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Recent News in Global Maritime Affairs

[1] Ocean Governance and Maritime Cooperation [1]

[Sinking Nations Should Keep Their Maritime Boundaries, Commonwealth Leaders Agree in First Ocean Declaration](#)

October 28 - *Earth.org*
[Atlantic Ocean, Global]

On the final day of the 27th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa, the group of 56 Commonwealth nations, 49 of which have a coastline, announced the Apia Ocean Declaration, which calls on all signatories to protect the ocean amidst the threats of climate change, sea level rise, rising temperatures and increasing ocean acidity.

[South China Sea needs 'pragmatic cooperation', Beijing and Kuala Lumpur agree](#)

October 17 - *South China Morning Post*
[Southeast Asia, South China Sea]

On October 17, China and Malaysia held their first bilateral dialogue on the management of maritime issues in the South China Sea, held in Langkawi, Malaysia, where the two sides exchanged "in-depth views on the current maritime situation" as well as "reached a consensus" on promoting "pragmatic maritime cooperation."

[China, Nordic nations eye cooperation in green transformation, maritime transport](#)

October 15 - *Global Times*
[China, North Atlantic Ocean]

A spokesperson of China's Ministry of Commerce reported that China and the five Nordic nations have made great progress in economic cooperation, including in the field of maritime

transportation and green transportation. The spokesperson also highlighted the then-upcoming 6th China-Nordic Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum.

[ASEAN urges early accord on South China Sea code, end to Myanmar violence](#)

October 13 - Reuters

[Southeast Asia, South China Sea]

At the recent ASEAN summit in Laos, Southeast Asian leaders released a statement urging for a swift agreement on the South China Sea code of conduct, which they say must be grounded in international law, and also to work on confidence-building measures that could "reduce tensions and the risk of accidents, misunderstandings and miscalculation" in the South China Sea.

[Vietnam, China hold talks on calming South China Sea tensions](#)

October 13 - France24

[Southeast Asia, South China Sea]

Amid a background of rising tensions over the South China Sea, Vietnam and China signed 10 agreements to boost cross-border trade, including plans for a rail link and cross-border QR code payment services. The leaders also discussed controlling maritime disputes, with both sides committing to maintaining stability at sea and enhancing defense and economic cooperation.

[Turkish president sees off Turkish energy research vessel bound for Somalia](#)

October 10 - Anadolu Ajansı

[Middle East, Africa, Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea]

Under a new agreement between Türkiye and Somalia, the Turkish seismic survey vessel *Oruc Reis* successfully embarked on a seven-month joint mission to explore oil and natural gas off the coast of Somalia. The ship will conduct 3-D seismic studies in three offshore areas, accompanied by Turkish naval frigates, with collected data analyzed in Ankara to identify potential drilling sites.

[Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley Crew Returns From 75-day Arctic Ocean Patrol](#)

October 9 - Sea Power Magazine

[Arctic Ocean, Baltic Sea, United States]

The US Coast Guard cutter *Alex Haley* returned to its home port of Kodiak, Alaska, after a 75-day patrol of the Arctic Ocean during which their law enforcement team boarded 22 vessels and issued 27 safety and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration fishery violations. The crew also intercepted a Russian Federation naval vessel transiting the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone.

[Canada marks expansion of coast guard cooperation with Japan port call](#)

October 2 - *The Japan Times*

[Arctic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, East Asia]

The 83-meter-long icebreaker CCGS *Sir Wilfrid Laurier* arrived at the port of Yokohama, Japan, marking the first time that a Canadian Coast Guard has made a port call in Japan. During the four-day visit, Japanese and Canadian coast guard representatives exchanged views to increase cooperation and joint initiatives, especially on countering illegal fishing and protecting fish stocks.

[Dr. Mike Sfraga confirmed as US Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs](#)

September 25 - *Arctic Today*

[Arctic Ocean, United States]

On September 24, the U.S. Senate confirmed Dr. Mike Sfraga, Chair and Founding Director of the Wilson Center Polar Institute, as the new U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs, making Dr. Sfraga the first person to serve in this position since its creation in 2022.

[2] Maritime Security and Defense [2]

[US warships sailed into the Barents Sea](#)

October 24 - *Arctic Today*

[United States, Barents Sea, North Atlantic Ocean]

For the first time since conducting a joint voyage with the British Navy in 2020, the US Navy sent two Arleigh Burke-class destroyers—the USS *Jason Dunham* and USS *Stout*—into the Barents Sea on October 21, returning to the Norwegian Sea within three days. Meanwhile, the Russian Navy is preparing for its annual strategic nuclear exercise, which is conducted in the Barents Sea.

[Chinese military mounts second round of exercises near Taiwan in a week](#)

October 22 - UPI

[Indo-Pacific, East Asia, China]

Following the People's Liberation Army's (PLA's) multi-force Joint Sword-2024B military exercise conducted on October 14-15, 2024, the PLA Navy conducted a second military maneuver with live-fire drills around Taiwan on October 22, which involved nine PLA ships and 17 PLA aircrafts.

[Beijing's military says US-Canada Taiwan Strait transit 'undermines peace and stability'](#)

October 21 - *South China Morning Post*

[East Asia, China, United States]

After U.S. and Canadian warships transited through the Taiwan Strait as part of a freedom of navigation operation on October 20—one week after Beijing conducted a military drill to blockade

the island of Taiwan—a spokesperson of the People’s Liberation Army of China said that the transit “disturbed the situation and undermined peace and stability.”

[Exercise Ibsamar VIII concludes](#)

October 21 - *Military Africa*
[South Africa, Global]

The eighth multinational Exercise Ibsamar was successfully conducted from October 7-16, including an alongside phase at Simon’s Town Harbour from October 7-9 and a sea phase in False Bay and the Cape West coast area from October 10-16. South Africa hosted this round of the biennial, trilateral maritime cooperation as the Brazilian and Indian navies participated.

[Marlink Security Operations Centre Report Shows Evolution of Cyber Threats](#)

October 20 - *The Maritime Executive*
[Global]

Marlink’s Security Operations Centre of Marlink delivered a global maritime cyber threat report that highlights how in the first half of 2024 there were 23,400 malware detections and 178 ransomware detections threatening the cybersecurity of more than 1,800 vessels. The analysts also observed a continued rise of conventional threats such as Command and Control attacks and the evolution of new tactics like botnet attacks.

[Russia Attacks Two More Civilian Ships in Ukraine’s Odesa Port](#)

October 14 - *gCaptain*
[Black Sea, Europe, Russia]

On October 14, Ukrainian authorities reported another Russian missile strike on Ukraine's Black Sea port of Odesa, damaging two civilian vessels and a grain storage. This brought the total number of damaged foreign-flagged vessels to four since strikes picked back up in the area on October 6.

[India-Philippines defense talks focus on coproduction, maritime security](#)

October 10 - *Indo-Pacific Defense Forum*
[Indo-Pacific]

In September 2024, India and the Philippines held the fifth Joint Defense Cooperation Committee meeting in Manila, co-chaired by Indian Defense Secretary Giridhar Aramane and Philippine Senior Undersecretary for Defense Irineo Cruz Espino. The dialogue underlined service-to-service interaction and opportunity for defense equipment collaboration. Secretary Aramane also mentioned the interest of partnership with the Indian defense industry in “co-development and co-production of equipment.”

[Malaysia eyes strengthened South China Sea defense with new naval base in Borneo](#)

October 8 - *South China Morning Post*

[Southeast Asia]

Malaysia's new navy base at Bintulu, which is 80 nautical miles from the South Luconia Shoals, is aiming to be operational by 2030. Defense Minister of Malaysia Mohamad Hasan emphasized the importance of this new navy base for ensuring that the country's coastal areas, waters, borders, and airspace "are always in a state of readiness."

[In A First, Chinese Coast Guard Fleet Enters Arctic Ocean For Patrol, Russia Joins](#)

October 3 - *Marine Insight*

[Arctic Ocean, China, Russia]

In a historic first, China's coast guard joined Russian ships in a joint patrol of the Arctic Ocean, coinciding with the 75th anniversary of the People's Republic of China and highlighting the growing maritime cooperation between the two nations in the Arctic region.

[China's newest nuclear-powered submarine sank this year, U.S. says](#)

September 27 - *The Japan Times*

[United States, China]

A spokesperson from the U.S. Department of Defense, speaking anonymously, told *The Japan Times* that China's newest nuclear-powered attack submarine was confirmed to have sunk earlier this spring at a shipyard in Wuhan, China, with some observers believing it was carrying nuclear fuel.

[Japan MSDF warship sails through Taiwan Strait for first time](#)

September 26 - *The Japan Times*

[Pacific Ocean, East Asia]

For the first time, a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force vessel, a destroyer named the *Sazanami*, sailed through the Taiwan Strait, sailing alongside warships from Australia and New Zealand. Beijing responded to the sail-through the following day with a strong warning.

[3] Maritime Economy and Shipping [3]

[Carbon emissions in ocean container shipping hits record high](#)

October 28 - *Hellenic Shipping News*

[Global, Red Sea]

According to the Xeneta and Marine Benchmark Carbon Emissions Index, which measures across Xeneta's top 13 ocean container shipping trades, Q3 of 2024 saw the highest rates of carbon emissions on record, up 12.2% compared to one year ago, before the crisis in the Red Sea began.

[Putin to Examine Black Sea Shipping Proposals From Turkey's Erdogan](#)

October 25 - *gCaptain*

[Black Sea, Europe, Russia]

Russian President Vladimir Putin, speaking on Russian state television, said that Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan had “once again renewed” proposals to continue contracts related to securing Black Sea shipping agreements, but noted that he had not yet “had time to read the materials.”

[Yemeni Houthi group attacks ship in Arabian Sea for links with Israel](#)

October 19 - *Anadolu Ajansi*

[Middle East, Arabian Sea, Red Sea]

The Yemen-based Houthi group claimed responsibility for a drone attack in the Arabian Sea on the Malta-flagged *Megalopolis* container ship, citing both its connection to Israel and U.S.-UK air raids on Al-Hudaydah province in Yemen. The Houthis vowed to continue targeting Israeli-affiliated vessels and declared all U.S. and UK ships military targets amid ongoing conflict in Gaza.

[Russia Picks India Over China For Building Its Non-Nuclear Icebreaker Ships](#)

October 11 - *Marine Insight*

[The Arctic, Russia, South Asia]

While working to develop the Northern Sea Route as a transit hub, Russia has decided that India should construct its non-nuclear icebreakers, especially amidst Western sanctions. Discussions are currently underway in India to build four ships valued at more than \$750 million.

[China Seeks Carbon Data From Ships as Trading Scheme Grows](#)

October 11 - *Bloomberg*

[China, Pacific Ocean]

Authorities in China have begun to ask some overseas shipowners that service Chinese ports to report on their carbon emissions, highlighting a potential greater scrutiny of the industry as the regulatory framework shifts.

[Cargo Ship Smuggling Cocaine Draws Scrutiny Due to Unique Routing](#)

October 9 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic Ocean]

Spanish and French forces intercepted the Turkish-owned cargo ship *Ras* in the Atlantic, seizing 4,000 kilos of cocaine in a hidden compartment after detecting suspicious movements during its erratic voyage. Turkish authorities, cooperating with the investigation, confirmed the ship's involvement in an international smuggling operation using “ghost ships” to transfer narcotics from South America to Europe.

[US port workers and operators reach deal to end East Coast strike immediately, union says](#)

October 4 - *USA Today*

[United States]

U.S. port workers and port operators have reached a preliminary agreement to end a three-day strike that paused shipping operations on the East Coast and Gulf Coast. The parties agreed to extend a master contract and resume work covered thereof, but did not further specify specific terms such as wages.

[Porto Itapoá aims for South America container port top spot by 2033](#)

September 30 - *Seatrade Maritime*

[South America, Atlantic Ocean]

Brazil's Porto Itapoá revealed new investment plans that make it on target to become the largest container port in South America by 2033. The latest expansion is the fourth stage of a broader project and now brings the total investment to \$550 million.

[Panama and China strengthen cooperation in the maritime sphere](#)

September 28 - *Prensa Latina*

[Central America, China]

Panama's Maritime Authority and the government of Shenzhen have signed a virtual agreement to enhance collaboration on port operations, leveraging Shenzhen's technological and logistical expertise. The partnership aims to improve Panama's port management, environmental protection, and training, drawing from Shenzhen's status as a global technology and transportation hub.

[First Panamax Containership Makes Historic Arctic Crossing, Reaches Shanghai In 3 Weeks](#)

September 26 - *Marine Insight*

[Arctic Ocean, China]

A massive containership, the Panamax *Flying Fish 1*, successfully sailed without an icebreaker from St. Petersburg to China—starting in the Baltic Sea, crossing the Laptev Sea and the East Siberian Sea, and then exiting through the Bering Strait—in just over three weeks. This trip typically takes about five weeks when traveling the traditional route through the Suez Canal.

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

[New £4M project to better predict response of Southern Ocean to climate change](#)

October 28 - The University of Liverpool

[Europe, Global]

An ocean biogeochemist from the University of Liverpool will lead a new £4 million IronMan research project dedicated to finding a way to better predict the effects of climate change on the Southern Ocean through the study of micronutrients. Funded by the UK's Natural Environment Research Council, the project involves five UK universities and eight international partner organizations.

[Jakarta using GIS technology to monitor marine ecosystem](#)

October 26 - Antara News

[Southeast Asia]

Jakarta's provincial government announced it is using geographic information system (GIS) technology to "map out the zones and monitor ecosystem locations" to ensure that economic activities like marine tourism and fisheries "can run side by side with conservation efforts."

[Climate scientists warn Nordic ministers of changing Atlantic Ocean current](#)

October 21 - Reuters

[North Atlantic Ocean]

A group of more than 40 climate scientists sent a letter to the Nordic Council of Ministers urging the ministers to specifically prevent global warming from causing a major change to the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation, a system of ocean currents that transports warm water into the North Atlantic Ocean and feeds many natural ecosystems.

[Scientists identify potential deep-ocean greenhouse gas storage solution](#)

October 18 - Phys.org

[Global]

Researchers from University of California, Irvine said they identified a technique to observe how marine bacteria in the deep-ocean store carbon through complex organic molecules. According to the researchers, it is the first time that researchers managed to measure carbon storage through complex organic molecules made by marine bacteria.

[Climate Change: Whale sharks 15,000 times likelier to be hit by ships by 2100](#)

October 14 - *Oceanographic*

[Global]

A new study reports that whale sharks, which normally live in warm waters around the equator, are expected to start migrating into cooler regions over the next few decades as average ocean temperatures rise, which is also expected to make them 15,000 times more likely to be struck by ships by the year 2100.

[ExxonMobil Partners With NG3 For Carbon Capture, Transport And Storage](#)

October 10 - *Carbon Herald*

[United States]

ExxonMobil announced that they will partner with the Louisiana-based New Generation Gas Gathering (NG3) Project and utilize carbon capture and storage technology to capture up to 1.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide every year from NG3's natural gas facilities.

[Climate change fueled the fury of hurricanes Helene and Milton](#)

October 9 - *Science News*

[Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean]

Two separate analytical reports—one by the international World Weather Attribution and the other by Princeton-based Climate Central—conclude that the warm waters in the Gulf of Mexico that fueled the devastating Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton were made hundreds of times more likely by human-caused climate change.

[Celios Warns of Blue Carbon Crisis Due to Sea Sand Export](#)

October 3 - *Tempo*

[Southeast Asia]

A new report released by the Center of Economic and Law Studies in Indonesia analyzes the Indonesian government's decision to renew sea sand export, calling a related 2023 regulation a potential catalyst for the destruction of marine ecosystems, increased coastal erosion, and damage to coral reefs, among other environmental concerns.

[Cruise ships are potential Arctic first responders to oil spills](#)

September 30 - *Arctic Today*

[Arctic Ocean, Global]

The Arctic Economic Council and the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators are now looking at the potential for expedition cruise vessels already sailing in the Arctic to become valuable players in responding first to oil spill emergencies, as authorities are often farther away.

U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs

Issue Background

The U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs is a position in the U.S. government that was established in 2022 to enhance America's role in the Arctic, a maritime region that has become increasingly central to global geopolitics, economics, and environmental concerns.

'Ambassador-at-large,' in contrast to 'ambassador-in-residence,' refers to an individual who is not assigned to a particular diplomatic post but is instead entrusted with a special mission, usually on behalf of a national government. [Announced](#) by Secretary of State Antony Blinken in August 2022 and [formalized](#) with the appointment of Dr. Mike Sfraga in September 2024, the formation of this position underscores the significance of a region where rapid environmental changes have created new challenges and opportunities. The melting of Arctic ice due to climate change has exposed previously inaccessible shipping routes and untapped natural resources, attracting the interest of international stakeholders, particularly regional states, including the United States, which is an Arctic nation through the State of Alaska. Prior to this appointment, the U.S. did not have a dedicated, high-level diplomatic position for Arctic affairs. This position was intended to consolidate U.S. policies and interests in the Arctic and to ensure a unified approach to Arctic issues.

The Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs is responsible for promoting U.S. interests in the Arctic through a range of activities, including enhancing national security, fostering sustainable economic growth, and strengthening international cooperation among Arctic nations. This role involves coordinating efforts across various U.S. agencies, such as the Department of Defense, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Department of the Interior to make sure that policies from different agencies share the same objective on Arctic affairs. Additionally, the Ambassador-at-Large engages with counterparts from Arctic and non-Arctic nations to build trust and ensure the region remains stable, secure, and open to constructive initiatives.

Prior to the establishment of this role, Arctic affairs were managed by the [Office of the U.S. Coordinator for the Arctic Region](#)—a lower-ranking office within the U.S. State Department—which greatly limited the level of engagement on critical Arctic issues. There have also been bilateral and multilateral engagements conducted by other departments and agencies, such as joint U.S. Coast Guard trainings and engagements with regional counterparts, but these were typically uncoordinated over time or conducted in the short-term and at lower levels.

Recent Events¹

On September 24, 2024, Dr. Mike Sfraga was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the inaugural U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs. As a native Alaskan and a preeminent figure in Arctic research, Dr. Sfraga brings extensive experience to the role. Among other experiences, he has served as the [Chair of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission](#) and as the founding director of the [Wilson Center's Polar Institute](#). His career focuses on Arctic geopolitics, environmental challenges, and policy coordination, and these all make him a qualified leader to lead the U.S. to navigate the complexities of the region.



Soon after his confirmation, Dr. Sfraga traveled to Iceland to attend the [2024 Arctic Circle Assembly](#) in Reykjavik from October 17-19. This Assembly marked one of his first major international engagements, allowing him to connect with leaders and representatives from other Arctic and non-Arctic nations. Then, in an [interview](#) with *National Public Radio* (NPR) on October 20, Dr. Sfraga outlined his Arctic policies. He emphasized the need for robust scientific research towards the Arctic because the significant impacts of climate change on the Arctic are reshaping the region's geopolitical, economic, and security landscapes. Both mitigation and adaptation policies are needed to address climate change as well as the new norms. When asked about the expansion of Russia in the Arctic, Sfraga stressed the importance of maintaining a U.S. presence, collaborating with allies, and enhancing research capabilities to facilitate policy decision making. Sfraga also [predicted](#) potential policy objectives of China in the Arctic, which he described as being multifaceted: "China wants a number of things...They're looking for economic leverage. They're looking for resources. They're looking for influence. They're looking for domain awareness, understanding the Arctic environment. They're looking to have a foothold."

There are many positive responses to Sfraga's appointment. Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski, who is also co-chair of the Senate Arctic Caucus, [welcomed](#) the inauguration of Sfraga. She emphasized that Sfraga is the ideal choice to represent U.S. interests in the region, noting his ability to counter adversarial actions from other countries and support economic development. However, some concerns were also raised during the Senate confirmation process. Idaho Senator James Risch, for instance, [criticized](#) Sfraga's past engagements with Russian and Chinese scientists and officials, questioning if these could compromise U.S. interests.

Keep In Mind

The creation and fulfillment of the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs position is set to shift U.S. Arctic policies toward a more integrated and proactive approach. Previously, the U.S. Arctic policy was coordinated across multiple departments and agencies without a central figure to

¹ Image Source: Dr. Mike Sfraga, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs, speaking at the Arctic Circle Assembly in Iceland on October 18, 2024. (Source: [Arctic Circle, CC2.0 via Flickr](#))

drive consistent strategies, making it difficult for the U.S. to effectively influence the region. This position represents a strategic move by the U.S. to elevate its long-term presence in the Arctic and to match the increasing activities of other countries such as Norway, China, and Russia.

Sfraga's appointment also brings a focus on strengthening diplomatic ties with other Arctic nations to ensure regional stability. As more countries and international players become involved in Arctic affairs, concerns about interests and security issues require the United States to engage in more active diplomatic dialogue. One significant shift to take place under his leadership will [likely be a stronger emphasis](#) on actively countering the activities of Russia, and very likely China as well, as both have proven to be increasingly active in the Arctic. The new ambassador is likely to engage in more direct and responsible negotiations with America's main competitors on issues related to maritime boundaries, resource claims, and military presence. His personal experience with these two countries could help him establish a more responsible and accountable Arctic diplomatic relations with these rivals. Also, the establishment of the new ambassador position reflects [a stronger U.S. commitment](#) to Arctic affairs, which will enhance America's relationships with its allies in the region. Communicating and standardizing the U.S. stance and attitude on issues such as new Arctic shipping routes, energy development, and military bases are crucial to the stability and development of the region, which is the continually stated goal of most Arctic nations.

Additionally, Sfraga is expected to place a greater emphasis on Arctic environmental protection through enhanced Arctic research. He has underscored the need for continuous, long-term research to better understand the region's dynamic environmental patterns. Also in his [interview with National Public Radio](#), he stated: "We still have a significant deficit in our observation networks...We have to mitigate and understand that what we plan for, we have to plan for not just for the next five or 10 years." By investing in sustained research and observation projects, Sfraga aims to enhance the United States' ability to plan and implement effective adaptation and mitigation strategies in the Arctic, addressing both immediate and long-term challenges. This approach is particularly important because warming waters and retreating ice are altering ecosystems and opening new maritime routes. With these insights, the U.S. can better navigate the balance between protecting the Arctic's unique oceanic resources and adapting to new geopolitical and economic realities in this rapidly changing marine frontier.

This issue's [Spotlight](#) was written by Zhangchen Wang, ICAS Research Assistant Intern.

Peer-Reviewed Research on Maritime Issues

Government Releases & Other Press Statements

- U.S. Embassy in the Philippines - ["United States, Philippines Hold Third Maritime Dialogue in Manila"](#) [October 28]
- The Commonwealth - [APIA COMMONWEALTH OCEAN DECLARATION](#) [October 26]

- U.S. Department of Defense - [“Defense Official Statement on AUKUS Pillar 2 and Exercise Maritime Big Play”](#) [October 24]
- State Council of the People’s Republic of China - [“China, Japan hold high-level consultations on maritime affairs”](#) [October 24]
- U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa - [“Truman Strike Group Destroyers Conduct Barents Sea Operations”](#) [October 23]
- State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council - [“Weifang Becomes China's First Zero-Carbon Port”](#) [October 22]
- U.S. Department of the Treasury - [“Price Cap Coalition Issues Updated Advisory for Maritime Industry”](#) [October 21]
- World Economic Forum - [“Here's how to mobilize for Sustainable Development Goal 14 ahead of UN Ocean Conference 2025”](#) [October 21]
- Solomon Islands Government - [“Carbon Trading Policy for the Solomon Islands Project Successfully Launched in Honiara”](#) [October 14]
- UNESCO - [Ambition, Action, Impact: The Ocean Decade Pathway to 2030 – Consolidated Outcomes of the Vision 2030 Process](#) [October 10]
- ASEAN - [“Joint Statement on Strengthening ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Peace, Stability and Prosperity in The Region in The Context of The ASEAN Outlook on The Indo-Pacific \(AOIP\) with The Support of India’s Act East Policy \(AEP\)”](#) [October 10]
- Office of the President of the Philippines - [“Joint Declaration on the Strategic Partnership between the Republic of the Philippines and the Republic of Korea”](#) [October 7]
- Government of India - [“India and Maldives: A Vision for Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership”](#) [October 7]
- Naval News - [“Interview with the Chief of the Colombian Navy”](#) [October 7]
- Ministry of Maritime Affairs of Pakistan - [“PAKISTAN AND DENMARK SIGNED AN MOU FOR INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN PAKISTAN’S MARITIME SECTOR”](#) [October 3]
- European Commission Africa-Europe Ocean Strategic Group - [“Roadmap Towards 2030: Co-driving the Africa-Europe Ocean Partnership”](#) [October 1]
- Greenpeace - [“Greenpeace South Asia Welcomes Regional Leadership in Ratification of Historic UN Ocean Treaty”](#) [October 1]
- European Commission - [“First report on the implementation of the multiannual plans for the North Sea and Western Waters and the fisheries exploiting those stocks”](#) [September 30]
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh - [“Bangladesh Deposits Instrument of Ratification of BBNJ Agreement”](#) [September 26]
- Panama Maritime Authority - [“THE AMP AND SHENZHEN PORT AUTHORITY, CHINA SIGN COOPERATION AGREEMENT”](#) [September 27] [[In Spanish](#)]

Analyses & Opinions

- [“America’s SOS: Can the U.S. build enough ships to keep up with China?”](#) [*The Wire China* - October 27]
- [“China plans to be world's second nation to reach Arctic seabed”](#) [*Oceanographic* - October 25]
- [“Norway’s Supposed Arctic Seafloor Treasures: What Does the Data Show?”](#) [Wilson Center - October 25]
- [“Maritime Industry on Edge as Russia Intensifies Attacks on Ukraine’s Black Sea Grain Corridor”](#) [*qCaptain* - October 24]
- [“Operationalising the Quad: Maritime security and climate change in the Indo-Pacific”](#) [United States Studies Centre - October 23]
- [“A day with the Indian Navy”](#) [*defenceWeb* - October 21]

- [“Memo to Next President: Bolster the Merchant Marine Fleet”](#) [Defense Opinion - October 21]
- [“All together now: Southeast Asia must act collectively in the South China Sea”](#) [Australian Strategic Policy Institute - October 21]
- [“Joint naval exercise serves to increase Iran’s legitimacy - analysis”](#) [The Jerusalem Post - October 20]
- [“More surface warships or more drones? Both, please.”](#) [The Washington Post - October 18]
- [“The Continuing Value of Consensus-Based Decision-Making in the Antarctic Treaty System”](#) [Wilson Center - October 17]
- [“In a war against China, the US could quickly exhaust its weapons. A new Indo-Pacific defense initiative might be the answer.”](#) [Atlantic Council - October 17]
- [“A Biden-Starmer Giveaway Helps China”](#) [The Wall Street Journal - October 16]
- [“India Turns to Maritime Neighbors to Navigate Troubled Neighborhood”](#) [The Diplomat - October 16]
- [“The Ship Operators Shrugging Off Houthi Attacks”](#) [The Washington Institute for Near East Policy - October 16]
- [“Strengthening Ties: Navy and Coast Guard Sail with Brazilian Partners to Commemorate 200 Years of Partnership”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - October 15]
- [“Maritime Security in Peril: How Climate Change impact Sri Lanka and Island States”](#) [Sri Lanka Guardian - October 13]
- [“China’s Ports Edge”](#) [The Wire China - October 10]
- [“Limitations of German Maritime Security and Defense on NATO’s Eastern Front”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - October 10]
- [“Israel in the Red Sea: From Threats to Cooperation”](#) [The Institute for National Security Studies - October 9]
- [“A time of great opportunity for reconfiguring the governance of the Arctic”](#) [Polar Journal - October 9]
- [“The Quad’s Deepening Maritime Cooperation”](#) [Toda Peace Institute - October 9]
- [“China is rapidly building warships. Satellite images reveal the scale.”](#) [The Washington Post - October 7]
- [“Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal is About to Go Big”](#) [Hakai Magazine - October 7]
- [“Quad’s maritime vision short on strategic intent”](#) [Hindustan Times - October 7]
- [“The One Year Anniversary of Hamas’ Attack: Implications for the United States Navy in the Red Sea and Beyond”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - October 7]
- [“Maritime milestone: Türkiye and Somalia’s strategic partnership”](#) [Daily Sabah - October 6]
- [“What does China’s first Arctic coastguard patrol with Russia reveal about its ambitions?”](#) [South China Morning Post - October 6]
- [“Bottled up in the Black Sea: Russia is having a dreadful naval war, hindering its great power ambitions”](#) [The Conversation - October 3]
- [“Competition and Cooperation in the Maritime Domain”](#) [World Politics Review - October 1]
- [“Beneath the potential strike at US ports: Tensions over innovation”](#) [The Economic Times - September 30]
- [“Navy pushes to catch up to China’s superiority at sea”](#) [The Hill - September 30]
- [“A Modernizing Force: An Interview with Philippine Navy Chief Adaci”](#) [Naval News - September 29]
- [“Unmanned Vessels Threaten to Undermine the Sea-Based Deterrent”](#) [Center for Maritime Strategy - September 27]

Other Research

- Video: World Economic Forum - [“C4IR | Impact On The Ground | How ocean data is catalysing carbon-free shipping”](#) [October 11]
- Video: Wilson Center NOW - [“Global Ports and US Maritime Strategy: Critical to Competitiveness and Daily Life”](#) [October 10]
- Journal Article: [“Optimization of multiple ecological infrastructures across the land-sea interface for coordination management: A case study around Laizhou Bay in China”](#) - Science of the Total Environment Vol. 949 [November 2024]

- Journal Article: [“Coastal urbanization may indirectly positively impact growth of mangrove forests”](#) - *Communications Earth & Environment* Vol. 5, No. 608 [October 20]
- Journal Article: [“Who owns reefer vessels? Uncovering the ecosystem of transshipment in fisheries”](#) - *Science Advances* Vol. 10, No. 41 [October 11]
- Report: Sasakawa Peace Foundation - [Table Top Exercise \(TTX\) on the Taiwan Strait Crisis](#) [October 1]
- Report: Wilson Center - [Pan-Arctic Methane: Current Monitoring Capabilities, Approaches for Improvement, and Implications for Global Mitigation Targets](#) [October 2024]
- Report: South China Sea Strategic Situation Probing Initiative - [Report on Navigation and Overflight Situation in the South China Sea](#) [September 2024]

Events on the Maritime Domain

- On September 26, the Hudson Institute hosted an 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 hosted 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 hosted 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 hosted 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 held a group lecture titled [“The Ocean-Climate Nexus in International Law.”](#)
- On October 8, the Center for Strategic & International Studies hosted a discussion with Vice Admiral James E. Pitts titled [“At the Helm of Innovation”](#) about advancing naval capabilities.
- From October 8-10, UNESCO and its partners held the [2024 All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance \(AAORIA\) Forum](#) in Ottawa, Canada to “discuss and highlight opportunities for collaborative ocean science, share knowledge, and inform advancements” to achieve a sustainable Atlantic Ocean.
- From October 8-11, UNESCO and its partners held the [6th International MSPforum](#) in Bali, Indonesia, gathering 99 participants from 46 countries “to discuss and exchange recommendations on strengthening the links between Marine/Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and the three thematic pillars of the Updated MSProadmap.”
- On October 9, the National Institute of Maritime Affairs, with Bahria University, hosted the [International Maritime Symposium 2024 \(IMS-24\)](#) in Islamabad, Pakistan, with this year’s theme being the “Realisation of Blue Economy through the Prism of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Options for Developing Countries.”
- On October 22, Wilson Center Polar Institute and the US-Greenland Joint Committee held an event titled [“Cooperation in the Arctic: 20 Years of Partnership between Greenland and the United States.”](#)
- On October 22, Atlantic Council held an online event on [“Advancing Latin America and the Caribbean’s sustainable growth.”](#)
- On October 25, Center for Strategic & International Studies hosted a discussion with VADM Peter Gautier titled [“Plotting a Course for the Future: The First U.S. Coast Guard Operational Posture Statement.”](#)

- 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.
- On November 14, Ifri's Center for Asian Studies will host an online event titled [“Allied and Aligned? The Future of Alliances in the Indo-Pacific after the US Elections.”](#)
- 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.
- On November 22, the Hudson Institute will host an in-person event titled [“Technology and Maritime Security Cooperation between NATO and the Indo-Pacific.”](#)
- 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 Report —

Navigating the Arctic Shifts: The Evolving Impacts of Economic Sanctions on Russia

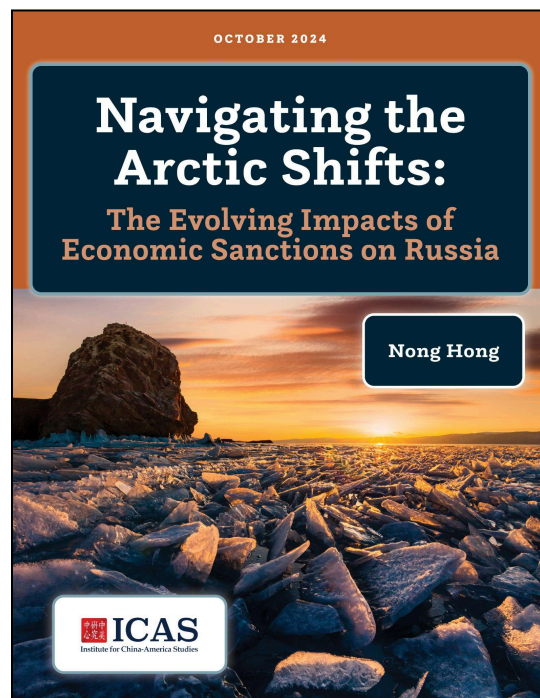
By Nong Hong
October 2024

Executive Summary

Following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the crisis starting in Ukraine in 2022, the United States, European Union, and other Western imposed stringent sanctions on key sectors of Russia's economy, particularly the energy sector. This report analyzes the effects of these sanctions on Russia's economy, geopolitics, and security, with a focus on their impact on Russia's Arctic liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects, such as Yamal LNG and Arctic LNG 2, both critical to the country's energy export strategy.

Key Findings:

- **Economic Impact:** Sanctions have caused significant disruptions in project timelines, financing, and partnerships, leading to delays, reduced production, and economic losses. As Western companies withdraw, Russia has turned to China and India for support, reshaping global LNG markets and supply chains.
- **Local and Regional Impact:** Sanctions have hurt Arctic local economies reliant on LNG-related activities. Employment has decreased, infrastructure development has slowed, and regional economic stability has weakened, particularly in remote communities.
- **Geopolitical and Security Concerns:** Sanctions have led Russia to increase its military presence in the Arctic, using its natural resources to maintain influence. Rising competition among Arctic nations has heightened geopolitical stakes.



- **International Responses:** Arctic Council member states, including the United States, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland, as well as observer states like China, Japan, South Korea, India, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France, have had varied reactions to the sanctions. China and India have strengthened energy ties with Russia, while others have scaled back their involvement in Arctic LNG projects. Organizations like the European Union and NATO have played key roles in shaping collective responses to Russia's Arctic ambitions.

In the future, sanctions are likely to reshape Arctic geopolitics, energy markets, and regional governance. As Russia seeks alternative markets and adjusts its Arctic strategy, global energy dynamics will remain in flux. The Arctic is set to become a more contested region, with increased competition and the potential for new alliances and confrontations. At this stage, the relevant policymakers should prioritize two goals in the Arctic: mitigating economic disruptions and balancing environmental and security concerns. Policymakers should diversify Arctic regional economies by promoting renewable energy, tourism, and other sustainable industries to reduce dependency on LNG projects. Simultaneously, as the Arctic is ecologically fragile, maintaining strict environmental standards and safety regulations is crucial. Enhanced international cooperation is needed to avoid weakened safety protocols due to sanctions.

In conclusion, this report highlights the complex impact of Western sanctions on Russia's Arctic LNG projects and underscores the need for coordinated international responses to manage the economic, political, and environmental challenges in this strategically vital region.

Learn About & Read the Report: chinaus-icas.org/research/navigating-the-arctic-shifts/

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chinaus-icas.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Navigating-Arctic-Shifts-ICAS-Report-FINAL.pdf

– MAP Commentary –

Reflection from the 2024 Arctic Circle Assembly: Charting the Future of Arctic Governance

By Nong Hong

October 22, 2024

The Arctic Circle Assembly, held from October 17-19, 2024, in Reykjavik, Iceland, attracted over 2,500 participants, including government leaders, academics, indigenous representatives, and business figures, solidifying its status as the world's largest annual event dedicated to Arctic affairs. The 2024 edition expanded its scope with new initiatives, such as the Arctic Circle Business Forum, and took a more integrated approach to scientific and cultural cooperation. These additions built upon the foundations laid in 2023 while addressing evolving geopolitical and environmental challenges. The Assembly emphasized key issues such as Arctic governance, climate change, and economic opportunities, featuring more than 700 speakers across 250 sessions...



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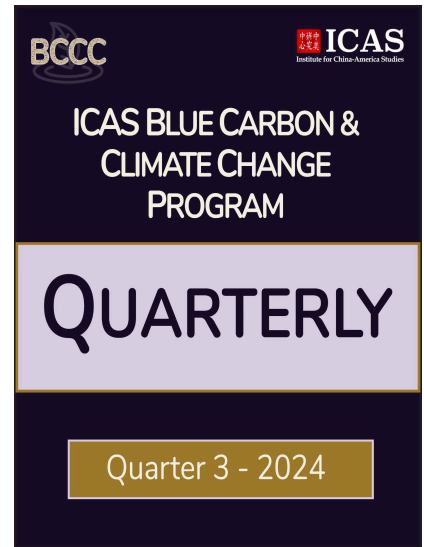
chinaus-icas.org/research/reflection-from-the-2024-arctic-circle-assembly-charting-the-future-of-arctic-governance/

– BCCC Program 2024 Q3 Quarterly –

Blue Carbon & Climate Change 2024 Q3 Has Been Released!

The first week of October, the ICAS Blue Carbon & Climate Change Program released its BCCC Quarterly newsletter for 2024 Q3. This issue features a ‘Theme of the Quarter’ on “Infrastructure and Climate Change” and a ‘Blue Carbon Country Profile’ on “Japan.”

Released each quarter, the BCCC Quarterly records the most important trends and developments regarding blue carbon policies and regulations in China, the U.S., and other regions, as well as international regimes, such as under the United Nations framework. It also includes two special sections—the ‘Theme of the Quarter’ and the ‘Blue Carbon Country Profile’—that aim to bring a fresh and applicable element to each issue.




Explore & Share the BCCC Quarterly 2024 Q3 Issue: chinaus-icas.org/bccc-quarterly/volume-3-issue-3/

BCCC Quarterly (Q3 2024) - 1

Theme of the Quarter: Infrastructure and Climate Change

News on Infrastructure and Climate Change
Strengthening Infrastructure to Build Resilience Against the Increasing Threats of Climate Change is a Global Need

As climate change intensifies, its impacts on global infrastructure are becoming increasingly evident. Extreme weather events such as heatwaves, floods, and droughts are pushing existing infrastructure to its limits. The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) recently warned that nearly 1,100 key infrastructure facilities along the U.S. coastline could experience flooding once a month by 2050 due to rising sea levels. This would put critical infrastructure services such as wastewater treatment plants, schools, and hospitals under serious threat, which are all essential to the daily operation and safety of communities. Also in the U.S., analysts recently found that extreme heat and flood are already damaging transportation infrastructure, affecting everything from roads to airports, causing significant disruptions to daily life and economic activity. For example, in Moorhead, Minnesota, increased rainfall has overwhelmed stormwater systems and led to frequent street flooding. What is most worrying is that much of the infrastructure in the U.S. was built many years ago and is seriously outdated, which makes them particularly vulnerable to increasingly extreme weather. This is particularly true of infrastructure in inland regions, evidenced by the disastrous multi-state Hurricane Helene in late September that isolated—if not destroyed—entire mountainous communities, swept out highways and bridges, killed over 100 people, left millions of people across 10 states without power, and resulted in an estimated \$160 billion in damages and economic loss. Similarly, in Africa, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) reports that climate-related hazards, including droughts, floods, and tropical cyclones, are damaging local infrastructures and causing annual economic losses amounting to two to five percent of their GDP, seriously exacerbating the food insecurity, water scarcity, and displacement problems of this underdeveloped continent.¹



The growing frequency of climate-induced disruptions underscores the urgent need to upgrade and redesign infrastructure to withstand future conditions. The U.S. state of Florida has collectively invested

¹ Hurricane Helene caused flooding on the North Fork Catawba River in McDowell County that washed out a bridge on Highway 22 in North Cove, N.C. on Sept. 28, 2024, disconnecting communities and isolating them from already limited resources. (Photo by Julia Wall for The Washington Post via Getty Images)

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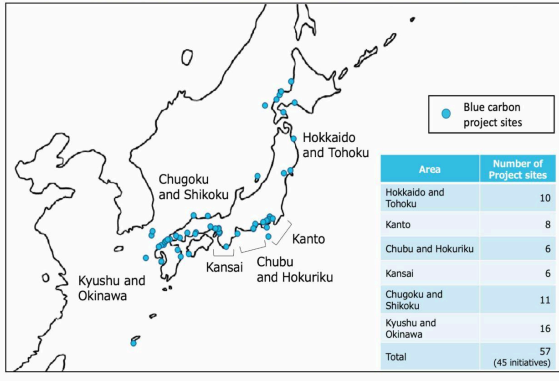
BCCC Quarterly (Q3 2024) - 24

Blue Carbon Country Profile: Japan

A. Potential of Japan in Blue Carbon Affairs

Japan's approach to blue carbon is comprehensive and innovative. Japan incorporates not only traditional blue carbon ecosystems like seagrasses, mangroves, and tidal marshes, but also seaweed beds, which are widely distributed along Japan's extensive coastline. As a large island nation, Japan's rich marine environment supports vast blue carbon ecosystems, and the country is one of the few countries that has placed significant emphasis on managing these resources across multiple levels of society, including in the government, the private sector, research institutions, and non-government organizations. Japan also actively engages in international blue carbon initiatives, collaborating with other countries to promote the concept, foster joint research, and support blue carbon conservation efforts, particularly in developing nations.

- Amount of mangroves: Approximately 500 hectares
- Amount of seagrass: 62,000 hectares
- Amount of seaweed beds: 172,000 hectares
- Key institutions of study on blue carbon: Ministry of the Environment; the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; and the Fisheries Agency
- Key regions of interest: Yokohama Blue Carbon Project; Fukuoka City Hakata Bay Blue Carbon Offset Programme; Osaka Bay Sea Forest (Seaweed Beds) Conservation and Restoration Project



Area	Number of Project sites
Hokkaido and Tohoku	10
Kanto	8
Chubu and Hokuriku	6
Kansai	6
Chugoku and Shikoku	11
Kyushu and Okinawa	16
Total	57 (45 initiatives)

⁴ Image Source: "Case Study on Blue Carbon Initiatives in Japan: Conserving and Restoring Coastal Ecosystems as a Solution to Climate Change"; Blue Carbon Liaison Council of Ministry of the Environment, December 2023.

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About the BCCC Quarterly: chinaus-icas.org/icas-blue-carbon-climate-change-program/bccc-quarterly/

About the Blue Carbon & Climate Change Program: chinaus-icas.org/icas-blue-carbon-climate-change-program/

— ICAS Save the Date Announcement —

The ICAS 2024 Annual Conference will be held on Thursday, December 12, 2024!

The Institute for China-America Studies is excited to host its full-day Annual Conference—in conjunction with a celebration of the tenth anniversary of its founding—on Thursday, December 12, 2024 in Downtown Washington, D.C.!

Full information regarding this anticipatory event, to include the list of over two dozen experts in U.S.-China relations gathering to discuss current and future actions in this complex field, will be announced soon!

Subscribe to Receive the RSVP Notice: chinaus-icas.org/subscribe/

Explore the 2023 Annual Conference: chinaus-icas.org/events-2/annual-conferences/2023-annual-conference/