

Call For Abstracts: The 11th China-Nordic Arctic Cooperation Symposium 2026

Date

February 1-2, 2026

Convened by

Norwegian Polar Institute

Location

Tromsø, Norway

Event by

China-Nordic Arctic Research Center (CNARC)

Language

English

Participants

Chinese and Nordic Institutions

Symposium Theme: Human Footprints in the Arctic – Remote and On-site

We cordially invite proposals for oral presentations at the 11th China-Nordic Arctic Cooperation Symposium. Proposals are welcome from researchers affiliated with Nordic and Chinese universities, research institutes, think tanks and organizations. All presentations will focus on Arctic-related issues, within one of the session topics:

- **Session I - Sustaining China-Nordic Cooperation in a Shifting Era**
- **Session II - Advancing Arctic Ocean Science Cooperation: From Knowledge to Action and Towards the 5th IPY**
- **Session III - Human footprints in the Arctic – impacts of pollutants and contaminants on the Arctic ecosystems**
- **Session IV - Sustainable Development of Arctic Shipping**

The 11th China-Nordic Arctic Cooperation Symposium is an international and multi-disciplinary event expected to draw researchers, industry representatives, policy-makers and community leaders to present, debate and discuss research findings and issues relating to growing Nordic-Asian Arctic cooperation.

Please note that the Symposium will be immediately **followed by the Arctic Frontiers Conference**, scheduled from February 2 to 5, 2026 in Tromsø, Norway.

Abstracts (250–400 words)

Deadline for Submission: Oct 31, 2025

Please submit abstracts electronically to:

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Background description for each session:

Session I –Sustaining China-Nordic Cooperation in a Shifting Era

Amid growing global complexity, the Arctic continues to serve as a critical region for international collaboration. China and the Nordic countries maintain aligned interests in areas such as scientific research, sustainable development, and climate resilience. A shared dedication to climate science and green development offers a stabilizing foundation that may further enhance China-Nordic Arctic cooperation. In this context, the China-Nordic Arctic Research Center plays a vital role as a knowledge platform that facilitates joint research and dialogue. By promoting academic exchange and collaborative knowledge production, it helps strengthen mutual trust, understanding and international research collaboration.

Key discussion points will include:

- How can the China-Nordic Arctic Research Center (CNARC) be optimally utilized to enhance cooperation and strengthen trust among member research institutions?
- What are the key priorities and existing foundations for fostering future collaboration between Chinese and Nordic research institutions working on Arctic issues?

Session II –Advancing Arctic Ocean Science Cooperation: From Knowledge to Action and Towards the 5th IPY

The Arctic Ocean is undergoing an unprecedented transformation, rapidly shifting from a perennial ice-covered state to a seasonally open ocean. This dramatic change has created new opportunities—and urgent needs—for scientific exploration, shared knowledge and international collaboration. This session aims to foster dialogue on enhancing cooperative mechanisms, align scientific agendas, and develop a coherent, action-oriented roadmap for Arctic Ocean science—ensuring that research outcomes contribute to both global understanding and substantial knowledge contributions in the lead-up to IPY2032–2033.

Key discussion points will include:

- Presenting and synthesizing major findings from recent multinational research cruises and observing platforms, including contributions from research facilities from Ny-Ålesund and the China-Iceland Arctic Science Observatory (CIAO).
- Identifying key research priorities for the next decade in light of rapid ecological transitions and new policy frameworks, including the Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement (CAOFA) and the BBNJ Agreement.
- Strategizing and aligning international efforts in preparation for the 5th International Polar Year (IPY) 2032–2033.

Session III –Human footprints in the Arctic – impacts of pollutants and contaminants on the Arctic ecosystems

The Arctic Ocean and its surrounding regions are undergoing rapid changes due to global warming and intensified human activity. Growing anthropogenic activity in the Arctic may result in increase in local emissions of chemical, black carbon, noise and light pollution as well as disturbance of local wildlife impacting the environment and Arctic ecosystems. Arctic ecosystems are also influenced by global activities. The Arctic is the fastest warming region in the world and long-range atmospheric and oceanic transport bring chemical pollutants, black carbon and plastic from industrialized areas into remote and “pristine” Arctic regions. Further, rising

temperatures, sea ice loss, and ecosystem changes also reshape the distribution of contaminants within the Arctic regions. Knowledge and cooperation about these changes in the Arctic are necessary contributions in shaping international environmental policies, risk assessment frameworks, and mitigation strategies.

Key discussion points will include:

- Do we have necessary monitoring programs for pollutants in the Arctic? How can we enhance monitoring through international collaboration and coordination?
- What are the impacts of pollutants and contaminants on the Arctic ecosystems?
- How can we raise awareness on the serious implications of pollution in the Arctic and contribute to both national actions and international conventions?

Session IV –Sustainable Development of Arctic Shipping

Over the past four decades, Arctic sea ice extent in September has declined at an average rate of 12% per decade, leading to extended navigable windows in Arctic waters. Whereas international transits between the Pacific and Western Europe almost ceased after Ukraine crisis in 2022, growing transports between Russian European ports and China, particularly of oil but also general cargo, have taken place in later years. In September 2025, a Chinese private shipping company completed the first transit voyage connecting Chinese and West European ports through the Arctic routes since 2022. This shift has prompted various actors to take a new look at the Arctic routes as an alternative to traditional maritime corridors. For instance, South Korea has established an Arctic shipping task force, plans to restart trial voyages, and is formulating mid- to long-term strategies for Arctic navigation. Despite growing commercial interest, significant challenges remain. Ballast water management and emissions to air continue to pose environmental risks. There is a persistent need to enhance the safety of maritime operations, as well as questions regarding what constitutes sufficient emergency preparedness and SAR capacity in the Arctic region, especially in light of increasing maritime activity. Enforcement of the Polar Code and sufficient insurance coverage is essential. Russia's policies and regulations for shipping through the NSR remain a key issue.

Key discussion points will include:

- How should we assess the economic prospects of Arctic transit shipping in the coming years? What are the main risk factors from the shipping industry's perspective?
- What are the most pressing environmental challenges facing Arctic shipping today?
- Are emerging green shipping technologies capable of reducing shipping's environmental footprint, and could the establishment of green shipping corridors offer a viable pathway forward?
- How can we ensure that Arctic expedition tourism is sustainable and safe? Is there sufficient rescue capacity in case of accidents, or should development be restrained?