



Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

## STUDIES

# Tightening the Chain: Implementing a Strategy of Maritime Pressure in the Western Pacific

May 23, 2019 | **Thomas G. Mahnken, Travis Sharp, Billy Fabian , Peter Kouretsos**

Resources: Strategy & Policy

In this report, the CSBA team describes the strategy, operational concepts, and resource investments needed to counter Chinese aggression in the Western Pacific. The report is the latest CSBA effort to describe the operational concepts the United States and its allies will need if they are to compete and win in an era of great power competition.

In this report, the authors propose a strategy of maritime pressure to erode the Chinese leadership's confidence in its ability to present the United States and its allies with a fait accompli. The strategy, implemented in a new operational concept dubbed "Inside-Out," entails fielding precision-strike networks - particularly land-based anti-ship and anti-air capabilities - along the First Island Chain inside China's anti-access/area denial network, supported by air and naval forces outside it. The report goes beyond previous studies by providing an in-depth analysis of the costs required to implement the strategy and by assessing potential Chinese responses to the strategy.