

China in the Arctic

Gørild M. Heggelund

Research professor, Fridtjof Nansen Institute

China and the Global Value Chain

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Overview

- China's interest in the Arctic
- China's ambitions in the Arctic
- Current status for activities
- Concluding remarks



Brief history & White Paper



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China's Arctic history

<https://www.fni.no/news/new-books-on-the-law-of-the-sea-and-the-svalbard-treaty>

- Svalbard Treaty 1925
- Polar Research Institute of China (PRIC) set up in 1989 (under CAA)
- Chinese Advisory Committee for Polar Research in 1994
- International Arctic Science Committee in 1996
- Scientific research activities 1990s
- Organized scientific expeditions with Snow Dragon (research vessel) since 1999
- Research station Yellow River in Ny Ålesund, Svalbard, 2004 by PRIC
- Observer status Arctic Council 2013
- Polar Silk Road included in BRI in 2017
- **White Paper China's Arctic Policy January 2018**
 - China regards itself a 'near-Arctic' state – 'one of the continental States that are closest to the Arctic Circle'
- 14th FYP mentions Arctic & Polar Silk Road



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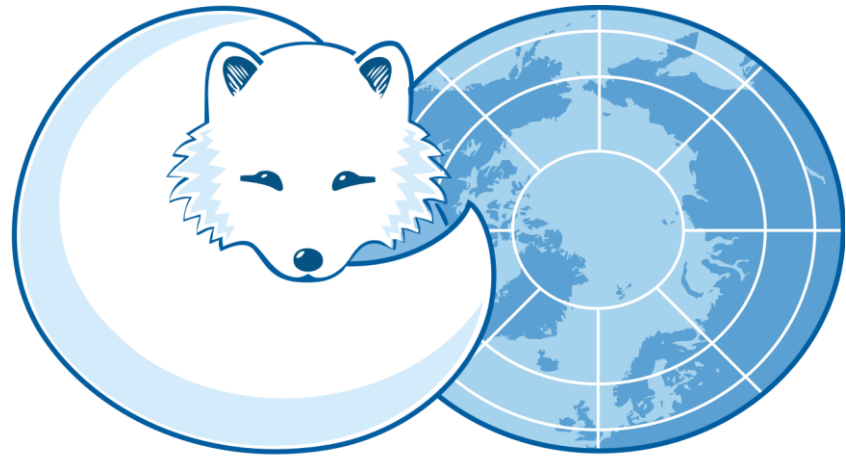
White Paper: China's interests in Arctic

- Environment, climate change, research, shipping/sea routes, energy (oil and gas), and fisheries
- Environmental protection and climate change stand out, and forms the backdrop for China's engagement in the Arctic
- Polar research & science
 - focusing on scientific expeditions and basic scientific climate research at Yellow river
 - Xuelong (Snow Dragon)



China in Arctic Council & scientific research

<https://www.arctic-council.org/>



ARCTIC COUNCIL

- Observer status in AC in 2013 a milestone for China
- Significance of the AC work
 - is closely linked with China's key domestic policies and priorities on environment and climate change
- Strong climate science tradition, participates internationally, IPCC etc
- AC: Contribute to scientific research in task forces, WG
- Chinese experts will 'bring home' relevant expertise on climate change
- Polar scientific research plays an important role in determining China's Arctic climate agenda...
- ...and contributes to better understanding of climatic changes at home



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Arctic & climatic changes in China

- China Meteorological Administration (CMA) ('Blue Paper' launched Aug 2022)
- The 3. national report on CC, Launched at COP21, Paris 2015



- Arctic warming linked with extreme weather events in China, precipitation patterns and temperature rise and air pollution
- China vulnerable to CC
 - Floods & drought 2022
- 'Blue paper' 蓝皮书 August 2022:
- China has experienced considerable warming
 - Retreating glaciers in the Tibetan Plateau '3rd Pole'
 - Temp increase 0.26C per decade between 1951 and 2020
 - compared to the global average of 0.15 degrees
 - Annual precipitation increasing trend



China's ambitions in the Arctic

Energy projects & Polar Silk Road



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Ambitions: how important is the Arctic

- From Beijing's point of view, not the most important foreign policy area ...
 - but increasing international engagement, incl. in the Arctic
- Arctic of interest
 - Observer status Arctic Council; research; climate and environment;
- 14th FYP (2021-2025): Arctic and Polar Silk Road mentioned
- Joint statement 4 February 2022
 - <http://www.en.kremlin.ru/supplement/5770>
 - Despite fine words....lack of trust between the nations as reflected in academic articles;
- The Northern Sea Route/Polar silk road/丝绸之路
 - Transport time potentially shortened between Asia og Europa (30 og 40%)
 - Investments in port infrastructure & tech. Needed
 - China has tech. and funding



Status for activities in Arctic



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Most activity – in 3 areas

photo <https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/chinese-shipping-company-cosco-send-record-number-ships-through-arctic>

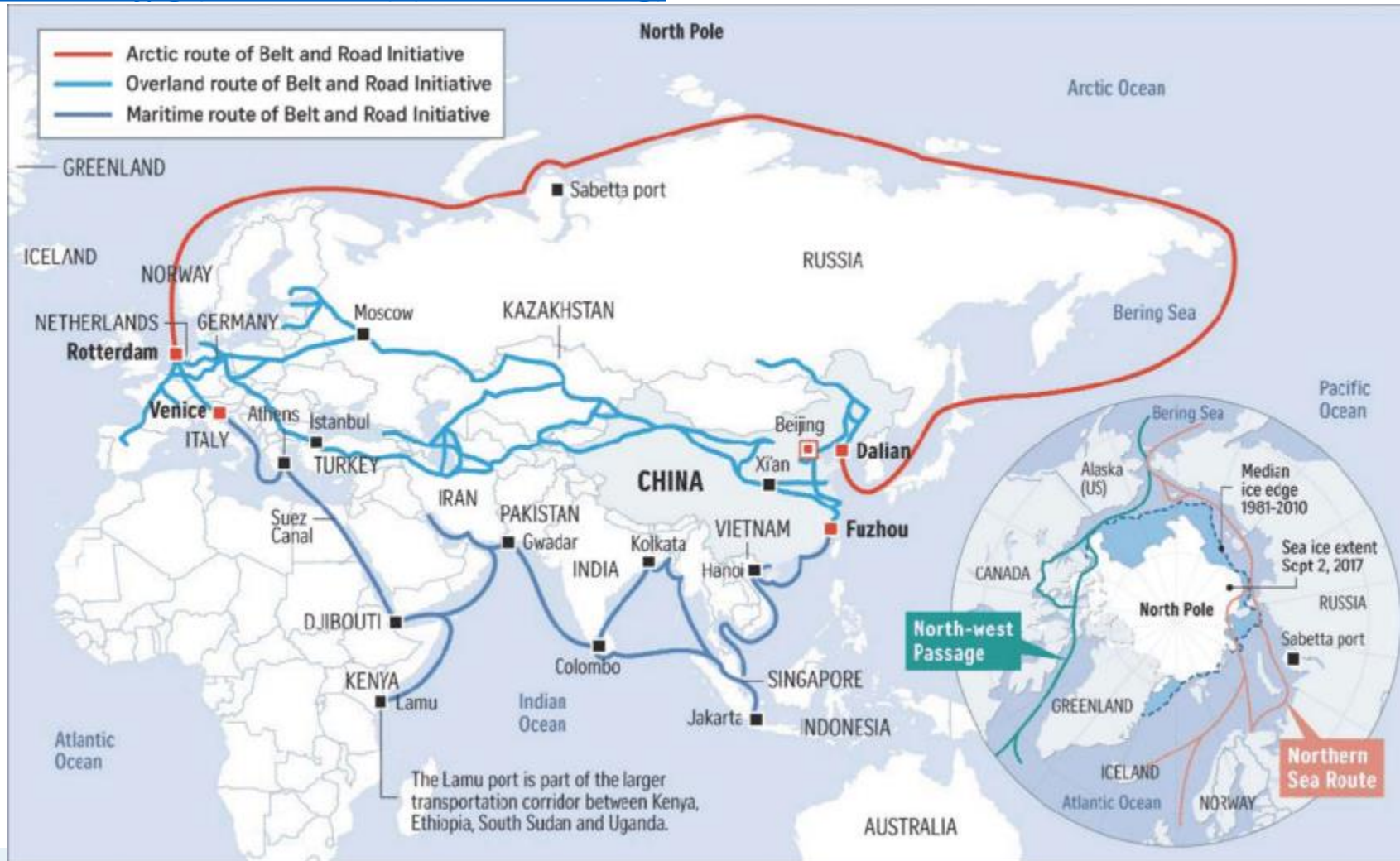
- Research
 - Research station Yellow River in Ny Ålesund, Svalbard
- Energy:
 - Cooperate Russia China on LNG/liquefied gas/energy in Yamal most concretely
 - China has (30%) ownership in Yamal LNG, plus in 14 (out of total) 15 tankers that transport LNG from Yamal.
 - Chinese ownership interests in 14 (of 15) ice-breaking LNG transport vessels delivered from South Korea
- Shipping the Northern Sea Route
 - Less than anticipated
 - Strait of Malacca& Suez canal



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The Polar Silk Road

Source: 1-104.jpg (2561x1866) (southfront.org)



SUMMARY

gheggelund@fni.no

- **China in the Arctic:**
 - Arctic interesting, yet not highest on political agenda
 - Suspicions on China's Arctic motives
 - Two levels:
 - Created geopolitical 'hype'...
 -yet number of actual projects & investment moderate
 - Research, Energy & Yamal & shipping most concrete
 - Research gives legitimacy to Arctic presence
- Possible environmental areas of cooperation through AC:
 - Mercury
 - Black carbon



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谢谢

THANK YOU!

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