

Chinese Icebreaker Enters the Arctic

By Les Grau
OE Watch Commentary

China continues to demonstrate a great deal of interest, and presence, in the Arctic. According to the following excerpted article from *The Independent Barents Observer*, a Norway-based English- and Russian-language online newspaper, China's second medium-duty icebreaker, the *Xue Long 2*, has embarked on its first Arctic expedition. Chinese officials quoted in the article claim the purpose

of the voyage is to study climate change-related issues. According to the Chief of China's State Oceanic Administration, "protecting the Arctic environment is a common responsibility and China will make its contribution to this." The article mentions how the chief "also stressed that China sees itself as "a near-Arctic state."

“China sees itself as ‘a near-Arctic state’ and it will “actively participate with wisdom and strength to future protection and development.”

Source: Atle Staalesen, "New Chinese Icebreaker sets course for Arctic", *The Independent Barents Observer* (Norway based English and Russian language news website), 16 July 2021. <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/arctic/2020/07/new-chinese-icebreaker-sets-course-arctic>

The 122-meter-long vessel left its home port of Shanghai on 15th July and sailed towards the north. It is the first Arctic expedition of the vessel that entered service in 2019. Earlier this year, the ship completed a voyage to the Antarctica.

According to Xinhua news agency, the expedition is organized by the Chinese Ministry of Natural Resources and the ship is expected back in Shanghai in late September. The voyage is expected to cover 12,000 nautical miles. The researchers on board the ship will conduct studies of the biological diversity of Arctic ecosystems, including the acidification of waters and pollution in areas such as the Chukotka plateau, the Canadian basin and central parts of the Arctic Ocean.

According to Xinhua, the expedition will help expand the research knowledge of China about climate change in the Arctic and prepare the ground for a solid foundation for more efficient reaction to global climate change. The "Xue Long 2" is owned and managed by the Chinese Polar Institute. The institute has been instrumental in all of the country's previous ten research expeditions to the Arctic. Until now, it has been sister ship "Xue Long" (Snow Dragon) that has sailed on the Chinese Arctic expeditions that have proceeded along Russia's Northern Sea Route, across the central Arctic Ocean and through Canada's Northwest Passage.

In a comment made during the Arctic Circle China conference in 2019, Wang Hao, Chief of China's State Oceanic Administration, underlined that "protecting the Arctic environment is a common responsibility and China will make its contribution to this." He also stressed that China sees itself as "a near-Arctic state" and it will "actively participate with wisdom and strength to future protection and development." Wang Hong spoke at an event with more than 500 participants from some 30 countries, the largest conference ever in China exclusively with an Arctic focus.

Fangs of the Lone Wolf

Chechen Tactics in the Russian-Chechen Wars
1994-2009

Dodge Billingsley
with Lester Grau

Fangs of the Lone Wolf is about combat experience in urban, mountain and fairly open terrain. It is not a comprehensive history of conflict. This book is a series of snapshots — of vignettes — describing the difficulty, the hardship, the victories and the defeats of the participants. It is an examination of the raw data of combat in a foreign land, and is aimed to advance the professional military study of conflict.

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