

the f

The m
greatly
states
the La
that pr

This b
involve
proac
resour

and continued in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1974. It is also a goal of the future, for, like peace, the conservation of global resources must be re-examined by each succeeding generation.

Canada's stake in the Law of the Sea

To realize how vitally interested Canada is in Law of the Sea issues, it is only necessary to look at a map of the country: Canada has the longest total coastline of any nation in the world.

Canada also has the second largest continental shelf, that vast submerged area that is the natural prolongation of Canada's land mass into and under the sea, an area already rich in fish resources of many kinds, and potentially rich in oil and gas deposits.

Canada is one of the major fishing nations of the world and one of the major mineral producing states.

Canada is one of the major trading nations, dependent on the shipping of goods to and from its ports.

And Canada possesses large vulnerable coastal areas on the Atlantic and Pacific, and in the Arctic, which significantly affect the ecology of the northern hemisphere.

Because of these basic interests, Canada has been in the forefront of attempts to modernize the laws governing use of the oceans. Through its own domestic legislation, and through various international treaties and conventions, Canada has sought to advance its national interests with policies of restraint and reason on such key issues as marine pollution and conservation of fisheries. Canada was instrumental in bringing about agreement on the need for and the scope of the third Law of the Sea Conference. Canada has played a leading role in the preparations for that Conference.

At Caracas, Canada will continue to stress a comprehensive approach to the management of the sea's uses and resources. As a coastal state, Canada shares many of the concerns of the developing coastal nations

in Latin America, Africa and Asia. As a trading partner of all and ally of some, Canada also understands the navigational and related interests of the larger maritime powers. As a responsible member of the world community, Canada also understands that the challenge is to reach an accommodation respecting both the varying needs of individual states and those of humanity as a whole.

What is needed?

Reconciling the many national needs and interests will not be an easy task. Each issue raises opposing views and affects all the other issues. An increase in national rights over pollution prevention and control, for example, increases the likelihood of interfering with navigation; the upholding of unfettered and unregulated rights of transit of the oceans, on the other hand, increases the threat from pollution. Hence the Canadian position that all these issues are so inter-related that they must be dealt with as a package, rather than one by one in isolation.

At the heart of the problem lies the need to distinguish clearly between the areas under national control and the international area beyond, both in terms of the limits of these areas and the rights and duties of states within them. In the view of most coastal states, national control should comprise the territorial sea over which a state exercises total sovereignty (subject to the right of innocent passage for foreign vessels), *plus* an "economic zone" (or "patrimonial sea" as it is referred to by the Latin Americans) over which the coastal state would exercise specific rights over marine resources and the environment, while at the same time having the duty to preserve and protect international community interests within the zone, especially with regard to navigation and overflight and the prevention of pollution.

Clearly the negotiators at the Law of the Sea Conference, representing 148 nations, have their work cut out for them, even on the issues which at first glance might seem the easiest to resolve.