

Poland To Build Canal To Bypass Russian Waters

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Jarosław Kaczyński, leader of Poland's ruling party, has announced plans to build a canal to bypass a stretch of territory controlled by Russia.

“By building this canal, we will demonstrate that we are a sovereign country,” Kaczyński told journalists in the port city of Elbląg. “This is for political-military interests,” he added.

The canal will go through the Vistula Split, a stretch of land that separates the Vistula Lagoon from the Gdańsk Bay in the Baltic Sea. The only way to access the Baltic from Elbląg is to go through Russian-controlled waters. The canal, which authorities plan to complete by 2022, aims to change that.

“We already know that Russia will be against the building of the canal. But we will do it anyway. Soon, we will be celebrating the dig of the first shovel,” said Kaczyński.

Ecologists and locals, many of whom live off holiday-makers who travel to the split's sandy beaches every year, have voiced concerns over the canal. But ministers say security concerns in the Kaliningrad region come before ecological threats.

“We already know that our eastern neighbors will be protesting this decision on ecological grounds,” said Poland's minister for maritime trade Marek Gróbarczyk. “I call on ecological circles: do not become tools of their actions.”

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