

# Russia May Double Volume of Deep Sea Crab Fished Below 1000 m to 30% of Total Harvest

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Russia plans to significantly increase the volume of catch of deep-sea crabs during the next several years, according to recent statements of an official spokesman of the Russian Federal Fisheries Agency (Rosrybolovstvo).

As part of these plans, a particular attention will be paid for the increased crab production at the depth below 1000 meters. Currently the production of deep-sea crab already accounts 15% of the total crab catch in the Russian Far Eastern basin, however, according to state plans, the increase of these figures up to 25-30% during the next several years.

The first plan talks about the prospects for deep-sea crab fishing began as far back in the late 1990's, when the Russian government introduced a ban on the production of traditional crabs in the domestic territorial waters.

Analysts of the Pacific Research Fishing Center (TINRO-center), one of Russia's leading research institutions in the field of fishing, said the reserves of opilio crab and angulatus at depths within Russian territorial waters are several times higher than previously thought.

Analysts from TINRO said it is a completely new type of activity for the Russian fishing industry, which involves the transition of the industry from the traditional depths of the shelf fishery, to mass fishing at depths, varied in the range of 1,400-2,500 meters.

Alex Slizkin, a scientific consultant of the project from TINRO-center said commercial crab is presented at the depth of more than 1400 meters (for up to 6-9 months per year) and at these depths its colossal reserves are concentrated.

To date, some leading Russian fish producers have announced plans for the increase of deep-sea crab production. For example, Vostok-1, a Russian leading crab producer said it will invest more than 400 million rubles in deep-sea crab fishing within the next 3 years.

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