



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.

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- **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,
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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

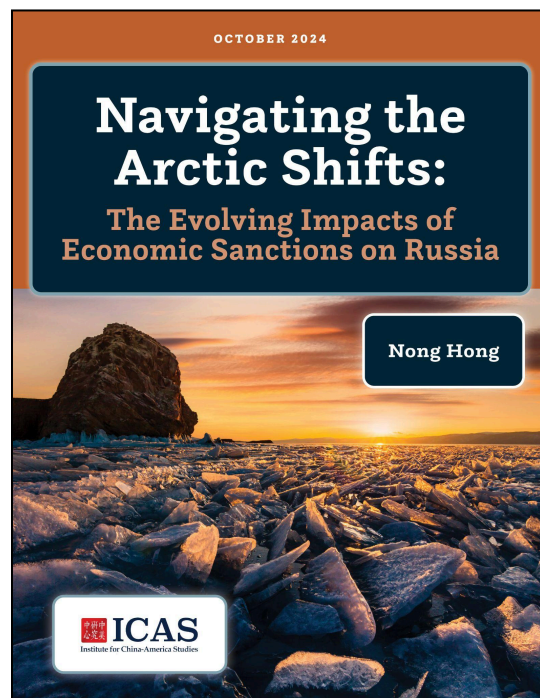
By Nong Hong
October 2024

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/

Read & Share the PDF:

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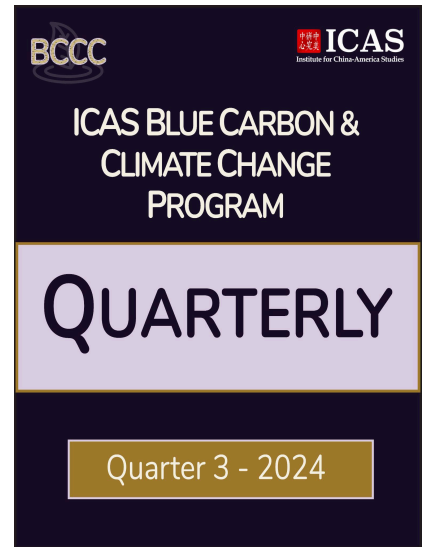
chinaus-icas.org/research/reflection-from-the-2024-arctic-circle-assembly-charting-the-future-of-arctic-governance/

– 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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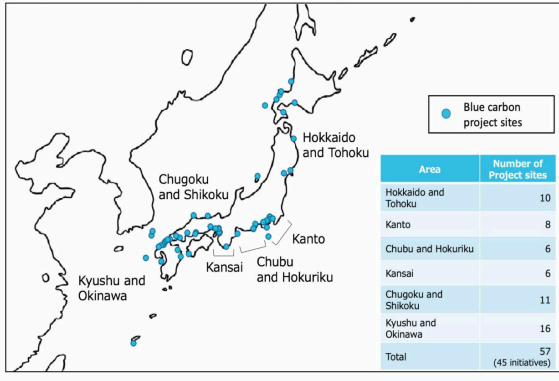
BCCC Quarterly (Q3 2024) - 24

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/



ICAS MARITIME AFFAIRS HANDBILL

November 27, 2024

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Recent News in Global Maritime Affairs

[1] Ocean Governance and Maritime Cooperation [1]

[In 'biggest-Ever' Haul, Indian Coast Guard Seizes 5 Ton Drugs In Andaman Waters](#)

November 25 - *Hindustan Times*

[Indian Ocean]

On November 25, the Indian Coast Guard seized what is likely to be its biggest ever drug consignment—around five tonnes of drugs—from a fishing boat that was sailing in Andaman waters. The seizure was one in a string of several anti-narcotics operations in the region.

[Leaders Fail To Address Overfishing Near Europe At 'fraught' International Meeting](#)

November 22 - *Mongabay*

[Atlantic Ocean, Global]

From November 12-15, the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), a multilateral regional body that controls fishing in international waters, held its annual meeting in London, United Kingdom. Non-government organizations and other observers are protesting against the NEAFC member countries' failure to address overfishing of certain fish stocks in the Northeast Atlantic, including mackerel and herring, which have been reported as being overfished for years.

[EU Council Adopts New Maritime Safety Legislation For Cleaner, Safer Shipping](#)

November 18 - *IBEX Publishing*

[Europe, Global]

The Council of the European Union (EU) has a new 'maritime safety' legislative package, involving four pieces of legislation, that collectively aims to align EU rules with international standards, improve cross-border coordination and enforcement, and incorporate international standards on marine environment protection into EU law.

[Malaysia Protests New Philippine Maritime Zones Laws For South China Sea](#)

November 15 - *Radio Free Asia*
[South China Sea, Asia-Pacific]

After Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed two laws on November 8—the Maritime Zones Act and the Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act—Malaysia sent an official protest note to Manila on the grounds that the laws encroach on Malaysia’s state of Sabah. China's foreign ministry also officially rejected the laws within days, stating that they infringe upon Beijing's territorial sovereignty and rights, and released a definition of the baseline for “territorial waters” around the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea, which the Philippines protested in turn.

[First Oceans 20 Communiqué Urges Bold G20 Action For Ocean Stewardship](#)

November 12 - *Globe Newswire*
[Brazil]

One week ahead of the G20 Leaders’ Meeting in Brazil, Oceans 20 released a Communiqué outlining ten priority themes and six actionable recommendations that “promote a sustainable ocean economy, energy transition, food security, marine conservation, strengthened governance, and increased ocean finance.” The Communiqué was drafted after gathering over 6,000 participants from 34 countries, including 300 expert speakers.

[The EU Says It Won't Renew A Fishing Agreement With Senegal Criticized By Many In The Country](#)

November 12 - *ABC News*
[Senegal]

After the European Union (EU) identified Senegal as a “non-cooperating country” in countering illegal fishing earlier this year, the EU has now announced that, unless there were “encouraging developments,” their fishing agreement with Senegal signed in 2019 that allows European vessels to fish in Senegalese waters would not be renewed.

[Indonesia's Maritime Agency To Hold Talks With Chinese Coast Guard](#)

November 11 - *The Jakarta Post*
[Southeast Asia, China]

Indonesia’s chief of its maritime security agency known as Bakamla Vice Adm. Irvansyah announced that Bakamla will hold a meeting with the Chinese coast guard in late November or early December 2024. The official remark highlighted that the bilateral meeting will not include talks on security issues in the South China Sea but focus on joint maritime maneuver and training.

[India, Maldives Strengthen Maritime Security Ties To Support Regional Stability](#)

November 8 - *Indo-Pacific Defense Forum*

[India, Maldives]

India and the Maldives have agreed to enhance joint surveillance, radar upgrades, and coastal infrastructure improvements to strengthen their defense and maritime security partnership. They will also now look towards addressing threats like piracy, illegal fishing, and natural disasters to work towards their shared goal of maintaining regional stability.

[Court Challenges Slow Italy's Out-of-Country Migrant Transfer Centers](#)

November 7 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Mediterranean Sea]

In an attempt to move the burden of asylum claims away from Italy's shores and stave off the rising influx of migrants coming from Libya and Tunisia, the Italian government set up two out-of-country processing centers in Albania for maritime migrants rescued near the Italian coastline. However, the first month of the centers' operations faced legal opposition over the suitability of the transfer centers for migrants whose nations of origin are unsafe for repatriation.

[Moroccan Forces Foil Hijacking Attempt On Cargo Ship](#)

November 6 - *BAIRD Maritime*

[Atlantic Ocean, Africa]

On November 4, the Royal Moroccan Navy successfully intercepted an attempted hijacking of a commercial cargo vessel off Morocco's Atlantic coast, taking into custody the attacking group of 54 suspected migrants. The Liberia-flagged ship was approximately 100 kilometers off the southwestern coast of Morocco when its crew alerted the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre.

[2] Maritime Security and Defense [2]

[US Says Its Forces Are Supporting Philippines in South China Sea](#)

November 21 - *Bloomberg*

[United States, South China Sea]

After U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin announced he had visited with members deployed to "Task Force-Ayungin" during a trip to the Philippines, a spokesperson at the U.S. Embassy in Manila confirmed that U.S. military forces are supporting the Philippines in the South China Sea as part of "Task Force-Ayungin," which "enhances US-Philippine alliance coordination and interoperability." 'Ayungin' is the Philippines' name for the disputed Second Thomas Shoal.

[Sabotage threats loom as Norway joins international subsea cable initiative](#)

November 21 - *Arctic Today*

[Baltic Sea]

After subsea data cables connecting Finland, Germany, Sweden, and Lithuania were damaged on November 18, Danish authorities began suspecting the Chinese vessel *Yi Peng 3*, which data shows drifted around the site at the time of damage, but circumstances remain unclear. The day after the damage was reported, Norway announced its endorsement of an international initiative on underwater communication security. European foreign ministers, recalling similar events in 2023, expressed concerns over intentional damage, citing growing hybrid warfare threats.

[Nigeria, India To Strengthen Ties On Counter-Terrorism, Maritime Security](#)

November 17 - *Voice of Nigeria*

[Africa, South Asia]

Nigerian President Bola Tinubu and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged deeper collaboration in counterterrorism, maritime security, and economic development during a state visit by Prime Minister Modi during which key agreements on defense modernization support, energy partnerships, and \$14 billion in Indian investments across critical sectors were signed.

[Philippines Boosts Coastguard Fleet With 49 New Ships From France, Japan](#)

November 13 - *South China Morning Post*

[The Philippines]

The Philippine coast guard announced plans to “more than double” their capability starting in 2027 with the planned acquisition of 49 new ships from France and Japan. A Philippine coast guard commandant confirmed that 40 of the vessels would include 40 fast-patrol craft from France.

[Houthis Attack Two U.S. Destroyers Leaving The Red Sea, Pentagon Says](#)

November 12 - *USNI News*

[Red Sea, United States, Middle East]

The U.S. Department of Defense reported Yemen-based Houthi forces attacked two independently-deployed U.S. destroyers on November 11 with drones and missiles as they were sailing through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait entering the Gulf of Aden. This marks the second time that the *USS Spruance* (DDG-111) and *USS Stockdale* (DDG-106) had faced Houthi fire.

[Exercise Nemo Boosts Maritime Security In The Gulf Of Guinea](#)

November 12 - *The Defense Post*

[Gulf of Guinea]

West African nations and their international partners conducted Exercise Grand African Nemo to strengthen maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. The drills, involving 28 nations and 55 naval units, focused on combating piracy, smuggling, and illegal fishing, fall under the Yaoundé Architecture interregional security framework that was created in 2013 to counter illicit activities.

[Indonesian, Russian Navies Hold Joint Counter-Terrorism Drills](#)

November 11 - *The Jakarta Post*

[Java Sea, Russia, Southeast Asia]

From November 4-9, the navies of Russia and Indonesia held their inaugural bilateral joint naval drills. The drills were set to take place in two phases, one at a naval base in Surabaya and the other in the Java Sea, and involved practicing maneuvering, communication, and vessel inspection.

[Australia Confirms Donation Of 14 Rigid Bull Boats To Ukraine](#)

November 11 - *Defence Connect*

[Europe, Australia]

Australia has confirmed that they will provide 14 rigid hull boats valued at \$14 million to bolster Ukraine's maritime defense against Russian aggression. This support, part of the over \$1.3 billion in military aid that has been given so far, builds on earlier contributions, including inflatable boats and 49 M1A1 Abrams tanks, to enhance Ukraine's coastal security and armored capabilities.

[Sweden Rejects Applications For Thirteen Offshore Wind Farms, Citing Security Concerns](#)

November 5 - *Euro News*

[Baltic Sea, Europe]

The Swedish government has rejected a plan to build 13 offshore wind farms in the Baltic Sea, off the Åland Islands and farther south along its eastern coast. Swedish Defense Minister Pal Jonson argued that wind farms will be a substantial defense challenge for detecting and countering missiles. Since 2022, the government has approved construction of three offshore wind farms.

[US Envoy Sees Some 'concerning Signals' In Russia-China Military Cooperation In Arctic](#)

November 1 - *Reuters*

[United States, The Arctic]

U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Arctic Affairs Michael Sfraga, speaking in a phone interview with *Reuters*, said the "frequency and the complexity" of recent military cooperation between Russia and China in the Arctic sends "concerning signals" and the U.S. will continue to monitor activities.

[3] Maritime Economy and Shipping [3]

[Chennai-Vladivostok Maritime Corridor Opens To Boost India-Russia Trade](#)

November 25 - *Logistics Insider*

[South Asia, Russia, Global]

India's Union Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways announced that the Chennai-Vladivostok Maritime Corridor, a 5,600-nautical-mile route also known as the Eastern Maritime Corridor, has officially begun operations and has successfully received container ships. The corridor is anticipated to reduce shipping times by almost half compared to alternatives.

[Mexico's Manzanillo Port To Double Container Capacity](#)

November 24 - *Seatrade Maritime News*

[Central America, Pacific Ocean]

On November 23, Mexico launched the US\$3 billion expansion of its Port of Manzanillo, Mexico's primary Pacific Coast container ship port. The project, overseen by the Mexican Naval Ministry, is expected to increase the port's capacity from 3.5 to 10 million teu, which would make Manzanillo Port the largest in Latin America and place it among the top 15 container ports in the world.

[Cosco Shipping Inks Green Methanol Agreement](#)

November 20 - *Seatrade Maritime News*

[China, Global]

China-based Cosco Shipping Group, Thailand-based Charoen Pokphand Group, and U.S.-based Freeport Commodities have signed a memorandum of understanding to deepen cooperation on green energy shipping that plans to combine biomass resources and leading technologies.

[Xi Jinping Inaugurates Peru's Chancay Port, Emphasizes Deeper China-Latin America Cooperation](#)

November 17 - *Helsinki Times*

[South America, China]

On November 14, the Port of Chancay in Peru, a US\$1.3 billion Belt and Road Initiative project aimed at strengthening South America-Asia trade ties, was officially inaugurated and opened. Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke at the inauguration virtually while he was in Lima, Peru for a global summit, calling the port the "Inca Trail of the New Era."

[Amazon, IKEA Form Zero Emissions Maritime Buyers Alliance To Go Green In Shipping](#)

November 15 - *Marine Insight*

[United States, Europe, Global]

Led by the Zero Emissions Maritime Buyers Alliance, over 30 global companies that rely on ocean freight transportation, including Amazon and IKEA, are pushing for the use of greener maritime fuels like e-methanol to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. Starting in 2027, contracts for near-zero-emissions shipping aim to cut greenhouse gasses by 470,000 metric tons, leveraging collective demand to lower costs and drive industry decarbonization.

[Report: Shipping Execs Believe They Are Ready for Cyberattacks](#)

November 13 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Global]

A study by risk management provider DNV reveals overconfidence in maritime cybersecurity, with 80% of industry professionals believing that their organizations are prepared for cyber incidents despite evidence suggesting vulnerabilities remain. Key challenges include inconsistent readiness across diverse organizations, insufficient training and persistent risks like malware spread via USBs.

[Andhra Pradesh Aims For Port-Led Economic Transformation](#)

November 12 - *The Hindu*

[Indian Ocean]

India's coastal state of Andhra Pradesh aims to become a key maritime hub by 2030 by leveraging port-led development to boost its economy. With new ports nearing completion and international collaborations, the state plans to increase cargo capacity and attract investments in shipbuilding, repair and industrial development.

[Chinese Shipbuilder Could Soon Restart Production On Back Of MSC Mega Order](#)

November 6 - *Caixin Global*

[China]

New reports from sources state that Jiangsu Rongsheng Heavy Industries Co. Ltd., once China's largest shipyard that has since been laying dormant for almost a decade, has begun hiring personnel and repairing equipment for shipyard production to resume.

[Late Arriving Containership Delays Reach Highest Levels Since Pandemic](#)

November 4 - *The Maritime Executive*

[Global]

Container ship delays have reached their highest levels since the peak during the coronavirus pandemic, as reported by Sea-Intelligence. The global maritime shipping industry continues to

grapple with disruptions in 2024, most notably the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea. Alan Murphy, CEO of Sea-Intelligence, noted that while schedule reliability in 2024 has stabilized between 50% and 55%, it has experienced a slight decline since peaking in May.

[US Navy To Extend Service Lives Of 12 Destroyers](#)

October 31 - *Breaking Defense*

[United States]

The US Navy will extend the service lives of 12 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, thus adding 48 operational years between 2028-2036. This US\$6 billion initiative aims to bolster fleet size, support global operations, and maintain readiness while addressing budgeting constraints and long-term shipbuilding goals.

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

[Divisions On Curbing Plastic Waste Persist As Un Treaty Talks Begin](#)

November 25 - *Reuters*

[East Asia, Global]

On November 25, the fifth and hopefully final United Nations Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5) meeting on establishing an international treaty to address plastic pollution began in South Korea. This round of talks is expected to focus on chemicals of concern, which has been a divisive issue between petrochemical-producing nations and those suffering from pollution.

[Plastic Reduces Krill's Ability To Remove Carbon In The Deep Ocean, Marine Ecologists Find](#)

November 21 - *Phys.org*

[Southern Ocean, The Antarctic]

A new scientific study indicates that Antarctic krill, a unique crustacean naturally capable of absorbing carbon dioxide and removing carbon, could be losing up to 27% of their carbon removal abilities due to the presence of nanoplastics in seawater.

[Murad Unveils Sindh Delta Blue Carbon Project At COP-29](#)

November 18 - *The News International*

[Middle East]

The chief minister of Pakistan's Sindh province highlighted Sindh's Delta Blue Carbon project at COP29, showcasing its success in restoring mangroves, combating climate change, and fostering sustainable livelihoods in the Indus Delta. The pioneering public-private partnership has gained global recognition as a model for nature-based climate solutions and community engagement.

[Mapping 'gloop And Mud' Sheds Light On Seabed Carbon Storage](#)

November 14 - *Mongabay*

[North America, Europe]

New blue carbon mapping projects in Canada and the United Kingdom are revealing the significant carbon storage potential of seabed sediments, with Canada's waters holding 10.9 billion metric tons and the UK's seabeds storing 244 million metric tons of carbon. These findings, crucial for supporting seabed conservation, emphasize the risks of bottom trawling and call for policies to protect high-carbon areas, aiding global net-zero emissions goals.

['Drowning' Mangrove Forests In Maldives Signal Global Coastal Threat, Say Researchers](#)

November 12 - *Phys.org*

[Indian Ocean, Global]

Researchers from Northumbria University have identified significant levels of dieback—a gradual deterioration before eventual death—of mangrove forests in the Maldives, attributing it to accelerated sea-level rise and increased salinity. From 2017-2020, sea levels around the Maldives rose by over 30mm annually, surpassing the mangroves' natural sediment accumulation rate.

[MarONet Buoy To Help NASA Illuminate Ocean's Role In Climate Change](#)

November 8 - *SciTechDaily*

[South Pacific Ocean, United States]

The U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration, in partnership with several universities, has deployed a 15-meter-tall buoy with a new optical system called MarONet (Marine Optical Network) off the coast of Perth, Australia to gather essential data on ocean health such as ocean color. The buoy's data will assist in validating satellite observations used for climate regulations.

[Dominion Energy Announces Installation of 78 Monopile Foundations, 4 Offshore Substation Foundations](#)

November 6 - *T&D World*

[United States, Atlantic Ocean]

Dominion Energy has completed the installation of 78 monopile foundations and four offshore substation foundations for the 2.6 GW Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project. The project aims to generate enough renewable energy to power up to 660,000 homes, with anticipated fuel savings of US\$3 billion for customers in its first decade of operation.

[Two Million Mangroves & A New Subscription: Boris Herrmann's Malizia Mangrove Park Achieves Another Restoration Milestone](#)

October 29 - *Team Malizia*
[Southeast Asia]

The Philippines' Malizia Mangrove Park, established in 2020, has surpassed its goal of planting two million mangroves, marking a significant milestone in coastal ecosystem restoration and climate change mitigation. The park now aims to plant five million mangroves and has introduced a subscription model to facilitate ongoing restoration efforts.

[Intensive Fishing On The Seabed Increases The Release Of Carbon, Researchers Find](#)

October 29 - *Phys.org*
[Europe, North Sea]

Intensive seabed fishing, particularly through bottom trawling, significantly disrupts marine sediments, leading to increased carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. A study revealed that such trawling in the North Sea releases approximately 1 million tons of CO₂ annually, with global estimates being set at around 30 million tons. This process, the study argues, not only diminishes the seabed's capacity to store carbon but also contributes to atmospheric CO₂ levels.

Handbill Spotlight

Port of Chancay

Issue Background

The Port of Chancay (Puerto de Chancay) is a multipurpose, deep-water megaport located in the city of Chancay, Peru that opened in November 2024 following a five-year, \$1.3 billion renovation as [part of](#) China's Belt and Road Initiative. In January 2019, [COSCO Shipping Ports](#) (COSCO)—China's largest state-owned shipping company—[penned](#) a port construction agreement with Volcan Compañía Minera (Volcan)—a Peruvian mining company—in which COSCO [acquired](#) a 60% stake in Terminales Portuarios Chancay for the purpose of jointly building Chancay Terminal with Volcan “into an important gateway port in Peru.” Located approximately 78 km north of the Peruvian capital of Lima, the Chancay port is the [largest](#) Chinese investment in the Latin American port network and the first Chinese logistics hub for the Pacific Ocean in Latin America.

The first stage of extensive renovations [gives](#) the four berth port terminal a draft depth of 16-18 meters, an ability to accommodate containerhips up to 14,000 teu (twenty-foot equivalent unit), and an annual handling capacity of 1 million teu. This expansion concluded with a successful trial period from November 2023 through May 2024 in preparation for official opening in November 2024. Future expansions, expecting to bring the investment total to at least \$3.6 billion, could see the port expand to 15 berths and become [capable](#) of handling 24,000 teu capacity vessels. Most

notably, ships that use the port will be able to considerably reduce their shipping time between Peru and China, decreasing the length to 23 days down from the 35-40 days typically required. In addition to its massive capacity, this drastic drop in shipping time and its expected long-term impact has long granted the Port of Chancay expansion nicknames such as [“the gateway from South America to Asia,”](#) a [“game-changer for South America,”](#) and a [“wake-up call for all of us.”](#)

The Port of Chancay and its construction has received occasional attention by the global observers and, while its benefits were regularly [lauded](#), suspicions and [concerns](#) were also regularly discussed. For instance, there were occasional reports of pushback from locals being mistreated or [endangered](#), shoddy workmanship, and [social](#) and environmental impacts being left [unaddressed](#). The largest season of publicity came in March 2024 when the Peruvian government entered a dispute with COSCO over the port lease. In February 2021, Peru’s National Port Authority (APN) awarded COSCO exclusivity to operate all port services at Chancay Port, but three years later it requested its decision be annulled, [citing](#) an “administrative error” had been discovered and it lacks the power to grant exclusivity. In early June 2024, after months of discussions, the Peruvian government [dropped](#) the lawsuit after its congress passed an amendment to Peru's national port system laws, giving the APN the legal authority to formally grant COSCO exclusive operator rights and resolving the aforementioned error. A [separate](#) legal dispute between COSCO and the Peruvian government recently began in November 2024 over a similar issue, though port operations have not been interrupted.

Recent Events¹

On November 14, [while](#) the 31st APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting was being held in Lima, the Port of Chancay held its operation ceremony, officially opening the new “maritime expressway” across the Asia-Pacific. In her celebratory announcement, Peruvian President Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra [referred](#) to it as “el nuevo camino Inca,” or “the new Inca road,” in reference to the revolutionary trade routes of the pre-Columbian era. Chinese President Xi Jinping, in his own congratulatory [remarks](#) given by video link, described the port as a “key maritime centre for trade between South America and Asia” and stated that it would serve as the starting point of an “Inca Trail of the New Era.” On the same day, Minister of Commerce Wang Wentao and Peruvian



¹ Image Source: A combination photo showing Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Peruvian counterpart, Dina Boluarte, attending the opening ceremony of the Chancay Port via video link in Lima, Peru, Nov. 14, 2024. (Xinhua/Xie Huanchi, Li Mengxin via Getty Images)

Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism Ursula Leon Chempen signed the [Optimization Protocol of the Free Trade Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Peru and the Government of the People's Republic of China](#), which [optimizes](#) seven existing provisions and adds five new provisions while reaffirming their strategic partnership.

Concurrently in November, a new [legal conflict](#) over the Port of Chancay arose between COSCO and Ositran—Peru's supervisory body for public use transport infrastructure investments—regarding the supervision and scope of regulatory authority over the port. COSCO [filed](#) a protective action with the Peruvian Judiciary stating that Ositran [lacks](#) the authority to enforce certain regulations at the Port of Chancay, while Ositran maintains that they are obligated to oversee the port infrastructure to ensure competitiveness, transparency, and accessibility.

The Port of Chancay's inauguration drew the attention of many with observers in media, academia and government around the world giving their opinions about the implications of the port. Presented debates on the port have covered a range of topics, including the implications of [China's presence](#) in the [region](#), the [revival](#) of the Maritime Silk Road, [arguments](#) on increased [security](#) concerns, the potentials of a [strengthened](#) bilateral China-Peru ties, and the array of [benefits](#) the new port brings to the [global shipping industry](#), among other subjects.

Keep In Mind

The opening of the Port of Chancay arrived at a complex and sensitive period in history. Driven by a solid decade of tense security suspicions and pervasive caution worldwide, the port has drawn controversy and concern for [years](#) and it has all come to a head now that opening day has arrived. It is difficult to differentiate speculation from fact, especially when concerns are inflated by constant military conflicts ongoing in the background or questions are left only vaguely answered by the knowledgeable parties. The presence of two confusing lawsuits and the port's connection to the Belt and Road Initiative—which has long ago become infamous in some circles—within the span of seven months do not soothe this tension.

Regardless of how it is discussed, the successful opening and operation of this port will lead to an evolution in China-Peru—as well as China-South American—relations. Even as China is in the midst of addressing a domestic economic downturn, as long as it is managed effectively, the Port of Chancay can be seen as a success for China's long-term global economic stability. By most accounts, it is a tremendous boon to the global maritime economies of both China and South America that has the potential to bring many possibilities, especially should the remaining stages become complete. As COSCO CHANCAY's [vision statement](#)—“To be recognized as the most important and efficient multipurpose port terminal in the South Pacific”—indicates, it wants to become the center of trade in the South Pacific, and it is in a position to succeed.

Public opinions on the port will likely remain divided, with some observers continuing to describe it as [evidence](#) of “a concerted Chinese strategy to extend its maritime trade and logistics footprint to all of the key maritime points on the globe.” For bulk speculation to cede in a timely manner,

COSCO, along with the Peruvian government and other invested parties, will need to address the several issues that have come up during its construction—legal, environmental, geopolitical and social. Without—at the very least—open attempts to address and resolve these issues, the Port of Chancay is, more likely than not, destined to remain yet another point of contention and distrust between China and much of the rest of the world in the long-term; an outcome which favors no party.

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

- United Nations Environment Programme - [“Decisive fifth session of negotiations on a global plastic pollution treaty opens in Busan”](#) [November 25]
- U.S. Department of Defense - [“Austin Meets With Southeast Asian Counterparts, Charts Vision for Enhanced Regional Cooperation”](#) [November 21]
- Government of Norway - [“Norway joins the international initiative on submarine cables \[Norge slutter seg til internasjonalt initiativ om undersjøiske kabler\]”](#) [November 19]
- Council of the European Union - [“Maritime safety: Council adopts new laws to support safe, clean and modern shipping in the EU”](#) [November 18]
- U.S. Department of Defense - [“DOD Launches Industry-Government Maritime Security \(MARSEC\) Consortium To Advance Maritime Security Across Southeast Asia”](#) [November 18]
- Council of the European Union - [“Maritime safety: Council adopts new laws to support safe, clean and modern shipping in the EU”](#) [November 18]
- Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme Inger Andersen - [“Working together for the resilience of the Caspian Sea”](#) [November 18]
- Government of Peru - [“Chancay es el nuevo camino inca marítimo \[Chancay is the new maritime Inca trail\]”](#) [November 14]
- The White House - [“Statement from National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan on MOU Signed by United States, Canada, and Finland to Build Arctic and Polar Icebreakers”](#) [November 13]
- U.S. Embassy Jakarta - [“‘Partnership In Resilience’ Exhibit Marks 20 Years Of U.S.-Indonesia Cooperation After Indian Ocean Tsunami”](#) [November 12]
- European Commission - [“Letter from Maroš Šefčovič to Minister of Foreign Affairs Espen Barth Eide - EU-Norway High Level Dialogue on Fisheries and Ocean Governance”](#) [November 11]
- European Commission - [“Commission and Norway agree on EU quota of Svalbard cod for 2025 and beyond”](#) [November 11]
- Senate of the Philippines - [“New Maritime and Sea Lanes Laws Secure Philippines' Waters and Safeguard Marine Resources - Legarda”](#) [November 11]
- U.S. Indo-Pacific Command - [“U.S. Indo-Pacific Command representatives meet with the People's Liberation Army counterparts for the Military Maritime Consultative Agreement working group and plenary session”](#) [November 8]

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The People's Republic of China - "[Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The People's Republic of China On the Enactment by the Republic of the Philippines Of Its "Maritime Zones Act" and "Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act"](#)" [November 8]
- U.S. Department of State - "[On the Philippines Maritime Zones Act](#)" [November 8]
- Australian Government - "[Australia to boost Ukraine's maritime defences](#)" [November 5]
- International Organization for Migration - "[IOM Statement: At least 25 dead in latest tragic shipwreck off Comoros Islands](#)" [November 4]

Analyses & Opinions

- "[Blue Economy and the Mediterranean: How the Red Sea Crisis is Shaping the Region's Maritime Future \(and What is Next\)](#)" [Italian Institute for International Political Studies - November 24]
- "[Harnessing Blue Carbon: Mozambique's Path To Climate Resilience](#)" [Devdiscourse - November 23]
- "[Manila and Beijing Clarify Select South China Sea Claims](#)" [Center for Strategic & International Studies - November 21]
- "[Will Denmark Expose Chinese-Russian Sabotage In The Baltic?](#)" [Foreign Policy - November 20]
- "[The Clandestine Oil Shipping Hub Funneling Iranian Crude To China](#)" [Bloomberg - November 20]
- "[The Origins And Principles Of Freedom Of The Seas](#)" [Law Society Journal Online - November 19]
- "[Positioning South Africa As Guardian Of The Cape Route](#)" [Institute For Security Studies - November 19]
- "[Regenerative Blue Economy: A Strategic Framework For Global Ocean Governance](#)" [Observer Research Foundation - November 18]
- "[Building Blue Bridges: Strengthening Maritime Connectivity And Sustainable Growth From The Mediterranean To The Indian Ocean](#)" [Observer Research Foundation - November 17]
- "[Managing Cyber Risk With USCG's New Maritime Security Directive](#)" [The Maritime Executive - November 17]
- "[The Opening Up Of The Chancay Port In Peru And Its Role In The Chinese Maritime Silk Road](#)" [Modern Diplomacy - November 16]
- "[From Chancay to Shanghai: New China-Peru BRI project to become hub, gateway port of Latin America](#)" [Global Times - November 15]
- "[Meet The Companies Pioneering The World's First Blue Carbon Innovation Studio](#)" [The Fish Site - November 13]
- "[China's Marine Conservation Efforts Prioritise Symbolism Over Substance](#)" [South China Morning Post - November 12]
- "[Are Houthis Blackmailing Shipping Companies For Millions?](#)" [DW - November 12]
- "[Significance Of Mombasa Port For Chinese Outreach In Africa](#)" [Observer Research Foundation - November 11]
- "[Trump Administration Must Reform How U.S. Navy Designs, Builds Warships](#)" [Defense Opinion - November 11]
- "[Strengthening Defence, Maritime Security, And Trade: India's Strategic Partnership With Nigeria](#)" [Financial Express - November 10]
- "[How Colombia's Mangrove Stewards Are Pioneering A Climate And Nature-Positive Approach](#)" [World Economic Forum - November 8]
- "[Chancay Port, A Vindication Of China-Peru Win-Win Cooperation Under BRI](#)" [Global Times - November 7]
- "[Sea Ice In 2024 – The New Abnormal](#)" [Arctic Today - November 6]
- "[Could Seaweed Be The Ultimate Carbon Capture Solution?](#)" [New Scientist - November 6]
- "[Offshore Wind Energy: What's The Big Deal?](#)" [DW - November 4]
- "[Ever Forward: The Unique Relationship Between The Arctic And Space](#)" [Wilson Center - November 1]
- "[Why The U.S. Military Has To Hitch A Ride On Commercial Ships](#)" [The Wall Street Journal - November 1]
- "[Responding To China's Growing Influence In Ports Of The Global South](#)" [Center For Strategic & International Studies - October 30]

- [“How Many Runways Is Vietnam Building In The Spratly Islands?”](#) [Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative - October 30]
- [“Russia’s Arctic Rise”](#) [USNI News - October 29]

Other Research

- Report: Global Maritime Forum - [Annual Progress Report on Green Shipping Corridors 2024](#) [November 19]
- Journal Article: [“Legal Pathways for China’s Blue Carbon Conservation: A Perspective of Synergizing Ocean and Climate Rule of Law”](#) *Frontiers in Marine Science* Vol. 11
- Journal Article: [“The Change In Sovereignty For The Chagos Archipelago”](#) *Strategic Comments* Vol. 30, No. 7
- Journal Article: [“The Dual Role Of Coastal Mangroves: Sinks And Sources Of Microplastics In Rapidly Urbanizing areas”](#) *Journal of Hazardous Materials* Vol. 480

Events on the Maritime Domain

- From November 6-7, Active Communications International hosted its [18th Arctic Shipping Summit](#) in Montreal, Canada to gather regional stakeholders and experts to address a variety of shipping issues.
- On November 8, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research held a hybrid event titled [“Securing the Seas: A Comprehensive Assessment of Global Maritime Security”](#) in Geneva, Switzerland.
- On November 14, Ifri’s Center for Asian Studies hosted an online event titled [“Allied and Aligned? The Future of Alliances in the Indo-Pacific after the US Elections.”](#)
- On November 14, Center for Strategic & International Studies held a live webinar with the Vice Chief of Naval Operations titled [“Readying the Navy’s Platforms: More Players on the Field.”](#)
- From November 18-19, India’s Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and the Observer Research Foundation co-hosted the first annual [Sagarmanthan: The Great Oceans Dialogue](#) in New Delhi, India.
- From November 18-22, UNESCO and a collection of other sponsors will host [OceanPredict Symposium](#) in Paris, France to “focus on the development of the operational oceanography for societal benefit.”
- From November 19-21, the inaugural [Anchorage Security and Defense Conference](#) was held on behalf of the U.S. Department of Defense, gathering U.S. and global defense and security practitioners to “discuss challenges and opportunities facing the circumpolar Arctic and neighboring regions with international security implications.”
- On November 21, East-West Center held a webinar titled [“Can we Maintain Peace with China? Developments in China and their Implications in the Indo-Pacific Region.”](#)
- On November 22, Hudson Institute hosted an in-person event titled [“Technology and Maritime Security Cooperation between NATO and the Indo-Pacific.”](#)
- From November 25-December 1, the [fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment \(INC-5\)](#) will be held in the Republic of Korea.
- 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.”
- On December 2, Wilson Center will host a book discussion webinar titled [“The Contest for the Indian Ocean And the Making of a New World Order.”](#)

- On December 4, the University of Bergen and Arctic Frontiers will hold a panel discussion titled [“Science diplomacy and ocean governance for the green transition”](#) as part of the Arctic Frontiers Abroad event “License to Operate: Sustainable Ocean Development and the Green Transition.”
- On December 5, Center for Strategic & International Studies will host a webinar on [“Examining PRC Activities in the Arctic”](#)
- On December 11, the U.S. Naval Institute will hold its [Defense Forum Washington 2024](#), gathering military, congressional and civilian leaders to “address the challenges facing the Sea Services.”

ICAS Maritime Affairs Program: New and Upcoming

– ICAS 2024 Annual Conference –

ICAS
Institute for China-America Studies

2024 Annual Conference
& ICAS 10th Anniversary

Thursday, December 12, 2024
9:00am-4:20pm (EST) (GMT-5)
Georgetown Marriott Hotel, Washington, DC

Trump 2.0: Will U.S.-China Relations Prosper, Suffer or Muddle Through?

Keynote
Moderated by

QIU Wenxing
Minister
Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States

Gordon HOULDEN
Director Emeritus
The China Institute,
University of Alberta

Luncheon Speech
Moderated by

Stephen ORLINS
President
National Committee on
U.S.-China Relations

Amy CELICO
Partner
Albright Stonebridge Group

Panel I: Geopolitics & Security
Michael SWAINE
Robert DALY
Moderated by: LIU Yawei

Panel II: Science & Technology
Paul TRIOLO
LU Xiaomeng
CAO Cong
Denis SIMON
Moderated by: Sourabh GUPTA

Panel III: Third Parties' Views on U.S.-China Relations
Vikram NEHRU
Jan Willem BLANKERT
Enrique DUSSEL PETERS
Rachel Minyoung LEE
Moderated by: YANG LI

Panel IV: People-to-People Exchanges
Madelyn ROSS
HAN Hua
Jan BERRIS
WANG Sheng

Opening Remarks
WU Shicun
Chairman of the Advisory Board
Institute for China-America Studies

Introduction
HONG Nong
Executive Director
Institute for China-America Studies

In Collaboration With
THE CARTER CENTER
NHSCS
BEIJING CLUB
ICES

RSVP: <https://chinaus-icas.org/events-2/annual-conferences/2024-annual-conference/>

For media and other inquiries, email Jessica Martin at jessicamartin@chinaus-icas.org

Trump 2.0: Will U.S.-China Relations Prosper, Suffer or Muddle Through?

Thursday, December 12, 2024
9:00am - 4:20pm EST (GMT-5)

ICAS will hold its 2024 Annual Conference in-person at the Georgetown Marriott Hotel in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, December 12, 2024!

Featuring a keynote by **Minister Qiu Wenxing (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States)**, a luncheon speech by **Stephen Orlins (National Committee on U.S.-China Relations)**, and four expert panels coverage a variety of subject matters, this year's conference will assess the upcoming challenges and opportunities in U.S.-China relations amidst Donald Trump's return to the Oval Office.

A buffet lunch will be provided to registered guests. Media and other inquiries may be directed to jessicamartin@chinaus-icas.org.

Register To Save Your Seat & Learn More:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/events-2/annual-conferences/2024-annual-conference/>

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<https://chinaus-icas.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/ICAS-2024-Annual-Conference-Program-Online.pdf>

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– MAP Commentary –

How the West can navigate Sino-Russian cooperation in the Arctic

By Nong Hong

November 26, 2024

The China-Russia partnership has reached unprecedented levels, propelled by mutual strategic interests in Arctic governance and a shared objective of countering Western influence. This partnership is reflected in recent joint military activities, enhanced maritime cooperation and increasingly integrated Arctic policies...



...The Arctic is increasingly emerging as a focal point for international cooperation and competition. China and Russia, while strategically aligned, have distinct national priorities and ambitions to shape the regional order. For Western nations, this partnership calls for nuanced and coordinated strategies that balance engagement with preparedness.

As climate change accelerates resource accessibility and amplifies geopolitical

interest in the Arctic, the stakes remain high for all stakeholders. By pursuing collaborative approaches and maintaining open channels of communication, the West can effectively navigate these challenges, promoting an inclusive framework for Arctic governance that considers the interests of all regional players, including China and Russia.

Continue Reading:

<https://chinaus-icas.org/research/how-the-west-can-navigate-sino-russian-cooperation-in-the-arctic/>

This commentary was [originally](#) released by South China Morning Post on November 26, 2024.



ICAS MARITIME AFFAIRS HANDBILL

December 31, 2024

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Recent News in Global Maritime Affairs

[1] Ocean Governance and Maritime Cooperation [1]

[Maritime Law Has To Be Changed To Protect Undersea Infrastructure, Estonia Says](#)

December 27 - Reuters

[Baltic Sea, Europe, Russia]

Estonia's Minister of Justice said that international maritime law must be updated to outlaw damage to undersea infrastructure such as pipelines and subsea cables, and has announced plans to apply to the International Maritime Organization by February to update the law. The comment followed an incident earlier in the week where subsea cables connecting Estonia to Finland were again damaged. On December 26, Finnish authorities seized a ship carrying Russian oil in the Baltic Sea on suspicion of its involvement. One day later, Estonia's navy deployed a ship to protect a parallel subsea power line.

[Sweden Says China Denied Request For Prosecutors To Board Ship Linked To Severed Cables](#)

December 23 - The Guardian

[Baltic Sea, Europe, China]

After the Chinese-registered bulk carrier *Yi Peng 3* was put under suspicion of sabotaging data cables in the Baltic Sea in mid-November after sailing in the area, the Chinese government agreed to cooperate with European police, allowing authorities to board the ship in early-December as observers to a Chinese investigation. A week later, Swedish officials accused China of denying Swedish prosecutors access to the ship for a preliminary investigation. The *Yi Ping 3* then left the Kattegat strait in which it had been anchored for over a month for the "wellbeing of the crew."

[Iran, China Sign Cooperation MOU At Indian Ocean Forum](#)

December 19 - MEHR News Agency

[Indian Ocean, China, Middle East]

Iran and China, on the sidelines of the Indian Ocean Rim Development Cooperation Forum in Kunming, China, signed a memorandum of understanding for development cooperation. After emphasizing the importance of the blue economy at the forum, Iran's representative also held bilateral meetings with other Indo-Pacific deputy ministers to explore cooperation opportunities.

[Boakai Stresses Importance of Managing Region's Marine Resources](#)

December 16 - Daily Observer

[Africa]

From December 11-13, the 15th Ministerial Conference of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea took place in Monrovia, Liberia. During the conference, Liberian President Joseph Boakai urged for marine ecosystem protection and sustainable resource management, especially in the fishing industry.

[Japan-U.S.-Philippines Maritime Dialogue Convenes In Tokyo](#)

December 10 - Daily Tribune

[Japan, U.S., Philippines]

On December 10, Japan, the United States., and the Philippines convened an inaugural maritime dialogue in Tokyo, which focused on South China Sea disputes and promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific. The nations reaffirmed opposition to unilateral actions and agreed to expand trilateral maritime cooperation, with the Philippines set to host the next dialogue in 2025.

[Canada Seeks Stronger Us Ties In Arctic To Counter Russia, China](#)

December 6 - Bloomberg

[Arctic Ocean, North America]

Canada has announced that it will establish two new Arctic consulates, one in Alaska and the other in Greenland, as well as appoint a dedicated Arctic ambassador. These announcements are seen as key parts of Canada's expanding foreign policy strategy for the Arctic region, of which the United States has been named its "closest partner."

[Seychelles And India Continue To Expand Maritime Cooperation Through Hydrography](#)

December 2 - Seychelles News Agency

[Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean]

Following a series of high-level meetings on November 29, Seychelles and India reaffirmed their mutual commitment to strengthening cooperation in hydrography, highlighting its multifaceted importance in maritime safety efforts, economic development and environmental protection.

[Legal Frameworks Seen Vital In Climate Action, Ocean Protection](#)

November 29 - Philippine News Agency

[Global]

President Tomas Haukur Heidar of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, during a series of high-level university and government lectures during a historic visit to the Philippines, highlighted how important legal frameworks are in pushing climate action and ocean protection.

[India And France Strengthen Maritime Partnership](#)

November 28 - India Shipping News

[Indo-Pacific, Indian Ocean, Europe]

On November 27, representatives from India and France conducted a high-level meeting in New Delhi to discuss deepening bilateral cooperation in maritime security, sustainable ocean governance, and holistic collaborative opportunities in the Indo-Pacific region. During the meeting the two sides also underscored their shared vision to uphold international maritime law and foster multilateral cooperation.

[Symposium Calls For Safeguarding Universal And Sustainable Maritime Security](#)

November 26 - Global Times

[China, Global]

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, speaking in a keynote address at the 5th Symposium on Global Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance in Sanya, China, said that China is prepared to work with countries to properly handle maritime differences through negotiations and consultations with the end goal of maintaining long-term peace and stability at sea. Other global experts participating also emphasized the importance of peaceful negotiations throughout dialogue.

[2] Maritime Security and Defense [2]

[China Launches New Amphibious Assault Ship, Enhancing Naval Power](#)

December 27 - *Euro News*

[China, Pacific Ocean, Global]

On December 27, China launched its first Type 076 amphibious assault ship, *Sichuan*. The largest of its kind to date, the Type 076 includes advanced technologies—like an electromagnetic catapult and an “arrestor technology” system that allows fighter jets to land on its deck—and is designed to enhance the People’s Liberation Army Navy’s distant water combat capabilities.

[Myanmar Navy Unveils 135-Meter Frigate King Thalun And Commissions Anti-Submarine Ships On 77th Navy Day](#)

December 25 - *Asia News Network*

[Southeast Asia, Pacific Ocean]

The Myanmar Navy, on its 77th Navy Day, launched its newly constructed 135-meter frigate, *King Thalun*, which is the largest and most advanced warship ever built by the Myanmar Navy. Myanmar also commissioned two new 63-meter anti-submarine warfare ships into its navy.

[Cambodia To Grant Japan Visitation Rights To China-Linked Naval Base](#)

December 21 - *The Japan Times*

[Southeast Asia, East Asia]

On December 20, Cambodia’s former Prime Minister Hun Sen said that Japan would be granted visitation rights to Cambodia’s Ream Naval Base, a naval base that underwent an upgrade starting in 2022 with the support of Chinese funding.

[China Expanding Pacific Operations, Taiwan Invasion ‘Not Possible’ by 2027, Say DoD Officials](#)

December 19 - *USNI News*

[Info-Pacific, United States, China]

U.S. Assistant Secretary for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs Ely Ratner, speaking at a think tank event in Washington, D.C., said that, despite its “rapid progress,” having China’s military forces prepared for a “short, sharp invasion” of Taiwan by 2027 “is not possible right now.”

[China Permits Philippine Ship To Deliver Supplies To Second Thomas Shoal Outpost](#)

December 17 - *South China Morning Post*

[South China Sea, Southeast Asia, China]

On December 12, "with the permission of the Chinese side," a Philippine civilian ship delivered supplies to the grounded warship at the disputed Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea.

[Taiwan Says China Has Launched Biggest Maritime Operation In Decades](#)

December 10 - *Voice of America*

[China, Taiwan]

China has deployed nearly 90 naval and coast guard vessels around Taiwan, marking its largest regional military operation in nearly 30 years, according to Taiwanese defense officials. The unannounced maneuvers aim to block regional allies like Japan and the Philippines from aiding Taiwan, as Beijing heightens pressure amid U.S. leadership transition.

[Maritime Threats High On Agenda As Chinese Navy Hosts Gulf Of Guinea Security Forum](#)

December 9 - *South China Morning Post*

[China, Gulf of Guinea]

China hosted a forum in Shanghai with 18 Gulf of Guinea nations to address maritime security issues like piracy and smuggling, signaling its intent to expand military cooperation in Africa. Analysts suggest Beijing's efforts, including potential naval bases, aim to secure trade routes and project power toward the Atlantic, raising geopolitical concerns.

[US To Provide Security Boats To Vietnam](#)

December 5 - *Marine Link*

[Southeast Asia, United States]

The U.S. Embassy in Hanoi announced that the U.S. will be providing a US\$12.5 million assistance package to Vietnam in order to enhance its maritime law enforcement capabilities and counter illegal fishing. The package includes the transfer of small boats and support for training facilities.

[Japan Grants Philippines \\$11 Mln In Security Aid To Bolster Defences](#)

December 5 - *Reuters*

[The Philippines, Japan]

Japan and the Philippines inked a US\$10.65 million security agreement to enhance maritime surveillance and domain awareness, reflecting their shared commitment to regional stability. The deal includes radar systems, boats, and air surveillance equipment as both nations counter China's actions in contested waters.

[NATO Wants To Use Drone Boats For Maritime Security In The Baltic](#)

December 4 - *The Maritime Executive*

[The Baltic]

NATO has announced that it is considering deploying unmanned systems to monitor maritime threats in the Baltic, inspired by U.S. 5th Fleet's Task Force 59. The initiative aims to safeguard subsea infrastructure after the Nord Stream pipeline attack and several similar security incidents.

[Philippines' Marcos Says Presence Of Russian Submarine 'very Worrisome'](#)

December 2 - *The Japan Times*

[South China Sea, Southeast Asia, Russia]

On November 28, a Russian Kilo-class submarine was spotted 80 nautical miles off the western coast of the Philippines, within the boundaries of the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, which Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. called "very concerning." After establishing radio contact with a Philippine Navy frigate and before being escorted out, the submarine was identified and stated it was awaiting improved weather conditions before continuing to Vladivostok, Russia.

[3] Maritime Economy and Shipping [3]

[Egypt Successfully Tests New Channel Extension Of Suez Canal](#)

December 30 - *Smart Water Magazine*

[North Africa, Mediterranean Sea]

Egypt's Suez Canal Authority announced the successful trial operation of a newly constructed 10-kilometer extension at the southern end of the Suez Canal. The new construction is intended to avoid a repeat of the 2021 case in which the *Ever Given* container ship ran aground and blocked the entirety of the critical global shipping route for six days.

[Political Unrest Creates Shipping Crisis in Mozambique](#)

December 29 - *The Maritime Executive*

[South Africa]

Months of domestic political unrest and protests in Mozambique, which began after the election in October, has been confirmed to be severely impacting the state of Port of Maputo's shipping trade in South Africa. The government of Mozambique reported that it has lost US\$54 million due to disruptions while Maputo Port operator Grindrod confirming ongoing delays and cancellations.

[Panama's president calls Trump's Chinese canal claim 'nonsense'](#)

December 26 - BBC

[South America, United States]

In a social media post, U.S. President-elect Donald Trump said that the Panama Canal is charging “exorbitant prices and rates of passage” on U.S. naval and merchant ships and demanded that either the fees be lowered or Panama return the canal to the U.S.; a demand that Panamanian President José Raúl Mulino denied to even consider. Trump said in another post that there are Chinese soldiers stationed there, a claim that President Mulino called “nonsense,” clarifying that there is “not a single Chinese soldier in the canal.”

[The Great Cotonou Joins The Grimaldi Fleet And Inaugurates The China-West Africa Service](#)

December 25 - Port News

[Africa, Atlantic Ocean, China]

On December 20, the sixth and final of the G5-class ro-ro multipurpose vessels in the Grimaldi fleet, *Great Cotonou*, was delivered in Ulsan, South Korea. The 250-metre long vessels are capable of transporting 4,700 linear metres of rolling freight, 2,500 CEU and 2,000 TEU, accompanied by several cutting-edge technological and energy efficiency updates compared to its G4-class predecessor. Starting in January 2025, *Great Cotonou* will inaugurate a new Grimaldi Group route between China and Lagos, Nigeria.

[China Receives First Shipment Of Peruvian Products From The Port Of Chancay](#)

December 24 - Produce Report

[Pacific Ocean, South America, China]

On December 18, the first shipment of Peruvian fruit sailing the new Chancay-Shanghai direct shipping route successfully arrived on the COSCO Shipping vessel *Xin Shanghai*. Starting in December 2024, following a successful inauguration of the Port of Chancay in November, COSCO Shipping Group launched a weekly direct route with further expansions already underway.

[China Lifts Ban On Australian Rock Lobster, Marking An End To 'trade Impediments' Imposed On Canberra By Beijing](#)

December 20 - Hong Kong Free Press

[Pacific Ocean, Indo-Pacific]

On December 20, after months of diplomatic discussions, Australia announced that China has lifted a four-year de facto ban on imports of Australian live rock lobsters into China, marking the fall of the last major sanctions imposed by China in recent years. The lobster trade is worth US\$500,000 a year and, before the ban, an estimated 97.7% of Australia's rock lobster exports were sold to China.

[New Ocean And Air Freight Data Reveals Major Shifts in Global Trade Routes](#)

December 18 - *Supply & Demand Chain Executive*

[Global, Europe, Red Sea]

According to data from Fluent Cargo, major disruptions in the Red Sea from the threat of Houthi attacks against cargo vessels has resulted in one of the largest realignments of global shipping routes in recent years. The most affected was the Asia-Europe route, the maritime capacity of which dropped 33% from 2023 to 2024.

[Morocco Boosts Trade Connectivity With New Maritime Route Linking Agadir to Dakar](#)

December 9 - *Morocco World News*

[Africa, Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic Ocean]

Utilizing existing infrastructure, Morocco has launched a new maritime route between Agadir and Dakar in order to strengthen ties with Sub-Saharan Africa, reduce transport times for perishable goods, and assist Moroccan truckers who face technical issues, border delays and high fuel costs.

[China's New Port Has Peru Targeting \\$30 Billion Farm Exports](#)

December 2 - *Bloomberg*

[Pacific Ocean, South America, China]

Following the successful opening of the first stage of the Chinese-operated Port of Chancay in Peru, Peru's Minister of Agriculture Angel Manero is targeting US\$30 billion in farm exports by 2040, most of it coming from fruit and growth in Asia. 2024 exports are an estimated US\$12 billion.

[Transport Ministry Forms Committee To Review Maritime Law, Port Acts](#)

November 28 - *The Edge Malaysia*

[Southeast Asia]

In preparation to develop a national shipping policy and maritime master plan, Malaysia's Ministry of Transport has created the Malaysia Maritime Law Revision Committee (MLRC) in order to review and update the Merchant Shipping Ordinance (MSO) 1952 and the respective Port Acts.

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

[Tissue-Cultured Seaweed Boosts Farm Productivity](#)

December 30 - *The Fish Site*

[South Pacific Ocean, Indo-Pacific]

Farming researchers at the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre in the Philippines have discovered that the rate of seaweed growth can be increased by up to 6.5 times through the use of applying tissue culture technology that better protects seaweed seedlings from disease and frailty.

[4 Million Dead: “Warm Blob” Disaster Causes Catastrophic Loss](#)

December 27 - *SciTechDaily*

[Atlantic Ocean, North America]

According to an updated study led by the University of Washington, the 2014-2016 marine heat wave known as “the blob” in the Northern Atlantic has led to the death of an estimated 50-75% of the population of common murre, a seabird that feeds off small ocean fish, between 2008-2022.

[DP World Raises \\$100 Million In Middle East’s First-Ever Blue Bond To Fund Sustainable Maritime Projects](#)

December 24 - *Marine Insight*

[Africa]

Dubai-based logistics company DP World successfully raised US\$100 million through the first-ever Blue Bond issued by a company in the Middle East and North Africa region. The five-year bond funding is aimed at supporting sustainable projects in marine transportation, port infrastructure, marine pollution control, and nature-positive initiatives in the maritime and water sectors.

[Freed activist Paul Watson vows to 'end whaling worldwide'](#)

December 21 - *France 24*

[Global, Southern Ocean, Europe]

Paul Watson, a 74-year-old Canadian-American animal rights activist, was released by Denmark after five months of detention in Greenland following an extradition demand from Japan. Watson returned to France and declared to a group of gathered supporters that they would “end whaling worldwide,” calling on Japan to “obey the law” on whaling in the Southern Ocean if they return.

[Arctic Tundra Has Long Helped Cool Earth. Now, It’s Fueling Warming.](#)

December 10 - *The New York Times*

[Arctic Ocean, Global]

Several signs of rapid change were depicted in the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Arctic Report Card 2024 including how, for the 11th year in a row, the Arctic was more abnormally warm than the world as a whole and the Northwest Passage sea route had the lowest amount of sea ice coverage on record.

[Research Set To Transform Our Understanding Of How The Ocean Breathes](#)

December 5 - National Oceanography Centre

[Global, Europe]

The University of Southampton and the National Oceanography Centre in the United Kingdom are jointly launching a £2.5 million project designed to re-evaluate the world’s understanding of how

the ocean stores heat and greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. The project will involve the deployment of floating sensors that will gather data on “small-scale mixing” movements.

[70% Of Ocean Microplastics Are The Type Found In Clothes, Textiles & Fishing Gear – And Europe Is A Hotspot](#)

December 4 - National Oceanography Centre

[Global, Europe]

Newly analyzed samples from the Atlantic Ocean, southern Indian and Pacific Oceans, the Southern Ocean, and in seas around Europe, collected by participants in The Ocean Race, identified that every sample gathered contained microplastics and the greatest concentration was found close to South Africa. The new samples were analyzed with modernized methods that can examine microplastics ten times smaller than traditional methods.

[Norway Kills First Round Of Arctic Deep-Sea Mining Permits Amid Opposition](#)

December 2 - *Mongabay*

[Arctic Ocean, Norwegian Sea]

Following months of pressure from an environmentalist political party and other activists, Norway’s Ministry of Energy has cancelled the first licensing round for deep-sea mining in the Arctic Ocean. The halted proposal, introduced in June 2024, included 386 license areas covering almost 106,000 square miles in the Norwegian Sea.

[MoE and China’s Ministry of Natural Resources sign agreement for clean, green, and sustainable environment under the Sustainable Oceans Cooperation Initiative](#)

December 2 - *Khmer Times*

[Indo-Pacific]

On December 2, Cambodia’s Ministry of Environment and China’s Ministry of Natural Resources signed a memorandum of understanding under the Sustainable Ocean Cooperation Initiative, agreeing to jointly work towards cleanliness, greenness, and sustainability in the oceans to fight climate change.

J-35A Stealth Fighter

Issue Background ¹

The J-35A is the People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN's) newest stealth fighter that has enhanced stealth capabilities and is holistically expected to further strengthen China's naval power. China's journey toward developing advanced stealth fighters has marked a significant leap in its military modernization efforts. Following the introduction of the [J-20](#) as the first fifth-generation stealth fighter for the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF), the J-35A now marks a parallel evolution for the PLAN as the growing military power's second fifth-generation stealth fighter.

Following the introduction of the [J-15](#), China's first carrier-based fighter, the J-35A, whose most significant feature is its enhanced [stealth capabilities](#), is expected to further strengthen China's naval power as the PLAN moves quickly to extending its naval reach, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, and equipping its second indigenous [Type 003 carrier](#), the Fujian, and future carriers models with a viable stealth platform for the next generation of combat scenarios.



Publicly available specifications from China's [state media](#) suggest the J-35A features twin engines, low observability, and enhanced operational versatility—capabilities that could make it a formidable competitor in its class.

Recent Events

The J-35A made its first public appearance at the [2024 Zhuhai Airshow](#) mid-November 2024. Official Chinese media [highlighted](#) the platform as a testament to the country's growing expertise in stealth technology and its commitment to self-reliance in military innovation. The airshow served as a platform for Beijing to demonstrate its progress in developing a viable carrier-based stealth fighter, particularly as the PLAN ramps up the operational readiness of its aircraft carriers fleets, particularly the Type-003 Fujian, PLAN's first [catapult-equipped](#) carrier.

On December 19, 2024, Pakistan is [reported](#) to procure 40 J-35A from its Chinese neighbor. Given the longstanding defense ties between Islamabad and Beijing, a potential deal would mark a significant milestone in China's arms export ambitions. Over the past decade, Pakistan has already worked closely with China to jointly develop the JF-17 Thunder fighter amid pressing challenges to

¹ Image: A J-35A stealth fighter aircraft flying at the 2024 Zhuhai Airshow on November 10, 2024. (Source/Credit: [中国新闻社](#), [Wikicommons CC3.0](#))

modernize its air force to cope with regional challenges. The decision to procure the J-35As could provide a much-needed edge in stealth capabilities that takes the Pakistani air capability to a newer level. The procurement, if proceeded, would undoubtedly recalibrate the military balance in the South Asian region, particularly in relation to Pakistan's rival, India.

Keep In Mind

The introduction of the J-35A carries significant implications for regional security. For the U.S., it underscores the growing challenge of countering China's expanding naval capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region. As a carrier-based stealth fighter, the J-35A enhances China's ability to project power across regional hotspots, including the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait. Its deployment alongside advanced carriers could complicate U.S. military planning and further tilt the regional balance of power.

Beyond military applications, the J-35A could also bolster China's position in the international arms market. Although China [trails far behind](#) the United States and a few other western countries in global arms sales, Beijing has steadily increased its exports, targeting markets in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East in recent years. A stealth fighter like the J-35A could appeal to countries seeking advanced technology without the political strings often attached to U.S. defense sales.

The J-35A's potential export to countries like Pakistan also raises concerns about its role in reshaping military partnerships. While its technical capabilities are not designed to match the U.S. An F-35 in terms of interoperability and networked warfare, the J-35A could still offer a cost-effective alternative for nations reluctant or unable to procure Western-made platforms. This could allow China to expand its influence in markets traditionally dominated by American and Russian aircraft.

Finally, the J-35A represents a broader trend in stealth fighter development. As more nations, such as Italy, Japan and the UK's [next generation fighter project](#), South Korea-Indonesia joint [KF-X](#) project, and Turkey's [TF-X](#) project, enter the race for low-observability aircraft, the proliferation of this technology could lead to new challenges in arms control and military escalation. For China, the J-35A is both a symbol of progress and a reminder of the strategic complexities that come with advanced military capabilities.

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

Peer-Reviewed Research on Maritime Issues

Government Releases & Other Press Statements

- Government of Finland - [“Amendments to Act on Environmental Protection in Maritime Transport – prohibitions on discharges to enter into force gradually from next year”](#) [December 30]
- Ministry of Defense of Australia - [“Albanese Government accelerates Defence capability delivery as part of commitment to safer Australia”](#) [December 30]
- Suez Canal Authority - [“Adm. Rabiee: ‘Success of the trial operation of the Suez Canal duplication in the Small Bitter Lakes by transiting two vessels in the new waterway’”](#) [December 28]
- Government of India - [“‘Lothal to become Global Hub for Maritime Heritage with National Maritime Heritage Complex’: Sarbananda Sonowal”](#) [December 28]
- Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea - [“MOF, GS Retail Join Hands to Conserve Marine Protected Species”](#) [December 20]
- Office of U.S. Congressman John Garamendi - [“Garamendi, Kelly, Senators Young and Kelly, Introduce SHIPS for America Act to Revitalize US Shipbuilding and Commercial Maritime Industries”](#) [December 19]
- U.S. Congressional Research Service - [“Navy Large Unmanned Surface and Undersea Vehicles: Background and Issues for Congress”](#) [Updated December 19]
- The State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China - [“First vessel from Peru's Chancay Port reaches Shanghai”](#) [December 19]
- International Chamber of Shipping - [“New International Chamber of Shipping Secretary General announced”](#) [December 18]
- International Seabed Authority - [“ISA reaffirms its unwavering international cooperation and renewed multilateralism at the 5th Symposium on Global Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance”](#) [December 11]
- U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - [“Arctic Report Card 2024”](#) [December 10]
- World Shipping Council - [“Joint industry and trade statement on the EU Trade Customs Reform”](#) [December 9]
- Government of Canada - [“Remarks made by Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly at the launch of the Arctic Foreign Policy”](#) [December 6]
- Government of Canada - [“Canada’s Arctic Foreign Policy”](#) [December 6]
- University of Wellington Australia - [“UOW ANCORS announces new Southeast Asia Maritime Institute in Malaysia”](#) [December 5]
- Ministry of Information of Cambodia - [“Cambodia, China Ink Clean, Green, and Sustainable Deal”](#) [December 3]
- National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) of Indonesia - [“Facing Global Challenges, BRIN and MNR China Establish Marine Science and Technology Cooperation”](#) [November 29]
- Foreign Minister Wang Yi of the People’s Republic of China - [“Coexisting in Harmony and Working Together to Bring Global Ocean Governance to a Higher Level”](#) [November 26]
- United Nations Secretary General’s Special Envoy for the Ocean Ambassador Peter Thomson - [“5th Symposium on Global Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance Keynote Speech”](#) [November 26]

Analyses & Opinions

- [“Ghana’s Pathway To Sustainable Ocean Knowledge: Empowering Blue Economy And Policy Reform”](#) [Joy Online - December 30]
- [“Why Ocean Acidification Is Called Climate Change's Evil Twin”](#) [Nation Kenya - December 29]

- [“Emerging Non-Traditional Security Threats in the Atlantic Ocean”](#) [*Pakistan Today* - December 29]
- [“Fear That China Rules The Waves Jolts U.S. To Pursue Maritime Revival”](#) [*The Wall Street Journal* - December 29]
- [“Type 076 Assault Ship: A Call For Objective Views On China’s Military Power Development”](#) [*Global Times* - December 29]
- [“Biden’s Missed Chance To Safeguard America’s Oceans”](#) [*The Hill* - December 28]
- [“Trump Wants U.S. Control of the Panama Canal. Here Are 3 Things to Know.”](#) [*The New York Times* - December 26]
- [“What’s In The Bill That Aims To Revitalize America’s Decaying Naval Industry”](#) [*The Warzone* - December 23]
- [“The Drowning South: Why Seas Are Surging”](#) [*The Washington Post* - December 20]
- [“China Makes Progress On Its Fifth Antarctic Research Station”](#) [Center for Strategic & International Studies - December 19]
- [“Serious About Building Maritime Capacity in the High Latitudes? Look South”](#) [Center for International Maritime Security - December 18]
- [“Peruvian port helps spur trade with China”](#) [*China Daily* - December 18]
- [“Explainer: Why Ocean Temperatures Are A Growing Concern”](#) [Dialogue Earth - December 18]
- [“Prioritising Maritime Domain Awareness In The Indian Ocean”](#) [Observer Research Foundation - December 18]
- [“What A Nato-Skeptic U.S. Means For Nato Maritime Security”](#) [Center for Maritime Security - December 17]
- [“In Some Port Towns, It’s Residents Vs. Cruises: ‘We’re Going To Eradicate Them’”](#) [*The Washington Post* - December 15]
- [“More Aircraft, More Ships, More Often: How The PLA Is Pressuring Taiwan’s Defences”](#) [*South China Morning Post* - December 14]
- [“Anti-Submarine Warfare: The U.S. Navy’s Strategic Imperative”](#) [Center for Maritime Security - December 13]
- [“In Recent Border Controversies, Thailand’s Government Has Been Missing In Action”](#) [*The Diplomat* - December 12]
- [“Red Sea Tensions: 4 Scholars Explain What’s At Stake For Global Trade And Security”](#) [*The Conversation* - December 11]
- [“Catastrophic Sea Level Rise Possible Within Our Lifetime? Yes, Here’s How”](#) [Australian Strategic Policy Institute - December 10]
- [“Good News: Norway Won’t Start Deep Sea Mining, Yet”](#) [Environment America - December 10]
- [“Why Is Canada Scrambling To Counter Russia, China In The Arctic?”](#) [*Al Jazeera* - December 9]
- [“A New Normal for the China Coast Guard at Kinmen and Matsu”](#) [Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative - December 6]
- [“Aukus Risks Are Piling Up. Australia Must Prepare To Build French Ssns Instead”](#) [Australian Strategic Policy Institute - December 5]
- [“What Is The Best Way To Resolve Maritime Dispute?”](#) [PR Newswire - December 4]
- [“The Baltic Sea’s Bad Actors”](#) [*Foreign Policy* - December 4]
- [“Importance Of Indian And Sri Lankan Navies Collaborating To Curb Drug Trafficking”](#) [ETV Bharat - December 3]
- [“China Tensions Prompt U.S. Navy Race to Reload Missiles at Sea”](#) [*The Wall Street Journal* - December 2]
- [“Is Hanoi Quietly Building Asean Alliances On A South China Sea Code Of Conduct?”](#) [*South China Morning Post* - November 29]
- [“Breaking the Naval Impasse on the U.S. Icebreaker Program”](#) [The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs - November 26]

Other Research

- Podcast: Center for Maritime Strategy - [“Maritime Nation: A Conversation With The Commander Of Fleet Forces Command”](#) [December 13]
- Magazine Article: U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* - [“Partnering Will Determine the First Days of Conflict in the Western Pacific”](#) [December 2024]
- Magazine Article: U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* - [“The U.S. Navy Must Preserve and Use the Lessons from Red Sea Combat”](#) [December 2024]
- Scientific Article: [“Drifting fish aggregating devices in the Indian ocean impacts, management, and policy implications”](#) - *npj Ocean Sustainability* Vol. 3, No. 60

Events on the Maritime Domain

- From November 25-December 1, the [fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment \(INC-5\)](#) was held in the Republic of Korea.
- From November 28-29, the annual [International Maritime Human Factors Symposium](#) was jointly hosted at the International Maritime Organization headquarters in London to gather “academia, industry, and regulatory bodies to enhance maritime safety and operational efficiency.”
- On December 2, Wilson Center hosted a book discussion webinar titled [“The Contest for the Indian Ocean And the Making of a New World Order.”](#)
- On December 4, Hudson Institute held an online event with Alaska Senator Dan Sullivan to discuss [“Alaska’s Strategic Importance for the Indo-Pacific.”](#)
- On December 4, the University of Bergen and Arctic Frontiers held a panel discussion titled [“Science diplomacy and ocean governance for the green transition”](#) as part of the Arctic Frontiers Abroad event “License to Operate: Sustainable Ocean Development and the Green Transition.”
- On December 5, Center for Strategic & International Studies hosted a webinar on [“Examining PRC Activities in the Arctic.”](#)
- On December 11, the U.S. Naval Institute held its [Defense Forum Washington 2024](#), gathering military, congressional and civilian leaders to “address the challenges facing the Sea Services.”
- On December 17, Foreign Policy Research Institute held an in-person discussion titled [“Sharing Nuclear Secrets and the Future of AUKUS.”](#)
- On December 18, Center for Strategic & International Studies hosted a webinar on [“Security and Resilience: The Strategic Future of Subsea Cables.”](#)
- On December 19, Brookings held a hybrid conversation with National Economic Advisor Lael Brainard on [“How to strengthen America’s supply chains”](#) amidst past and upcoming global shifts.
- From January 29-30, 2025, the European Subsea Cables Association will be hosting a hybrid [“Subsea Cables Awareness Workshop”](#) designed for participants to “gain broad insight into subsea cables and project lifecycle.” Online registration is still open.
- On February 11, 2025, Asia Society will be hosting a public program titled [“Indo-Pacific Security and the QUAD: Updates & Analysis”](#) to explore the QUAD’s pivotal role in Indo-Pacific security.

ICAS Maritime Affairs Program: New and Upcoming

– ICAS 2024 Annual Conference –

Recordings & written summary for the ICAS 2024 Annual Conference are now available!

On December 12, the Institute for China-America Studies (ICAS) organized its 2024 Annual Conference, coinciding with the 10th anniversary of ICAS' founding, in full in-person format at the Georgetown Marriott Hotel in downtown Washington, D.C. Dr. Hong Nong, Executive Director of ICAS, opened the conference and Dr. Wu Shicun, Chairman of ICAS' Advisory Board, delivered the introductory remarks. In his heartfelt message, Dr. Wu spoke of the need for pragmatism as well as a recognition of shared responsibility in U.S.-China relations, given that both countries are indispensable to combating global challenges – be it the fight against climate change, stabilizing the global economy or addressing regional conflicts. Acknowledging that the re-election of Donald Trump had brought forth both uncertainty and familiarity, he noted that both countries had much to gain from working together – and even more to lose if they failed to do so. He expressed his hope that the U.S. and China will recognize that while competition was inevitable in their relationship, outright confrontation is not. And on this basis, they should explore pathways to manage their differences constructively...

Read the Full Summary, Full Speaker List & More:
chinaus-icas.org/events-2/annual-conferences/2024-annual-conference/



Panel and Session Titles: Keynote Address; Geopolitics & Security; Science & Technology; Luncheon Speech; Third Parties' Views on U.S.-China Relations; People-to-People Exchanges

Watch the Full Conference: www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLs4oA4vJ3iF4fywe96EaSkfagn2gN2Zap

— MAP Academic Engagement —

Dr. Nong Hong participates in the Symposium on Global Maritime Cooperation and Ocean Governance 2024

November 27, 2024

Sanya, China

Dr. Nong Hong, ICAS Executive Director gave a presentation in Session 6: “The future of the Poles and the Deep Sea” titled “Reflection on the 2024 Arctic Circle Assembly: Charting the Future of Arctic Governance.”



Learn More:

chinaus-icas.org/event/dr-nong-hong-participates-in-the-symposium-on-global-maritime-cooperation-and-ocean-governance-2024/

Watch the Event: www.youtube.com/watch?v=kA3tfjIDEU8&t=3s

— ICAS Internship Announcement —

The Institute for China-America Studies is seeking two research assistant interns for Spring 2025!



The Institute for China-America Studies is seeking two research assistant interns for Spring 2025! The internship will run from mid-January through mid-May. This is a part-time, 20 hour per week internship that will primarily be conducted in-person at the ICAS office in Washington, DC. 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. We

are looking for team-oriented problem solvers who can think on their feet, be detail-oriented, and are eager to improve their professional skills.

View & Share the Position Details:

chinaus-icas.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Spring-2025-Research-Assistant-Internship-Ad.pdf

Apply Online by January 2, 2024: chinaus-icas.org/2025-spring-internship-application/

— ICAS Holiday Announcement —



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

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

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