

There are a number of proponents of the economic zone concept who would limit a coastal state's shelf rights to 200 miles. In their view, the existence of coastal states' rights beyond that limit would deprive the International Seabed Authority of all the more accessible resources and leave to it only the deep seabed resources. In this connection, it should be noted that a 200-mile economic zone would encompass the continental margins of the great majority of coastal states, and that it would be only Canada and a mere handful of other wide-shelf states who, under a strict 200-mile formula, would be contributing areas of their physical continental shelf to the International Authority. (Canada's East coast continental margin does extend much beyond 200 miles).

Navigation

Under the traditional principles of the Law of the Sea, the seas were divided into three basic areas: internal waters, the territorial sea, and the high seas.

Coastal states exercise their full sovereignty over any foreign vessel entering their internal waters, the outer limits of these waters coinciding with the baselines from which the territorial sea is measured.

As to the regime applicable in the territorial sea, that is, the belt of sea adjacent to the coast, the 1958 Convention on the Territorial Sea sets down that coastal states must accept in these waters over which they enjoy sovereignty, passage of foreign vessels if it is "innocent" i.e. not prejudicial to its peace, good order and security. If the coastal state deems that passage is prejudicial in this sense, then it may take necessary action to suspend it.

Finally, all activities, including navigation, in the ocean area beyond the territorial sea, the high seas, are governed by the traditional principle of freedom of the high seas. As mentioned earlier, this principle, which has been subjected to few constraints, has opened the door to some abuses which should now be corrected, in particular as they affect the living resources and the marine environment as a whole.