

The Arctic: A New Frontier

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The Arctic is a new frontier in science, transportation, natural resources, and international politics. In particular, the Arctic is a treasure house of natural science. There are many fascinating phenomena that need intense, explorative research, such as the aurora, noctilucent clouds, the ozone hole, Arctic oscillation, sea ice, glaciers, tundra, and permafrost.

The Arctic is sensitive to climate change and environmental changes, presenting an ideal region for examining future changes.

As the Arctic sea ice seems to be receding, the Northeast Passage sea route may become operable in the future, and the exploration of oil and natural gas may begin soon. Unlike the Antarctic continent, there is so far no international treaty on territorial and resource claims yet, though many countries aside Japan are active on this issue.

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