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Deep Sea Coral Protection Act

Congress: 108 (2003–2005, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Public Lands and Natural Resources

Introduced: Nov 25, 2003

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. (Nov 25, 2003)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/108th-congress/senate-bill/1953>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Lautenberg, Frank R. [D-NJ]

Party: Democratic • **State:** NJ • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors

No cosponsors are listed for this bill.

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee	Senate	Referred To	Nov 25, 2003

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Public Lands and Natural Resources

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Deep Sea Coral Protection Act - Prohibits the use of mobile bottom-tending fishing gear in Coral Management Areas (CMAs).

Designates CMAs according to specified coordinates. Requires the Secretary of Commerce to designate as additional CMAs areas within the exclusive economic zone that have not been fished with mobile bottom-tending gear in recent years. Authorizes the Secretary to terminate such CMA designations in specified circumstances.

Requires the Secretary to: (1) monitor fishing within the exclusive economic zone and quantify deep sea coral and sponge bycatch; (2) direct the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere to research and map deep sea corals and sponges; and (3) designate as CMAs areas identified through such monitoring and research as having deep sea coral ecosystems.

Requires the Chair of the National Research Council to review annually all available data on deep sea corals and sponges and recommend areas for CMA designation. Directs the Secretary to designate such areas after publication of a proposed rule unless a rational basis for designation is lacking.

Applies the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act's civil penalty and forfeiture requirements to persons who violate this Act's prohibition against the use of mobile bottom-tending gear. Prohibits interference with enforcement of this Act and applies the Magnuson-Stevens Act's criminal penalty scheme to violators.

Authorizes the President to permit the Secretary to identify, with foreign entities, areas in international waters that would benefit from additional protection.

Actions Timeline

- **Nov 25, 2003:** Introduced in Senate
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