

Kremlin to Consider U.S. Proposal on Antarctic Reserve

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia will consider the United States' proposal to create a conservation zone in the Ross Sea in the Antarctic, said Alexander Savelyev, head of the Federal Fisheries Agency's public relations department, Prime reported.

The U.S. State Department said earlier this week that U.S. authorities had sent the proposal to the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources.

"Russia is prepared to consider this initiative and take part in this work," Savelyev said. He added that further research on the issue was necessary.

The initiative affects the country's economic interests, since Russian fishermen catch fish of the *Dissostichus* genus, which belongs to the family of cod icefishes, or nothothens, in the Ross Sea, he said.

But such catches are small, and a ban on fishing in the area would not cause much damage to fishermen, he said.

To create a conservation zone, an international treaty should be negotiated, he said.

"A treaty is not being discussed yet but, if it is proposed, Russia is ready to join it," he said. "There are currently a number of areas in the world's oceans whose status is regulated by conventions, and Russia has always participated in all these conventions."

The United States' proposal will be considered at the next meeting of the commission, which is scheduled to be held in Australia in October. Meanwhile, New Zealand has suggested authorizing fishing in a part of the Ross Sea.

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