

The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) and its work

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Outline

- The continental shelf
- Delineation of the continental shelf beyond 200 M
- The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS)
- Current workload of the Commission

The continental shelf



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Continental shelf – Legal framework

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Part VI)

- Definition (article 76)
- Rights and duties of coastal States (articles 77-82, 84, 85)
- Delimitation between States with opposite or adjacent coasts (article 83)

Continental shelf – Benefits I

Coastal State has

- Sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring the continental shelf and exploiting its natural resources

These rights are

- Exclusive
- Independent from occupation, effective or notional
- No proclamation required

Continental shelf – Natural resources

Article 77, UNCLOS

- Mineral and other non-living resources of the seabed and subsoil
- Living organisms belonging to sedentary species

In the case of exploitation of non-living resources beyond 200 M (article 82):

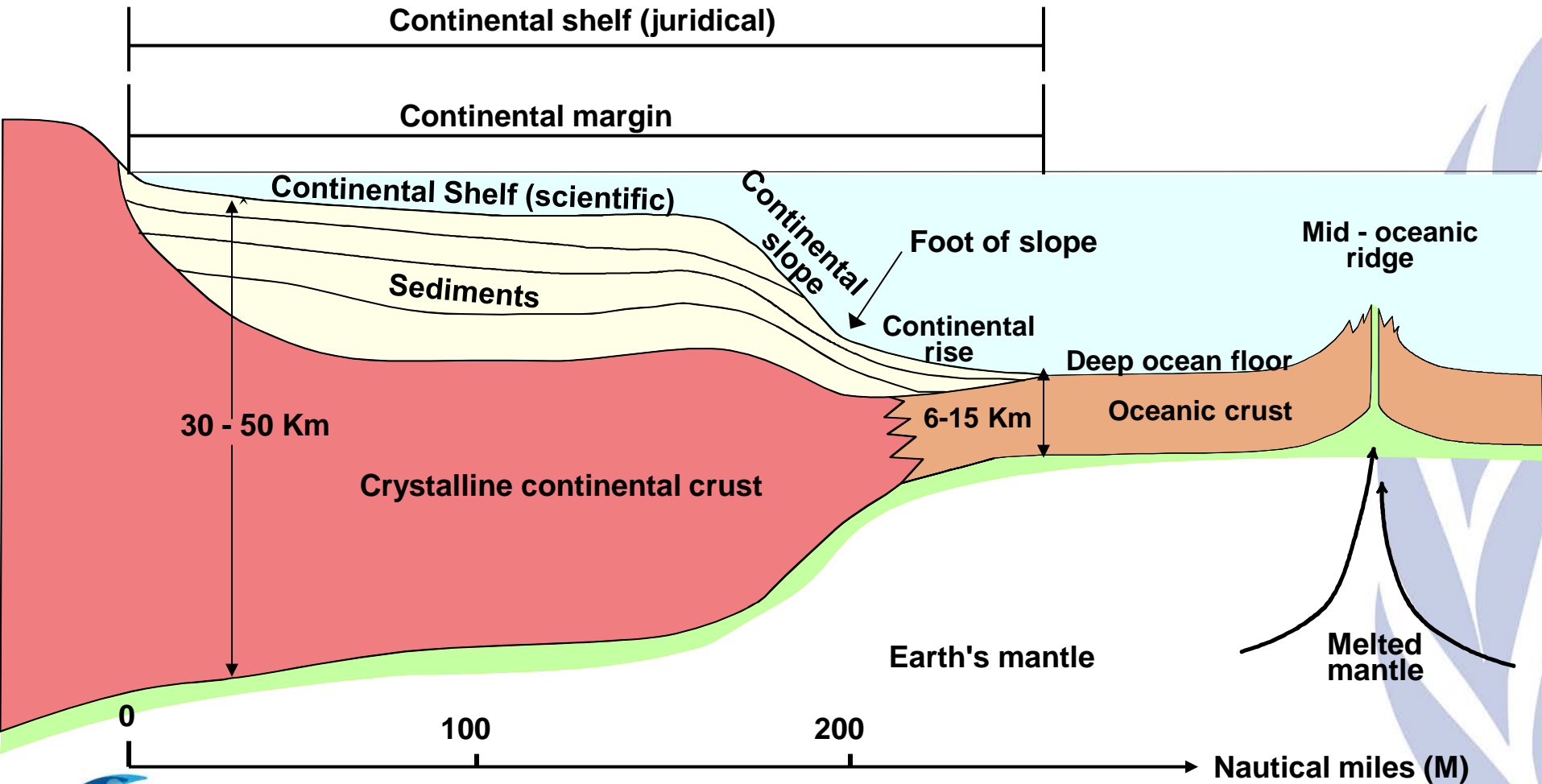
- Payments or contributions in kind to the International Seabed Authority (up to 7% of value or volume of production)

Continental shelf – Benefits II

Coastal State has jurisdiction with regard to

- Drilling on the continental shelf (article 81)
- Establishment and use of artificial islands, installations and structures (article 80)
- Laying of cables and pipelines connected to exploration and exploitation or to operations of artificial islands, installations and structures (art. 79)
- Marine scientific research (article 246)
- Protection and preservation of marine environment (article 208)

Continental shelf – Scientific & legal concepts



Continental shelf – Scenarios

A. States with continental margins up to 200 M

➡ No further action needed

B. States with continental margins extending beyond 200 M

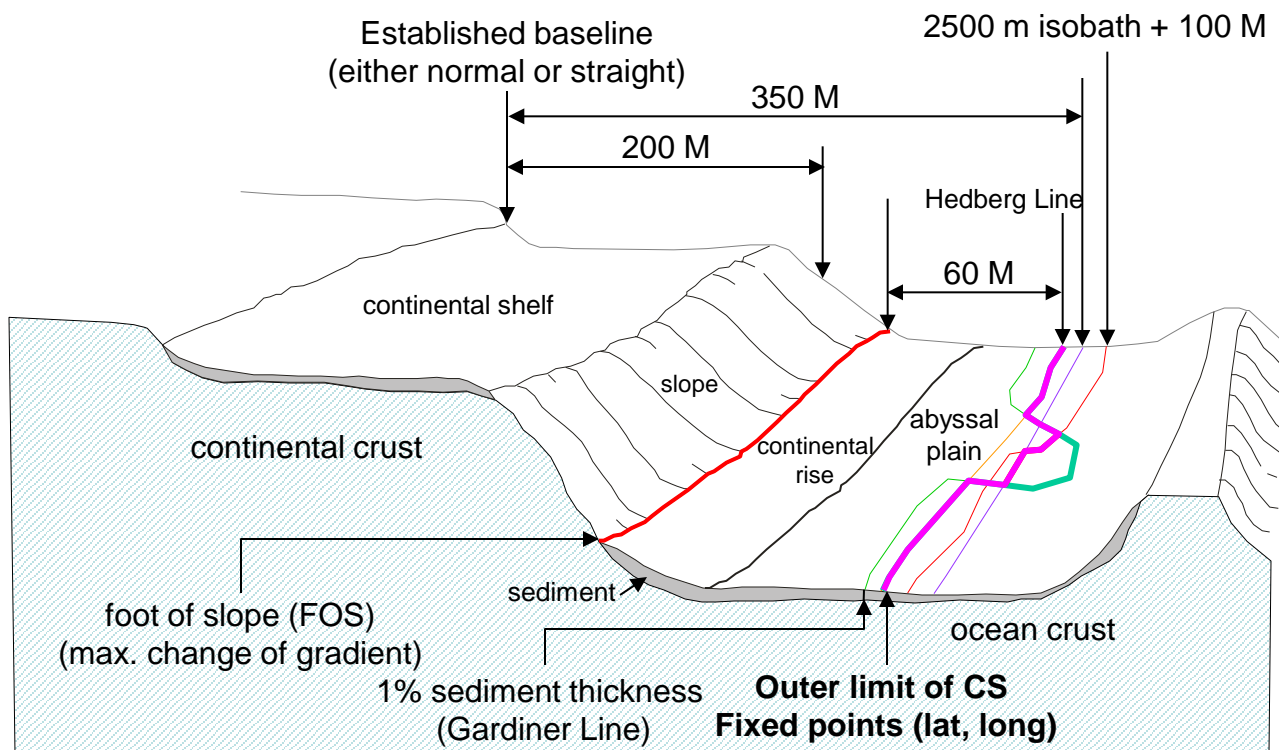
➡ Obligation to submit information on the limits of the continental shelf to the CLCS

Delineation of the continental shelf beyond 200 M

Delineation beyond 200 M – Summary

- The outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 M result from the application of two formulae (giving entitlement) and two constraint lines (restricting entitlement):
 - 60 M formula line (FOS + 60 M)
 - sediment thickness formula line (sediment thickness at least 1% of distance back to FOS)
 - distance constraint (350 M from baselines)
 - depth constraint (2500 m isobath + 100 M)
 - Landward combination of combined formulae and combined constraints lines to be used for outer limits of the continental shelf
- Seaward combination is outer edge of continental margin
- Seaward combination of two constraint lines applies

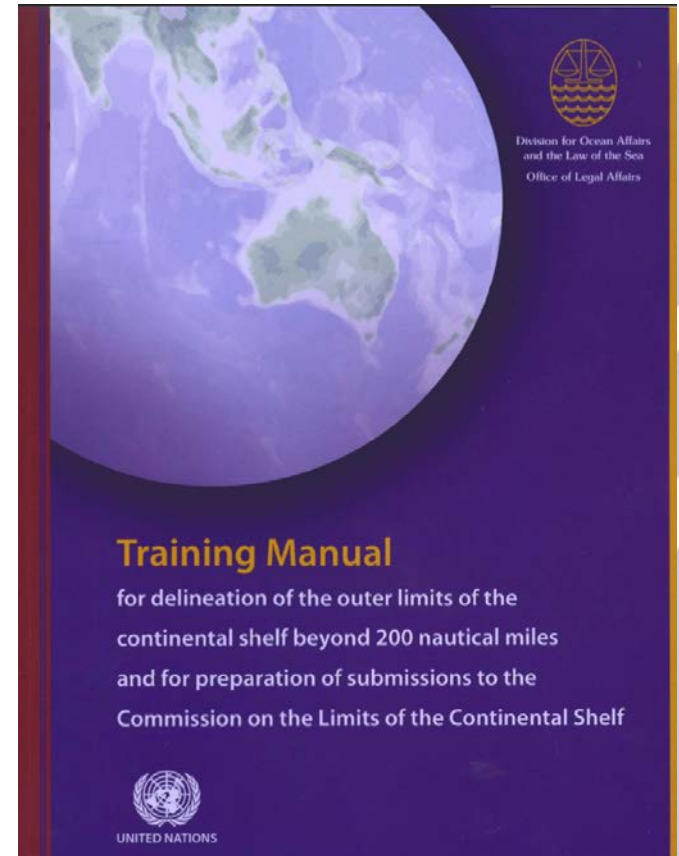
Delineation beyond 200 M – Overview



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Delineation beyond 200 M – Framework

- Article 76 of UNCLOS
- Scientific and Technical Guidelines of the CLCS ([link to the document](#))
- Training manual details methodological aspects of the delineation process including the preparation of submissions to the CLCS
- Methodological aspects such as geodesy, hydrology, geology and geomorphology are necessary for delineating the outer limit of the continental shelf



The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS)



CLCS – Mandate



- Considers submissions by coastal States in respect of the establishment of the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 M;
- Makes recommendations regarding the outer limits;
- Provides scientific and technical advice

CLCS – Framework

- Article 76, paragraph 8 (role of the CLCS in the delineation of the outer limits of the continental shelf)
- Annex II to the Convention (more detailed)
- Rules of Procedure of the CLCS – Document CLCS/40/Rev.1 (day-to-day operation of the CLCS)
- Regular sessions at UN Headquarters (currently three sessions per year of seven weeks each)
- Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) acts as the Secretariat of the CLCS

Haworth, R.T.

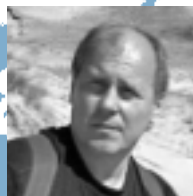


Heinesen, M.V.

WEOG



Uścińowicz, S.



To be elected

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Glumov, I.F.



**Eastern
European**

Roest, W.R.



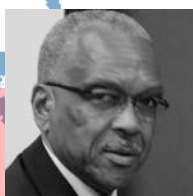
Arshad, M.



Urabe, T.



Charles, F.L.



Oduro, I.O.



Kalngui, E.



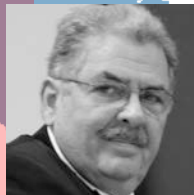
Lu, W..



Carrera H., G.



Marques, J.



GRULAC

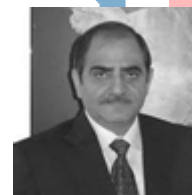
Park, Y.A.



Madon, M.B.

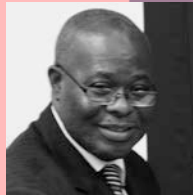


Ravindra, R.



Asia/Pacific

Awosika, L.F.



Njuguna, S.



Africa



Mahanjane, E.S.

Paterlini, C.M.



Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf 2012-2017



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CLCS – Procedure after submission

- Presentation of the submission to the CLCS by the State
- When submission is next in line and there is no dispute, establishment of a subcommission
- Consideration of the submission by the subcommission including exchanges with the State
- Preparation/adoption of draft recommendations and submission of them to the CLCS
- Consideration of draft recommendations by the CLCS including final presentation by the State
- Adoption of final recommendations by the CLCS and transmittal to State and Secretary-General of the UN
- Publication of summary of recommendations on website

CLCS – Annex I, Rules of Procedure

In cases of

- disputes in the delimitation of the continental shelf between opposite or adjacent States, or
- other unresolved land or maritime disputes, related to the submission,

the CLCS will not consider the submission unless prior consent is given by all States parties to the dispute.

Avenues available to States

- Partial submission
- Joint submission
- Provisional arrangements of a practical nature

CLCS – Procedure after recommendations

If State agrees with the recommendations:

- Proceed to establish the limits of the continental shelf on the basis of the recommendations
- Limits are final and binding (article 76, paragraph 8)

If State disagrees with the recommendations,

- Make a new or revised submission to the CLCS

Deposit obligations

- **Article 76, para. 9 (UNCLOS):**

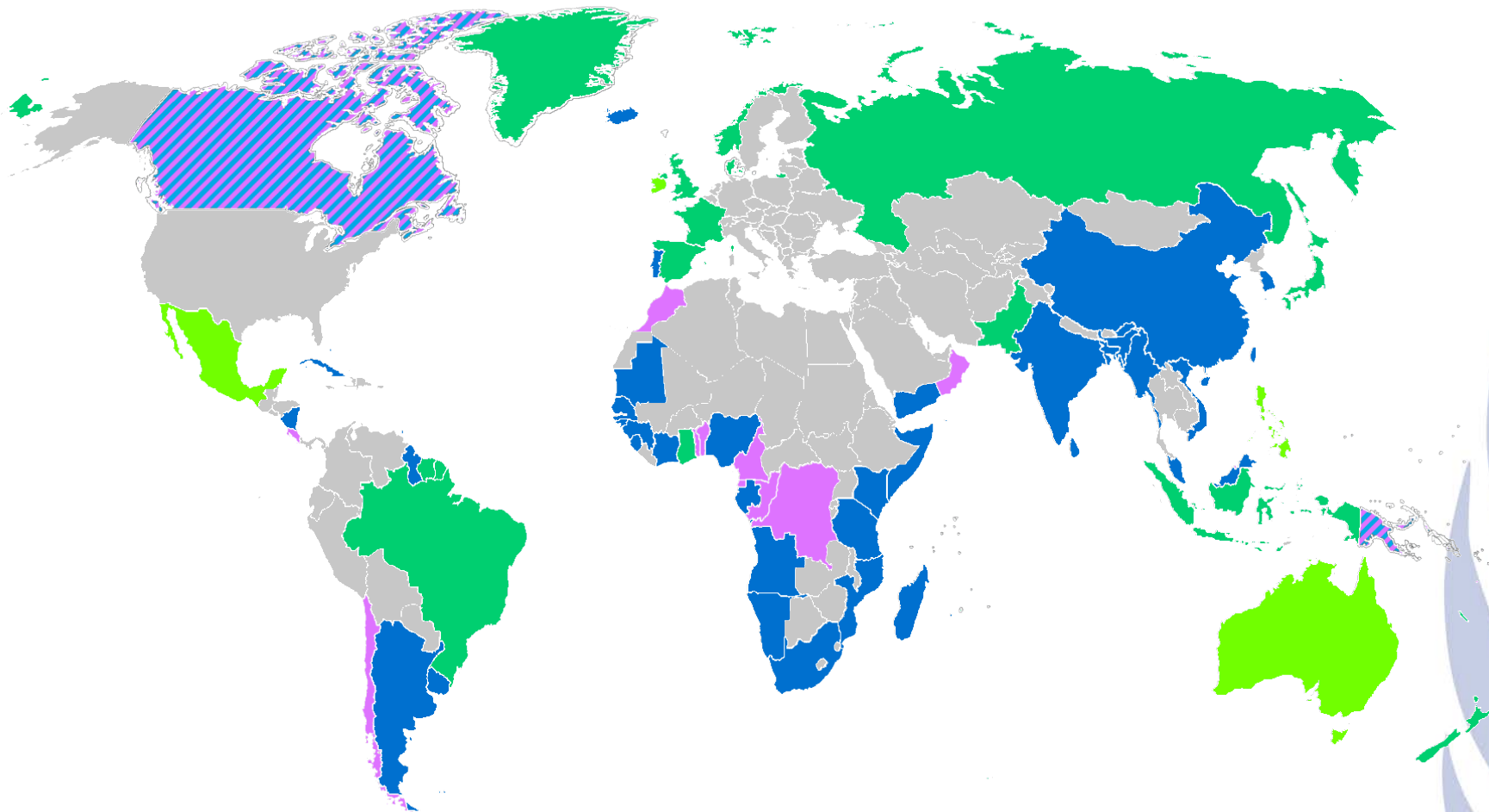
Deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations charts and relevant information, including geodetic data, permanently describing the outer limits of its continental shelf. The Secretary-General shall give due publicity thereto.

- **Article 84, para. 2 (UNCLOS) – by reference to art.83:**

Due publicity to charts or lists of geographical coordinates showing the outer limits of the CS (States with adjacent or opposite coast) and deposit copies with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, in the case of those showing the outer limit lines of the continental shelf, with the Secretary-General of the Authority.

Current work of the Commission





77 Submissions, and 4 revised, received

47 Preliminary Information received, 25 became Submissions or parts thereof

22 Recommendations approved

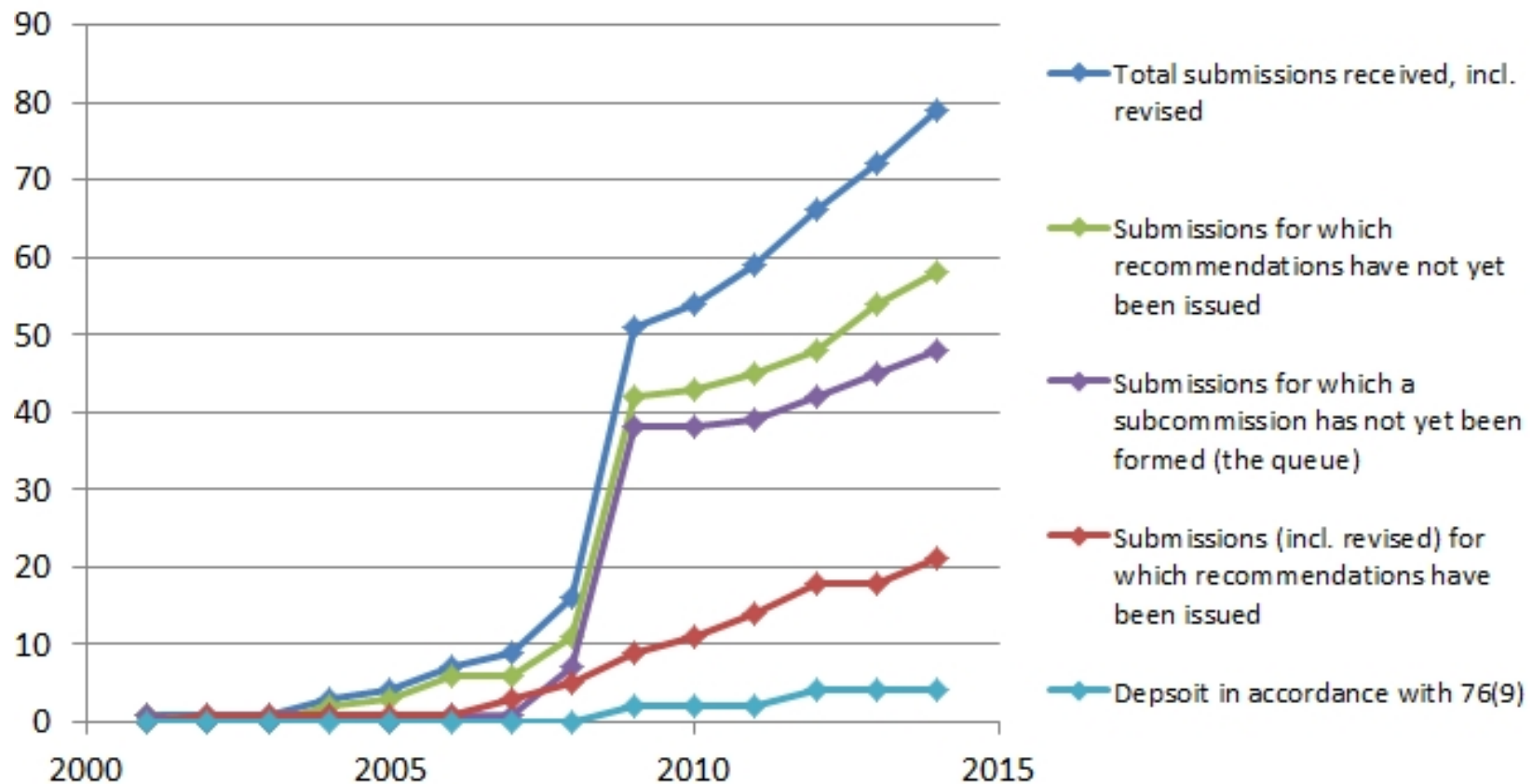
4 Deposited with Secretary-General of United Nations



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Submissions over time



(as of 01/2015)

Pending submissions

- 47 sets of Preliminary Information received (SPLOS/183), several of which have already been followed by full submissions for the whole (22) or part of the area (3) indicated in the Preliminary Information
- Further partial submissions for additional areas
- Further revised submissions
- New submissions by States whose ten-year time limit for making a submission has not yet expired
- New submissions by States not yet Parties

www.un.org/depts/los



OCEANS & LAW OF THE SEA UNITED NATIONS

DIVISION FOR OCEAN AFFAIRS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA

[New developments and recent additions](#)

[Calendar of meetings](#)

[Secretary-General and Oceans](#)

[Video on UNCLOS in action](#)

8 June - World Oceans Day

THE CONVENTION AND THE RELATED AGREEMENTS

- [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea](#)
- [Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the Convention](#)
- [1995 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement](#)
 - [Review Conference](#)
 - [Informal Consultations](#)
 - [Assistance fund](#)
- [Meeting of States Parties to the Convention](#)
- [Status of the Convention and of the Agreements](#)

OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA: THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- [United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process](#)
- [Reports of the Secretary-General](#)
- [General Assembly resolutions](#)
- [Other General Assembly documents](#)
- [Official Records of the General Assembly](#)
- [A regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects](#)
- [Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction](#)

BODIES ESTABLISHED BY THE CONVENTION

- [Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf](#)
- [International Seabed Authority](#)
- [International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea](#)
- [ITLOS Trust Fund](#)

SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

- [Choice of procedure under article 287 of the Convention](#)
- [International Court of Justice](#)
- [International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea](#)
- [Lists of Arbitrators and Conciliators](#)
- [List of experts](#)

THE DIVISION, ITS FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- [H.S. Amerasinghe Fellowship](#)
- [TRAIN-SEA-COAST](#)
- [Technical Cooperation Trust Fund - United Nations and The Nippon Foundation of Japan](#)
- [Technical Assistance](#)
- [United Nations publications prepared by the Division](#)
- [Study - Available assistance to and measures that may be taken by developing States](#)

¡ Gracias !



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