

marine scientific research

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Research is widely pursued in the world's oceans for a variety of purposes, scientific, economic and strategic. The aim may be "pure" research into the formation of the ocean floor or the movements of ocean currents or the behaviour of marine species, such as research made famous by Jacques-Yves Cousteau and his colleagues, contributing to man's knowledge of the ocean depths and even aiding fisheries management or pollution control. Or research may be carried on by oil and mining companies or by national governments for a variety of other purposes. Obviously, however, even "pure" research can be put to commercial or strategic uses involving vital interests of both the state conducting the research and the state off whose shores it may be conducted.

The Canadian position on management of its coastal resources requires controls to ensure that research related to those resources is used for the benefit of Canada. This does not imply arbitrary restrictions on research by foreign vessels in waters under Canadian jurisdiction. It does mean, however, that Canada and other coastal states must have the right to be notified of and participate in research conducted off their coasts, and must have full access to the data collected. With this kind of cooperation from the researching agency, the coastal state can actually assist research, for example, by extending port facilities to research vessels and their scientific staff.

However, if the purpose or modalities of research by a foreign vessel in waters under the jurisdiction of a coastal state are unacceptable to that coastal state for economic, security, environmental or other legitimate reasons, it must have the right to disallow such activities.

There will undoubtedly be difficulties in reaching agreement on this point. Somewhat similar safeguards for the coastal state are already embodied in the 1958 Convention on the Continental Shelf, but their application has given rise to considerable disagreement. Again the Canadian view is that an accommodation of interests is necessary, taking into account both the legitimate concerns of the coastal state and the responsibility of all states to facilitate the growth of man's knowledge of the marine environment from which life emerged and upon which life depends.

