Government 2005-2006

“We want to see the Barents Sea bee developed into a ‘Sea of Cooperation’, a peace project involving cooperation between Norwegian interests and Russian interests and, where appropriate, with interested parties in Western countries in a far reaching northern web of cooperation”⁶⁰⁷

-Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre

The rapid pace of development in both the energy and environmental sectors pushed the High North higher up global economic and geopolitical agendas in 2005. As noted in the preceding chapter, 2006 would be a year in which trends continued to accelerate. This represented a greater opportunity for Norway to work with a wide range of partners to help further Oslo’s cooperative vision in the Arctic. This vision of cooperation, however, would be tested during the Stoltenberg II government’s first year in office. Growing global attention had led to a growing global presence in the High North. Norway believed it needed to develop a clearer, more assertive posture in defense of its sovereignty in the region. Russia continued to be the most important cog in Norway’s High North policy in regard to bilateral cooperation, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would also spend a considerable amount of time working with a diverse group of partners that included the United States, Canada, and various European powers. The following chapter will explore the evolution of Norway’s relations with other important actors in spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North and, furthermore, how the New Middle Way discourse continued to shape the evolution of these relationships.

⁶⁰⁷ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

5.1 Russia 2005-2006

The Stoltenberg II government argued good relations with Russia were a critical component in Norway's focus on the High North. As State Secretary Anita Ulseth laid out at the Interprise Barents conference in Arkhangelsk, the two main points of emphasis of the new government in its relationship with Moscow would be "Developing the bilateral cooperation in the energy sector to the mutual benefit of both countries," and, "Contributing to the realization of commercial cooperation in the energy sector by encouraging the active cooperation between Norwegian and Russian companies with regard to exploration for, and production of hydro carbons."⁶⁰⁹ It was clear, therefore that the Stoltenberg II government's ambitions in its relations with Moscow were very much oriented around petroleum production in the Russian portion of the Barents Sea. "If we manage to become involved in the development of the Russian shelf, the Norwegian oil era could be prolonged by several decades," noted Støre in Tromsø.⁶¹² The prolonging of petroleum activities, in the domestic context, meant increased viability for the Norwegian welfare state and economic opportunities for Norwegian businesses in Northern Norway. Thus, Stoltenberg, Støre, and company hoped that a dynamic, close relationship with Moscow would become so close that the two nations could eventually "abolish visas [between Norway and Russia] all together."⁶¹³ It would be Norway-Russia relationship where ties, according to Støre, would become as "close as for example the Nordic countries' relations are today: something we take for granted like being members of the same family."⁶¹⁴ It was certainly a sentiment that went far beyond anything said by the Bondevik II government.

The Stoltenberg II government wasted no time in building relationships with their Russian counterparts. Minister of Petroleum and Energy Enoksen visited Russia in January.⁶¹⁵ Støre followed suit a month later, taking the "northern route to Moscow" in a trip evocative of Petersen's a year prior, travelling through Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, and St. Petersburg, in order to illustrate, "The emphasis that the Norwegian government puts on the opportunities of

⁶⁰⁹ Utseth, Anita. "Interprise Barents 2006 Opening Speech." Speech, Interprise Barents 2006, Arkhangelsk, June 14, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/interprise-barents-2006/id420779/>.

⁶¹² Støre, "A Sea of Opportunities."

⁶¹³ Støre, "Norway-A Cooperation Partner."

⁶¹⁴ Støre, Jonas Gahr. "Summary of Address (Talking Points) at Seminar Arranged by the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)." Speech, Seminar Arranged by the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) and the Norwegian Association of Regional Authorities (KS), Oslo, June 19, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018.

<https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/summary-of-address-at-seminar-arranged-b/id420857/>.

⁶¹⁵ Støre, "Address to the Storting."

the High North.”⁶¹⁶ Soon after, Russia’s Prime Minister, Mikhail Fradkov, visited Stoltenberg in Norway.⁶¹⁸ Perhaps the biggest early political coup for the new prime minister, however, was the fact that Russia had decided to resume high level talks concerning the delimitation of the disputed area in the Barents Sea after a two year delay in December 2005.⁶¹⁹ In these visits, and other, related speeches relating to Norway’s relationship with Russia, Norway would set out to create a relationship where Norwegian innovation and regulatory practices would lead the way for the offshore petroleum adventure in Russia. Thus, the discourse with Russia was highly oriented around the Barents Sea, the Russian portion in particular, with topics of interest being petroleum and the implementation of a joint integrated management plan for the whole Barents region.

5.1.1 Joint Integrated Management Plan for the Barents Region

In terms of concrete policy goals, “a successful bilateral, high-level seminar,” was held in Moscow at the end of February in order to “promote the Russian-Norwegian cooperation on protection of the Barents Sea.”⁶²¹ With the launch of the integrated management plan in April, Norway saw the institution of similar programs as a way to secure both Norwegian environmental norms and the continuation of Arctic petroleum production. Thus, the normative acceptance of such plans became a central feature of the broader New Middle Way discourse. “Our vision,” said State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Liv Monica Bargem Stubholt in Moscow, “is to develop an integrated management plan for the entire Barents Sea in cooperation with Russia and, on a longer term, for the whole circumpolar Arctic.”⁶²² It was an ambitious goal. In Norway, it had taken three years and two governments to come up with a similar plan. Therefore, Stoltenberg officials knew it would be necessary to, “persuade Russia that it is the country’s own interest to establish an integrated management plan for the Russian part of the Barents Sea”⁶²³

Støre believed that it could use Russia’s documented interest in petroleum industry development as a starting point for the creation of such a plan, noting, “Norway and Russia

⁶¹⁶ Støre, “Norway-A Cooperation Partner.”

⁶¹⁸ Støre, “Address to the Storting.”; Seljeseth, Geir. "Spent Stoltenberg Møter Russisk Kollega I Dag." *Www.nordlys.no*. March 27, 2006. Accessed May 21, 2018. <https://www.nordlys.no/nyheter/spent-stoltenberg-moter-russisk-kollega-i-dag/s/1-79-2019764>.

⁶¹⁹ Støre, “Address to the Storting.”

⁶²¹ Westhrin, “Changes in the Arctic.”

⁶²² Bargem Stubholt, “Arctic Climate Change.”

⁶²³ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

have everything to gain by working together to set the highest possible safety and environmental standards for activities in the Barents Sea.”⁶²⁵ He argued further that “applying the highest standards not only protects the environment, it also brings higher returns on investments, it yields more resources, and it makes the products more acceptable for the increasingly environmentally aware consumers.”⁶²⁶ By adhering to Norwegian environmental and security standards, Russian companies would therefore be more profitable and attractive to foreign investors. It additionally presented another win-win for Norway. In order to make the long-term petroleum activity that many in Northern Norway thought would lead to an economic renaissance in the region palatable to environmental concerns, it would have to be environmentally friendly. By exporting the integrated management model Norway would employ in the Barents from April onwards, Norway could be both set environmental norms for the region while simultaneously laying the foundation for lasting, petroleum-based prosperity in the High North.

5.1.2 Cooperation in the Petroleum Industry

In a speech at the University of Tromsø given on November 10th, 2005, titled “A Sea of Opportunities – A Sound Policy for the High North,” Støre quipped that President Putin had said that, “Russia has the resources and Norway has the expertise,” when referring to the new strategic partnership on energy announced between the two countries in 2005.⁶²⁷ Whereas Russia had decades of petroleum experience on land in Siberia and the Caucasus, they had comparatively little experience extracting resources “at the bottom of a rough, cold sea.”⁶²⁸ “This is why,” Støre posited, “it makes such good sense for us to work together with Russian partners in the Barents Sea. The combined experience and know-how of Norwegian and Russian oil companies and authorities will create the best possible conditions for efficient development of the petroleum resources in these northern waters.”⁶²⁹ In the opinion of the foreign minister, technology was “probably why” companies such as NorskHydro and Statoil were on Gazprom’s shortlist for foreign partners in the Shtokman development.⁶³⁰ Norwegian technology, furthermore, was not just seen as an instrument to help Russia hit certain environmental standards, but a boon for growth in Northern Norway. “If Norwegian

⁶²⁵ Støre, “Talking Points NHO KS.”

⁶²⁶ Støre, “Norway-A Cooperation Partner.”

⁶²⁷ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁶²⁸ Støre, “Norway-A Cooperation Partner.”

⁶²⁹ Støre, “Norway-A Cooperation Partner.”

⁶³⁰ Støre, “Norway-A Cooperation Partner.”

technology is used on the Russian Shelf,” stated Støre at the University of Tromsø, “it can only be an advantage that it is adapted to high Norwegian health, environmental, and security standards. But I would be surprised if it doesn’t also ensure that projects are highly profitable, and thus that there is more money for the community – in Russia as well.”⁶³¹

A key initiative in fostering this technological cooperation was the Barents 2020 project, which aimed increase “knowledge of how to master the challenges involved in environmental and resource management in the North.”⁶³⁶ A majority of the projects in Barents 2020, encouraged Norwegian-Russian petroleum cooperation. Of the five projects proposed in the Barents 2020 report, all concerned petroleum operations in Arctic waters, with all but one listing one or more Russian companies as possible foreign partners.⁶³⁸

Cooperation between major Norwegian energy companies and Russian authorities, institutions of higher learning, and petroleum companies, however, was not just a future plan, but, as Stoltenberg officials made clear, already a reality. The prospects of tremendous economic benefits from enhanced Russian-Norwegian cooperation in Arctic petroleum extraction had already inspired a variety of existing initiatives, not only in the Barents Sea, but in the Pechora Sea, another Arctic sea located in Russian waters to the east of the Barents. Norwegian companies had already been awarded 25% of the supply contracts in the Pechora’s Prirazlomnoye oil field.⁶³⁹ The Supplier Development Program NorskHydro had established in 2003 was still in operation.⁶⁴⁰ Statoil had initiated dialogues with regional authorities in the Russian oblasts of Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, that targeted “relevant industrial, labor, and social issues to be addressed in order to prepare for a growing petroleum industry.”⁶⁴¹ At speech in Moscow, Enoksen pointed out that these efforts had led to, “two memorandums of understanding between the oblasts and Statoil.”⁶⁴² In addition, Statoil had also developed a collaborative framework with Moscow State University, “With a view to establishing a good model for exchanging ideas and strengthening cooperation between leading actors in the future oil and gas industry in Norway and Russia.”⁶⁴³ Norwegian oil industry organization Norwegian Energy Partners (INTSOK) had developed a project for partnership with several important Russian petroleum companies. INTSOK hoped to “develop mutually beneficial

⁶³¹ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁶³⁶ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, 27-36.

⁶³⁹ Enoksen, “Developments Arctic and Cold Regions.”

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴¹ Enoksen, “Developments Arctic and Cold Regions.”

⁶⁴² Enoksen, “Developments Arctic and Cold Regions.”

⁶⁴³ Støre, “Norway-A Cooperation Partner.”

cooperation between Norwegian technology suppliers and Russian companies,” by bringing together the Norwegian industry with actors such as Gazprom, Semorneftgaz, Lukoil, and Rosneft.⁶⁴⁴

In sum, the Stoltenberg II government hoped to further the efforts of the Norwegian petroleum industry to integrating itself in Russian petroleum projects in the Barents Sea and other Arctic regions. In the Russia context, this modification of the New Middle Way discourse showcased not only that increased cooperation would unlock the great potential of the Russian side of the Barents, but Norwegian-Russian collaborative efforts had already had a positive impact on both countries, environmentally and economically. In terms of Europe, discussion about Russian-Norwegian petroleum cooperation underscored the special role Norway believed it had in the evolving relationship between Russia and the West. Additionally, it highlighted the positive direction of the industry across the whole of the High North. There was, however, a final component. In both contexts, the discussion of Russian-Norwegian petroleum competition hinged on the regions continued stability, a question that, in the long-term, depended upon the two countries’ ability to settle the long running delimitation issue in the Barents.

5.1.3 Delimitation

The resumption of senior level talks in December gave new hope to Norwegian officials that the delimitation question, a question that had plagued Norwegian governments for decades, could finally be resolved. It was an issue of critical importance. Officials knew the Barents Sea’s geopolitical stability would play a significant role in attracting the long-term funding necessary for petroleum projects in the region. “If we fail to establish a predictable framework for energy development,” noted Støre in Tromsø in November 2005, “this region will lose the very things that are its strengths: stability, transparency, and peaceful developments.”⁶⁴⁸

The Norwegian government, however, was confident that significant progress could be made, with Støre stating in the foreign minister’s annual February address to the Storting that, “I myself have an open and direct dialogue with my Russian colleague on these matters.”⁶⁴⁹ On November 27th, 2006, Norway would deliver its submission to the Commission on the

⁶⁴⁴ Enoksen, “Developments Arctic and Cold Regions.”

⁶⁴⁸ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁶⁴⁹ Støre, “Address to the Storting.”

Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) in regard to three disputed areas in the North Atlantic, Arctic Sea, and Barents Sea that Norway believed it had claim to per the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In the submission, Norway noted that while Moscow and Oslo had not yet come to a definitive agreement about the disputed maritime areas, “The Government of the Russian Federation has indicated to Norway that it has no objection to the commission considering and making recommendations on this part of the submission without prejudice to any future delimitation.”⁶⁵⁰ While it did not reflect a level of understanding and cooperation comparable to those Norway had with Iceland and Denmark in regard to similar disputed areas, it still was an important step forward through which a neutral third-party could make a recommendation that could serve as the basis for final negotiations.⁶⁵¹

5.1.4 Problems

The shift of governments, however, did not eliminate some long-standing concerns in the complex relationship between the two Arctic nations. In a similar refrain to that often heard from officials in the Bondevik II government, Støre would at times refer to Russia as a “democracy in the making,” adding that, “not all trends are pointing in the right direction.”⁶⁵² Støre was even more frank in his annual address to the Storting noting, “Russia still has a long way to go before it becomes a predictable and democratic state governed by the rule of law.”⁶⁵³ In particular, Støre would point to issues such as, “Corruption and increased political control over strategic economic sectors, the media, NGOs, and civil society,” as problematic.⁶⁵⁴ However, Støre, believed that the relationship between the two countries was strong enough for Norway to hold conversations with Russian officials about these problems, noting in Washington that, “These issues are part of our frank and open dialogue – a testament to the solid relations we have built.”⁶⁵⁵

Familiar issues with Russian democracy would be met in 2006 by new issues related to the two most important economic concerns in the High North: fish and petroleum. In October 2005, only days after Stoltenberg took office, two Norwegian fishing inspectors were

⁶⁵⁰ Oljedirektoratet. Continental Shelf Submission of Norway in Respect of Areas in the Arctic Ocean, the Barents Sea and the Norwegian Sea (Executive Summary). By Oljedirektoratet. Oljedirektoratet, 2006. Accessed January 18, 2018. http://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/nor06/nor_exec_sum.pdf, 12.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid., 11.

⁶⁵² Støre, “Main Address Arctic Council Ministerial.”

⁶⁵³ Støre, “Address to the Storting.”

⁶⁵⁴ Støre, “Top of the Agenda.”

⁶⁵⁵ Støre, “Top of the Agenda.”

effectively kidnapped after they boarded a Russian fishing vessel, The Elektron, in the waters around Svalbard.⁶⁵⁶ With the two Norwegian officials on board to ensure the ship had complied with Norwegian fishing regulations, the ship attempted to flee to Russian waters.⁶⁵⁷ The move resulted in an international incident. Norwegian ships and aircraft tailed the fishing ship until met by a Russian naval craft sent to prevent the Norwegian vessels from entering Russian waters.⁶⁵⁸ While the officials were promptly returned, both sides were agitated. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov argued that, "The incident took place in the Spitzbergen area, which the Norwegian side has proclaimed a fish-protection zone. We have never agreed to the parameters that the Norwegians set unilaterally."⁶⁵⁹ Norwegian officials, however, maintained they had a right to ensure the proper management of resources in the archipelago.⁶⁶¹

Norway's designs on the Shtokman field would face a setback a year after the Elektron incident. In a speech in Brussels, Støre noted that, "Yesterday the perspectives changed as Gazprom stated that it would manage the production [of the Shtokman field] itself, that LNG was no longer the key component and that gas from Shtokman would be transported to Europe by pipeline rather than to the US market by ship."⁶⁶² NorskHydro and Statoil, both on Gazprom's shortlist for foreign partners, were effectively left out in the cold. While Støre argued that, "We have not yet seen the end of the Shtokman story," it was undoubtedly a setback in terms of the ability of New Middle Way discourse to positively affect the direction of the relationship between Oslo and Moscow.⁶⁶³

Despite these issues, Lavrov and Støre's relationship was in good enough condition for the two to work together to pen an editorial for the Norwegian news magazine *Dagbladet* titled "Arctic Council – Ten Years of Cooperation for the Benefit of the North." highlighting the two countries achievements in the intergovernmental body and their visions for the

⁶⁵⁶ BBC News. "Fleeing Trawler in Russian Waters." BBC News. October 19, 2005. Accessed April 11, 2018. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4351136.stm>.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁶¹ Støre, "Talking Points NHO KS."

⁶⁶² Støre, "Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province."

⁶⁶³ Støre, Jonas Gahr. "Norway and the US — a Common Future?" Speech, Oslo Military Society, Oslo, October 23, 26. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/norway-and-the-us--a-common-future/id425705/>.

region's future.⁶⁶⁴ These negative events did, however, make an impact. While Norway continued its cooperative efforts, the Stoltenberg II government decided that Norway needed assert its sovereignty in the North, particularly in Svalbard. In terms of the New Middle Way discourse, an element of competitive sovereignty emerged in the broader High North dialogue. It was clear that Norwegian officials would longer discuss resources as purely cooperation inducing tools, in certain cases arguing instead that Norwegian assets would need to be protected as the region attracted more international attention

5.2 The Nordic States 2005-2006

Norway's strong relations with its Nordic neighbors would definitively continue with Stoltenberg's ascension to the Prime Minister's office. The government saw a rare opportunity to secure the High North's position on the European political agenda vis-à-vis cooperation with the Nordic states in the Nordic Council of Ministers, Arctic Council, the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), and the European Union. It was an opportunity that built on the fact that the Nordic states would hold important leadership positions in those intergovernmental organizations. At the same time, Norway would assume the presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2006.⁶⁷⁰ "We have a particularly good opportunity for close and coordinated efforts," stated Støre in his foreign policy address to the Nordic Council in Copenhagen in November 2006, "when chairmanships, as at present, are held by Nordic countries; Finland in the Barents Council, Sweden in the CBSS, and Norway in the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Arctic Council."⁶⁷¹ "We must make the most of this," he added.⁶⁷² This "good opportunity" for influence also extended to the European Union, where Finland would hold the Council of the European Union's presidency.⁶⁷³ Norway continued to have concern about its influence in Brussels as a nation outside the Union, but eminently affected by it. Thus, Oslo saw the confluence of Nordic chairmanships in various European and Arctic

⁶⁶⁴ Støre, Jonas Gahr, and Sergey Lavrov. "Arctic Council - Ten Years of Cooperation for the Benefit of the North." *Dagbladet*, October 29, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/arctic-council-ten-years-of-cooperation-/id425707/>.

⁶⁷⁰ Nordic Co-Operation. "The Norwegian Presidency 2006." Nordic Co-operation. Accessed May 01, 2018. <https://www.norden.org/en/nordic-council-of-ministers/regeringssamarbejdet/presidency-of-the-nordic-council-of-ministers/former-presidencies/the-norwegian-presidency-2006>.

⁶⁷¹ Støre, Jonas Gahr. "Foreign Policy Address to the Nordic Council." Address, Copenhagen, November 01, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/foreign-policy-address-to-the-nordic-cou/id425716/>.

⁶⁷² I Støre, Jonas Gahr. "Foreign Policy Address to the Nordic Council."

⁶⁷³ Støre, "Address to the Storting."

intergovernmental institutions as a way to ensure that Norway's views would continue to be heard in Europe.

In addition, Norway saw the back-to-back-to-back Nordic chairmanships in the Arctic Council as another means to secure long term change in the organization in Norway's interest. Norway would take the chairmanship from 2006-2009, Denmark from 2008-2011, and Sweden from 2011-2013.⁶⁷⁴ The three states would work together in order to release a joint program for their chairmanships in order to establish a long-term perspective within the Council's work.

There were, however, aspects of competition between the Norway, Denmark, and Iceland in relation to delimitation of disputed areas in the Arctic Ocean and parts of the Northern Atlantic Ocean above the Arctic Circle. Norway would tender its submission to the CLCS on November 27th, 2006, a submission that asked for the body's adjudication on disputed areas with Denmark and Iceland.⁶⁷⁵ While a move to delimitate territory is fundamentally competitive, Copenhagen and Oslo saw the process as another arena to foster strong ties between the two countries, despite the fact that it was "expected that Iceland and Denmark and the Faroe Islands will also make 'overlapping claims'."⁶⁷⁶ On February 20th, 2006, Norway and Denmark, in addition to representatives from Greenland, signed a cooperative agreement regarding, "The delimitation of the continental shelf and fishery zones in the area between Greenland and Svalbard."⁶⁷⁷ The deal would enter into force on June 2nd of that year.⁶⁷⁸ On September 20th, 2006, the foreign ministers of Denmark, Norway, and Iceland, in addition to the Prime Minister of the Faroe Islands, signed agenda minutes that, "Set out an agreed procedure for determining future delimitation lines in the southern part of the Banana Hole," adding further that, "Final agreements will be bilateral."⁶⁷⁹

⁶⁷⁴ Arctic Council. "History of the Arctic Council." Arctic Council. November 04, 2016. Accessed May 21, 2018. <http://www.arctic-council.org/index.php/en/about-us/arctic-council>.

⁶⁷⁵ Oljedirektoratet, Continental Shelf Submission of Norway, 11.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid.

5.3 Europe 2005-2006

Under the Stoltenberg II government, Norway would continue its High North dialogue with Europe. “Our High North policy is an integral part of our European policy,” stated Støre in a speech in Berlin in January 2006.⁶⁸⁰ The foreign minister’s European background was well suited to engaging officials in Berlin, Paris, and Brussels on issues of importance in the High North. Norwegian officials were encouraged that the High North was finally rising on the European political agenda, in large part thanks to the specter of energy security. “Fifteen years ago,” stated Støre in a speech at the European Policy Centre in Brussels in October, “we sought to bring European officials to the North to introduce them to Arctic realities. Today, they come all by themselves, driven not by altruism, but by legitimate self-interest.”⁶⁸² Key to that interest was Norway’s use of the New Middle Way discourse to assuage European environmental concerns while simultaneously touting the region’s ability to meet Europe’s energy needs.

Despite the region’s growing profile in Europe, the Stoltenberg II government knew there was still a long way to go before the High North was truly on the agenda in European capitals. In the same speech where Støre highlighted the fact that more European officials were traveling to Norway’s Arctic areas, he also admitted that, “The organizers of this policy briefing warned me that this notion would not attract sufficient attention here in Brussels.”⁶⁸³ Støre, in fact, would often begin his speeches in Europe with a joke about how European television stations had the Nordic capitals of Oslo, Stockholm, and Helsinki as the “cut-off point” of European weather maps.⁶⁸⁴ In fact, one German professor even quipped to the foreign minister in Germany that when he heard the term “High North,” he thought of Schleswig-Holstein, a region on the German border with Denmark.⁶⁸⁵

The Stoltenberg II government saw the growing importance of energy security in 2006 due to the events in Ukraine as an important opportunity to take the High North dialogues started under Bondevik further in an attempt to put the region higher on the European agenda. Thus, the European Union’s desire for increased work with Norway’s petroleum sector in order to “secure energy access and energy supply diversification” was welcomed by Norwegian officials. Mentioned previously in Chapter 5, the EU’s *Green Paper on*

⁶⁸⁰ Støre, “German-Norwegian Dialogue High North.”

⁶⁸² Støre, “Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province.”

⁶⁸³ Støre, “Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province.”

⁶⁸⁴ Støre, “Chairmanship of the Arctic Council.”

⁶⁸⁵ Støre, “Barents Sea as a Petroleum Province.”

Sustainable, Competitive, and Secure Energy found High North to be an important European energy province and argued that, “Attention should be given to facilitating Norway’s efforts to develop resources in the high north of Europe in a sustainable manner.”⁶⁸⁶ The statement, which firmly situated the High North in the European context, further gave Norwegian officials hope that more EU funds would be earmarked for environmental and energy based projects in the region.⁶⁸⁷ In particular, the government hoped Arctic research would “receive a high priority” and additional funding in the EU framework program for research and technology, a framework that State Secretary Stubholt described as, “an important arena for pan-European cooperation in developing new knowledge in highly relevant areas such as climate and marine research.”⁶⁸⁸

Thus, the variant of the New Middle Way discourse deployed in Europe differed considerably to that Stoltenberg officials had employed in Moscow. Whereas the Russian variant focused on redefining environmental regulations as beneficial to Russian economic interests, in addition to opening doors for Norwegian involvement in Russian petroleum, the European variant focused on securing European interest in the High North vis-à-vis finding an equilibrium between environmental concerns on the continent and a growing need for a stable security of supply. In petroleum terms, Russia was the upstream dialogue, Europe the downstream. In France, Støre highlighted the need for Norway to build a brand in the country as an important role as an energy provider and a critical geopolitical player in the High North attuned to continental interests in the region.⁶⁸⁹ This notion was also applied in the German context. Germany continued to be the most important European country outside of the Nordic area in terms of the High North for Norway. The central focus was on the petroleum industry, economically, technologically, and environmentally. Norwegian officials would point out the benefit of the industry to both countries. Germany was the most important market for Norwegian gas, “accounting for 30 percent of [Norway’s] total gas exports” and the German company E.ON Rhinegas had become, “Norway’s single largest trading partner.”⁶⁹² “The proportion of gas supplied by Norway,” Støre, noted in a June speech to the Norwegian-German Chamber of Commerce in Oslo, “is expected to rise to more than 30 percent of total

⁶⁸⁶ European Commission of the European Communities, *Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy*, 16.

⁶⁸⁷ Støre, “Top of the E.U. Agenda.”

⁶⁸⁸ Bargem Stubholt, “Arctic Climate Change.”

⁶⁸⁹ Støre, “My French Brand.”

⁶⁹² Støre, “Norwegian-German Chamber of Commerce.”

German consumption by 2010”, and would soon become “the biggest supplier of energy to Germany, superseding Russia.”⁶⁹³

Norway’s cooperation with Germany and German companies on issues of importance in the High North, however, also had a focus on technological development, in particular technological development to make energy extraction more environmentally friendly. “We should reach out to Germany’s environmental expertise,” noted Støre, adding that German firms such as Linde and RWE-DEA played important roles in tech development in the Snøhvit project.⁶⁹⁵ Oslo was also encouraged that the Norwegian-German Willy Brandt Foundation was, “Considering the possibility of launching concrete research and development projects in the High North.”⁶⁹⁶

5.4 United States and Canada 2005-2006

Representing the two members of the Arctic Council not on the European continent, Norway looked to leverage its historically strong ties with Ottawa and Washington to put the High North higher on the agenda in North America. The Bondevik II government saw these nations as important partners to engage in High North dialogues. Norway hoped these dialogues could sway the negative sentiment in Washington towards international climate regimes such as the Kyoto Protocol, while at the same time paving way for cooperation between the Norwegian, Canadian, and American petroleum industries. The petroleum companies in these countries were technological sophisticated, vertically integrated transnational oil giants, companies that Norway hoped would invest in its Arctic waters while at the same time partnering with Norwegian companies to operate in North America’s Arctic areas.

Norway continued to see Canada as a valuable partner under the Stoltenberg II government. Canada was a significant petroleum producer, with substantial Arctic resources and an environmentally concerned population like Norway. In a seminar given by State Secretary Liv Monica Stubholt in Ottawa titled the “The High North: A Strategic focus for Norway,” Stubholt noted that, “The preparations for the seminar have identified a large number of topics that are relevant for our discussion and this reveals the great potential for

⁶⁹³ Støre, “Norwegian-German Chamber of Commerce.”

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid.

Norwegian-Canadian cooperation on High North issues.”⁷⁰¹ In particular, Stubholt pointed out that both countries could benefit from a New Middle Way approach on energy issues, “Norway and Canada produce energy from fossil fuels. In addition, we have substantial hydropower. But there does not necessarily have to be a conflict between renewable and non-renewable energy resources in policy making.”⁷⁰² During a trip to Ottawa, officials from the Ministry of the Environment joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to share the recently enacted integrated management plan with Canadian officials, noting “Such a management plan could be a useful tool in other regions as well.”⁷⁰³ Thus, it was clear that Norway’s designs on getting other countries to adopt Norwegian normative standards in regard to resource management was not just limited to the Barents, but the entire Circumpolar Arctic.

In the United States, Støre and the Norwegian government realized that they faced the same uphill battle as their predecessors to get High North issues on the political agenda. In a speech made by Foreign Minister Støre at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, Støre noted that John Hamre, a former American government official and the CEO and President of CSIS, had told him that, “None of the aspects of the High North he had heard about [during a trip to Oslo] were anywhere near the top of the political agenda in Washington.”⁷⁰⁴ For a nation bogged down in wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the rapid changes in the High North, both economically and environmentally, were likely of less importance than pressing issues in other parts of the world. A common American refrain Norwegian government officials heard from their American counterparts at this time was that, “The problem with Norway is that there is no problem with Norway.”⁷⁰⁵

Yet there were signs of optimism for the Stoltenberg II government. The United States’ ambassador to Norway, Benson Kelley Whitney, noted in a speech given in Kirkenes on February first,

“This region is of great significance to the United States, the agenda is large: oil and natural gas development, environmental protection, global energy security, fisheries and even non-proliferation. Subjects of such global significance demand international

⁷⁰¹ Bargem Stubholt, Liv Monica. "The High North: A Strategic Focus for Norway." Speech, Ottawa, May 11, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/the-high-north-a-strategic-focus-for-nor/id420840/>.

⁷⁰² Ibid.

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁴ Støre, “Top of the Agenda.”

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

cooperation and understanding. The United States and Norway have a rich, multi-dimensional relationship in the High North.”⁷⁰⁶

By Whitney’s own admission, petroleum and gas would compose the axis of the Norwegian-American relationship in the High North. In terms of energy, part of that cooperation would soon become manifest. In Washington, Støre boldly proclaimed that Norway, “Is about to meet a significant share of the globe’s future energy demands – in particular those of the United States.”⁷⁰⁸ Central to this vision would be the importation of LNG from Snøhvit.⁷⁰⁹ “When Snøhvit commences operation in 2007,” noted Støre, “Norway will supply 85 billion cubic feet of LNG to Cove Point, Maryland.”⁷¹⁰ Before Gazprom decided that it did not want to have international partners on the Shtokman project, Støre also highlighted that project’s potential to further satisfy demand in America, a statement likely assuming Norwegian companies would play a critical part in the project.

Whitney also, however, noted the importance of environmental issues. In Washington, Støre would argue that, “The issue [of climate change] is not at the top of the agenda in Washington,” adding, “This is something I regret – simply because we will not be able to deal with the challenge of Climate Change unless the US with all its talent and technology engages.”⁷¹¹ Whereas the Stoltenberg II government found ways to leverage and adapt New Middle Way discourses to both Russia and Europe, comments such as Støre’s evoked a weakness not found in other dialogues. The United States did not need Norwegian technology and expertise as much as the Russians. Nor did the U.S. need Norway as much as Europe did in terms of energy security. In addition, the Americans also comparatively lacked the growing environmental concern found in European capitals. Officials would attempt to convince American politicians to travel to the High North, in the hope that the effects of climate change could be clearly seen, making a lasting impression. Støre, in a conversation with Senator John McCain, who had visited Svalbard with Senator Hillary Clinton in 2004, therefore proposed, “That we organize a visiting program to give his fellow senators and other elected representatives of the people in the Arctic region, the opportunity to come and see for themselves so that they can match their impressions with scientific evidence and gain stronger

⁷⁰⁶ Støre, “Top of the Agenda.”

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁹ Støre, “German-Norwegian Dialogue High North.”

⁷¹⁰ Støre, “Top of the Agenda.”

⁷¹¹ Ibid.

incentives to move towards political action.”⁷¹² It was clear, however, that a new government in Oslo would not find the key to increase American participation both in the High North and global environmental treaties. Instead, it would take a changing of the guard in Washington.

In sum, the Stoltenberg II government saw Canada and the United States as two important partners with influential voices in the Arctic Council and globally. Canada was seen as a kindred spirit of sorts, another country with a strong Arctic identity that sought to balance petroleum production with environmental concerns, an ideal environment for the further adoption of Norwegian normative practices tied to the New Middle Way discourse. The United States, on the other hand, though long considered Norway’s most important ally, was decidedly more difficult to engage with on Arctic affairs.

5.5 The Barents Cooperation 2005-2006

The Barents Cooperation was a popular topic with the Stoltenberg II government. In a similar fashion to the Bondevik II government, the new government would also argue that petroleum activity was the linchpin for the economic aspect of the Cooperation. In sum, at least discursively, the Cooperation was spoken of as a support apparatus for petroleum efforts on both sides of the Barents, an important conduit for the development of the infrastructure necessary to sustain long-term petroleum activities in both the Norwegian and Russian areas of the Barents Sea. At the same time, however, Stoltenberg officials noted that it was importance that economic development attached to the Barents Cooperation’s efforts be centered around principals of sustainable development,

“Norwegian companies have experience in developing local industry and accept social responsibility as a natural consequence of endorsing principles of sustainable development. Having a long-term perspective on activities and engagement in the Barents Region, issues related to local and regional community development at large, are an integrated part of the preparatory work for companies looking at opportunities in the Barents Region.”⁷²⁴

In order to achieve the desired results, however, Norwegian officials believed that cooperation would need to be strengthened by ensuring that the Cooperation’s structures and

⁷¹² Støre, “Top of the Agenda.”

⁷²⁴ Enoksen, “Developments Arctic and Cold Regions.”

frameworks worked optimally. In a speech given in Harstad on November 9th, 2005, Støre would highlight what the new government envisioned for the cooperation in front of the foreign ministers from Iceland, Finland, and Russia, in addition to a “high level representative” from the European Union.⁷²⁵ “The principle of joint working groups,” stated Støre in Harstad, “should be further developed with the aim of strengthening regional involvement in key sectors like health, education, and energy.”⁷²⁶ In order to give the organization a sense of “permanence and institutional memory,” the Stoltenberg II government offered up Kirkenes as the location for an international secretariat for the Cooperation, a secretariat, “Norway would be willing to bear a proportionally greater financial responsibility for its operation.”⁷²⁷ Thus, the Stoltenberg II government looked to further entrench the Barents Cooperation as an important cooperative framework in the region by giving at a dedicated facility from which it could build a long-term future.

5.6 The Arctic Council 2005-2006

Like the Bondevik II government before it, the new government regarded the Arctic Council “as the main body for circumpolar cooperation.”⁷²⁸ This point was further made in an editorial Støre and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov co-authored for the Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet*. “The key challenges we are facing in the Arctic today have one thing in common – they are transboundary,” stated the two foreign ministers, going on to argue that, “[These challenges] can only be met through close international cooperation. And this is the role of the Arctic Council, the activities of which are more important today than ever before.”⁷²⁹

In 2006, Norway would take over the chairmanship of the organization from Russia and set forth an ambitious program for the country’s chairmanship. Three priorities were highlighted in particular were integrated resource management, climate change, and conducting a review of the Council’s structure.⁷³⁰

⁷²⁵ Støre, Jonas Gahr. “Strengthening Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.” Harstad, November 09, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2006. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/strengthening-cooperation-in-the-barents/id420711/>.

⁷²⁶ Ibid.

⁷²⁷ Støre, “Strengthening Cooperation BEAR.”

⁷²⁸ Støre, “Main Address Arctic Council Ministerial.”

⁷²⁹ Støre & Lavrov, “Arctic Council.”

⁷³⁰ Støre, “Chairmanship of the Arctic Council.”

The desire to implement integrated resource management practices borrowed from the integrated management plan Norway established for its portion of the Barents Sea was an integral component of the institutionalization of the New Middle Way in the Council, “It was agreed that the council should develop an energy dimension with a view to establishing cooperation in sustainable oil and gas development.”⁷³¹ Støre at the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region held in Oslo in November, stated he furthermore believed, “Protection of the environment, combined with the sustainable utilization of natural resources, should be at the core of the Arctic Council’s work. Major opportunities relating to non-renewable resources –i.e. Oil and gas – are arising in the Arctic, but we need to see these in the context of the social and environmental challenges.”⁷³² The first step Norway would take in this process would be to conduct an assessment of oil and gas activities across the entirety of the Circumpolar North, “The extensive assessment of oil and gas activities in the Arctic, which will be submitted next year will be an important input to our work to protect the fragile environment the same time as we develop new economic activities,” noted Støre at the Arctic Council Ministerial in Russia.⁷³³

Such management plans would be aided further by the ambitious platform Norway had proposed to tackle climate change via the Arctic Council. It was clear from the onset the issue would be a priority for Norway.⁷³⁴ More concretely, however, “Norway will give priority to presenting a comprehensive and up to date picture of the present climate effects and future challenges the Arctic Countries face in the region,” in addition to generating more data, “to prepare ourselves for the impact of climate change in the Arctic and to understand how climate change in the Arctic affects other regions of the world.”⁷³⁵ Lastly, in regard to climate change, creating a follow up to the 2004 ACIA would be another key Norwegian priority during its chairmanship.⁷³⁶

The last pillar of Norway’s plan for its chairmanship of the Council, a review of the Council’s structure, was also quickly addressed by government officials. To the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Regions, Støre said the following, “The Arctic Council is now 10 years old. We must ensure the most efficient use of its limited resources. I think it is

⁷³¹ Støre & Lavrov, “Arctic Council.”

⁷³² Støre, “Chairmanship of the Arctic Council.”

⁷³³ Støre, “Main Address Arctic Council Ministerial.”

⁷³⁴ Ibid.

⁷³⁵ Støre & Lavrov, “Arctic Council.”

⁷³⁶ Westhrin, Henriette. "Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group 1 Opening Speech." Speech, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Bergen, June 26, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/intergovernmental-panel-on-climate-chang/id420784/ear-period-of-the>

important to make regular evaluations of the Council's work, and Norway will initiate a process to review its organization and consider ways of improving its effectiveness and efficiency."⁷³⁷ Central to these efforts would be the establishment of a permanent secretariat for the Council. In a speech concerning the strengthening of cooperation in the Barents-Euro Arctic Region, Støre argued that, "A whole range of activities would benefit from the existence of a permanent common secretariat, of course on terms acceptable to our partners."⁷³⁸ In a similar fashion to the way Norway proposed to host a secretariat for the Barents Cooperation in Kirkenes, the government officials offered to host the Council's secretariat in Tromsø, with Støre noting that, "Norway would be willing to bear a proportionately greater responsibility for its operation," in that case.⁷³⁹ By the end of 2006, the idea of a permanent secretariat in Tromsø was fast becoming a reality, buoyed by cooperation from Denmark and Sweden. "We are now in the process of establishing a secretariat in Tromsø for the total six-year period of Scandinavian chairmanships," said Støre, before going on to say that, "If everything goes as planned, the secretariat will be up and running in January 2007."⁷⁴⁰

5.7 Exercising Sovereignty: A Stronger Norwegian Presence in the High North

The Stoltenberg government's enhanced focus on the High North was, as stated previously, in part a reaction to the confluence of a variety of global trends, both geopolitical and economic, that made the region an area of greater interests to countries around the world. Thus, the increasingly competitive nature of the High North's internationalization would see a competitive facet to the New Middle Way discourse develop under the Stoltenberg II government. Støre would note in his first address to the Storting on February 8th, 2006, that, "Other countries can be expected to increase the level of activity [in the High North], particularly in the energy and transport sectors," going on to argue that, "We must therefore have the capacity to maintain a presence and exercise our responsibilities as a coastal state."⁷⁴¹ Støre, would also note, "A credible exercise of sovereignty is contingent on the

⁷³⁷ Støre, "Chairmanship of the Arctic Council."

⁷³⁸ Støre, "Strengthening Cooperation BEAR."

⁷³⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁰ Støre, "Chairmanship of the Arctic Council."

⁷⁴¹ Støre, "Address to the Storting."

maintenance of activities,” three months prior in Tromsø⁷⁴². The statement would in fact, later be famously echoed by Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who argued that, “Sovereignty is not a theoretical concept; you either use or lose it,” during a visit to Northern Canada some nine months later.⁷⁴³ Norway was not going to be left behind in asserting its sovereignty. The Stoltenberg II government, however, would look to build upon international law in its assertions of sovereignty, “Through our conduct in forums relevant to international law, in High North dialogues and by means of other contacts, we will seek to gain acceptance for our positions.”⁷⁴⁵

In particular, the archipelago of Svalbard would test the overriding cooperative nature of Norwegian policy in the High North. Incidents such as the Elektron incident with Russia, in addition to other ambiguities created by the Svalbard treaty made it critical that Norway establish an assertive policy in the area, with government officials noting that, “much of the discussion about the zone [around Svalbard] must therefore be viewed as vying for resources.”⁷⁴⁶ Norwegian officials bemoaned that the treaty was, in many ways, outdated. “At the time when the treaty was concluded, continental shelves and 200 mile maritime zones were unknown concepts,” remarked Støre.⁷⁴⁷ Therefore, the Norwegian government would, “Seek international acceptance for Norway’s views regarding Svalbard, the fisheries zone, oil and gas production and sound environmental management.”⁷⁴⁸

In part due to the Elektron incident, the Norwegian government realized that some actors may would simply not share Norwegian views on the archipelago. Perhaps taking into account Lavrov’s displeasure with Norway’s unilateral actions in regards to the Elektron incident, Støre clearly reserved Norway’s right to act unilaterally, arguing in Tromsø after the incident that, “Seeking other countries prior approval [for decisions concerning Svalbard] would not be in keeping with the Svalbard Treaty, which accords Norway full and absolute sovereignty over the archipelago.”⁷⁴⁹ In sum, while Norway would “listen carefully in our dialogues with our partners,” Oslo would also “make it clear that there are some questions

⁷⁴² Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁷⁴³ Querengesser, Tim. "Harper's Sovereignty Junket Pleases Northerners - If No One Else." Yukon News. August 17, 2006. Accessed May 13, 2018. <https://www.yukon-news.com/news/harpers-sovereignty-junket-pleases-northerners-if-no-one-else/>.

⁷⁴⁵ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁷⁴⁶ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁷⁴⁷ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁷⁴⁸ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

⁷⁴⁹ Støre, “A Sea of Opportunities.”

that are not up for discussion or negotiation.”⁷⁵⁰ One area that one area that was not up for discussion, “[Was] the question of Norway’s continued jurisdiction [in Svalbard and the Barents Sea] in accordance with international law and with a view to responsible management of resources.”⁷⁵¹

5.8 Conclusion: A Global High North 2005-2006

In 2004 and 2005, the Bondevik II government responded to the rapid geopolitical changes in the High North, caused by shifting economic, environmental, and energy security dynamics, by establishing High North dialogues with several key partners. In late 2005 and 2006, with the continuation of the trends and market dynamics above, the Stoltenberg II government came into power prepared not only to continue these dialogues, but to put them at the top of Norway’s foreign policy agenda. Central to these dialogues would be an even stronger embrace of New Middle Way policies, policies that the Stoltenberg II government believed made Norwegian normative standards and environmental regulations attractive to the other littoral Arctic states looking to craft their own policies towards a region with a newfound geopolitical significance. At the same time, the Stoltenberg II government was also determined to differentiate Norwegian petroleum companies and, thus, Norwegian economic interests, from other similar companies.

As before, cooperation would remain the central means by which these New Middle Way politics would take hold in foreign policy context. The Stoltenberg II government advanced a sophisticated, nuanced approach that secured its position in the High North in both bilateral contexts and intergovernmental arenas. Key to that approach was the New Middle Way, which in the course of 2006, helped Norway to continue to have an important place in global geopolitics.

The growing interest in the High North indeed provided an opportunity to redefine the region’s geopolitical relevance in the shifting realities of a post-Cold War world. Just as Støre, like Bondevik officials before him, noted the that overarching security of narrative of the Cold War was history, so too was Norway’s historic role as a mediator between East and West that helped Norway maintain a heightened geopolitical relevance during the Cold War.

⁷⁵⁰ Støre, Jonas Gahr. "Svalbard - An Important Area." Nordlys, April 15, 2006. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/svalbard--an-important-arena/id420843/>.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

The Stoltenberg II government, however, saw the precipitous rise of the High North as an opportunity, a conduit for showcasing Norway's value in geopolitical arenas. Norway again wanted to play a critical role in building the bridge between Moscow and the West after years of worry about being sidelined in Brussels and in Transatlantic relations due to the specter of increased cooperation between NATO and various European defense initiatives.

Thus, Foreign Minister Støre believed, therefore, Norway's High North was not just oriented around Norway, or even bilateral relations with Russia. "Our intensified cooperation with Russia is more than a close bilateral relationship," began Støre in a January 2006 speech in Berlin, "It is part of a broader effort to link Russia more closely into European and Western cooperation structures."⁷⁵² It was at a time when Russia was experience a newfound self-assurance. The poor, hobbled Russia of the Yeltsin years had been replaced with Russia led by a shrewd tactician in Vladimir Putin, buoyed to newfound wealth derived from soaring petroleum prices. Yet, while this led to a welcome surge of Russian investment across Europe, it also gave Russia the confidence to challenge Europe and the West geopolitically, as evidenced by the gas conflagration with Ukraine. Thus, the Stoltenberg II government believed that, "Norway and other countries in Europe – indeed all the countries of the transatlantic community – need Russia just as much as Russia needs us. We must not isolate Russia or allow Russia to go its own way."⁷⁵³ Norway hoped to increase its strategic relevance in the transatlantic context by reasserting a familiar, but critical role in helping Europe and the United States navigate an increasingly more complex relationship with Russia.

Key to this effort, was the High North. A High North oriented around cooperative structures further oriented around Norway's unique New Middle Way approach. It was approach that could onboard Europe's growing environmental sentiment, while at the same time promoting the financial incentives many in Western policy circles, not least Norway, believed necessary, to continue to engage with the West. Thus, the Stoltenberg II government did not simply see the High North as area just to spur economic growth in Norway and prolong Norway's petroleum era, but a means to preserve Norway's ability to punch above its weight in international geopolitical circles, entrenching Norway's role as an important

⁷⁵² Støre, "German-Norwegian Dialogue High North."

⁷⁵³ Støre, "Top of the Agenda."

geopolitical player, despite its small size, in the twenty-first century.⁷⁵⁴ The government's High North Strategy, released on December 1st, 2006, would be one the first strategies of its kind amongst Arctic littoral states and would connect the countries future prosperity and normative influence to its ability to navigate the High North's rapidly shifting geopolitical currents vis-à-vis the New Middle Way. The strategy's political priorities, such as being "the best steward of the environment and natural resources in the High North", and providing, "a suitable framework for the further development of petroleum activity in the Barents Sea and will seek to ensure that these activities boost competence in Norway in general and in Northern Norway in particular, and foster local and regional business development," put Norway on a path towards the future in large part governed by the adaptive, pragmatic principles of the New Middle Way.⁷⁵⁵

⁷⁵⁴ U.S. President Barack Obama as quoted in De Carvalho, Benjamin, and Jon Harald Sande Lie. "A Great Power Performance."

⁷⁵⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy*. Report. Oslo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006. Accessed January 18, 2018. <https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/ud/vedlegg/strategien.pdf>, 8.

6 Conclusion

By the time the Stoltenberg II government released its High North Strategy in December 2006, it was clear the New Middle Way had come to play a substantial role in how Norway framed its High North discourse and, further, how that policy was presented to the world. In spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North, Norway used the New Middle Way to assert normative primacy in important regional dialogues while at the same time incorporating the economic and environmental preferences of other important actors into Norway's discursive framework. Under both the Bondevik II and Stoltenberg II governments, the New Middle Way provided a sort of historically tested conceptual starting point for Norwegian officials looking to cope with the region's rapidly shifting dynamics and heightened geopolitical importance. The ability of Norwegian officials to effectively leverage this discourse in spaces for competition and cooperation, modifying it to accentuate the evolving policy preferences of various partners, shows that the New Middle Way discourse is a useful cooperative tool for historical explorations of the work of Norwegian officials in various bilateral situations, in addition to transnational networks and intergovernmental organizations. The table on the following page provides an overview of how Norwegian officials modified their discourses using New Middle Way thinking to balance between a wide range of actors that had varied and, at times, competing points of view.

Table 1: Overview of Discursive Modification in Spaces for Competition and Cooperation (Bilateral)

<i>Country or Group</i>	<i>Discursive Modification</i>
Russia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Win-win scenarios. • Russian companies encouraged to adopt environmental measures in order to attract investment necessary for expanded exploration and production in Arctic offshore environments. • Russia needed advanced technology to conduct more environmentally friendly and profitable offshore exploration and production. Norwegian companies were well suited for these tasks and ideal partners for their Russian counterparts. • Establish an integrated management scheme for the entire Barents Sea.
Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental component satiated growing European environmental awareness. • Petroleum component played into European worries about security of supply. • Petroleum cooperation with Russia served as a means to highlight Norway's strong relationship with Moscow and its role as a crucial intermediary between the West and Moscow.
United States & Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. participation in global environmental regimes critical. • Heighten U.S. interest in the region. • Bond with Canada over shared qualities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Norwegian abilities in the petroleum field.
Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand Norway as a normative leader within the environmental movement. • Improve prospects for Norwegian petroleum companies by marketing them as “environmentally friendly” alternatives prepared for a world of growing environmental awareness.

As Table 1 notes, Norway modified the parameters of the New Middle Way discourse in order to better reflect the preferred outcomes of its target audience, at the same time ensuring that Norwegian preferences remained at the fore of the debate. In this way, Norway differentiated itself as a world leader in “environmentally friendly” methods of petroleum production, while also letting it remain an environmental norm entrepreneur. This synthesis of technology, economic progress, and environmental leadership in the Norwegian discourse was not an attempt to reconcile a sort of “cognitive dissonance” between petroleum and environmental interests. Rather, it is reflective of a long established Norwegian discourse that allowed Norway to adroitly maneuver in the complex post-Cold War geopolitical order. This discursive flexibility also furthered Norwegian cooperation in spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North. Norwegian officials would highlight the environmental side to curry favor in certain situations, while leveraging the economic or, in this case, the petroleum side, in others. Norway was thus able to incorporate the interests of others into its own discourse, creating cooperation facilitating win-win scenarios. This allowed Norway to create a more environmental line in the High North, than if Norway had not worked cooperatively or labored as extensively in intergovernmental organizations to institutionalize Norwegian environmental norms.

Furthermore, the New Middle Way discourse also played a role in helping Norway navigating shifting political sands in the mid-2000’s. In a marked departure from Yeltsin’s Russia, Vladimir Putin brought a new assertiveness to Russian foreign policy. The E.U. emerged as an increasingly more influential political and economic actor with the addition of ten new member states in 2004. Brussels’ growing power, particularly in regard to the transatlantic relationship between Europe and the United States, made Norwegian officials

worried that they could be marginalized. The High North's ability, however, to increase Norway's leverage in European and transatlantic geopolitics allowed Norway to play a role between East and West that went hand-in-hand with Oslo's strategies to avoid marginalization. Norway's High North dialogue during this period was, in many ways, a deliberate attempt to reassert itself by inserting itself into a key geopolitical role, as Støre noted in Berlin, "[The High North Dialogue] is about future management of resources in vast geopolitical areas with Arctic conditions. It is also about managing relations with Russia – Norway's relations with Russia and Europe's and America's relationship with Russia."⁷⁵⁷ By leveraging the New Middle Way discourse in spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North, Norwegian officials could engage on their own terms with much larger powers.

The utility of the New Middle Way as historical paradigm allows the usefulness of the term, however, to be expanded beyond bilateral settings. The New Middle Way was more than just a means of employing a certain sort of pragmatic adaptability that facilitated bilateral cooperation, but was also active in intergovernmental networks in terms of the institutionalization of various norms and frameworks. In the Arctic Council, the Norwegian discourse shifted to a position that the Council should increasingly mirror Norwegian normative positions. Norwegian officials worked to get the organization to undertake full circum-polar petroleum activity consequence evaluation, like Norway did from 2002-2003 in the Barents. Officials also expressed desire for the organization to help launch a comprehensive Arctic integrated resource management plan, similar to the one Norway had installed for its portion of the Barents Sea. The Barents Cooperation, on the other hand, came to embody the New Middle Way as part of the supporting framework for sustainably oriented petroleum development in the Barents Sea.

In sum, in both bilateral and intergovernmental contexts, Norway's use of the New Middle Way discourse was deliberate and coordinated. Officials from both governments would leverage the discourse to facilitate greater cooperation in the region, rather than engaging in competitive moves that could damage the High North's stable reputation. While furthering cooperation, the main aim of the discourse nevertheless remained the promotion of Norwegian economic interests and norm entrepreneurship through a patchwork of bilateral relationships, transnational economic networks, and intergovernmental organizations. Thus, the New Middle Way allowed Norway to evolve and adapt, following the adage from a 1989

⁷⁵⁷ Støre, "German-Norwegian Dialogue High North."

government white paper that said if Norway was to have “real influence” geopolitically, it must, “concentrate [its] efforts to areas where our interests are considerable or where we have particular experience, traditions, competence or resources.”⁷⁵⁸ Through the New Middle Way discourse, Norway was able to just that in spaces for competition and cooperation in the High North during the 2000s.

6.1 Remarks on Relevant Historiographical Debates and Interdisciplinary Questions

As pointed out at the outset of this thesis, this project has relevance for ongoing historiographical debates within contemporary Arctic studies. Furthermore, the thesis is also of relevance to a number of interdisciplinary questions pertaining to works by political scientists and international relations theorists. As the thesis largely corroborates existing contemporary historical narratives in terms of the High North and histories exploring Norway’s unique relationship to environmental interests and petroleum production, I will therefore focus on its contribution to interdisciplinary debates.

In particular, this thesis offers a new insight into the discourses on the High North amongst Norwegian officials from 2004 to 2006. Therefore, it is natural compare my findings with those of Jensen’s in regard to his analysis of the High North discourses in Norwegian newspapers during the 2000s. In particular, the findings of this thesis contrast with Jensen’s assertion that the, “Drilling for the environment discourse emerged – and grew in strength to become undeniable – without anyone sitting down to plan its conception, diffusion and, not least, influence.”⁷⁶¹ While Jensen argues that, “It would be totally impossible for one or more stakeholders to decide to establish and sustain a ‘drilling for the environment’ discourse given the sheer amount of text, time, and complexity involved,” the works of Tamnes, Anker, and Sejersted show that various stakeholders, through tight cooperation initiated in the early 1990s between the Norwegian government, the petroleum industry, and think tanks such as

⁷⁵⁸ *Stortingsmelding No. 11: Om Utviklingstrekk I Det Internasjonale Samfunn Og Virkinger for Norsk Utenrikspolitikk*. Report. 1989 in Riste, Olav. *Norways Foreign Relations: A History*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2005.

⁷⁶¹ Jensen, “Norwegian Petroleum Extraction in Arctic Waters,” 36.

CICERO, developed an apparatus for the formation and dissemination of a variety of analogous discourses that fall under the umbrella of the New Middle Way.⁷⁶²

Therefore, by the time the High North emerged on the geopolitical agenda in the 2000s, Norwegian officials had the knowledge, network, and experience to plan, diffuse, and influence the greater discourse. This work finds that the Bondevik II and Stoltenberg II governments likely employed and leveraged these assets to do just that. This thesis finds Norwegian officials deliberately adapted New Middle Way discourses to suit their respective audiences, playing to Europe's dueling desires for energy security and environmental progress, America's need for new, stable sources of petroleum, and Russia's desire to reap the economic benefits of petroleum development in the High North, in order to better achieve preferred Norwegian policy positions. Furthermore, both the Bondevik II and Stoltenberg II governments noted the importance of improving the petroleum industry's public perception. Under Bondevik, Petroleum Minister Thorhild Widvey argued, "I believe that all these [environmental] measures have been and will be necessary in order to achieve or earn the public opinion's acceptance to operate in [the Barents Sea and Lofoten areas]."⁷⁶³ Her successor in the Stoltenberg II government, Odd Roger Enoksen, was even more concrete, arguing that a challenge for the industry was, "The need to further increase sustainable and environmentally good oil and gas activities and thereby also contributing [sic] to improve the political and public perception of the oil and gas sector."⁷⁶⁴ These statements are indicative of efforts by both governments to improve public perception of the Norwegian petroleum industry as environmentally conscious, normatively promote integrated resource management plans that gave room for petroleum activity, and increasing funds in the State Budget for the dissemination of information in the press about projects such as Barents 2020, which highlighted environmentally oriented petroleum projects between Norwegian and Russian actors.

While this thesis cannot definitively prove that there was extensive coordination in order to conceptualize, diffuse, and plan the influence of these discourses, its findings, seen in conjunction with the broader historical narratives offered by Anker, Sejersted, and Tammes, nevertheless show that it was possible for relevant stakeholders to pull off such a discursive

⁷⁶² Ibid, 35.

⁷⁶³ Widvey, "Norway Leading European Energy Supplier."

⁷⁶⁴ Enoksen, "Sanderstølen 2006."

feat, in addition to the fact that it is highly likely these actors did so, both in the early 1990s and again in the High North during the 2000s.

6.2 Final Remarks

The analysis and findings of this work naturally give rise to further questions, debates, and avenues for further projects. The sheer amount of primary material found in the research stages of this project was in part responsible for the decision to focus on a smaller time period, 2004-2006. Naturally, a more expansive project covering the entirety of the original proposed period of 2000-2013 would be more authoritative and yield deeper insights into how official discourses evolved over the transformative period in Arctic history that was the 2000s. Of particular interest would be the continued influence of the New Middle Way discourse in the period from 2006-2013, during which a number of traditionally non-Arctic states, most notably India and China, began to express a growing interest in the region.

In addition, the contrast between the findings of the discourse analysis in this thesis with those from Jensen's discourse analyses form an interesting point of departure for projects seeking to map out the evolution of High North discourses in the 2000s in a more comprehensive way. A work aggregating, contrasting, and comparing discourse analyses of the press, government officials, environmental groups, and the petroleum industry would be able to extensively explore linkages between these groups, shedding further light on the influence of the New Middle Way outside of the official discourse. Such work would perhaps be of interest to current research projects such as the project on the History of Statoil at the University of Oslo's Institute for Archaeology, Conservation, and History, bringing to mind in particular Eivind Thomassen's work on Statoil's political influence and the relationship between Statoil and Norwegian politics from 1972-2007.⁷⁶⁵

Additionally, while this thesis showcased the influence of petroleum on the official Norwegian discourse, particularly in terms of economic opportunity and its use as geopolitical leverage in Norwegian relationships with larger powers, further exploration of the relationship between the petroleum industry and the government will undoubtedly foster greater insight

⁷⁶⁵ For more information on the project, see Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History. "Statoils Historie, 1972-2022 - Institutt for Arkeologi, Konservering Og Historie." Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History. August 25, 2016. Accessed May 21, 2018. <http://www.hf.uio.no/iakh/forskning/prosjekter/statoils-historie/>.

into how the industry has shaped domestic and foreign policy in Norway. One last project that may be of interest that this thesis pertains to, is an exploration of the synergies between Norwegian resource management in the High North and the resource management assistance offered by programs such as Norad's Oil for Development program. Of particular interest would be the influence of the New Middle Way discourse in these two contexts, especially insofar as how the impacts of climate change have impacted the evolution and implementation of these programs, in addition to their public perception.

In sum, the findings in this thesis could serve as a useful point of departure for several historical projects, ranging from expansions of Norwegian historical narratives in the High North to development programs employed in the Global South. Additional sources, resources, and time could further result to add nuance to this thesis itself, enriching its historical narratives found and adding further points of departure for other projects.

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