



News Release

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NBR and Sasakawa USA launch premier interactive maritime website

MAP portal displays visual analysis of disputes, trends, and issues

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Today, the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) and Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA officially launch the Maritime Awareness Project (MAP), a comprehensive interactive and analytical website dedicated to expert analysis of maritime security issues. The MAP initiative is jointly led by Admiral (ret.) [Dennis Blair](#) (Sasakawa USA), Dr. [Richard Ellings](#) (NBR), and [Dr. M. Taylor Fravel](#) (MIT) in collaboration with a diverse International Expert Panel made up of leading maritime experts throughout the world.

Recent maritime disputes at sea and in the diplomatic arena have become intractable features of the global security landscape. Despite increasing confrontations in the East and South China Seas, in particular, little progress has been made in understanding the specifics of each individual maritime dispute, possible solutions, and the complex nature of a host of other issues in the maritime domain. To address this problem, the MAP portal combines exciting, interactive mapping technology with premier analyses from the world's greatest maritime experts from the portal's International Expert Panel (IEP) to serve as the authoritative resource on maritime issues.

“This interactive website is the first step towards a resource to understand many complex maritime issues around the globe,” Blair said. “It will serve scholars, reporters, policymakers, and the interested public, increasing understanding and stimulating research and creative thinking on solutions to competing interests in the South China Sea and beyond.”

[Click here to access the Maritime Awareness Project](#)

The MAP portal is launching today starting at 1 p.m. at a public event in Washington, D.C. with an initial focus on the Asia-Pacific region. During today's event, the leadership of MAP and a number of IEP members will gather to both demonstrate the web portal and engage in fruitful discussions on pressing maritime issues in the Asia-Pacific region. Vice Admiral Robert L. Thomas, Jr. (Director, Navy Staff, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations) will also provide a keynote address.

[Click here to watch a livestream of the MAP launch event](#)

The MAP portal features an interactive map that allows users to navigate geographic data on disputes, displaying claim lines, security and economic trends, resource distributions, incidents at sea, and much more. The portal also hosts detailed historical explanations of maritime disputes and regularly updated analyses and resources written by leading maritime experts.

“Peace, prosperity, and other essential values are at stake in the maritime domain,” said Dr. Ellings. “The world’s key decision makers need the best possible knowledge and strategic analysis, and this project combines exciting, premier, interactive web technology—extraordinary maps and info—with groundbreaking analyses from leading experts. The project will determine the facts in the maritime areas and explain their implications for the interests of the countries involved and, more broadly, for the prospects for international relations.”

The portal offers visitors a comprehensive tool to discover the full complexities of the maritime domain. While the launch focuses exclusively on the Asia-Pacific region, over time MAP will expand its analysis to other bodies of water throughout the world.

“Maritime disputes are becoming an increasingly common source of conflict among states,” said Dr. Fravel. “The Maritime Awareness Project will help to illuminate the complexity of these disputes and their consequences for the international community.”

MAP Leadership

- Admiral Dennis Blair, USN (Ret.), *Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA*
- Dr. Richard Ellings, *The National Bureau of Asian Research*
- Dr. M. Taylor Fravel, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

MAP International Expert Panel

- Dr. Rommel Banlaoi, *Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research*
- Dr. Ja Ian Chong, *National University of Singapore*
- Mr. Mikal Herberg, *The National Bureau of Asian Research*
- Dr. Nong Hong, *Institute for China-America Studies*
- Dr. James Kraska, *Naval War College*
- Dr. Tabitha Mallory, *The National Bureau of Asian Research*
- Mr. James Manicom, *Independent scholar*
- Mr. Rory Medcalf, *Australian National University; Lowy Institute for International Policy*
- Dr. Shafiah Muhibat, *Center for Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia*
- Dr. Justin Nankivell, *Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies*
- Ms. Kerry Lynn Nankivell, *Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies*
- Dr. Hong Thao Nguyen, *Vietnam National University*
- Dr. Ryo Sahashi, *Japan Center for International Exchange*
- Dr. Ian Storey, *ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute*

MAP Project Team

- Jeffrey Hornung, *Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA*
- Karolos Karnikis, *The National Bureau of Asian Research*
- Tiffany Ma, *The National Bureau of Asian Research*
- Roy Kamphausen, *The National Bureau of Asian Research*

About The National Bureau of Asian Research

Founded in 1989 with a major grant from the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, NBR is an independent, nonpartisan research institution committed to informing and strengthening U.S. policy toward the Asia-Pacific. Drawing upon an extensive network of the world's leading specialists, NBR bridges the academic, business, and policy arena.

About Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA

Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA is an independent, American, non-profit, non-partisan institution devoted to research, analysis, and better understanding of the U.S.-Japan relationship. Through research and education programs, Sasakawa USA facilitates people-to-people exchange and dialogue between American and Japanese policymakers, influential citizens, and the broader public.

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