



beyond the outer limits of a state's territorial sea. The seabed of the territorial sea has always belonged to the coastal state.

The International Law Commission has recommended that the "legal edge" of the continental shelf should be at the point where the superjacent waters reach a depth of 100 fathoms. The purpose of this provision is to give precision to the boundary and prevent disputes and uncertainty which might arise if, for instance, the criterion of exploitability were accepted as the sole determinant of the boundary of the shelf. The Commission has, however, introduced an element of uncertainty by providing that the boundary might extend beyond the 100 fathom depth contour to where the depth of the superjacent waters admits of exploitation. In the case of the continental shelf off the east coast of Canada, the edge of the shelf is often not encountered until the 200 fathom depth is reached.* Furthermore, in ninety per cent of cases

*The accompanying maps illustrate this. The outer line represents the approximate edge of the geographical shelf. The inner more sinuous line the 100 fathom contour.