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President Obama has designated the first marine national monument in the Atlantic Ocean. The Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument, which covers 4,913 square miles of ocean off the coast of New England, will be jointly managed by the Department of Commerce and the Department of the Interior.

Chosen for its array of sensitive deep-sea ecosystems, the new monument will ban commercial fishing, while recreational fishing will be allowed within the protected region. Red crab and lobster fisheries will also be given a seven-year relocation period.

Environmentalists praised the designation as a win for conservation. Opponents of the monument, however, argued that it would severely impact the historical commercial fisheries that have existed in the region for decades.

Sources: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, White House Press Release
