Climate change and commercial shipping development in the Arctic

Summary

Project Leader

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The Arctic ice is receding, as ice extent in the summer is decreasing fast, faster than models predicted. The perspective of an ice-free Arctic in the summer is looming, with talks of riches to be exploited (oil, gas, minerals) and seaways developing across it between Europe and Asia. The perspective of a dramatic development in Arctic shipping triggered the debate in Canada as to how to assert Canada's sovereignty so as to protect the environment. But is shipping really going to develop this fast ? What segments of the shipping industry could be interested in plying a seasonal, poorly mapped, unserviced northern route ? Will containerized cargo liners between Europe and Asia rush to the route ? The weak development of shipping in the region, despite several years of talks about the perspective of the opening of the Northwest and Northeast Passages, attest to the complexity of the question. Although some segments of the shipping industry might be interested in developing new routes across the Arctic, not all will be : what will then be the speed and shape of shipping development in the region?

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Publications

Canadian Embassy in Beijing
Centre d'étude des politiques étrangères et de sécurité (CEPES)
Chaire Raoul Dandurand - UQAM
Cinémathèque Québécoise
City of Iqaluit
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Fonds québécois de recherche sur la société et la culture
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K-Films Amérique
National Defense
Shanghai Institute for International Studies
SNC Lavalin
Transport Canada
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