



The Continental Shelf beyond 200 M from the baselines: The work of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

Vladimir Jares, Senior Law of the Sea/Ocean Affairs Officer
Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS)
Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations

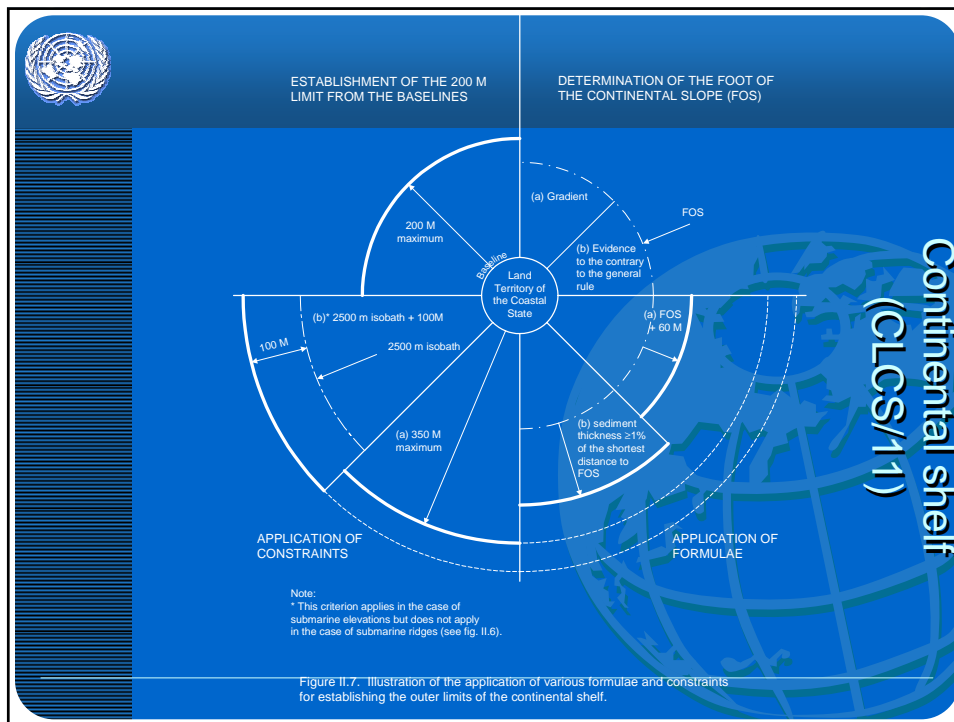
Design and animation: Robert Sandev, GIS Officer, DOALOS/OLA

23 August 2008



Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf - its functions

- CLCS - set up pursuant to article 76, paragraph 8, and under Annex II to UNCLOS, on the basis of equitable geographical representation.
- CLCS functions:
 - (a) To consider the data and other material submitted by coastal States concerning the outer limits of the continental shelf in areas where those limits extend beyond 200 nautical miles, and to make recommendations;
 - (b) to provide scientific and technical advice, if requested by the coastal State concerned during the preparation of the data referred to above.



CLCS Members and their status

- Twenty-one members, experts in the field of geology, geophysics or hydrography, elected by States Parties to UNCLOS from among their nationals, having due regard to the need to ensure equitable geographical representation, who serve in their personal capacities.



CLCS Members and their status



Basic documents of the Commission

- The Rules of Procedure (CLCS/40/Rev.1) – latest modifications adopted on 11 April 2008.
 - Annex I - Submissions in case of a dispute between States with opposite or adjacent coasts or in other cases of unresolved land or maritime disputes;
 - Annex II - Confidentiality;
 - Annex III - Modus operandi for the consideration of a submission made to the Commission.
- The Scientific and Technical Guidelines - adopted by the Commission on 13 May 1999 (CLCS/11).



Submissions to CLCS

12 submissions received to date

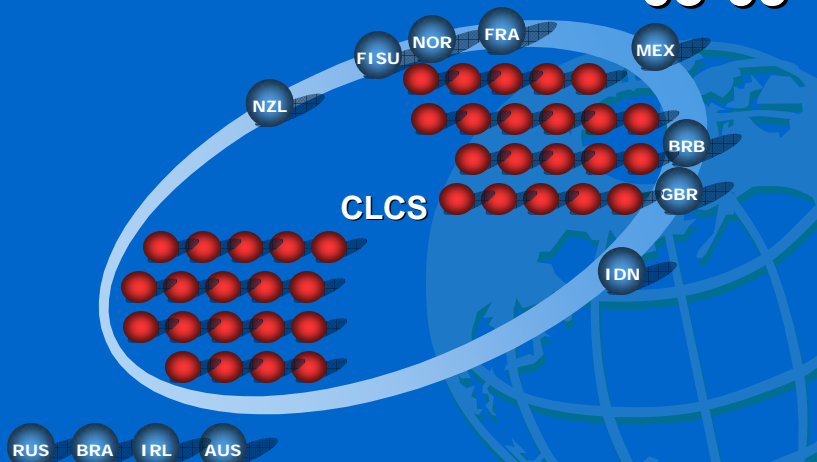
Russian Federation – 2001, Brazil – 2004, Australia – 2004, Ireland (partial: Porcupine Abyssal Plain) – 2005, New Zealand – 2006, joint submission by France, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Celtic Sea and the Bay of Biscay) – 2006, Norway – 2006, France (partial: French Guiana and New Caledonia) – 2007, Mexico (partial: western polygon in the Gulf of Mexico) – 2007, Barbados – 2008, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (partial: Ascension Island) – 2008, and Indonesia (partial: North West of Sumatra Island) – 2008

40 more expected by 2009



CLCS-workload

08-09





Receiving submissions

Publicity and notification:

- Notification to the Commission, and all Member States of the United Nations
- Acknowledgement to the submitting State
- Publication of the executive on the website
- Inclusion of the examination of the submission in the agenda of the session of the Commission
- Notification to the submitting State of the date and place of the meeting with invitation to send its representatives



Interaction between the Commission and States - issues

- The Scientific and Technical Guidelines and compliance by the coastal States therewith;
- Confidentiality;
- Disputes in the delimitation of the continental shelf;
- Assistance provided by any member of the Commission to the submitting State;
- Participation in the relevant proceedings of the Commission;
- “Partial” submissions; joint submissions.



The Commission and the scientific community

- The Commission may cooperate, to the extent considered necessary and useful, with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, the International Hydrographic Organization and other competent international organizations with a view to exchanging scientific and technical information which might be of assistance in discharging the Commission's responsibilities.
- Participation in various scientific and technical forums (most recently in the 33rd International Geology Congress, Oslo 6-14 August 2008).



The Commission and the Secretariat of the United Nations

Legal, logistical and technical support

Receiving/processing submissions from coastal States and giving publicity to their executive summaries

Organizing and servicing the meetings of the Commission and its Subcommissions

Facilitating the consideration of submissions by the Commission and its Subcommissions



Organizing and servicing the meetings

Secretariat undertakes the following activities:

- ◆ Arrangements for the meetings of the Commission and its sub-commissions;
- ◆ Arrangements for meeting of the Commission/Subcommission with the representatives of coastal State and its technical experts;
- ◆ Provision of GIS laboratories and other facilities.



Geographic Information System services

- ◆ Compilation of data contained in the submission into a consistent GIS format;
- ◆ Calculation of geodetic distances, (using a number of different methods);
- ◆ Facilitating the analysis of the 2D data;
- ◆ Facilitating the analysis of the 3D data;
- ◆ Research for additional scientific or bathymetric information and its incorporation into the consistent GIS format.



Geographic Information System services

- Compilation of data contained in the submission into a consistent GIS format;
- Calculation of geodetic distances, using a number of different methods;
- Facilitating the analysis of the 2D data;
- Facilitating the analysis of the 3D data;
- Research for additional scientific or bathymetric information and its incorporation into the consistent GIS format.



Software packages required by the Commission

- ESRI ArcGIS
- Caris LotS
- GeoCap
- GeoSoft
- Marzone
- Surfer
- ERDAS Imagine
- Fiedermas



Thank you for your attention!



Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS)
Office of Legal affairs, United Nations