

**Act of 27 July 1956 concerning the Territorial Sea,
Continental Shelf, Fishery Protection and Air-Space**

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Article 2.

The territorial sea shall be measured generally from the line of the lowest tide. When circumstances require a special régime because of the configuration of the coastline or the presence of nearby islands, or when the particular interest of a given region so justify, measurement shall be made from straight baselines.

Waters within the straight baselines shall be deemed to be internal waters forming part of the national territory.

The National Executive shall determine such straight baselines, which shall be marked on official geographical charts.

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Title II
The Continental Shelf

Article 4

The Republic of Venezuela shall own and have sovereignty over the sea-bed and subsoil of the submarine shelf adjacent to the territory of the Republic of Venezuela outside the area of the territorial sea, to a depth of 200 metres or, beyond that limit to where the depth of the waters admits of the exploitation of the resources of the sea-bed and subsoil in accordance with technical progress in exploration and exploitation. Channels, depressions or irregularities in the sea-bed of the continental shelf shall not constitute a break in the continuity of that shelf, and banks which by position or natural conditions are related to the continental shelf shall be comprised therein.

The continental shelf of the Republic of Venezuela shall include the continental shelf, as just defined, of the islands of the Republic.

Article 5

Installations necessary for the exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf shall be subject to the sovereignty of the Republic, and the Republic shall, in the safety zones which it establishes around such installations, take such measures for the protection of those installations as it considers necessary.

Article 6

In the exploration and exploitation of its continental shelf, the State shall ensure that no interference is caused to navigation, fishing or the development of fish resources. The State shall also ensure that appropriate precautions are taken with regard to the installation of electric power cables, oil pipelines and the like.

Title III
Fishery Protection

Article 7

The exploration and exploitation of the sedentary fisheries of the continental shelf of Venezuela shall be subject to the prior authorization and to the control of the national executive.

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