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5.)UDQFH¶V SUHVHQFH LQ LQWHUQDWLRQDO IRUXPV

decreased from a maximum of 3.64 meters in the central Arctic Ocean in 1980,

advisory effort primarily carried out through six permanent working groups and ad-hoc task forces.

Non-Arctic states must engage in research in the Arctic to obtain official observer status in the Arctic Council. France applied for and obtained in 2000 observer status in the Arctic Council on the strength of its tradition of polar exploration and expeditions. This status is reviewed periodically on the basis of VFLHQWLILF FRQWULEXWLRQV 2EVH main means of participation is their contribution of expertise to the working groups.

)UDQFH¶V JURZLQJ LQWHUHV LQ WKH QHZ VFLHQWLILF HQYLURQPH Arctic, and that of the international community, gave rise to a national initiative to coordinate Arctic research. This Arctic initiative is overseen by France's National Centre for Scientific Research and complements the work of the Paul-Emile Victor Polar Institute.

A recent long-range pla QQLQJ H[HUFLVH LQYROYLQJ DOO RI)UDQFH¶V VFLHQ and major research bodies who are interested in scientific issues in the Arctic revealed the abundance and excellence of French Arctic research, but also its lack of coordination. The system based on the Arctic initiative and the Paul-Emile Victor Polar Institute is bound to play a more structural role in the coming years at both the national and international levels, as long as additional resources are allocated to it.

The excellence RI)UDQFH¶V SRODU VFLHQWLILF UHVHDUFK DQG LWV LQW research constitute a major asset of French foreign policy in the Arctic and underpin its legitimacy.

- 1 Build up France's scientific role in the Arctic Council working groups and task forces, by bringing in French human and social science specialists in particular.
- 1 Ensure that France participates fully in international scientific organisations, such as the International Arctic Science Committee.
- 1 In calls for proposals, discussion groups and the preparation of calls for projects, H Q F R X U D J H) U D Q F H ¶ V L Q Y R O Y H P H Q W L Q L Q W H U Q D W L R Q D O V F Arctic.
- 1 Develop the European aspects (cooperation between Arctic and non-Arctic European Union countries) of French scientific research on the Arctic, as part of the European Union research and innovation programme (Horizon 2020), and at the institutional level, through the European Polar Board (EPB) and its initiatives (e.g. the EU-PolarNet project).
- 1 Develop and enhance partnerships with scientific organisations from the Arctic Ocean coastal states.
- 1 3 U R P R W H) U D Q F H ¶ V V F L H Q W L I L F H [S H U W L V H L Q K X P D Q D Q G teaching of Arctic languages in France to the Arctic states.
- 1 Develop research contracts with businesses that may be interested by economic opportunities in the Arctic (transport, aerospace, shipping, energy, mineral resources, insurance, communications, health).
- 1 All of these initiatives require development of French Arctic research with strong institutional and scientific support:
 - allocating operating grants for the coordination structure based on the Arctic project and the Paul-Emile Victor Polar Institute;
 - placing greater priority on the main scientific issues relating to the Arctic defined by the Arctic project in the other research funding agencies, including the National Agency for Research;
 - increasing funding for the Paul-Emile Victor Polar Institute to support scientific programmes and maintain national infrastructures in the Arctic.

Northern Ostrobothnia) and the Swedish North (Norrbotten and Västerbotten) is near the Arctic Circle. In 2013, the Russian Arctic was redefined in administrative terms in order to delimit the priority economic development zones as part of the

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Economic
opportunities
and cooperation

Navigation conditions are restrictive and dangerous:

- x extreme conditions: ice floes, fog, imprecise charts;
- x lack of search and rescue infrastructure and lack of deep-water ports;
- x lack of international shipping hubs or intermediate markets since Russia is the only country with a coast on the Northeast Passage;
- x added cost of navigation in polar waters: more expensive shipbuilding and crew training requirements, need for ice-breakers, high insurance costs;
- x commercial constraints: no guarantee of shipping times because of the variability of ice conditions, summer-only route;
- x uncertain return on operating capital, since ship safety and environmental protection requirements that are especially difficult to implement make it hard for the Northeast Passage to be in the short to medium term a serious competitor for the Suez Canal or the Strait of Malacca. However, the development of projects to exploit the Arctic resources and logistical support. Consequently, local and regional shipping, particularly to mining platforms, mines and mineral deposits, is bound to grow rapidly. Furthermore, Arctic cruising is booming.

Infrastructures

The challenges of building infrastructure in a region where thawing permafrost (frozen ground) undermines land-based constructions concern the following:oil and gas mining infrastructures;

- x oil and gas mining infrastructure;
- x modernisation of portt.96 Tf 4.56 diTd 6t gas min11(i)-14(sat7(n)6(11(8/MCID 11 >>BDC 0.243 0.365 0.404 r



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Defence
and security
issues

ORGANISATION CHART OF THE ARCTIC COUNCIL

Member States	Permanent Participants	Observers		
		Countries	International organisations	Non - Governmental Organisations
Canada	Aleut International Association	Germany (1996)	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	Advisory Committee on Protection of the Seas (ACOPS)
Denmark/ Greenland/ Faroe Islands	Arctic Athabaskan Council	Spain (2006)	International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	Arctic Institute of North America (AINA)
Finland	* Z L F K ¶ L Q & R X International	France (2000)	Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM)	Association of World Reindeer Herders (AWRH)
Iceland	Inuit circumpolar Council	Netherlands (1998)	Nordic No	

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France's presence
in international
forums

working group that drafted the texts.

We should also closely monitor the work of the Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission (ARHC) of the International Hydrographic Organization and possibly contribute to it.

5 \$ 1 & (¶ 6 ' , 3 / MATIC ACTION RELATING TO THE ARCTIC

With its history in the Arctic, France should rely on its experience and the recognised excellence of its polar research to make a helpful contribution to the Arctic Council working groups. France cannot strengthen its legitimacy in the Arctic or promote its scientific, environmental and economic interests in the region without providing the necessary resources for French scientists to play an active and substantial role in these working groups.

The quality of the work of the Arctic Council working groups also creates an opportunity to enhance our bilateral scientific cooperation with the Arctic states. This will also be an opportunity to promote) U D Q F H ¶ V V F L H Q W L I L F H [S H U W L V H

The new observer status, adopted at the 2013 Kiruna Ministerial Meeting, involves a S H U L R G L F U H Y L H Z R I W K H R E V H U Y H U V ¶ L Q W H U H V W V L Q W K H U H J L R Q to renew their status are invited to submit to the Arctic Council all relevant information about their activities in the Arctic and their contributions to the work of the Council. With this in mind, it has become particularly critical to provide appropriate resources to V W U H Q J W K H Q) U D Q F H ¶ V V F L H Q W L I L F S U H V H Q F H L Q W K H Z R U N L Q J observers have already joined most of them.

Maintain a presence in all the relevant forums in order to promote France's interests, maintain the positions of French players and promote a common interest vision (conservation of the environment, combating climate change, balanced governance, etc.)

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national interests
and the common interest
in the arctic region

CONCLUSION

7 KLV GRFXPHQW WHVWLILHV WR)UDQFH¶V OHYHO RI LQWHUHVW LQ where economic opportunities and environmental and climate challenges are inextricably linked.

In his speech to the Arctic Circle conference in Reykjavik, Iceland on 16 October 2015, the President of the French Republic, François Hollande, said:

³)UDQFH ZLOO GR HYHU\WKLQJ WKDW LW FDQ KHUH LQ WKH)DU action, mobilise its researchers and its businesses, to enable us to preserve this SDUW RI WKH ZRUOG ZKLFK LV XQGRXEWHGO\ RQH RI WKH PRVW

For France, and for many other countries that are directly and indirectly concerned, the Arctic is an area of global scientific interest. France calls for increased scientific cooperation in the Arctic, in which it intends to play an active role by increasing its resources and its investment in scientific research on the Arctic. The Arctic is an important natural laboratory for studying climate change at the global level, making it an area of scientific interest for all of humanity.

France supports a multi-sector environmental precautionary approach based on the

