



# ICAS MARITIME AFFAIRS HANDBILL

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## Recent News in Global Maritime Affairs

### [1] Ocean Governance and Maritime Cooperation [1]

#### [China and Russia Challenge Legality of US Claims to Seabed Floor](#)

July 29 - *Bloomberg*  
[United States, Global]

Speaking during a debate session of the International Seabed Authority, Russian and Chinese representatives challenged U.S. claims that would add about 1 million square kilometers to the U.S. continental shelf, saying they have no basis in international law and should be rejected.

#### [Philippines says China mischaracterised South China Sea deal](#)

July 28 - *Reuters*  
[South China Sea]

After months of clashes between Chinese and Philippine vessels in the South China Sea's Second Thomas Shoal, the Philippines said it "reached an understanding" in early July on a "provisional arrangement" with China on its resupply missions to a military outpost in the South China Sea. Very soon after, the disputes continued, with the Philippines eventually accusing China of "mischaracterizing" the arrangement. The details of the arrangement have not been published.

#### [Finland mulls an end to Barents cooperation](#)

July 25 - *The Barents Observer*  
[Arctic Ocean, North Atlantic Ocean]

Finland's Foreign Minister, Elina Valtonen, told the Finnish Parliament that its country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs is "gradually disengaging from Barents cooperation," mainly referring to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Barents Regional Council, to make room for a new, more effective cross-border cooperative structure following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

### [US military shuts down problematic Gaza aid pier, shifts to Israeli port](#)

July 18 - *Al Jazeera*

[Middle East, United States]

On July 18, the U.S. military's mission to install and operate a temporary, floating pier off the Gaza coast to bring humanitarian aid to Palestinians officially ended after having "achieved its intended effect." The pier was in operation less than 25 days due to a series of delays and complications and cost US\$230 million. Future aid to Gaza will now be shipped through Israel's Port of Ashdod.

### [Vietnam files new claim on boundary in South China Sea](#)

July 17 - *Radio Free Asia*

[South China Sea]

On July 17, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry announced that it has filed a claim to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of Continental Shelf for an extended continental shelf in the South China Sea. In response, the Philippines stated that it respects Vietnam's submission but nonetheless reaffirmed its claim over the overlapping sea while China rejected Vietnam's claim.

### [US, Canada and Finland form 'Ice Pact' to project influence into Arctic region](#)

July 11 - *The Guardian*

[Arctic, North America, Europe]

The U.S., Canada, and Finland announced a new Ice Pact ("Icebreaker Collaboration Effort") to counter China and Russia's expanding influence in the Arctic region. Announced during the NATO Summit in Washington, D.C., the pact is estimated to produce up to 90 icebreaker ships in the near future.

### [India hosts 6th East Asia Summit Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation](#)

July 8 - *India News Network*

[South Asia, East Asia, Indo-Pacific]

From July 4-6, India hosted the 6th East Asia Summit Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation in Mumbai. The discussions focused on the Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative, ASEAN's outlook on the Indo-Pacific, and collaborations in fishing regulation, disaster relief, and maritime policing.

### [Taiwan says China seizes fishing boat near its coast](#)

July 3 - *Reuters*

[China, Indo-Pacific]

On July 2, Taiwan's coast guard reported that two Chinese coast guards boarded and seized a Taiwanese fishing boat after the vessel entered Chinese waters near Kinmen Island and took it to a port on China's mainland. Beijing said that the vessel was violating a fishing ban and using illegal

nets that damage the environment. Taipei sent its own coast guard to assist and warn the vessel should be released. The U.S. Biden administration said it was monitoring the situation.

### [PH, Japan, Indonesia coast guards hold joint exercises vs marine pollution](#)

June 26 - *Inquirer.net*

[East Asia]

On June 25, the Philippine, Japanese, and Indonesian coast guards conducted the joint Regional Marine Pollution Exercise in Philippine waters to “promote initiatives for regional cooperation mechanisms to ensure capability and readiness...in addressing pollution from oil spills.”

## [2] Maritime Security and Defense [2]

### [Russian navy starts major drills involving most of its fleet](#)

July 30 - *Reuters*

[Arctic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, Baltic Sea]

On July 30, the Russian navy announced the start of planned exercises involving most of its fleet—20,000 personnel and 300 ships—to “check the actions of the military authorities of navy at all levels, as well as the readiness of the crews of ships” and other troops to perform tasks. The drills are planned to take place in the Arctic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, the Baltic Sea and the Caspian Sea.

### ['Quad' top diplomats decry situation in South China Sea](#)

July 29 - *The Japan Times*

[Pacific Ocean, United States]

On July 29, the top diplomats from 'the Quad' group of nations—Australia, Japan, India and the United States—met and jointly pledged to increase maritime security in the Indo-Pacific. Their joint statement expresses “serious concern” about “coercive and intimidating maneuvers,” the “dangerous use” of coast guard and maritime militia vessels, and disruptions to offshore resource exploitation activities occurring in the region.

### [Kremlin says Russian Arctic cooperation with China is not aimed against anyone after Pentagon expresses concern](#)

July 23 - *Reuters*

[The Arctic, Russia, China]

Following the release of the U.S. Department of Defense 2024 Arctic Strategy that mentions increased collaboration between the People’s Republic of China and Russia in the Arctic, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said “Russian-Chinese cooperation is never directed against third countries or groups of third countries, but is aimed only at protecting the interests of [Russia and China].”

### [Philippines to develop airport on South China Sea island, amid Beijing tensions](#)

July 18 - *South China Morning Post*

[South China Sea]

The Philippines announced it is developing an airport on Thitu (also known as Pag-asa) Island, an island that it occupies in the Spratly Islands chain in the South China Sea. A military runway on the island of Balabac in the Philippines' Palawan province—one of four sites that the U.S. military can newly access as of last year—is also reportedly nearing completion.

### [China's Aircraft Carrier Shandong Launches 240 Sorties in Philippine Sea](#)

July 16 - *U.S. Naval Institute News*

[Philippines Sea]

Japan reported on July 16 that the Chinese military aircraft carrier Shandong Carrier Strike Group conducted 240 fighter aircraft launches and recoveries and 140 helicopter take-offs and landings in the Philippines Sea, southwest of Japan, over the span of a week. This marks this carrier strike group's first deployment to this area in 2024. It was deployed to this area three times in 2023.

### [US Coast Guard patrol spots Chinese naval ships off Alaska island](#)

July 11 - *ABC News*

[United States, China]

While on routine patrol in the Bering Sea, a U.S. Coast Guard cutter spotted several Chinese military ships operating within the U.S. exclusive economic zone but “in accordance with international rules and norms.” They were located about 124 miles north of the Aleutian Islands.

### [Russia's First Combat Icebreaker, Ivan Papanin, Sets Sail For Sea Trials](#)

July 3 - *Marine Insight*

[Russia, The Arctic]

Russia's first armed combat icebreaker, *Ivan Papanin*, is set to begin sea trials before joining the Northern Fleet by the end of 2024. Equipped with an AK turret gun and pre-installed missile launchers, Russia is reportedly building two additional icebreakers of this same type for its patrol unit in addition to three more nuclear-powered icebreakers also under construction.

### [Cambodia Denies Hosting Chinese Naval Base, but Two Ships Raise Suspicions](#)

July 1 - *The Wall Street Journal*

[South China Sea]

A series of satellite images show two hulking gray Chinese warships have been docked at the Cambodia's Ream Naval Base's 1,000-foot pier almost continuously since December 2023. However, Cambodia's various explanations and reports from locals have been fostering suspicions.

### [African ministers unveil policy to boost maritime security](#)

June 29 - *The Independent*

[Africa]

On June 27, the Maritime Organization for Eastern, Southern, and Northern Africa launched the Regional Maritime Transport Policy for Eastern, Southern and Northern Africa to “foster a secure and safe maritime environment through regional collaboration and sustainable practices.”

### [US hands over 3 converted maritime surveillance aircraft to RMAF](#)

June 27 - *New Strait Times*

[Southeast Asia, United States]

On June 27, the United States delivered three aircrafts to the Royal Malaysian Air Force. These aircrafts had been converted from tactical transport planes into maritime surveillance aircraft under the U.S. Maritime Security Initiative in Malaysia.

## [3] Maritime Economy and Shipping [3]

### [Turkey Rolls Out its Own Carbon Price on Shipping](#)

July 28 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Europe, Global]

On July 9, the Turkish parliament published a new law to push forward new regulations with guidelines for a carbon pricing mechanism for Turkey’s shipping sector, including measures to begin taxing shipping emissions released by commercial ships entering and departing Turkish seaports.

### [U.S. Importers Are Rushing Goods in Early Ahead of Shipping Disruptions](#)

July 23 - *The Wall Street Journal*

[United States, Global]

U.S. retailers and manufacturers have been actively advancing shipping times despite higher costs in fear of further shipping disruptions and geopolitical concerns. Imports into the ports of New York, Los Angeles, and Seattle all reached their highest levels since late 2022.

### [Exclusive: Illicit chip flows to Russia seen slowing, but China, Hong Kong remain transshipment hubs](#)

July 22 - *Reuters*

[China, Russia]

According to previously undisclosed data from the U.S. Commerce Department, transshipments of semiconductors and other restricted goods through China and Hong Kong likely being used for Russia's war in Ukraine dropped by 28% between January and May of 2024.

### [Maersk says Red Sea shipping disruption having global effects](#)

July 17 - Reuters

[Middle East, Europe, Global]

Denmark's shipping company Maersk said that Houthi militants in the Red Sea have created ripple disruptions that extend "beyond the primary affected routes," causing congestion and delays in its shipping networks in Far East Asia, West Central Asia, Europe, Southeast Asia, and Oceania.

### [China's Waterborne Cooking Oil Tankers Also Shipping Chemicals, Fuel, Sources Say](#)

July 13 - Caixin Global

[China]

An investigation conducted by Caixin found that Chinese water vessels are used to transport both cooking oil and toxic chemicals and diesel. Industry insiders said that such practice is common and that inter-shipment cleaning may not be sufficient to ensure food safety for consumers.

### [Singapore Backlog Spills Over to Malaysia Threatening More Price Increases](#)

July 9 - The Maritime Executive

[Southeast Asia, Global]

Port congestion in Singapore largely caused by Red Sea shipping disruptions have spread to Malaysia's Port Klang, resulting in nearly 84,000 TEU and 32 ships waiting in the anchorage point. Analysts predict that capacity delays in these ports will last until August and further increase prices of shipping and consumer goods.

### [HHLA Opens Hydrogen Test Field in the Port of Hamburg](#)

July 4 - The Maritime Executive

[Germany]

On July 4, Germany's Hamburger Hafen und Logistik AG (HHLA) opened the first test field for hydrogen-powered port logistics at the Port of Hamburg. The CEO of HHLA explained that the objective behind this move was "to decarbonise the logistics sector and achieve...[the] target of climate-neutral operations...by 2040."

### [Nigeria to leverage Belgium's maritime expertise for Blue Economy](#)

July 4 - Sweet Crude

[Africa]

In her meeting with the Belgian Ambassador to Nigeria, Nigeria's Minister of Marine and Blue Economy expressed hopes of leveraging "Belgium's expertise in maritime technology and sustainable practices alongside Nigeria's vast marine resources and strategic location...to forge a mutually beneficial partnership in the blue economy sector."

### [Bulker Breaks Apart in Storms Causing Oil Spill off South Africa](#)

July 29 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Africa, Global]

Almost three weeks after the bulker ship the *Ultra Galaxy* first suffered damage, South African Maritime Safety Authority said that it has launched an oil spill contingency plan to contain the oil spill from the *Ultra Galaxy* after it ran aground by South Africa's west coast. The authority reported that the operation needs to remove around 500 tons of fuels from the vessel.

### [Plastic waste has increased in the Barents Sea, study shows](#)

July 25 - *The Barents Observer*

[Arctic Ocean, North Atlantic Ocean]

A study conducted by Norwegian Institute of Marine Research and the Norwegian Polar Institute concluded that the amount of microplastic has increased in the Barents Sea due to pollution linked to the fishing industry. The study found that the proportion of seahorses found with microplastics rose from 29 to 95 percent in the last four decades.

### [2023 had highest annual mean sea level on record](#)

July 25 - National Oceanography Centre

[Global]

A section of the UK's National Oceanography Centre's new 'State of the UK Climate' report details how 2023 marked the highest year on record for annual mean sea level since records began in 1915, with levels being particularly high in the second half of the year.

### [Malaysia tracks down missing oil tanker which fled after collision](#)

July 21 - BBC

[Southeast Asia, Singapore]

Malaysian Coast Guards said that it has intercepted and detained the large oil tanker, *Ceres I*, that fled after it collided with the Singapore-flagged *Hafnia Nile* and caught fire on July 19. The Coast Guards further discovered a 17 square kilometer oil spill that resulted from the collision.

### [Oil spills detected in Murmansk region](#)

July 17 - *The Barents Observer*

[Arctic, Russia]

Russia's Federal Service for Supervision of Natural Resources detected a large oil spill in the Kola fjord bay in Murmansk, located only a few kilometers away from the Barents Sea. The area of the oil



spill was 591 square meters and the concentration of petroleum pollution in the water was found to be 400 times higher than the government standard, according to environmental group Rosprirodnadzor.

### [Fukushima beach opens for first time since treated water release](#)

July 13 - *The Japan Times*

[Japan]

On July 13, the Fukushima Prefecture Government reopened one of its beaches to the public for the first time since the Japanese government began releasing treated nuclear water into the ocean.

### [China, Philippines Spar Over Coral Damage in Disputed Waters](#)

July 9 - *Bloomberg*

[South China Sea]

In response to Beijing's claim that Philippine ships' grounding have damaged the coral reef systems in the South China Sea, the Philippine's South China Sea Task Force said that "it is China that has caused untold damage to the maritime environment." Manila is also preparing an environmental case against China over coral reef damages.

### [Norway set to make history as first nation to mine seafloor minerals amidst environmental debate](#)

July 4 - *Arctic Business Journal*

[Norwegian Sea]

On June 26, the Norwegian Ministry of Energy released a proposal for the first licensing round for seabed mining exploration on the Norwegian continental shelf, aiming to identify areas for sustainable extraction of seabed minerals and ensuring minimal environmental impact.

## Handbill Spotlight

### Icebreakers

#### Issue Background

Icebreakers are marine vessels uniquely designed to break ice and make ice-covered waters accessible, either for their own passage or for the passage of other ships through icy landscapes. While they typically only operate in and around the polar regions—the Arctic and the Antarctic oceans—icebreakers themselves are utilized in a wide array of operations and purposes, including but not limited to trade, scientific research, search and rescue, and tourism throughout the year. While they have assisted in clearing a path for military vessels, icebreakers are typically under the



direction of national coast guards, not military branches, and are therefore traditionally not associated with offensive capabilities.

Though also [outfitted](#) with several unique tools for their terrain such as heaters and spotlights, there are three specific features that [allow](#) icebreakers to break through ice: a reinforced hull, which is thicker and covered with special materials; strengthened engines, coupled with specialized navigation and propulsion systems to reduce damage from ice, and; a uniquely wide shape, which gradually slopes at the bow that simultaneously utilizes the ship's weight to break the ice and pushes away broken ice to prevent buildup. This unique shape of the bow and extreme weight displacement are what make them inefficient and unsuitable for normal waterways outside of polar regions.

While there is not an internationally unified classification system for ice capable ships, there exists a [wide array](#) of types that can be categorized based on ship type, size, primary mission, and technical characteristics. For instance, the U.S. and Canada [use](#) four classifications—Patrol, Light, Medium, and Heavy—while Russia has nine classifications largely named after their primary missions.

The idea of an icebreaker ship has [been around](#) as long as polar exploration has existed, with its earliest predecessors (small wooden ships known as koch used by Arctic coastal communities) dating back to the 11th century. As propulsion [technology](#), shipbuilding, and global exploration [evolved](#) over the centuries—especially by the [Finnish](#) who have designed about 80% of the world's icebreakers—the modern icebreaker came to fruition after the turn of the 20th century and continued to popularize. As of January 1, 2024, there [are](#) 243 known icebreaking ships worldwide, 179 of which are in service, and nearly half of which belong to Russia. Although Canada began formally [supporting](#) icebreaking efforts in the mid-1800s, followed soon after by countries like the [U.S.](#) and [Sweden](#), Russia [is](#) the world's icebreaker powerhouse, having been steadily [building](#) the world's largest icebreaker fleet continually since the 1890s and launching the first nuclear-powered icebreaker, the *Lenin*, in 1957.<sup>1</sup>



## Recent Events

On June 28, 2024, the *Ivan Papanin* departed from St. Petersburg, Russia, to begin its sea trials, marking significant progress in the Russian Navy's Project 23550: a [class](#) of armed, multirole, icebreaking patrol ships also known as [Arktika-class icebreakers](#) being built for Russia's Navy and Coast Guard. Simultaneously being called patrol or icebreaker vessels and yet being armed with at least a 76mm AK-176MA artillery system and capable of launching cruise missiles, there is

<sup>1</sup> Image Source: The Russian nuclear icebreaker '50 let Pobedy' on North 88° in the Arctic Ocean in July 2012. (Source: [Wikimedia, CC3.0](#))

controversy over how to describe or interpret this class of vessels, which has been [referred to](#) as [both](#) an “ice-class patrol ship” and [a](#) “combat icebreaker.”

Meanwhile, with the Covid-19 pandemic more firmly in the past and wariness about Russia’s unpredictability and aggression building, interest and investments in icebreaker ships have jumped worldwide, driving a new phase of icebreaker construction and interest in several countries. In February, Japan [announced](#) its first Arctic research vessel, in construction since 2021, will be named *Mirai II*, as voted on by the Japanese public. In early July, Chile held a [ceremony](#) presenting the *Almirante Viel*, the first icebreaker entirely built in South America. Most notably, on July 11, the leaders of Canada, Finland and the United States jointly signed the Icebreaker Collaboration Effort or [ICE Pact](#), which they described as necessary to [scaling up](#) shipbuilding capacity and “compete on the world stage” against adversaries.

Even outside of the shipbuilding or national security spheres, the awareness of and interest in icebreakers is expanding, especially regarding their cost. The construction of two Russian Project 22220 icebreakers was [criticized](#) in July for bringing record monetary losses for the construction shipyard. In Australia, the [RSV Nuyina](#) has been facing malfunctions and publicly exceeding [budgets](#), but one of Australia’s proposed solutions under [consideration](#) is to purchase a second, supporting vessel to continue operations. And starting in July, the Chinese public is able to physically [visit](#) two Chinese-made icebreakers—the newly debuted *Ji Di* and the famous *Xuelong 2*—at the port city of Qingdao, exhibiting the increased public interest in and awareness of such vessels.

## Keep In Mind

Even as polar ice sheets continue to melt, icebreakers are gearing up to be the core deciding factor in Arctic and Antarctic presence, and a record number of nations are willing to pay the costs in the name of national interest. [Nuclear icebreakers](#) are more powerful and capable than their diesel-electric counterparts, but they are very [expensive](#) to operate, which may explain why Russia is the only country constructing nuclear-powered icebreakers today. Seven of the world’s ten [largest](#) icebreakers by size belong to Russia, many of them being nuclear-powered, and now Russia is intelligently building massive, multi-use vessels seemingly capable of self-defense. The rest of the world is responding with clear signs indicating more than just a passive interest in icebreakers.

More importantly, the mission and role of icebreakers is transforming before our eyes. Increased offshore drilling and oil production, increased accessibility of northern sea routes in the Arctic, and the increased [militarization](#) of the Arctic are pushing policymakers and government officials to creatively apply icebreakers in new ways. Russia’s growing fleet of *Arktika*-class ships—described by a retired U.S. Coast Guard captain as “extraordinary ships that provide the Russian Federation with a unique, surface ship capability anywhere in the Arctic Ocean”—are particularly eventful and could easily be signaling a shift from icebreakers’ traditionally non-combatant roles. The U.S. Department of Defense’s new 2024 Arctic Strategy and joint ICE Pact also directly link icebreakers to maintaining peace and stability against aggressors in polar regions. This shift in tone can be expected to persist.

This issue’s [Spotlight](#) was written by Jessica Martin, ICAS Research Associate & Chief Editor, ICAS Newsletters.

# Peer-Reviewed Research on Maritime Issues

## Government Releases & Other Press Statements

- International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea - [“Tribunal delivers its Order in The “Zheng He” Case \(Luxembourg v. Mexico\), Provisional Measures”](#) [July 27]
- U.S. Department of the Interior - [“BOEM Announces Next Steps for Offshore Wind in Gulf of Mexico”](#) [July 26]
- Greenpeace - [“Greenpeace launches Arctic expedition to study vulnerable marine mammals in targeted deep sea mining area”](#) [July 26]
- African Union - [Revised African Maritime Transport Charter](#) [July 25]
- U.S. Department of Defense - [2024 Arctic Strategy](#) [July 22]
- U.S. Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy - [Clean maritime transportation makes waves](#) [July 17]
- Government of Vietnam - [Statement on Viet Nam's submission on limits of extended continental shelf of central area of East Sea](#) [July 18]
- International Maritime Organization - [World Maritime Day theme 2025: Our Ocean - Our Obligation - Our Opportunity](#) [July 11]
- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland - [“Icebreaker initiative means significant opportunities for Finnish industrial policy”](#) [July 11]
- U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency - [“Seized At Sea: Iranian Weapons Smuggled to the Houthis”](#) [July 10]
- MAERSK - [“The ongoing ripple effects of Red Sea shipping disruptions”](#) [July 9]
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan - [“Second Japan-Philippines Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting \(“2+2”\)”](#) [July 8]
- Ministry of External Affairs of India - [“Keynote address by Secretary \(East\) at the 6th EAS Conference on Maritime Security”](#) [July 5]
- Government of Chile - [“It’s Chilean: The first icebreaker ship built in South America”](#) [July 3]
- Ministry of Defense of Japan - [2024 Defense of Japan Pamphlet \[In Chinese\]](#) [July 2024]
- Maritime Organization for Eastern, Southern, and Northern Africa - [“Regional Maritime Transport Policy for Eastern, Southern and Northern Africa”](#) [June 29]
- Ministry of Energy of Norway - [“Public consultation of the first licensing round for seabed minerals”](#) [June 26]
- U.S. Agency for International Development - [Levant Response Operations Chief At A Press Availability On The Humanitarian Maritime Corridor](#) [June 26]

## Analyses & Opinions

- [“Why Are There Fears of War in the South China Sea?”](#) [The New York Times - July 30]
- [“China is itching to mine the ocean floor”](#) [The Economist - July 28]
- [“Will ‘loss and damage’ climate funding reach ocean communities?”](#) [Dialogue Earth - July 25]
- [“The rise and fall of the US aid pier for Gaza”](#) [The Times of Israel - July 25]
- [“Opinion: China’s ‘monster’ ship is a sign of a much bigger problem”](#) [CNN - July 24]
- [“Russia’s War in Ukraine Is Aggravating the Caspian Sea Environmental Crisis”](#) [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace - July 23]
- [“Off Ecuador’s Galapagos, a Former Chinese Shark-Poaching Ship’s New Mission”](#) [China Global South Project - July 23]

- [“The tragic cost of Taiwan's silence on its South China Sea claims”](#) [Nikkei Asia - July 22]
- [“China's Expanding Arctic Ambitions Challenge the U.S. and NATO”](#) [Newsweek - July 21]
- [“China Makes a Port Play in Peru”](#) [The Wall Street Journal - July 21]
- [“Why Japanese researchers are looking to submarine cables for faster tsunami warnings”](#) [The Japan Times - July 21]
- [“Shifting tides: Global piracy trends and emerging threats in 2024”](#) [Hellenic Shipping News - July 18]
- [“The Houthis, Operation Prosperity Guardian, and Asymmetric Threats to Global Commerce”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - July 18]
- [“360° View of America’s “ICE Pact” Polar Icebreaker Partnership with Canada and Finland”](#) [Wilson Center - July 16]
- [“Are China’s blue carbon credits a free pass to harm its oceans?”](#) [Eco-Business - July 16]
- [“Combatting Shipping Emissions in the Arctic”](#) [Wilson Center - July 15]
- [“Inside the U.S. Coast Guard’s Aleutian encounter with China’s military – and what it means”](#) [Arctic Business Journal - July 15]
- [“The Chinese Base That Isn’t There”](#) [The New York Times - July 14]
- [“Do Drones Have a Future in Latin America and the Caribbean?”](#) [The Maritime Executive - July 14]
- [“How the South China Sea Situation Will Develop After the June 17 Clash?”](#) [South China Sea Strategic Situation Probing Initiative - July 12]
- [“Indonesia’s New Military Base in the South China Sea: Preparing for Friction”](#) [Foreign Policy Research Institute - July 11]
- [“Are China’s blue carbon credits a free pass to harm its oceans?”](#) [Dialogue Earth - July 11]
- [“Avoiding War in the South China Sea”](#) [Foreign Affairs - July 9]
- [“Mapped: the vast network of security deals spanning the Pacific, and what it means”](#) [The Guardian - July 8]
- [“Do USVs have a future in Latin American and Caribbean navies?”](#) [CIMSEC - July 8]
- [“Carbon Capture is No Silver Bullet, But Holds Opportunities for Shipping”](#) [The Maritime Executive - July 5]
- [“The obvious idea that slashes shipping's climate impact”](#) [BBC - July 3]
- [“Climate change: Ocean Tribunal ruling gives power to small island nations”](#) [World Economic Forum - July 2]
- [“Modernizing Alaskan Fisheries Regulation for a Changing, Warming Ocean”](#) [Wilson Center - July 2]
- [“South China Sea disputes: can Beijing keep it bilateral despite high-seas clashes?”](#) [South China Morning Post - July 2]
- [“The Indispensable Ingredient for Victory: Defeating Deadly Sea Mines”](#) [CIMSEC - July 2]
- [“Beijing’s Naval Expansion in Africa: 100 Seaports in 20 Years”](#) [Japan Forward - July 2]
- [“Why Can’t the U.S. Navy and Its Allies Stop the Houthis?”](#) [Foreign Policy - July 1]
- [“Denmark will chair the Arctic Council in 2025 – what is it up against?”](#) [The Copenhagen Post - July 1]
- [“Reevaluating the future commercial viability of the Northern Sea Route”](#) [Arctic Business Journal - June 27]
- [“China's undersea cable drive defies U.S. sanctions”](#) [Nikkei Asia - June 26]
- [“The Vanishing Islands That Failed to Vanish”](#) [The New York Times - June 26]

## Other Research

- Magazine: U.S. Naval Institute - [Proceedings Vol. 150 “Naval Aviation Moving Forward”](#) [July 2024]
- Journal Article: *Scientific Reports* Vol. 14 - [“Enhancing global maritime traffic network forecasting with gravity-inspired deep learning models”](#) [July 19]
- Journal Article: *Sustainability* Vol. 16 - [“Sea Level Variability Assessment along the African Coast”](#) [July 2]
- Podcast: CIMSEC - [“Sea Control 537 – Europe’s Role in Indo-Pacific Security with Dr. Joanna Siekiera”](#) [July 18]
- Podcast: Center for Maritime Strategy - [Wargaming War in the Western Pacific](#) [July 9]



## Events on the Maritime Domain

- From June 4-6, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and its sponsors celebrated its [Capitol Hill Ocean Week 2024](#) in Washington, D.C. involving an extensive agenda of speakers and events.
- From June 7-8, UNESCO and the Government of Costa Rica held a High Level Event on Ocean Action titled [“Immersed in Change”](#) in Costa Rica.
- From June 13-14, Banca d’Italia and the International Monetary Fund held a hybrid research conference in Venice, Italy on [“Embedding Sustainability in Credit Risk Assessment”](#) to highlight “how sustainability factors, especially climate change and environmental issues, can be integrated in credit risk assessment,” among other topics.
- On June 25, US-Asia Institute will host a briefing in Washington, D.C. titled [“Deep Sea Mining: Policy Considerations and Implications for the United States.”](#)
- From June 25-28, UNESCO’S Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission will hold their [57th session of the Executive Council](#) at UNESCO Headquarters. Its provisional [agenda](#) is available.
- On June 26, Wilson Center held an online discussion titled [“Sailing to the Edge of the Carbon World: Decarbonizing Shipping from American, Chinese, and European Perspectives.”](#)
- From June 27-28, Maritime Security Centre of Excellence will host its [4th Maritime Security Conference](#) out of Istanbul, focused on the protection of maritime critical infrastructures and seabed.
- On July 1, Ocean Policy Research Institute held a special seminar at Washington, D.C. titled [“The Faroe Islands: Bridging Oceans Through Friendly Relations, Trade, and Tourism.”](#)
- On July 1, Atlantic Council hosted a report launch event on [“Executing distributed operations in a contested maritime environment.”](#)
- On July 2, Brookings Institution hosted an online event titled [“Force Design: A conversation with General Eric Smith, 39th commandant of the US Marine Corps.”](#)
- On July 9, Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology held its international [Future of Ships, Shipping and Environmental Sustainability Conference](#) in Southampton, England, to feature plenary keynotes and panels under the headings of Technology, Human Contribution and Environment.
- On July 11, Center for Strategic & International Studies held its [14th Annual South China Sea Conference](#) in Washington, D.C.
- On July 23, Wilson Center and the U.S. DoD’s Office of Arctic and Global Resilience held an [in-depth discussion on the DOD’s new 2024 Arctic Strategy](#) to discuss how it was formed and its implications for the Arctic region.
- On July 31, Center for Strategic & International Studies will hold a webinar titled [“Rebuilding America’s Maritime Strength with Senator Kelly and Congressman Waltz”](#) as part of its Maritime Security Dialogue series alongside the U.S. Naval Institute.
- On August 7, Center for Strategic & International Studies will host a hybrid conversation titled [“Preserving the Free Flow of Commerce in the Red Sea and Beyond: An Update from FIFTH Fleet Commander VADM George Wikoff, USN.”](#)
- From August 12-14, Maritime Security West will host its [11th annual conference](#) in San Diego, California, gathering global maritime security personnel from both the private and public sectors to take part in roundtable discussions, sessions, and keynote addresses on a wide array of current maritime issues.

- On September 23-26, the International Maritime Organization will be hosting the [2nd WMO-IMO Symposium](#) to discuss potential solutions in addressing extreme maritime weather.
- From November 6-7, Active Communications International will host its [18th Arctic Shipping Summit](#) in Montreal, Canada to gather regional stakeholders and experts to address a variety of shipping issues.

## ICAS Maritime Affairs Program: New and Upcoming

### – ICAS Announcement –



### ICAS is Looking for a Part-Time Intern for Fall 2024!

Interested in gaining first-hand experience on exploring, analyzing and writing on top issues in U.S.-China relations? Looking for a place to improve your professional skills and learn about think tank operations in Washington, D.C.?

Apply to join our team! The internship will run from early-September through mid-December. This is a part-time, 20 hour per week internship that will primarily be conducted in-person at the ICAS office in Washington, D.C.

Competitive candidates will have an interest in U.S.-China relations and are pursuing a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, though those pursuing a relevant master's degree will also be considered.

Apply by August 14, 2024 & Learn More: [chinaus-icas.org/about-icas/careers-internships/internships/](https://chinaus-icas.org/about-icas/careers-internships/internships/)

Stay Informed: [chinaus-icas.org/subscribe/](https://chinaus-icas.org/subscribe/)

### – MAP Commentary –

The U.S. DOD's 2024 Arctic Strategy is a welcome respite from fatalistic views on China

By Jessica Martin

July 25, 2024

On July 22, 2024, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) released the 2024 Arctic Strategy, marking the first update in five years on the DOD's official approach to the Arctic region. Unlike most DOD policy and strategy releases of late, the 2024 Arctic Strategy takes a refreshing perspective on its priorities, thus providing a welcome respite from the now-expected fatalistic views on the People's Republic of China (PRC) in U.S. defense policy communications.





Since its last Arctic strategy was released in June 2019, the Arctic has undergone unprecedented shifts in its geostrategic environment...

Continue Reading:

[chinaus-icas.org/research/the-u-s-dods-2024-arctic-strategy-is-a-welcome-respite-from-fatalistic-views-on-china/](https://chinaus-icas.org/research/the-u-s-dods-2024-arctic-strategy-is-a-welcome-respite-from-fatalistic-views-on-china/)

## — Journal Article —



### Strengthening International Cooperation on Blue Carbon under the Green Silk Road Initiative: China's Practical Pathways

By Wang Sheng

East Asian Policy (2024) Vol. 16, No. 02

#### Abstract:

The blue carbon reservoir plays a unique role in addressing climate change and holds significant importance for China's advancement in the "dual carbon" initiative. The mechanisms, carbon reduction potential, and potential economic value of blue carbon align with the goals of the Green Silk Road Initiative. China's conceptual frameworks, strategies and practices provide strong impetus for enhancing international cooperation and supporting the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative. Looking ahead, integrating blue carbon into the focal points of international cooperation will contribute China's wisdom and solutions to global sustainable development.

Read the Article:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/research/strengthening-international-cooperation-on-blue-carbon-under-the-green-silk-road-initiative-chinas-practical-pathways/>

## — MAP Academic Engagement —

### Dr. Nong Hong speaks at CSIS' 14th Annual South China Sea Conference

Thursday, July 11, 2024

9:00am – 4:00pm EST

On Thursday, July 11, 2024, Dr. Nong Hong joined as a panelist at the 14th Annual South China Sea Conference, presented by the CSIS Southeast Asia Program and Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Hong spoke in "Session 1: State of Play in the South China Sea" alongside three other expert panelists, who discussed and traded opinions on the current state of the situation in the South China Sea. A full video recording of this panel discussion is available.



Learn More:

[chinaus-icas.org/event/dr-nong-hong-participates-as-a-panelist-at-csis-14th-annual-south-china-sea-conference/](https://chinaus-icas.org/event/dr-nong-hong-participates-as-a-panelist-at-csis-14th-annual-south-china-sea-conference/)

## — MAP Academic Engagement —

### ICAS Researchers Hold Academic Visit in Greater Boston

Monday, July 8, 2024

On July 8, 2024, ICAS Executive Director Dr. Nong Hong held an academic visit in the Greater Boston area, joined by Yilun Zhang, ICAS Trade n' Technology Program Manager, Research Associate, and Amanda Jin, ICAS Research Assistant. Mr. Jinsong Xi, Vice President of National Institute for South China Sea Studies (NISCSS), and Dr. Zhenwei Cai from NISCSS also participated in the group visit and academic exchanges.



At Harvard Kennedy School, ICAS and NISCSS scholars had a round table discussion with Professor Henry Lee, Program Director of Belfer Center Environment and Natural Resources Program and other fellows of the Belfer Center. The discussion addressed topics including U.S.-China academic exchanges, decarbonization policy and blue carbon efforts in China, as well as multilateral governance and sustainable development in the Arctic region.

Learn More: [chinaus-icas.org/event/dr-nong-hong-holds-academic-visit-in-greater-boston/](https://chinaus-icas.org/event/dr-nong-hong-holds-academic-visit-in-greater-boston/)