

AY 2017

year in review

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2016

October

5-6th – The Arctic Council’s Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) and Indigenous Permanent Participant organizations (PPs) meet in [Portland, Maine](#) to discuss the Council’s ongoing work and future plans to address environmental issues and promote sustainable development in the Arctic. The United States is chairing the Arctic Council until May 2017.

28th – [The 2016 Arctic Yearbook is launched](#) at the Canadian Department of Global Affairs as part of the celebrations marking the twentieth anniversary of the Ottawa Declaration, the founding document of the Arctic Council established in 1996. AY2016 is themed *The Arctic Council: 20 Years of Regional Cooperation & Policy Shaping*.

November

2nd – [China appoints Mr. Gao Feng](#) as the first *Special Representative for Arctic Affairs* of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Senior Arctic Official to the Arctic Council.

25th – The Arctic Resilience Report is [launched](#).

December

2nd – Russia releases its [new foreign policy strategy](#) with a focus on the Northern Sea Route, the delineation of the continental shelf (OCS) and the role of international law.

6th – UArctic’s *Northern Nursing Education Network* publishes a special collection issue on [“Nursing Education in the Circumpolar North.”](#)

20th – Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and President Barack Obama announce the [United-States-Canada Joint Arctic Leaders’ Statement](#). In this declaration, President Obama designates the vast majority of the U.S. federal Arctic waters in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas as indefinitely off limits to offshore oil and gas leasing. Prime Minister Trudeau also designates a moratorium on oil and gas licensing in the Canadian Arctic waters, however to be reviewed every five years through scientific reassessments.

31st – Kick-off celebrations begin in Helsinki as Finland prepares to mark its [100 years of independence](#).

2017

January

1st – The *International Code of Safety for Ships Operating in Polar Waters* (the [IMO Polar Code](#)) enters into force. 9th – 2016 is confirmed as [the warmest year on the planet](#) since record-keeping began, close to a record breaking 1.50C warming.

16th – Hundreds of [United States Marines land in Norway’s Arctic](#) for a six month deployment, irking Russian officials.

2017

January

25th – U.S. Special Representative for the Arctic, Admiral Robert Papp, [steps down](#) as the State Department's top Arctic diplomat. Papp joins a Washington-based shipbuilding company as lobbyist.

February

6th – Celebrations begin in Trondheim, Norway, to mark the [100th anniversary of the Sami People's first congress](#) of 1917.

23rd – The [Svalbard Global Seed Vault](#) (often called the 'doomsday' vault) located in Longyearbyen (Norway) receives 50,000 new samples from seed collections around the world. The vault is the world's largest repository built to safeguard against wars or natural disasters.

March

20th – A Nunavik teacher from the Kativik School Board, Maggie MacDonnel, wins the \$1 million [Global Teacher Prize](#) for her work to encourage young Inuit to return to school by engaging them in projects that interests them.

23rd – The leaders from the eight coast guards of the [Arctic Coast Guard Forum sign a joint statement](#) adopting doctrine, tactics, procedures, and information-sharing protocols for emergency maritime response and Arctic operations. The Chairmanship for the forum is transferred from the U.S. Coast Guard to the Finnish Border Guard.

28-30th – The [Circumpolar Inuit Economic Summit](#) is held in Anchorage, Alaska.

28th – The five coastal Arctic states joined by China, the EU, Japan and Republic of Korea meet on Central Arctic Ocean fisheries, but no agreements are reached and negotiations continue.

31st – The [Arctic Science Summit Week 2017](#) begins in Prague.

April

11th – The Canadian province of Québec includes the Arctic region in its new 10-year [International Policy](#).

18th – Russia unveils its [Arctic Trefoil base](#) in Franz Josef Land, a Russian archipelago in the Barents Sea.

21st – Norway presents a [new Arctic strategy](#).

27th – U.S. President Donald Trump signs an [executive order](#) aimed at lifting former President Obama's indefinite ban on Arctic drilling.

28th – Canada's Special Representative for Arctic Leadership, Mary Simon, releases her report for a [New Shared Arctic Leadership Model](#) that puts emphasis on establishing Indigenous Protected Areas, funding for renewable energy, and efficiency alternatives to diesel fuels.

May

8-14th – The [Week of the Arctic](#) is held in Fairbanks, Alaska, preceding the Arctic Council ministerial meeting that begins the same week. The events include: [Arctic Interchange](#), the [Arctic Broadband Forum](#), and the [North by North](#) on Arctic innovation, resilience and sustainability.

2017

- May**
- 11th – The [10th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting](#) is held in Fairbanks, Alaska. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson chairs the meeting, becoming the first Republican holding that position to attend an Arctic Council Ministerial. **Key deliverables from the U.S. Chairmanship:** the *Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation* is signed, becoming the 3rd legally binding agreement signed under the auspices of the Arctic Council; the release of the *Snow, Water, Ice & Permafrost in the Arctic* (SWIPA); the *Telecommunications Infrastructure in the Arctic Assessment*; the *Circumpolar Local Environmental Observer Network* (CLEO).
 - 11th – Finland takes over the chairmanship of the Arctic Council until 2019 with an agenda themed [Exploring Common Solutions](#).
 - 12th – Russia announces that it is [slashing funding](#) for activities under the new Russian Arctic Programme by 75%.
 - 17th – Eleven circumpolar mayors sign [The Declaration of Arctic Mayors](#).
 - 17th – The [Álgu Fund](#) for indigenous peoples is created.
- June**
- 1st – President Donald Trump announces that he is [withdrawing the United States from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change](#), joining Syria and Nicaragua as the only nations that are not part of this treaty. Many officials from the circumpolar Arctic states [lambast Trump](#) for his decision to pull out.
 - 1st – [Calotte Academy 2017](#) begins in Rovaniemi, Finland. This year's theme is *Perceptions of the Arctic: Rich or Scarce, Mass-scale or Traditional, Conflict or Cooperation*.
 - 8-12th – Ninth [International Congress of Arctic Social Science](#) (ICASS IX) held in Umeå, Sweden.
 - 27th – France appoints its new [Ambassador for Arctic & Antarctic negotiations](#), Ségolène Royal, former presidential candidate in the 2007 French election and former Minister of Ecology, Sustainable Development, and Energy. The position, created in 2009 by former President Nicolas Sarkozy, was formerly occupied by Michel Rocard, French Prime-Minister from 1988 to 1991.
- July**
- 7th – The UN's International Maritime Organization (IMO) announces that it will begin the process of developing rules in [mitigating the risk of use of heavy fuel oil \(HFO\)](#) for ships operating in Arctic waters.
 - 29th – The Finnish icebreaker *MSV Nordica* sets a record for [the earliest transit](#) in the Northwest Passage.
- August**
- 1st – Russia's new Arctic icebreaker-tanker *Christophe de Margerie* makes [first liquefied natural gas voyage](#) from Norway to South Korea.
 - 2nd – 10 years ago today, a [Russian titanium flag](#) was planted on the Arctic Ocean seabed at the geographical North Pole.
 - 16th – Norwegian explorer Roald Admundsen's ship, *Maud*, [begins her returns to Norway](#) where she was built in 1917. *Maud* sank in Nunavut nearly 90 years ago.

September

5-6th – The Arctic Coast Guard Forum holds its [first operative exercise](#) in Iceland, *Arctic Guardian 2017*. Maritime and air assets are provided by Denmark, Canada, Norway, Iceland, and the U.S. The three other Arctic Council states, Finland, Sweden and Russia, participate as observers.

6th – China's *Xue Long* (*Snow Dragon*) research vessels completes [its two-week transit through the Canadian Northwest Passage](#) from the Bering Strait to Lancaster Sound. This is China's first ever voyage through these waters, part of an 83-day research mission circumnavigating the Arctic. This is *Xue Long*'s eight Arctic expedition, but the first sailing the Arctic rim.

18-20th – The 2017 [Arctic Energy Summit](#) is held in Helsinki, Finland.

19th – The Arctic Economic Council welcomes [three new members](#) representing different parts of the Arctic business community.

20th – The luxury cruise liner [Crystal Serenity](#) completes its second Northwest Passage voyage. A smaller vessel, the polar-class *Crystal Endeavor*, will take over from *Serenity* at a future date.

October

13-15th – The 5th [Arctic Circle Assembly](#) is held in Reykjavik, Iceland.

14th – The Arctic Yearbook 2017 is launched at the fifth *Arctic Circle Assembly* in Reykjavik, Iceland. AY 2017 is themed *Innovation & Change in the Arctic: Policy, Society, ? the Environment..*

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