THE COMMISSION ON THE LIMITS OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF (CLCS)
Legal Continental Shelf
(UNCLOS Art 76)

- **Dry Land**
- **Low Water Baseline**
- **Geological Continental Shelf**
- **Slope**
- **Foot of Slope**
- **Foot of slope + 60 nm**
- **Foot of slope + 1% sediment**
- **MAX LIMIT**
- **Sediments**

*d = distance from 1% sediment thickness to foot of slope
** = Legal Continental Shelf (whichever is the greatest)
Purpose of the Commission

- Examine Submissions
- Provide Advice
Organization of the Commission

- Officers
- Subsidiary bodies
- Sub-Commission
Planning For a Submission to the CLCS

A multi-disciplinary approach involving the following professionals:

- Hydrographer
- Geologist
- Geophysicist
- Geodesist
- Legal
- Finance
- GIS Officers
- Coordinator
Matters To Be Considered

During the planning process, there are matters that need serious consideration. These include:

- Unresolved maritime boundaries that may affect the claim
- Any issue of overlapping claims
The Desktop Study

In order to minimize cost a desktop study is done to estimate the following:

• The extent of the area
• The amount of work involved
• The personnel required
• The cost
• The area where work needs to be done
Data Requirements

- Data for the Desktop Study – from organizations holding data sets for the world oceans
- Minimum for submission – bathymetric profiles, seismic profiles.
- Supporting data – images from:
  - Magnetic surveys
  - Gravity surveys
  - Multibeam surveys
Data Analysis

• Determination of constraint lines
  o 2500 metre isobath + 100 nautical miles
  o 350 nautical miles from baseline

• Determine outer limit of continental shelf using:
  o 1% sediment thickness formula
  o Foot of slope + 60 nautical miles

• Calculate outer limit
Identification of The Foot of The Continental Slope

Defined as the maximum change in gradient at the base of the slope, this requires:

• General idea of seabed morphology

• Bathymetric profiles

• Supportive images
Geology, Geomorphology, and Potential FOS
2,500 m isobath plus 100 M constraint
350 M distance constraint
Foot of the continental slope plus 1% sediment thickness formula
Foot of the continental slope plus 60 M formula
Format of the Submission to the CLCS

The CLCS requires the submission to be done in three (3) parts:

- Executive summary
- Main Body
- List of supporting documents
Preparing the Submission

• **The executive summary consists of:**
  o Introduction
  o Area
  o Provisions of Article 76 invoked
  o Delimitation Issues
  o Statement on Commission members providing advice
  o Coordinates and information relating to the final outer limits

• **Main Body**
  o Geomorphology of the area
  o Demonstration of natural prolongation
  o Description and Analysis
  o Foot of slope selection
Preparing the Submission cont’d...

- **Main Body**
  - Selection of outer limits
  - References

- **Supporting Documents**
  - Charts
  - Coordinates
  - Any other supporting information
Presentation of the Submission

- Submission is presented to the UN Secretary General
- Due publicity is given in accordance with UN rules
- CLCS convene meeting to examine submission.
- Submission is presented by coastal state representative
- Nomination and selection of members of sub-commission who will examine submission
- Arrangements made for meeting of sub-commission
Preliminary Assessment of the Submission

The sub-commission will first make a preliminary assessment of the submission to ascertain the following:

• The format complies with that specified by the commission
• If there is a need for any clarification by the submitting coastal state
• If there are relevant disputes to be considered
• If there is a need for specialist advice, whether from within the commission or external

The sub-commission will then report back to the Commission on requirements and estimated time to examine the submission.
Examination of the Submission

- Sub-commission considers all relevant data submitted
- Sub-commission arrives at final decision
- Sub-commission reports back to the Commission
Cost

Collection of data involves:

• Technical Personnel
• Ship & Crew
• Equipment
Benefits

• Potential for hydrocarbons

• Fisheries

• Minerals

The cost involves in the data collection could be recovered by dividing the area into blocks which can be sold to oil companies for Petroleum exploration.
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