



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] 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 1957.¹



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

¹ 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/

Stay Informed: 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.

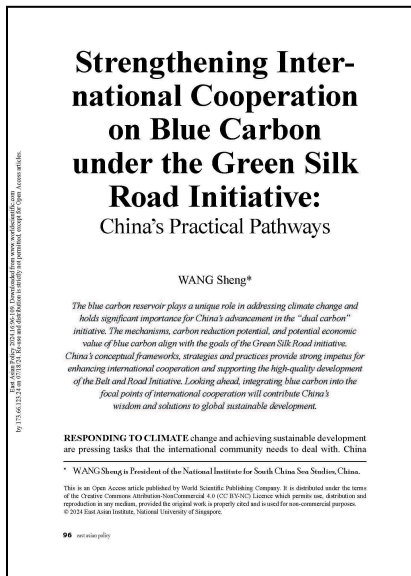


Since its last Arctic strategy was released in June 2019, the Arctic has undergone unprecedented shifts in its geostrategic environment...

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— 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/

— 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/



ICAS MARITIME AFFAIRS HANDBILL

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Recent News in Global Maritime Affairs

[1] Ocean Governance and Maritime Cooperation [1]

[Taiwan, Japan hold maritime talks in Taipei](#)

August 27 - *Taipei Times*
[East Asia]

On August 26, Taiwan and Japan held their sixth Maritime Affairs Cooperation Dialogue in Taipei, Taiwan. This meeting focused on cooperation in several areas, including maritime security, conservation of the marine environment, “marine power development,” fisheries and marine science, and safety regarding nuclear energy. Prior maritime-related memorandum of understandings were also mentioned in the spirit of continuing support for already established maritime initiatives.

[Finland and Estonia Continue with Investigations into Balticconnector Pipeline Damage](#)

August 19 - *Pipeline Technology Journal*
[Baltic Sea, Global]

On August 14, the prime ministers of Finland and Estonia announced that investigations into the rupture of the Balticconnector pipeline in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea last autumn are still ongoing. Two days prior, Chinese authorities reportedly acknowledged for the first time that it was a Chinese freighter that accidentally damaged the pipeline during a severe storm.

[Russia criticises German progress in Nord Stream sabotage inquiry](#)

August 19 - *The Guardian*
[Europe]

Russia has officially complained to Germany about its investigation into the 2022 sabotage of the Nord Stream gas pipelines, accusing Germany of lacking efforts in finding the perpetrators. The

complaint follows Germany's issuing of an arrest warrant for a Ukrainian suspect and Russian concerns that the investigation may be closed prematurely without revealing those responsible. Germany stated that the investigation is still ongoing and that information will be shared.

[India, Vietnam hold maritime security dialogue, discuss ways to enhance cooperation](#)

August 16 - *Deccan Herald*

[South Asia, Southeast Asia]

India and Vietnam recently held a Maritime Security Dialogue to discuss ways to enhance bilateral cooperation and strengthen collaboration to ensure security and stability in the region. Both sides emphasized the importance of maintaining a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.

[Jaishankar meets Maldives Defence Minister Maumoon, discusses joint initiatives for maritime security](#)

August 10 - *The Print*

[Pacific Ocean, South Asia]

During a three day visit to the country, India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met with Maldives Defence Minister Mohamed Ghassan Maumoon to discuss defense and security cooperation and joint initiatives for maritime security between the two countries.

[Ireland elected to international seabed regulator for first time](#)

August 6 - *Irish Legal News*

[Europe]

Ireland has been elected to the International Seabed Authority (ISA) for the first time, further increasing its role in managing marine resources and protecting the marine environment.

[Nigerian Delegation Tours Moroccan Ports and Maritime Advancements](#)

August 3 - *Morocco World News*

[Africa]

A high-level delegation from Nigeria, led by Nigeria's Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, visited several ports and maritime-related centers in Morocco with their Moroccan counterparts to learn more about Morocco's maritime advancements and boost bilateral cooperation.

[Brazil's Carvalho to lead seabed-mining authority following predecessor's controversial term](#)

August 3 - *Mongabay*

[South America, Global]

Brazil's Leticia Carvalho has been elected as the next secretary-general of the International Seabed Authority (ISA), defeating incumbent ISA Secretary-General Michael Lodge.

[European NGOs call for more debate on deep-sea mining](#)

July 31 - *Euro News*

[Europe, Global]

European non-government organizations have intensified their calls for a more extensive debate on deep-sea mining, pressing the European Union to thoroughly assess the environmental risks prior to advancing any mining activities. They argue that the potential damage to marine ecosystems could be irreversible and also stress the importance of transparency.

[2] Maritime Security and Defense [2]

[Pentagon chief orders two aircraft carrier strike groups to remain in Middle East](#)

August 25 - *Alarabiya News*

[United States, Middle East]

On August 25, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin ordered two aircraft carrier strike groups to remain deployed in the Middle East to support Israeli security. Prior to this announcement, the Abraham Lincoln carrier strike group—which arrived in the area three days prior—was expected to replace the Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike group that was already operating in the region.

[Australia to take command of international taskforce protecting Red Sea shipping lanes](#)

August 22 - *ABC News*

[Middle East, Red Sea, Australia]

Unlike prior reporting had seemingly suggested, the Royal Australian Navy will assume command of Combined Task Force 153, one of the five international task forces that make up the U.S.-led Combined Maritime Forces initiative focused on protecting shipping lanes in the Red Sea.

[German warships await orders on crossing Taiwan Strait](#)

August 19 - *Reuters*

[East Asia, Europe]

While currently deployed in the Indo-Pacific and visiting several ports, two German warships—the frigate *Baden-Wuerttemberg* and the replenishment ship *Frankfurt am Main*—are awaiting instruction from Berlin regarding a potential passage through the Taiwan Strait in September. This would mark the German navy's first passage through the Taiwan Strait since 2002.

[Coast Guard confirms plans to buy polar icebreaker, station it in Juneau](#)

August 17 - *Alaska Beacon*

[United States, Arctic Ocean]

To fulfill the mission of increasing the U.S. presence in the polar regions, the US Coast Guard has purchased a new commercial icebreaker which it plans to station in Juneau, Alaska. While expected following a preliminary announcement earlier this year, the purchase confirmation occurred just after the *Healy* icebreaker experienced an electrical fire that halted its operations.

[Russian military ship spotted by Coast Guard near Alaskan coast](#)

August 9 - *CBS News*

[Arctic Ocean, United States, Russia]

On August 9, the US Coast Guard cutter *Alex Haley* came across a Russian naval vessel near Alaska's Aleutian Islands. The vessel was sailing in international waters but within the U.S. exclusive economic zone, similar to other recent movements by foreign vessels in the region.

[Philippines, Vietnam coast guards hold first joint drills](#)

August 9 - *DW*

[Southeast Asia, South China Sea]

The Philippine and Vietnamese coast guards successfully held their first joint drills off Manila, focusing on humanitarian exercises such as firefighting, search-and-rescue and medical response.

[Turkey launches newly built anti-submarine warship for Ukraine](#)

August 2 - *Turkish Minute*

[Europe, Black Sea]

Turkey successfully launched a newly built anti-submarine warship for the Ukrainian Navy, the second warship Turkey built for Ukraine since February 2022. Ukraine's Defense Minister, along with several high-ranking officials and Ukraine's first lady, attended the launching ceremony.

[India pledges \\$300m loan to boost Vietnam's maritime security](#)

August 2 - *Radio Free Asia*

[South Asia, Southeast Asia]

During a three-day state visit by Vietnam's Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh to India, hosted in New Delhi by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India made an offer to provide Vietnam with US\$300 million to strengthen its maritime security.

[Aussie Collins-class subs get \\$2.2B AUD sustainment pledge](#)

August 1 - *Breaking Defense*

[South Pacific Ocean]

On July 27, the Australian government announced a pledge of AUD\$2.2 billion towards supporting the longevity of its Collin-class submarine while Australia awaits the delivery of the U.S.-built Virginia-class submarines that are set to be delivered sometime in the 2030s.

[3] Maritime Economy and Shipping [3]

[Port of Lobito Handles First Congolese Copper Shipment to the U.S.](#)

August 25 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Africa, Atlantic Ocean, United States]

Angola's Port of Lobito successfully sent off its first shipment of copper cathodes to the United States through its new mineral terminal in a sign of expanding development in the region. The Port of Lobito is directly connected to the Lobito Atlantic Railway—newly opened in January—that stretches 800 miles to the center of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's copper belt.

[Developers of large construction projects in Peru call for change of government attitude](#)

August 24 - *BNAmericas*

[South America, China]

Cosco Shipping Ports Chancay Perú (CSPCP), to further support its US\$3.6 billion Chancay megaport, has identified at least eight large projects—such as railways, trains, highways and an industrial park—that it says is necessary to take full advantage of the potential for Chancay port. The first phase of Chancay port, currently 91% complete, is set to open in November 2024.

[GSA addresses concerns over new Shippers' Authority Law](#)

August 23 - *GBC Ghana Online*

[Africa, Global]

After Ghana passed its new Ghana Shippers' Law at the end of July, the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) openly addressed concerns that were brought by the Ghana Union of Traders Association and the Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders related to transparency and registrations.

[Viking Line cuts emissions 90% with BioLNG on Baltic Sea route](#)

August 16 - *GasWorld*

[Baltic Sea, North Atlantic Ocean]

From August 29 through September 4, Finnish cruise company Viking Line's *Viking Glory* and *Viking Grace* vessels will operate solely on liquefied biogas (LBG or BioLNG), establishing the Baltic

Sea's first green shipping corridor. According to Viking Line, the open use of biofuel also increased the number of booked trips by 500% out of support for the initiative.

[Yang Ming Marine ship catches fire in container explosion in Ningbo](#)

August 10 - *Focus Taiwan*

[East Asia]

A Liberian-flagged, Taiwanese company-owned cargo vessel, YM Mobility, caught fire following an explosion within a container onboard that held hazardous materials. The vessel was docked at China's Ningbo port and was scheduled to sail to Jakarta, Indonesia.

[Wallem Group and COSCO Enter Strategic Cooperation Agreement](#)

August 5 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Global, China]

Global partner Wallem Group and China-based COSCO's Shipping Seafarer Management Company have signed a strategic cooperation agreement to enhance bilateral cooperation on common goals such as reaching "green, low-carbon, and intelligent shipping" as well as to "further integrate resources and jointly enhance competitiveness in ship management."

[Sturgeon Bay shipyard builds and delivers a record-breaking liquefied natural gas barge](#)

August 2 - *Green Bay Press Gazette*

[United States]

On July 31 in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding successfully delivered the largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) bunker barge ever constructed. The delivery of the 416-foot-long vessel, known as *Progress*, was built for and designed by Crowley, the United States' largest independent operator of tank vessels, and can carry 12,000 cubic meters of LNG.

[WSC Presents Fund Plan to Support Green Fuels Ahead of IMO's MEPC Session](#)

July 31 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Global]

The World Shipping Council has adjusted its proposal to the International Maritime Organization that is dedicated to creating an equalized financial mechanism that also encourages the adoption of green fuels. The global shipping industry is also actively addressing other decarbonization issues.

[4] Climate Change and Blue Carbon Economy [4]

[Tepco aims to dismantle Fukushima water tanks from 2025](#)

August 26 - *The Japan Times*

[North Atlantic Ocean, East Asia]

Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings (Tepco) announced plans to begin dismantling the now-empty tanks that had stored treated wastewater from the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant. Over the past year, under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency and amidst environmental protests, Tepco released a total of 62,400 metric tons of treated water.

[New Mangrove Methodology Featuring Remote-Sensing Expands Nature-based Solutions From Gold Standard](#)

August 26 - *Carbon Herald*

[Global]

Swiss sustainability group Gold Standard and German climate group FORLIANCE released their first methodology—the Sustainable Management of Mangroves Methodology—for mangrove projects that enables remote-sensing applications for measurement and impact quantification.

[Mediterranean Sea reaches highest surface temperature ever recorded](#)

August 16 - *France24*

[Mediterranean Sea]

On August 15, the Mediterranean Sea broke its maximum sea surface temperature record with a daily median of 28.90C. The last record was last broken in July 2023 with a temperature of 28.71C, making 2024 the second year in a row that the Mediterranean will have been at its warmest.

[Fijian coral reveals new 627-year record of Pacific Ocean climate](#)

August 16 - *Phys.org*

[South Pacific Ocean, Global]

By analyzing a 627-year coral record from Fiji, an international team of climate scientists have been able to identify unprecedented information about ocean temperatures and climate variability in the Pacific Ocean dating back to 1370, including how ocean temperature is currently at its highest point in the past 653 years.

[Coastal erosion rapidly affecting Arctic Ocean's ability to absorb CO2 – Nature study](#)

August 14 - *The Print*
[Arctic Ocean, Global]

According to a new study, coastal erosion along the Arctic Ocean is rapidly decreasing the Arctic Ocean's ability to absorb carbon dioxide, leaving it to release more carbon dioxide than it absorbs.

[Cloud brightening over oceans may stave off climate change, but with risk](#)

August 12 - *Mongabay*
[Global]

Researchers are experimenting with marine cloud brightening—"the spraying of sea salt aerosols or other fine particles into clouds to artificially brighten them and increase the sun's reflectivity"—as a potential way to buy time amidst global warming. The research remains highly controversial, however, with some calling it a distraction from true solutions and others concerned about this strategy's impact on the global climate system if improperly applied.

[Heat Raises Fears of 'Demise' for Great Barrier Reef Within a Generation](#)

August 7 - *The New York Times*
[South Pacific Ocean]

A new scientific study raises fears of the 'demise' of the Great Barrier Reef within one generation following extreme temperatures in the Coral Sea reaching their highest point in at least 400 years.

[A mixed response for proposed Cornwall seaweed farm](#)

August 5 - *The Fish Site*
[United Kingdom]

A controversial seaweed farm that was proposed by the two companies Biome Algae and Camel Fish to be constructed in Port Quin Bay of Cornwall, United Kingdom is now receiving support that could help in its fruition as the holistic benefits of the projects are now being discussed.

[New Study Shows Impressive CO2 Capture Capabilities Of Marine Animals](#)

August 1 - *Carbon Herald*
[Global]

A new study conducted by global information hub Ocean Science & Technology shows that mesopelagic fish—animals found at ocean depths greater than 200m—have stronger capabilities in capturing and storing 'oceanic blue carbon' during their lifespan.

The Nord Stream Pipelines

Issue Background ¹

The Nord Stream pipelines, run by [Nord Stream AG](#), an international consortium of five major companies established in 2005, were built to transport natural gas directly from Russia to Europe. The pipelines include the original Nord Stream and its parallel Nord Stream 2. The original Nord Stream pipeline, operational since 2011, stretches 1,224 kilometers under the Baltic Sea from Vyborg, Russia, to Lubmin, Germany. Nord Stream 2 was completed in 2021 but faced delays in becoming operational due to geopolitical tensions. Together, these pipelines are designed to supply Europe with up to [110 billion cubic meters](#) of natural gas annually while bypassing traditional transit routes through Ukraine and Poland.

Before the [Russian invasion](#) of Ukraine in February 2022, the Nord Stream projects were already a topic of intense debate. Critics argued that the pipelines increased Europe's reliance on Russian energy, potentially giving Moscow undue [influence](#) over Europe, especially over Germany. The completion of Nord Stream 2, in particular, was seen by many as a strategic move to secure long-term energy supplies, despite the U.S. and Eastern European countries, particularly Ukraine, [expressing concerns](#) about the geopolitical risks involved.



In September 2022, six months after the start of the Russia invasion, the Nord Stream 1 pipeline was [sabotaged](#) in a series of underwater explosions. The blasts severely damaged the pipeline, leading to a complete halt in gas flow. The incident immediately triggered a flurry of accusations between Russia and Western nations, each blaming the other for the attack. Russia labeled the

¹ Image: A map of the Nord Stream pipelines with shipping traffic. (Credit: The European Space Agency, ESA Standard License)

sabotage as an act of [“international terrorism”](#) and [accused](#) the West of seeking to destabilize its energy exports further. Conversely, Western officials [initially suggested](#) that Russia might have sabotaged its own infrastructure to heighten the energy crisis in Europe or to create a pretext for further military or political actions.

Additionally, Nord Stream 2, not soon after its completion in 2021, faced immediate setbacks due to [Western sanctions](#) imposed in response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Germany, under intense international pressure and shifting political dynamics, [halted](#) the certification process for Nord Stream 2, effectively suspending the pipeline indefinitely.

Recent Events

Nearly two years after the Nord Stream 1 sabotage incident, controversy and arguments around the incident was again renewed by newly released findings. On August 18, 2024, a [German investigation](#) released its most recent findings and stated that a [pro-Ukrainian group](#) used a rented yacht to transport explosives to the site, where they were subsequently placed on the pipeline. This narrative has sparked significant controversy, particularly between U.S. and German officials, as they navigate the delicate diplomatic implications of these findings. These revelations have also intensified disputes within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), with some member states, especially [Poland](#), questioning the handling and communication of investigation results.

In contrast, Russia has consistently accused Western nations of orchestrating the sabotage. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov recently [reiterated](#) this position, claiming that the United States had ordered the explosions as part of a broader strategy to weaken Russia's influence in Europe. Moscow has used this incident to further criticize the West, accusing European countries of being complicit in what it describes as an act of "international terrorism."

Other countries have also been involved in investigating the Nord Stream 1 sabotage. [Sweden](#), in particular, has conducted underwater surveys and forensic analyses to determine the cause and perpetrators of the explosions. [Denmark](#) has similarly been active in investigating the incident within its waters. Both countries have kept their findings largely under wraps, fueling speculation and frustration among the international community.

Keep In Mind

The ongoing investigation into the sabotage of Nord Stream 1 continues to be a source of tension, particularly between Germany and Poland. The recent findings have not only strained relations within Europe but also highlighted the fragile nature of western alliances during the Ukraine conflict. Germany, heavily reliant on Russian gas through Nord Stream, finds itself in a delicate position, balancing its energy needs with the growing pressure to reduce dependence on Russian resources. Meanwhile, Poland, a vocal critic of Nord Stream 2, has used the incident to reinforce its stance against the pipelines, further complicating intra-European dynamics as the war rages on

into an uncertain future, as Ukrainian forces have made advances in some areas while losing ground in others in recent months.

As the war in Ukraine unfolds, scrutiny around the Nord Stream pipelines is expected to intensify. The differing conclusions and theories surrounding the Nord Stream 1 sabotage have created a vicious cycle of nations pointing fingers at one another. The situation remains unresolved, with the potential for further diplomatic fallout as more information comes to light. As the investigation continues, the Nord Stream 1 incident remains a significant flashpoint in the broader geopolitical tensions, underscoring the fragile state of relations between Russia and the West since the start of the 2022 Russia-Ukraine war.

This issue's [Spotlight](#) was written by Yilun Zhang, ICAS Research Associate & Manager, Maritime Issue Tracker Project.

Peer-Reviewed Research on Maritime Issues

Government Releases & Other Press Statements

- Government of Australia - [“53rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders’ Meeting”](#) [August 26]
- U.S. Department of State - [“Houthi Attacks on the SOUNION Oil Tanker Threaten Becoming an Environmental Disaster”](#) [August 24]
- Ministry of Defence of Australia - [“Australia to command Red Sea task force”](#) [August 23]
- United Nations Environment Programme - [“A regional agreement aims to save a tropical paradise in trouble”](#) [August 19]
- Ministry of External Affairs of India - [“4th India-Vietnam Maritime Security Dialogue”](#) [August 16]
- Saudi Press Agency - [“Transport General Authority Holds an ESG Symposium”](#) [August 14]
- Government of New Zealand - [“NZ to cooperate on marine resources in Palau”](#) [August 14]
- U.S. Pacific Fleet - [“Multilateral Maritime Cooperative Activity Joint Statement”](#) [August 7]
- The White House - [“Memorandum on Presidential Determination on the Proposed Agreement Among the Government of the United States of America, the Government of Australia, and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for Cooperation Related to Naval Nuclear Propulsion”](#) [August 5]
- International Seabed Authority - [“ISA Assembly elects Ms. Leticia Carvalho of Brazil as a new Secretary-General”](#) [August 2]
- Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways of India - [“India’s Port and Maritime Sector: Latest Government Updates and Plans”](#) [August 2]
- Ministry of Economy of Ukraine - [“Full restoration of navigation safety in the Black Sea is a common interest of Ukraine and Turkey: Yuliia Svyrydenko”](#) [August 1]
- International Chamber of Shipping - [“New hydrogen demand report unveils once in a generation opportunity”](#) [August 1]
- The State Council of the People’s Republic of China - [“Xi calls for modernizing China’s border, sea, air defense”](#) [August 1]
- Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Indonesia - [“Why do Indian Ocean architectures for maritime security fail?”](#) [July 31]

- World Shipping Council - [“WSC advances Green Balance Mechanism Proposal with New Submission to IMO”](#) [July 31]
- Government of Jamaica - [“Jamaica Reaffirms Commitment to ISA Principles”](#) [July 31]
- Ghana Shippers’ Authority - [“Parliament Passes Shippers’ Authority Bill into Law”](#) [July 30]

Analyses & Opinions

- [“China’s Port Power”](#) [The Wire China - August 25]
- [“In Beijing’s Quest for Control of the South China Sea, a New Flashpoint Emerges”](#) [The Wall Street Journal - August 25]
- [“Will German warships pass through the Taiwan Strait?”](#) [DW - August 24]
- [“The High Seas Treaty: Prospects and challenges”](#) [Observer Research Foundation - August 23]
- [“How China Could Blockade Taiwan”](#) [Center for Strategic & International Studies - August 22]
- [“Why protecting the ocean is a key priority for the EU”](#) [Open Access Government - August 21]
- [“Dissecting the new Shippers’ Authority Act; uncovering veiled intents and implications on the maritime business”](#) [GhanaWeb - August 20]
- [“Will the new U.S. defense strategy for the Arctic break the investment ice ceiling?”](#) [Arctic Today - August 20]
- [“Why there’s no quick fix in the South China Sea disputes, and war ‘cannot be ruled out’”](#) [South China Morning Post - August 19]
- [“Maritime Maneuvers: China’s hidden Quest for Oceanic Supremacy”](#) [Modern Diplomacy - August 17]
- [“China in the Indo-Pacific: Alfred Mahan and the Island Chains”](#) [Australian Institute of International Affairs - August 16]
- [“The Need for Speed”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - August 15]
- [“Eastern Pacific Fisheries Managers Have Prime Opportunity to Boost Sustainability”](#) [Pew Charitable Trusts - August 12]
- [“Will Australia Reject a Proposal to Drill Under a Coral Reef?”](#) [The Maritime Executive - August 11]
- [“Unlocking potential of China-Africa collaboration in blue economy”](#) [CGTN - August 9]
- [“Sanctions are not an obstacle: how Senator Zubarev’s ships dock in Norwegian ports, and his companies sell fish”](#) [The Barents Observer - August 8]
- [“China looks to its shipyards to beat US in any future war”](#) [Reuters - August 8]
- [“Election of New Secretary-General Opens ‘New Chapter’ for ISA”](#) [International Institute for Sustainable Development - August 7]
- [“Navigating Turbulence at Second Thomas Shoal”](#) [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace - August 7]
- [“The Maritimes are no longer an economic basket case. But the good times bring their own problems”](#) [The Globe and Mail - August 6]
- [“Ukraine Bought Two Warships From Turkey - But Can it Take Delivery?”](#) [The Maritime Executive - August 5]
- [“A Freight Election Just Reshaped the Next Steps for Deep Sea Mining”](#) [Bloomberg - August 2]
- [“Carbon Pricing Is Coming To Maritime Shipping”](#) [Clean Technica - August 2]
- [“China’s Massive Next-Generation Amphibious Assault Ship Takes Shape”](#) [Center for Strategic & International Studies - August 1]
- [“Australia’s Growing Defense and Security Role in the Indo-Pacific”](#) [Council on Foreign Relations - August 1]
- [“Unmanned Maritime Systems and Warships: Interpretations Under the Law of the Sea”](#) [Center for International Maritime Security - July 31]
- [“Multilateral cooperation needed to deter Beijing in South China Sea”](#) [Nikkei Asia - July 31]

Other Research

- Podcast: *ChinaTalk* - [“Industrial Icebreaker Policy”](#) [August 13]
- Interview: [“Q&A: Vice Admiral Andrew J. Tjongson, Commander, Pacific Area and Commander, Defense Force West, U.S. Coast Guard”](#) *Sea Power Magazine* [August 13]
- Journal Article: [“A Study on the Governance Pathways of the Law of the Sea in Response to Climate Change”](#) *Frontiers in Marine Science* Vol. 11 [August 20]
- Journal Article: [“Reduced Arctic Ocean CO2 uptake due to coastal permafrost erosion”](#) *Nature Climate Change* [August 12]
- Journal Article: [“Blue Economy Financing Solutions for the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sectors of Caribbean Island States”](#) *Fishes* Vol. 9, No. 8 [August 3]
- Journal Article: [“Black Sea, grain, and two humanitarian corridors: unblocking Ukrainian shipping amid the Russian invasion”](#) *Small Wars & Insurgencies* [August 1]

Events on the Maritime Domain

- On July 31, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace hosted an online event titled [“Rising Seas Triggered Climate Lawsuits: What Now?”](#)
- On August 7, Center for Strategic & International Studies hosted 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 hosted 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.
- From August 21-22, the Government of Fiji, supported by the Government of the United Kingdom, hosted [Fiji’s Maritime Security Committee](#) in Suva to discuss safety and security at Fiji’s borders.
- From August 23-25, UNESCO and the Hainan Provincial government jointly held the [2nd Hainan Free Trade Port International Science and Technology Innovation Cooperation Forum \(ISTICE\) & Deep-Sea Science and Technology Innovation Conference \(DSSTIC\) 2024](#) in Sanya City, Hainan Province, China with the theme of “Gathering Wisdom in the Deep Sea, Sharing the Blue Ocean.”
- On August 29, Cloverly and Gresham Smith will host a webinar titled [“Offsetting with Purpose: How Gresham Smith Built a Carbon Program that Delivered Immediate Impact.”](#)
- From September 18-22, the three-day [Africa Aerospace & Defense 2024 Conference](#) will be held in Tshwane, South Africa. Day three of the conference, dedicated to “Maritime Security,” will feature several keynote addresses, panels, and discussions on current events in maritime security.
- On September 19, Center for Strategic & International Studies will host an online webcast titled [“America’s Warfighting Navy with Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Franchetti.”](#)
- From September 23-26, the World Meteorological Organization and International Maritime Organization will host their [2nd WMO-IMO Symposium on Extreme Maritime Weather](#) in London, United Kingdom.
- From September 26-27, Ridge China will host their 13th annual [Green Shiptech China Congress](#) gathering experts and decision makers for in-depth discussion on global and domestic shipping issues.

- 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.
- From November 28-29, the annual [International Maritime Human Factors Symposium](#) will be jointly hosted at the International Maritime Organization headquarters in London to gather “academia, industry, and regulatory bodies to enhance maritime safety and operational efficiency.”

ICAS Maritime Affairs Program: New and Upcoming

– MAP Commentary –

Media Manipulation and Strategic Tension: The Philippines' Role in the South China Sea Dispute

By Nong Hong
August 22, 2024

The South China Sea has long been a flashpoint for geopolitical tension, with multiple nations vying for control over this critical maritime region. In recent years, some of the most contentious interactions in the South China Sea have involved China and the Philippines, two nations whose conflicting claims have fueled numerous confrontations over the years, particularly since 2021, when they became embroiled in a standoff over the Second Thomas Shoal, triggered by the Philippines' [resumption of resupply missions](#) in the disputed area. Recently, these clashes have [escalated, sparking international concern and media scrutiny...](#)

Continue Reading:

chinaus-icas.org/research/media-manipulation-and-strategic-tension-the-philippines-role-in-the-south-china-sea-dispute/



– MAP Academic Engagement –

Dr. Nong Hong participates in Bai Xian Asia Institute's BXAI Summer Program 2024

On August 13, 2024, ICAS Executive Director and Senior Fellow Dr. Nong Hong spoke in an expert panel during Bai Xian Asia Institute's BXAI Summer Program 2024, held in Shanghai in partnership with Shanghai Jiao Tong University. This year's program covers the holistic theme of “Digital Transformation in Asia.”

Dr. Hong shared her research on maritime security with the BXAI fellows, highlighting what she believes are the most pressing issues in the maritime domain in East Asia.



Learn More: <https://www.bxai.org/bxsp2024/>



ICAS MARITIME AFFAIRS HANDBILL

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Recent News in Global Maritime Affairs

[1] Ocean Governance and Maritime Cooperation [1]

[Quad group expands maritime security cooperation at Biden's farewell summit](#)

September 21 - Reuters

[United States, Indo-Pacific]

The leaders of the 'Quad' nations—Australia, India, Japan and the United States—met for a summit in Delaware on September 21, during which they expanded collective maritime security initiatives. These initiatives include conducting joint coast guard operations, sharing technologies with nations in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands, and expanding the existing Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness. The summit was not directed at another country, but did begin with a briefing on China by President Joe Biden.

[Inside the US push to steer Vietnam's subsea cable plans away from China](#)

September 17 - Reuters

[United States, Southeast Asia]

According to several sources involved, since January 2024, U.S. officials have been holding discussions with Vietnamese and foreign officials and business executives regarding Vietnam's subsea cables strategy. Vietnam, whose subsea cables system has faced repeated failures, is in talks with Chinese companies to build 10 new cables by 2030, which the U.S. is urging against.

[Tehran, Moscow discuss maritime cooperation in Caspian Sea during China visit](#)

September 15 - Tehran Times

[China, Russia, Middle East, Eurasia]

On September 12, Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari of Iran and Deputy Minister Alexander Fomin of Russia attended the Xiangshan Security Forum in Beijing. They focused on regional security

among Caspian-bordering countries, promoting stability without foreign interference, and enhancing cooperation in the North-South Corridor to boost trade and connectivity.

[India eyes place at high table of global maritime narrative](#)

September 15 - *The Week*

[India, Global]

On September 3, India announced that its Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways will be hosting 'Sagarmanthan: The Great Oceans Dialogue,' with about 100 countries expected to participate. The Dialogue will take place from November 18-19 in Mumbai, with a goal of creating strategies and solutions for a more sustainable and equitable future in the maritime arena.

[South China Sea: Philippines, Beijing hold 'frank' talks amid Sabina Shoal feud](#)

September 12 - *South China Morning Post*

[South China Sea, East Asia]

China and the Philippines held another round of talks to discuss their territorial disputes over the South China Sea under its bilateral consultation mechanism. The Philippines reaffirmed its position on Sabina Shoal, and both countries agreed to explore ways to reduce tensions. They also agreed to continue discussions on areas of cooperation, such as hotline mechanisms, coastguard cooperation, and marine scientific cooperation.

[House ratifies Philippine Archipelagic Sea Lanes bill](#)

September 9 - *Manila Standard*

[Southeast Asia]

On September 9, the Philippines' House of Representatives approved the bicameral conference committee report on the proposed Philippine Archipelagic Sea Lanes. The bill's role is described as safeguarding national security and international law while facilitating foreign passage in a way that preserves the Philippines' maritime integrity. The bill will now be transmitted to the President.

[Defined maritime boundaries would ensure Africa's peace and security - Minister](#)

September 7 - *Ghana Business News*

[Africa, Global]

Ghana's Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, speaking at the 2024 International Conference on Ocean Governance in Accra, emphasized the importance of defining maritime boundaries to ensure peace and security in Africa. He also stressed that cooperation among African nations is essential for the sustainable management of marine resources and for addressing security challenges in maritime zones.

[Việt Nam, Thailand ink MoU on maritime law enforcement cooperation](#)

August 30 - Viet Nam News

[Southeast Asia]

The Vietnam Coast Guard and Thailand's Maritime Enforcement Coordinating Centre signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in Hanoi to enhance maritime law enforcement cooperation. The MOU focuses on issues including smuggling, illegal fishing, and search and rescue operations. Officials emphasized that this partnership will foster mutual understanding and pave the way for more intensive collaboration in maritime security for regional peace and stability.

[2] Maritime Security and Defense [2]

[Russia and Ukraine face off over Kerch Strait](#)

September 23 - Al Jazeera

[Black Sea, Russia, Eurasia]

On September 23, Russia and Ukraine met for a legal fight at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague over the Kerch Strait, which connects mainland Russia and the Crimean Peninsula. Ukraine's representative Anton Kortenvykh argued in the opening of hearings that "Russia wants to take the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait for itself." Russian Gennady Kuzmin made the point that Ukraine's accusations are "baseless, fall outside of" Ukraine's jurisdiction.

[Russia's Pacific Fleet, Chinese Navy Begin Interaction-2024 Drills in Sea of Japan](#)

September 21 - Sputnik International

[Global, Russia]

The Russian and Chinese navies launched the joint naval exercise "Beibu/Interaction-2024" in the Sea of Japan, with plans to practice mock enemy attacks from the air, water, and underwater with anti-aircraft and anti-submarine weapons. The Chinese ships and sailors are staying in Vladivostok, the Russian Pacific Fleet's main base, also taking place in cultural events.

[China-Philippines retreat, for now, from Sabina Shoal row](#)

September 19 - Asia Times

[South China Sea]

On September 19, according to public announcements by both the Philippines and China, the two countries withdrew their coastguards and affiliated vessels from the Sabina Shoal in the South China Sea after months of contest. Meanwhile, critics in the Philippines described recalling Philippine's coastal guards from Sabine Sholar as a "surrender."

[China condemns German navy's transit of Taiwan Strait](#)

September 14 - Reuters

[Pacific Ocean, East Asia, Europe]

On September 14, two German navy ships sailed through the Taiwan Strait. The People's Liberation Army's Eastern Theatre Command criticized Germany's "wrong" message of having two naval ships in Taiwan Strait, and warned that Troops in the Eastern Theatre will "resolutely counter all threats and provocations."

[Xiangshan security forum opens amid South China Sea tensions](#)

September 12 - Nikkei Asia

[China, Indo-Pacific, Global]

On September 12, China held the 10th Beijing Xiangshan Forum on defense and security, which invited multiple countries including the United States. The Pentagon sent Michael Chase, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for China, Taiwan and Mongolia, to the forum. Two days before the Xiangshan Forum, Adm. Sam Paparo, head of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, held a call with his counterpart, Wu Yanan, head of China's Southern Theater Command, to maintain communication.

[Japan's Largest Warship Headed to California for F-35B Testing](#)

September 10 - USNI News

[East Asia, Pacific Ocean]

According to the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force, Japan's largest warship, Izumo-class carrier JS *Kaga*, will sail to San Diego later this year for F-35B Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter developmental tests. The day before, U.S. Indo-Pacific Commander Adm. Samuel Paparo held the first meeting with People's Liberation Army Southern Theater Commander Gen. Wu Yanan since bilateral military communication became stagnant in 2022.

[Exercise Varuna 2024 concludes, expanding India-France naval cooperation in the Mediterranean](#)

September 7 - India News Network

[Mediterranean Sea, Southeast Asia]

From September 2-4, the 22nd edition of India's and France's bilateral naval Exercise Varuna was successfully conducted in the Mediterranean Sea. The exercise includes coordinated operations between air and naval assets, advanced anti-submarine warfare exercise, air defense drills, and live weapon firings.

[Australia Hiring Naval Repair Workers Ahead of More U.S. Submarine Visits](#)

September 2 - USNI News

[United States, South Pacific Ocean]

The Australian government announced its plan of employing 200 people over the next two years for the operation and maintenance of nuclear-powered submarines. Meanwhile, for the first time, the nuclear powered submarine USS *Hawaii* was maintained by foreign workers on foreign soil at Australia's Diamantina Pier.

[Vietnam, Philippines to sign defense cooperation agreement](#)

August 30 - Radio Free Asia

[Southeast Asia]

Vietnamese defense minister Phan Van Giang and his Philippine counterpart in Giberto Teodoro signed a letter of intent to facilitate cooperation on humanitarian assistance, disaster relief at sea, and military medical arrangements. Secretary Teodoro mentioned that the two countries might be able to sign a memorandum on defense cooperation at the end of year.

[3] Maritime Economy and Shipping [3]

[CMA CGM to Buy \\$1.2 Billion Stake in Brazil Port Operator Before Launching Takeover](#)

September 23 - *The Wall Street Journal*

[South America, Europe]

CMA CGM, a French shipping group, has agreed to purchase a 48% stake in Santos Brasil Participacoes, a Brazilian port terminal operator, with plans already set to buy remaining shares.

[China To Launch Its First Polar Expedition Cruise Line In 2025](#)

September 17 - *Marine Insight*

[The Arctic, China]

The China-based Guangdong Port and Shipping Group and the Guangdong Travel Holding Group announced the launch of 66 Degrees Expeditions, China's first polar expedition cruise line brand. The first polar cruise is set to sail in May 2025 with the *Poseidon*, a to-be-refitted ice-class vessel.

[Chinese Cargo Cranes at U.S. Ports Pose Espionage Risk, Probe Finds](#)

September 12 - *The Wall Street Journal*

[United States, China]

A yearlong congressional investigation by the U.S. House Homeland Security Committee and Select Committee on the CCP found that Chinese cargo cranes used at U.S. seaports came embedded with cellular modems that can "collect information, and bypass firewalls."

[Ukraine Accuses Russia of Missile Attack on Grain Ship in Black Sea](#)

September 12 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Black Sea, Eurasia]

A commercial cargo vessel carrying grain has reportedly been hit by a missile in the Black Sea, though local reports are conflicting as to whether the ship was near the mouth of the Danube near Romanian territorial waters. Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy released several pictures along with a call for a global reaction, but few details have been released.

[Russia sends elderly non-ice-class LNG carrier through Arctic](#)

September 11 - *TradeWinds*

[The Arctic, Russia]

On September 5, Russia sent the *Everest Energy*, a non-ice-class LNG carrier ship originally built in 2003, eastbound through the Vilkitsky Strait towards the Laptev Sea, a marginal sea of the Arctic Ocean. *Everest Energy*, capable of carrying 138,000 cbm of LNG, is sanctioned by the U.S.

[Iran, Spain to expand cooperation in maritime transport services](#)

September 6 - *Tehran Times*

[Middle East, Europe]

Spain's Advanced Training Course in Transport and Logistics and the Shipping Association of Iran have signed a memorandum of understanding to improve bilateral relations in shipping lines. The agreement's main goal is to mutually increase knowledge and technical skills in the maritime transport and logistics sector, including through digital simulation courses and joint training..

[India one of the first large economies to have prepared a detailed green transition action plan for ports: Minister](#)

September 4 - *The Hindu*

[Indian Ocean]

In a public address ahead of India's inaugural 'Sagarmanthan' dialogue in November, India's Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal called India "one of the first large economies to have prepared a detailed green transition action plan" for ports and inland vessels. India's Vadhvan port "mega project," Sonowal said, has already drawn "substantial global interest."

[Somalia Mandates Vessels To Fly National Flag Under New Maritime Regulations](#)

September 3 - *Marine Insight*

[Africa]

The government of Somalia introduced a new law requiring all maritime vessels entering or operating within Somali national waters to notify Somalia's maritime authorities, fly the Somali flag, and comply with the regulations of the Ministry of Ports and Marine Transport.

[Galactic Energy launches six satellites with third sea launch](#)

August 29 - *SpaceNews*

[China, Pacific Ocean]

On August 29, China's Galactic Energy company successfully launched its third Ceres-1 solid rocket into orbit from a mobile sea platform off the coast of Shandong Province, China. The launch, which brought six satellites into orbit, is another example of a successful sea launch.

[4] Climate Change and Blue Carbon Economy [4]

[Lowest tide 'may never be seen again'](#)

BBC - September 20

[Europe]

The position of the Moon and Sun around the September equinox are causing low tides. Some in the United Kingdom are predicting that, as sea levels are now rising by 3-5.2 millimeters (0.1-0.2 inches) a year, it may be a decade before such exceptionally low tides are seen again.

[Norway limits wild salmon fishing as stocks hit new lows](#)

Phys.org - September 20

[North Atlantic Ocean]

The Norwegian Environment Agency announced new restrictions for 2025 on wild salmon fishing after incoming numbers reported current fish stocks hitting record lows in recent years.

[Antarctic krill can lock away similar levels of carbon as seagrass and mangroves, finds study](#)

September 17 - *Phys.org*

[The Antarctic]

New research shows that Antarctic krill, a specific species located in the Antarctic that have been subject to global warming and overfishing, are capable of storing similar amounts of carbon as mangroves, saltmarshes and seagrasses. This, the Europe-based researchers explain, means that Antarctic krill should receive similar levels of protection as 'blue carbon' ecosystems.

[Scientists Will Engineer the Ocean to Absorb More Carbon Dioxide](#)

September 12 - *The Scientific American*

[Pacific Ocean, Global]

A group of academics from a not-for-profit consortium have presented a program idea to examine how much carbon dioxide the process of iron fertilization can sequester in the deep sea and what additional impacts it may have on marine ecosystems. They hope to begin trials as soon as 2026.

[Study reveals crucial role of mixing Atlantic and Arctic waters in global ocean circulation](#)

September 10 - National Oceanography Centre

[Global, Atlantic Ocean, Arctic Ocean]

A group of global researchers have analyzed ocean model data from 1979-2021 to clarify how important the mixing of Atlantic and Arctic waters is to sustaining the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation, which is a natural cycle vital for regulating the Earth's climate.

[Blue Forest receives license for world-leading mangrove restoration project](#)

September 6 - *Further Africa*

[Africa, Middle East]

Blue Forest, a Dubai-based blue carbon project development company, has successfully received a license to begin operating one of the world's largest mangrove restoration projects. The project, known as MozBlue, is located in Mozambique, covers an area of over 155,000 hectares, and plans to start in November 2024 by restoring more than 5,000 hectares of degraded coastline.

[Silver is being buried beneath the sea, and it's all because of climate change, study finds](#)

September 3 - *Live Science*

[South China Sea]

By analyzing samples in the South China Sea, a professor at the Hefei University of Technology in China believes to have found a possible link between an increase in the amount of silver found in marine sediment—potentially poisonous if also occurring on a global scale—and global warming.

[Researchers study carbon capture in Upper Newport Bay salt marshes](#)

August 28 - *Phys.org*

[United States]

Researchers from the University of Southern California in the United States are conducting a two-part project in the tidal salt marshes along a 42-mile-long stretch of the California coastline to examine how sea level rise may affect the marsh's microbial communities and, therefore, impact blue carbon capture and storage.

IUU Fishing

Issue Background ¹

Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing) is a broad term that generally refers to the fishing and fishing-related activities that violate or circumvent fisheries laws and regulations that are designed to prevent overfishing and the resulting dangerous ecological imbalances. Able to occur both intentionally and unintentionally, it also includes fishing occurring in unmanaged areas without oversight. IUU fishing most commonly occurs intentionally and for the sake of short-term economic gain in the [amount](#) of tens of billions of dollars. A relatively new term inspired by long-standing concerns, the issue is [considered](#) by [many](#), [including](#) the International Maritime Organization, to be “one of the greatest threats to marine ecosystems” and a major [inhibitor](#) to long-term ocean sustainability. It is also marked as a direct danger to human livelihoods, [national security](#) and [food insecurity](#), which further makes it a regular issue of interest to [governments](#) and the public alike.

The ecological concerns of IUU fishing primarily circulate around two factors: overfishing and damage to the marine environment such as coral reefs. The rapid reduction of fish stocks—the direct result of [overfishing](#)—causes ecological imbalances that [erode](#) the remaining sea life in a downward, widespread [spiraling](#) effect if not corrected. IUU fishing activities and fishers themselves also deteriorate the marine environment that they sail through via oil pollution, the breakage of coral reefs from uncared-for steering, and destructive fishing methods such as [blast fishing](#) which involves setting off explosives or the use of cyanide powder to stun fish for capture.

IUU fishing is particularly prevalent in the impoverished areas of the world that contain weaker management or enforcement systems, such as [Africa](#) and [South Asia](#). While several nations, namely the [People’s Republic of China](#), [Mexico](#), Russia, [India](#), Senegal and [Somalia](#) are among the commonly discussed as violators, many nations and actors have been [marked](#) as contributing to or not sufficiently countering the IUU fishing supply chain, be it at the point of capture, transfer at ports, or sale at market. [Reports](#) have long [estimated](#) that 20% of the global fishing market caught falls under the IUU fishing category, further identifying how widespread and seemingly uncontrollable such fishing practices are to tame.



Since formally being used for the first time in a [1997 CCAMLR report](#) on overfishing in the Antarctic, ‘IUU fishing’ has become regularly mentioned in legal legislation and multilateral agreements at the

¹ Image Source: Police board a fishing boat at a police coastal station in Thailand's southern province of Narathiwat on June 6, 2021, after nine Vietnamese fishermen were caught allegedly fishing in Thai waters. (Photo by MADAREE TOHLALA/AFP via [Getty Images](#))

[domestic](#), [regional](#) and [international](#) levels. The most significant international agreements related to IUU fishing, most of which are overseen by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), include but are not limited to: the 1993 [FAO Compliance Agreement](#); the 2010 [Strategic Plan for Biodiversity's](#) Target 6; and the 2010 [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#) (CITES). Most notably, the 1999 session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries considered IUU fishing to be such a severe issue that it adopted the [International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing](#) (IPOA-IUU), a “comprehensive toolbox...to combat IUU fishing,” in 2001. In 2009, the FAO’s adoption of the [Agreement on Port State Measures](#) (PSMA) marked the first binding international agreement to specifically target IUU fishing.

Several older international agreements—such as the 1979 [Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals](#) (CMS) and its [Memorandum on Sharks](#), the 1982 [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea](#) (UNCLOS), the 1995 [United Nations Fish Stock Agreement](#) (UNFSA), and the 1995 [FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries](#)—emphasize concerns over and suggest actions to counter illegal fishing the related destruction of marine habitats, but do not mention IUU fishing by name, largely because the term had not yet been popularized. Many of these agreements are now [recognized](#) as being directly applicable to IUU fishing even if they have not yet included the term ‘IUU fishing’ in amended versions.

Recent Events

While IUU fishing—the illegal aspect in particular—has remained in the minds of governments and international organizations for decades, the Summer of 2024 has seen an uptick in the attention given to, reporting on, and counteractions against IUU fishing.

For example, one scientific investigation analyzing 230 global fisheries [concludes](#) that the assessment of some fish stocks have likely been “excessively positive” estimates. U.S. NOAA Fisheries [announced](#) on September 10 that, effective in 30 days, certain fishing vessels from 17 nations would be blocked from U.S. ports over IUU fishing concerns. Also in the U.S., a group of bipartisan House members [wrote](#) letters to eight federal agencies requesting information on their efforts to combat IUU fishing. Costa Rica just [finished](#) another year of its training program dedicated to IUU fishing, this year involving virtual reality technology.

Continued, renewed, and inaugural multinational cooperation has also taken place. In mid-September, diplomats said ‘The Quad’ members—Australia, Japan, the U.S., and India—plan to [initiate](#) joint patrols to monitor vessels specifically to counter illegal fishing in the Indo-Pacific. In August, a French navy jet [assisted](#) Senegal in surveillance for illegal fishing. Earlier in July, Ecuador’s navy [held](#) another round of counter-IUU exercises around the Galapagos Islands while ASEAN and the European Union held their fourth [workshop](#) focused on combating IUU fishing, which focused on implementing their new set of [guidelines](#) on information-sharing. The EU also just [renewed](#) their fisheries agreement with Guinea-Bissau, adding a new protocol on sustainability, and is [evaluating](#) the potential renewals of similar agreements with other African countries.

Most notably, Vietnam has been readying itself for a review by the European Commission so that it can have its ‘yellow card’ warning on its seafood, applied to Vietnam since 2017, [removed](#). On August 28,

following seven years of various domestic efforts to [combat](#) IUU fishing, Vietnam's Prime Minister led a review meeting in which he [gave clear orders](#) to continue to strictly adhere to legal fishing protocols, to keep authorities [accountable](#), and further strengthen vessel oversight procedures. After Vietnam submits an official anti-IUU report to the EU this month and the EC [conducts](#) its inspection in October, the EC will decide about the status of the 'yellow card.'

Keep In Mind

IUU fishing is one of the rare issues that, while obviously contentious in how it should be dealt with, impacts every nation and is capable of being a solid point of commonality to cooperate upon. While it does impact impoverished coastal nations the most, it also impacts any nation involved in the global fishing supply chain.

A lack of reliable information is one barrier to finding solutions, but with technology expanding and tracking [methods](#) evolving, the true picture of IUU fishing—its pervasiveness, its ecological impact, its long-term repercussions—should be becoming clearer and, therefore, easier to discuss and counter. This information is also becoming more publicly available through sites such as the [IUU Fishing Risk Index](#) or the efforts of non-profit organizations like that of [The Outlaw Ocean Project](#), which are being seen and responded to by government officials.

Since the IPOA-IUU and PSMA were adopted under the FAO, 'addressing IUU fishing' has become a reliable area of cooperation for nations at bilateral, multilateral and regional levels. But it cannot be denied that decades of global discussion of IUU fishing has not prevented it from remaining a—if not becoming a more—severe issue today. It can make observers question how much of a priority it really is to governments when compared to economic growth, and to what extent agreements at any level—especially non-binding agreements—are simply political tools.

IUU fishing is not an issue that is capable of simply disappearing overnight, either; it is too complex and embedded into the fishing supply chain. As one [article](#) puts it, "[u]ntil there is a traceable chain of custody from the time a fish leaves the water to the time it hits the shelf, customers cannot have 100% confidence in the origin country of their fish." But real progress is possible, though it will require [accountability](#) measures and [enforcers](#). China, as the [largest](#) fish [producer](#) since 1989, will need to be part of the conversation. Having leaders exhibit open acceptance of the numerous mutual benefits of battling IUU fishing would not go to waste, either. The United Nations' [declaration](#) of June 5 as the International Day for the Fight Against IUU Fishing is a positive example of bringing the public into the conversation.

In spite of seemingly sluggish progress, attention on the issue has not waned and is unlikely to decline in the future. In fact, the world [may](#) be approaching a turning point. The sustained—if not [increased](#)—attention on IUU fishing, coupled with its natural positive tilt towards mutually beneficial cooperation and the world's recent obsession with healing the world, are all factors that lean towards the world truly being at the cusp of achieving positive, lasting, impactful action in countering IUU fishing. Tangible progress, not elimination of the issue, is the rational goal to strive for at this stage. A few more loud pushes by powerful, influential, impassioned players—something more concrete than a

speech or short social campaign—may soon be all that is needed for global solutions to come to fruition for the betterment of the world.

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

- U.S. Navy - [“Chief of Naval Operations Navigation Plan for America’s Warfighting Navy 2024”](#) [September 18]
- AAR - [“AAR and Defense Logistics Agency Land and Maritime sign Supply Chain Alliance, formalizing commitment to strengthening joint support of the warfighter”](#) [September 16]
- Prime Minister’s Office of the Government of India - [“English rendering of PM’s address at inauguration of Tuticorin International Container Terminal”](#) [September 16]
- Delegation of the European Union to the United Republic of Tanzania and the East African Community - [“European Union Reinforces Support for Tanzania’s Blue Economy Agenda”](#) [September 13]
- Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency - [“BLUE ECONOMY: NIGERIA SET TO HOST DEEP SEABED WORKSHOP”](#) [September 9]
- Shipping Association of Iran - [“Memorandum of Understanding Signed Between the Iranian Shipping Association and the Escola Europea – Intermodal Transport”](#) [September 5]
- Ministry for the Environment of New Zealand - [Coastal Wetland Blue Carbon Policy Research in Aotearoa](#) [September 4]
- Government of India - [“The Union Minister of Port Shipping and Waterways Shri Sarbananda Sonowal Launches Sagarmathan: The Great Oceans Dialogue at Key Curtain-Raiser Event”](#) [September 3]
- Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Ghana - [“Ghana’s Interior Minister Calls for Clear Maritime Boundaries for Peace and Security in Africa”](#) [September 3]
- Ministry of Defense of Singapore - [“The Republic of Singapore Navy and People’s Liberation Army \(Navy\) Officiate the Start of Bilateral Maritime Exercise”](#) [September 1]
- Ministry of Defense of Japan - [“Defense of Japan 2024”](#) [September 2024]
- Ministry of Defense of India - [“Indian Naval Ship Tabar Conducts Maritime Partnership Exercise with Spanish Navy Ship Atalaya”](#) [August 30]
- U.S. Agency for International Development - [“USAID’s Gaza Response: External Factors Impaired Distribution of Humanitarian Assistance Through the JLOTS Maritime Corridor”](#) [August 27]

Analyses & Opinions

- [“At the World’s Largest Shipyard, U.S. Courts an Ally to Face Up to China”](#) [The Wall Street Journal - September 23]
- [“Explainer: Sabina Shoal, the newest flashpoint in the South China Sea”](#) [Radio Free Asia - September 23]
- [“Experts warn Philippines may ‘hijack’ UN for own agenda at planned summit”](#) [The Global Times - September 23]
- [“U.S. leans on shipbuilding prowess of allies to compete with China”](#) [The Japan Times - September 21]
- [“Guest Opinion: Manila’s tricks shake security around South China Sea”](#) [Xinhua - September 21]
- [“Understanding the potential of the Northern Sea Route”](#) [Observer Research Foundation - September 18]

- [“Exclusive: Inside the US push to steer Vietnam's subsea cable plans away from China”](#) [Reuters - September 17]
- [“Mapping the Decline of Eelgrass Along Maine's Coast”](#) [The New York Times - September 17]
- [“New Report: Busy Summer for Arctic Shipping on Russia's Northern Sea Route”](#) [High North News - September 17]
- [“China's Risky Power Play in the South China Sea”](#) [The New York Times - September 15]
- [“The Case for Regional Defense Cooperation to Safeguard Maritime Security”](#) [The Times of Israel - September 13]
- [“A sea of opportunities: Exploring cooperation between Turkey and the West in the Black Sea”](#) [Atlantic Council - September 13]
- [“Opinion: Chancay port will light the way for Peru's economy”](#) [Dialogue Earth - September 12]
- [“Which countries challenge China's claim to the Taiwan Strait?”](#) [Australian Strategic Policy Institute - September 12]
- [“Small islands are innovators for the ocean”](#) [The Global Environment Facility - September 11]
- [“Germany's decision to send warships through Taiwan Straits: All harm, no gain”](#) [Global Times - September 11]
- [“A New Paradigm for Shipbuilding in America”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - September 10]
- [“Cables under the sea: Pacific island countries need integrated electricity grids”](#) [Australian Strategic Policy Institute - September 10]
- [“The scary new map of the South China Sea”](#) [The Economist - September 10]
- [“How Indian Navy's Maritime Security Shapes India's Future, Everyday Lives – Analysis”](#) [Eurasia Review - September 9]
- [“As it completes five years, it's time to take the IPOI to the next level”](#) [Observer Research Foundation - September 9]
- [“Why Do Singapore and China Cooperate on Joint Maritime Exercises?”](#) [The Diplomat - September 6]
- [“Beware the Allure of Blockade: There Won't Be Any Silver Bullets in a War Against China”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - September 5]
- [“The Maritime Doctrine of Pakistan - Setting the Record Straight”](#) [Center for International Maritime Security - September 4]
- [“Advancing Blue Carbon in New Zealand's Coastal Wetlands”](#) [The Nature Conservancy - September 3]

Other Research

- Video: CBS News 60 Minutes - [“Conflict between China, Philippines could involve U.S. and lead to a clash of superpowers”](#) [September 15]
- Podcast: CIMSEC Sea Control - [“Maritime Competition in the Mediterranean with Dr. Sebastian Bruns & Dr. Jeremy Stöhs”](#) [September 21]
- Podcast: NPR Short Wave - [“Climate change is one reason for hotter oceans. But there are others”](#) [September 16]
- Podcast: Center for Maritime Strategy Maritime Nation - [“Tensions in the Red Sea: The Israel-Hamas Conflict a Year On”](#) [August 30]
- Scientific Journal: [“The ocean carbon sink enhances countries' inclusive wealth and reduces the cost of national climate policies”](#) *Communications Earth & Environment* 5 [September 17]
- Scientific Journal: [“Antarctic krill sequester similar amounts of carbon to key coastal blue carbon habitats”](#) *Nature Communications* 15 [September 8]
- Scientific Journal: *Scientific Reports* 14 - [“Blue carbon storage in a sub-Antarctic marine protected area”](#) [September 4]

Events on the Maritime Domain

- On August 29, Cloverly and Gresham Smith hosted a webinar titled [“Offsetting with Purpose: How Gresham Smith Built a Carbon Program that Delivered Immediate Impact.”](#)
- From September 5-6, Stellenbosch University and its global partners co-hosted an international maritime security conference titled [“The Gulf of Guinea and the Red Sea as a Learning Curve for African Decision-Makers in Capacity-Building”](#) in Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- From September 18-22, the three-day [Africa Aerospace & Defense 2024 Conference](#) was held in Tshwane, South Africa. Day three of the conference, dedicated to “Maritime Security,” will feature several keynote addresses, panels, and discussions on current events in maritime security.
- On September 19, Center for Strategic & International Studies hosted an online webcast titled [“America’s Warfighting Navy with Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Franchetti.”](#)
- From September 23-26, the World Meteorological Organization and International Maritime Organization hosted their [2nd WMO-IMO Symposium on Extreme Maritime Weather](#) in London, United Kingdom.
- On September 25, the Center for Strategic & International Studies will hold a webinar with Senator Mark Kelly and Congressman Mike Waltz on [“Rebuilding America’s Maritime Strength.”](#)
- On September 26, the Hudson Institute will host a n in-person event titled [“Preserving a Free and Open Indo-Pacific: A Conversation with Rep. Andy Kim \(D-NJ\).”](#)
- From September 26-27, Ridge China will host their 13th annual [Green Shiptech China Congress](#) gathering experts and decision makers for in-depth discussion on global and domestic shipping issues.
- On October 2, Wilson Center will host an online webinar titled [“UK and US Antarctic Collaboration: The Cutting Edge of Polar Science and Future Directions.”](#)
- On October 3, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation will be hosting an in-person interview with Ambassador Tariq Karim [“On the growing importance of the Bay of Bengal and the role of Bangladesh and Japan.”](#)
- On October 4, the University of Gothenburg will hold a group lecture titled [“The Ocean-Climate Nexus in International Law.”](#)
- 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.
- From November 18-19, India’s Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and the Observer Research Foundation will co-host the first annual [Sagarmanthan: The Great Oceans Dialogue](#) in New Delhi, India.
- From November 28-29, the annual [International Maritime Human Factors Symposium](#) will be jointly hosted at the International Maritime Organization headquarters in London to gather “academia, industry, and regulatory bodies to enhance maritime safety and operational efficiency.”



— MAP Commentary —

Opportunities, Challenges, and the Uncertain Future of Sino-Russian Cooperation in the Arctic

By Nong Hong
September 3, 2024

With Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin meeting on August 21 in Moscow and pledging deeper economic partnerships, it appears that China and Russia are making strides in their long-discussed cooperation in the Arctic. However, while the political will for collaboration in the Arctic is evident, this partnership presents both opportunities and challenges, making it difficult to be fully optimistic about its long-term success...

...The success of Sino-Russian cooperation in the Arctic will largely depend on how both countries navigate these complex challenges while balancing their national interests with the broader geopolitical dynamics of the Arctic region. While there is potential for significant economic and strategic benefits, the road ahead is fraught with risks and uncertainties that make long-term success far from assured. As they move forward, both China and Russia will need to carefully manage their relationship, address environmental and legal challenges, and consider the broader implications of their actions on the global stage.



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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.

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