



In the Arctic: The 7 C's

Climate

Arctic sea ice extent in September (when it is at its lowest) has **declined almost 13% per decade** since 1979. In that same year, Arctic sea ice extent **reached its second-lowest recorded level** since satellite imaging began. The Arctic is warming more than twice as fast as the global averages. Threats to coastal communities are due to storm surge and thawing permafrost.

- Natural resources are more accessible for future development.
- Commercial shipping and ship-based tourism have increased in recent years.

Connectivity

There is a **digital and information abyss** in large portions of the Arctic that jeopardizes national security and inhibits community access to the internet.

- America's Arctic infrastructure in Alaska is lagging behind other Arctic nations.
- There is no deep-water port in America's Arctic, from the North Slope of Alaska, along the Bering Strait, to the Aleutian Islands
- American Arctic **needs more enhanced, integrated internet and communications connectivity.**



Commodities

- The Arctic region holds 13% of the world's undiscovered oil, 30% of its undiscovered natural gas, and 20% undiscovered natural gas liquids.
- The Arctic contains vast stores of rare earth and strategic minerals.

CHALLENGES:

- **Commercial shipping and ship-based tourism have increased** in recent years.
- Increase Arctic tourism will **challenge existing search and rescue capacities.**
- **Oil spill mitigation and response capabilities will need to expand** as activities increase.
- Fish stocks and related international fleets moving north means **more area for the US Coast Guard to monitor and patrol.**

Communities

- Communities in the Arctic are **dealing with dynamic environmental, social, cultural, and economic change.**
- There are stronger and more frequent storms and shifting subsistence patterns.
- Indigenous communities may need to relocate due to coastline erosion.
 - Relocation can cost billions.

Go Deeper! More Resources



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Commerce

- Increased commodities = increase in shipping!
- Less than 5% of the U.S. maritime Arctic is charted to modern international standards.
- Recommendation: **A comprehensive and appropriately funded ocean mapping strategy** should be developed and executed to advance all facets of U.S. interests and include the development of an Arctic Marine Transportation System.

Competition

- Military and economic ties between Russia and China are growing stronger in the Arctic.
- Russia has refurbished Soviet era military bases and built new bases along its Northern Sea Route.
- U.S. adversaries seek to weaken “the **international order that underpins a free and open maritime domain**”.

Cooperation

The Arctic remains a zone of low conflict, but with increased activity and rising competition, **continued engagement is required**. The Arctic Council remains an important international fora.



The Icebreaker Gap



THE U.S.A.
2 ICEBREAKERS



CHINA
2 ICEBREAKERS



RUSSIA
40+ ICEBREAKERS

