

### **Some scientific conclusions of the ACCESS project:**

An ongoing reduction of sea ice area and volume in the Arctic ocean is caused by the warmer winters and longer summers most likely resulting from climate change.

The polar ice caps are expected to shrink further in the next 30 years and the navigation season will be extended, but still some areas near the coast, like narrow gateways, may be blocked for shipping.

Great investments in infrastructure will be necessary in the next few decades in order to provide the services necessary for human activities in the area and to deal with emergencies.

The Polar Code was recently agreed and is expected to be ratified and transposed to national legislation by 168 member states. It remains to be seen how it will be enforced in international waters. The current Polar Code does not regulate pollution emissions to the atmosphere.

Currently, the effect of Arctic ship emissions on global warming is not significant, but they are increasing with increasing maritime traffic and are expected to grow further in the future, so the effect on air quality in the area must be taken into account.

The general noise caused by shipping is expected to increase and it will be an important source of noise pollution in the coming decades. Steps must therefore be taken to mitigate it.

A great deal of technology is available to develop future activities in the Arctic, but it is currently insufficient to deal with the future challenges, such as to ensure evacuation in case of emergency or adequate SAR facilities.

The transfer of fishing and aquaculture facilities northward can be expected, but the governance and management of fisheries will be the dominant factor to influence the fisheries, not the climate change.

The scientists summarize that, instead of a single regulation or treaty for the whole Arctic, they rather expect a range of specific regulations.

**The final conclusions of the ACCESS project will be delivered to the European Commission in the coming weeks, and they will be approved and made public within two months.**