

relatively primitive activity, it is now practised on a massive scale by fleets fishing far from home, using sophisticated methods, rather like vacuum cleaning.

In the briefest space of time, therefore, we have reached the point where we can over-use or misuse the sea. As ancient and vast as it is, the sea cannot indefinitely be abusively exploited. Like everything else in our world, it has its limits. Human technology can now fish whole species to virtual extinction. Man-made pollution from all sources damages fish and bird life, befouls coastlines used for recreation or habitation, and could even upset oceanographic systems on which we depend in large measure for our climate and oxygen supply.

The world's nations now recognize these facts. They know the law must be changed to prevent abuses and provide for responsible management. They also, however, wish to protect their respective rights as they see them.

Many states with substantial coastlines, such as Canada, wish to retain control over the oil and gas deposits off their shores and to extend their control over fishing, over ship-generated hazards to their environment, and over marine scientific research, beyond the present limits of their jurisdiction for such purposes.

By contrast the major maritime powers, with their global strategic, fishing, trading and mineral resource interests, feel a strong need to limit or modify some coastal state claims, so as to maintain their own freedom of navigation and related economic and military concerns. Both sides, in a sense, consider their sovereignty or freedom of action to be threatened.

These conflicting positions are important, even dangerous, but they must not be exaggerated. In Canada's view at least, the states of the world share the goal of resolving these conflicts, and this has been the goal pursued at Geneva in 1958 and 1960, and at the third United Nations Law of the Sea Conference, begun in New York in 1973

continental margin

PHYSICAL CONTINENTAL SHELF
gently-dipping part of the seabed extending out from the shoreline to the transitional zone where there occurs a significant increase in dip marking the beginning of the continental slope.

CONTINENTAL SLOPE
area of the seabed extending from the outer edge of the continental shelf to the abyssal ocean floor or to the continental rise where that feature exists. The inclination of the slope varies widely from less than three degrees to over forty-five degrees.

CONTINENTAL RISE
apron of sedimentary rocks that slopes gently oceanward from the base of the continental slope, usually in 2000 to 5000 meters of water. Where deep sea trenches are present along the margin of the continent, the continental rise does not occur.

ABYSSAL PLAIN
flat-lying portion of the deep seabed situated beyond the continental margin.

