

Chapter 5: Law of the Sea

Glossary

Baseline: boundary between a state's territory and international waters

Common heritage of mankind: the principle that certain natural resources belong to mankind as a whole and should be protected from exploitation

Common seabed: seabed in which no individual state has jurisdiction

Contiguous zone: sea zone outside of a territorial sea over which the state has limited law enforcement rights; extends up to 12 n.m.

Continental shelf: seabed in which a coastal state has exclusive rights over natural resources; extends 200 n.m. or more, depending on topography

Delimitation: the allocation of legal rights when multiple states claim jurisdiction over the same area

Diplomatic protection: assertion of legal claims by a state on behalf of private individuals (including ships)

Equidistance method: a geographic technique for drawing a line—called the equidistance or median line—that is equally distant from each state

Flag state: the state in which a ship is registered

Exclusive economic zone: sea zone in which coastal states can regulate economic activities and natural resource conservation; extends up to 200 n.m.

High seas: water in which no state has jurisdiction

Hot pursuit: a legal doctrine that allows a state to preserve its law enforcement authority if it follows certain procedures while pursuing crime suspects at sea

Inter-generational equity: the claim that current generations of humans should leave ample resources for future generations

Internal waters: water bodies that lie within a state's baseline

Mare clausum: "closed seas"; the principle that a state can claim exclusive jurisdiction over the sea

Mare liberum: "open seas"; the principle that no state can claim jurisdiction over the sea

Right to innocent passage: right of foreign ships to travel through a territorial sea, subject to specified constraints

Sovereign immunity: legal rules that protect a state and its activities from the jurisdiction of domestic courts in foreign states

Territorial sea: sea zone that lies outside of a state's baseline, but over which the state has exclusive jurisdiction; extends up to 12 n.m.

Universal jurisdiction: use of a state's domestic law and institutions to regulate behavior that occurs outside of its domestic territory, does not involve its nationals, and does not have systematic or important effects on itself