Chinese Maritime Strategy

- History
- Geography
- Economics
- Individuals
- Seapower
“A maritime strategy is an important constituent of a nation’s overall strategy ... The basic elements of a maritime strategy are formed by maritime geographic conditions, the national economy’s demands on the seas, the national security’s demands on the seas, the national political level’s demands on the seas, the national security decision-making level’s attention to the seas...”
“Maritime hard power and the military constitute only one component [of maritime competition]. Other methods such as diplomacy and maritime economics are more and more promising. The worldwide rankings of maritime power must consider such nonmilitary inputs as the development level of the maritime economy, diplomatic power, and the skilled use of international law.”
I. History
“But with the Opium War of 1840, China was plunged into the darkness of domestic turmoil and foreign aggression; its people, ravaged by war, saw their homeland torn apart and lived in poverty and despair.”
Admiral Wu Shengli
Former Commander of PLA Navy
“In China's modern history, imperialists and colonists initiated more than 470 invasions of China, including 84 large ones, from the sea. The Chinese nation, which has suffered humiliation to the fullest, realized that the thin awareness of the maritime rights caused the decline of sea defense in modern history…”
II. Geography
First Island Chain

第一岛链
强敌 = Powerful Adversary
III. Economics
第一岛链主要海峡示意图（图中红色线为航道走向）
“Our nation is an oceanic nation that owns more than 18,000 kilometers of oceanic coast line, more than 6,500 islands that are larger than 500 square meters, more than 3 million square kilometers of oceanic area with sovereignty and jurisdiction, and international exclusive exploitation right for 75,000 square kilometers at the bottom of the Pacific.”
IV. Individuals
邓小平同志当面嘱托他
V. Seapower
2017 Pentagon Report

“The PLAN is the largest navy in Asia, with more than 300 surface ships, submarines, amphibious ships, and patrol craft. It is also an increasingly technologically advanced and flexible force”
## China’s Surface Fleet Leaps Forward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Service</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>Expected ‘18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destroyers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frigates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corvettes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Changing Minds

“When one counts the number and variety of warships that the PLAN is likely to have in commission by around 2020, China will have both the largest navy in the world (by combatant, underway replenishment, and submarine ship count) and the second most capable ‘far seas’ navy in the world.”

### A Projection to 2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Inventory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destroyers</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frigates</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corvettes</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missile Patrol Craft</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphibious Ships</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine-warfare Ships</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Auxiliaries</td>
<td>65+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Surface Combatants</strong></td>
<td><strong>432+</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nonmilitary Maritime Power

- China is pursuing “the largest MLE [maritime law enforcement] modernization effort in Asia.”

- China’s MLE fleet “is likely to increase in size by 25 percent and is larger than that of all of the other claimants combined.”
Regional Comparisons

China
- 95 X Large
- 110 X Small
- 205

Japan
- 53 X Large
- 25 X Small
- 78

Vietnam
- 5 X Large
- 50 X Small
- 55

Indonesia
- 3 X Large
- 5 X Small
- 8

Malaysia
- 2 X Large
- 0 X Small
- 2

Philippines
- 0 X Large
- 4 X Small
- 4

* A number of older WAGORs (non-naval oceanographic research ships) used as patrol ships were included.

* Navy AFT (stores ship) and AF (combat stores ship) vessels are not included.

* This includes WPCs (non-naval patrol craft) and WAIIs non-naval intelligence trawler.

* For the purposes of this graphic, Large vessels are greater than 1,000 tons; Small vessels are between 500–1,000 tons.
Some Judgments

• China attaches very high value to its maritime interests and goals

• China’s turn to the seas will be a permanent factor in Asian politics

• Maritime Asia will get ever more competitive in military/non-military terms

• Getting reacquainted with risk