

Russian Scientists Are Developing 'Lasso' to Round Up Space Debris – Reports

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Russian scientists are proposing pulling space debris out of Earth's orbit using a device that has been called a "space lasso."

Around 7,200 metric tons of space debris capable of damaging satellites or spacecraft currently orbit the Earth, scientists [estimate](#). Several proposals on how to deal with the growing issue have been collected ahead of the three-day space debris conference hosted by the Russian Academy of Sciences that starts on Wednesday.

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"A transport docking module ... is separated on a cable from a launch vehicle, docks with the space debris, then the cable is pulled," reads one proposal [drafted](#) ahead of the conference.

The launch vehicle then pulls the debris out of orbit, according to the proposal authored by Russian scientists.

The state-run RIA Novosti news agency [dubbed](#) the proposed device “space lasso.”

Other ideas include equipping the International Space Station (ISS) with [lasers](#) to pulverize the debris, which scientists [say](#) could reduce the amount of sunlight that reaches the Earth.

The proposals follow successful tests by a European satellite of a harpoon skewering space junk at close distance in February.

Russia plans to build space debris monitoring stations in Chile, Mexico and South Africa in 2019-2020, Interfax cited public procurement data as [saying](#) last month.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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