

of a limited form of jurisdiction which was required to ensure the preservation of the Arctic environment, having regard to the unique nature and the particular vulnerability of this environment, the disastrous consequences which could flow from its pollution or degradation, and the especially severe risks involved in the navigation of Arctic Waters. The exercise of various forms of jurisdiction by coastal states beyond the limits of their territorial waters is a well-established principle of customary international law, as reflected in the practice of numerous states including the major maritime powers.

Arctic and multilateral action

The view has often been expressed that the preservation of the Arctic marine environment called for international solution rather than for unilateral action. The Canadian Government has always considered that the action taken by Canada was wholly consistent with the development of internationally-agreed standards of navigation safety and pollution control in Arctic waters, which should take into due account the special rights and responsibilities of the Arctic coastal states. The Government has carried out a series of intensive negotiations with the U.S. and the USSR and other Arctic countries concerning the possibility of developing a multilateral agreement to ensure the prevention of pollution and the safety of navigation in Arctic waters. However, this possibility is not yet in sight.

Territorial Sea and Fishing Zones

The Act amending the Territorial Sea and Fishing Zones Act received Royal Assent on June 26, 1970 and was promulgated on March 10, 1971. The Act extended Canada's territorial sea from 3 to 12 miles: the 12-mile territorial sea is now virtually a rule of law which has been established by