

## Exclusive Economic Zone

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### DEFINITION

- An exclusive economic zone (EEZ) is a sea zone prescribed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea over which a state has special rights regarding the exploration and use of marine resources, including energy production from water and wind.
- Exclusive Economic Zones give countries the exclusive right to develop resources within them and can be used for anything, including offshore wind farms, natural gas and oil extraction and/or access to finishing grounds.
- The concept is a relatively recent one, only having been agreed to in 1982 at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. Previously, territorial waters, which are defined as extending up to 12 nautical miles (22km) off a country's coast, had been used as the basis for economic activity.

### Continental Shelf

- The boundary of a continent is not its coastline, but the edge of the continental shelf that lies under the ocean.
- Even though it is underwater, continental shelf is part of the continent and contains the sea-bed and subsoil of the submarine areas that extend beyond the territorial sea.
- Coastal nations have control of all resources on or under it, living or not, but no control over any living organisms above the shelf that are beyond its exclusive economic zone.

### Law of the sea convention 1982

- Established the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) for the coastal states (200 nautical miles from the coastline)
- 90 % of the marine fish stocks are found inside the EEZs
- Fisheries disputes remained

### Deep-sea fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone of India, resources, performance and new approaches to development

- The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India, declared in 1977, placed an onus on the country to exploit fully the living and non-living marine fishery resources.
- The potential of marine fishery resources of the EEZ was revalidated at 3.92 million L, of which, currently, 3.20 m .t are being exploited mainly from the coastal area.
- The balance of less than one million t. comprising mainly the underexploited and unexploited resources needs to be harvested from the offshore and deep sea regions.
- The recent successful indigenous efforts at deep-sea fishing needs to be encouraged and supported from all angles, by putting an end to foreign invasions for fishing in the Indian EEZ.

### Country-By-Country Examples

- There are many countries which have their own exclusive economic zones. Some examples for a few such countries are described below:
- **Australia:** It stands third in EEZ area, and is behind the countries of the United States of America and France and leads in this regard over Russia. Its area extends to 200 nautical miles from its coastline to the external maritime territories. It was also allotted an area of 2.5 million square kilometers in the Australian seabed.
- **Canada:** The area covered under the Canadian EEZ includes the marine waters of Hudson Bay, the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, and the water areas of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago.

- **Mexico:** The total area covered under the Mexican EEZ is 3,144,295 square kilometers.
- **United Kingdom:** The country has the fifth largest EEZ area of 6,805,586 square kilometers. Includes the zones of Crown Dependencies and British Overseas Territories.
- **Brazil:** The areas included in the maritime boundary of the country are St. Paul, the Fernando de Noronha Islands, the St. Peter Archipelago out to Trinidad, and even the Martim Islands. In the year 2004, it submitted an exclusive request to increase its continental margins.
- **India:** The country claims a total area of 2,305,143 square kilometres under its EEZ, but with this India is also planning to increase it by 350 square miles.

**Suggested reading**

- James, P S B R (2014) *Deep-sea fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone of India, resources, performance and new approaches to development*. In: Marine Biology. The National Academy of Sciences, pp. 100-123.
- <http://brilliantmaps.com/territorial-waters/>
- <http://www.fao.org/docrep/s5280t/s5280t0p.htm>