



The International Business Alliance
for Corporate Ocean Responsibility

News Release

ARCTIC POLICY: EU OPENS CONSULTATION ON FUTURE APPROACH

World Ocean Council Encourages Participation in Public Consultation on the Way Forward for the European Union's Arctic Policy

28 August 2020

On 20 July 2020 the European Commission and the European External Action Service jointly launched a [public consultation](#) on the way forward for the European Union's Arctic policy. The consultation will enable a broad reflection of the EU's Arctic policy in the face of new challenges and opportunities, including the EU's ambitions under the European Green Deal. The consultation seeks input on the strengths and shortfalls of the existing policy, with a view to possibly preparing an updated approach.

High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell said, "The Arctic is a rapidly evolving frontier in international relations. Climate change is dramatically transforming the region and increasing its geopolitical importance, with a number of players seeing new strategic and economic opportunities in the High North. We must ensure that the Arctic remains a zone of low tension and peaceful cooperation, where issues are solved through constructive dialogue. The European Union must be fully equipped to manage the new dynamics effectively, in line with our interests and values."

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries stated, "What happens in the Arctic does not stay in the Arctic. It concerns us all. The EU must be at the forefront with a clear and coherent Arctic policy to tackle the challenges in the years ahead. Drawing on a wide spectrum of expertise and opinions through this consultation will help us in preparing a strong strategy for the region."

The [consultation](#) will help to:

- Re-examine the role of the EU in Arctic affairs;
- Revise the three priorities of the current Joint Communication on An integrated European Union policy for the Arctic, and the actions thereunder; and
- Identify possible new policy areas to be developed.

The World Ocean Council (WOC) is a working partner of the Horizon 2020 ARICE (Arctic Research Icebreaker Consortium), EU-PolarNet and Blue-Action projects working to facilitate

regular and sustained interaction between the Arctic science community and industry, and ensuring the private sector is engaged and heard as a key stakeholder. We encourage industry representatives (in particular private sector members of the WOC) to seize the opportunity to offer feedback as part of the newly launched [public consultation](#).

[Blue Economy by the Numbers](#)

Increase in the number of ships entering the Arctic Polar Code area between 2013 and 2019: **25 percent**

Increase in total distance sailed by ships in the Arctic Polar Code between 2013 and 2019: **75 percent (from 6.51 million nautical miles to 9.5 million nautical miles)**

Percentage of ships entering the Polar Code Area which are fishing vessels: **41 percent**

Number of cruise ships which sailed in the Arctic Polar Code area in 2019: **73**

Increase in the distance sailed by bulk carriers in the Arctic Polar Code area between 2013 and 2019: **160 percent**

Source: Arctic Council PAME Arctic Shipping Status Report, 2020

Recent and Upcoming WOC Outreach and Engagement

27 August, Webinar

The Blue Economy Hub: Blue Opportunities in Island Blue Economies (Panelist)

2-3 September, Online Summit

[Global Arctic Shipping Summit](#) (Speaker)

3 September, 07:00 BST, Webinar

The Nautical Institute: [Ocean Responsibility – How can Shipping Make a Difference?](#) (Speaker)

23-24 September, Online Summit

[Shipping & the Blue Economy Virtual Forum](#) (Speaker, Key Partner)

30 September, 10:00 BST, Webinar

[Breakbulk – The Digital Special: Growing a Sustainable Future](#) (Speaker)

World Ocean Council (WOC) – The Global Blue Economy Business Organization

The WOC is the international, cross-sectoral alliance for private sector leadership, collaboration and action on ocean sustainability, stewardship and science. Companies from a range of industries worldwide are distinguishing themselves as leaders in “Corporate Ocean Responsibility”, including: shipping, oil and gas, tourism, fisheries, aquaculture, mining, renewable energy, ocean technology and investment.

WOC Members are listed [here](#), a part of the WOC Network of 35,000+ ocean industry stakeholders around the world. The WOC is a registered not-for-profit organization in the US and France.

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