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The Arctic in 2019: international and national aspects (issues of international cooperation and security) *

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Abstract. The article represents a review of the leading international and Russian conferences that took place in 2019 and played an essential role in the study and development of the Arctic. The author paid attention to the analysis of their features from the standpoint of strengthening Arctic international cooperation. It is noted that the Fifth International Forum “The Arctic — Territory of Dialogue” (St. Petersburg) made a significant contribution to the development of Arctic solidarity and partnership. The author commended a proposal of creating a separate state company in Russia that would operate on the Arctic shelf, have the appropriate personnel, equipment and would not be related to business interests. It is noted that in Russia, it is necessary to organize more events and conferences on the Arctic topic in the Arctic territories. The publication concerns the measures taken by the country's leadership to manage the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation. Particular attention is paid to the further development of the Northern Sea Route, a new approach to its functioning, which consists of a significant increase in its cargo transportation along with the parallel development of the Russian Arctic territories within the framework of development support zones. The article presents an analysis of the State Commission for the Development of the Arctic meetings on research and national projects. The author also focuses on the current problems of defense and security in the Arctic region. It is noted that Russia is taking adequate measures to strengthen its national security in the Arctic region in response to the NATO states' military buildup in the Arctic.

Keywords: *Arctic, Russia, Arctic Council, Northern Sea Route, conference.*

Introduction

In the Arctic, a long-term trend of climate change persists [1, Matishov G.G., Dzhenyuk S.L., Moiseev D.V.; 2, Morozov A.]. In this regard, new lands are appearing in the Arctic region, favorable conditions for the exploration and extraction of mineral resources and the intensification of shipping in the Arctic are being created. In 2019, the volume of cargo through the NSR reached 30 million tons¹.

On the other hand, competition among states in the Arctic region was intensifying. It led to the World Economic Forum in the Global Risk Report prepared for the Davos Forum to suggest that “there is a growing cold war for the Arctic in the world, in which Russia, the USA, China, and Norway are the countries fighting for resources, fish, trade routes and strategic presence”². With-

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¹ Ob"em perevozok gruzov po Sevmorputi dostig 30 mln ton [The volume of cargo transportation along the Northern Sea Route reached 30 million tons]. 13 January 2020. URL: <https://sudostroenie.info/novosti/29125.html> (accessed 15 January 2020).

² Tairov R. Davoskiy forum nazval glavnye riski 2020 goda [The Davos Forum identified the main risks 2020]. 15 January 2020. URL: <https://www.forbes.ru/newsroom/obshchestvo/391219-davoskiy-forum-nazval-glavnye-riski-2020-goda> (accessed 16 January 2020).

out rejecting the possibility of these events, it should be noted that, at present, no real reasons that could lead to armed conflict between states exists. Answering this question at a press conference on Russian diplomacy results in 2019, S.V. Lavrov noted: “There is no reason to bring military methods of work to the Arctic. In this regard, we consider it incorrect to try to draw NATO into this region in high latitudes. Still, we are in favor of resuming the previous practice when the chiefs of general staffs of the armed forces of the Arctic Council met solely to ensure the proper level of confidence”³.

The current situation requires a new system of global and regional security, ensuring effective and sustainable integrated socio-economic development of the Arctic as a macro-region, and establishing new, more effective approaches to organizing international cooperation.

Important meetings, forums, conferences on the Arctic held in 2019. They made a positive contribution to maintaining an atmosphere of peace and constructive cooperation in the Arctic and played an essential role in this.

International Arctic forums, conferences, and meetings in 2019

On February 21–22, the IV international conference “The Arctic: Offshore Projects and Sustainable Development of Regions” was held in Moscow. 400 people took part in its work, including specialists from different regions of Russia, as well as from Poland, Turkey, China, South Korea, Japan, Denmark, Azerbaijan, and Austria. The conference is devoted to topical issues in the development of the mineral resource potential of the Arctic zone, the role of the Arctic in meeting global demand for energy resources. It was noted that the states are not yet ready to solve this problem in full. When we speak about offshore production, several factors must be considered: a significant drop in world hydrocarbon prices; the discovery of new oil and gas fields in different parts of the world in more favorable climatic conditions and with low production costs; recognition of Russia's technological lag, also the one due to the US and EU sanctions; rather high ecological vulnerability of the arctic nature. It is important to note that for most of the vast Arctic waters, incl. Kara, Laptev, East Siberian, and Chukchi seas have no proven technological solutions for offshore production.

The 5th International Forum “Arctic — Territory of Dialogue” was held on April 9–10 in St. Petersburg»⁴. The event gathered on its site more than 3600 Russian and international political, scientific, and business circles, the public, leading media outlets from 52 countries. The event was attended by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, the President of Finland Sauli Niinistö, the President of Iceland Houdni Torlatius Johannesson, the Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg and the Prime Minister of Sweden Kjell Stefan Löfven, the Foreign Ministers of Den-

³ Sergey Lavrov. Vystuplenie i otvety na voprosy v khode press-konferentsii po itogam deyatelnosti rossiyskoy diplomatii v 2019 godu [Speech and answers to questions during a press conference on the results of Russian diplomacy in 2019]. 20 January 2020. URL: <https://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/comments/vystuplenie-i-otvety-na-voprosy-v-khode-press-konferentsii-po-itogam-deyatelnosti-rossiyskoy-diploma/> (accessed 25 January 2020).

⁴ Plenarnoe zasedanie Mezhdunarodnogo arkticheskogo foruma [Plenary meeting of the International Arctic Forum]. 09 April 2019. URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/60250> (accessed 15 April 2019).

mark and Norway Anders Samuelsen and Ine Marie Eriksen Sørreide, representatives on Arctic issues from the ministries of foreign affairs of the 8 states and the EU. Russia was represented by 7 federal ministers, 10 heads of federal agencies and services, and 15 heads of subjects of the Russian Federation. 33 sessions were held on three main themes: “Coastal Territories”, “Open Ocean” and “Sustainable Development”, and 11 events within the framework of Youth Day. In two days in St. Petersburg, 30 agreements were concluded for a total amount of about 70 billion rub. ⁵.

When analyzing the results of the forum, it should be noted that among the leaders of the Arctic states, along with the unity of assessments and approaches to the development of the Arctic, some differences also emerged, especially regarding security in the region [3, Zhuravel V.P.]. At the same time, the forum made a significant contribution to the development of Arctic solidarity and partnership.

At the end of the forum, a meeting of the State Commission for the Development of the Arctic was held ⁶, where issues of the implementation of national projects were considered. It was noted that the situation in the social sphere of the Arctic zone of Russia was significantly worse than the average in the Russian Federation. So, in 16 out of 23 territories, life expectancy is lower than the average Russian value; in 15 out of 23 territories, the share of dilapidated and emergency housing stock is higher than the average Russian value. The largest share is in the Turukhansky district of the Krasnoyarsk Krai (this is 28.7%). The region got a low volume of new housing construction and a low density of roads.

The continuation of this work was a two-day strategic session with the regional management teams of the Arctic zone of Russia at the Moscow School of Management Skolkovo, which addressed issues of development of the Russian Arctic ⁷. There the regional teams got acquainted with the side of the Ministry for the Development of the Far East and the Far East Development Institutions in connection with the decision of the President of the Russian Federation on extending their activities to the Arctic. They discussed proposals for a new system of preferences for investment projects in the Arctic and residents of the Arctic zone of Russia so that their quality of life is brought up to the average Russian level. It is doubtful the thesis of the session participants that private investors can become the main driving force of the economic development of the Arctic. In our opinion, they can still be an addition to government funding.

On May 6–7, the 11th Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council took place in the Finnish town of Rovaniemi, where the chairmanship in the AC of Finland (2017–2019) passed to Iceland.

⁵ V Sankt-Peterburge podvedeny itogi Mezhdunarodnogo arkticheskogo foruma 2019 [The International Arctic Forum 2019 results have been summed up in St. Petersburg]. 10 April 2019. URL: <https://forumarctica.ru/news/results-of-the-arctic-territory-of-dialogue-5th-international-arcticforum-summed-up-in-st-petersburg/> (accessed 12 April 2019).

⁶ Yuriy Trutnev provel zasedanie prezidiuma Gosudarstvennoy komissii po voprosam razvitiya Arktiki [Yuri Trutnev held a meeting of the Presidium of the State Commission for Arctic Development]. 10 April 2019. <http://government.ru/news/36350> (accessed 12 April 2019).

⁷ V Moskovskoy shkole upravleniya «Skolkovo» obsudili voprosy razvitiya rossiyskoy Arktiki [The Moscow School of Management Skolkovo discussed the development of the Russian Arctic]. 13 April 2019. URL: <http://government.ru/news/36395> (accessed 20 May 2019).

The meeting participants positively evaluated the results of the Finnish presidency of the Council in 2017–2019. At the May meeting, the International Maritime Organization became an observer to the Council. The Arctic Council and the Arctic Economic Council signed a memorandum of understanding also there. Along with this, the final joint Declaration was not adopted, which happened for the first time for the entire period of the existence of the Arctic Council. The US blocked the draft document because of the mention in its text of the need to work together on climate issues, limiting itself to a very concise joint statement. The Strategic Plan for Cooperation in the Arctic until 2025 was not agreed for the same reason. The Plan supposed to be the first long-term planning document in the history of the Council. All the above can be considered a manifestation of the early signs of contradictions in the AC. Suomi also failed to organize and hold an Arctic summit at the level of state leaders due to the complexity of the international situation, including due to the position of the United States and several other countries to resolve conflicts in Syria and Ukraine.

Reykjavik plans during its chairmanship in 2019–2021 to focus on the protection of the marine Arctic environment, the fight against ocean acidification; sustainable development of the fishing sector; reducing ocean pollution, combating marine debris, developing a Regional Action Plan to reduce marine debris and plastic microparticles in it; combating climate change and introducing green energy, continuing to work to improve the quality of weather forecasts in the Arctic region, further exploring ways to improve the efficiency of use of marine resources; preparing for the ministerial meeting in Reykjavik in 2021 an updated report on climate change in the Arctic; creating a prosperous and sustainable community of indigenous peoples living in the Arctic through their social well-being, quality of life and the development of cultural and academic exchanges, and facilitating dialogue on gender equality issues in the Arctic; continuing to strengthen and increase the role of the Arctic Council as an effective platform for dialogue, strengthening cooperation with the Arctic Economic Council and observer countries [4, Zhuravel V.P.].

May 22–30 at the Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov (Arkhangelsk) hosted the international week of Arctic science, in which about 450 people from 29 countries took part. This summit presented to the international community dozens of projects of the National Arctic Scientific and Educational Consortium and the results of ten expeditions of the Arctic Floating University project, in which young scientists and students from several countries took part. It is necessary to ensure that these events take place regularly, and their composition is expanded.

The Northern Forum on Sustainable Development was held in Yakutsk on September 24–28. Representatives of 14 regions of the Russian Federation and 13 countries, incl. 7 subpolar countries (Russia, Canada, the USA, Iceland, Finland, Norway, and Sweden), 3 Asian (China, Republic of Korea and Japan), and scientists from Great Britain, Germany, and France participated. In to-

tal — more than 300 people⁸. Within the framework of the forum, more than 30 events were held at which the issues of participation of Russian Arctic entities in international Arctic interaction and their cooperation with foreign regions in the Far North, prospects for developing relations with the Association of World Reindeer Herders, and further promotion of the project “Children of the Arctic. Preschool education”. The main idea of the program for holding this forum in Yakutsk, in our opinion, was an attempt to bring the countries of Southeast Asia closer to the Arctic, to respond to their interest in the Arctic problems, by attracting them to projects for the development of the Arctic territories and the NSR.

September 30 — October 2, under the auspices of the Security Council of Russia, the 8th international meeting of representatives of the Arctic Council member states, AC observer countries, and the foreign scientific community was held⁹. Head of the Russian delegation, Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation N.P. Patrushev, stressed the importance of jointly counteracting attempts to create artificial lines and escalate tensions around issues that the Arctic powers want and can solve within the framework of existing international platforms — the UN, the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the Northern Dimension, the Arctic Economic Council. Representatives of 15 states spoke in favor of strengthening cooperation with Russia, and for further multilateral formats meetings to solve the most important tasks regarding the development of the Arctic. According to the assessment of the First Deputy Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Yu.T. Averyanova, these meetings are important multilateral platforms dedicated to the problems of the region, where politicians, public and world-class scientific experts participate¹⁰. It should be noted that these international meetings have been held since 2011 and have become an important factor in ensuring stability in the Arctic zone.

On October 10–13, the international Arctic forum was held in Reykjavik (Iceland). The central place in discussions has traditionally been occupied by global climate change, considering its local and global manifestations, and international cooperation issues. It is the largest and most representative event of all regularly held conferences on the Arctic region development. It was attended by more than 2 thousand people from 60 countries, incl. the prime ministers of Finland, Iceland and Greenland, Princess of Sweden Victoria, former US Secretary of State John Kerry, two governors of the Russian regions (Chibisa A.V., Murmansk Oblast and Artyukhov D.A., Yamal-

⁸ V Yakutske proshlo mezhdunarodnoe meropriyatie «Severnnyy forum po ustoychivomu razvitiyu» [International event “Northern Forum on Sustainable Development” was held in Yakutsk]. URL: https://yakutsk.mid.ru/ru/press-centre/news/_v_yakutske_proshlo_mezhdunarodnoe_meropriyatie_severnnyy_forum_po_ustoychivomu_razvitiyu/ (accessed 20 November 2019).

⁹ Sostoyalas' VIII Mezhdunarodnaya vstrecha predstaviteley gosudarstv-chlenov Arkticheskogo soveta i stranablyudateley v Arkticheskom sovete, a takzhe predstaviteley zarubezhnoy nauchnoy obshchestvennosti. Sayt Soveta Bezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Federatsii [The 8th International meeting of representatives of the Arctic Council Member States and observer countries in the Arctic Council, as well as representatives of the foreign scientific community, took place. Website of the Security Council of the Russian Federation]. 02 October 2017. URL: <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/news/allnews/2655/> (accessed 15 October 2019).

¹⁰ Egorov I. Kogo sogreet Arktika [Whom Arctic will warm]. Rossiyskaya gazeta [Russian newspaper]. 30 September 2019 (An interview with the first deputy metropolitan Sekret-ry Sovet Security of the Russian Federation Yuri Averyanova).

Nenets Autonomous Okrug), etc ¹¹. At this forum, as analysis shows, at the expert level, Arctic issues are being worked out, the solution of which is then proposed or rejected at the state level. In our opinion, Russia needs to more actively use such a platform to present its regional projects and promote its ideas for the development of the Arctic.

The 7th annual meeting of the International Expert Council for Cooperation in the Arctic was held on November 7 at the Gubkin University with grant support from the Gorchakov Foundation. This time it was dedicated to information technology. Each meeting is accompanied by the publication of the issue of the journal Arctic Review. Representatives of the AC founding countries, Great Britain, India, and Australia, took with interest the announcement about the creation of the first Russian Center for Combating Hybrid Threats, including in the Arctic.

On December 5–7, the 8th International Forum “Arctic: Present and Future” was held in St. Petersburg. The discussion covered all areas and relevant aspects of Russian Arctic development. The discussion went through the prism of adopting a law on the development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, mentoring and educating the young generation, the development of volunteering and volunteering, as well as international non-governmental interaction. The forum was attended by over 2 thousand people, including all governors of the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation. According to the results of the discussion, the draft resolution included over 300 proposals, which for the most part related to improving the quality of life of the population, the development of human capital and environmental protection [5, Volgin N.A., Shirokova L.N., Mosina L.L.; 6, Korchak E.A.]. In our opinion, it is vital that they are considered and evaluated in the framework of fulfilling the requirements of the national projects “Health Care”, “Education”, “Housing and Urban Environment”, “Ecology”, “Labor Productivity and Employment Support”.

In 2019, at Arctic conferences, round tables, and expert meetings the Russian Federation actively discussed the goals and main areas of activity of the authorities and the development management of the Russian Arctic, which, according to their participants, should be reflected in the new Fundamentals of State Policy Russia in the Arctic until 2035.

The trend remains shelf development, environmental issues, safety, and international cooperation. Participants pay attention to the slow implementation of national projects in the territory of the Russian Arctic.

Russia in the Arctic in 2019

The Arctic has always been in the field of vision of the country's leadership. For decades, step by step, Russia has strengthened, increased its presence, its position in the Arctic region. At each new stage, the main tasks for its development were determined [7].

¹¹ Mezhdunarodnyy forum «Arkticheskiy krug» [International forum Arctic Circle]. URL: <https://будущее-арктики.рф/arctic-circle/> (accessed 20 November 2019).

In 2019, much more attention was paid to the development of the Arctic in Russia. One of the indicators of this is the adoption of several federal management decisions that solved the accumulated problems and contributed to the development and development of the Arctic region.

In the interests of improving the management of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF) by President V.V. Putin signed a decree¹² and enabled the Ministry for the Development and Development of Russia to develop and implement state policy and legal regulation in the field of socio-economic development of the Arctic. The Ministry was renamed the Ministry of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic, and it is now responsible for the development of the Arctic region.

By the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of May 13, 2019 No. 220 "On Amendments to the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of May 2, 2014 No. 296 "On Land Territories of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation", the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation covered 8 more municipal districts (uluses) of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). So, work was completed to determine the southern border of the Russian Arctic. The justice was established for the residents of the republic who live in arctic conditions. It is possible that soon the Arctic territories of the Russian Arctic will be determined in terms of the projects implemented there.

The focus of the country's leadership was on the development of the Northern Sea Route [8, Egorov V., Lopatkina N.; 9, Andreev A.A., Sozaeva D.A., Rud' G.G.], on which important decisions were made. Thus, under Federal Law of December 27, 2018 No. 525-FZ "On Amending Certain Legislative Acts" Of the Russian Federation, Rosatom State Corporation adopted the functionality of a single infrastructure operator of the Northern Sea Route. This decision is already yielding positive results.

To meet the need for specialized gas carrier vessels for the export of liquefied natural gas and gas condensate from the Yamal LNG and Arctic LNG 2 projects, Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of March 14, 2019 No. 435-r established the possibility of using 28 foreign vessels for these purposes¹³. The solution to this problem removed the shortage of vessels exporting LNG from the Yamal-LNG plant. The earlier decision to abandon foreign vessels on the NSR route turned out to be premature.

At a meeting of the Government of the Russian Federation, a comprehensive plan for the implementation of the investment project "Marine transshipment complex of liquefied natural gas in the Kamchatka Krai" was approved (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of March 14, 2019 No. 436-r). A decision aimed at implementing a new investment project on the construction of a terminal for the transshipment of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the seaport of

¹² Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii ot 26 fevralya 2019 g. № 78 [Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of February 26, 2019 No. 78].

¹³ Ob ispol'zovanii inostrannykh sudov dlya realizatsii proektov po proizvodstvu szhizhennogo prirodnogo gaza [On the use of foreign ships for the implementation of projects to produce liquefied natural gas.]. 18 March 2019. URL: <http://government.ru/docs/36073/> (accessed 01 December 2019).

Sabetta for the development of the Salmanovsky (Ytrennee) oil and gas condensate field on the Gydansky Peninsula (Government Order of the Russian Federation of March 28, 2019 No. 554-r).

An investment project to create a Marine transshipment complex (MPC) will be implemented in the Bechevinskaya Bay of the Kamchatka Krai with the aim of transshipment of LNG delivered from the seaport of Sabetta in the Gulf of Ob from ice-class gas tankers for subsequent shipment from the eastern coast of Kamchatka by gas tankers without ice gain in the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. The MPC provides for the construction of two floating LNG storage facilities, an approach channel in the Bechevinsky Bay, a port fleet berth, and the creation of systems to ensure the safe movement of ships. Within the framework of this project, the gasification of the Kamchatka Territory will also be resolved due to the stripping gas generated during transportation. The project will increase the volume of transportation along the Northern Sea Route from 9.7 million tons in 2017 to 31.4 million tons by the end of 2026. It will ensure the transition of the NSR to year-round loading, create the most significant regional LNG hub in the region, attract about 70 billion rubles of private investment, create new jobs, build ten ice-class gas tankers (Arc 7) ¹⁴.

Under the second project, an offshore terminal for the transshipment of liquefied natural gas with a capacity of 19.8 million tons per year and stable gas condensate with a capacity of 1.8 million tons per year, as well as the installation and construction of a natural gas liquefaction plant, will be built in the port of Sabetta. It is planned to create artificial land plots to accommodate port infrastructure facilities, technical flyovers, on-site automobile driveways, a complex of engineering and technical security equipment, other structures and auxiliary engineering, and technical elements ¹⁵.

These two decisions are due to a significant increase in the role of LNG [10, Matvishin D.A.] in the economies of countries. Speaking at the "Russian Energy Week" on October 2, 2019, President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin recalled that since the beginning of the century, the number of LNG-consuming countries has grown by more than five times. The demand for it has almost doubled over this period, and in 5-10 years, half of the global gas trade will account for LNG. He clarified that thanks to the Yamal-LNG project, Russia's share in the global liquefied natural gas market more than doubled and now stands at about 9% ¹⁶.

The largest in terms of funding and implementation prospects is the decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of December 21, 2019. It approved the development plan for the infrastructure of the Northern Sea Route for the period until 2035. It includes 11 chapters and

¹⁴ Ob investitsionnom proekte stroitel'stva morskogo peregruzochnogo kompleksa szhizhennogo prirodnogo gaza v Kamchatskom krae [About the investment project for the construction of a marine transshipment complex for liquefied natural gas in the Kamchatka Territory]. 20 March 2019. URL: <http://government.ru/docs/36084/> (accessed 01 June 2019).

¹⁵ O rasshirenii morskogo porta Sabetta [About the expansion of the seaport of Sabetta.]. 01 April 2019. URL: <http://government.ru/docs/36227/> (accessed 01 June 2019).

¹⁶ Putin rasskazal o rabote Rossii v sfere SPG [Putin spoke about Russia's work in the field of LNG]. RIA Novosti. 02.10.2019. URL: <https://ria.ru/20191002/1559359489.html/> (accessed 01 December 2019).

84 specific points for future events on the development of the Northern Sea Route until 2035¹⁷. The document is well-developed and comprehensive; it regulates specific measures in all the main areas of importance for the development of the NSR, its further transformation into a transport corridor of global significance. The plan is divided into three main stages: until 2024, until 2030, and until 2035. The first stage involves the implementation of the Decree of the President of Russia of May 7, 2018 No. 204 “On national goals and strategic objectives for the development of the Russian Federation for the period until 2024”. According to this act, by 2024, the NSR freight traffic should increase to 80 million tons [11, Grigoryev M.N.; 12, Ban’ko Yu., 13, Osipova E.E., Smirnov S.V., Khairova T.A.]. The second stage, from 2025 to 2030, provides for the formation based on the Northern Sea Route of a “year-round transport system that provides the basic needs of consumers of transport services throughout the NSR.” By 2035, the Northern Sea Route should become an element of the competitiveness of the international and national maritime transport corridor, effectively providing any needs of consumers of transport and logistics services.

In 2019, much attention was paid to scientific research in the Arctic. So, to organize and conduct comprehensive scientific research and state monitoring of the state and environmental pollution of the Arctic using four research and expeditionary vessels of Roshydromet by order of the Government of the Russian Federation of February 23, 2019 No. 276-r. 868.75 million rubles allocated from the reserve fund of the Government¹⁸.

Discoveries were made in the Russian water area. It should be noted that the hydrographic group, operating as part of the Northern Fleet’s integrated expedition to the Franz Josef Land archipelago, confirmed the discovery of five islands that are located in Vise Bay on the western, Kara, sea coast of the island of Severniy of Novaya Zemlya and in the area of the Vylki (Nansen) glacier. The area of discovered objects varies from 900 to 54,500 m²¹⁹.

From July 16 to August 2, within the framework of the Transarctic – 2019 program and the 12th scientific and educational expedition “Arctic Floating University”, an expedition took place on the research vessel “Professor Molchanov” in the waters of the White and Barents Seas, on the islands of Vaigach and Sosnovets, as well as on the territory of the polar hydrometeorological station MG-2 Belyi Nos. The organizers were the FSBI “Severnoe UGMS” and the Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov. The expedition was attended by 57 people: students, undergraduates and graduate students of Russian educational institutions, and young scientists from Germany, Norway, France, Switzerland, China, and the Republic of Korea. The value of

¹⁷ Pravitel'stvo Rossiyskoy Federatsii. Postanovlenie ot 21 dekabrya 2019 goda № 3120-r [Government of the Russian Federation. Decree of December 21, 2019 No. 3120-r]. Sayt Pravitel'stva RF [Website of the Government of the Russian Federation]. URL: <http://static.government.ru/media/files/itR86nOgy9xFEvUVAgmZ3XoeruY8Bf9u.pdf> (accessed 25 December 2019).

¹⁸ Ob assignovaniyakh na nauchnye issledovaniya «Transarktika-2019» [On the appropriations for scientific research “Transarctica-2019”]. 26 February 2019. URL: <http://government.ru/docs/35848/> (accessed 15 May 2019).

¹⁹ Severnyy flot podtverdil otkrytie pyati novykh ostrovov v Arktike [The Northern Fleet has confirmed the discovery of five new islands in the Arctic.] 27 August 2019. URL: <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/674139> (accessed 25 December 2019).

this expedition lies not only in scientific discoveries but also in the fact that a youth international team of Arctic researchers is being formed on the basis of NArFU.

Arctic tourism began to acquire a systematic, planned character. So, e.g., the Russian Arctic national park in 2019 was visited by tourists from 44 countries. During the summer season, 1,306 people visited it. The largest category of visitors to the national park are tourists aged 51–70 years (382 people), aged 71–90 years (268 people)²⁰.

It is important to note that most of the Arctic issues by the government and ministries were considered in the future [14, Zaikov K.S., Kondratov N.A., Kudryashova E.V., Lipina S.A., Chistobaev A.I.]. So, on December 18, at a meeting of the Presidium of the State Commission for the Development of the Arctic, issues that were supported in the Government of the Russian Federation in February-2020 were considered: creating a system of preferences for new projects being implemented in the Arctic zone of Russia; infrastructure plan for the Northern Sea Route; preparation of the chairmanship of Russia in the Arctic Council in 2021–2023²¹. Confirmation of this thesis is the fact that on December 27, the Security Council of the Russian Federation approved the foundations of state policy in the Arctic²². This document should combine the activities of national projects and state programs, investment plans of infrastructure companies, development programs of the Arctic regions and towns. All these steps together will allow a more efficient resolution of Arctic issues.

Security issues in the Arctic

Safety is a prerequisite for the development and well-being of the Arctic communities and for a cost-effective and sustainable business in the region. At the same time, the NATO countries are in the process of building up their military presence in the Arctic [15, Lazarev V.M., Kruglov A.A., Khabirov R.N.; 16, Terebov O.V.]. So, in a report at an expanded meeting of the board of the Russian Ministry of Defense in December 2018, Secretary of Defense S. Shoigu highlighted the following trends in the military-political situation affecting the Arctic region: from 2018, the second operational fleet of the US Navy is being recreated; to ensure the transfer of troops from the United States for their deployment in Europe, it was decided to form by 2022 two new commands of the joint NATO command — the Atlantic and the joint rear command; in Norway, construction of a new radar station is underway 60 km from the Russian border; in its territory in 2018 the number of deployed units of the US Marine Corps was doubled; the number of exercises is increasing, more and more non-NATO countries, in particular Sweden and Finland, are taking part in them;

²⁰ Rekordnoe chislo turistov posetilo natspark «Russkaya Arktika» v 2019 godu [The record number of tourists visited the Russian Arctic national park in 2019]. 27 September 2019. URL: <https://tass.ru/kultura/6936025> (accessed 25 December 2019).

²¹ Yuriy Trutnev provel zasedanie prezidiuma Gosudarstvennoy komissii po voprosam razvitiya Arktiki [Yuri Trutnev held a meeting of the Presidium of the State Commission for Arctic Development]. 18. December 2019. URL: <http://government.ru/news/38637/> (accessed 25 December 2019).

²² Sovet bezopasnosti RF odobril osnovy gospolitiki v Arktike [The Security Council of the Russian Federation approved the foundations of state policy in the Arctic]. 27 December 2019. URL: <https://tass.ru/politika/7435673> / (accessed 25 January 2019).

the number of reconnaissance flights near the borders of Russia is growing [17, Shitova T.V., Sinit-skaya D.S., Raznobarskaya E.V.].

Commander of the Northern Fleet of the Russian Federation Alexander Moiseev at a conference call in the Ministry of Defense said that in 2019 the Arctic continued to increase the intensity and scale of operational and combat training activities of the NATO armed forces, the total number of which increased by 17%, intelligence activity increased by 15%. In response to the increased military exercise of the alliance in the Russian Arctic, measures are being taken to strengthen national security in the Arctic region in different directions. The intensity of the combat training in the Northern Fleet increased. In 2019, 590 different exercises were held, including 30 interspecific and more than 900 training from strategic to the tactical level. These events made it possible to increase the level of personnel training by more than 9%²³.

So, in response to the increased military activity of NATO member countries in the Russian Arctic zone and the US statement to block the Northern Sea Route, the Russian Government has developed rules for the passage of foreign warships through the NSR. Foreign warships should now notify the Russian side 45 days before passage along the Northern Sea Route. In this case, the name of the ship, the route, and the timing of navigation, as well as the main parameters of the craft, such as displacement, draft, and engine characteristics, are required. One will also need to indicate the military rank and surname of the captain. Also, the document will oblige foreign ships and vessels to take on Russian board pilots. In the event of an emergency or ice complication, Russian icebreakers will have to help them²⁴.

It should be noted that the necessary border infrastructure on the island of Kotelny and Franz Josef Land (Nagursky border post) has been practically rebuilt. The Russian Ministry of Defense is carrying out a series of measures to upgrade the naval group of the Northern Fleet, to restore the network of military airfields, and the air defense system. The activities of the Joint Strategic Command "North" continue to improve, measures are being taken to optimize groupings of troops, supply new weapons and military equipment that are designed to ensure Russia's territorial integrity in the Arctic region, protect the natural resources of the Arctic, the continental shelf and exclusive economic zone [18, Gavrilov O.Y.; 19, Semchenkov A.S., Unsalted A.K.; 20, Federov V.P., Zhuravel V.P., Grinyaev S.N., Medvedev D.A.]. Attention is paid to the development of objects of military infrastructure in the Arctic (590 objects with a total area of more than 720 thousand square meters have been built)²⁵. The army is actively taking measures to clean up the Arctic territories from debris.

²³ NATO aktivno uvelichivaet boevuyu podgotovku svoikh voysk v Arktike [NATO is actively increasing the combat training of its troops in the Arctic]. 15 January 2020. URL: <https://prosvet.press/2019/12/27/nato-aktivno-velichivaet-boevuyu-podg/> (accessed 15 February 2020).

²⁴ V Rossii sozdany pravila prokhoda Sevmorputi inostrannymi korablyami [In Russia, rules for foreign ships passing the Northern Sea Route have been created]. 06 March 2019. URL: <https://www.gazeta.ru/army/2019/03/06/12226447.shtml> (accessed 15 March 2019).

²⁵ Verkhovnyy Glavnokomanduyushchiy Vooruzhennymi Silami Rossii Vladimir Putin prinyal uchastie v rasshirennom zasedanii Kollegii Minoborony [Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of Russia Vladimir Putin participated in an

All this is aimed at maintaining parity and creating favorable conditions for the protection of national interests in this vital region.

Due to the lack of apparent reasons for the conflict, military threats in the Arctic are currently estimated by the coastal states as relatively low. At the same time, the territorial, resource, and military-strategic interests of several countries are being strengthened, which could potentially lead to an increase in the conflict potential in the region in the medium and long term. In this regard, all the problems arising here should be resolved based on cooperation and constructive interaction.

Conclusion

Studying the processes taking place in the Arctic in 2019 is of great importance for analyzing the current Arctic situation, understanding the “bottlenecks” in the development of the Arctic region, and, most importantly, it can more accurately determine the state’s strategy and tactics in the Arctic direction. The New Fundamentals of Russian state policy in the Arctic for the period until 2035 from an expert point of view have been worked out quite effectively. In many respects, this was facilitated by the work of the National Arctic Scientific and Educational Consortium, conferences, seminars, and round tables. If we talk about Arctic conferences, then, in our opinion, in subsequent years, Russia should strive to hold more events and meetings on Arctic topics all the same in the territories of the Russian Arctic.

The Russian Arctic is a unique region of our country. Its value is extremely high in terms of potential mineral reserves. It plays a critical geopolitical and military-strategic role. But the wealth of the Arctic is not only economical but also scientific and technological.

In 2019, the leadership of the country, federal ministries, and departments began to pay much more attention to the Arctic. The basis of this activity was the achievements of the State Commission for the Development of the Arctic in the previous five years, which established what needs to be done in the Arctic region in the coming years and what should not be done at all. It is significant for understanding the problems of strategic planning. Indeed, in addition to the Arctic, Russia has a host of other tasks that need to be solved and solved effectively. The leading position here is the implementation of national projects. Their application in the Russian Arctic, unfortunately, raises many questions.

Last year, several federal management decisions were adopted on the development of the Northern Sea Route until 2035. It gives us hope for improving its infrastructure, increasing the volume of cargo transportation, and developing the Arctic territories. And it can form the basis of the program of the chairmanship of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Council in 2021–2033.

The military-political situation in the Arctic remains no less complicated and contradictory. At the same time, it must be recognized that today the Arctic is a territory of low political tension

expanded meeting of the Board of the Ministry of Defense]. 24 December 2019. URL: https://function.mil.ru/news_page/country/more.htm?id=12268217@egNews (accessed 28 December 2019).

and the successful development of multilateral international cooperation. Currently, the level of militarization of the Arctic does not go beyond reasonable sufficiency. However, the geopolitical situation in the Arctic region cannot remain stable for a long time amid the aggravation of international relations in the world.

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