

From: Monsters and Critics (UK)

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Group Seeks Penguin Protection

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1 (UPI) -- Some penguins need U.S. environmental laws to protect them against global warming and overfishing, a petition filed with the Fish and Wildlife Service says.

Of the world's 19 species of penguins, 12 living in the southern hemisphere could become extinct if the federal government doesn't list them under the Endangered Species Act, the petition said.

The document was prepared by the non-profit **Center for Biological Diversity**.

The petition said the government must limit industrial fishing in the Antarctic Ocean to preserve the penguins' food supply, the San Francisco Chronicle said. In addition, the government must control greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere that lead to warming oceans, which melts their sea ice home, the petition argued.

Kassie Siegel, a Center for Biological Diversity attorney who helped prepare the petition, said penguins such as the Humboldt, rockhopper, African, macaroni and Galapagos have declined because of warm ocean conditions and the overfishing of species, including the shrimplike krill and Patagonia toothfish sold as Chilean sea bass.

By law, the Fish and Wildlife service has 90 days to respond to the petition.