

Continental Shelf

The Last Maritime Zone



Environmental Knowledge for Change



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All information in this publication is derived from official material that is posted on the website of the UN Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS), which acts as the Secretariat to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS): www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/clcs_home.htm.

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Foreword

During the past decade, many coastal States have been engaged in peacefully establishing the limits of their maritime jurisdiction. This represents an historical milestone towards the definition of maritime sovereignty, and presents enormous economic opportunities for coastal States, but also brings new environmental challenges and responsibilities.

States may secure their legal entitlement to the seabed by submitting information on the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles as defined in Article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). This is profoundly significant in that it will enable many developing coastal States and small island nations to access valuable natural resources, such as oil, gas and minerals, as well as sedentary organisms.

The high costs and extensive technical capacity required to comply with the provisions of Article 76 were recognized by the UN General Assembly. Accordingly, in 2002 they called on the UN Environment Programme's Global Resource Information Database (GRID) network to assist interested states, particularly developing States and small island developing nations. This gave rise to the UNEP Shelf Programme, which along with other international initiatives, has been providing data and technical assistance to States preparing proposals to define their national jurisdiction.

All States have an obligation to ensure that their territorial rights – including marine territories – are secured for future

generations. Importantly, the rules and regulations regarding the continental shelf require the States to safeguard the environment and share benefits from resource development with developing States. Furthermore, the ocean beyond national jurisdiction remains the common heritage of all mankind.

Today there are legitimate concerns about the state of the marine environment, and its unique and largely undocumented ecosystems. While resource development in these marine areas will likely present additional challenges and environmental management issues, the sustainable development of these areas could result in long-term economic and environmental benefits. Therefore States should consider all options, including the establishment of marine protected areas, which could support eco-tourism and healthy fisheries.

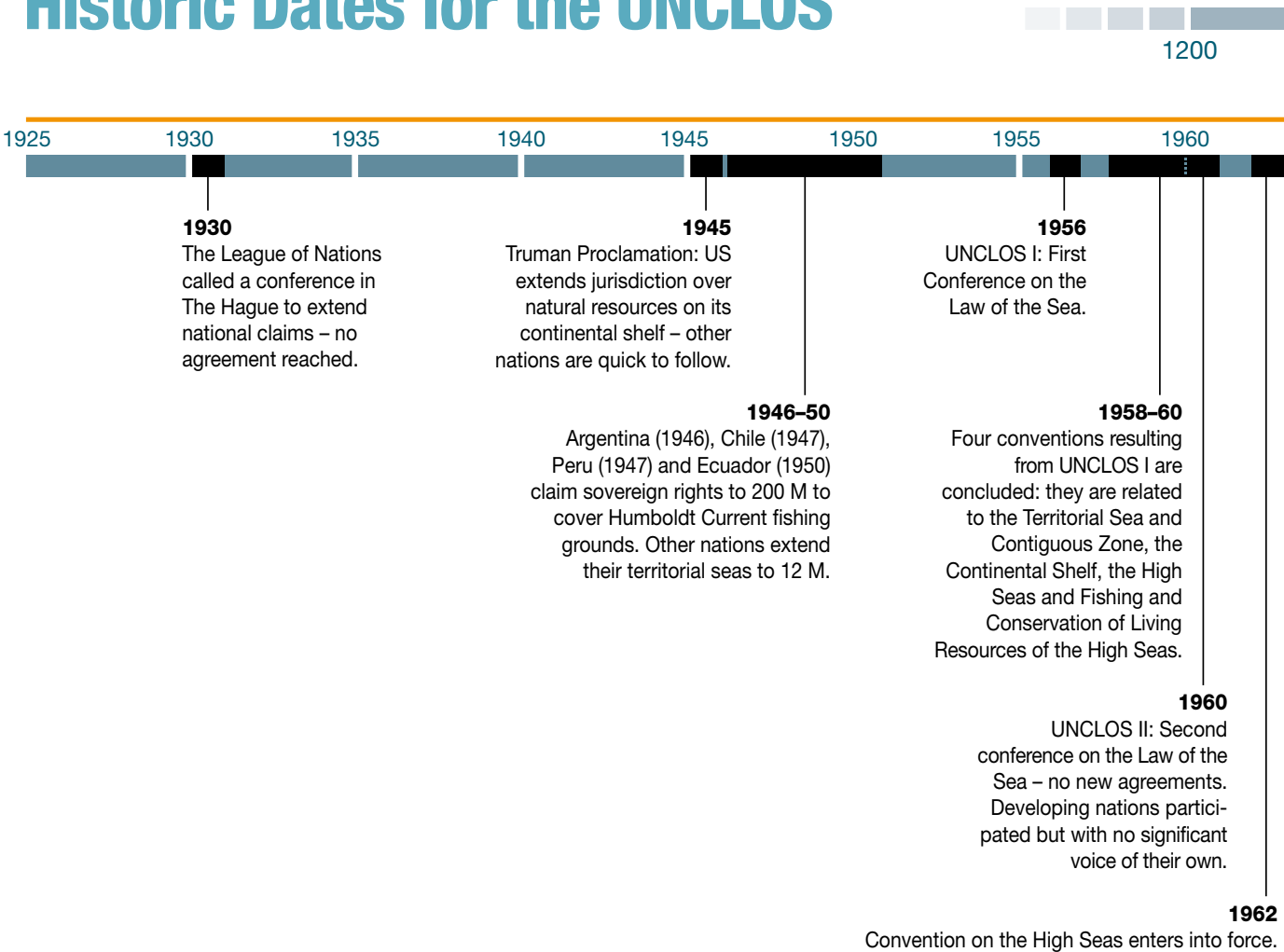
Continental Shelf: The Last Maritime Zone examines the status of the submissions made to date and begins to illustrate a new world map – one which will hopefully help reduce poverty and lead to the wise use of ocean resources.

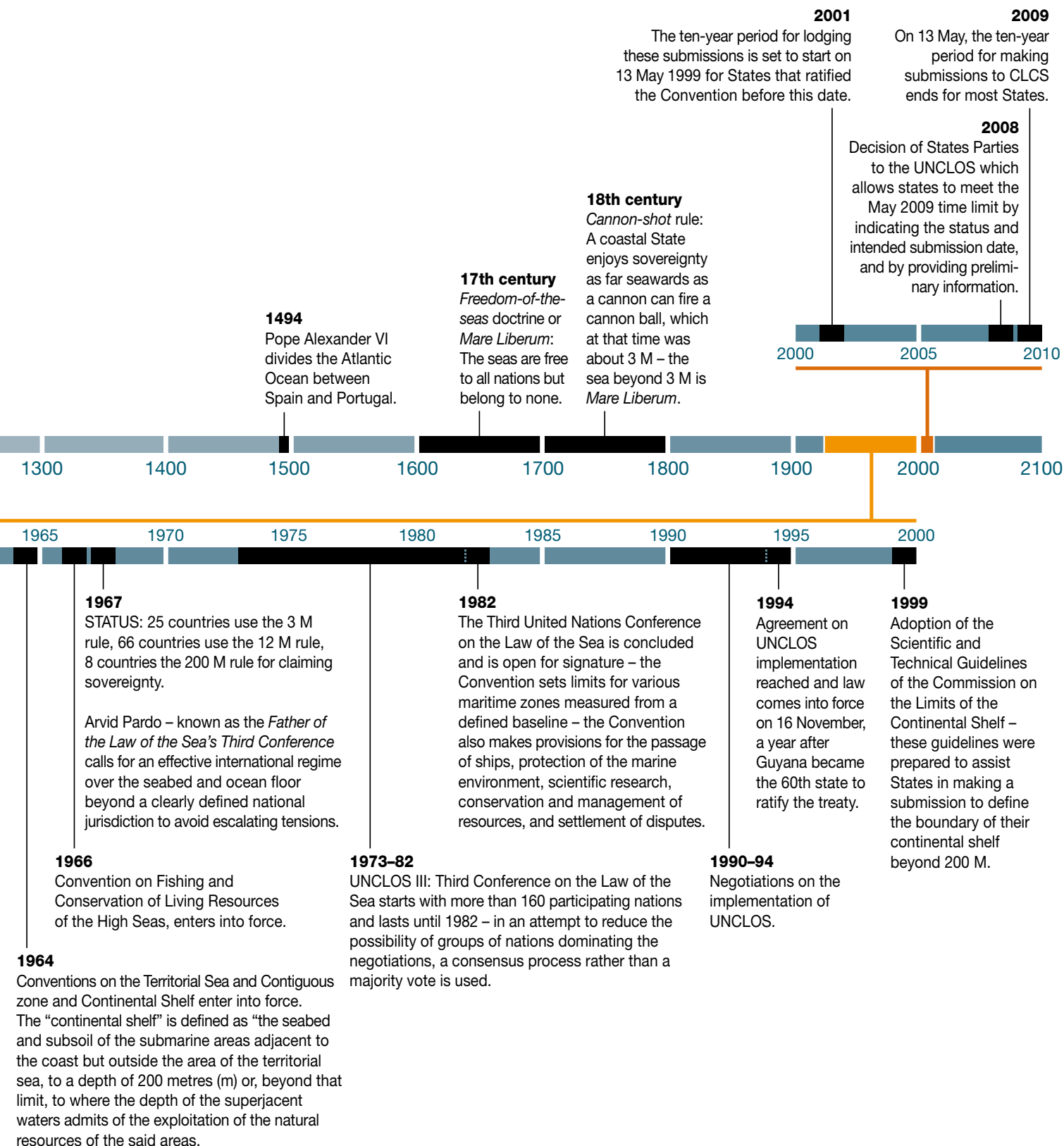
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Historic Dates for the UNCLOS





Peaceful Regulation of Ocean Space

Where does sovereignty end?

After many years of negotiation to regulate the use of the oceans in a single convention acceptable to all nations, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (the “Convention” or UNCLOS)¹ was adopted on 10 December 1982 and entered into force on 16 November 1994. Many developing States were among the first 60 ratifications. As of December 2009, significant progress towards universal ratification of the Convention has been made since the treaty has now been signed and ratified by 159 States Parties and an additional 19 States have signed the Convention but not yet ratified it.

When the Convention was negotiated, particular attention was given to the definition of the outer continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles (M) in order to establish the precise limits of national jurisdiction. Article 76 of the Convention² defines the legal continental shelf and the process of delineating its outer limits. Setting these limits ensures the right of coastal States to explore and exploit the resources of the seabed and subsoil. Article 76 does not affect the legal status of the water column or the airspace above the continental shelf.

Status of the Convention



预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_10359

