

**Act No. 10 of 4 August 1978 establishing rules concerning  
the Territorial Sea, the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Continental Shelf  
and regulating other matters**

**Article 1**

The territorial sea of the Colombian nation, over which the latter exercises full sovereignty, shall extend beyond its mainland and island territory and internal waters to a distance of 12 nautical miles or 22 kilometres, 224 metres.

National sovereignty shall also extend to the space over the territorial sea as well as to its bed and subsoil.

**Article 2**

Ships of all States shall enjoy the right of innocent passage through the territorial sea, in accordance with the rules of international law.

**Article 3**

The outer limit of the territorial sea shall be constituted by a line every point of which is 12 nautical miles from the nearest point of the baseline referred to in the next article.

**Article 4**

The normal baseline for measuring the breadth of the territorial sea is the low-water line along the coast. In localities where the coast is deeply indented or cut into, or if there is a fringe of islands along the coast in its immediate vicinity, measurements shall be made from straight baselines joining appropriate points. Waters on the landward side of the baselines shall be considered as internal waters.

**Article 5**

In the case of gulfs and bays whose natural entrance points are separated by no more than 24 miles, the territorial sea shall be measured from a line of demarcation joining the natural entrance points. The waters enclosed thereby shall be considered as internal waters.

If the mouth of the gulf or bay exceeds 24 miles in width, a straight baseline of that length may be drawn within it in such a manner as to enclose the maximum area of water possible.

**Article 6**

In the case of rivers which flow directly into the sea, the baseline shall be a straight line across the mouth of the river between points on the low-tide line of its banks.

**Article 7**

An exclusive economic zone shall be established adjacent to the territorial sea; the zone shall extend to an outer limit of 200 nautical miles measured from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured.

**Article 8**

In the zone established by the preceding article, the Colombian nation shall exercise sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring, exploiting, conserving and managing the living and non-living natural resources of the seabed, the subsoil and the superjacent waters; it shall also have exclusive jurisdiction for scientific research and the preservation of the marine environment.

**Article 9**

In pursuance of this Act, the Government shall identify the lines referred to in the preceding articles relating to its continental territory, the archipelago of San Andrés y Providencia, and other island territories; the said lines shall be published in the official maritime charts in accordance with the relevant international rules.

**Article 10**

National sovereignty shall extend to the continental shelf for the purposes of exploring and exploiting its natural resources.

**Article 11**

The national Government shall be empowered for a period of 12 months from the promulgation of this Act to adopt measures, to reorganize national administrative agencies and units or to establish such new agencies and units as may be deemed necessary, in order to ensure the policing and defence of Colombian maritime areas and to make appropriate use of the living and non-living natural resources of such areas with a view to meeting the needs of the Colombian people and the country's economic development.

The national Government shall likewise be empowered to contract such loans and make such budgetary appropriations and transfers as it deems appropriate.

**Article 12**

Provisions contrary to this Act are hereby superseded.

**Article 13**

This Act shall enter into force with its promulgation.

Enacted in Bogota, D.E., on 25 July 1978.