



INTERCONTINENTAL TRUST

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MAURITIUS: PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OCEAN ECONOMY

One of Mauritius Initiatives for 2013 – To look for strategic partners for the exploration and exploitation of its mineral resources

The Exclusive Economic Zone (“EEZ”) of the Republic of Mauritius extends over an area of about 2.3 million Km² (including approx. 400,000 Km² jointly managed with the Seychelles) and this makes Mauritius the 20th country in the world with the largest EEZ.

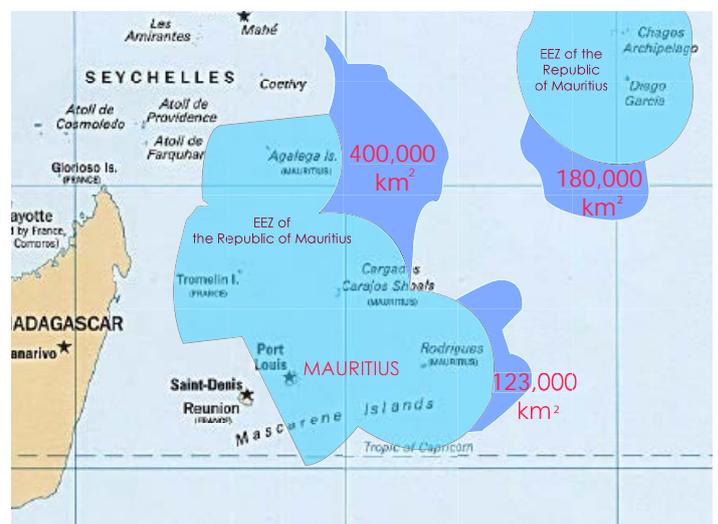
Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (“UNCLOS”), every coastal nation has a certain portion of the sea called the EEZ over which it has exclusive rights with regards to environment protection, fish stocks, exploration of mineral resources like oil, gas and metals, etc.

The 2.3 million Km² of exploitable marine resources does not only provide Mauritius with a huge maritime zone to manage but also holds a massive potential for development that can change significantly the shape of the economy.

The exercise of its rights over the EEZ and Continental Shelf means that the country will have access to potentially vast natural and mineral resources in years to come.

This economic potential covers the exploitation of living and non-living resources in the Mauritius waters, on the seabed and in the subsoil. The development of the Ocean Economy will have significant positive impact on other industries including land and sea transportation, cargo and port services. The government’s aim is to make the Ocean Economy one of the most important future contributors of GDP.

Furthermore, additional claims of 123,000 Km² and 180,000 Km² near Rodrigues and Chagos Archipelago respectively are under application.





Size Comparison

France	643,801 km ²
Spain	505,370 km ²
Germany	357,022 km ²
Italy	301,340 km ²
United Kingdom	243,610 km ²
Greece	131,957 km ²
Bulgaria	110,879 km ²

Total **Approx 2.3 Million km²**



As part of the 2012 – 2015 Government Programme, Mauritius will also:

- Make further submissions to the United Nations with respect to other parts of its continental shelf, including around the Chagos Archipelago which forms part of its territory.
- Significantly extend the economic space for investors, businesses, workers, and the entire population by setting out a concrete and practical plan for developing the Ocean economic space.
- Lay the foundations of an Ocean Economy as an unprecedented quest for the expansion of its spatial boundaries, the development of scientific knowledge and business opportunities.

The Mauritius Oceanographic Institute, which was set up in 1999, has been chosen to lead the nation on this great journey which will shape the future of generations to come. All fundamental and applied research on the ocean industry will be carried out under the aegis of the Mauritius Oceanographic Institute.

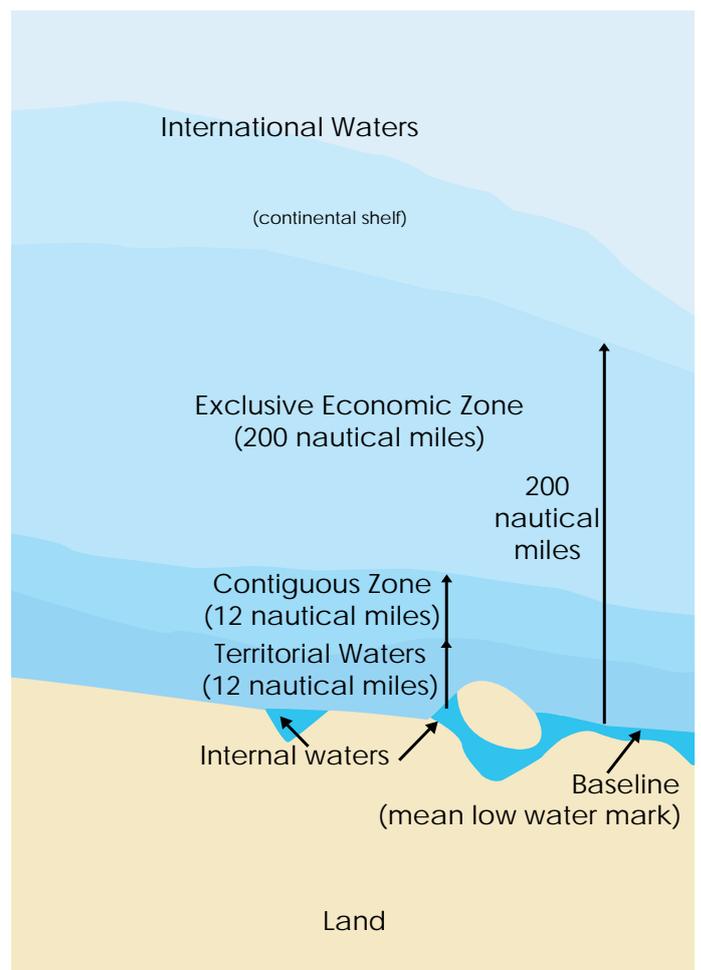
Exclusive Economic Zone (“EEZ”)

According to the UNCLOS, the EEZ is an area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea which is subject to a specific legal regime, under which the rights and jurisdiction of the coastal State and the rights and freedoms of other States are governed by the relevant provisions of this Convention, primarily:

- the coastal State has sovereign rights over fisheries, production of energy from water, currents and winds.
- the coastal State can exercise jurisdiction over artificial islands, marine scientific research and environment protection and

- other States can enjoy freedom of navigation and over-flight, the right to lay and operate submarine cables and pipelines whilst having due regard to the rights and duties of the coastal State.

The EEZ starts at the coastal baseline and extends 200 nautical miles out into the sea, perpendicular to the baseline.



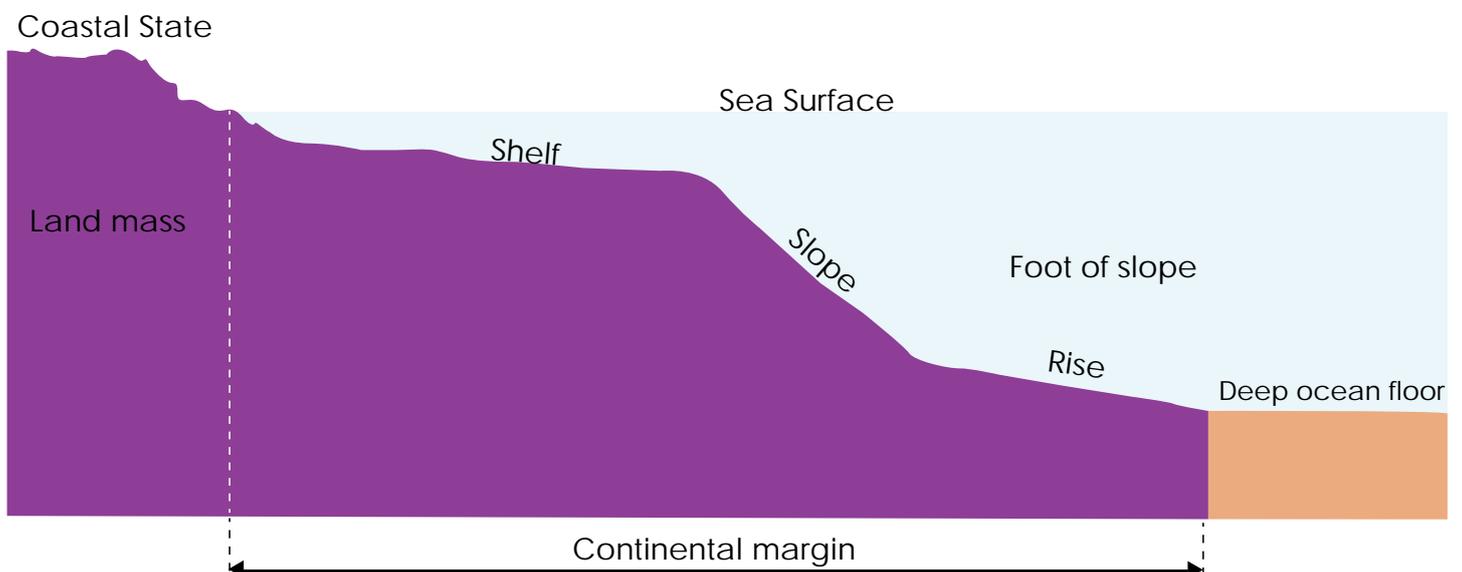
Continental Shelf

In geological terms, the continental shelf of a coastal State is described as the extended perimeter of each continent and associated coastal plain, and was part of the continent during the glacial periods. However, in this present era which is called “the interglacial periods the continental shelf is now submerged by relatively shallow seas.

Under UNCLOS, the term “continental shelf” was given a legal definition as the stretch of the seabed adjacent to the shores of the particular country to which it belongs. According to UNCLOS, the continental shelf of a coastal State comprises the submerged prolongation of the land territory of the coastal State—the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas that extend beyond its territorial sea to the outer edge of the continental margin, or to a distance of 200 nautical miles where the outer edge of the continental margin does not extend up to that distance.

The continental margin consists of the seabed and subsoil of the shelf, the slope and the rise. It does not include the deep ocean floor with its oceanic ridges or the subsoil thereof. The continental rise is below the slope, but landward of the abyssal plains. Its gradient is intermediate between the slope and the shelf, on the order of 0.5-1.0. Extending from the slope, it normally consists of thick sediments deposited by turbidity currents from the shelf and slope. Sediment cascades down the slope and accumulates as a pile of sediment at the base of the slope, called the continental rise.

However, some continental margins, like in the Mascarene Plateau region, do not necessarily consist of a continental rise. The foot of the continental slope is normally located between the rise and the slope. However, in the absence of a rise, it is taken as a point where the maximum change in gradient occurs between the slope and the deep seabed.



United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (“UNCLOS”)

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (“UNCLOS”), which applies to 162 States, as well as to the European Community, and whose principles are being followed by many other States, is a multilateral convention which seeks to regulate the rights of States in the different maritime zones and the high seas, including freedom of navigation, protection of the marine environment and the right to exploit, use and own marine resources.

This Convention is the international agreement that resulted from the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III), which took place from 1973 to 1982. UNCLOS came into force on 16 November 1994.

It sets out clear criteria for the establishment of the various maritime zones such as the territorial sea, the Exclusive Economic Zone and the continental shelf. Part VI (articles. 76-85) of UNCLOS deals with the coastal State’s rights in relation to the continental shelf, including any extended continental shelf.

One of the most significant achievements of UNCLOS is that it regulates the exploitation of natural resources found in the continental shelf of a coastal State and those found in the international seabed area beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.



Sources: • Mauritius Oceanography Institute • Republic of Mauritius Government Programme 2012-2015 • Central Intelligence Agency – The World Fact Book • The World Bank

For any additional information please contact us:

MAURITIUS

Email: info@intercontinentaltrust.com
Web Site: www.intercontinentaltrust.com

SEYCHELLES

Email: seychelles@intercontinentaltrust.sc
Web Site: www.intercontinentaltrust.sc

SOUTH AFRICA (Representative Office)

Email: nmckean@intercontinentaltrust.com
Web Site: www.intercontinentaltrust.com

SINGAPORE

Email: singapore@intercontinentaltrust.com.sg
Web Site: www.intercontinentaltrust.com.sg

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