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Powered by LNG, Russian Tanker Sails Arctic Route to China

Russian maritime shipping company Sovcomflot says this the first shipment of its kind.

By The Barents Observer

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The 250-meter long Korolev Prospect tanker set out from Murmansk fully loaded with oil on August 28. Seven days into its eastbound course, it reached Cape Dezhnev in the Bering Strait.

The tanker is expected to arrive in a Chinese port by Sept. 14.

It is the first time that an LNG-powered tanker will transit across the Northern Sea Route, Russian maritime shipping company Sovcomflot said.

"Favorable ice conditions and weather along the whole route allowed the vessel to proceed without icebreaker escort," said the ship captain Oleg Shishkin. There have been no

encounters with icebergs, he added.

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The tanker chose a new route north of the New Siberian Islands and the Wrangle Island. "We assume that this new route will be in high demand for commercial tanker traffic in the eastern direction," Shishkin said.

Sovcomflot has a fleet of six tankers powered by LNG and another five are under construction. The Korolev Prospect was included in the fleet in February this year. The use of LNG is believed to reduce carbon emissions by 30% compared with conventional tankers.

The ship is in the 1A/1B ice class, which means that it will have to rely on icebreaker assistance in difficult ice conditions.

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