

## **A NEED FOR MARITIME SPATIAL PLANNING IN THE ARCTIC: A PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHING A MARINE PROTECTED AREA NETWORK**

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### **ABSTRACT**

“Regardless of where we live, all of us depend upon healthy ocean ecosystems: either as a source of food or revenue, or as a key shaper and regulator of climate and weather. This dependency and the need to embrace sustainable development led nations of the world to agree to a series of high-level political commitments for marine conservation and marine protected areas” (IUCN - World Commission on Protected Areas, 2008).

However, the increasing dependence on energy (oil and gas) and other resources by humans has led to an increase in marine activities, which if left unchecked or managed effectively may result in irreversible damage to our oceans, considering the vast amount of services and human well-being provided by the oceans.

This increased need for especially marine resources has led to the pressure to exploit the Arctic<sup>1</sup> for the alleged social and economic development of the Arctic Nations and its indigenous people and other countries and stakeholders with an interest in the area (see figure 1 below for Arctic region).

The aim of this paper will address the effects of climate change on the Arctic and its impact and then propose a detailed and justified Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) with specific reference to establishing a Marine Protected Area (MPA) network as a management tool for addressing the climate change impacts, and finally address the role, influence and responsibility of the shipping sector in the Arctic.

**KEYWORDS:** A Need for Maritime Spatial Planning in the Arctic: A Proposal for Establishing a Marine Protected Area Network

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