

Act No. 15/1978 on the Economic Zone of 20 February 1978

Article 1

1. In a belt of sea to be called the exclusive economic zone, which shall extend from the outer limit of the Spanish territorial sea for a distance of 200 nautical miles from the base lines used to measure the breadth of the territorial sea, the Spanish State shall have sovereign rights for the purposes of exploring and exploiting the natural resources of the seabed, subsoil thereof and its superjacent waters.

In the case of archipelagos, the outer limit of the economic zone shall be measured from straight base lines joining the outermost points of the islands and islets forming the archipelagos, so that the resulting perimeter conforms to the general configuration of each archipelago.

2. In accordance with the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the rights of the Spanish State shall include:

- (a) The exclusive right to the natural resources of the Zone;
- (b) The authority to enact regulations concerning the preservation of, exploration for and exploitation of such resources with a view to the protection of the protection of the marine environment;
- (c) Exclusive jurisdiction to enforce all relevant measures;
- (d) Such other rights as may be determined by the Government in accordance with international law.

Article 2

1. Except as provided in international treaties with States whose coasts are opposite or adjacent to Spanish coasts, the outer limit of the economic zone shall be the median or equidistant line.

2. For the purposes of this article, "median or equidistant line" shall mean the line every point of which is equidistant from the nearest points on the base lines drawn in accordance with international law from which the breadth of the territorial sea of each State is measured.

In the case of archipelagos, the median or equidistant line shall be determined on the basis of the archipelagic perimeter drawn in accordance with article 1, paragraph 1.

Article 3

1. Fishing in the economic zone shall be reserved for Spanish nationals, and subject to agreements between the Governments concerned, to nationals of those countries whose fishing vessels have habitually fished in the zone.

2. Foreign fishermen not covered by the preceding paragraph may not fish in the economic zone, except as provided in international treaties to which Spain is a party.

Article 4

The provisions of Law No. 93/1962 of 24 December setting forth penalties for fishing violations committed by foreign vessels shall be applicable in the economic zone.

Article 5

1. The establishment of an economic zone shall not affect the freedom of navigation, the freedom of overflight and the freedom to lay submarine cables.
2. In the exercise of the freedom of navigation, foreign fishing vessels must comply with Spanish laws designed to prevent such vessels from fishing in the economic zone, including the laws concerning the carrying of fishing tackle.

FINAL PROVISIONS

1. The application of the provisions of this law shall be limited to the Atlantic coasts of Spain, both of the mainland and the islands, including the coasts on the Cantabrian Sea; the Government shall have the right to extend these provisions to other coasts of Spain.
2. Law No. 93/1962 of 24 December setting forth penalties for fishing violations committed by foreign vessels, Law No. 20/1967 of 8 April on the extension of the reserved fishing belt and any other laws which are contrary to the provisions of this Law shall be amended as may be necessary for the application of this Law.
3. The Government and the competent official bodies shall adopt the necessary measures for the application of this Law.