

# Arctic Oil and Gas

An Interview with **Captain David Snider**, CEO and Principal Consultant, **Martech Polar Consulting Ltd**, on Arctic Oil and Gas

## An interview with Captian David Snider on Arctic Oil and Gas

The region above the Arctic Circle is estimated to account for as much as 25% of the world's undiscovered but recoverable oil and gas reserves. Infrastructure, search and rescue, geo-politics and regulatory authorities are just a few of the many elements that must be considered when operating Arctic Oil & Gas assets. This article seeks to highlight a few of these key areas.

In this report we speak with **Captain David Snider**, CEO and Principal Consultant at **Martech Polar Consulting Ltd**, about Arctic Oil and Gas.

We hope you find it interesting!



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## About David



Captain David (Duke) Snider is CEO and Principal Consultant of Martech Polar Consulting Ltd, a privately owned company that provides global ice pilotage and navigation services.

Duke is an ice pilot and ice navigator with extensive Arctic and ice navigation experience in different waters. He is a Master Mariner with 27 years at sea, operating vessels in a variety of ice regimes in polar regions, the Baltic, Great Lakes and Eastern North American Waters.

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For more information on Martech Polar Consulting Ltd, visit [www.martechpolar.com](http://www.martechpolar.com)



**Martech Polar**  
Ice Pilotage and Polar Navigation

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## Arctic Oil and Gas Briefing: 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014

Duke's report provides a taster for the Arctic Oil and Gas Briefing on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in London, which will analyse Arctic Oil and Gas prospects.

The Briefing will look at Norway as a case study and how you can overcome Arctic specific barriers in order to engage in E&P activities.

The Arctic Circle has huge potential for undiscovered but recoverable oil and gas reserves. Understanding this area is key to identifying lucrative offshore oil and gas opportunities in the Arctic.



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## 1. Duke, can you please tell us a bit about your role at Martech Polar Consulting Ltd and how this fits into the Arctic E&P space

Martech Polar provides seagoing Ice Navigation support through provision of experienced and knowledgeable onboard Ice Navigators as well as pre-operation ice navigation/routing feasibility studies. Given my many years of ice navigation in the Arctic, Baltic and East Coast of North America, onboard icebreakers and icebreaker tankers (OBO), and work with many tanker and bulk carrier operators in examining polar shipping prospects I can assure clients that the safety of any envisioned polar voyage will be at the forefront of any work we do. This is due to both the experience of the company and in developing company and ship specific Safety Management Procedures.

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## 2. Can you give us a brief overview of E&P activity in the Arctic currently

The primary international focus in recent years has been in the Russian and Norwegian Arctic. However, exploration work in Greenlandic waters has been quietly progressing over the last few years and American exploration off Alaska has been stop and go. Though more quiet in the last few years, Canada is expected to see a resurgence of activity given commodity prices and the willingness of the present government to support Arctic activity in line with its Northern Vision.

## 3. The Arctic is a large region, how do Oil and Gas operations in America differ to European operations, if at all?

At present, Russia is using Arctic resources as a tremendous boost in export value and supports activities to explore and exploit oil and gas. Norway is beginning to see the end of more southern producing fields so they are beginning to look further north. North America is struggling with balancing environmental protection and supporting E&P activities. Given very strenuous and complex regulatory requirements in both Canada and United States, from my perspective it appears to be less inviting than Russian gusto and even less focused than Norwegian support.

#### 4. What are your thoughts on current Global Warming fears in relation to the Arctic

I don't look at Global Warming Fears, I look at Global Climate Change effects. There is no doubt that GCC is occurring. Hidden amongst the hype however are some facts about cyclical change that we have been aware of long before the beginning of satellite imagery that has prompted the more recent media clamour. For instance, those experienced in polar ice navigation have anecdotally tracked two more or less constant cycles, one of approximately 11 years and another of approximately 50 years in amongst the annual variabilities that occur. Depending on how one tracks those two cycles, it is apparent that the last few years of "least ice" have corresponded to confluence of these two cycles "good" or "least" ice years and that some increase in ice is likely in the coming decade. HOWEVER, on top of that there certainly does appear to be a very gradual reduction in overall Arctic ice coverage since satellite data began to be analyzed in the 1970s. The annual "navigation season", that summer period when Arctic shipping is likely to encounter the least ice, is gradually growing in length, by days, not weeks however (conversely, Antarctic ice coverage is increasing). Ice strengthened and icebreaking ships will still be required to ensure safe voyages for decades to come however. Global Climate Change is real and it is affecting Polar ice coverage, but what is uncertain is the veracity or interpretation of the various climate models in long term predications. Yes we will experience less ice, but how much less is the question.

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## 5. How does the diverse Arctic climate affect E&P operations in the region?

The presence or likelihood of presence of ice is the primary concern. After that the extreme cold temperatures during winter. Even the remote chance of encountering ice requires ships designed and built to withstand impact, while extreme cold operations demand changes in training and work habits of crews.

## 6. In your view what do the next ten years hold for Arctic Oil and Gas developments?

As commodity prices continue to climb, the very high cost of designing and building Arctic ice capable exploration, exploitation and transportation platforms and shipping with continue and result in an increase in overall activity. Present North American regulatory hurdles will be met and overcome and a resurgence of Arctic Oil and Gas activity will occur there.

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## 7. What are your top five tips for successfully engaging in Arctic Oil and Gas operations?

1. NEVER underestimate the effects of ice
2. Design and build suitably ice capable ships and platforms
3. Ensure crews and personnel are suitably EXPERIENCED and trained to deal with ice and extreme cold (don't assume a simple familiarization course is sufficient)
4. Remember that the Arctic is at the extreme end of logistics and SAR assistance, as polar infrastructure remains negligible at best
5. Properly equip ships and crews for Arctic survival and day to day work personal protective equipment for extreme cold

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## We'd love to meet you too...

We're hosting our Arctic Oil and Gas on 18<sup>th</sup> September in London, and we would love to see you there.

This one-day, in-depth event explores the opportunities within the Arctic for Oil and Gas exploration, identifying key areas and overcoming Arctic specific barriers.

Our smaller, more intimate Briefings of approximately 35-50 attendees have been specifically created to foster discussion and make sure you have time to meet and network with both our expert speakers and delegates alike.

### Here are three reasons why you should attend:

1. Understand current **operating procedures** and **geopolitical considerations** in the Arctic
2. Alleviate huge **CAPEX costs** through **joint ventures**
3. Put theory into practice with advice from **Norway on their Arctic success**

Interested in attending? Contact me, Yolanda, on +44 207 608 7081 or [yolanda.king@terrapinn.com](mailto:yolanda.king@terrapinn.com).  
or visit our website for more information

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# We'd love to hear your views on all of this...

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