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Russia May Ban Foreign Ships From Fishing In Its Waters

By The Moscow Times

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Fishing vessels built or modernized in foreign shipyards may be banned from fishing in Russia's waters.

Fishing vessels built or modernized in foreign shipyards and uncleared by Russian customs authorities may be banned from fishing in Russia's waters, providing a potential boost for the domestic shipbuilding sector.

The fishing regulatory authority, Rosrybolovstvo, is preparing legislative amendments that could introduce the measure from 2019, newspaper Kommersant reported Friday, citing a copy of the plan.

The move comes at a low point in Russia's relations with its Western neighbors, which accuse the Kremlin of fomenting separatist violence in Ukraine.

According to the Audit Chamber, some 121 ships regularly net Russia's waters for fish. They are licensed to do this, but because they have not gone through customs clearing and paid

the appropriate duty they do not dock at Russian ports. The cost of clearing customs for a vessel is estimated at $1.2 to $3.7 million.

These ships annually catch about 350,000 tons of fish — out of a total catch from Russian waters that last year amounted to over 4 million tons.

Analysts interviewed by Kommersant said the measure would benefit state-owned United Shipbuilding Company, which can likely count on additional orders.

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