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# Dispute over the Applicable Scope of the Svalbard Treaty: A Chinese Lawyer's Perspective

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*The Svalbard Treaty, one of the few inter-governmental treaties in the Arctic area, has drawn global attention. Currently, the dispute focuses mainly on its scope of applicability. Different interpretations of the issue, directly affect each contracting party's interests in Svalbard, intensifying its debate. China signed the Svalbard Treaty on July 1, 1925, becoming one of its first contracting parties. China has attached great importance to non-discriminatory rights under the treaty, such as scientific research, resource exploitation, fishing, hunting and commercial activities, etc. Therefore, the final determination of the treaty's applicable scope has a profoundly direct impact on China's interests in the Arctic area. This research is to analyze the Chinese position on the Svalbard Treaty and to demonstrate the legitimacy of China's viewpoint from a treaty interpretation perspective.*

## Keywords

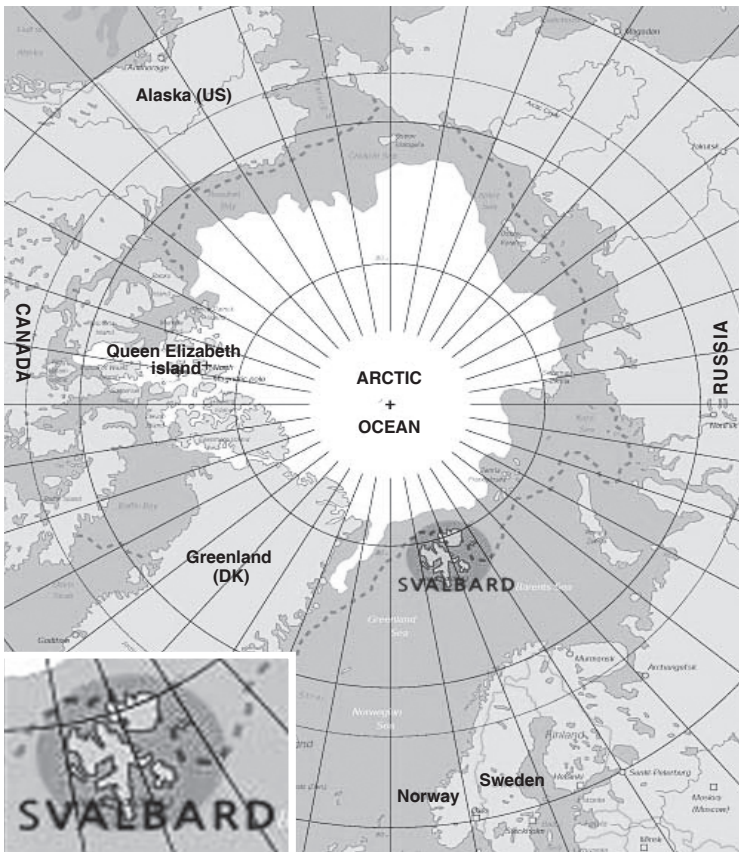
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# 1. Introduction

Svalbard is located in the Arctic Ocean, between the Barents Sea and the Greenland Sea, including the islands of Spitsbergen, North-East Land, Edge, Barents Islands and Bear Island and rocks appertaining thereto, with an area of more than 62,000 square kilometers.

Figure 1: The Svalbard Islands<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Norwegian Polar Institute, Maps, available at <http://www.npolar.no/en/services/maps> (last visited on May 9, 2015).