

## SUGGESTED READINGS

# Understanding Japan's Interests in the Arctic Region: a literature review

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For much of its recent history, Japan has been perceived as an economic giant but a diplomatic dwarf in the Asia Pacific region. The Japanese government has been vocal about the responsibility to protect the Arctic environment<sup>1</sup> and has stressed the importance of environmental security in the region.<sup>2</sup> More specifically, Japan's priorities include responding to the global repercussions of climate change<sup>3</sup> and preparing for the sustainable use of the Arctic Ocean for future shipping opportunities.<sup>4</sup> Additional areas of importance for Japan in the Arctic region include oil and natural gas projects in Russia (Yamal liquefied natural gas project)<sup>5</sup> and resource exploration and sustainable development.<sup>6</sup> Japan's strategic engagement in the Arctic is carried out through international cooperation on research, science and technology as drivers of Japanese industry and diplomacy in the region.<sup>7</sup> There is potential for Canada-Japan relations in the area of Arctic security to support shared concerns and priorities in the region. This overview provides a literature review and suggested reading list on the subject of Japan's interests and involvement in the Arctic, as well as a few recommendations on future areas of collaboration between Canada and Japan.

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<sup>1</sup> Aki Tonami, "The Arctic Policy of China and Japan: Multi-Layered Economic and Strategic Motivations." *The Polar Journal* 4, no. 1 (January 2, 2014): 115.

<sup>2</sup> Taisaku Ikeshima, "Japan's Role as an Asian Observer State within and outside the Arctic Council's Framework." *Polar Science* 10, no. 3 (August 1, 2016): 461.

<sup>3</sup> Parliament of Canada, "Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting its participation at the 12th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region." 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Government of Japan. *Outline of Japan's Arctic Policy*. Oct 2015, [https://www8.cao.go.jp/ocean/english/arctic/pdf/japans\\_ap\\_e.pdf](https://www8.cao.go.jp/ocean/english/arctic/pdf/japans_ap_e.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Arlid Moe and Olav Schram Stokke. "Asian Countries and Arctic Shipping: Policies, Interests and Footprints on Governance." *Arctic Review on Law and Politics* 10, (January 01, 2019): 34.

<sup>6</sup> Government of Japan. *Outline of Japan's Arctic Policy*. Op. Cit.

<sup>7</sup> Aki Tonami, "Exporting the Developmental State: Japan's Economic Diplomacy in the Arctic." *Third World Quarterly* 39, no. 6 (January 19, 2018): 1212.

## Literature Review: Japan's Interests and Involvement in the Arctic

Babin, Julie and Frederic Lasserre. "[Asian States at the Arctic Council: Perceptions in Western States](#)." *Polar Geography* 42, no. 3 (February 12, 2019): 145-59. Accessed January 19, 2021.

- Natural resources and sea routes are the main interests driving Japan's Arctic Policy (p.147).
- Japan's strategy seems clear as the country strives to be a leader in Arctic research programs (p.154).

Chater, Andrew. "[What Is Japan's Arctic Interest?](#)" *The Polar Connection*. January 24, 2017. Accessed January 19, 2021.

- Outlines Japan's interests in the arctic, research, Northern Sea Route (NSR) and the Yamal liquefied natural gas project.
- More broadly, Chater describes Japanese interests from an environmental, economic perspective and considers their role in the Arctic Council.
- Japan interests as a large importer of liquefied natural gas (LNG), investing in the Yamal LNG project secures Japan's access to natural gas from a nearby source.
- A major way to deliver LNG is through the Northern Sea Route from Yamal.
- Japan in the Arctic Council - strategy to build international "trust and status"
- through research activities in the region.

ChuZart, Romain, Sakiko Hataya, Osamu Inagaki, and Lindsay Arthur. "[Assessing Japan's Arctic Engagement during the ArCS Project \(2015–2020\)](#)", *The Yearbook of Polar Law Online* 12, 1 (2021): 328-348.

- Japan's Involvement in the Arctic in the past 5 years
- 2015-2020: Arctic Challenge for Sustainability (ArCS) project, to reassure
- Japan's role in Arctic governance and sustainability solutions from a
- scientific/academic perspective (p.329).
- Japan's Arctic Policy 2015: Strong emphasis on international cooperation and
- rule of law (p.346).
- Japan's focus is on the maritime issues of the Arctic region, key importance placed on the Arctic Ocean - Japan's involved in developing shipping routes, the IMO Polar Code/guidelines and domestic implementation of them (p.346).
- Excels in scientific research cooperation: Japan's approach to Arctic governance with involvement in scientific research/scientific international cooperation (p.347).

Enomoto, Hiroyuki. "[Canada-Japan Future Collaboration Workshop at CHARS](#)." ArCS Blog - Arctic Challenge for Sustainability Project. July 09, 2019. Accessed January 19, 2021.

- Goal of this workshop: to deliver and exchange information for current and future research projects in the Canadian Arctic, involving local stakeholders.
- Japanese willingness to proceed with research in Canada, and prioritizing consideration from local residents in these activities.

- Local residents and community organizations of Cambridge Bay showed high interest in scientific collaboration between Japan and Canada.
- Finding ways to connect high level science and technology with Indigenous knowledge in addressing the changing environment in the Arctic.

**Government of Japan. [Outline of Japan's Arctic Policy](#). Oct 2015.**

- Research & Development: international cooperation with stakeholders in Arctic research, establish research stations in Arctic states for joint research (p.3).
- International Cooperation: share scientific findings with the global community, expand international/bilateral cooperation with Arctic and non-Arctic countries (p.4)
- Sustainable use: Prepare for the use of Arctic Sea route, including the environmental risks and challenges associated with this. Resource exploration and development with a framework for sustainable use based on scientific evidence (p.4).

**Hiroshi, Ueta and Hiroyuki, Goda, "[Commercial Perspective of the Northern Sea Route](#)," in *Arctic Governance and Japan's Diplomatic Strategy*. Report from the Japan Institute of International Affairs, 2012.**

- For Japan, the NSR is understood as a shortcut for the shipping route linking Asia with Europe (p.10).
- Current possibility for Japanese business importing resources in the Arctic Ocean: Liquefied natural gas in the Yamal Peninsula (p.11).

**Ikeshima, Taisaku. "[Japan's Role as an Asian Observer State within and outside the Arctic Council's Framework](#)." *Polar Science*10, no. 3 (August 1, 2016): 458-62. Accessed January 19, 2021.**

- Role of Japan: Facilitate the fields of science, tech, environment, and to coordinate/accommodate as a mediator between coastal and maritime states, and build relationships between Asia and Arctic states such as law of the sea, shipping, resources (p. 459).
- Security: "proactive pacifism" - New security legislation for Japan to make a "proactive" contribution to world peace, views the seas as a global commons: mentioned in recent National Security Strategy of Japan (p.461)
- Japan's role in maritime security: multilateral cooperation in search and rescue (SAR), pollution prevention, preventative/reactive approach to natural disasters, rather than unilateral contribution to maritime security (p.461)
- Japan's involvement in non-traditional security: environmental security over traditional security (p.461)

**Lackenbauer, Whitney, and James Manicom. "[Canada's Northern Strategy and East Asian Interests in the Arctic](#)." *East Asia - Arctic Relations: Boundary, Security and International Politics*, December 2013, 1-17. Accessed January 22, 2021.**

- Japan's investment in research of Arctic gas hydrates off the coast of Canada (p.2).

- International excitement over undiscovered oil and gas in the Arctic could turn into large-scale, offshore development in the Canadian Arctic - Japan “seems cool on resource development prospects in the Arctic more generally” (p.13).
- Without a physical attachment in the region - Japan must engage in international research and development cooperation with Arctic states - to protect their future national interests in the region (p.15).

**Moe, Arlid, and Olav Schram Stokke.** "[Asian Countries and Arctic Shipping: Policies, Interests and Footprints on Governance.](#)" *Arctic Review on Law and Politics*10, no. 0 (January 01, 2019): 24-52.

- Out of the Asian countries, Japan has potential to benefit the most from the Northern Sea Route in the future - Japan’s northern position would mean the NSR could decrease the sailing distance between the Atlantic and Pacific (p.33).
- Japanese programmes and projects conducted to test the viability of the NSR: 1990 International Northern Sea Route Program (INSROP) and 2006 Japan Northern Sea Route Program (JANSROP) both had negative conclusions on the short-term commercial benefits for the NSR (p.33).
- Negative findings for the NSR: construction and operational costs, unpredictable ice at certain parts of the year, limited vessel size (p.33).
- Future involvement for Japan in Arctic shipping: oil and natural gas projects in the Russian North (Yamal LNG project) (p.34).

**Parliament of Canada.** "[Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting its participation at the 12th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region.](#)" 2016. Accessed February 2, 2021.

- Mentions Japan’s plan to promote closer international scientific cooperation: International Arctic Research Center (Alaska); Canadian High Arctic Research Station (Nunavut), etc.
- Includes reports from Canada-Japan bilateral meeting and new opportunities for Japan and Canada in the Arctic.

**Study Group for the Future of the Arctic.** "Japan’s Future Priority Areas of Arctic Policy: Policy Elements to Be Considered on the Development of the Third Revised Basic Plan on Ocean Policy." *The Nippon Foundation, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. Ocean Policy Research Institute of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.*, November 2017, 1-15.

- Outlines Japan’s Arctic policy interests present and future
- *Enhancement and promotion of Arctic Research:* Strengthen research infrastructure (equipment) and enhance research initiatives (p.1, 4).
- *Protect Marine Environment of the Arctic Ocean:* Environmental change has the potential to affect Japan’s weather, fisheries etc. (p.1). Rising sea levels (p.6).
- *Promote Ocean Economy in the Arctic:* promote the “blue economy”(p.1). Interested in the arctic sea route, port facilities, commercial shipping opportunities between East Asia and Europe (p.8).

- *Safety and Security of the Arctic Ocean*: International law, rule of law, enhance maritime domain awareness (p.1, 11).
- *Promoting International Cooperation on the Arctic*: bilateral and multilateral dialogues and relationships between Arctic and non-Arctic states (p.1, 13).

**Tonami, Aki. "[Arctic Newcomers: Japan, South Korea and Singapore](#)." East Asia Forum: Economics, Politics, Public Policy in East Asia and the Pacific. February 15, 2014. Accessed January 22, 2021.**

- In securing future interests, without legal title to resources in the Arctic region, Japan considers it important to engage with Arctic states through research and development.
- Japan's strategy: to deliver and build its concrete research in the past to "get the credit" for involvement in the region.
- Business and industry as a key part of Japan's Arctic policy: NSR as a priority for the future.

**Tonami, Aki. "Chapter 3: Japan's Arctic Policy." In *Asian Foreign Policy in a Changing Arctic. The Diplomacy of Economy and Science at New Frontiers.*, 47-66. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.**

- This article outlines Japan's Arctic policy: looking towards future opportunities (p.47).
- Japan's liberal position in the Arctic focuses on multilateral solutions to global problems in the region (p.47).
- Japan is a significant importer of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Russia, notable interests include building pipelines to lower dependency of transporting LNG by sea (p.55).
- Japan's involvement in the Arctic, involves "planting flags" for the future as leader in research on climate change for the region (p.61).

**Tonami, Aki. "[Exporting the Developmental State: Japan's Economic Diplomacy in the Arctic](#)." *Third World Quarterly* 39, no. 6 (January 19, 2018): 1211-225. Accessed January 19, 2021.**

- Japan's science and technology is a catalyst for creating industry and supporting its economy. Uses science and tech to justify engagement in the Arctic, economic diplomacy (p.1212).
- Arctic Challenge for Sustainability (ArCS) project, showcase for Japanese policy makers and researchers in the Arctic region. The focus of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology concentrates around research and building a "polar scientist network" (p.1219).
- The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), involved in Japan's interest in developing new shipping routes and the necessary research involved, such as evaluating the viability of the NSR (p.1218-1219).

**Tonami, Aki. "[Future-Proofing Japan's Interests in the Arctic: Scientific Collaboration and a Search for Balance.](#)" *Asia Policy*, no. 18 (2014): 52-58. Accessed January 19, 2021.**

- Japan's engagement in the Arctic is understanding and protecting the natural environment: National Institute for Polar Research (NIPR) (p.52).
- Ocean Policy Research Foundation (OPRF), lobby group and think-tank for Japan shipping and manufacturing - conducts research projects, specifically looks at Northern Sea Route (NSR) (p.53).
- Japan's interest in joining the Arctic council: Not motivated by threats or economic interests at the time - Japan expects the potential for security issues to be minimal and research from the OPRF, found the benefits of the NSR were "fragile" and did not present financial/logistical advantages to current systems of commercial shipping (p.54).
- Why then? Japan joined the Arctic council for research and development, to advance national interests for the future, rather than for the present (p.54).
- Japan, as a maritime nation, can help Arctic countries (such as Canada) by contributing knowledge to develop/improve search and rescue efforts of the member states in the Arctic council (p.55).

**Tonami, Aki. "[Influencing the Imagined 'Polar Regions': The Politics of Japan's Arctic and Antarctic Policies.](#)" *Polar Record* 53, no. 5 (September 2017): 489-97. Accessed January 19, 2021.**

- Tools of science and tech diplomacy, purpose of using this strategy to promote its domestic economy (p.496).
- Science and tech is used to link domestic, industrial and foreign policy in Japan (p.494).
- Environmental diplomacy, Japan's liberal position in the Arctic - promotion of multilateral solutions (p.496).
- In order to gain influence in the Arctic, Japan engages tools of science and technological diplomacy, backed by political/domestic goals, (p.495).

**Tonami, Aki. "[The Arctic Policy of China and Japan: Multi-Layered Economic and Strategic Motivations.](#)" *The Polar Journal* 4, no. 1 (January 2, 2014): 105-26.**

- Japanese interests in the Arctic are tied to Japanese interests globally, mainly the protection of the global environment (p.115).
- Highlights Japan's perceived responsibility to protect the Arctic environment, as a member of the international community and as a country active in environmental protection globally (p.115).
- With Japan's earthquake and nuclear accidents, most nuclear plants were stopped. Now relying on liquefied natural gas, the cost of domestic electricity is rising - needs a better way to transport and access LNG (p.116).
- Japan's strategy: build on its previous research and tech achievements and keeping a low-profile position (p.122).

## Recommendations for Potential Collaboration between Canada and Japan on Arctic Security Issues

### 1. Convening a regular roundtable with academic and industry partners in both countries to enhance research and development capabilities, provide innovative solutions and address the infrastructure deficit in the Canadian Arctic.

- Japan's expertise in research, science and development of new technologies has the potential to strengthen Canadian interests in domain awareness, address impacts of climate change in the region and aid in resource exploration.
- Canada and Japan have an opportunity to work together to improve research and defense infrastructure including observation equipment, advanced sensors, satellites and icebreaker research vessels.<sup>8</sup>

### 2. Collaborating to counter the rise of China, as like-minded NATO allies.

- Japan and Canada share similar priorities in the Arctic, including the promotion of the rules-based international order and engaging in multilateral dialogues to prevent military tensions in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>9</sup>
- Working together to mitigate great power rivalries taking place in their respective regions, strengthening the process of international rule-making<sup>10</sup> and maintaining the "low-tension" environment in the Arctic region are both in the strategic interests of Canada and Japan.

### 3. Collaborating on the development of a framework for sustainable resource exploration and utilization of marine resources.

- Canada's priorities in the Arctic include creating a conservation economy, whereby natural resource extraction is done in such a way that respects and preserves indigenous livelihoods, with a focus on meeting local needs and restoring natural resources rather than depleting them.<sup>11</sup>
- In previous collaborations, at the Canadian High Arctic Research Centre (CHARS) in July 2019, Japanese scientists and researchers prioritized local engagement from residents and indigenous organizations in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.<sup>12</sup>
- Canadian priorities align with Japan's Arctic policy, concerned with establishing a conservation and management framework on sustainable use based on scientific evidence.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Study Group for the Future of the Arctic, "Japan's Future Priority Areas of Arctic Policy: Policy Elements to Be Considered on the Development of the Third Revised Basic Plan on Ocean Policy," *The Nippon Foundation, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. Ocean Policy Research Institute of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.*, November 2017, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Study Group for the Future of the Arctic, "Japan's Future Priority Areas of Arctic Policy," 11.

<sup>10</sup> Study Group for the Future of the Arctic, "Japan's Future Priority Areas of Arctic Policy," 1.

<sup>11</sup> Whitney Lauckenbauer et. al "Understanding the Future Arctic Security Environment," 60-61.

<sup>12</sup> Hiroyuki Enomoto, "[Canada-Japan Future Collaboration Workshop at CHARS](#)," ArCS Blog - Arctic Challenge for Sustainability Project, July 09, 2019, accessed January 19, 2021,

<sup>13</sup> *Outline of Japan's Arctic Policy*. Government of Japan.

- Together, Canada and Japan can share indigenous knowledge and scientific expertise to create a framework for sustainable resource exploration and use in the Canadian Arctic.





## Suggested Reading List

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Astrasheuskaya, Natassia. "[Japan Lines up Russian Arctic Oil Investment](#)." *Financial Times*, December 11, 2019. Accessed February 2, 2021.

Babin, Julie, and Frederic Lasserre. "[Asian States at the Arctic Council: Perceptions in Western States](#)." *Polar Geography* 42, no. 3 (February 12, 2019): 145-59. Accessed January 19, 2021.

Babin, Julie, and Fujio Ohnishi. "[Science Diplomacy in the Arctic - A Japanese Perspective](#)." 2020. Accessed February 2, 2021.

Bennett, Mia. "[North by Northeast: Toward an Asian-Arctic Region](#)." *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 55 (1) (2014): 71-93.

Chater, Andrew. "[What Is Japan's Arctic Interest?](#)" *The Polar Connection*. January 24, 2017. Accessed January 19, 2021.

Chu9art, Romain, Sakiko Hataya, Osamu Inagaki, and Lindsay Arthur. "[Assessing Japan's Arctic Engagement during the ArCS Project \(2015–2020\)](#)", *The Yearbook of Polar Law Online* 12, 1 (2021): 328-348.

Coates, Ken, and Carin Holroyd. "[Non-Arctic States and their Stake in Arctic Sustainability](#)." In *Governing Arctic Change: Global Perspectives*, (2017): 207-228.

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Lackenbauer, Whitney, and James Manicom. "[Canada's Northern Strategy and East Asian Interests in the Arctic](#)." *East Asia – Arctic Relations: Boundary, Security and International Politics*, December 2013, 1-17.

Lanteigne, Marc. "[Walking the walk: science diplomacy and identity-building in Asia-Arctic relations](#)." *Jindal Global Law Review* (8) (2017): 87-101.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. [Speech by H. E. Mr. Taro Kono, Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Arctic Circle 2018](#).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. [Speech by H. E. Ms. Miyoshi Mari, Ambassador of Japan in Charge of Arctic Affairs at the Arctic Circle 2019](#).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. "[Achieving Innovative Solutions for Arctic Challenges](#)."

Moe, Arlid, and Olav Schram Stokke. "[Asian Countries and Arctic Shipping: Policies, Interests and Footprints on Governance](#)." *Arctic Review on Law and Politics*10, no. 0 (January 01, 2019): 24-52.

Nakano, Jane. "[Japan to Invest in the Latest Russian LNG Project](#)." *Center for Strategic and International Studies*. July 12, 2019. Accessed February 02, 2021.

Nishimoto, Kentaro. "[The Rights and Interests of Japan in Regard to Arctic Shipping](#)." *Publications on Ocean Development*. Vol. 84. (2017).

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