

## Maritime nuclear energy: opportunities and challenges

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June 27, 2023 Andreas Dracoulis, Jack Spence

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PRACTICES Shipping

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[Andreas Dracoulis](#) and [Jack Spence](#) are featured in the March/April 2023 edition of the Nuclear Institute's journal, *Nuclear Future*, looking at the opportunities and challenges of using nuclear power in the maritime industry.

Nuclear-powered propulsion in commercial vessels has been in contemplation and use since the time that nuclear fission was developed as a power source. In 1959 the first nuclear-powered merchant ship, the NS Savannah, was launched in the US and for a short period until 1970 operated as a demonstration vessel. However, the development of nuclear-powered merchant ships, leaving aside Russia's ice-breaking vessels, has not progressed since the early demonstration projects.

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