
RIVER TRADE ROUTE TO ARCTIC PORTS GETTING NEW LOOK FROM CHINA, RUSSIA AND KAZAKHSTAN

-

02.09.2026

Eurasianet (01.09.2026)

China, Russia and Kazakhstan are mulling the development of a new northern trade route which would use the Irtysh and Ob rivers to open access for the export of Chinese goods from Russian Arctic ports at the base of the Yamal Peninsula.

Trade along the Ob-Irtysh system reached an estimated peak of 9 million tons annually in the 1970s before crashing following the Soviet Unions collapse in 1991. Kazakhstan and Russia in recent years have floated the idea of reviving the route, but the concept gained momentum only recently, after China signaled its interest.

The plan offers potential economic and geopolitical advantages for all involved. But a variety of factors, some related to global warming, others to competing needs for the rivers waters, create substantial obstacles to the trade routes realization.

[Click for more](#)

Kaynak/Source: