

B11-O12

NETWORKS AND GOVERNANCE OF ARCTIC SHIPPING AND FISHING: A ROBUST MANAGEMENT APPROACH

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The retreat of summer sea ice opens space for increased navigation in the Arctic Ocean, both for shipping and fishing activities. Since most of the Arctic Ocean falls within the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of Arctic coastal nations, these states will be responsible for managing fisheries in their waters. Shipping regulations and fishing on the high seas portion of the Arctic Ocean will be governed by international instruments like UNCLOS and IMO's Polar Code. Many government actors may be involved: coast guards, foreign ministries, environmental ministries, and fisheries managers at the federal as well as state or regional level. Local and tribal governments will also play an important role, given their proximity to targeted activities.

Given the current uncertainties associated with environmental and ecological data, including ice extent, fisheries distribution, and interaction between environmental change and ecological assortments, information sharing across scientific disciplines is crucial to informed government decisions. In addition, the sovereignty and subsistence rights of Arctic communities must also be integrated into decisionmaking. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and corporations are also important actors in the Arctic, and may be valuable sources of information as well as play crucial roles in the governance of Arctic shipping and fishing activity.

From this brief sketch, it is clear that a complex network of actors will be participating in the governance of Arctic fishing and shipping activity. How will this network function? How will information be shared across boundaries—national, academic, corporate, public/private, administrative, tribal, and other traditional lines of demarcation? How will these networks be governed? How will resources be shared across them to maximize effectiveness?

This presentation will present information on Arctic governance networks. Based on public policy theory, as well as empirical research into the networks that the United States Coast Guard participates in for Arctic governance, indications of network robustness, distribution, and connectedness may be offered.