



ICAS
MARITIME AFFAIRS
PROGRAM

HANDBILL

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ICAS MARITIME AFFAIRS PROGRAM

The ICAS Maritime Affairs Program (MAP) gathers, displays, and debates both the historic and the newly developed maritime related issues, including U.S.-China interaction on maritime affairs.

The goal of this program is to inform and stimulate open, fact-based, intellectual discussion on an array of topics including but not limited to international law of the sea, maritime security, fisheries, shipping, oil and natural gas management, and marine environment protection.

There are four featured products currently associated with the ICAS MAP Program:

- **MAP Issue Trackers:** An online, collaborative platform designed to encourage intellectual exchange on maritime developments and issues around the world. The longest-running project at ICAS, it currently features trackers for three regions: Polar, South China Sea, and the East China Sea.
- **MAP Publications:** Written pieces that analyze and explore the evolving and long-standing multinational interactions uniquely found in the maritime realm. MAP publications can range in size from blog posts and commentaries to the Handbill newsletter and full-length books,
- **MAP Events:** Multilateral events designed to promote the free and equal exchange of ideas on maritime affairs and international law, especially as they relate to U.S.-China relations.
- **MAP Media:** A variety of short-form periodicals and Twitter campaigns (#ICASMAP, #MAPWave) to keep our audience informed of major news events as they occur.

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Recent News in Global Maritime Affairs

[1] Climate Change and Blue Carbon Economy [1]

[Increasing Melting of West Antarctic Ice Shelves May Now Be Unavoidable](#)

October 29 - *The Maritime Executive*
[The Antarctic, Global]

New research argues that ice losses in vulnerable West Antarctic ice shelves are nearly inevitable this century due to warming waters, suggesting that the previous predictions on sea level rise may be too conservative. The research argues that rising ocean temperature, largely linked to carbon emissions, will cause widespread ice-shelf melting even in the vital regions for ice-sheet stability.

[Two 'pristine' deep-water reefs in Galápagos discovered](#)

October 28 - *The Washington Post* [Paywall]
[Pacific Ocean]

The Schmidt Ocean Institute announced that an international group of researchers have discovered two “pristine” coral reefs in the waters off the Galápagos Islands in the Eastern Pacific. The reefs, located about a quarter of a mile below the surface and within the boundaries of the Galápagos Marine Reserve, are suspected to be thousands of years old.

[Greenpeace ship to tour Philippines to amplify call for climate justice](#)

October 26 - *PhilStar Global*
[Global, Southeast Asia]

Greenpeace's *Rainbow Warrior* ship will return to the Philippines in November 2023 to draw attention to climate-impacted communities and demand accountability from major polluters. The Philippines is highly vulnerable to climate change, and this visit also notably coincides with the 10th anniversary of Super Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan).

[Japan and Denmark to tie up on floating offshore wind technology](#)

October 25 - *The Japan Times* [Paywall]

[Europe, East Asia, Global]

Japan and Denmark have signed a letter of intent to create a cooperative framework involving industry, regulation, and academia to advance research and development in floating, offshore wind power technology to combat climate change. Additionally, they may be planning to discuss taking the lead in creating global standards for the industry.

[Billions of crabs went missing around Alaska. Scientists now know what happened to them](#)

October 20 - CNN

[The Arctic, United States]

The snow crab harvest season in the U.S. state of Alaska was canceled for the second consecutive year in a row due to insufficient supply of snow crabs. A study conducted by scientists from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration suggests that warmer ocean temperatures in Alaska potentially caused the death of billions of snow crabs in recent years.

[Atlantic Hurricanes Are Getting Stronger, Faster, Study Finds](#)

October 20 - *The New York Times* [Paywall]

[Atlantic Ocean, Global]

A recent study reveals that Atlantic hurricanes are now twice as likely to rapidly intensify from weak storms into Category 3 or higher hurricanes within 24 hours. Among other concerns, rapid intensification complicates weather forecasting and can leave officials with insufficient time for evacuations, causing more serious damages to local communities.

[These houses are at risk of falling into the sea. The U.S. government bought them.](#)

October 16 - *The Washington Post* [Paywall]

[United States]

The U.S. National Park Service has bought two homes for over US\$700,000 with the intent to demolish them as these houses face imminent collapse into the Atlantic Ocean due to rising seas, intense storms and unceasing erosion.

[Coastal Carbon secures \\$1.6 million towards carbon credit assessment tool](#)

October 10 - *The Fish Site*

[Canada, Global]

Canadian startup company Coastal Carbon has received \$1.6 million in funding from Canada's Ocean Supercluster to advance the development of its "small, non-intrusive sensors" that "remotely measure seaweed biomass and quantify those data using artificial intelligence." These sensors could also be used to quantify blue carbon credits; a necessity for both seaweed farmers and the industry.

[Wall Street urged to back Indigenous peoples as protectors of forests and oceans](#)

October 5 - Reuters

[Global, United States, The Americas, South Pacific]

At Climate Week in New York in September, a group of government officials, business executives, nonprofit activists and Indigenous leaders began analyzing how to turn the Global Biodiversity Framework—a commitment made by 200 governments in Montreal in December 2022 “to conserve 30% of the world’s lands and oceans by 2030”—into reality. Several task forces were launched, each of which emphasize the trillions of dollars needed in capital flows towards biodiversity protection.

[2] Maritime Economy and Shipping [2]

[Dutch gov't, maritime sector pledge €60 million to turbocharge shipbuilding innovation](#)

October 30 - Offshore Energy

[Europe, Global]

On October 26, the Dutch government launched a joint €60 million investment venture with the maritime sector to drive innovative shipbuilding over the next two years. The extensive agenda includes ‘25 measures to address 25 bottlenecks, categorized into five lines of action’ holistically aimed at driving the clean energy transition and ‘ensuring economic and military security.’

[Signal: North Sea shipping traffic disrupted by sunken cargo vessel](#)

October 26 - Ship Technology

[North Atlantic, Europe]

On October 24, the UK-flagged inland bulker cargo ship the *Verity* collided with the Bahamian-flagged bulker ship the *Polesie* close to the German island of Heligoland. The collision resulted in the sinking of the *Verity* and at least one of its seven crew members dead, according to Germany’s Central Command for Maritime Emergencies.

[Australia decides against canceling Chinese company’s lease of strategically important port](#)

October 20 - Associated Press

[Australia, China, Global]

The government of Australia said it will not cancel a Chinese company’s lease on a commercial port in Darwin. The renewal was in question over concerns that the firm’s operations pose a security risk because of its additional use by U.S. troops during training exercises.

[Putin praises 'dear friend' Xi, pitches Russia's Northern Sea route](#)

October 18 - Reuters

[Russia, China, The Arctic]

While attending the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing, Russian President Vladimir Putin praised China’s Belt and Road Initiative and invited “interested states” beyond “partners” to “participate directly in its

development.” President Putin also said that year-round navigation along the entire Northern Sea Route, a route within Russia’s Arctic exclusive economic zone, will be possible “as soon as next year.”

[Adani’s New Mega Port to Lure World’s Biggest Ships to India](#)

October 15 - *Bloomberg* [Paywall]

[South Asia, Global]

India has opened its new transshipment container port of Vizhinjam in Kerala, located near the southernmost tip of India. Largely made possible by Indian billionaire Gautam Adani, it is the first of its kind in the country as it is suitable for the world’s biggest container ships.

[Moscow cuts funding for icebreakers](#)

October 13 - *Arctic Today*

[The Arctic, Russia]

The Russian government is considering decreasing its budget for the construction of icebreaking vessels over the 2024-2026 period by 5,24 billion rubles. The proposed budget is currently under discussion at the State Duma.

[Russia attacks Ukraine’s Danube ports with drones](#)

October 12 - *Politico*

[Black Sea, Europe]

On the night of October 11, Russia attacked a Ukrainian port on the Danube River near the Romanian border, taking place two days after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with Romanian President Klaus Iohannis in Bucharest to discuss Ukrainian grain exports through Romania.

[China Is Gaining Long-Coveted Role in Arctic, as Russia Yields](#)

October 2 - *The Wall Street Journal* [Paywall]

[The Arctic, China, Russia]

Facing increasing pressures on resources due to the Ukrainian war, Russia has seemingly turned to China for help with developments within the Arctic Circle. Chinese energy companies are filling in some of the space left by their Western counterparts, causing a surge in shipments of crude through the Northern Sea Route in recent weeks.

[Live: China’s first geological exploration of 3,000 meters into deep sea is underway](#)

October 1 - *CGTN*

[South China Sea, Indo-Pacific]

CGTN released a live recording of China’s first 3,000 meter deep-sea geological exploration. This exploration was the first of its kind conducted by China through the use of self-developed equipment. The video consists mostly of interviews with the crew of the ship.

[3] Ocean Governance and Maritime Cooperation [3]

['Might is Right' has no place in maritime order: Rajnath's veiled dig at China](#)

October 30 - *The Hindu*

[Indian Ocean, Global]

India's Defense Minister Rajnath Singh addressed the Goa Maritime conclave on October 30, saying that the concept of 'might is right' should not be the maritime law of the Indo-Pacific. "A free, open and rule-based maritime order is a priority for all of us. 'Might is right' has no place in such a maritime order," Singh said, in what some view as an indirect verbal jab at Beijing.

[China willing to provide necessary information on Baltic Sea pipeline probe](#)

October 25 - *Reuters*

[North Atlantic, Baltic Sea]

China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs told the press that China is willing to provide necessary information to assist Finland's police with investigating an incident that damaged gas pipelines in the Baltic Sea. Some authorities are looking into whether a Chinese container vessel might be involved.

[China unveils major steps to bolster Belt and Road Cooperation](#)

October 24 - *Helsinki Times*

[China, Global]

From October 17-18 in Beijing, China hosted its third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF), during which President Xi Jinping unveiled a comprehensive eight-point plan that emphasizes infrastructure expansion, green development, technological innovation, and global cooperation. One of the major focuses is the connective New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor.

[U.S. Lawmakers Point to Reports of Forced Labor in China's Seafood Industry](#)

October 24 - *The Wall Street Journal* [Paywall]

[China, United States]

In a public letter sent to the Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, several U.S. lawmakers said the Biden administration should crack down on China's use of forced labor in seafood production, citing reports by an investigative journalism group.

[Djibouti Latest Nation to Reject Ethiopia's Red Sea Access Plea](#)

October 19 - *Bloomberg* [Paywall]

[Middle East, Africa, Global]

Djibouti has joined Eritrea and Somalia in rejecting an appeal from Ethiopia's prime minister to grant his country direct access to a port on the Red Sea, one of the world's busiest shipping routes.

[IAEA team gathers marine samples near Fukushima as treated radioactive water is released into sea](#)

October 19 - *Associated Press*

[East Asia, Japan, Global]

A team of marine radiology scientists from the International Atomic Energy Agency visited Fukushima, Japan to observe nearby fishing practices and take samples following the planned release of treated radioactive wastewater into the sea from the Fukushima Daiichi power plant.

[PCG: Foreign vessel that rammed PH boat off Bajo de Masinloc violated protocols](#)

October 5 - *CNN Philippines*

[South China Sea]

On October 2, a foreign vessel rammed a Filipino boat near Bajo de Masinloc in the West Philippine Sea and killed three fishermen. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) released a public statement that the foreign vessel violated two international regulations: Regulation 33 under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea and Rule 2 of the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea.

['Blue Africa' Partnership Seeks to Curb Annual \\$10B Loss from Illegal Fishing](#)

October 4 - *USNI News*

[Africa, United States]

In an effort now known as 'Blue Africa', U.S. naval forces in Europe and Africa are working with West African nations to better understand and collectively police their exclusive economic zones against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, which is now the region's primary maritime challenge.

[Polar Code May Need Updating as Arctic Shipping Increases New Study Concludes](#)

September 26 - *High North News*

[The Arctic]

A new study concludes that The International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters—more often called the Polar Code—which took effect in 2017 'may contain gaps in its definition of hazardous conditions,' especially amidst the rise in regional shipping traffic, and could need updating.

[4] Maritime Security and Defense [4]

[China, Russia target US at security forum](#)

October 30 - *Radio Free Asia*

[China, Russia, United States]

From October 29-31, China's People's Liberation Army Academy of Military Sciences and the Chinese Institute of International Strategic Studies (CIISS) hosted its 10th annual Beijing Xiangshan security forum in the wake of Chinese defense minister Li Shangfu being removed from his post the week

before. In separate speeches, China's second highest military official, Col. Gen. Zhang Youxia, and Russia's Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu both gave "like-minded" speeches that pointed to the U.S. as "deliberately" provocative, confrontational and a barrier to "common security and lasting peace."

[China, US Release Dueling Videos With Accusations of Provocation](#)

October 26 - *Bloomberg* [Paywall]
[South China Sea, United States, China]

China's military released video footage that it says shows "provocative" actions by the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *Ralph Johnson* "against a People's Liberation Army Navy task group under routine training in South China Sea" on August 19.

[Biden reasserts 'ironclad' defense commitment after West PH Sea collisions](#)

October 26 - *CNN Philippines*
[United States, South China Sea]

In a press conference on October 25, U.S. President Joe Biden said, "I want to be clear, I want to be very clear: The United States' defense commitment to the Philippines is ironclad." Earlier in October, Manila said a China Coast Guard vessel came within 3 feet of colliding with a Philippine Coast Guard ship, attempting to block it in the South China Sea about 200 km off the Philippine coast near the Second Thomas Shoal. China says it drove away a Philippine Navy vessel when it entered an area near the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea; a claim that Manila denied.

[China PLA stationed up to 6 warships in Middle East over past week amid rising tensions from Israel-Gaza war: reports](#)

October 19 - *South China Morning Post* [Paywall]
[China, Middle East]

In the span of one week, up to six Chinese warships have been operating in the Middle East as the 44th and 45th naval escort task forces conduct routine operations and several multi-day formal visits with regional countries including Kuwait and Oman.

[US Syria Base Attacked as Destroyer Stops Missiles From Yemen](#)

October 19 - *Bloomberg* [Paywall]
[Middle East, United States]

On October 18, the naval destroyer USS *Carney* in the Red Sea intercepted three cruise missiles and several drones fired toward Israel by Houthi rebels in Yemen. The U.S. Pentagon says it is seeing an increase in the number of drone attacks in Iraq and Syria as it works to deter expanding conflicts.

[Putin Sends Jets With Hypersonic Missiles to Patrol Black Sea](#)

October 18 - *Bloomberg* [Paywall]

[Black Sea, Russia, Europe]

Russian President Vladimir Putin says he has ordered fighter jets armed with hypersonic missiles to begin round-the-clock patrols over the Black Sea, thus promoting tensions with the U.S. in the area.

[China drives away Japanese vessels illegally entering territorial waters of Diaoyu Island](#)

October 17 - CGTN

[East Asia, China, Japan]

On October 16, the China Coast Guard reported driving away several Japanese vessels that had “illegally entered the territorial waters of China’s Diaoyu Island” and urged against illegal activities.

[Fearing China, South Korea targets firms building Taiwan navy submarines](#)

October 16 - *Reuters*

[East Asia]

In the midst of the launch of Taiwan’s first domestically built submarine the *Narwhal*, authorities from South Korea and Taiwan are working to address security and potential trade law violations.

[North Korea says US carrier's visit to South 'undisguised' provocation](#)

October 12 - *Reuters*

[East Asia, United States]

On October 13, North Korea denounced a US Navy visit by the USS *Ronald Reagan* aircraft carrier and its strike group to South Korea’s port of Busan the previous day; a provocation that Pyongyang said could bring “irrevocable, catastrophic circumstances.”

[Chinese and Saudi navies launch joint counterterrorism exercise against backdrop of Israel-Hamas war](#)

October 10 - *South China Morning Post* [Paywall]

[China, Middle East, Global]

On October 9, China and Saudi Arabia launched the first iteration of Blue Sword-2023, a joint naval exercise focused on overseas maritime counterterrorism operations and “deepening” friendships.

[6 countries join PH in sea exercises](#)

October 10 - *The Manila Times* [Paywall]

[South China Sea, Indo-Pacific]

The United States, Japan, United Kingdom, France, Canada and Australia joined the Philippines in the Samasama (Together) 2023 maritime exercises “to demonstrate our resolve...and to enhance our interoperability.” This year’s exercise was held from October 8-13 off the coast of Manila.

[Three Filipino fishermen dead after boat 'rammed' in South China Sea](#)

October 4 - *The Japan Times* [Paywall]

[South China Sea, South Pacific]

On October 4, the Philippine coast guard reported an "accidental collision" between an oil tanker registered under the flag of the Marshall Islands and a Philippine fishing boat, resulting in the death of three Philippine fishermen.

Peer-Reviewed Research on Maritime Issues

- Government Release: Department of Defense of India - ["Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addresses Goa Maritime Conclave 2023; stresses on cooperation for security"](#) [October 30]
- Government Release: U.S. State of Alaska - ["Sen Murkowski Arctic Circle Speech: The New Arctic Vision of the United States"](#) [October 23 via *Arctic Today*]
- Government Release: Philippine News Agency - ["PBBM orders PCG to probe China's harassment in WPS"](#) [October 23]
- Government Release: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan - ["Recent Surge in Tensions in the South China Sea"](#) [October 23]
- Government Release: United States, The White House - ["Readout of National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan's Call with National Security Advisor Eduardo M. Año of the Philippines"](#) [October 23]
- Government Release: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China - ["Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on CCG Lawfully Blocking Philippine Attempt to Send Construction Materials to Its Illegally 'Grounded' Warship at Ren'ai Jiao"](#) [October 22]
- Government Release: U.S. Department of State - ["U.S. Support for our Philippine Allies in the Face of Repeated PRC Harassment in the South China Sea"](#) [October 22]
- Government Release: U.S. Department of Defense - ["U.S. Accuses China of Conducting 'Centralized, Concerted' Campaign of Harassment of Aircraft"](#) [October 17]
- Government Release: U.S. Department of Defense - ["Department of Defense Releases Declassified Images, Videos of Coercive and Risky PLA Operational Behavior"](#) [October 17]
- Government Release: Police of Finland - ["National Bureau of Investigation examines background of vessels sailing in the gas pipeline damage area"](#) [October 17]
- Government Release: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China - ["Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on the Ren'ai Jiao Issue"](#) [October 9]
- Government Release: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China - ["Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on Japan's Start of Second Round of Ocean Discharge of Fukushima Nuclear-contaminated Water"](#) [October 5]
- Government Release: U.S. Congressional Research Service - ["China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress"](#) [Updated October 5]
- Government Release: U.S. Congressional Research Service - ["United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea \(UNCLOS\): Living Resources Provisions"](#) [October 4]

- Government Release: Republic of the Philippines Philippine News Agency - [“Australia concerned over ‘destabilizing behaviors’ vs. PH in WPS”](#) [September 27]
- Podcast: [“Japan’s policy towards grey-zone activities in the Indo-Pacific with Professor Kotani Tetsuo and Lynn Kuok”](#) [IISS Japan Memo - October 16]
- Podcast: [“James Borton and Rodger Baker: Science Diplomacy and The Ecological Implications of The South China Sea”](#) [Asia Unscripted - October 5]
- Opinion: [“Shipping Contributes Heavily to Climate Change. Are Green Ships the Solution?”](#) [The New York Times - October 30] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Why the rusting wreck of a second world war ship is so important to China”](#) [The Guardian - October 30]
- Opinion: [“Views From Manila on China-Philippines Confrontations in South China Sea”](#) [China Global South Project - October 26] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“From kingfish to insects: insights from the €200 m ocean impact fund”](#) [The Fish Site - October 25]
- Opinion: [“Late US Submarine Delivery Shows Pitfalls for Partnership With Australia”](#) [Bloomberg - October 25] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“After collisions at sea, could Sino-Philippine tensions boil over?”](#) [The Japan Times - October 23] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“China is fighting the third Opium War with fish”](#) [CIMSEC - October 23]
- Opinion: [“Increased Arctic Shipping Brings Increased Risks”](#) [Arctic Today - October 21] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“China is set to dominate the deep sea and its wealth of rare metals”](#) [The Washington Post - October 19] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“How India and China compete in non-aligned South Asia and the Indian Ocean”](#) [Brookings - October 18]
- Opinion: [“Unmanned ships: A fleet to do what?”](#) [CIMSEC - October 17]
- Opinion: [“The Swedish Navy brings Capable Forces to NATO”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - October 17]
- Opinion: [“The Arctic Council: Still Our Best Tool for Circumpolar Cooperation”](#) [Wilson Center - October 16]
- Opinion: [“The Planet’s Big Blue Machine: Why the Ocean Engine Matters”](#) [Yale Environment 360 - October 12]
- Opinion: [“With UVA Discovery, We May Be One Good Solution Closer to Solving Climate Change”](#) [University of Virginia Today - October 6]
- Opinion: [“The war in Ukraine is threatening to wash across the Black Sea”](#) [The Economist - October 5] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Transatlantic Security in Baltic: How Realistic is Poland’s Concept of protecting NATO’s Eastern Flank against Russian Aggression?”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - October 5]
- Opinion: [“A Step in the Right Direction: Advancing the Philippines’ Maritime Priorities”](#) [Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative - October 4]
- Opinion: [“Sea Control in the Black Sea Still up for Grabs”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - October 3]
- Opinion: [“Seychelles Op-Ed: The Ocean Offers Rich Solutions for Climate Change”](#) [High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy - October 2]

- Opinion: [“The United States and the Philippines have launched joint military exercises in the South China Sea. Should China be worried? \[美国菲律宾启动南海联合军演 中国要担心吗?\]”](#) [Radio Free Asia - October 2] [In Chinese]
- Opinion: [“How seeding the oceans with minerals could help slow climate change”](#) [The Japan Times - September 29]
- Opinion: [“To succeed against China, Washington and Its Allies must be in the South China Sea”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - September 28]
- Analysis: [“Where’s the Nearest Carrier?”](#) [The Jerusalem Strategic Tribune - October 2023]
- Analysis: [“The Nordic Roadmap: Plotting a course for the maritime energy transition”](#) [Hellenic Shipping News - October 30]
- Analysis: [“Greece’s valuable ‘blue forests’ reveal their secrets”](#) [Greek City Times - October 30]
- Analysis: [“China, a U.S. Ally and the Fight Over an Old Rusty Ship”](#) [The Wall Street Journal - October 25] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“‘Nightmare’ Hurricanes Are Popping Up Out of Nowhere”](#) [Bloomberg - October 25] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Speak its name: Blockade”](#) [SeaLight - October 22]
- Analysis: [“Huge US Naval Force Off Israel Comes With Costs”](#) [Center for European Policy Analysis - October 20]
- Analysis: [“The Desert Pipeline That Ensures Israel Can Keep Importing Oil”](#) [Bloomberg - October 20] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Unmanned Vessels as Sensors in U.S. Naval Operations”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - October 19]
- Analysis: [“Ongoing Arms Transfer Activity at Najin Port”](#) [Center for Strategic & International Studies - October 17]
- Analysis: [“BRI at 10: China’s Maritime Silk Road”](#) [The China Project - October 16] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“More Than Meets the Eye: Philippine Upgrades at EDCA Sites”](#) [Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative - October 12]
- Analysis: [“To Protect its Valuable Seagrass, Seychelles Leverages Partnerships”](#) [Pew Charitable Trusts - October 10]
- Analysis: [“Another Summer In The South China Sea: A Guided Tour Of The World’s Most Contested Waters”](#) [USNI News - October 6]
- Analysis: [“China’s green tech giants link supply chains to Southeast Asia”](#) [Nikkei Asia - October 4]
- Analysis: [“Choppy waters as Europe navigates China-US rivalry”](#) [Reuters - October 4]
- Analysis: [“In Shipping, a Push to Slash Emissions by Harnessing the Wind”](#) [The New York Times - October 3] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Can CO2 Capture and Nuclear Power Get Ships to Net Zero?”](#) [The Maritime Executive - October 2]
- Analysis: [“Nigeria’s new blue economy ministry could harness marine resources - moving the focus away from oil”](#) [The Conversation - October 2]
- Analysis: [“A fight against climate change is happening under water”](#) [University of Waterloo - September 29]
- Analysis: [“How a Tiny Crew Struck a Blow Against China With a Wooden Boat and a Knife”](#) [The Wall Street Journal - September 28] [Paywall]

Events on the Maritime Domain

- From September 27-28, 2023, the Wilson Center, the National Science Foundation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the US Coast Guard, and Battelle held the first-ever conference on Antarctic policy in Washington, DC: [“The Rules-Based Order in Antarctica and Global Challenges.”](#)
- From September 27-29, 2023, SNAME and its partners held the [“SNAME Maritime Convention 2023”](#) in San Diego, California with a focus on “Utilizing New Technologies to Solve Complex Maritime Problems.”
- On October 2, 2023, the International Institute for Strategic Studies held a talk on [“Cooperative Maritime Security in the CENTCOM Area of Operations”](#) in-person in Bahrain.
- On October 2, 2023, Columbia Climate School held a [forum](#) to discuss “Murky and Pristine Blue Pacific Waters- Challenges of marine resource development: Sustainable Fishing, Nuclear Waste, Plastic, Deep Sea Mining and More.”
- On October 3, 2023, Brookings held a hybrid event on [“De-risking the economic relationship with China: Views from the Indo-Pacific.”](#)
- On October 4, 2023, Columbia Climate School held an event on [“Climate Change, Disasters, and the Dynamics of Armed Conflicts.”](#)
- On October 5, 2023, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation held a seminar on [“Like-Minded Allies? Indo-Pacific Partners’ Views on Possible Changes in the U.S. Relationship with Taiwan.”](#)
- On October 10, 2023, the Center for Strategic & International Studies held an event on [“Arctic Geopolitics: Svalbard and the European High North.”](#) A full recording is available.
- On October 17, 2023, the Center for Strategic & International Studies International Security Program and the U.S. Naval Institute held a Maritime Security Dialogue event featuring ADM Linda L. Fagan, Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard to discuss [“The U.S. Coast Guard in an Era of Great Power Competition.”](#) A full recording is available.
- On October 17, 2023, the Center for Strategic & International Studies International Security Program held a virtual event with the [“UK’s First Sea Lord on the Royal Navy.”](#) A full recording is available.
- On October 27, 2023, The Nautical Institute held a seminar on [“Seafaring in the modern and ever-changing millennium”](#) at its Singapore Conference 2023.
- On October 27, 2023, the Atlantic Council’s Indo-Pacific Security Initiative held [“A conversation with Deputy Assistant Secretary Dawson on Indo-Pacific strategy.”](#) A full recording is available.
- On October 31, 2023, Center for Strategic & International Studies will hold a hybrid webcast on [“A Discussion with Norwegian Minister Terje Aasland”](#) on energy security.
- From November 1-2, 2023, Chatham House will be holding their hybrid [“Climate change 2023”](#) conference at Chatham House, focusing on “multi-stakeholder collaboration for increased ambition, action and impact.” Registration is still open.
- On November 2, 2023, North American Marine Environment Protection Association and its partners will hold its [Annual Conference and Awards Dinner on “Maritime’s Pathway to 2050.”](#)
- On November 3, 2023, Center for Strategic & International Studies International Security Program will hold a virtual event on [“Canada’s Role in Global Maritime Security.”](#)

- On November 8, 2023, the Wilson Center will hold an online event on [“A Half Decade of Indo-Pacific Strategies: Assessing US Outreach to Allies and Partners.”](#)
- From November 15-16, 2023, DefenceIQ and its partners will hold a forum combining the [“Warships & OPV Latin America Conference”](#) and the [“Caribbean Basin Maritime Security and Coastal Surveillance” \(CABSEC\)](#), both of which focus on addressing regional security challenges such as technological advancements and information sharing. Registration is still open.
- From November 17-19, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation Ocean Policy Research Institute and their partners will hold [“The International Eelgrass and Blue Carbon Workshop.”](#) Both in-person and online registration is still open.
- On November 20, 2023, Riviera will be holding their [International Bulk Shipping Conference](#) in London, United Kingdom, which will focus on “navigating new market dynamics, environmental requirements and improving operational efficiency.” Registration is still open.
- On November 28, 2023, The Nautical Institute and the Singapore Maritime Academy (SMA) will hold a conference on [“Achieving Effective Simulation.”](#) Registration is still open.
- From November 29-30, 2023, Active Communications International and their partners will be holding their [17th Arctic Shipping Summit](#) in Montreal, Canada for the first time in three years. Registration is still open.
- On December 7, 2023, the Danish Embassy and the Danish-UK Association will be holding the [11th Annual UK Offshore Wind Seminar](#) in London, United Kingdom. Registration is still open.

Handbill Spotlight

Air Interception and Close Encounters

Issue Background

‘Interception’ is a technical aviation term that is usually used to describe the practice of a military flight to intercept another unidentified or unregistered aircraft in a restricted or prohibited airspace. The purpose of interception is for the military aircraft to first identify the intercepted aircraft, understand its intention, and then follow [standardized procedures](#) based on the understanding of the intercepted aircraft’s intention.

Contrary to common understanding, air interceptions are not rare. Fighter jets around the world dispatch—also known as “scramble”—to intercept another aircraft frequently when civilian aircraft mistakenly enter restricted or prohibited airspace due to communication or navigation malfunction. For instance, earlier this year, two F-16 fighter jets scrambled from Joint Base Andrews to intercept [a private jet](#) that mistakenly flew over Washington, D.C. airspace.

Air interception of military aircraft from another country and beyond domestic airspace is significantly more complicated and potentially alarming. Given the nature of military operations, the intention of a foreign military aircraft is usually unclear. While pilots could communicate with each other through the public channel, miscommunication or ‘no-response’ tends to happen. As modern military operations increasingly rely on airborne platforms for reconnaissance, communication, strike

and other capabilities, it is critical for any country's air force to make sure that they can detect, intercept, and properly deal with foreign military aircraft, even during peacetime.

Recent Events¹

On October 17, 2023, the U.S. Department of Defense, for the first time, [released over a hundred cases](#) of alleged “coercive and risky operational behavior by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) against U.S. aircraft.” More specifically, the release pointed at close encounters when PLA aircraft intercepted various U.S. aircraft in the Asia-Pacific. Before the release, the United States has already accused the Chinese military of “unprofessional maneuver” in many cases. In May 2023, the U.S. military [released footage](#) of a Chinese J-16 fighter jet carrying out a close maneuver near a U.S. RC-135 reconnaissance aircraft over the South China Sea. While the U.S. claims that its aircraft is operating in international airspace, given the highly sensitive and complex geographical situation in the South China Sea, information-gathering activities carried out by the US Air Force are likely to encounter more Chinese intercepts in the future.



Likewise, as many countries begin to increase their presence in the Asia-Pacific region, air movements over the waters around China, not only in the South China Sea but also in the East China Sea, are creating more cases of intercepts and close encounters. In mid-October 2023, the Chinese military of defense [reacted strongly](#) and criticized a Canadian military aircraft's activity near the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. In the public [footage](#), it can be seen that a double-seated Chinese J-10 fighter aircraft flew close to the Canadian CP-140 surveillance aircraft, though the scene was relatively “stable” compared to the abovementioned close encounter between China and the U.S.

¹ A video newly released by the Department, recorded September 21, 2023, captures a PLA fighter jet conducting a coercive and risky intercept against a lawfully operating U.S. asset in the South China Sea, including by approaching a distance of just 50 feet from the U.S. plane. (Source/Credit: [Indo-Pacom Courtesy Photo](#), Public Domain)

Keep In Mind

Engagement in the air is oftentimes risky given its nature of high speed and height. As one military aircraft approaches the other without proper signaling and communication, under high stress, unexpected air collisions will happen. Both the U.S. and China are not strangers to such severe consequences. On April 1, 2001, a Chinese J-8II interceptor jet collided with the U.S. EP-3 intelligence aircraft, which resulted in the Chinese pilot Wang Wei missing in action and later declared dead. Badly damaged, the U.S. EP-3 made an unauthorized landing on Lingshui airfield in Hainan, China. This [“EP-3” incident](#), though being managed properly by the diplomats between the two countries, put both the U.S. and China close to the edge of an unwanted confrontation.

Given the increasing tensions between the U.S. and China and the increased air operations of the U.S. military in the South China Sea and East China Sea as the U.S. military [moves on to prepare](#) for a great power competition with China, an unexpected collision could potentially lead to more severe consequences than the “EP-3” incident. The [1987 Soviet-Norwegian](#) air collision between a Su-27 fighter jet and a P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft over the Barents Sea shall serve as a great lesson for the U.S. and China nowadays to prevent crisis when hostility between the two militaries is high.

This issue’s Spotlight was written by Yilun Zhang, ICAS Research Associate & Manager, Trade ‘n Technology Program.

ICAS Maritime Affairs Program: New and Upcoming

— ICAS 2023 Annual Conference Summary & Videos Released —

Stopping “Gray Rhinos”, Handling “Black Swans” and Removing “Tigers Blocking the Way”:
Assessing Challenges and Exploring Prospects for U.S.-China Relations in 2024

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

9:00am - 2:00pm EDT

Georgetown Marriott Hotel, Washington, D.C.

- [Watch All Conference Sessions on YouTube](#) -

- [Read the Full Written Summary and Explore Conference Information](#) -



On October 17, the Institute for China-America Studies (ICAS) organized its 2023 Annual Conference. With COVID-19 thankfully more or less in the rear-view mirror, the conference was held in full,

in-person format for the first time in more than four years. Dr. Hong Nong, Executive Director of ICAS, opened the conference and Dr. Wu Shicun, Chairman of ICAS' Advisory Board, delivered the **introductory remarks**. In his heartfelt message, Dr. Wu spoke of the pressing need for both sides to present a forward-looking vision of ties so as to remove risks to the bilateral relationship and stabilize its long-term development. China and the United States are not fated to fall into a ‘Thucydides Trap’, and decision-makers on both sides must ensure that such a circumstance does not come to pass. Casting his own family’s experience as a typical example, Dr. Wu referred to the innumerable people-to-people ties that many Chinese share with the United States and the American people at large. Such relationships must never be decoupled, he noted, and future generations of Chinese and Americans must not pay the price of bad decisions that are taken today. Concluding, he hoped that the annual conference would throw up vibrant ideas and solutions to the many challenges being faced and articulate a new paradigm of ties that could rehabilitate and relaunch China-U.S. relations on a stable track for the next quarter century...



Dr. Wu’s introductory remarks was followed by the highlight of the conference—a **keynote dialogue** featuring Madam Xu Xueyuan, Deputy Chief of Mission & Minister at the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United States, and Professor David Lampton, Professor Emeritus of China Studies at the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University.



Following two experts panel discussions—one on “**Cooperation, Competition and Rivalry in U.S.-China Relations**” and the second on “**Taking Stock of Selective Decoupling in U.S.-China Economic Relations**”—the ICAS 2023 Annual Conference was rounded off by a **keynote luncheon** address by Ms. Amy Celico, Partner at the Albright Stonebridge Group and an ex-senior U.S. government official in both the foreign service and international trade capacities.

Watch All ICAS 2023 Annual Conference Sessions on YouTube:

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLs4oA4vJ3iF5-3DVl-wOcD2i6crV7X-&si=QV3PU0u2r3h_moNG

Read the Full Written Summary and Explore Conference Information:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/events-2/annual-conferences/2023-annual-conference/>

Explore Key Quotes Released Live on Twitter (X) via #ICAS2023:

https://twitter.com/hashtag/ICAS2023?src=hashtag_click

— Upcoming Book Release —

US-China Global Maritime Relations

By Nong Hong (Routledge, 2024)

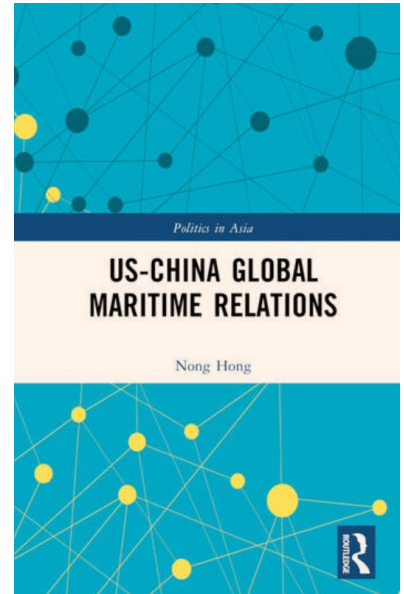
This book explores the U.S.-China maritime relationship, examining the development and implementation of the maritime strategies of both the United States and China.

Delving into the U.S.-China maritime relationship within the global context, the book investigates six key maritime regions: the South China Sea, the Northeast Asia waters (the East China Sea, the Yellow Sea), the Indian Ocean, the South Pacific Ocean, as well as the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Its observations form a comprehensive exploration of these regions and their significance in shaping the dynamics between the two nations, and this analysis reveals that an expanded view is necessary to discover and clearly display the role that these maritime regions currently—and could potentially—play in overarching U.S.-China relations.

Examining both the ongoing conflicts and opportunities for cooperation in the global maritime domain between the United States and China, this book will be a valuable resource to students and scholars of international relations, Chinese and U.S. politics, strategic studies, and maritime studies.

Learn More: <https://chinaus-icas.org/research/us-china-global-maritime-relations/>

Preorder: <https://www.routledge.com/US-China-Global-Maritime-Relations/Hong/p/book/9781032510897>



— Upcoming MAP Academic Engagement —

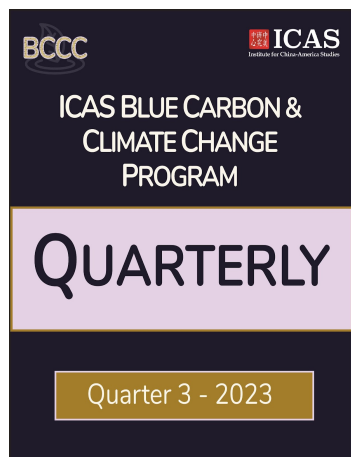
ICAS research fellows will participate in the upcoming Symposium on Global Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance 2023 taking place in Sanya, China from November 8-9, 2023.

Stay tuned for more information:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/event/symposium-on-global-maritime-cooperation-and-ocean-governance-2023/>

Register Virtually: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_UFyW_TE8Q8upJWmV4OkNEA#/registration

– Blue Carbon & Climate Change Quarterly 2023 Q3 Released –



Released the first week of every new quarter, the BCCC Quarterly is a magazine-style newsletter that records the most important trends and developments regarding blue carbon and climate change policies and regulations in China, the U.S., and other regions, as well as international regimes such as the United Nations. It also includes two special sections – the ‘Theme of the Quarter’ and the ‘Blue Carbon Country Profile’ – that aim to bring a fresh element to each issue.

The Theme of the Quarter, examining The Rise of Carbon Crediting, was written by ICAS BCCC Research Assistant Intern Zhangchen Wang.

The Blue Carbon Country Profile, focusing on Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs), was written by ICAS BCCC Research Assistant Intern Zhangchen Wang.

View the Full 2023 Q3 BCCC Quarterly:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/BCCC-Quarterly-2023-Q3.pdf>

BCCC Quarterly (Q3 2023) - 18

Blue Carbon Country Profile: Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs)

A. Potential of Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) in Blue Carbon Affairs

The term “Pacific Island Countries and Territories” refers to a diverse group of 22 sovereign states and dependent territories situated in the Pacific Ocean, including: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna. The total land area of PICTs is approximately 550,000 km², with Papua New Guinea making up approximately 85%. Although the current number of blue carbon ecosystems is rather limited among those islands, blue carbon still plays an important role in ensuring and improving local life and safeguarding these islands from climate change: one of the PICTs’ greatest adversaries right now. As arguably one of the most underprivileged regions in the world that is highly susceptible to environmental degradation, a healthy blue carbon ecosystem will help these vulnerable islands with very limited resources to better cope with the dual threats of climate change and economic constraints.

- Amount of seagrass: 1446 km² (2021)
- Amount of mangroves: 3427 km² (2023)
- Key Institutions of Study on Blue Carbon: Solomon Islands Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology; Kiribati Ministry of Environment, Lands & Agricultural Development
- Key Regions of Interest: Viti Levu Bay (Fiji), Fagatoto Bay National Marine Sanctuary (American Samoa), Phoenix Islands Protected Area (Kiribati), Namdrik Atoll (Marshall Islands)



¹Image: A map of the PICTs. (Source: Graphic Guide—Oceania Maps, (2020), Map of Oceania—Pacific Islands www.geographicguide.com/australia-map.html)

BCCC Quarterly (Q3 2023) - 1

Theme of the Quarter: The Rise of Carbon Crediting

News on the Rise of Carbon Crediting
Carbon Credit Trade is Receiving Unprecedented Attention

The third quarter of 2023 has proven to be a groundbreaking period for carbon credit trading as it serves as a feasible solution for countries to fulfill their net zero emissions by the middle of the century. Despite the term “carbon credits” has been around for more than 25 years, during the past few months, many countries and regions have planned to start their first-ever carbon credit trading platform that is regulated by the government and endorsed by government credit. In July, Taiwan opened the Taiwan Carbon Solution Exchange with NT\$1.5 billion (US\$47.33 million) of capital in Kaohsiung as the nation aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. The exchange will start carbon credit trading businesses once Taiwan’s Environmental Protection Administration (EPA) works out the carbon pricing and trading rules that fulfill the regulations and policies stipulated by the Climate Change Response Act. At the beginning of September, Kenya published a new law that would allow them to start carbon credit trading. Similarly, Indonesia opened its first carbon exchange on September 26, aiming to offer companies and financial institutions a mechanism to offset their emissions while providing funding for carbon reduction projects. Currently, coal power plants are required to realize carbon neutrality through carbon trading in Indonesia. As one of the countries with the richest reserves of blue carbon and other carbon-sequestering natural resources in the world, the extra funds gained from carbon credit trading is expected to provide the local natural resource protection efforts with more resources and assistance to a great extent. In addition, nearby Japan is another country that has announced that it will soon start the country’s first carbon credit trading programs. The Tokyo Stock Exchange will start carbon credit trading on October 11 in an attempt to encourage companies and cities to curb emissions and achieve its goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. As the Tokyo Stock Exchange now offers carbon credit trading in Japan with a much more convenient and transparent system than it did in the past, the Japanese government hopes to encourage organizations and companies to support and even establish more energy-saving devices and manage forests.¹

A particular concept repeatedly mentioned in the above reports is how one of the most important functions of carbon credit trading is that it provides carbon reduction projects with extra funds to strengthen their power and influence on carbon offsetting and carbon neutrality. Indeed, carbon credit trading is already an unexpectedly large market with unprecedented, expanding potential. Occasionally, some financial institutions will evaluate the value of the carbon credit trading market. Recent valuations believe that the carbon credit trading market will maintain a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of around 20% in the near future. Although the growth rate is far from rapid, it is steady and predictable when properly conducted. In fact, the pioneers of carbon credit trading are already enjoying the fruits of this climate change mitigation methodology. According to an official announcement in August, the Zimbabwe government took 30% of carbon credit revenue as an environmental levy over the past decade. Even with



¹Image: Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen and guests holding “golden kettles” at the Opening Ceremony of the Taiwan Carbon Rights Exchange in Kaohsiung on August 7, 2023. (Source: Office of the President, Republic of China (Taiwan); Public Domain)

Learn More About the 2023 Quarter 3 Publication:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/bccc-quarterly/volume-2-issue-3/>

Explore the ICAS Blue Carbon & Climate Change Program:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/icas-blue-carbon-climate-change-program/>

View the Condensed, Chinese-Language Version:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/BCCC-Quarterly-Q3-2023-CHN.pdf>



ICAS MARITIME AFFAIRS HANDBILL

November 30, 2023

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Recent News in Global Maritime Affairs

[1] Climate Change and Blue Carbon Economy [1]

[In Chile's far south, scientists record an island's quickly shifting ecology](#)

November 30 - *Mongabay*

[South America]

On Chile's Navarino Island, one of South America's southernmost islands, scientists are recording major and rapid shifts across the island's ecology from increased temperatures, including but not limited to wetlands drying up, ice floes disappearing and animal populations declining.

[Blue carbon project unveils hidden treasure in our sea](#)

November 22 - *Isle of Man Today*

[Atlantic Ocean]

In November, at the halfway point of a three-year project, two top marine officers explored the progress from the Isle of Man's Manx Blue Carbon Project and the project's goals through 2025. As 85% of the Isle of Man's territory lies beneath the waves, this project began in February 2022 to better understand the sea and restore lost marine life.

[Oil spill tops 1 million gallons, threatens Gulf of Mexico wildlife](#)

November 21 - *The Washington Post* [Paywall]

[Atlantic Ocean, North America, The Caribbean]

On November 16, a large oil spill was discovered near a 67-mile pipeline in the Gulf of Mexico off the Louisiana coast. The US Coast Guard estimates the spill to contain at least 1.1 million gallons of oil and is still investigating the source of the oil spill, which may have originated from a pipeline operated by the Main Pass Oil Gathering Co.

[Jamaica battles relentless plastic pollution in quest to restore mangroves](#)

November 21 - *Mongabay*

[The Caribbean]

New research notes how mangroves in Jamaica have declined by more than 33% since the 1970s and that one of the most significant ongoing challenges in restoration efforts is combating plastic waste.

[Pacific Confronting Growing Climate Change Impacts, Official US Assessment Finds](#)

November 14 - East-West Center

[Pacific Ocean, South Pacific]

The United States Government's Fifth National Climate Assessment revealed that climate change has threatened ecosystems in Hawai'i and the Pacific Islands and increased inequalities in relevant communities. The assessment recommended several adaptation and mitigation strategies that incorporate local and indigenous knowledge into solution planning.

[Indonesia president inaugurates \\$108 million floating solar plant](#)

November 9 - *Reuters*

[Southeast Asia]

On November 8, Indonesian president Joko Widodo inaugurated a floating solar plant in Indonesia's West Java province that can process up to 192 megawatts of power. This project is part of Indonesia's plan to switch away from coal by increasing renewable energy sources.

[Orcas sink another boat in Strait of Gibraltar off Morocco](#)

November 6 - *The Washington Post* [Paywall]

[Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic Ocean]

On October 31, a pod of killer orca whales swarmed a Polish-flagged yacht for 45 minutes in the Strait of Gibraltar, resulting in the sinking of the vessel just off the coast of Morocco. While no one was harmed, observers have noted this as another example of similar cases in the region.

[Iceland's Blue Lagoon on Alert for Magma Flows After Earthquakes](#)

November 3 - *Bloomberg* [Paywall]

[North Atlantic Ocean]

Blue Lagoon, a geothermal spa in Grindavik, Iceland, risked facing magma flows after the occurrence of several earthquakes near Reykjavik led to the formation of an underground magma intrusion. Authorities are closely monitoring the situation but said that there is no immediate risk of eruption.

[South China Sea brims with rare earth and renewable power promise](#)

November 3 - *Nikkei Asia*

[South China Sea]

Renewable energy and rare earth mining are becoming a growing industry in the South China Sea. This is especially true in regards to building offshore wind turbine farms as the increase in monsoons brings stronger winds and the relevant technology to build these turbine farms evolves.

[The latest unlikely place where you can now find microplastics](#)

November 2 - *The Washington Post* [Paywall]

[Japan]

Researchers from Waseda University have unexpectedly found microplastics in the clouds above Mount Fuji. Chemicals in microplastics are believed to have a negative impact on marine life as they interfere with reproduction, stress responses, immune response and development.

[Biggest Chinese Antarctic fleet sets off to build research station](#)

November 1 - *Reuters*

[The Antarctic, China]

On November 1, China dispatched a large fleet off to Antarctica—made up of two icebreaker research ships and a cargo ship—to continue building its fifth research station in the Antarctic region.

[2] Maritime Economy and Shipping [2]

[Fresh China questions for Cameron as video shows him praising port project](#)

November 24 - *The Guardian*

[Europe, South Asia, China]

David Cameron, the United Kingdom's former prime minister and newly-appointed foreign secretary, is facing a series of questions after promoting the Chinese development of a port in Sri Lanka. Cameron promoted the port development in a video two months ago in which he quoted from a Chinese-funded study, speaking to investors in Dubai.

[US sanctions maritime companies, vessels for shipping oil above Russian price cap](#)

November 16 - *Reuters*

[Black Sea, United States, Global]

On November 16, the U.S. Department of Treasury imposed sanctions on three United Arab Emirates-based companies and three of their vessels that have been shipping Russian oil above the US\$60 a barrel cap. The cap was imposed by the Group of Seven nations and Australia in 2022 to reduce Russia's revenues following its invasion of Ukraine.

[Ellesmere Port: Green shipping hub for vehicle plant opens](#)

November 15 - BBC

[Western Europe]

Earlier in November, the £10m Green Automotive Manufacturing Hub at Queen Elizabeth II Dock at Eastham, located south of Liverpool, has successfully opened. The shipping hub is a collaboration between Peel Ports, Suardiaz and Stellantis and is being touted as a “gamechanger in cutting supply chain emissions and road congestion in the UK.”

[Russian Strike on Merchant Ship Threatens Ukraine's Exports](#)

November 9 - *Bloomberg* [Paywall]

[Black Sea]

A Russian missile strike on the KMAX *Ruler* merchant ship inflicted what the United Nations called “the first civilian casualty of a mariner” since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war. The strike added more risk to commodity exports of Ukraine.

[US plans to build a \\$553 million terminal at Sri Lanka's Colombo port in rivalry with China](#)

November 9 - AP

[South Asia, United States, China]

The U.S. DFC has announced a US\$553 million project to build a deep-water shipping container terminal in Sri Lanka's Port of Colombo. As described by the project chief, the terminal will “expand its shipping capacity, creating greater prosperity for Sri Lanka—without adding to sovereign debt—while at the same strengthening the position of our allies across the region.”

[Marine product exports to China tank 90% on year after import ban](#)

November 8 - *The Japan Times* [Paywall]

[Japan, China]

In September 2023, Japan's marine product exports to China dropped by 90.8% compared to a year ago as the amount of China-bound marine product exports fell for the third consecutive month, as reported by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

[Two Gas Tankers U-Turn Just Miles From Dried-Up Panama Canal](#)

November 7 - *Bloomberg* [Paywall]

[Central America]

Ship-tracking data showed two giant gas tankers, the *Pyxis Pioneer* and the *Sunny Bright*, performing u-turns near the southern mouth of the Panama Canal, where low rainfall is snarling traffic on the vital waterway.

[NPA launches \\$1.1bn port rehabilitation plan for enhanced trade competitiveness](#)

November 7 - *Vanguard*

[Africa]

Mohammed Bello Koko, the Managing Director of Nigerian Port Authority, announced at a port management conference that Nigeria would be launching a US\$1.1 billion port rehabilitation project to overhaul and enhance existing ports in the country.

[3] Ocean Governance and Maritime Cooperation [3]

[Saudi ambassador to UK appointed IMO president](#)

November 28- *Arab News*

[Global, Europe]

At the opening of their 33rd General Assembly being held in London, United Kingdom, the member states of the International Maritime Organization unanimously appointed Prince Khalid bin Bandar Al-Saud as President of the IMO General Assembly.

[China Denies Australia's Claim That Warship Used Sonar Against Divers](#)

November 20 - *The Wall Street Journal* [Paywall]

[South Pacific, East Asia]

After Australia's acting Prime Minister Richard Marles accused the Chinese navy of injuring some of its divers with sonar pulses during an operation in international waters near Japan, calling the act "unsafe and unprofessional conduct," a spokesman for China's Defense Ministry said Australia's account was "completely inconsistent with the facts" and that China "didn't engage in any activities that might affect the Australian diving operations."

[Pacific Partnership 2023 Humanitarian Mission Expanding in the Western Pacific](#)

November 14 - *USNI News*

[Western Pacific Ocean]

Throughout November, the US Navy has been conducting its Pacific Partnership 2023 mission in the South China Sea which involves almost 1,500 personnel from Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and the United Kingdom. With this year marking its 18th iteration, this cooperative mission seeks to enhance regional interoperability and disaster response capabilities.

[Pacific island nations express concern over Fukushima water release](#)

November 11 - *The Japan Times* [Paywall]

[Japan, Pacific Ocean]

During last week's Pacific Islands Forum, leaders of the regional states expressed strong health-related concerns over the release of treated radioactive water from Japan's Fukushima No. 1

nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean. Japan began its third release of treated water from Fukushima in early November and several surrounding countries still have active bans on Japanese seafood.

[Shell sues Greenpeace for \\$2.1 million after activists boarded oil vessel](#)

November 9 - Reuters

[Atlantic Ocean]

Environmental activist group Greenpeace is being sued by Shell for US\$2.1 million after their activist boarded the petroleum giant's oil production vessel in transit at sea to protest oil drilling earlier this year. The protesters boarded the vessel near the Canary Islands off the Atlantic coast of northern Africa and traveled on it as far as Norway.

[China stresses S.China Sea disputes should be resolved through consultation between parties directly concerned, rejecting bloc confrontation, zero-sum approach](#)

November 8 - Global Times

[China, Global]

Giving opening remarks at a two-day ocean governance forum in Sanya, China, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi said the world's oceans should be "a link for the promotion of exchanges and cooperation among countries" not for "creating obstacles."

[Senate to allot funds to build facilities in WPS](#)

November 8 - The Manila Times

[Southeast Asia]

According to one member, the Philippine Senate has unanimously decided to allocate funds from its 2024 national budget to build structures in the West Philippine Sea "meant not for aggression but for the welfare of our soldiers stationed there." "Unless you've been living under the rock, you cannot miss what's happening there," the Senator noted.

[Vietnamese boycott Snapchat over China's U-shaped line](#)

November 7 - VN Express

[South China Sea]

Vietnamese are boycotting U.S. social media app Snapchat for its use of China's U-shaped line, which is disputed and not recognized by Vietnam. The Vietnamese authorities are aware of the issue but could not get in touch with Snapchat since there is no point of contact based in Vietnam.

[Vietnam rapidly builds up South China Sea reef](#)

November 6 - *Radio Free Asia*

[South China Sea, Southeast Asia]

A new series of satellite images depicts how Vietnam has been building up the Barque Canada Reef in the South China Sea. The reef is part of the Spratly Islands and has been under development since the end of 2021. As of early November, the square footage of the reef was nearly 1 km (250 acres).

[China hits back after Canada accuses PLA jets of 'unsafe' South China Sea moves](#)

November 5 - *South China Morning Post* [Paywall]

[South China Sea, Canada]

On November 4, China described a Canadian aircraft's close encounter with People's Liberation Army (PLA) military jets in the South China Sea as "provocative". The comment came after Ottawa accused the PLA jet of unsafe behavior over international waters in the region on October 29.

[Migrants say 'Spain or death' as Senegalese navy tackles sea crossings](#)

November 4 - *Reuters*

[Africa, Europe]

After a nighttime chase, a Senegalese navy patrol ship intercepted a boat with 159 passengers aiming to migrate to Spain's Canary Islands. "You think you're going to stop us? We're going back! We will reach Spain, or we will die," one migrant was reported shouting, emphasizing the determination of such migrants regularly trying to cross from West Africa to Europe.

[Colombia Accelerates Plan to Recover Up to \\$20 Billion in Sunken Treasure](#)

November 3 - *Bloomberg* [Paywall]

[South America, Caribbean Sea]

Colombia is accelerating its effort to recover as much as US\$20 billion in gold, silver and gems from a three-century-old shipwreck found on the floor of the Caribbean Sea in 2015. Meanwhile, a U.S. exploration company Glocca Morra claims to have found the San Jose in 1981 and is suing Colombia for half the value.

[China and Southeast Asia nations vow to conclude a nonaggression pact faster as sea crises escalate](#)

November 2 - AP

[Southeast Asia]

In a meeting in Beijing, diplomats from China and Southeast Asian countries have renewed a vow to finalize a nonaggression pact for the South China Sea region within the next three years. The renewed pledge follows several maritime collisions and confrontations in the last few months.

[4] Maritime Security and Defense [4]

[India To Get Aircraft Carrier Worth \\$ 5 Billion To Counter Chinese Presence In Indian Ocean](#)

November 30 - *Marine Insight*

[South Asia, Indo-Pacific]

According to people familiar with the matter, India's Defense Acquisition Council is expected to approve the acquisition of its second exclusively indigenous aircraft carrier, to cost over 400 billion rupees. The intent of the new carrier would be to defend India's economic interests and counter any difficulties from regional adversaries, as described by a former vice admiral in India's navy.

[US Navy seizes attackers who held Israel-linked tanker. Missiles from rebel-controlled Yemen follow](#)

November 26 - *Associated Press*

[Middle East, United States]

Attackers—who Yemen's internationally recognized government identified as linked to the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels—temporarily seized the Liberian-flagged *Central Park* tanker in the Gulf of Aden before being apprehended by the US Navy. Then, two ballistic missiles fired from the Houthi-controlled Yemen landed near a U.S. warship aiding the *Central Park* in the Gulf of Aden.

[Australia-Philippines Launch Joint Naval Patrol in South China Sea](#)

November 24 - *The Diplomat*

[Southeast Asia, South Pacific, East Asia]

A few days after the U.S. and the Philippines jointly launched three-day air and maritime patrols near Taiwan, Australia and the Philippines began joint naval patrols in the South China Sea, marking the first time the two countries have held maritime cooperation activities.

[Aman Youyi-2023 joint exercise launches live drills](#)

November 23 - *China Military*

[China, Southeast Asia]

On November 22, China launched the Aman Youyi 2023 anti-terrorism joint exercise, involving both land and sea training. Troops from China, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam are participating in the live drills that “optimized the processes and mechanisms of joint anti-terrorism and military operations on maritime security...and demonstrated their confidence and determination to jointly safeguard regional peace and stability.”

[Maldives will have no foreign military presence - new president](#)

November 17 - Reuters

[South Pacific, Global]

Mohamed Muizzu, the newly elected President of the Maldives, announced that the Maldives would seek to ensure no foreign military presence on their soil through diplomatic means. Currently, India maintains a military presence in the Maldives, though both India and China appear to be seeking influence in the country via supportive investment initiatives.

[U.S. Marines forms coastal unit in Okinawa for island defense](#)

November 16 - *The Japan Times*

[East Asia, United States]

On November 15, the United States' 12th Marine Regiment based in Japan's Okinawa Prefecture was reorganized into the 12th Marine Littoral Regiment in an indication of bolstered defenses of remote islands in southwestern Japan. The US Marines currently have only one other littoral regiment, with the other being set up in Hawaii in March 2022.

[China and Pakistan hold naval drills after first Russia-Myanmar exercise](#)

November 13 - *Nikkei Asia*

[China, Central Asia, South Asia]

A few days after Russia and Myanmar held their first “naval exercise in modern history” in the Andaman Sea, the Chinese and Pakistani navies held a week-long joint naval drill in the Arabian Sea which included anti-submarine operations and air operations.

[China, U.S. Hold Talks on Maritime Security](#)

November 6 - *Caixin*

[United States, China]

On November 3, China and the United States held the first round of new consultations on maritime affairs in Beijing, co-hosted by U.S. State Department China Coordinator Mark Lambert and China's director-general of the foreign ministry's Department of Boundary and Ocean Affairs. Both sides aim to use this meeting to “avoid misunderstanding and misjudgment,” said China's foreign ministry.

[US airs concerns to China about 'dangerous and unlawful' South China Sea actions](#)

November 3 - Reuters

[South China Sea, United States, China]

During the first round of consultations on maritime affairs between China and the United States held on November 3 in Beijing, Washington underscored its concerns over China's actions in the South China Sea. Citing China's recent obstruction of a Philippine resupply mission and intercept of U.S. aircraft, the U.S. side called the Chinese actions “dangerous and unlawful.”

[US-Canada naval partnership asserts freedom of navigation in Taiwan Strait](#)

November 2 - *Naval Technology*

[East Asia, North America]

The U.S. Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *Rafael Peralta* and Royal Canadian Navy Halifax-class frigate HMCS *Ottawa* undertook a routine transit of the Taiwan Strait “in display of unity and commitment to upholding international law.”

[Israel deploys missile boats in Red Sea as Houthis attack from Yemen](#)

November 1 - *Reuters*

[Middle East, Red Sea]

A day after the Iran-aligned Houthi movement launched missiles and drone attack on Israel, Tel Aviv deployed missile boats in the Red Sea and claimed that they had intercepted an “aerial threat” over the Red Sea. Israeli Saar-class corvettes have also been seen patrolling near Eilat port, which Israel sees as a new front in its conflict with Hamas.

Peer-Reviewed Research on Maritime Issues

- Government Speech: International Maritime Organization Secretary-General Kitack Lim - [“IMO Assembly, 33rd session, 27 November – 6 December 2023 - opening speech”](#) [November 27]
- Government Speech: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy - [“No one in recent decades has caused greater harm to free navigation than Russia – address by the President of Ukraine to the participants of the 33rd Assembly of the International Maritime Organization”](#) [November 27]
- Government Speech: Greek Minister of Maritime Affairs & Shipping Island Policy Christos Stylianides [“Speech at the Plenary Session of the 33rd Assembly of the International Maritime Organization \(IMO\)”](#) [November 27]
- Government Speech: Indian Department of Defense, Defense Minister Rajath Singh - [“India affirms commitment to freedom of navigation in international waters, says Rajnath Singh at ASEAN defence ministers’ meet”](#) [November 16]
- Government Speech: Foreign Ministry of the People’s Republic of China, H.E. Wang Yi - [“Working Together to Make Our Oceans a Peaceful, Tranquil, Clean and Beautiful Home with Fairness, Justice and Prosperity”](#) [November 8]
- Government Action: The White House, President of the United States - [“Message to the Congress – Notification to the Congress Consistent With Section 8 of the Fishermen’s Protective Act of 1967, as amended \(22 U.S.C. 197\)”](#) [November 3]
- Press Release: Council of the European Union - [“EU-New Zealand: Council gives final green light to free trade agreement”](#) [November 27]
- Press Release: Government of Nigeria - [“At IMO General Assembly, Oyetola restates FG’s commitment to reposition maritime sector”](#) [November 27]

- Press Release: European Commission Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries - [“Have your say: how can we better protect vulnerable marine ecosystems in the high seas?”](#) [November 27]
- Press Release: Singapore Ministry of Transport - [“Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Transport and Sustainability Dr Amy Khor to Attend 33rd Session of International Maritime Organization Assembly”](#) [November 26]
- Press Release: Ministry of Defense of the People's Republic of China - [“Aman Youyi-2023 joint exercise launches joint commanding drill”](#) [November 22]
- Press Release: U.S. Department of State - [“Joint Statement of the 2023 Caribbean-U.S. High Level Security Cooperation Dialogue”](#) [November 22]
- Press Release: Government of Ireland - [“Minister McConalogue sets out Ireland's priorities for 2024 fishing opportunities”](#) [November 22]
- Press Release: Government of Mexico - [“Mexico supports a moratorium on deep-sea mining in areas beyond national jurisdiction”](#) [November 21]
- Press Release: U.S. Department of the Treasury - [“Treasury Sanctions Additional Maritime Companies, Vessels Transporting Oil Sold Above the Coalition Price Cap”](#) [November 16]
- Press Release: European Commission - [“EU and Neighbourhood countries commit to enhanced fisheries management control in the Mediterranean and Black Sea”](#) [November 13]
- Press Release: U.S. Department of State - [“U.S. Support for the Philippines in the South China Sea”](#) [November 10]
- Press Release: U.S. Department of State - [“China Coordinator Mark B. Lambert's Meeting with the People's Republic of China \(PRC\) Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director-General for Boundary and Ocean Affairs Hong Liang”](#) [November 3]
- Press Release: U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration - [“Biden-Harris Administration Invests More Than \\$653 Million in Ports to Strengthen American Supply Chains”](#) [November 3]
- Interview: [“Interview With The Captain Of Philippine Frigate BRP Antonio Luna”](#) [Naval News - November 4]
- Research Release: The World Bank - [“Unlocking Blue Carbon Development: Investment Readiness Framework for Governments”](#) [November 2023]
- Podcast: Center for Maritime Strategy - [“Our Naval Neighbor to the North: A Conversation with the 38th Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy Vice Admiral Angus Topshee”](#) [Maritime Nation - November 14]
- Opinion: [“Japan's wastewater release could bring the region together”](#) [The Japan Times - November 27] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Seafarers' Wages Act: Considerations for operators and harbour authorities”](#) [Safety4Sea - November 24]
- Opinion: [“The Era of Total U.S. Submarine Dominance Over China Is Ending”](#) [The Wall Street Journal - November 20] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“‘Like a 40-metre pizza’: the seaweed farms that could feed us all – at a cost”](#) [The Guardian - November 17]
- Opinion: [“Treasury Department's hunt for Russian oil sanction violators on the seas is intensifying”](#) [CNBC - November 16]
- Opinion; [“The promise and risks of deep-sea mining”](#) [Reuters - November 15]

- Opinion: [“More Combat Logistics Force Ships? Yes Please!”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - November 14]
- Opinion: [“Towards a greener future: how shipping needs to adapt and evolve”](#) [Seatrade Maritime News - November 14]
- Opinion: [“Bloc confrontation nothing but harm for South China Sea countries”](#) [China Military - November 13]
- Opinion: [“In Texas, Vietnamese American Shrimpers Must Forge a New Path Again”](#) [The New York Times - November 12] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“China’s disregard for small state agency hampers its foreign policy”](#) [East Asia Forum - November 12]
- Opinion: [“How a Decaying Warship Beached on a Tiny Shoal Provoked China’s Ire”](#) [The New York Times - November 11] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“A Chinese dispute with the Philippines is a test of America”](#) [The Economist - November 9] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Surge and Swarm: How China’s Ships Control the South China Sea”](#) [The Wall Street Journal - November 9] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Ukraine. Israel. Can America Support Two Wars and Still Handle China?”](#) [The New York Times - November 9] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Russia and China are opening a new anti-western front in the Arctic”](#) [Financial Times - November 9] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“U.S. Navy Needs to Build Back its Sea Mine Capability”](#) [Defense Opinion - November 8]
- Opinion: [“‘It inspires people’: Experts call for larger role for ocean at climate talks”](#) [China Dialogue Ocean - November 8] [[In Chinese](#)]
- Opinion: [“The strategic impact of military drone proliferation on Indo-Pacific maritime security”](#) [CIMSEC - November 7]
- Opinion: [“Fisheries management: Artificial intelligence makes a difference”](#) [European Commission - November 7]
- Opinion: [“Pacific Islands Forum: what is it and why does it matter?”](#) [The Guardian - November 6]
- Opinion: [“China has acquired a global network of strategically vital ports”](#) [The Washington Post - November 6] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Manufacturing woes could sink US sub fleet. Can 3D printing save it?”](#) [DefenseNews - November 6]
- Opinion: [“Shipping industry steers container production away from China”](#) [Financial Times - November 2] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Ukraine’s Strategy for winning the Battle of the Black Sea”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - November 2]
- Opinion: [“PLA sharpens nuclear and conventional capabilities but still has work to do, US says”](#) [International Institute for Strategic Studies - November 1]
- Analysis: [“Sanctions, Shipping, and Sabotage: China and Russia Enter the ‘Gray Zone’ in the Baltic Sea”](#) [Wilson Center Polar Institute - November 2023]
- Analysis: [“Ukraine has a new way to get its grain to the world despite Russia’s threat in the Black Sea”](#) [Associated Press - November 27]
- Analysis: [“Thailand wants to build a brand new shipping route. Why isn’t China buying?”](#) [South China Morning Post - November 27] [Paywall]

- Analysis: [“Rising tides: exploring the expanding horizons of bathymetric Lidar applications”](#) [Hydro International - November 24]
- Analysis: [“Dry Bulk in Africa Through the Eyes of an African Shipping Line”](#) [The Maritime Executive - November 19]
- Analysis: [“A Brief Summary of the Battle of the Black Sea”](#) [USNI News - November 16]
- Analysis: [“Vietnam ramps up Spratly Island dredging”](#) [Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative - November 15]
- Analysis: [“Uncharted waters: Navy navigating first-ever dismantling of nuclear-powered carrier”](#) [Breaking Defense - November 15]
- Analysis: [“Inside the Philippines’ Dangerous Mission in the South China Sea”](#) [Bloomberg - November 12] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“How a Decaying Warship Beached on a Tiny Shoal Provoked China’s Ire”](#) [The New York Times - November 11] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“India, China Fight for Influence Over Tiny Archipelago Nation”](#) [The Wall Street Journal - November 11] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Littoral Warfare Requirements for Future Black Sea Operations”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - November 9]
- Analysis: [“Lack of Attribution as Critical Infrastructure is Damaged Again in the Baltic Sea”](#) [Wilson Center - November 7]
- Analysis: [“With Two Wars Raging, China Tests America in Asia”](#) [Foreign Policy - November 7] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Tracking China’s Control of Overseas Ports”](#) [Council on Foreign Relations - November 6]
- Analysis: [“China Is ‘Schooling’ Ottawa By Intimidating Canadian Aircraft In South China Sea: Expert”](#) [International Business Times - November 5]
- Analysis: [““Zeitenwende” at Sea?: The German Navy’s Purchase of SeaRAMs and Bolstering Security in the Baltic Sea”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - October 31]

Events on the Maritime Domain

- From November 1-2, 2023, Chatham House held their hybrid [“Climate change 2023”](#) conference at Chatham House, focusing on “multi-stakeholder collaboration for increased ambition, action and impact.” Registration is still open.
- On November 2, 2023, North American Marine Environment Protection Association and its partners held its [Annual Conference and Awards Dinner on “Maritime’s Pathway to 2050.”](#)
- On November 3, 2023, Center for Strategic & International Studies International Security Program held a virtual event on [“Canada’s Role in Global Maritime Security.”](#)
- On November 8, 2023, the Wilson Center held an online event on [“A Half Decade of Indo-Pacific Strategies: Assessing US Outreach to Allies and Partners.”](#)
- From November 8-10, 2023, the Peace Paris Forum hosted its [“The One Planet - Polar Summit”](#) in Paris, France, the “first international Summit devoted to glaciers and poles aims to strengthen international cooperation to preserve the cryosphere and glacial and polar biodiversity.”

- On November 9, 2023, the East-West Center held a virtual seminar on [“PRC Competition in the Pacific.”](#)
- On November 13, 2023, the [“Joint IMO/ILO Conference on Work at Sea”](#) was held at the IMO Headquarters. Recordings and agendas are now available.
- From November 15-16, 2023, DefenceIQ and its partners held a forum combining the [“Warships & OPV Latin America Conference”](#) and the [“Caribbean Basin Maritime Security and Coastal Surveillance” \(CABSEC\)](#), both of which focus on addressing regional security challenges such as technological advancements and information sharing. Registration is still open.
- From November 17-19, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation Ocean Policy Research Institute and their partners held [“The International Eelgrass and Blue Carbon Workshop.”](#)
- On November 20, 2023, Riviera held their [International Bulk Shipping Conference](#) in London, United Kingdom, which will focus on “navigating new market dynamics, environmental requirements and improving operational efficiency.”
- On November 27, 2023, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation in Japan held a bilingual, hybrid [“The 196th Ocean Forum: Enhancing Food Security and Promoting Sustainable Fisheries in Africa-Forging Regional Cooperation and International Partnership: TICAD 30th Year Anniversary Event.”](#)
- From November 27-28, 2023, the [International Maritime Organization Assembly is holding its 33rd session](#) in London, United Kingdom, which was preceded by the IMO Council 130th session held November 21-24, 2023. “The Assembly is expected to adopt the Strategic Plan for the six-year period 2024 to 2029 and the Organization's budget and work programme for 2024 and 2025.”
- On November 28, 2023, The Nautical Institute and the Singapore Maritime Academy (SMA) held a conference on [“Achieving Effective Simulation.”](#)
- On November 29, 2023, Wilson Center held an online event on [“The Regulation of Seabed Mining: A Conversation with Michael Lodge, Secretary General of the International Seabed Authority.”](#)
- From November 29-30, 2023, Active Communications International and their partners will be holding their [17th Arctic Shipping Summit](#) in Montreal, Canada for the first time in three years. Registration is still open.
- Throughout November, in preparation for the COP28 summit, the [Ocean Pavilion](#) has returned with “70+ events that will bring together leading ocean stewards and climate champions from around the world.” The full details of their related [“COP28 Dubai Ocean Declaration”](#) and list of full signatories are available online as well.
- From December 5-8, 2023, Marintec China will host their [Marintec China 2023](#) event, with a theme of “Rebuild Together,” at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC) in Shanghai, China.
- On December 7, 2023, the Hudson Institute will hold an in-person discussion titled [“Senator Mike Rounds on the B-21 Bomber and Its Deterrence Mission.”](#)
- On December 7, 2023, the Danish Embassy and the Danish-UK Association will be holding the [11th Annual UK Offshore Wind Seminar](#) in London, United Kingdom. Registration is still open.
- On December 8, 2023, Digital Ship Ltd. will host its [Maritime Cyber Resilience Forum 2023](#) in Hamburg, Germany.
- From December 13-15, 2023, Upstream Business Solutions will hold its [“India International Cargo Show 2023”](#) in Mumbai, India.
- From December 14-15, 2023, Riviera will host its [“Maritime Decarbonization Conference, Americas 2023”](#) in Houston, Texas.

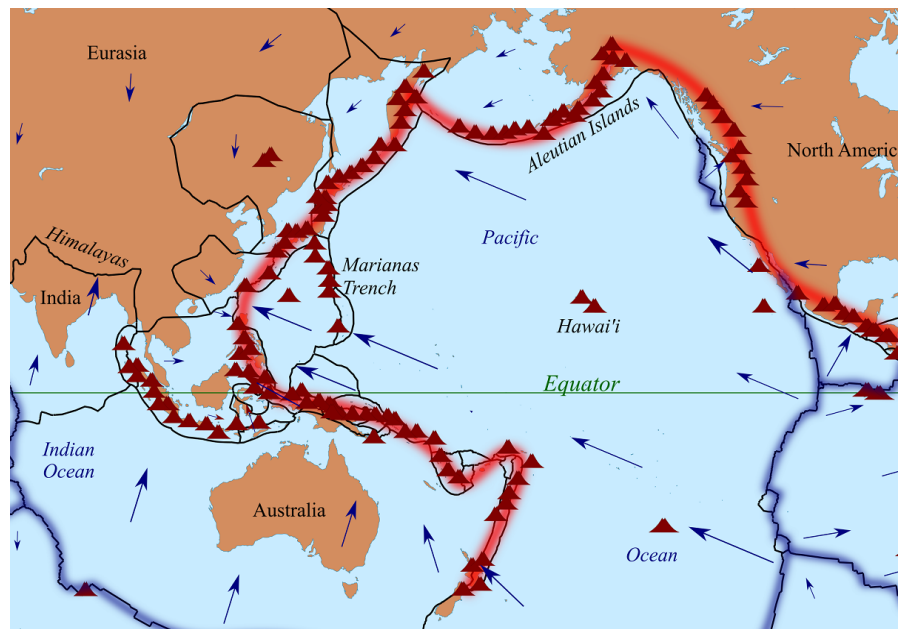
- From December 21-23, 2023, INASE will host “[The International Conference on Maritime and Naval Science and Engineering 2023](#)” in Bann, Switzerland.
- From March 11-13, 2024, The Economist Group will host [The 11th Annual World Ocean Summit & Expo in Lisbon, Portugal](#), which “convenes the widest cross-section of the ocean community from business and finance to government, national and international policy-makers, civil society, and academia. The summit is designed to instigate action to develop a sustainable ocean economy; to encourage new partnerships across industries, with NGOs, scientists, technology developers and investors.”
- From March 12-14, 2024, [Oceanology International](#) will host their 2024 Expo in London, Excel.

Handbill Spotlight

Submarine Volcanoes

Issue Background ¹

Submarine volcanoes, also referred to as [volcanic seamounts](#), are volcanoes that are located below sea level. Submarine volcanoes are, on average, [located](#) 8,500 feet (2,600 meters) below sea level and [produce](#) around 75% of the annual global output of lava. Around 75% of all of Earth’s volcanoes are located along the “[Ring of Fire](#),” a path around most of the Pacific Ocean with high amounts of seismic activity due to the movement of plate tectonics. Despite this, the total amount of submarine volcanoes is currently unknown, as their characteristics and location make them [difficult](#) to locate and track.



When they do erupt, the result is oftentimes not explosive, as the water pressure from above [forces](#) the lava into passive flows. These passive lava flows often do not disturb the ocean surface, making detection difficult. However, these eruptions are not completely benign. One major risk factor of these eruptions is that they are virtually [unpredictable](#). Most of the time, scientists fail to detect imminent eruptions due to instrument uncertainty or data miscalculation. At present, only a [quarter](#)

¹ The locations and motions of tectonic plates as well as the Ring of Fire and volcanoes. (Source: Astroskiandhike via Wikimedia Commons, [CC BY-SA 4.0 DEED](#))

of the ocean floor has been mapped by sonar, though radar satellite technology is aiding in the [detection](#) of a large number of new submarine volcanoes.

In instances where the submarine volcanoes are located close to [human-populated shorelines](#), eruptions can become hazardous, placing local human populations at risk. The same risks may also apply to areas with high maritime traffic, placing boats, their cargo, and their crew at risk when near an erupting volcano. Many [submarine vessels](#) have also collided with submarine volcanoes, sometimes resulting in injury or death of crew members.

Additionally, what makes submarine volcanoes unique is that their eruptions have the potential to form volcanic islands, unlike terrestrial volcanoes. Islands can form from submarine volcanic eruptions because the passive lava flows sometimes build up the height of the submarine volcano, allowing it to reach the ocean surface. However, these volcanic islands are sometimes [temporary](#) due to erosion. Such temporary islands are known as [ephemeral islands](#).

Recent Events

Similar to low-scale seismic earthquakes, submarine volcanoes are erupting on a regular basis and oftentimes without much warning. On October 21, 2023, an unnamed volcano off the coast of Iwo Jima in Japan began erupting, eventually [forming](#) a new island of about 100 meters, or 328 feet, in diameter as of October 30, 2023, according to the Earthquake Research Institute at the University of Tokyo. Interestingly, the island of Iwo Jima itself is a [volcano](#). While Iwo Jima is not a submarine volcano, the recent submarine volcanic eruptions were on the flank of the ‘parent’ volcano of Iwo Jima. According to Setsuya Nakada, a professor with the Earthquake Research Institute at the University of Tokyo, as volcanoes erupt, “it’s hard to know when it will stop, but assuming the eruption continues, the [resulting] island could grow higher and bigger.” Later reports did state that, once the volcanic activity subsided in early November, the newly formed island does not appear to be durable, as the material composition of the lava was [“crumbly.”](#)

The Japan Meteorological Agency estimates there are around [111 active volcanoes](#) in Japan, including submarine varieties. In recent history, submarine volcanoes have erupted before in and around Japan. In 2013, an [eruption](#) occurred within the island chain of Nishinoshima—located south of Tokyo—in the Pacific Ocean. The result was an island that has lasted for around a decade so far. In 2021, the same submarine volcano as the one that erupted in October 2023 near Iwo Jima experienced a [major undersea eruption](#), further exemplifying the higher levels of activity in this particular region.

Notably, several terrestrial volcanoes were [erupting](#) at the same time as the submarine volcano in Japan, including the Klyuchevskaya Sopka volcano in Russia, Mount Etna in Italy, and Mount Mayon in the Philippines. According to experts at the Smithsonian Institution's Global Volcanism Program, the number of coinciding eruptions is normal.

Keep In Mind

People often become aware of submarine volcanoes through their eruptions and prepare against the high risks of volcanic eruptions by tracking said eruptions.. Thus, the current lack of knowledge on submarine volcanoes lends to a dangerous situation and is concerning.

Eruptions of submarine volcanoes can lead to loss of life, among other kinds of devastation. In January of 2022, a submarine volcanic eruption in the nation of Tonga resulted in [three deaths](#). In an incident that [rivaled](#) the Krakatoa Island eruption of 1883, a [sonic boom](#) produced by the eruptions was heard all the way in New Zealand, which lies 1,300 miles away. The eruption of lava into the ocean also resulted in a tsunami stretching up to [65 meters high](#) that struck the main island of Tonga. Resulting smaller waves were also recorded as [reaching](#) the shorelines of Japan, Australia, the U.S., and Chile.

The submarine volcano central to this 2022 explosion, the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano, was small and unknown [before](#) the eruption. Given the small amount of research dedicated to submarine volcanoes, such an explosion highlights the need for further investigation. While the likelihood that submarine volcanic eruptions can pose a severe risk to humans is small, some instances have proven to be catastrophic and far-reaching. According to experts at the University of Hawaii, there are currently [dozens](#) of submarine volcanoes around the world that could erupt like Hunga, potentially claiming thousands of lives and even reshaping coastlines.

There are scientists already paying attention to the importance of tracking submarine volcanoes. In April 2023, a new [seamount catalog](#) was published that used data collected from radar satellites. Yet, there is still more to be done. While the catalog [detected](#) more than 43,000 submarine volcanoes in the Earth's waters, only 16,000 have been charted in detail by sonar tools. Sonar research must be conducted on the topic of submarine volcanoes, detailing the size and locations of these submarine volcanoes. Perhaps this topic of research could be a joining point for cross-national cooperation, such as between the U.S. and Chinese navies who recently [re-established](#) regular lines of communication. Even in an era of increased tension over [submarine](#) activity, a joint scientific venture to study and map the submarine volcanoes that may pose a threat to not only submarine vessels but to humanity at large could become a collaborative partnership.

This issue's Spotlight was written by Jacqueline Cheng, Part-Time Research Assistant Intern

ICAS Maritime Affairs Program: New and Upcoming

— MAP Academic Engagement —

Symposium on Global Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance 2023

Grand Hyatt Sanya Haitang Bay Sanya, China (Hybrid)

Thursday, November 8, 2023 – Friday, November 9, 2023 (GMT+8, Beijing)



Dr. Nong Hong, ICAS Executive Director & Senior Researcher, and Mr. Yilun Zhang, ICAS Research Associate, participated in the Symposium on Global Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance (GMCOG) 2023 held in Sanya, China from November 8-9, 2023. Dr. Nong Hong moderated “Session 6: BBNJ Agreement and Global Ocean Governance” and presented in “Session 7: Global Climate Change and Polar Research.” Mr. Yilun Zhang presented in “Session 2: Mutual Confidence Building in the South China Sea from the Perspective of Global Security Initiative.”

Learn More:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/event/symposium-on-global-maritime-cooperation-and-ocean-governance-2023/>

Watch the Livestream: www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLs4oA4vJ3iF6eKeHL5RGq7-6957EHZsZ4

— MAP Academic Engagement —

2023 Symposium on International Maritime Dispute Settlement and International Law

Beijing, China

Monday, November 27, 2023 – Tuesday, November 28, 2023 (GMT+8, Beijing)

ICAS Executive Director Dr. Nong Hong participated in the 2023 Symposium on International Maritime Dispute Settlement and International Law held in Beijing, China from November 27-28, 2023.



2023年
“国际海洋争端解决
与国际法”研讨会

Symposium on International
Maritime Dispute Settlement
and International Law

Dr. Hong was a speaker participant in "Panel 1: International Maritime Dispute Settlement: Judicial Means" and spoke on the topic of "The Role of ITLOS in Addressing Traditional and Emerging Legal Issues in the Arctic."

— Past Event Summary —

5th China-U.S.-Canada Trilateral Relations Roundtable

Hosted by Institute for China-America Studies; Co-sponsored with National Institute for South China Sea Studies (NISCS), China Institute University of Alberta, and The Carter Center
Wednesday, October 18, 2023 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

On Wednesday, October 18, 2023, the 5th China-U.S.-Canada Trilateral Relations Roundtable was held at the Institute for China-America Studies' (ICAS) office in Washington, D.C. The 5th Trilateral Roundtable was conducted under Chatham House rules and consisted of two panels: Panel 1 on Politics & Security and Panel 2 on Trade & Climate, with a total of 13 expert participants gathered from across China, the United States and Canada. During each panel, every participant first contributed short opening remarks in response to a set of prepared questions relevant to the topic of their choice. After their initial remarks, each panel engaged in a moderated group discussion, joined by questions and comments from all gathered participants. The event began and was concluded with introductory and closing remarks, respectively, by senior officials from the institutions co-sponsoring the roundtable: the National Institute for South China Sea Studies, The Carter Center, and the China Institute, University of Alberta...

Read the Full Summary:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/event/5th-china-u-s-canada-trilateral-relations-roundtable/>

— Blog Post —

Event Summary: Unpacking China's Climate Action, Wilson Center

By Zhangchen Wang
November 14, 2023

On November 9, 2023, the Wilson Center held an event on the topic of "Unpacking China's Climate Action." As the title of the event suggests, the panelists walked through some of the progress or slippage China has made in climate action since the signature of the U.S.-China Joint Glasgow Declaration in 2021. Since the U.S.-China climate cooperation stalled for a long time due to rising political tensions, both countries have been independently accelerating their climate action. Thus, the panelists also compared some of China's progress with the developing trends of climate actions in the United States...

Read Online:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/research/event-summary-unpacking-china-climate-action-wilson-center>

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ICAS MARITIME AFFAIRS HANDBILL

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Recent News in Global Maritime Affairs

[1] Climate Change and Blue Carbon Economy [1]

[Seaweed farms the size of 176 football pitches planned for Cornwall](#)

December 28 - *Cornwall Live*
[Western Europe]

Two companies, Biome Algae and The Carbon Sea Garden, have filed applications with the United Kingdom's Marine Management Organisation to establish two large, 55-hectare seaweed farms—a region as big as 176 football fields—in Gerrans Bay off the Roseland Peninsula in Cornwall, England.

[Govt to link financial services and blue economy in 2024](#)

December 26 - *BVI News*
[The Caribbean, Africa]

British Virgin Islands Minister of Financial Services Lorna Smith has announced that the Ministry will be focusing on building the blue economy in 2024, including the development of blue bonds for ocean-based projects and potential implementation of a blue carbon strategy with aid from Guyana.

[China to ramp up marine pollution control efforts](#)

December 23 - *China Daily*
[China]

With China's revised Maritime Environment Protection Law set to be implemented starting January 1, Chinese officials clarified how the amended law will require authorities at all levels of government to strengthen the comprehensive, coordinated and regular environmental monitoring of the ocean.

[Stabilizing 'coral rubble' for reef recovery](#)

December 15 - *Sea Technology*

[South Pacific]

Heron Island Research Station researchers in Australia, utilizing a Nortek velocimeter to measure hydrodynamic energy, have found that stabilizing 'coral rubble'—"the skeletons of corals broken apart by bleaching or storm events in the ocean"—can be effective for coral reef recovery.

[A breakthrough moment for mangroves: Delivering Global Action on Mangrove Restoration and Protection](#)

December 15 - *Global Mangrove Alliance*

[Global]

During the COP28 Climate Conference in Dubai, the Mangrove Breakthrough's objective of protecting and restoring 15 million hectares of mangroves by 2030 with US\$4 billion of new investments was successfully secured. This initiative gained the backing of over 40 new governments, with various stakeholders including ministers, indigenous communities, financial institutions, and NGOs making substantial commitments toward realizing the Breakthrough.

[China dispatches massive vessel to catalogue fisheries, scale up industry presence](#)

December 8 - *South China Morning Post* [Paywall]

[China, Global]

On December 7, the independently-owned *Lan Hai 201*, China's largest fishery research vessel, set sail from Shanghai to conduct surveys in the high seas of the northwestern Indian Ocean. The *Lan Hai 201* is owned by the East China Sea Fisheries Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences. Its four-month journey will cover and assess 100 sites as it works to achieve "sustainable development of distant-water fisheries" and safeguard "China's maritime rights."

[Marine heat waves likely culprit in Alaska chum declines](#)

December 6 - *Arctic Today*

[Arctic Ocean]

According to a new study, the successive marine heat waves in 2014-2019, which reduced the amount of normal prey of salmon like krill, has led to chum salmon off the coast of Alaska becoming scarce.

[Philippines joins Blue Carbon Action Partnership to Strengthen Coastal Ecosystems](#)

December 4 - *Modern Diplomacy*

[Southeast Asia, Global]

The Philippines announced at COP28 that it joined the World Economic Forum's Blue Carbon Action Partnership to bolster the conservation and restoration of blue carbon ecosystems including

mangroves, seagrasses, and salt marshes. Given the environment, the blue carbon ecosystems in the Philippines are capable of collectively sequestering nearly 700 billion metric tons of carbon.

[Seaweed-robot startup nets GBP 150,000 in pre-seed funding; US DOE funds seaweed study searching for rare earth metals](#)

December 1 - *Seafood Source*

[Western Europe, United States]

London-based seaweed startup Samudra Ocean has received a US\$190,000 investment from the British Design Fund to support the additional creation of prototypes of AI-powered seaweed robots that are made to help farmers monitor and predict their seaweed yield.

[Ocean Visions Creates Road Map to Advance Research for the Restoration of Blue Carbon](#)

December 1 - *Ocean Visions*

[United States]

Ocean Visions released a new road map on restoring blue carbon in order to accelerate research and development of ocean-based solutions—especially the blue carbon ecosystem—to the climate crisis. This road map aims to address challenges in carbon storage, restoration techniques, and improve monitoring and reporting systems.

[2] Maritime Economy and Shipping [2]

[Singapore Port Breaks Record With 3 Billion Gross Tons In Vessel Arrivals For 2023](#)

December 27 - *Marine Insight*

[Southeast Asia, Global]

On December 25, the Port of Singapore announced a record-breaking annual vessel arrival tonnage of 3 billion gross tons in 2023, which is being celebrated as a historic milestone. In 2022, 2.83 billion gross tons were reported.

[Maersk and MSC Get Agreement to Expand Brazilian Terminal in Santos](#)

December 22 - *The Maritime Executive*

[South America, Global]

After more than two years of reviews, Brazil's Ministry of Ports and Airports and the Santos Port Authority have renewed the concession for Brasil Terminal Portuário (BTP), a joint venture between Maersk's APM Terminals and MSC's Terminal Investment Limited, for another 20 years.

[Ships rerouted by Red Sea crisis face overwhelmed African ports](#)

December 22 - Reuters

[Africa, Indian Ocean, Europe]

As hundreds of shipping vessels are being forced to sail around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa to avoid Houthi rebel attacks in the Red Sea, African ports like Cape Town, Durban and Ngqura are already becoming stressed with the high levels of unexpected traffic and berthing.

[Greenland receives DKK 25 million from the EU for new land-based submarine cable infrastructure](#)

December 20 - Arctic Today

[North Atlantic, Arctic Ocean]

After Greenland received support last year from the European Union to conduct a seabed survey, Greenlandic telecommunications company Tusass has now been awarded an additional DKK 25 million (US\$3.72 million) in co-financing for the next step in constructing a domestic submarine cable section, which is part of the Tusass Connect 2 infrastructure project.

[Oilmen start building of underwater pipeline across the Yenisey](#)

December 20 - Arctic Today

[Arctic Ocean]

Russian state oil company Rosneft and its subsidiary RN-Vanker have been dredging in the Russian Arctic in preparation for building an underwater pipeline that will connect the western and eastern shores of the Yenisey river. The 5,8 km long pipeline, now being laid out, is regarded as a vital component of the biggest industrial project currently underway in the Russian Arctic.

[China Pushes Northern Sea Route Transit Cargo to New Record](#)

December 18 - High North News

[Arctic Ocean, China]

According to data by the Center for High North Logistics, transit traffic through the Arctic's Northern Sea Route saw 75 shipments totalling 2.1 million tons of cargo during 2023; a new record which observers are crediting to a strong Chinese demand for Russia crude oil.

[Shippers mask positions, weigh options amid Red Sea attacks](#)

December 19 - Reuters

[Indian Ocean, Global]

Global shipping companies transiting the Suez Canal are being forced to make security decisions following weeks of maritime attacks in the Red Sea by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi militants. Many have announced plans to avoid the Red Sea route entirely and re-route around the southern tip of Africa, making their average travel time from Singapore to Rotterdam 36 days instead of 26 days.

[With China's first cruise ship delivered, unit of CSSC calls for Shanghai-based supply chain as it chases more orders](#)

December 7 - *South China Morning Post* [Paywall]

[China, Global]

After delivering China's first self-built cruise ship in November, Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding plans to continue establishing a local supply chain and expand its fleet of giant pleasure vessels, with the final assembly of its second cruise ship, code-named H1509, set to begin in April 2024.

[Sen. Kelly to propose legislation to strengthen commercial shipping](#)

December 5 - *Defense News*

[United States, Global]

U.S. Senator Mark Kelly, speaking at a Center for Maritime Strategy and Naval War College Foundation event, noted that "[t]here's a lot that needs to be done to revitalize this [shipping] industry" while noting he has readied but not yet filed legislation to revitalize the U.S. commercial maritime industry.

[Sea Cargo Charter to align with IMO emission targets](#)

December 5 - *Splash*

[Global]

Chair of the Sea Cargo Charter, a global framework for assessing and disclosing the climate alignment of chartering activities, has announced that the Charter will align its shipping emissions reporting with the International Maritime Organization's new ambition. This Charter currently has 37 signatories representing more than 17% of total bulk cargo transported by sea.

[3] Ocean Governance and Maritime Cooperation [3]

[Ukraine, Moldova and the European Commission signed an agreement to improve transport connectivity](#)

December 26 - *EU Reporter*

[Europe]

On December 26, the European Commission signed high-level agreements with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova to revise the Trans-European Transport Network, set to come into effect in early 2024. The revisions also introduce mandatory targets including the integration of the maritime space with other transport modes as well as upgrading and creating new shipping routes and ports.

China, Philippines agree to hold talks

December 22 - *China Daily*

[Indo-Pacific, Southeast Asia]

On December 20, China's Prime Minister Wang Yi and Philippine Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo held an extensive phone conversation during which objections and clarification of stances were exchanged. They also agreed to strengthen dialogue and "hold a meeting of the bilateral consultation mechanism on the South China Sea issue at an early date and earnestly create conditions for this."

Marcos: PH working to resolve WPS row for new energy exploration projects

December 17 - *CNN Philippines*

[South China Sea, Southeast Asia]

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Manila is currently working towards settling the "deadlock" in the West Philippine Sea specifically to begin new energy exploration projects before the Malampaya gas field starts to run dry; a region he clarifies is "clearly within our [EEZ] baselines."

Japan, ASEAN Agree To Boost Maritime Security Cooperation

December 17 - *Barron's*

[East Asia, Southeast Asia]

At an international summit in Tokyo marking 50 years of ties between ASEAN and Japan, Southeast Asian and Japanese leaders agreed to "strengthen dialogue and cooperation for the maintenance of maritime security and safety (and) maritime order based on the rule of law." On the sidelines of the summit, the prime ministers of Japan and Malaysia signed a bilateral 400 million yen (US\$2.8 million) security assistance deal to boost Malaysia's "warning and surveillance" equipment.

Philippines summons China ambassador after South China Sea confrontations

December 11 - *Al Jazeera*

[Southeast Asia, South China Sea, China]

Manila summoned the Chinese Ambassador and filed a diplomatic complaint with Beijing after Philippine and Chinese government ships faced off in the South China Sea once again. The Philippines said its vessels were "directly targeted" by a Chinese Coast Guard water cannon during a supply mission to the Second Thomas Shoal, with one Philippine vessel reportedly taking severe damage and another being rammed by a Chinese Coast Guard ship.

[Turning a page, Greece and Turkey agree to mend ties](#)

December 7 - Reuters

[Mediterranean Sea, Europe]

After decades of sparring over the Aegean Sea and other divisive issues, Greece and Turkey agreed to reboot their relations and communication. “We want to turn the Aegean into a sea of peace...[and] be an example to the world,” said Turkey’s prime minister Tayyip Erdogan.

[Norwegian government makes deal over deep sea mining in Arctic Ocean](#)

December 5 - *The Irish News*

[North Atlantic, Arctic Ocean]

Opposing parties within the Norwegian government have struck a deal to open the Arctic Ocean to seabed mineral exploration; a deal that environmental groups call a “disaster for the sea” and “completely contrary to scientific recommendations.”

[Britain, US Blame Iran for Enabling Red Sea Shipping Attacks](#)

December 4 - *gCaptain*

[Red Sea. Europe, United States]

In early December, the British government released a statement condemning the recent attacks on commercial ships in the Red Sea, clarifying that Iran “bears responsibility for the actions of its proxies and partners” such as the Houthi militants who they have “long provided” support to.

[Beijing accuses US of threatening peace and stability after warship passes disputed South China Sea reef](#)

December 4 - *South China Morning Post* [Paywall]

[South China Sea, China, United States]

After the American warship the USS *Gabrielle Giffords* sailed in disputed waters in the South China Sea near the Second Thomas Shoal on December 4, China's military criticized the U.S., saying the move “seriously violated China's sovereignty and security” and is a demonstration of how “the US is the biggest threat to peace and stability” in the region.

[4] Maritime Security and Defense [4]

[Ukraine attacks Russian landing ship in Crimean port](#)

December 26 - *The Washington Post* [Paywall]

[Eastern Europe]

In the early morning local time, Ukraine attacked and destroyed the *Novocherkassk*, a large Russian landing ship, while it was docked at the Crimean port of Feodosia; a port located in a Russian-controlled portion of eastern Crimea that was annexed by Moscow in 2014.

[Taiwan Navy confirms submarine incident likely due to unexpected waves](#)

December 26 - Focus Taiwan

[East Asia]

On the same day the prototype of Taipei's first indigenous defense submarine, the *Hai Kun* (SS-711), underwent a harbor acceptance test, one of Taiwan's purchased submarines, the *Hai Hu*, departed from Kaohsiung on December 18 for an 11-day training session. Three days later, "abnormal sounds" were reported from an incident involving sudden waves, leaving three crew members missing.

[India takes over as co-chair of IONS Working Groups on Maritime Security](#)

December 23 - Business Standard

[Indian Ocean, Global]

From December 19-22, the eighth Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Conclave of Chiefs was hosted by the Royal Thai Navy in Bangkok, Thailand, during which the Indian and Thai navies jointly assumed the duties of IONS chair. Delegates from 27 member and observer countries participated.

[Pentagon announces new international mission to counter attacks on commercial vessels in Red Sea](#)

December 19 - AP

[Indian Ocean, United States]

Following a series of attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea by Yemeni-based Houthi rebels, the U.S. and several other nations established Operation Prosperity Guardian, described by U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin as "an important new multinational security initiative."

[Chinese Maritime Militia Swarms Second Thomas Shoal as Manila Mulls Contingency Plans](#)

December 15 - USNI News

[Southeast Asia, South China Sea, China]

According to Sealight, a maritime transparency group, 11 Chinese maritime militia vessels entered the Philippine-occupied Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea on December 11; a number that increased by four two days later. Meanwhile, Chinese vessels were reported sailing around the shoal throughout the week, numbering between five to 27 at a time and including larger vessels.

[Houthis Hit Tanker with Missile in Red Sea, French Frigate Downs Drones](#)

December 12 - USNI News

[Indian Ocean, Europe]

On December 11, Yemen-based Houthi rebel forces attacked the Norwegian Motor Tanker *Strinda*, hitting it with what the U.S. described as an anti-ship missile that caused a fire. The *Strinda* was hit as it was passing through the Bab-el-Mandeb strait that connects the Gulf of Aden to the Red Sea as a French frigate patrolling nearby shot down a drone that was "directly threatening" the tanker.

[Chinese fighters, balloon cross Taiwan Strait a month before election](#)

December 8 - Reuters

[East Asia, China]

On December 8, Taiwan's defense ministry reported seeing 12 Chinese fighter jets cross the median line of the Taiwan Strait the night before. About half a day prior, a Chinese balloon was seen flying eastward 101 nautical miles southwest of Keelung, though the defense ministry believes it was likely a weather balloon.

[US Raises Concern Over China Warships' Rare Stop in Cambodia](#)

December 6 - Bloomberg [Paywall]

[Southeast Asia, China, United States]

After a Chinese warship appears to have docked at Ream Naval Base in Cambodia in a rare visit, the U.S. again called for “transparency on activities at Ream” including regarding China’s presence in and “future use of the facility.” When asked about the visit, a Chinese spokesperson said “China and Cambodia enjoy deep friendship” and “have productive cooperation” while Cambodia’s Defense Minister said he visited the ships “in preparation for training.”

[U.S. Urging Pacific Allies to Step Up Surveillance at Sea, Says Official](#)

December 5 - USNI News

[United States, Pacific Ocean]

Speaking to reporters at a breakfast, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Ely Ratner explained that the U.S. has been urging its allies in the Indo-Pacific region to increase their maritime awareness specifically by integrating new technology such as unmanned systems amidst “concerns about China’s coercive behavior” and increasing activity.

[The Philippines opens a new monitoring base on a remote island in the disputed South China Sea](#)

December 1 - AP

[Southeast Asia, South China Sea]

On December 1, the Philippines Department of National Defense inaugurated a new coast guard monitoring base on the Philippine-claimed island of Thitu, also known as Pag-asa, in the South China Sea. Manila also announced plans to expand joint patrols with U.S. and Australian counterparts to counter China’s “pure bullying” in the region.

Peer-Reviewed Research on Maritime Issues

- Government Release: President of France Emmanuel Macron - [“The Pillars of Green Wisdom”](#) [Project Syndicate - December 27]
- Government Release: The White House - [“WHAT THEY ARE SAYING: Biden-Harris Administration Unveils First-Ever U.S. Ocean Justice Strategy”](#) [December 22]
- Government Release: UK Department for Transport - [“Celebrating the Seas-on of Christmas”](#) [December 21]
- Government Release: U.S. Congressional Research Service - [“Coast Guard Polar Security Cutter \(Polar Icebreaker\) Program: Background and Issues for Congress”](#) [Updated December 12]
- Government Release: People’s Liberation Army - [“Chinese People’s Liberation Army Navy Recruitment Video: ‘Always Ready’”](#) [USNI News - December 8]
- Government Release: Government of Philippines - [“PH inks agreement with World Economic Forum on blue carbon, national plastic actions”](#) [December 4]
- Government Release: U.S. Government Accountability Office - [“Arctic Region: Factors That Affect the Advancement of U.S. Priorities”](#) [November 29]
- Government Release: European Council - [“Import of fishery products: Council adopts autonomous EU tariff quotas for 2024 to 2026”](#) [November 27]
- Government Speech: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Administrator Rick Spinrad - [“NOAA Administrator Spinrad on COP28: Despite the climate crisis, ‘there is hope’”](#) [December 1]
- Press Release: U.S. Department of Defense - [“Statement from Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III on Ensuring Freedom of Navigation in the Red Sea”](#) [December 18]
- Press Release: U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski - [“Murkowski: Defense Authorization Bill Invests in Alaska Defense Capabilities, Bolsters Arctic Security, Supports Servicemembers”](#) [December 14]
- Press Release: World Economic Forum - [“The Philippines joins Blue Carbon Action Partnership to Strengthen Coastal Ecosystems”](#) [December 4]
- Press Release: U.S. Central Command - [“Houthi Attacks on Commercial Shipping in International Water Continue”](#) [December 3]
- Press Release: High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy - [“Joint declaration on ocean and climate action”](#) [December 2]
- Press Release: European Council - [“Maritime safety: Council adopts positions to support clean and modern shipping in the EU”](#) [December 1]
- Press Release: MAERSK - [“Shipping CEOs join forces to accelerate the decarbonization of the global maritime transport”](#) [December 1]
- Podcast: UK National Oceanography Centre - [“The Integral Part Marine Snow is Playing in Fuelling the Ocean’s Twilight Zone”](#) [Into the Blue - December 2023]
- Podcast: The Japan Times - [“Feeling anxious? Wastewater, heat and Japan’s year in climate”](#) [Deep Dive - December 7]
- Report: [“Looking Beyond the Horizon: China’s Intense Fishing Efforts Threaten Galápagos Islands and Global Seafood Supply Chain”](#) [Oceana - December 2023]

- Report: [Arctic Shipping Status Report – Flag States of Ships in the Arctic: 2022](#) [Arctic Council Working Group on the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment - December 19]
- Report: [Global Tipping Points Report](#) [Multinational effort launched at COP28 on December 6]
- Report: [2023 Annual Progress Report on Green Shipping Corridor](#) [Global Maritime Forum - November 2023]
- Interview: [“Q&A: Dr. Edie Widder”](#) [Sea Technology - December 2023]
- Interview: [“U.S. Navy Warship responds to Red Sea Attacks”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - December 4]
- Opinion: [“Greater consensus on improving the Middle Corridor”](#) [International Institute for Strategic Studies - December 2023]
- Opinion: [“A Middle East preview for 2024: Maritime cooperation, regional rivalries and a new jet”](#) [Breaking Defense - December 27]
- Opinion: [“The India-France Partnership: New Avenues for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific”](#) [South Asian Voices - December 27]
- Opinion: [“Africa’s Maritime Security Experts Weigh In on Red Sea Attacks”](#) [The Maritime Executive - December 22]
- Opinion: [“Contributing to US-led Red Sea coalition is clearly in Australia’s interests”](#) [Australian Strategic Policy Institute - December 22]
- Opinion: [“NATO’s delicate balancing act in the Indo-Pacific”](#) [The Japan Times - December 19] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“A new Suez crisis threatens the world economy”](#) [The Economist - December 16] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Why the Indian Ocean could be China’s Achilles’ heel in a Taiwan war”](#) [Reuters - December 14]
- Opinion: [“Biden’s trade policy U-turn bodes ill for Indo-Pacific security”](#) [Australian Strategic Policy Institute - December 14]
- Opinion: [“Why China Is Stepping Up Its Maritime Attacks on the Philippines”](#) [Foreign Policy - December 13] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“‘Megayachts’ are environmentally indefensible. The world must ban them”](#) [The Guardian - December 11]
- Opinion: [“China Hawks Are Putting the Green Transition at Risk”](#) [Foreign Policy - December 6] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“America’s Indo-Pacific Alliances Are Astonishingly Strong”](#) [Foreign Policy - December 5] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Putin’s Weak Link to Crimea”](#) [Foreign Affairs - December 5] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Viewpoint: What Red Sea attacks mean for shipping”](#) [Freight Waves - December 4]
- Opinion: [“Why Yemen’s Houthis are attacking ships in the Red Sea”](#) [The Economist - December 4]
- Opinion: [“Why Clean Shipping Fuels Need Solar-Industry Style Support”](#) [The Maritime Executive - December 4]
- Opinion: [“American fingerprints all over Manila’s new spat with Beijing”](#) [South China Morning Post - December 3] [Paywall]
- Opinion: [“Britain’s Navy Is Diminished. Its Ambitions Are Not.”](#) [Foreign Policy - November 29] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Demystifying the Deep Sea: Holistic Solutions Illuminate the Ocean’s Depths”](#) [Sea Technology - December 2023]

- Analysis: [“Contactless Subsea Positioning: HaloCAM Upgrades INS with High-Res Imaging to Monitor Structures”](#) [Sea Technology - December 2023]
- Analysis: [“Analysis: In the Red Sea, the US has no good options against the Houthis”](#) [Al Jazeera - December 27]
- Analysis: [“When fishing boats go dark at sea, they're often committing crimes – we mapped where it happens”](#) [Midland Daily News - December 27]
- Analysis: [“Up for Debate: Should the U.S. ratify UNCLOS?”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - December 26]
- Analysis: [“Houthi Attacks in the Red Sea Disrupt Global Supply Chains”](#) [United States Institute of Peace - December 22]
- Analysis: [“U.S. Maritime Priorities for a New Era of Competition”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - December 21]
- Analysis: [“Developing Djibouti as a Sustainable Maritime Hub”](#) [Forbes - December 20]
- Analysis: [“Chinese Traders and Moroccan Ports: How Russia Flouts Global Tech Bans”](#) [The New York Times - December 19] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Sundowning the Oliver Hazard Perry-Class Frigate”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - December 19]
- Analysis: [“Deep Blue Scars: Environmental Threats to the South China Sea”](#) [Center for Strategic & International Studies - December 18]
- Analysis: [“Part II – U.S. Fisheries Enforcement in the Western Pacific: Embracing the Long Run”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - December 14]
- Analysis: [“Nature Undamned: Klamath River Dam Removal”](#) [The Washington Post - December 14] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Astute lessons for Australia’s AUKUS submarine workforce”](#) [Australian Strategic Policy Institute - December 14]
- Analysis: [“In global shipping, it’s China vs South Korea, and Seoul is securing its shipbuilding secrets”](#) [South China Morning Post - December 13] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Scared Strait: Understanding the Economic and Financial Impacts of a Taiwan Crisis”](#) [Center for Strategic & International Studies - December 13]
- Analysis: [“Deterrence and Dissuasion in the Taiwan Strait”](#) [Foreign Policy Research Institute - December 12]
- Analysis: [“How does a 1980s Video Game inform Uncrewed Surface Warfare Systems?”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - December 12]
- Analysis: [“Who are the Houthis, the group attacking ships in the Red Sea?”](#) [The Economist - December 12] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Storm assault on Chinese ports a wake-up call for climate risks”](#) [The Japan Times - December 12] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Explainer: Why China, the Philippines keep fighting over tiny shoal”](#) [Reuters - December 11]
- Analysis: [“What It Feels Like to Be the Target of China’s Water Cannons”](#) [The New York Times - December 11] [Paywall]
- Analysis: [“Part I: Combatting Short Term Limitations of U.S. Fisheries Enforcement in the Western Pacific”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - December 7]
- Analysis: [“Watch Russia's Shadow Fleet”](#) [Bloomberg - December 5] [Paywall]

- Analysis: [“China and Russia in the Black Sea Region: Moving towards Pax Sinica?”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - December 5]
- Analysis: [“How Will Climate Action Change The Face Of Global Shipping?”](#) [Forbes - December 5]
- Analysis: [“How States Can Develop Blue Carbon Programs”](#) [Pew Charitable Trusts - December 4]

Events on the Maritime Domain

- From December 4-8, 2023, U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration celebrated [Corals Week 2023](#) to celebrate the beauty and importance of coral reef ecosystems.
- On December 5, 2023, Center for Maritime Strategy and the Naval War College Foundation co-hosted an in-person symposium on [“America’s Future Fleet: Maintaining Peace & Deterring China”](#) in Arlington, Virginia.
- From December 5-8, 2023, Marintec China hosted their [Marintec China 2023](#) event, with a theme of “Rebuild Together,” at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC) in Shanghai, China.
- On December 7, 2023, the Hudson Institute held an in-person discussion titled [“Senator Mike Rounds on the B-21 Bomber and Its Deterrence Mission.”](#)
- On December 7, 2023, the National Oceanography Centre’s Head of Marine Policy and Chief Executive held a [Deep Dive Discussion on NOC’s Involvement at COP28](#). A recording is available.
- On December 7, 2023, the Danish Embassy and the Danish-UK Association held the [11th Annual UK Offshore Wind Seminar](#) in London, United Kingdom. Registration is still open.
- On December 8, 2023, Digital Ship Ltd. hosted its [Maritime Cyber Resilience Forum 2023](#) in Hamburg, Germany.
- On December 9, 2023, as part of the COP28 conference hosted by the United Arab Emirates, a live panel discussion on [“Powering Ocean Breakthrough Through Sustainable Ocean Planning”](#) was live-streamed. A recording is available.
- From December 13-15, 2023, Upstream Business Solutions held its [“India International Cargo Show 2023”](#) in Mumbai, India.
- From December 14-15, 2023, Riviera hosted its [“Maritime Decarbonization Conference, Americas 2023”](#) in Houston, Texas.
- On December 18, 2023, Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs held a public seminar on [“COP28 Climate Outcomes: What Do They Mean for the Arctic?”](#) A recording is available.
- From December 21-23, 2023, INASE hosted [“The International Conference on Maritime and Naval Science and Engineering 2023”](#) in Bann, Switzerland.
- On January 10, 2024, Exim India Shipping Times and its partners will be holding the [9th East Coast Maritime Forum 2024](#) in Kolkata, India.
- On January 16, 2024, Center for Strategic & International Studies Asia Program will host a hybrid discussion on [“Indo-Pacific Forecast 2024.”](#)
- On January 16, 2024, Maritime Research Alliance will be holding an event at Copenhagen Business School for [“Maritime Research Alliance PhD Day: Decarbonizing the maritime sector.”](#)
- From January 16-17, 2024, Pacific Forum and their partners will be holding the [Operationalizing Integration in the Indo-Pacific \(OIIP\): 2024](#) dialogue in Honolulu, Hawai’i, which “seeks to facilitate

dialogue and solutions between the private and public sectors in the hopes of hastening integration...in order to bolster deterrence.”

- From January 17-19, 2024, US Climate Variability and Predictability Program (US CLIVAR) and their co-sponsors will be hosting a hybrid workshop on [“Polar Amplification of Climate Change Across Hemispheres and Seasons: Causes and Constraints.”](#)
- On January 24, 2024, Alaska Sea Grant and Alaska Ocean Observing System will co-host the [January 2024 Alaska Marine Policy Forum](#); a one-hour meeting held every other month with participants across the state interested in marine policy in Alaska.
- From January 29-31, 2024, SAE Media Group will be hosting the [9th annual Maritime Reconnaissance and Surveillance Technology](#) conference in London, United Kingdom.
- From January 29-February 1, 2024, the hybrid [Arctic Frontiers 2024: Actions and Reactions](#) conference will take place in Tromsø, Norway with the aim to “connect different expertise and perspectives from areas such as policy, science and business.” Registration is still open.
- In February 2024, Economist Impact and The Nippon Foundation will be holding the [Back to Blue in Japan](#) event. Details are coming soon.
- From February 6-7, 2024, Pacific Forum International will host the virtual [“Cross-Border Cooperation on WPS & Maritime Environmental Crimes Workshop Series”](#) to “explore common environmental crimes in the region and their gendered impacts” in the Coral Triangle region.
- From February 27-28, 2024, the IGGS Group will be hosting the [World Maritime Forum](#) in Copenhagen, Denmark, with one of the key focus areas of this year's forum being sustainability.
- On February 29, 2024, Maritime Research Alliance and Danish Shipping will co-host a [Conference on Continuing Professional Development Courses for the Maritime Sector](#).
- From March 11-13, 2024, The Economist Group will host [The 11th Annual World Ocean Summit & Expo in Lisbon, Portugal](#), which “convenes the widest cross-section of the ocean community from business and finance to government, national and international policy-makers, civil society, and academia. The summit is designed to instigate action to develop a sustainable ocean economy; to encourage new partnerships across industries, with NGOs, scientists, technology developers and investors.”
- From March 12-14, 2024, [Oceanology International](#) will host their 2024 Expo in London, Excel.

Handbill Spotlight

The Red Sea

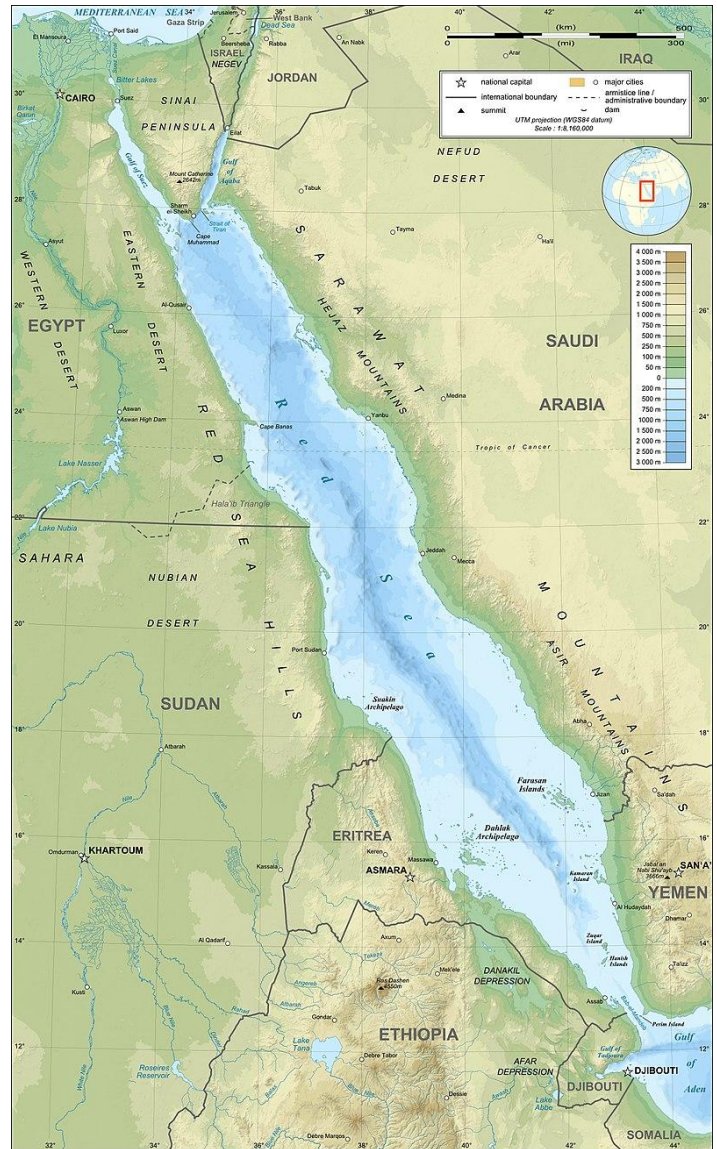
Issue Background

The Red Sea is a seawater inlet of the Indian Ocean, [roughly](#) 1,200 miles long and 190 miles wide at its widest point, that separates the African and Asian continents and connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Arabian Sea. It is connected to the Indian Ocean and Asia via the Bab-el-Mandeb strait and the Gulf of Aden at its south, and to the Mediterranean Sea and Europe via the Gulf of Suez and the Suez Canal at its north. To the majority of its east lies Saudi Arabia, with Yemen bordering its southeasternmost extent, while Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea, and Djibouti lie to its west and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula caps its northern extent. Because of its narrow width, there is no portion of the Red Sea that does not [lie](#) in one of the exclusive economic zones of its six coastal nations.

Geologically, it is part of the [Red Sea Rift](#) which itself is part of the [Great Rift Valley](#); the most well-known rift valley on Earth. Scientific research believes the Red Sea to have [originated](#) from the Indian Ocean flooding the rift valley millions of years ago upon the Arabian African tectonic plates drifting apart, and [expects](#) it to eventually continue to drift apart and separate Africa and Asia entirely. This body of water, one of the first large bodies of water mentioned in recorded history, also has [extensive](#) cultural and historical significance as it has been being used and accessed by empires, cultures, religions, and explorers for over 4,500 years.¹

Like the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea is one of the most [saline](#) bodies of water in the world largely [due](#) to high evaporation rates and insignificant freshwater inflow, with its salinity typically recorded at 40-41 parts per thousands (ppt) but capable of reaching 50 ppt in certain areas. This measure is compared to the [typical](#) range of sea water salinity at 33-37 ppt. While the Red Sea does reach [depths](#) of 3,000 meters at its deepest point, it is holistically shallow, with one-quarter of the Red Sea being less than 50 meters deep. As the Red Sea simultaneously contains some of the world's hottest water from two distinct monsoon seasons thus making it the world's most northern tropical sea, it is the habitat of [over](#) 1,200 fish species and 200 soft and hard corals. These unique characteristics and the extensive presence of marine life and corals led the World Wide Fund for Nature to identify the Red Sea as a "[Global 200](#)" [ecoregion](#) and a priority for conservation.

Still, because of its geographical location, the Red Sea has been used as a vital maritime shipping route since ancient times. [According](#) to the U.S. Naval Institute, about 12% of global maritime trade transits the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. Without this route, ships traveling between the Indian Ocean and Europe have to sail around the southern tip of Africa, extending their journey by at least 10 days, or by about 30%. There are also several types of mineral resources found in the Red Sea region—including petroleum deposits, evaporite deposits (magnesite, gypsum, etc.), sulfur, phosphates, and heavy-metal deposits—that have [caught](#) the [attention](#) of governments and private entities.



¹ Image: A topographical map of Red Sea and its surrounding region. (Source: [Eric Gaba, Wikimedia Commons, CC4.0](#))

Recent Events

It is largely because of this strategic importance to global maritime shipping that the Red Sea is often targeted by adversaries, such as the Yemen-based [Houthi rebel group](#) who have been attacking commercial ships transiting the Red Sea for over 10 weeks. Since October 17, 2023, exactly one week after the Houthi leader [warned](#) against U.S. interference in the Gaza conflict, the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels have been targeting ships that they say have a connection to Israel as a sign of solidarity with the Gaza-based Hamas group currently fighting against Israel in the Gaza strip. As warned, these attacks have typically come in the form of [ballistic missiles](#) fired from and aerial drones originating from Houthi-controlled regions of Yemen, and in [October](#) and [November](#) were also shot towards Israel itself.

As December approached, these attacks began primarily targeting private, commercial vessels in the Red Sea, [most](#) of which occurring as they transit through the Bab-el-Mandeb at the southern exit of the Red Sea, which Yemen borders. These attacks appeared to only increase in frequency over December. For example, on December 3 USS *Corney* [responded](#) to three separate distress calls from Bahamian-flagged, Panama-flagged, and Panamanian-flagged vessels while patrolling the Red Sea. The [Norwegian](#) Motor Tanker *Strinda* was attacked while passing through the Bab-el-Mandeb on December 11; the same day that French guided-missile frigate FS *Languedoc* (653) [shot](#) down a third drone with surface to air missiles while patrolling nearby after it was reportedly under attack two days prior. Three days later, Houthis attempted to [board](#) and reroute the Hong Kong-flagged *Maersk Gibraltar* cargo container ship after firing a ballistic missile at it; an attack that was deflected by the USS *Mason* (DDG-87). The following day, two Liberian-flagged ships were [attacked](#) and caught fire as a third was hailed by the Houthi told to turn to Yemen, which the crew did not do. Three days after that, two other missile attacks were separately [reported](#) against a Cayman Islands-flagged chemical/oil tanker and a Liberian-flagged bulk cargo ship. The Houthis have also [seized](#) and raided ships since mid-November—[such](#) as the Japanese-operated, British-owned vehicle carrier *Galaxy Leader*—prompting the U.S. to call their actions “piracy” and potentially designate the Houthi as a “terrorist” group.

These attacks, along with others of similar nature, prompted reactions from both the private and public sectors. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, like other organizations of its kind, continued to [report](#) a series of warnings over the last 6 weeks regarding this region, the comparative amount of which emphasizes the severity and rarity of such activities. Some companies ([A.P. Moller - Maersk](#), [COSCO](#), [BP](#), [Equinor](#), CMA CGM, Mediterranean Shipping, Evergreen Marine, etc.) officially halted all tanker transits through the Red Sea, forcing vessels to reroute around the southern tip of Africa in spite of the [soaring prices](#) and major supply chain disruptions caused by skipping the Red Sea and additional 10 days of sailing. Notably, there are still ships successfully transiting the route. Still, from November 19-December 19, the Suez Canal Authority [recorded](#) 2,128 ships had traveled through the route while 55 ships diverted via the Cape of Good Hope.

On December 18, one week after the White House [called](#) allies to fill the “natural response” of expanding a multinational naval task force to secure the region, the U.S. Department of Defense [established](#) a new multinational security initiative named Operation Prosperity Guardian to protect commercial traffic and ensure freedom of navigation in the Red Sea. Supported by [Combined Task](#)

[Force 153](#), Bahrain, Canada, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Seychelles, Spain, and the United Kingdom were named as initial allies in the Operation. That number reportedly expanded to 20 nations, though there appears to be [reluctance](#) in aligning themselves with the Operation as reports come of France, Italy and Spain snubbing the Operation.

Meanwhile, the Houthi rebels released [vows](#) that the attacks against Israeli-linked vessels would [continue](#) until Israel stops the conflict in Gaza, and they have [kept](#) that vow so far. Furthermore, the regional expanse of their attacks may be widening. On December 26, drone attacks were [launched](#) from Iran against two Indian merchant vessels less than 200 nautical miles off the coast of India, though the responsible party who New Delhi has promised retribution against has yet to be identified. On the same day, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) forces worked to [intercede](#) 12 attack drones, three anti-ship ballistic missiles and two land-attack cruise missiles that were fired on the same day by Houthi forces from Yemen.

In spite of these continued attacks, the establishment of Operation Prosperity Guardian has given some companies such as [Maersk](#) the confidence to safely utilize the Red Sea route once again, with several of their ships returning to the typical route on December 27. The [stabilization](#) of the oil market also may be an indicator of softening tensions in the area, but many container companies still [consider](#) the Red Sea route as too dangerous.

Keep In Mind

The ongoing situation of Houthi rebel attacks in the Red Sea is a live case study in the fragility of global maritime supply chains. Similar to [March 2021](#) in the Suez Canal or just this last [summer](#) in the Panama Canal, the world is witnessing the downfalls of inflexible maritime supply chains. It is prompting a deeper exploration in solution-building and variety. Given how similar problems appear to be populating, it could leave some to question whether or not the world is sufficiently learning from these instances, whatever their root cause may be.

While there is no easy answer, global maritime transportation companies must continue to value investing in options, such as cargo [flights](#) or supporting fresh innovation. Parties would also benefit from keeping the existing alternative routes such as those in Africa updated and communicative so ports do not become overwhelmed. [Decentralizing supply chains](#) seems like an attractive option at first, as this system provides more flexibility, but it is not realistically feasible to expect centuries of habit and globally integrated infrastructures to change; especially as the ever-growing pressure on the maritime shipping industry to address climate change persists.

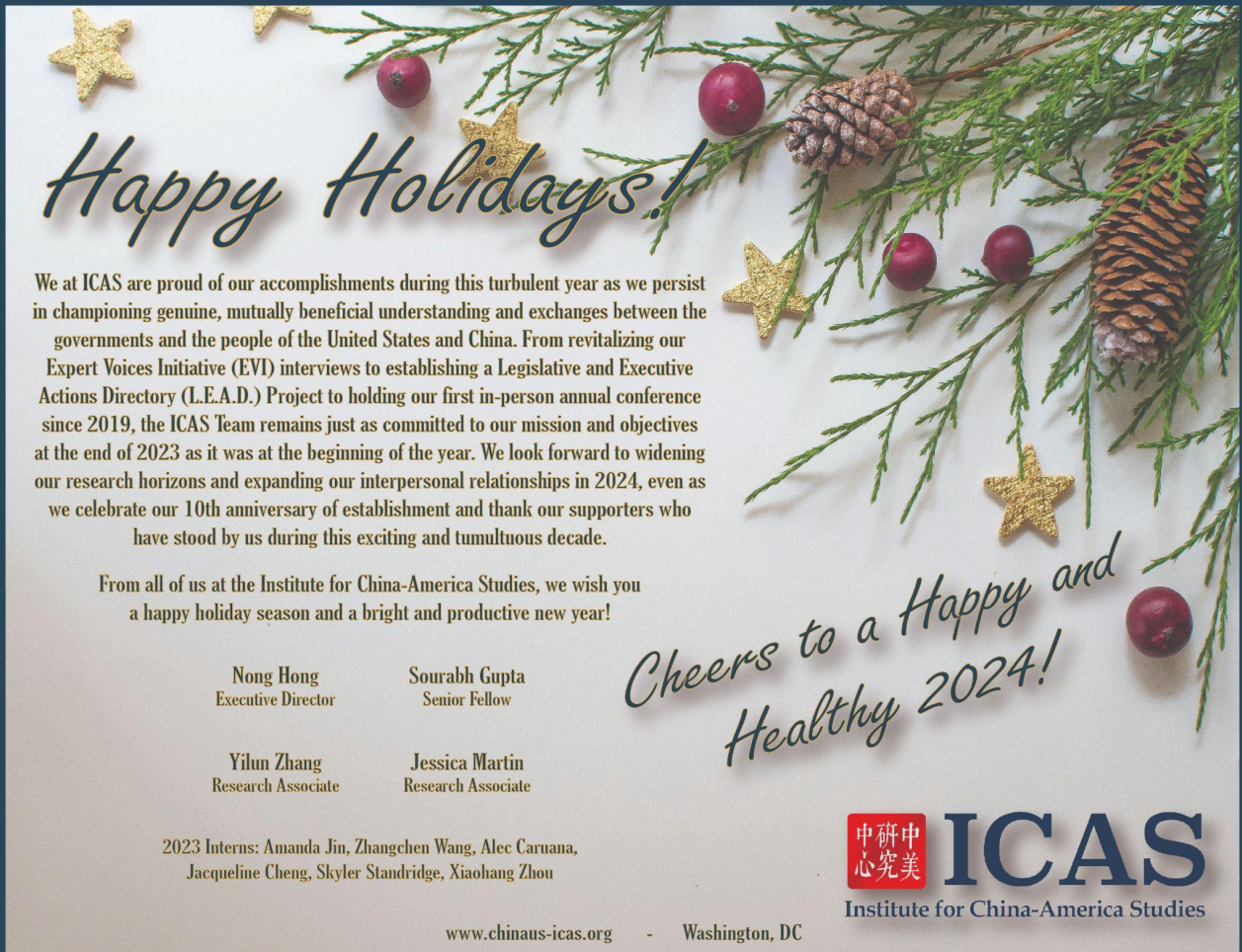
This region is no stranger to maritime piracy. The Horn of Africa is notorious for being one of the most highly pirated maritime regions in the world, and other attacks such as hijackings are still [ongoing](#). However, one special element of these attacks is the publicity and regular communication that the Houthi is employing to garner and retain global attention. Their [filming](#) of the November 19 overtaking of the *Galaxy Leader* merchant vessel was an intense message to the world and a warning that any other Israeli-linked vessel could be attacked in the same way. One way or the other, their communication efforts have driven many Israeli-linked ships to reroute while distracting governments. It is too soon to tell whether or not how effective this tactic will remain.

Last, while Operation Prosperity Guardian is still fledgling, its initial setup shows how establishing joint military operations is more difficult than it may seem, even among allies and with a clear adversary in sight. U.S. Secretary Lloyd Austin called it “an international challenge that demands collective action” but, even if his counterparts agree, there is an endless list of considerations and several unknowns. Perhaps some of these U.S. allies are looking at how unexpectedly long the Ukraine-Russia conflict has lasted and fear a similar case taking place in the Red Sea. One analyst [described](#) the task force as a “half measure that the Houthis will test.” Given how the Houthi leadership has also been vocalizing their warnings and doing what they have said they would, it would be wise to fear testing their resolve and foolish to disregard their words as pure propaganda, so their caution to tie themselves to an official military operation is understandable even if contributing seems like the [clear](#) answer.

This issue's Spotlight was written by Jessica Martin, ICAS Research Associate & Chief Editor, ICAS Newsletters.

ICAS Maritime Affairs Program: New and Upcoming

— A Note from the ICAS Team —



Happy Holidays!


We at ICAS are proud of our accomplishments during this turbulent year as we persist in championing genuine, mutually beneficial understanding and exchanges between the governments and the people of the United States and China. From revitalizing our Expert Voices Initiative (EVI) interviews to establishing a Legislative and Executive Actions Directory (L.E.A.D.) Project to holding our first in-person annual conference since 2019, the ICAS Team remains just as committed to our mission and objectives at the end of 2023 as it was at the beginning of the year. We look forward to widening our research horizons and expanding our interpersonal relationships in 2024, even as we celebrate our 10th anniversary of establishment and thank our supporters who have stood by us during this exciting and tumultuous decade.

From all of us at the Institute for China-America Studies, we wish you a happy holiday season and a bright and productive new year!

Nong Hong Executive Director	Sourabh Gupta Senior Fellow
Yilun Zhang Research Associate	Jessica Martin Research Associate

2023 Interns: Amanda Jin, Zhangchen Wang, Alec Caruana,
Jacqueline Cheng, Skyler Standridge, Xiaohang Zhou

Cheers to a Happy and Healthy 2024!

 **ICAS**
Institute for China-America Studies

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– Upcoming Book Release –

US-China Global Maritime Relations (Routledge 2024)

By Nong Hong

Release Date: January 1, 2024

This book explores the U.S.-China global maritime relationship, examining the development and implementation of the maritime strategies of both the United States and China.

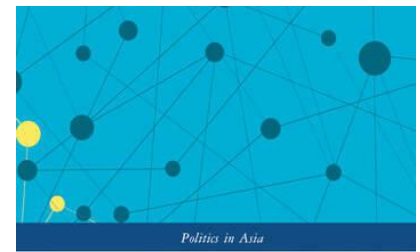
Delving into the U.S.-China maritime relationship within the global context, the book investigates six key maritime regions: the South China Sea, the Northeast Asia waters (the East China Sea, the Yellow Sea), the Indian Ocean, the South Pacific Ocean, as well as the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Its observations form a comprehensive exploration of these regions and their significance in shaping the dynamics between the two nations, and this analysis reveals that an expanded view is necessary to discover and clearly display the role that these maritime regions currently—and could potentially—play in overarching U.S.-China relations.

Examining both the ongoing conflicts and opportunities for cooperation in the global maritime domain between the United States and China, this book will be a valuable resource to students and scholars of international relations, Chinese and U.S. politics, strategic studies, and maritime studies.

Learn More: <https://chinaus-icas.org/research/us-china-global-maritime-relations/>

Order a Copy with Code ESA33 for a 20% Discount:

<https://www.routledge.com/US-China-Global-Maritime-Relations/Hong/p/book/9781032510897>



US-CHINA GLOBAL MARITIME RELATIONS

Nong Hong



– MAP Academic Engagement –

Visit by ROK MND officers with ICAS staff

December 7, 2023

On Thursday, December 7, 2023, a small delegation from the Republic of Korea Ministry of Defense visited with ICAS Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta and Research Associate Jessica Martin to discuss current events at the ICAS office in Washington, D.C. The discussion covered topics including perspectives on the general state of U.S.-China relations, the dynamic changes occurring in outer space relations and their potential security implications, the upcoming elections in Taiwan and the United States, and potential methods to achieve stability at the multinational level.

Learn More: <https://chinaus-icas.org/event/visit-by-rok-mnd-officers-with-icas-staff/?c>

– MAP Academic Engagement –

ICAS Staff Participate in Several Academic Exchanges in the State of Washington
December 11-12, 2023



From December 11-12, 2023, ICAS Executive Director Dr. Nong Hong engaged in academic discussions with various institutions in the State of Washington, which were facilitated through the invitation extended by the China Ocean Institute. Dr. Tabitha Grace Mallory (Founder and CEO of the China Ocean Institute and Affiliate Professor of the University of Washington Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies), Mr. Wang Sheng (President of China National Institute for South China Sea Studies–NISCSS), Dr. Ding Duo (Deputy Director, Research Center for Oceans Law and Policy, NISCSS), Dr. Hu Xin (Assistant Research Fellow, Research Center for Maritime Economy, NISCSS) and Ms. Amanda Jin (Research Assistant, ICAS) also participated in the group visits and exchanges...

Read the Full Summary:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/event/icas-staff-participate-in-several-academic-exchanges-in-the-state-of-washington/?c>

– MAP Academic Engagement –

Visit by National Institute for South China Sea Studies Scholars with ICAS Staff
December 14, 2023

On Thursday, December 14, 2023, a delegation from the National Institute for South China Sea Studies (NISCSS) visited ICAS and discussed a variety of current topics on U.S.-China relations with ICAS researchers. The NISCSS delegation was led by Mr. Wang Sheng (President, NISCSS), who was accompanied by Dr. Ding Duo (Deputy Director, Research Center for Oceans Law and Policy, NISCSS) and Dr. Hu Xin (Assistant Research Fellow, Research Center for Maritime Economy, NISCSS).



Learn More:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/event/visit-by-national-institute-for-south-china-sea-studies-scholars-with-icas-staff/?c>

The Institute for China-America Studies (ICAS) is an independent think tank in Washington D.C. ICAS focuses on the evolving dynamics in the U.S.-China relationship to promote greater collaboration and mutual understanding through sincere exchanges of fresh ideas, objective policy-oriented research, and fair assessments of this critical bilateral relationship.

We aim to provide a window into the worldviews of both the United States and China, and thereby serve as a vehicle to promote greater understanding between these two countries and societies.

ICAS is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization

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