



The United Nations and the Law of the Sea



WHY A LAW OF THE SEA?

Because no borders mark the sea, it is necessary to frame a law that would ensure that the sea and its vast resources are used and developed fairly, rationally and peacefully for the benefit of all mankind. Such a convention must reconcile many conflicting interests. Here are some of the main issues.

How far can a country's sovereignty extend over an expanse of sea?

How far out may a State proclaim exclusive rights over resources, including fishing?

The area beyond national jurisdiction has been designated the common heritage of mankind. How should this area be exploited?

How can developing countries benefit from deep-sea exploration if developed countries control the necessary technology and capital?

How can marine pollution be prevented?

How can marine life be protected against extinction?

How should disputes arising from use of the sea be settled?

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