

PhD Thesis in Public International Law: The 2018 Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean: Its Background, Motivations and Aspirations (Abstract)

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For decades, the establishment of a new agreement or the modification of existing agreements safeguarding the delicate area of the Arctic waters have been demanded. At a time when environmental conditions are changing and fishery becomes more of a reality in the Arctic, the 2018 Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean ("CAO Agreement") was set up just in time to stipulate necessary regulations.

Beyond addressing fisheries, the thesis employs a broad approach to gain an adequate understanding of the delicate environment of the Arctic area in order to classify the issue of fisheries. To comprehend the demands of the Arctic and the necessary level of protection in this area, a short overview of the Arctic land and marine area is given. Before an assessment of the CAO Agreement and

its achievements can be made, the factual environmental situation must be determined. Special focus lies on the issue of climate change and its possible implications for the Arctic, the CAO and the fish inhabiting its waters. Prognoses regarding the development of the region are made on the basis of scientific evidence. The environmental approach is one of the key elements of the thesis.

The thesis does not merely deal with the status quo of public international law but takes into account common policy issues in the Arctic area arising from territorial, economic or other national matters. Signatory States of the CAO Agreement as well as non-signatory States pursue different approaches and interests they want to safeguard. These might collide with the demands of effective protection. Similar issues arise in the case of regional associations of States and coastal States. Further, special weight is given to the interests of indigenous communities that the CAO agreement intends to take into consideration.

Further, the thesis analyses the current status of protection and compares it with existing regional and sub-regional fishery management organizations and similar arrangements. Thereby, common mistakes and difficulties as well as efficient measures that evolved over the history of these arrangements can assist

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in assessing the effectiveness of the CAO Agreement and might serve as best practice examples. Exceptional norms are discussed and recommendations for a better implementation of efficient management measures and tools are made.

The aim of the thesis is to provide suggestions for an improvement of the

CAO Agreement and thereby the protection of the high seas of the Arctic Ocean, its environment, and its fish stocks in the long-term. Consequently, the thesis aims to serve as a basis for future renegotiations of the present agreement or other agreements dealing with regional fishery management.



