

UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.138/81
9 August 1972

Original: ENGLISH



COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF THE
SEA-BED AND THE OCEAN FLOOR BEYOND THE
LIMITS OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION

REQUEST FOR A STUDY ON THE DIFFERENT ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF
THE VARIOUS PROPOSALS FOR LIMITS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEA-BED AREA

submitted by Afghanistan, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Czechoslovakia,
Hungary, Nepal, Netherlands, Singapore, Zaire and Zambia

It is proposed that the Secretary-General be requested to prepare a study on the economic implications for the area under the authority of the international machinery, as resulting from each of the various suggested limits for national jurisdiction. The suggested limits are the following:

- (a) 200 meters isobath;
- (b) 500 meters isobath;
- (c) 40 nautical miles;
- (d) 200 nautical miles;
- (e) edge of continental margin.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The question of the limits of national jurisdiction is important not only for the coastal States but is equally important for the international régime, whose extent would have to depend on the limits so established. Further, the character and functions of the organs of the international machinery must necessarily depend on the actual extent and nature of the area of the international régime which ultimately accrues to mankind as a whole.

Several proposals have been presented, both formally and orally, by delegations on the question of the limits of national jurisdiction. The economic significance and the extent of the international régime would vary according to the limits ultimately adopted.

In order to have a fruitful discussion and appraisal of the question it is necessary to understand and appreciate the economic significance and implications of the different proposals on limits. Information on this is not yet available to this Committee and for this reason the sponsors have considered it highly desirable and useful to have a study of the kind requested of the Secretary-General. Such a study would naturally have to be based on existing data and knowledge. It would also complement the reports prepared by the Secretary-General on "Possible impact of sea-bed mineral production in the area beyond national jurisdiction on world markets with special reference to the problems of developing countries" (A/AC.138/36) and "Additional notes on the possible economic implications of mineral production from the international sea-bed area" (A/AC.138/73). In those reports it was noted that such impact, if any, would depend on the final delimitation of the area.

The proposals for limits enumerated in this request for a study are not necessarily exhaustive. The sponsors would be prepared to accept any suggested additions to those already listed.

The sponsors also wish to state that this request is made in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2750C XXV where in paragraph 11 the Secretary-General was requested "to render the Committee all the assistance it may require in legal, economic, technical and scientific matters."