



# MAKING WAVES

## Fortnightly E-News Brief of National Maritime Foundation

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**Navy Studies Building 3 Virginia-Class Attack Submarines Per Year**

- Kris Osborn

The Navy is investigating the prospect of building three new Virginia-class attack submarines per year instead of two in order to boost the size of the fleet as more Los Angeles-class submarines retire.

Rear Adm. Joseph Tofalo, Director of Undersea Warfare, said he expects to receive answers in May to his question of whether ship builders could build three submarines per year. “The biggest issue is finding the man power pool in an economy that is also coming back. That is probably the biggest challenge. During the decade of the 80s this country built three SSNs (attack submarines) and one SSBN (ballistic missile submarine) every year for about a decade. This country can do amazing things when challenged,” Tofalo said.

In total, the Navy will have 71 submarines in 2016, including 14 nuclear-armed Ohio-class submarines, or SSBNs; four Ohio-class submarines converted to conventionally armed guided-missile boats, or SSGNs; Los Angeles-class fast attack submarines, or SSNs; three Sea Wolf submarines and 11 Virginia-class submarines, also SSNs.

Even though the Navy is currently producing two new Virginia-class attack submarines each year, an anticipated shortfall of submarines is expected to grow worse in coming years as more Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarines retire at a faster pace than Virginia subs are added. Senior Navy leaders have suggested that the service may delay retirement of some Los Angeles-class boats.

“We are going to drop below the minimum requirement of 48 (attack submarines) even with the two per year build rate – so we’ve got to sustain that two-per year build

rate and figure out ways to work through that trough, or a low point. Unfortunately, we will go down to 41 SSNs at one point,” Tofalo said. The Virginia-class attack submarine inventory will drop to 41 in 2029, according to the Navy’s recently released 2016 30-year shipbuilding plan. Ultimately, the plan calls for a fleet of 50 Virginia-class submarines by the mid-2040s.

Rep. Randy Forbes, R-Va., Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee’s Sea power and Projection Forces subcommittee, would like to see a larger submarine fleet but does not building the current industrial base could handle building three per year.

“There is no question that I am worried about the overall fleet size. It would be great for us to be able to do that but I think it is a little bit challenging for the industrial base to be able to be able to pull that off. While I think that would be a good goal to have, my suspicion is that is probably not going to happen in the short term and we will stick to doing two per year,” Forbes told Military.com in an interview.

Virginia-class submarines are built by a cooperative arrangement between the Navy and Electric Boat, a subsidiary of General Dynamics and Newport News Shipbuilding, a division of Huntington Ingalls Industries. Each industry partner constructs portions, or “modules,” of the submarines which are then melded together to make a complete vessel, industry and Navy officials explained. Thus far, 11 Virginia-class subs have delivered to the Navy, and seven are currently under construction. Like other programs, the Virginia-class submarines are broken up into procurement blocks.

Blocks II, totalling 10 ships, and I have already been delivered. The first Block III Virginia-class Submarine, the USS North Dakota, was delivered last year. On Dec. 22, 2008, the Navy awarded a contract for eight Virginia-class submarines. The third contract for the Virginia-class, or Block III, covering hulls numbered 784 through 791 is a \$14 billion multi-year procurement, Navy officials said.

Multi-year deals are designed to decrease cost and production time by allowing industry to shore up supplies in advance and stabilize production activities over a number of years. Budget uncertainties connected to sequestration have made these deals more difficult. The Block III subs, now under construction, are being built with new so-called Virginia Payload Tubes designed to lower costs and increase capability, Navy officials explained.

Instead of building what most existing Virginia-class submarines have 12 individual 21-inch in diameter vertical launch tubes able to fire Tomahawk missiles the Block III submarines are being built with two-larger 87-inch in diameter tubes able to house six Tomahawk missiles each.

The first several Block IV Virginia-class submarines are under construction as well the USS Vermont and the USS Oregon. Last April, the Navy awarded General Dynamics' Electric Boat and Huntington Ingalls Industries Newport News Shipbuilding a \$17.6 billion deal to build 10 Block IV subs with the final boat procured in 2023.

Design changes to the ship, including an alteration in the materials used for the submarines' propulsion, which will enable Block IV boats to serve for as long as 96-months between depots visits or scheduled maintenance availabilities, Navy officials said. The program's current two-boats per year production schedule, for about \$4 billion can be traced back to a 2005 challenge issued by then Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Mullen. Mullen challenged the program to reduce production costs by 20 percent, saying that would allow the Navy to build two Virginia-class submarines per year, Navy officials indicated.

Source: [Dodbuzz](#), 17 Apr 2015

## **The Real History of the South China Sea Disputes**

- Shannon Tiezzi

a question about China's foreign policy or domestic politics? Why not ask an expert! The Diplomat's China Power bloggers will be doing an "Ask Us Anything" on Reedit on April 30. Check out the official announcement [here](#). Drop by and get answers to all your burning questions about the South China Sea, China's anti-corruption drive, and more.

For anyone who finds himself or herself a bit adrift (pun intended) when it comes to the history of the various claims to the South China Sea, Chas Freeman has you covered. A former U.S. Ambassador and long-time China expert, Freeman outlined the various claims in a recent speech at Brown University. "Listen closely," Freeman warns at the outset. "The facts belie the prevailing narratives." I won't attempt to summarize the tangled historical narratives here, but one quote is particularly relevant for the situation today:

However, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and now China have correctly understood that the key to sovereignty is not legal arguments but physical possession and control – a continuous human presence. Whether an island generates an EEZ or simply a twelve-mile territorial sea is determined by whether or not it is able naturally to support human life. Hence the rush to seize and settle any and all land features in the South China Sea and to demonstrate that people can live on them.

China, Freeman notes, was late to this game, which may explain why Beijing is now being particularly assertive at building up the few islands and reefs it does hold. In other news, a Reuters exclusive may have finally answered the question of what state secrets former Politburo Standing Committee member Zhou Yongkang stands accused of leaking. According to Reuters' sources, "China has charged former domestic security chief Zhou Yongkang with leaking state secrets because he warned political ally Bo Xilai in 2012 that Bo was about to be ousted." That, sources

said, could have given Bo a chance to flee abroad, or even seek asylum in a foreign embassy (as Bo's former right-hand-man, Wang Lijun, did at a U.S. consulate in 2012). Reuters also reports that Zhou wanted Bo to succeed him as the head of domestic security affairs on the Politburo Standing Committee – a position that actually ended up being scrapped altogether with the slimming of the PBSC from nine to seven members.

Over at The Economist, we get a cautionary tale for all those China bears. The “ghost city” in Zhengzhou famously profiled on the U.S. news show “60 Minutes” is now a bustling metropolis. The Economist also notes, however, that Zhengzhou still symbolizes the hard truth about China's economy: “The city's GDP growth fell to 9.3 percent last year from an average of more than 13 percent over the preceding decade. The downward trend will continue.” Still, The Economist believes China is in for a soft landing as its growth inevitably slows: “China also has impressive underlying strengths and a new determination to fix its most harmful distortions.”

Source: [Diplomat](#), 18 Apr 2015

### **Cheaper Fuel to Boost Container**

- John Kemp

Lower oil prices are sharply reducing the cost of shipping merchandise from Asia to the United States and Europe as the cost of bunker fuel tumbles. Container shipping companies deal with the volatility in fuel prices by adding a separate bunker adjustment factor or fuel surcharge to their freight rates.

Fuel can account for more than 60 percent of the total operating costs of moving freight across the oceans so the surcharges are one of the most important elements of total transportation costs. Surcharges are recalculated quarterly based on the average cost of fuel over a previous 13-week period. So the charge for April-June 2015 is based on fuel costs between December 2014 and February 2015.



Other adjustments are made periodically to reflect changes in average fuel consumption, sailing time, vessel capacity and fuel quality changes. In September 2008, shortly after oil prices had peaked, shipping lines were adding a surcharge of almost \$1,500 to the cost of shipping every 40-foot container between Asia and the West Coast of the United States.

By the second quarter of 2014, lower oil prices and slow steaming, which helped offset the impact of stricter sulphur standards, had cut charges on the eastbound transpacific route to \$527 per 40-foot container. The collapse in oil prices has since cut surcharges by a further 27 percent. From April 1, major shipping lines will add a surcharge of just \$385 per 40-foot container on eastbound transpacific routes from Asia to the United States.

On westbound routes from the U.S. West Coast to Asia, surcharges have been reduced 31 percent, from \$703 per 40-foot container in the second quarter of 2014 to \$481 currently. The Transpacific Stabilization Agreement, a forum for shipping lines to meet and exchange market information and research, publishes surcharges between the United States and Asia.

The TSA, which has 15 members, including Maersk, COSCO and Hanjin, has a limited exemption from antitrust laws to develop voluntary guidelines for rates and surcharges as well as harmonizing other aspects of container shipping service.

The surcharge structure ensures most of the benefit from cheaper bunker fuel prices will be passed on to shippers in the form of lower total freight charges ("Clear evidence box carriers are passing-on bunker savings" April 1). In theory, shipping lines could try to capture some of the benefit by offsetting lower surcharges with higher basic freight rates.

But the container market is currently over supplied, with a new generation of ultra-large ships entering service, limiting the opportunity to boost basic freight margins ("Fuelling the rate drop" March 29). Cheaper freight costs will filter through to the

cost of transporting everything from clothing and foodstuffs to cars and consumer durables.

While freight charges are typically a small proportion of the final sale price, they are large in comparison with profit margins, so cheaper transportation has a direct impact on corporate profitability. Cheaper bunker fuel therefore acts as a stimulus to large parts of the global economy and should help raise global GDP slightly faster as its impact filters through.

The impact from the shipping sector alone is relatively small but when combined with other fuel-sensitive sectors such as aviation and road transport the total effect is significant. Marine transport accounted for almost 5.4 million barrels per day of fuel consumption in 2010, equivalent to almost 6 percent of global oil production, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. The maritime sector has been one of the fastest growing sources of fuel consumption, reflecting the impact of globalization and the rise of Asia. Consumption increased by two-thirds over the decade from 2000 to 2010, with demand rising by almost 5 percent per year.

Bunker consumption includes everything from oil tankers and dry bulk carriers for iron ore, coal and grain to ocean-going container ships, coastal shipping and recreational craft. However, the container-shipping sector has been one of the fastest growing and accounts for a large share of increased fuel consumption. Over the last decade, fuel demand has actually been restrained by the high cost of residual fuel oil and marine diesel, which encouraged many shipping lines to adopt practices such as slow steaming.

With lower fuel costs, however, container ships, oil tankers and bulk carriers are speeding up to cut total voyaging costs - sacrificing more fuel consumption for shorter journey times and faster turnarounds. In the medium term, over a one to five-year period, the global shipping industry could be a significant source of extra petroleum demand if bunker costs remain low.

Source: [Reuters](#), 21 Apr 2015

## **The New U.S. Maritime Strategy: A Navy Perspective**

- William McQuilkin Bruce Stubbs Frank J. Michael

The nation's three Sea Services have revised their 2007 Maritime Strategy, more formally titled A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Sea power: Forward, Engaged Ready. Changes in the world since 2007, new strategic guidance, and our current fiscal circumstances have compelled this revision. Security threats have become more sophisticated, widespread, and sinister. We face new or evolving threats from violent extremist organizations such as Boko Haram, al Qaeda in Yemen, and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant from Russia with its current unlawful aggression in the Ukraine; from North Korea and Iran; and from the proliferation of anti-access and area-denial (A2/AD) capabilities that threaten our access in cyberspace and in the global commons. Additionally, we face a rising China that presents both opportunities and challenges. In response to this new security calculus, the revised Strategy explains how the U.S. Navy will design, organize, and employ its forces in support of national security interests. It describes a Navy built and ready for any challenge from a high-end war to humanitarian operations.

From a U.S. Navy perspective, the 2015 Maritime Strategy identifies the biggest challenges to forward progress confronting the Navy and describes how it will design, organize, and employ its forces in support of our national security and defence objectives. It also sets Navy priorities in an era of constrained resources, while emphasizing war fighting capabilities and forward presence to protect our global national interests. It is a well-defined strategy to ensure our citizens and political leaders understand and support the Navy's national security role, the necessity of the Navy's existence, and the Navy's resource requirements. A separate, Navy-only classified annex addresses the Navy's strategic approach to regional threats and challenges.

Source: [National Interest](#), 21 Apr 2015

## **Australian Naval Shipbuilding in Limbo**

- Kevin Andrews

The Abbott Government is committed to a sustainable Australian naval shipbuilding industry. Sadly, years of neglect by the former Labor government has left shipbuilding in a precarious and uncertain state.

Labor's 'valley of death', which will soon be upon us could have been avoided. For all their posturing, in six years they did not commission a single naval vessel from an Australian yard. Decisions on the replacement frigates for the ANZAC fleet and new submarines to replace the Collins Class should have been taken during the previous Government's time. The shipbuilding job losses that are now occurring could have been avoided had the necessary decisions been made.

Although Labor's valley of death cannot be overcome, its impact can be lessened. The Government is in the early stages of an ambitious program to procure around 40 naval surface ships and submarines over the next two decades. So we have to be in a better position to understand the ability of Australian shipyards, workers and suppliers to produce, deliver and sustain those vessels at the pace and in the order required by the ADF.

In September last year the Government commissioned the RAND Corporation to conduct a detailed review of the Australian naval shipbuilding industry. Their final report, Australia's Naval Shipbuilding Enterprise: Preparing for the 21st Century, has found Australia could sustain a naval shipbuilding industrial base by carefully managing a continuous warship build strategy for our Future Frigates, with a regular pace of delivering new warships.

By adopting such a strategy, the industry would no longer be characterized by a stop-start approach to naval shipbuilding. That approach has proved expensive, it gave no long-term certainty to workers, and did not enable industry to make the

necessary investments, provide the necessary skill base, and build on construction improvements and skills.

In addition to the Future Frigate, the Government is progressing other projects that will create additional opportunities to move into a design, build, and sustainment phase for Australian shipbuilding. These include a fleet of Offshore Patrol Vessels to replace the Arm dale class patrol boats, and the Australian manufacture of up to 21 Pacific Patrol Boats under the Pacific Maritime Security Program.

The Australian naval shipbuilding industry that will build our next generation of vessels needs to be a different industry to the one we see today. RAND has found that currently, the industry isn't internationally competitive in terms of its productivity, and if this doesn't change the industry won't be sustainable. RAND also found that Australian taxpayers currently pay a price premium of at least 30 to 40 per cent greater than US benchmarks to build naval ships in Australia, and even greater against some other naval shipbuilding nations.

That premium is too high to make good economic sense and too high to enable a continuous build strategy to be adopted. The opportunity cost associated with the defense capabilities which could be foregone, as a result of paying that premium, are too great for any responsible government to consider.

This Government recognizes the significant value to our nation of having a skilled naval shipbuilding industry. We cannot afford to see this industry disappear. We have a vision for a long term, efficient and productive maritime industry in Australia which will provide high skilled jobs for young Australians for decades to come.

An enterprise-level Naval Shipbuilding Plan is being developed that will provide for the long-term future of the Australian naval shipbuilding industry. The expert, independent advice from the RAND review, is informing this plan.

Part of that plan will involve establishing a new compact between the Government, Defense, and industry. For its part, the Government will provide a credible, fully

coasted, and properly funded ADF, as well as greater certainty to industry about key priorities and timeframes. On Defense's side there needs to be improvements to acquisition practices to have more mature designs at the start of production and minimize changes during construction. However in return, Government has an expectation that, and the ADF has a critical need for, the Australian shipbuilding industry to become more productive and cost-effective.

This will require hard decisions with strong and visionary leadership to embrace and institutionalize the changes that will lead to an industry that is properly structured to operate effectively and drive efficiencies, and a commitment to a productivity-based culture from all parties – including unions. Our experience with the Air Warfare Destroyer project has underlined the need for a fully integrated approach.

The plans we are committed to developing will ensure that Australia has a sustainable naval shipbuilding industry that delivers the right capability, at the right time, and for the right price to the ADF and supports shipbuilding jobs in Australia. The Government will work closely with industry to bring this about. The safety and security of all Australians demands no less.

Source: [Marine Link](#), 22 Apr 2015

### **House Boosts Funds for Nuclear Submarines, Super Hornets and Amphibs**

- Kris Osborn

authorized more funding to pay for next generation ballistic missile submarines, F/A-18 Super Hornets, new amphibious assault ships, Tomahawk missiles and Littoral Combat Ships in several House Armed Services mark-ups of the proposed 2016 defence budget.

The House Armed Services Committee Sea power and Projection Forces subcommittee also emphasized that the Navy's developmental carrier launched

drone, the Unmanned Carrier Launched Airborne Surveillance and Strike system, or UCLASS, needs to be a long-range penetrating strike drone.

Rep. Randy Forbes, the subcommittee chairperson, has said the new carrier launched drone should be configured with stealth technology to penetrate enemy air defences and be engineered to carry and deliver a weapons payload. The planned competition to build the drone has been postponed as Pentagon decision makers deliberate requirements for the platform.

“I’ve been wanting for some time to make sure we have a deep penetrating strike capability. It is vitally important that we get this right and not just settle for an ISR capability. The key thing is we’ve got to be very careful about taking things off the table at the beginning because our potential adversaries or competitors are not going to take things off the table,” Forbes said.

Overall, Forbes said the proposed budget bill represents the work Congress has done to remain committed to the U.S. military. “From unmanned carrier aviation, to critical Air Force strike and airlift programs, to investment in Marine Corps amphibious programs, to the next-generation undersea nuclear deterrent, this year’s mark will help sustain America’s power projection capabilities in the years ahead,” he said in a statement.

Forbes’ subcommittee adds \$1.9 billion in research and development funds into a special account established to pay for the Navy’s Ohio Replacement Program ballistic missile submarine – the National Sea-Based Deterrent Fund.

Established by Congress in legislation this year, the fund is designed to house money for the expensive nuclear submarine program by separating it from the Navy’s formal shipbuilding budget.

The rationale for the fund is based on the need for top line budget relief to fund the undersea nuclear deterrence technology without massively reducing funds for the

Navy's other shipbuilding programmatic efforts. Congressional sources say the money comes from Navy research and development, or R&D, accounts.

### *Amphibs*

The mark-up adds \$279 million for advanced procurement materials for the Navy's new amphib, the LXR. The new ship, slated to be built by 2026, is the first in a series of new amphib designed to replace the Navy's existing fleet of 41/49 Dock Landing Ships.

Based upon an LPD 17 Amphibious Transport Dock hull, it will be engineered with the command and control technology and aviation ability to conduct operations independently from an Amphibious Ready Group as needed.

Forbes said he was hoping to help accelerate development for the LXR. "We need to increase the amount of funding we have and I am optimistic that we will be able to move forward with another LXR, probably this year," he told Military.com.

The subcommittee's mark up also authorizes funding for the Navy to complete its twelfth LPD 17 amphibious assault ship, called LPD 28. The mark-up also secures funding for a fifth Afloat Forward Staging Base or AFSB.

### *Carriers*

The Sea power mark provides support for what's called mid-life refuelling and complex overhaul, or RCOH, for its fleet of Nimitz-class aircraft carriers. Designed to refuel carriers nuclear power and perform a series of maintenance and technology improvements, the RCOH is a four to six year mid-career stopping point in the 50-year life-span of an aircraft carrier.

Furthermore, providing dollars to refuel the USS George Washington, or CVN 73, will ensure the Navy maintains an 11-carrier fleet. The mark-up also begins procurement authority for the Navy to begin ordering components for several of the services' future Ford-class carriers – CVN80 and CVN 81.



### *Littoral Combat Ship*

The subcommittee provided funding for the procurement of three new Littoral Combat Ships, a series of lightly armoured multi-mission surface ships in development by the Navy.

Overall, the Navy plans to acquire as many as 52 of the vessels, with the last 20 or more designated as Frigates with greater levels of weaponry and protection.

### *Tomahawk Missiles*

The Navy will receive funding to increase their Tomahawk missile arsenal to 198 missiles the minimum rate required to sustain the production line under the proposed bill.

The Navy's inventory of Tomahawk missiles is slated to begin recertification by 2018 and 2019 in order to ensure the missiles can reach their full expected service life of about 30-years. At the same time, the Navy is currently considering a host of high-tech upgrades and improvements to the weapon designed to improve its ability to strike moving targets.

### *Super Hornets*

HASCs Tactical Air and Land subcommittee added language in the mark-up indicating support for funding to pay for the 12 F/A-18 Super Hornets placed by the Navy on the unfunded requirements list.

Navy leaders have emphasized that more Super Hornet are needed to maintain the requisite fleet size due to maintenance backlogs, a high operational tempo and delays with the planned procurement of the Navy's carrier-launched F-35 C.

Source: [Dodbuzz](#), 22 Apr 2015

## **Malaysia is Staying out of the South China Sea Dispute**

- Praveen Menon and Manuel Mogato

Malaysia is steering clear of criticizing China's actions in the South China Sea at a meeting of Southeast Asian leaders next week, a draft end-statement seen by Reuters shows, despite a push by the Philippines to denounce Beijing's reclamation work.

Philippines President Benigno Aquino has called on leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to issue a collective statement condemning China's reclamation in the disputed waters at the end of their Kuala Lumpur meeting. The summit starts on Sunday.

China says ASEAN is not a party to the South China Sea dispute. A draft copy of the concluding statement by Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak devotes two paragraphs to tensions in the energy-rich waters, but stops short of taking sides in the matter, a source with direct knowledge of ASEAN issues told Reuters.

China's actions in the South China Sea have created a deep divide between the 10 ASEAN members, four of which have competing claims over the disputed territory. China claims most of the area, with overlapping claims from the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

Disputes over how to address the increasingly assertive role of China an ally of several ASEAN states in the strategic waters of the South China Sea has placed the issue squarely as Southeast Asia's biggest potential military flashpoint. Recent satellite images show China has made rapid progress in building an airstrip suitable for military use in the South China Sea's Spratly Islands and may be planning another.

ASEAN summit host Malaysia, which has close economic ties with China, has traditionally downplayed tensions in the South China Sea. An advance copy of

Najib's statement, as of April 16, makes no mention of China's reclamation work in the area.

Similarly, Cambodia, as host three years ago, refused to be drawn on China's actions in the disputed waters and the summit broke down. Then, for the first time in the group's 45-year history, a customary communiqué was not issued. Unlike the summit in Cambodia, a final communiqué is not expected from the meeting in Kuala Lumpur, leaving the final word to Najib.

"I think ASEAN should not avoid this problem, it will not go away," a Philippine foreign ministry official, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters.

"Before we discuss the situation in the Middle East, in Libya and in the Korean peninsula, let's talk about this problem first because it affects the region." The Philippines and Vietnam have been the most vocal critics of China's reclamation works in the South China Sea. Their leaders are due to meet on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit to discuss a pact strengthening their ties in the face of China's increasingly assertive claims, Philippine officials say.

Source: [Business Insider](#), 23 April 2015

### **US-India Collaboration on Aircraft Carriers: A Good Idea?**

- Ankit Panda

Yesterday, my colleague Franz-Stefan Gady covered the main takeaways from a new Carnegie Endowment for International Peace report, authored by Ashley Tellis, that calls for, among other things, broader cooperation between the United States and India on developing the latter's naval capabilities. Specifically, Tellis focuses on carrier aviation and recommends that the United States ensure that India fields a more robust carrier capability than China. India has a Vikrant-class carrier in the works: the 65,000 ton nuclear-powered INS Vishal will launch in the next decade.

Tellis' report has drawn attention for good reason, and I'd like to herein address two points that stood out to me.

First, Tellis astutely notes that while the United States and India are strategically converging certainly in the first 11 months of Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party's time in power what both sides really need is a bilateral strategic event on the scale of the 2005 123 agreement on civil nuclear cooperation. That agreement stands as a watershed moment in bilateral relations between the world's oldest democracy and its largest. It came a few years after that United States had alienated and sanctioned India for its nuclear tests in the late-1990s. The civil nuclear agreement was a feather in the Bush administration's cap on foreign policy and showed the India and the United States could work together for mutual benefit.

Today, though both countries cooperate and agree on a variety of security and defense issues (see examples here and here), there is no real looming possibility for a cooperative endeavor on the scale of the civil nuclear cooperation deal. Tellis claims and I would agree that U.S. technical assistance for India's indigenous aircraft carrier, while not comparable in scale to the nuclear agreement, are a great way to encourage a convergence between the core national security interests of both countries. Tellis situates the strategic logic of this endeavor in terms of the broader conversations that are taking place in both Washington and New Delhi about China's naval modernization and forays into the Indian Ocean Region.

Second, while the report's two core recommendations for the United States on offensive carrier technology are straightforward, they are not both equally convincing. The recommendations, on improving the ability of India's next-generation carriers to "fight," are to allow India access to General Atomics' electromagnetic aircraft launch

While joint production and development plans have hit a few roadblocks, New Delhi is almost certainly not interested in looking away at this point. To be sure, that could change in the future and the F-35 C may become a compelling option. For example, disagreements over the extent of India's involvement in the FGFA could drive New

Delhi away. Additionally, Tellis notes that the T-50 has no naval variant; the FGFA variant might not either, initially. India's recent decision to acquire 36 Dassault Rafale fighters from France could be the big wrench in the works here for any Indian plans to explore an F-35 C acquisition. While the Rafale is less capable than the F-35C as a stealth fighter, it would fight the bill for India's next-generation carrier air wings.

As an ancillary note, the F-35 could have had a very different fate with India had things done differently in the early stages of bidding for India's now-dead medium multi-role combat aircraft tender. In 2008, Lockheed Martin pitched a F-16 variant (F-16IN) for consideration under the MMRCA, with the added bonus that India would be eligible for the F-35 Lightning in the future (Tellis himself explored the reasons the U.S. pitch failed in 2011). The F-16 wasn't appealing for a variety of reasons: Pakistan operated the fighter and its capabilities were insufficiently differentiated from the Mirage 2000s the Indian Air Force already possessed. Additionally, Indian carrier development was less of a priority at the time the MMRCA was conceived. Today, Indian priorities have changed with the times and New Delhi sees a greater role for naval aviation in its bid to exert strategic primacy over the IOR.

Leaving the nuts and bolts of cooperation on India's carriers aside, one hopes that Tellis' recommendations will be heard loudly and clearly in both New Delhi and Washington. As the India and the United States continue to build their relationship on a solid foundation of shared interests, both strategic and economic, they will find it easier to pursue their common goal of preserving the status quo in the Indian Ocean through sustained cooperation on defense and security matters. Washington should do its part in buttressing New Delhi's ability to exercise naval supremacy in the IOR. Making sure India has the right tools for the job is a straightforward and visible way to do so.

Source : [Diplomat](#), 24 Apr 2015'



### **U.S. Navy Ships Sent to Waters near Yemen in Security Move -Official**

The U.S. Navy has sent an aircraft carrier and a guided-missile cruiser into the waters near Yemen to conduct maritime security operations, a Pentagon spokesman said on Monday, but he denied the ships were on a mission to intercept Iranian arms shipments.

The U.S. Navy sent the carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt and escort cruiser USS Normandy from the Gulf into the Arabian Sea on Sunday. Army Colonel Steve Warren, a Pentagon spokesman, denied reports the ships were on a mission to intercept Iranian arms shipments to Yemen.

Source: [Reuters](#), 20 Apr 2015

### **Panama Maritime Authority Administrator Meets with Japanese Maritime Industry**

In the framework of the meeting of the Panama Canal Advisory Board, Jorge Barakat Pitty, Administrator of the Panama Maritime Authority, made a working visit to the headquarters of the Tokyo MOU, located in Tokyo, Japan, where he formally transferred the application to become an observer member of this important Memorandum of the Asia-Pacific area that keeps Panama on the “white list.”

The Tokyo MOU started operations on April 1, 1994, and is comprised of 19 countries in the Asia and Pacific Ocean area. Its main objective is to eliminate sub-standard ships, harmonizing the rules of vessel inspection of the United Port Guiding Standards, a statistical system of inspections by which the Tokyo MOU keeps track of ships that meet the highest standards of maritime safety, accounting for inspections and detentions over the past three years, classifying them into three groups, namely, “black list, gray list and white list.”

Barakat Pitty also used his visit to Tokyo to meet with key actors in the Japanese maritime industry, such as the Director General of the Maritime Division of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan (MLIT), representatives of the Japanese Ship owners' Association (JSA), Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd. (K-Line), Nippon Yusen Kabushiki Kaisha (NYK) and Mitsui OSK Lines, Ltd. (MOL).

During the different meetings, the representative of the Panamanian Government took the opportunity to reiterate to registry users the commitment of this administration in the transparency of the services offered by the Panama Maritime Authority and the high level of technical support and administrative services given to Japanese shipping companies, upgrading technology platforms and increasing the local presence of technical services by opening offices of technical documentation (SEGUMAR) in different countries, including the opening of a SEGUMAR office in Imabari, Japan in May.

During his official mission, Barakat Pitty was accompanied by the Ambassador of Panama in Japan, Ritter N. Diaz; the Chief of the SEGUMAR office in Tokyo, Samuel I. G. Guevara and technical staff of the Consulate General of Panama in Tokyo.

Source: [The Bulletin Panama](#), 21 Apr 2015

### **Naval Task Force En Route to Waters off Yemen**

A US Navy task force, including the USS Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carrier, is headed to the Gulf of Aden off the coast of Yemen to prevent Iranian ships from delivering arms and supplies to Shiite Houthi rebels seeking to overthrow the country's Sunni government.

On April 20, the U.S. Navy said it was ordering the carrier and a guided missile cruiser to link up with other ships already in the region "as a result of the current instability in Yemen."

"The purpose of the operations is to ensure the vital shipping lanes in the region remain open and safe. The United States remains committed to its regional partners and to maintaining security in the maritime environment," the statement from the U.S. Navy Central Command said. According to reports from the region, a flotilla of eight Iranian ships were steaming toward the country to deliver arms and presumably as a show of force against Saudi Arabia, which has been conducting airstrikes on rebel positions in Yemen.

The Iranian Navy, however, is downplaying its show of force. According to Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, the Iranian Navy is only conducting "anti-piracy" operations against Somali pirates. He told the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), one of the official organs of the country's ruling religious sect, that Iran had not been told to leave the region's waters and he said Iran's forces would not heed calls to leave if confronted.

"Iran has an active presence in the Gulf of Aden and so far the navy forces have escorted over 2,500 vessels in the area," Sayyari told IRNA. Saudi Arabia's air campaign against rebels in Yemen has come to an end, the Saudi Press Agency reported. Now, the country will focus on protecting its border and ensuring a stable government in Yemen to "restore hope" to its citizens, a Saudi military representative said.

White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest said the United States had made Iran aware of its concerns about the arming of Houthi rebels. He said the U.S. remains committed to preventing actions that "will only contribute to greater violence in the country. These are exactly the kind of destabilizing activities that we have in mind when we raise concerns about Iran's destabilizing activities in the Middle East."

Source: [Christian Examiner](#), 22 Apr 2015



## **U.S. Navy Conducts First in-Flight Refueling of a Drone**

The U.S. Navy announced Wednesday that it had successfully completed the first in-flight refueling of a drone, widely increasing the use and range of the unmanned aircraft.

In a flight along the eastern coast of the United States, the unmanned prototype X-47 B approached a tanker aircraft, managed to snag its refueling boom and received two tons of fuel, the U.S. Navy said. “In manned platforms, aerial refueling is a challenging maneuver because of the precision required by the pilot to engage the basket,” said Capt. Beau Duarte in a report by the Navy.

“Adding an autonomous functionality creates another layer of complexity.” The Northrop Grumman-built X-47B is a stealth drone designed for use on aircraft carriers. In 2013, the Navy launched and landed one using an aircraft carrier for the first time.

Many U.S. manufacturers are vying to build an unmanned plane that can be the future of military flight, but disagreements between the U.S. Congress and Navy have slowed development.

The Navy is particularly interested in an intelligence drone that can spend uninterrupted hours in the air collecting information. Several influential Republican leaders in Congress are pushing for an offensive drone able to carry bombs and missiles over long distances.

The X-47 B is powered by a stealthy jet engine and has a wingspan of 62 feet (19 meters).

Source: [Japan Times](#), 23 Apr 2015

## **Indo French Naval Exercise Varuna Begins**

India and France today began 10-day naval exercise 'Varuna' that will see 12 Rafale fighter jets in action off the Goa coast along with a host of naval assets of both countries.

The 14th edition of 'Varuna' started with the arrival of four French naval ships at Goa including aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, two destroyers Chevalier Paul and Jean de Vienne, replenishment tanker Meuse and a maritime patrol aircraft Atlantique 2.

The French aircraft carrier is carrying fighter aircraft Rafale M, Strike Aircraft Super Etendard, E2C Hawkeye Airborne Warning And Control System a mobile, long-range radar surveillance and control centre for air defense and helicopters Dauphin and Alouette 3.

India has decided to buy 36 Rafale fighter aircraft in fly-away condition for the Indian Air Force. From Indian side, aircraft carrier INS Viraat, destroyer INS Mumbai, stealth frigate INS Tarkash, guided missile frigate INS Gomati, replenishment tanker INS Deepak, submarine INS Shankul and a few Fast Attack Craft are participating in the exercise.

Both INS Mumbai and INS Tarkash had recently come back after completing the evacuation operation in Yemen. Apart from these, Indian Navy's carrier-borne fighter aircraft Sea Harriers, maritime reconnaissance aircraft P-8I and Dorniers along with integral helicopters Seaking 42B and Chetak would also be participating.

The scope of exercise includes the entire gamut of maritime operations from aircraft carrier operations, anti submarines warfare exercises, maritime interdiction operations to multi-ship replenishment exercise, an official statement said. Relations between India and France have traditionally been close and friendly. With the establishment of strategic partnership in 1998, there has been significant progress in all areas of bilateral cooperation and exchanges including naval exercises.

The Indian Navy and the French Navy have been conducting naval exercises since 1983 and following the establishment of a strategic partnership, these exercises were christened as 'Varuna' in 2001. The 10-day exercise, which began today, will continue until May 3.

Source: [Business-Standard](#), 23 Apr 2015

### **No Complaint of Sri Lankan Navy Hurling Petrol Bombs**

The Indian government did not get any complaint against Sri Lankan navy hurling petrol bombs at Indian fishermen, the Minister of State for External Affairs V K Singh informed the Rajya Sabha.

The written reply by the Minister of State was a direct contradiction of reports in media in Tamil Nadu, which quoted police sources as saying that Lankan naval personnel had tossed petrol bombs on fishermen last month.

“As per records available with the Government, no complaint has been received regarding alleged incident of petrol bomb attack on Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy on March 11, 2015,” Singh said. He added that whenever reports of any attack were brought to the government’s notice, they had “consistently taken up the issue with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that Sri Lankan authorities acted with restraint and our fishermen were treated in a humane manner.”

Replying to another question, Singh said India had immediately taken up the matter of 54 Indian fishermen who were taken into custody on March 21 by the Lankan navy. “As a result of the Government’s steadfast efforts, all the fifty four Indian Fishermen were released by the Sri Lankan side and have since then been repatriated to India,” the Minister of State said.

On the repatriation of boats, Singh noted that 38 boats had been salvaged last month, out of the 87 boats detained by Sri Lanka since June 2014.

“Salvage of 30 more boats will be undertaken by Indian trawler owners in consultation with Government of Sri Lanka,” added the minister. Of the rest, 15 boats were completely damaged and likely to be abandoned, one abandoned by the salvage team and three boats sank at an early stage.

Source: [Indian Express](#), 24 Apr 2015

### **US Should Boost Indian Navy's Combat Power: US Think Tank**

With the US and India agreeing to explore the joint development of India's next-generation aircraft carrier, a leading think tank has suggested US offer India latest technology to help increase Indian Navy's combat power.

"While the Indian Navy has already begun design work, wide-ranging cooperation with the United States has enormous potential," Ashley J Tellis, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace suggested. "Such collaboration would increase the Indian Navy's combat power and would resonate throughout the Asian continent to India's strategic advantage," he wrote in a new report.

Specifically, he suggested that the US explore the possibility of equipping India's carrier with the electromagnetic aircraft launch system.

It should also offer India access to various advanced aviation systems, such as the US Navy's E-2C/D Hawkeye for airborne early warning and battle management and the fifth-generation F-35 C Lightning strike fighter, Tellis wrote. This would help the Indian Navy to secure a combat advantage over its rivals' air wings, said the Indian-American expert who worked as a key adviser to the Bush administration on the landmark India-US nuclear deal.

The US, Tellis suggested, should consider changes to current US policy to allow for discussions about nuclear propulsion technology to make the integration of EMALS technology a viable option for India's next-generation carrier.

It should also support a partnership between the Indian Navy and the US Naval Sea Systems Command, and US private industry to validate the vessel's engineering and production designs as also coordinate on sea trials prior to commissioning the ship.

Washington should also "encourage the conclusion of consulting contracts and memoranda of understanding between Indian shipyards and US industry to assist India in incorporating advanced construction techniques when building its new large-deck carriers," Tellis wrote. "The prospect of a major Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean transforms India's hitherto secure rear into a springboard from which coercive power can be brought to bear against the Indian landmass," he said.

Thus "the principal objective underlying bilateral cooperation should be to ensure that India's next-generation aircraft carrier-to include its air wing and its capacity for combat operations-will be superior to its Chinese counterparts," Tellis said.

Though cooperation on the fight, move, and integrate functions is likely to be most indispensable and rewarding, joint development should in principle span all the mission areas involved in carrier design, he said. "Above all else, the Indian Navy should not succumb to the temptation to make collaborative development merely an exercise in procuring technology," Tellis wrote.

Source: [Zee News](#), 24 Apr 2015

### **Indian Navy's Submarines to be Made Locally; Rs 60,000-Cr P75 I Will Be Last Order from Abroad**

The shipbuilding industry is set for mega business with the government deciding that an ongoing Rs 60,000 crore plan to procure diesel electric submarines will be the

last order to go to foreign firms and that all future projects will be designed and made in India.

Leading international players, which have for long eyed India as one of the largest importer of submarines in the world, are currently in contention for the P75 I project to manufacture six new stealthy submarines in India.

A top Navy officer told ET that the government has cleared the project on the condition that all future acquisitions of conventional submarines will be based on an indigenous design and produced at Indian shipyards. The Navy has accordingly initiated a futuristic design plan even though the next batch of conventional submarines under Project 76 would take several more years before a firm order is placed.

"It has been decided that after P75 I, all future submarines will be of our own design and will be made in India. The government has been very clear on this and we have already begun the work, even though the requirement is of the future," Navy's Controller of Warship Production and Acquisition Vice Admiral AV Subhedar confirmed to ET.

A similar project for six new nuclear powered submarines will obviously be of Indian design as foreign collaborators cannot share such technology openly. Private firm L&T is already working the Navy on this project. A recent study by EY shows that the requirement for warships and submarines in India far outstrips the capacity of public sector shipyards. It has estimated that orders worth Rs 8,47,000 crore will be placed by India in the next 15 years. Private yards, the EY study says, will be in contention for an annual business of RS 25000 crore for the next 15 years due to a lack of capacity from the public sector to deliver. EnY also suggests that in case the government can implement the Make in India plan for the defence forces, a saving of at least 20 percent or Rs 3 lakh crore in terms of capital expenditure can be achieved over the next 12 years in terms of military purchases.

At present, the Indian Navy has 13 conventional and one nuclear attack submarine as part of its underwater fleet. The conventional fleet relies primarily on the Russian Kilo class with nine of these submarines - most older than 20 years - in service. In addition, four German origin HDW subs are available with the Navy that are currently being upgraded to fire the Harpoon anti-ship missiles.

At present, 6 new French origin Scorpene submarines are under construction in Mumbai with the first one set to enter service next year. In addition, India is getting ready to deploy its Arihant class nuclear missile boat towards the end of this year. The Navy is also likely to lease a new nuclear attack submarine from Russia shortly.

Source: [Economic Times](#), 24 Apr 2015

### **Indian, French Navies' War Games to Enter New Phase**

With the first phase of the Indo-French Naval exercise Varuna 15 complete, the two navies will soon sail out to sea to undertake simulated war exercises from April 26 to May 2 with the aim of fine tuning procedures and improving interoperability between the two nations.

Participating in Varuna 15 are the carrier strike groups of India and France, represented by INS Viraat and Charles de Gaulle battle group. The 14th edition of Varuna 15 is being held off the Goa coast.

As part of Varuna15, both the carrier battle groups will participate in aircraft carrier operations, anti-submarine warfare exercises, maritime interdiction operations and multi-ship replenishment exercises. Simulated aerial combat exercises will also be conducted between the aviation wings of both the forces. Surface exercises, air defence, firing drills, air to sea firing, tactical exercises and visit board search and seize operations will also be undertaken, both the navies said at a press conference aboard INS Viraat.

The French navy will be represented by carrier strike group Task Force 150 which includes destroyers Chevalier Paul and Jean de Vienne, and replenishment tanker Meuse. Destroyer INS Mumbai, replenishment ship Deepak, submarine INS Shankul, and several fast attack crafts will represent the Indian Navy.

The harbour phase of the exercise began on April 23, where leaders of both the strike groups met to chalk out strategy and learn each other's standard operating procedures. "We undertake these exercises as there is great learning, we see new technologies, new procedures and we hope to see these exercises growing in complexity," Read Admiral R Hari Kumar said.

French Rear Admiral and commanding officer of the French Carrier Strike Group Eric Chaperon reaffirmed Kumar's view adding, "Stability of the Indian ocean is a key priority for the French Navy."

Chaperon explained that France has an important stake in the Indian ocean due to the French controlled islands of Reunion and Mayotte which is why the European nation maintains a permanent naval presence in the region. Besides security of its citizens, the French navy also undertakes counter terrorism activities in the region.

Source: [Times of India](#), 26 Apr 2015

### **Navy Drones Could Turn the Tide of Migrant Crisis**

Surveillance drones launched from Royal Navy ships could be sent to scour the Mediterranean as part of Britain's effort to combat the migrant crisis, under plans being drawn up by defence chiefs.

The Navy's new Scan Eagle remote-controlled aircraft would search for dangerously overloaded boats packed with people making the perilous crossing from Libya to Europe. David Cameron has already offered HMS Bulwark, 2 Border Force cutters and three Merlin helicopters for search and rescue efforts after international outcry at the loss of life in the Mediterranean this year.



More than 1,750 migrants have perished trying to make the crossing so far in 2015, a 30-fold increase on the same period last year.

Sources said the Type 23 frigate HMS Kent, currently in the Gulf, could be moved to take part in the operation and bring its new Scan Eagle drones for use in the search.

The unarmed drone is catapulted into flight from a 14 ft ramp and can remain airborne for 12 hours. The aircraft can fly at ranges of up to 40 miles from its ship and beams back live video, day or night, directly into the ship's operations room. One Whitehall source described the Scan Eagle as a potential "life saver". He said: "We are operating the Scan Eagle in the Gulf. It is a well-established system. Frigates are designed to take them".

Scan Eagle is operated by 700X Naval Air Squadron, nicknamed the X-Men, and has been used to hunt for pirates, mines and drug runners since it was introduced in 2013.

HMS Bulwark, an amphibious command and control ship, will help coordinate the effort in the Mediterranean's busy sea lanes. The source said: "Bulwark will be good at directing assets towards a vessel that needs rescuing. It is about coordination." EU leaders last week said they would triple funding for rescue operations aimed at migrant boats in the Mediterranean, following outcry after a boat capsized killing as many as 850 people.

Only 28 survivors were recovered from the overloaded fishing boat that had set sail from Libya. European countries scaled back search and rescue operations last year and Britain said it believed that was acting as a "pull factor", encouraging more people to attempt the dangerous voyage.

Libya has become a main thoroughfare for migrants trying to reach Europe and a haven for people-trafficking gangs. Thousands pass through the country each week from countries including Syria, Eritrea, Mali and Nigeria. David Cameron and other EU leaders have said they will smash the people-trafficking gangs, but have given little detail of how that might be done. One Naval source said any kind of blockade to

try to turn migrants back would be an "enormous task". Meanwhile, the family of the Tunisian man accused of piloting the migrant boat that sank off Libya have said he was forced at gunpoint to captain the doomed vessel.

Italian authorities say the man, named in court as Mohammed Ali Malek, 27, was in charge of the heavily overloaded fishing boat that capsized shortly before midnight on April 18 with hundreds of African and Bangladeshi migrants locked below deck.

Source : [Indian Express](#), 27 Apr 2015

### **ASEAN Tells China its Island-Building 'May Undermine Peace, Stability' in South China Sea**

Chinese island-building efforts "may undermine peace, security and stability" in the disputed South China Sea, said a statement by Southeast Asian leaders meeting for a summit today.

The statement, yet to be officially released, was prepared on behalf of leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) gathering in Malaysia for an annual meeting. "We share the serious concerns expressed by some leaders on the land reclamation being undertaken in the South China Sea, which has eroded trust and confidence and may undermine peace, security and stability," it said.

Today's summit in Kuala Lumpur opens under a cloud caused by fresh evidence in the form of recently released satellite photos showing the scale of Chinese land reclamation.

They depict flotillas of Chinese vessels heaping huge amounts of sand on coral reefs also claimed by the Philippines. ASEAN members Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei claim parts of the sea, which is rich in energy reserves, fishery resources, and is a vital conduit for much of world trade.

But Beijing claims nearly all of it, and its increasingly bold actions to underline those claims have caused fears of Chinese dominance of the waterway and potential armed conflict.

The chairman's statement by Malaysia -which holds the rotating chair of ASEAN this year - instructs the region's foreign ministers to "urgently address this matter" under dialogue mechanisms set up between the bloc and China.

The Philippines on Sunday challenged fellow members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to "finally stand up" to Beijing and demand an end to reclamation works. Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario warned his regional peers in a precursor meeting that China was poised to take "de facto control" of the strategic seaway.

But his Malaysian counterpart Anifah Aman had later brushed aside any expectations of an especially bold ASEAN final statement. Despite its rhetoric of a united ASEAN community, the regional grouping has a history of failing to respond in a robust manner to Beijing due to China's immense trade and diplomatic leverage and because not all ASEAN states have a stake in the maritime disputes.

Source: [SCMP](#), 27 Apr 2015

### **Navy to Commission New Base near Porbandar, Named after INS Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**

In view of increased threat along maritime border with Pakistan, Navy will commission a new base near Porbandar in Gujarat to strengthen surveillance and security apparatus in the region.

The new base will be named INS Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. This would be the second base on the Gujarat coast and will be commissioned by state Chief Minister Anandiben Patel and Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar on May 9 at Porbandar.

"This is a crucial strategic position as far as Navy is concerned because this coastal area is close to our western neighbors. Our ships can be mobilized at any time or warships can be organized," PRO, Western Naval Command, Commander Rahul Sinha told PTI.

"Any Naval base provides administrative support like loading of ships or for operational purpose during warfare or for turning around war-ships," he said, when asked as to how the new base will help the country. This will be second base in Gujarat besides INS Dwarka at Okha in Dwarka district.

"Despite having a base in Okha, there was still a need of expanding surveillance in the western coastal area. The coastal security (in the area) has been a concern for past couple of years. A need was felt to strengthen our infrastructure. Hence, we are going to commission INS Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel," said Sinha.

On christening the base after India's first Home Minister, Sinha said it has been decided by a board of an internal committee of Indian Navy. Surveillance activity on the maritime boundary with Pakistan has been a concern in the aftermath of the 26/11 attack on Mumbai where a Gujarat fishing boat was apprehended by terrorists and used to sail to the island city.

On December 31, a suspected Pakistani fishing boat carrying explosives was intercepted by the Coast Guards in the Arabian Sea. Recently, Navy in a joint operation with Coast Guards had apprehended a suspicious boat carrying around 232 packets of narcotics, suspected to be Heroin worth Rs 600 crore, and arrested eight Pakistani nationals.

Source: [Zee News](#), 29 Apr 2015

## **India and France Conduct Naval Exercise in the Arabian Sea**

The navies of India and France are conducting a joint maritime exercise in the Arabian Sea off the Indian coast at Goa.

Drills include aircraft carriers from both sides taking part. CRI's Indian correspondent Sun Yang has more. One of the major attractions in the exercise is the French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle. The nuclear-powered ship carries 12 naval version Rafale fighters on board. During a visit to France by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi earlier this month, India agreed to purchase 36 French Rafales in a deal that could be worth up to 4 billion Euros.

The Indian ships deployed for the drill are the Indian navy's aircraft carrier Viraat, fast attack craft, Sea Harriers, along with other ships and aircraft.

The scope of the exercise includes the entire gamut of maritime operations from aircraft carrier operations, anti submarine warfare exercises, maritime interdiction operations to multi-ship replenishment exercise. In addition, the focus of the exercise will be theatre-level cooperation in aero-naval and anti-submarine warfare. Relations between India and France have traditionally been close and friendly. With the establishment of a strategic partnership in 1998, there has been significant progress in all areas of bilateral cooperation and exchanges including naval exercises.

The Indian Navy and the French Navy have been conducting joint exercises since 1983. Following the establishment of a strategic partnership, these exercises were christened 'Varuna' in 2001. The 10-day exercise will continue till May 3. CRI's Indian correspondent Sun Yang reporting.

Source : [CRI English](#), 30 Apr 2015



### **Mariners Call for Stronger Shipping Policies**

Mariners are calling for stronger government policies to put shipping at the heart of Australia's transport system. Changes in ship and port technology, and the future of the merchant navy, have also been addressed at the third Master Mariners Congress in Launceston this week.

Congress coordinator Captain John Lloyd said a shortage of industry opportunities for new graduates was an issue for the maritime workforce. Captain Lloyd said although shipping is one of the most environmentally sustainable transport modes, its integration with other sectors needed to be addressed.

"So how maritime, which is very environmentally friendly; how it can contribute more effectively to the overall transport solution for our goods. "We're also looking at how improvements in technology improve safety of navigation and the safety of our ships and their operations around the coast. "And we have some very sensitive areas around the coast. "We're hearing all the time about the Great barrier Reef and how we need to look after that today and into the future.

"So having safe and efficient navigation around those area is very important for us." Captain Lloyd said new shipping and port technology; including E-navigation, computerized loading systems and dynamic positioning systems could help.

"Improvements in navigation aids, improvements in radio navigation, the monitoring of ships and their safe passage from on-shore and how we can communicate effectively with them to give them up to date and relevant advice on their passage. "E-navigation uses a range of electronic devices such as satellites to inform the ship very precisely where it is on the surface of the earth, so a ship's captain can know exactly where a ship is.

"He can use predictive technology to see where the ship is going next, to assess the impact of wind and currents on the ship. "And here at the Australian Maritime

College we're able to replicate those pieces of equipment and the ships to which they're fitted, in our sophisticated suite of simulation and use that to train the mariners of today and the next generation.”

With over 95 per cent of Australian goods travelling by sea at some point in their life, Captain Lloyd said the maritime community's contribution was often under-played. He said government policy needed to go beyond the narrow focus on the shipping sector itself. Captain Lloyd said the Australian and state governments needed to consider maritime as part of an overall transport solution from ports to road and rail. “It is about how we can service the whole of the community of Australia, by using sea routes and coastal shipping.

Source: [Hellenic Shipping News](#), 16 Apr 2015

### **Shipping Vessel Sharing Pacts Get Exemption from Competition Commission of India Lens**

The government has exempted vessel sharing pacts among shipping companies from the ambit of fair trade watchdog CCI for one more year after finding that such agreements are unlikely to hurt competition.

Vessel Sharing Agreement, which allows entities to share space in each other's vessels, is a common practice in the shipping industry. The Corporate Affairs Ministry recently decided to keep VSAs out of Competition Commission of India purview for one more year. Now shipping companies would not be required to seek the watchdog's nod before implementing such pacts.

In case of liner shipping industry, which provides services of ocean transport against payment by advertising in advance the schedule, the government has decided to exempt vessel sharing agreements from the CCI purview, according to the ministry's latest monthly newsletter.

The exemption is subject to certain conditions, such as that these agreements should not include practices involving fixing prices, limitation of capacity or sales and the allocation of markets or customers.

The Shipping Ministry would monitor these aspects, with respect to vessel sharing pacts. CCI, which keeps a tab on unfair trade practices across sectors, comes under the Corporate Affairs Ministry. After CCI and Director General of Shipping reviewed the situation during the last exemption period, it was found that such pacts did not cause any appreciable adverse impact on competition.

A one-year exemption, which was earlier provided by the government, expired in December 2014. That exemption was applicable for carriers of all nationalities operating ships of any nationality from any Indian port.

Source: [Business-Standard](#), 19 Apr 2015

### **ICS Chairman Warns of Chaos Caused by Regional Shipping Regulation**

Addressing members of the Singapore Shipping Association today (Monday 20 April) the Chairman of the International Chamber of Shipping, Masamichi Morooka, warned about the dangers of regional maritime regulation being adopted by governments at variance to the global maritime Conventions adopted by IMO, ICS said in its press release.

“Global rules for a global shipping industry is not just a slogan,” said Mr Morooka before criticizing the approaches to the regulation of shipping being pursued by the United States and the European Union. Mr Morooka began by highlighting the big problem caused by the different ballast water treatment regime that applies in the United States to that adopted by the IMO through the Ballast Water Management Convention.



“Whether we like it or not, the political reality is that the IMO Convention is probably going to enter into force, sooner rather than later, and we therefore have to make it work. But the conflicting IMO and U.S. requirements, when combined with the lack of systems fully approved by the United States, could produce an impossible dilemma in which some ships might not be able to operate in U.S. waters if the IMO Convention enters in force before U.S. approved equipment is commercially available.”

He added: “The problem is that the United States has adopted a process for the approval of ballast treatment equipment that is different to that adopted by IMO. At the request of the shipping industry, led by ICS, IMO has agreed to make the IMO type-approval process more robust while also advising governments not to penalize ship-owners that have installed first generation equipment in good faith. But the U.S. will not be a party to the international Convention.”

Under the current U.S. regulations, as applied by the U.S Coast Guard, ship-owners that have installed IMO type-approved systems, at a cost of between US \$1-5 million per ship, might have to replace the system completely after only five years. This is a particular concern for operators that have installed ultra-violet systems.

“This is an example of the very bad situation that can result when nations decide to adopt maritime rules unilaterally.” Mr Morooka then turned his sights onto the European Union’s decision to pre-empt the current IMO negotiations on a global data collection on shipping’s CO2 emissions by adopting a unilateral, regional Regulation on the Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of individual ship emissions – which will also apply to non-EU flag ships trading to Europe – in advance of IMO completing its work.

“Until now, with the industry’s support, the IMO negotiations have been progressing well,” said the ICS Chairman. “But there is a danger that the EU initiative will be seen by non-EU nations as an attempt to present them with a fait accompli.” This includes controversial elements, such as the publication of commercially sensitive individual ship efficiency data, an idea which had previously been rejected by the majority of

IMO governments during a meeting of the Marine Environment Protection Committee in October 2014.”

Mr Morooka remarked: “As the IMO negotiations on additional measures to help reduce CO2 continue, it will be vital for EU Member States to explain how the new EU Regulation can be implemented in a way which is fully compatible with whatever might be agreed by IMO for global application, in the interests of avoiding the unhelpful complication of a separate regional regime.”

Source: [Port News](#), 20 Apr 2015

### **World's First LNG-Powered Container Ship Makes its Way to Jacksonville**

The world’s first container ship powered by liquefied natural gas launched on Saturday in San Diego, bound for a route between Jacksonville and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Jacksonville-based Sea Star Line plans to start operating the ship, the Isla Bella, from JaxPort late this year, according to a news release. The company is switching to liquefied natural gas, or LNG, to comply with new emission restrictions enforced by the Environmental Protection Agency for trade routes in the Caribbean.

Crowley Maritime Corp., another Jacksonville shipping company that has routes to Puerto Rico, plans to roll out two LNG-powered ships of its own by 2017, according to the company’s website. San Diego-based General Dynamics NASSCO built the Isla Bella for TOTE Inc., a Princeton, N.J.-based shipping company that has offices in Jacksonville. Sea Star Line, a TOTE subsidiary, runs a weekly barge service between Jacksonville and Puerto Rico.

General Dynamics is building another LNG-powered ship, which Sea Star plans to bring to Jacksonville early next year. Together, the two ships cost \$350 million, according to a news release from TOTE.

Sea Star President Tim Nolan said the company had two choices to comply with the EPA restrictions, which go into full effect in 2019: build new LNG-powered ships, or install emission-limiting “scrubbers” in the diesel vessels it uses now. The company decided it was time to retire its current vessels, which date to 1974.

“It’s a 40-year investment that’s the way we look at it,” Nolan said. “Because we have a commitment to the trade we have right now in Puerto Rico, and that’s a long-term commitment.” Sea Star Line has been doing business out of JaxPort since 1990, according to the port’s website. In 2013, the company signed a 20-year lease for 52 acres of land at the Blount Island Marine Terminal.

In 2011, the International Maritime Organization, an agency of the United Nations, declared areas around Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands an “emission control area” and created restrictions on nitrogen oxide, sulfur oxide and other pollutants. Those restrictions will reduce environmental damage and the risk of asthma for residents in the area, an EPA report says.

“The dependency of the islands’ economies on marine transportation in combination with the physical and human geography of the territories place these populations and environments at an elevated risk from ship-related pollution,” the report says.

JaxPort handles more trade with Puerto Rico than any other American port, according to JaxPort’s website. Slightly more than half of the total weight of trade shipments leaving JaxPort goes to Puerto Rico. A 2011 study by Germanischer Lloyd, a consulting agency for the maritime industry, concluded that the use of LNG could reduce carbon dioxide emissions from container ships by 20 to 25 percent. In the long run, the use of LNG also would save money for some types of container ships, the study said.

Nolan said the new vessels will be faster and more punctual than their predecessors. Whether they will reduce costs, he wasn’t sure; that depends in part on whether the price of oil goes up again. TOTE doesn’t have plans to build any more LNG ships right now, he said.

TOTE's new ships are 764 feet long and capable of carrying 3,100 20-foot-long shipping containers, according to TOTE. They will bring a variety of goods to Puerto Rico, including food, medical supplies, retail goods, cars, building materials and paper products, Nolan said.

The ships will almost double the amount of cargo that can be transported between Jacksonville and Puerto Rico per week, the company said. Pivotal LNG Inc., which is building a natural gas processing facility in Jacksonville, signed a contract in January to provide the LNG for TOTE's container ships, according to a news release. It plans to start running the facility in mid-2016.

Source: [Jacksonville.com](http://Jacksonville.com), 20 Apr 2015

### **Be Ready to Ride Wave' of Maritime Growth**

ASIA'S fast-expanding economy will drive the shipping industry in coming years so Singapore must be ready to "ride on (this) wave of growth", said Transport Minister Lui Tuck Yew yesterday.

Mr Lui told the opening of Sea Asia, an anchor event at Singapore Maritime Week, that Asia accounted for almost 80 per cent of global container throughput at the world's top 30 ports last year, with this share tipped to expand. "We need to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet the growth in shipping demand, and support the proliferation of mega vessels," said Mr Lui.

He added that Singapore has already invested significantly to increase port capacity.

When the third and fourth phases for Pasir Panjang Terminal are fully operational by the end of 2017, Singapore's total port capacity will increase by more than 40 per cent to 50 million 20-foot equivalent units.

Mr Lui also said that the Government will ensure that the maritime industry will grow in “a sustainable and responsible way” such as introducing liquefied natural gas bunkering by 2017, in line with global efforts to use cleaner and sulphur free fuels. It will also take steps to develop maritime talent, he said.

The Maritime and Port Authority will roll out a career conversion scheme for Singaporeans to undertake mid-career switches into the maritime sector. “We will continue to ensure that Singapore remains a prime location... so that maritime companies which are already here, or are looking for a landing spot in Asia, can continue to look to Singapore as a potential base to tap immense opportunities in Asia and beyond,” said Mr Lui.

Industry leaders at the conference also discussed the future of Asia’s shipping and offshore industry against the backdrop of falling oil prices. “It’s a question of survival over the next few years,” said Mr Khalid Hashim, managing director of Thai dry bulk shipping firm Precious Shipping, who was one of five panelists at the Sea Asia Global Forum. Companies need to “do some things right” in order to be successful, namely scrapping old rigs, getting rid of non-core assets, raising finances and cutting costs, he said.

Pacific International Lines managing director Teo Siong Seng said ship-owners should be more “responsible” when it comes to new builds. “There is too much new building still.” Most of the panelists, however, remained optimistic about the medium to longer-term outlook, citing the projected growth of shipping volume, on the back of Asia’s burgeoning middle class.

Singapore Maritime Week, much of which is held at the Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre, ends on Friday.

Source: [Hellenic Shipping News](#), 23 Apr 2015

## **Iran Moves Ships, Reducing Tensions near Yemen: Pentagon's Carter**

A flotilla of nine Iranian naval and cargo ships that US officials feared was carrying arms to strife-torn Yemen sailed northeast in the direction of Iran on Friday, and this should ease US concerns, a Pentagon spokesman said. The Iranian state news agency IRNA, however, quoted Iran's top navy commander, Admiral Habibollah Sayyari as saying on Saturday that the flotilla was still carrying out its mission in the Gulf of Aden.

Iranian-allied Houthi militia sidelined the Yemeni central government after seizing the capital Sanaa in September. The Shi'ite Muslim Houthis have advanced southwards since, capturing more territory and drawing Saudi-led air strikes.

On Friday, US Defence Secretary Ash Carter told a small group of journalists travelling with him after a trip to California: "The (Iranian) ships have turned around. Obviously what their onward plans are, we don't know.

"It is a welcome event because it does contribute to de-escalation and that's what we're trying to suggest to all the parties there, is the best course, and those parties include the Iranians," Carter said. Army Colonel Steve Warren, a Pentagon spokesman, said earlier the flotilla was in international waters about midway along the coast of Oman on Friday and still headed northeast. Warren declined to say the ships were going back to Iran or headed toward Iran. Warren said the US military did not know their intent and the vessels could turn around at any point.

Iranian navy chief Sayyari told IRNA: "Currently the 34th fleet is located in the Gulf of Aden at the entrance to the Bab al-Mandab strait, and is conducting patrols" - a reference to two military ships that form part of the flotilla.

When the ships were first deployed earlier this month, Sayyari said that they were on a routine anti-piracy mission to protect shipping. President Barack Obama said on Tuesday the US government had warned Iran not to send weapons to Yemen that could be used to threaten shipping traffic in the Gulf. Carter said on Wednesday the United States was concerned the ships might be carrying advanced weapons to Houthi rebels there.

The US Navy sent the USS Theodore Roosevelt and an escort warship into the Arabian Sea earlier this week to support seven US warships already in the area around the Gulf of Aden because of concerns about worsening chaos in Yemen. A Saudi-led coalition, backed by the United States, began an air campaign last month to destroy heavy weapons controlled by Houthis that could threaten Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter and arch-regional rival of Iran. The Saudis say their goal is to restore Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

Saudi Arabia said on Tuesday it was ending its campaign against the Houthis and shifting to a new phase of operations in Yemen. Bombing has resumed since then, however, and US officials have said the Saudis had indicated they would continue the air strikes as deemed necessary.

Source: [Times of India](#), 25 Apr 2015

### **Turkish Naval Ship Arrives on Goodwill Visit to Colombo**

'TCG GEDIZ', a Turkish naval ship arrived in the island on Sunday (26 April 2015) making a two-day goodwill visit. The ship is calling on the port of Colombo on her way from Mumbai to the port of Klang in Malaysia.

Sri Lanka Navy accorded a traditional naval welcome to the visiting ship upon her arrival at the Colombo harbor. According to naval sources, a group of Sri Lankan naval officers will be trained in maritime security by the Multinational Maritime Security Center of Excellence Mobil Training Team of the visiting ship followed by a damage control exercise as part of strengthening the relations between the two friendly navies during the ship's stay in the country.

On her passage of departure, two Fast Attack Craft of the Sri Lanka Navy are also scheduled to join the visiting ship for a joint exercise.

Source: [Ministry of Defense](#), 27 Apr 2015

## **Indian Naval Ship INS Tarangini Leaves on 8-Month Voyage to Europe**

During these eight months, the ship is expected to travel approximately 17,000 miles under sails. In addition to the Tall Ship Races, the ship is also scheduled to participate in the one of its kind race with the newly acquired Oman Navy's sail training ship Shabab Al Oman, from Muscat in Oman to Kochi in India.

"During this voyage, we will be visiting 17 foreign ports in 14 countries. The prime purpose of this voyage being training of the under trainee officers that form a part of First Training Squadron and also to showcase our ship building capabilities and the capabilities of Indian Naval Ships to operate at far ranges over a prolonged duration of time," Commander Gaurav Gautam, Commanding Officer of INS Tarangini told the media.

"We have, thus, chosen the motto for this year's voyage as 'Tacking for Broader Reach'. Once we leave from here, we'll be visiting countries like Oman, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Malta, Spain, UK, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, France, Portugal and on the way back, we take part in the first of its kind race with the newly acquired Omani Navy Ship," he added.

The ship was flagged off by Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba, PVSM, AVSM, the flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern naval Command in a departure ceremony conducted at the Naval base, Kochi on Monday. INS Tarangini, a three masted barque, built in Goa Shipyard Limited and commissioned on November 11 1997, is manned by six officers, 40 sailors and 30 trainees.

Source: [NewKerala.com](http://NewKerala.com), 28 Apr 2015

## **KAMCO (Korea Asset Management Corporation) Becomes White Knight for Korean Shipping Once Again**

Inheriting role of the restructuring shipping fund, Korea Asset Management Corporation (KAMCO) has started supporting the domestic shipping industry. With



the shipping fund using its own funds, it is planning to serve as a tonnage bank to provide liquidity to domestic shipping companies which are struggling due to the contraction of shipping finance and deteriorating market conditions.

KAMCO announced that it signed a formal contract for the “Shipping Fund for Korean Tonnages 1 and 2” with SW Shipping CEO Kim Gyeong-deuk and Germany’s DVB Bank Executive Director Maarten Vis at the its conference room on the 47th floor of Busan International Finance Center (BIFC) on April 29, and took over two ships owned by SW Shipping.

Through the funds, first about 25 billion won by DVB Bank and later 38 billion won by KAMCO, SW Shipping will repay the existing high interest shipping funds and use it as internal floating money.

KAMCO’s shipping funds will be provided to SW Shipping’s Kamsarmax bulk carriers with a maximum of 18 years, which will transport bituminous coal for electric power generation from Australia and Indonesia for a generation subsidiary of the Korea Electric Power Corporation.

Meanwhile, KAMCO will invest 100 billion won every year for five years, starting from this year, to support liquidity by purchasing ships from domestic shipping companies. The shipping funds raised by KAMCO will be managed by KAMCO Ship Investment and Management Corporation, which moved its office to the 53rd floor of BIFC in Busan, from April 13 this year.

Source: [Business Korea](#), 30 Apr 2015



### **Drewry Reports Big Drop in Box Ships CO2 Emissions, Reduced Bunker Consumption**

Fuel-efficient ships, slow-steaming, and government restrictions were behind the reduction in box ship's bunker consumption.

Containership CO2 emissions on Asia-North Europe round-voyages have dropped by 35 percent over a five-year period to 2013, according to a brief published in April by Drewry Supply Chain Advisors. Drewry attributes the decline to a corresponding drop in fuel consumption and attributes this to three factors: slow steaming; the trend towards larger, more fuel-efficient ships; and restrictions placed by government on ships coming into the ports.

Drewry calculates that for the 35 percent drop in CO2 on the Asia-North Europe route, the average ship size on that route increased by 40 percent over the five-year period.

Although more recent data was not available to Drewry, the brief posits that because average containership sizes increased by another 23 per cent between 2013 and 2015, "it follows that emissions per unit of capacity must have continued to fall."

The Drewry analysts point out that global container trade grows by four-five per cent annually, so fuel efficiency gains of six-eight per cent yearly mean that fewer tones of CO2 are pumped into the atmosphere than before. "For example, in 2014, Maersk Line carried seven per cent more containers than the year before and reduced fuel consumption by container shipped by eight per cent – resulting in a net fall in the amount of fuel consumed and in associated CO2 emissions."

The most obvious benefit of reduced fuel consumption is reduced operating costs, and Drewry cites Maersk as having 2012 fuel costs US \$1.6-billion less than the

company would have paid had it not achieved a 25 per cent reduction in CO2 per container since 2007.

The brief also mentions pollution reductions in ports, and cites the Port of Los Angeles achieving a drop of diesel particulate matters and CO2 emitted by ocean going ships during a five-year period by 68 per cent and 22 per cent respectively.

The brief notes that sulfur emissions are now being tackled by the shipping industry but warns that government rules on the use of low-sulfur fuel "could cost shipping lines and shippers more money due to the price differential between cleaner bunker oil and high-sulfur oil." Earlier this month, Drewry said there was clear evidence that box carriers were passing on the savings from low bunker prices.

Source: [Ship and Bunker](#), 17 Apr 2015

### **ICS Dismisses Claims by T&E on Modern Ship CO2 Efficiency**

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) has dismissed the recent claim by the European environmental lobby group Transport and Environment (T&E) that modern ships are somehow less CO2 efficient than those built over 20 years ago as 'fanciful'.

T&E bases its claims on a report it has commissioned from the respected consultancy CE Delft, but it has used the findings very selectively. Moreover, the actual data from which the report's analysis is derived finishes before the worldwide implementation of the Energy Efficiency Design Index. This came into force in 2013 as part of the IMO mandatory package of CO2 reduction measures.

The T&E statement appears to confuse overall design efficiency with an approximate 'estimate of fuel efficiency' based on generic data. Modern ships are designed for optimal efficiency which requires far less fuel to be consumed than previously. Largely as a result of fuel efficient operations, the latest IMO Green House Gas Study, published in 2014, shows that international shipping reduced its total CO2

emissions by more than 10% between 2007 and 2012, at a time when demand for maritime transport continued to increase.

It is not helpful for T&E to twist the results of the CE Delft study to imply that the IMO EEDI, developed by the combined technical expertise of all the world's maritime nations, is somehow inadequate. Modern ships, built in line with the EEDI targets which came into effect in January 2015, are required to be designed to be at least 10% more efficient (compared to the agreed IMO reference line), while ships built after 2030 will be 30% more efficient.

Combined with continuously improving operational fuel efficiency measures, supported by the mandatory use of Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plans and new technology, the actual CO2 reductions achieved will be even greater. This is something on which the shipping industry and its regulator, IMO, should be congratulated rather than

Source: [Hellenic Shipping News](#), 21 Apr 2015

### **Arctic Carbon: One More Devastating Result of Global Warming**

The effect of modern society of emitting billions of pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere over a century isn't only going to make the plains into deserts, isn't only going to make ocean-front property into underwater property, isn't only going to exponentially increase the numbers of hurricanes, tornadoes, and severe storms, and it isn't only going to kill all the polar bears in the wild. According to a new study, scientists are all but convinced that there is a layer of carbon in the ice of the Arctic that will only snowball the global warming effect, effectively dooming the world of our children's children.

A team of scientists from the University of Georgia is currently studying a massive concentration of carbon embedded in the ice of the Arctic. As the ice the carbon is

embedded in thaws as it never has since it formed, the carbon is being converted to carbon dioxide, and releasing into the atmosphere.

Currently, the scientists are studying just exactly how large the carbon layer embedded in the arctic ice is, and what the exact effects will be when it is released. They believe that the carbon has existed under the ice for thousands of years, and originally formed by the remains of plants and animals that perished over 20,000 years ago. The landscape of the Arctic has been frozen year-round for centuries, however, now that it is thawing as a result of global warming, scientists are worried that all the carbon buried in the arctic ice will thaw, float into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide, and only accelerate the global warming process.

The amount of carbon dioxide that will be released as a result of the melting arctic ice layer will be more than ten times the amount of carbon dioxide that has been released into the atmosphere as a result of burning fossil fuels since the Industrial Revolution.

Aron Stubbins, a researcher at the University of Georgia's Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, talked about the difference between the carbon that is currently being released into the atmosphere and the carbon that will be released from the layer in the Arctic.

"If you cut down a tree and burn it, you are simply returning the carbon in that tree to the atmosphere where the tree originally got it. However, this [the Arctic layer] is carbon that has been locked away in a deep-freeze storage for a long time. This is carbon that has been out of the active, natural system for tens of thousands of years. To reintroduce it into the contemporary system will have an effect."

According to the researchers, the release of the carbon won't happen all at once, but gradually over time. The exact rate of release of carbon from the arctic ice layer will take more study to compute.

Source: [Inquisitr](#), 24 Apr 2015

## **British Columbia First Nations Reach Coastal Marine Pact to Protect Ocean Health**

First Nations from Vancouver Island to Haida Gwaii and along coastal B.C. have signed a marine-use partnership with the provincial government that aims to act as a guide for environmental, economic and stewardship issues along more than 100,000 kilometres of coastline.

The Marine Planning Partnership involving 18 First Nations has been in the works for more than a decade, but missing from Monday's celebration was the federal government even though it had taken part in past talks.

The federal government has jurisdiction over ocean waters, which makes it the major player in the issues of shipping, including the potential for more oil tankers navigating the coast, and fisheries, which involves the management and protection of stocks.

The plan maps out four regional marine areas along the coast, including Haida Gwaii, the North Coast, Central Coast and northern Vancouver Island. It sets out an eco-based management system that aims to ensure stewardship, environmental and economic decisions are reached by working together with minimal conflict.

"This collaboration recognizes the important role of coastal First Nations as stewards of the marine environment and as partners in supporting the health of coastal communities," said Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister John Rustad in a statement. Coastal First Nations' spokesman Art Sterritt said the partnership helps governments understand the significance of the marine environment in the lives of First Nations.

He said it also signals to the federal government the kind of collaborative agreement that can be reached when people are willing to negotiate. "I'm optimistic the federal government is going to come in," he said. "It's incumbent on the federal government to get in on this conversation. They'll realize collaborating with First Nations is much better than fighting us."

A spokeswoman for federal Fisheries Minister Gail Shea said in a statement the federal government is committed to healthy oceans and supports strong oceans management and marine protection, including investing in the Health of Oceans initiative to protect unique and vulnerable marine environments. The statement explained why the federal government did not participate in the marine planning partnership.

"It is involved in similar initiatives with similar partners such as the Canada-B.C. Marine Protected Area network strategy, which achieves marine protection and conservation goals through a joint federal-provincial approach, collaborative decision making, and a participatory process," it said.

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society said the partnership endorses a new wave in ocean management and marine conservation in Canada. "The region needs a plan to ensure that these special places are properly managed and protected for current and future generations," said society spokeswoman Sabine Jessen in a statement.

Source: [Brandon Sun](#), 27 Apr 2015

### **Ocean's Micro-Plastics as Harmful as Plastic Bags**

Tiny pieces of plastic or fibers, known as Micro-plastics, may act as a pathway for persistent, bio accumulating and toxic substances entering the food chain, and are increasingly being found in the oceans and may prove to be as harmful to marine life as more obvious, larger debris, such as plastic bags, according to a new report.

The report, sources, fates and effects of micro plastics in the marine environment - a global assessment, has been published by the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection, an advisory body that advises the United Nations (UN) system on the scientific aspects of marine environmental protection.

“While there is a need for further assessment of the problem, the report is the first attempt, at a global scale, to identify the main sources, fate and effects of micro plastics in the ocean and offers improved understanding of the scale of the problem. The assessment suggests that there needs to be a wider awareness of the potential harm that micro plastics in the oceans could cause,” said Dr. Stefan Micallef, Director Marine Environment Division, at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Administrative Secretary of GESAMP.

“Even tiny particles, such as those used in cosmetic products or abrasives, could potentially harm marine life if ingested. We need to work globally to ensure that plastics do not end up in the oceans,” Dr. Micallef said.

Micro plastics refer to small plastic particles, less than 5 mm in diameter, but some as small as 10 nanometres. Micro plastics may be purposefully manufactured for particular industrial or domestic applications (such as facial cleansers), or result from the fragmentation of larger items, especially when exposed to sunlight. Micro plastics have been found distributed throughout the world’s oceans, on shorelines, in surface waters and seabed sediments, from the Arctic to Antarctic. They may accumulate at remote locations such as mid-ocean gyres, as well as close to population centers, shipping routes and other major sources.

The potential problems of micro-plastics in the marine environment were brought to the attention of GESAMP in 2010 and the assessment report has been developed by a working group of experts which has met regularly during the past five years.

The report notes that while the physical impacts of larger litter items, such as plastic bags and fishing nets, have been demonstrated, it is much more difficult to attribute physical impacts of micro plastics. Nonetheless, laboratory tests indicate that even very tiny particles can cause cellular damage in mammals. Micro plastics have been found inside the bodies of a wide variety of marine organisms including invertebrates, fish, birds and mammals, and the ingestion of micro plastics may have an effect on the feeding, movement, growth and breeding success of the host organism.



Plastics often contain chemicals added during manufacture and can absorb and concentrate contaminants such as pesticides from the surrounding seawater and there is emerging evidence of transfer of chemicals from ingested plastics into tissues.

The report recommends better control of the sources of plastic waste, through applying the principles of the “3 Rs” (Reduce, Re-use, Recycle), and improving the overall management of plastics as the most efficient and cost-effective way of reducing the quantity of plastic objects and micro plastic particles accumulating in the ocean.

The report warns that even if all releases of plastic to the environment were to cease immediately, the number of micro plastics in the ocean would be expected to continue to increase as a result of continuing fragmentation.

The report provides six recommendations:

1. identify the main sources and categories of plastics and micro plastics entering the ocean;
2. utilize end-of-life plastic as a valuable resource rather than a waste product;
3. promote greater awareness of the impacts of plastics and micro plastics in the marine environment;
4. include particles in the nanosize range in future assessments of the impact of plastics in the ocean;
5. evaluate the potential significance of plastics and micro plastics as a vector for organisms in future assessments; and
6. future assessments should address the chemical risk posed by ingested micro plastics in greater depth.

GESAMP will continue to further develop knowledge on micro plastics in the marine environment.

Source : [Marine Link](#), 28 Apr 2015