

Putin Eases Environmental Concerns Over South Stream

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The South Stream pipeline is meant to be completed by late 2015, and commercial deliveries are set to start early the following year. **Mikhail Metzel**

President Vladimir Putin on Friday sought to allay environmental concerns about the subsea South Stream gas pipeline at a welding ceremony in Anapa.

"I can assure members of the project that it will be carried out to the most rigorous and modern environmental standards," Putin told delegations from several European countries who attended the symbolic welding, RIA-Novosti reported.

Putin promised to incorporate a system of sensors connected to a satellite monitoring system, similar to one already in use on the Nord Stream pipeline beneath the Baltic Sea, to ensure environmental safety.

South Stream will carry gas beneath the Black Sea to Bulgaria. The main pipeline will continue

through Serbia, Hungary and Slovenia to terminals in Austria and northern Italy. Spurs will carry gas to Croatia, Bosnia and Greece. The first joints in the South Stream gas pipeline were welded together Friday.

While the welding of the first joints marks the symbolic beginning of construction, the 16 billion euro (\$20.7 billion) project will really get under way in 2014, when subsea pipe laying is scheduled to begin.

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