

The Arctic Meltdown and its Implications on Shipping

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Despite the fact that a 'blue' Arctic Ocean is predicted in the summertime (four months) to occur from the middle of this century to as late as the 22nd Century, current rates of warming indicate an earlier realization. However, even before trans-polar navigation is realized, routes along the coast of Siberia will be navigable much earlier. Already there are plans to build trans-Arctic ships and plans for hub port development that will take advantage of this passage. Such plans indicate that the Northern Sea Route may be opened up for passage even as early as 2013 given current observed rates of global warming that have been beyond the expectations of existing forecasts. But before the Northern Sea Route can reliably be used on a large scale for transit by shipping along its passages, more investments are required on infrastructure and the provision of marine services to ensure the safe and secure transit of shipping with minimal environmental impact.



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