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Regional cooperation in space: policies, governance and legal tools (1)

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THE ROLE OF SPACE IN SUPPORT OF THE COMMON OBJECTIVES OF THE EUROPEAN
NORDIC COUNTRIES

Abstract

The European Nordic countries, namely Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, have common geopolitical and cultural aspects. These in turn shape their respective priorities and interests in setting up their policies in a number of areas like shipping and fisheries, energy, immigration, agriculture, security and defence, infrastructures, climate change and the Arctic. Space technology, navigation, earth observation, telecommunication and integrated applications can assist the Nordic countries in developing, implementing and monitoring policies of common interest. This paper provides an in-depth overview and a holistic comprehensive assessment of these common interests in policy areas where space can provide support in their realisation. The first part provides a synthesis of the Nordic countries respective priorities through analysing their government programmes and plans. The priorities are classified according to the six areas of sustainability: energy, environment/climate change, transport, knowledge, natural resources (fisheries, agriculture, forestry, mining, etc). Although the national strategies represent very different national perspectives, at the same time, there are a number of similarities when it comes to overall policy objectives in areas such as the arctic and climate change. In other words, even though the Arctic plays a different role in each country's national context and there are clear differences as regards geography, access to resources and security policies, the strategies display common general interest in sustainable development and management of resources, protection of the environment, international cooperation and regional security. The second part of this paper focuses on the national space strategies and indicates the main priorities and trends. The priorities vary from one from country to the another and can include science, navigation, earth observation, human space flight, launchers, technology development, and/or applications. The motivation for ingesting in space activities also change (eg. international cooperation, industrial competitiveness, societal benefits, job creation). The third apart of this paper will focus on specific aspect where space can help in the realisation of the countries strategic priorities.