

Maritime Zones of Maldives Act No. 6/96

Introduction

1. This Act makes provision in respect of the internal waters, territorial sea and contiguous zone and the exclusive economic zone of Maldives. This Act shall be cited as “Maritime Zones of Maldives Act”.

Internal waters

2. The inland waters of every atoll of Maldives, lagoons and reefs of islands shall be the internal waters of Maldives. In addition to these waters, the Government of Maldives has the right to designate, in accordance with the rule of international law, other maritime areas as internal waters of Maldives.

Archipelagic waters

3. Save the internal waters of Maldives as determined under section 2 of this Act, the maritime area contained within the archipelagic baselines established in accordance with Schedule 1 to this Act shall be the archipelagic waters of Maldives.

Territorial sea

4. The maritime area contained within 12 nautical miles measured from the archipelagic baselines established in accordance with Schedule 1 to this Act shall be the territorial sea of Maldives.

Contiguous zone

5. The maritime area contained within 12 nautical miles measured from the outer limits of the territorial sea as determined under section 4 of this Act shall be the contiguous zone of Maldives.

Exclusive economic zone

6. The maritime area adjacent to and beyond the territorial sea as determined under section 4 of this Act together with the seabed thereof up to 200 nautical miles measured from the archipelagic baselines as established in accordance with Schedule 1 to this Act shall be the exclusive economic zone of Maldives.

Overlap between the exclusive zone of Maldives and the exclusive economic zone of another State

7. In the event that the exclusive economic zone of Maldives as determined under section 6 of this Act overlaps with the exclusive economic zone of another State, this Act does not prohibit the Government of Maldives from entering into an agreement with that State as regards the area of overlapping and delimiting the exclusive economic zone of Maldives for the said area of overlapping.

Sovereignty

8. In addition to the land territory of Maldives and the airspace thereabove, the sovereignty of Maldives shall extend to the internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial sea, together with the seabed and subsoil and airspace thereof.

Sovereign rights

9. Within its exclusive economic zone, Maldives shall have sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources contained therein, whether living or non-living, and with regard to other activities for purposes of the economic exploitation of the zone. Economic exploitation of the natural resources found in the zone by persons other than nationals of Maldives or the conduct of scientific research within the zone as well as the construction, operation and use of any artificial island installation or structure within the zone for any of the foregoing purposes shall be subject to authorization from the Government of Maldives.

Jurisdiction over contiguous zone

10. Maldives may exercise within the contiguous zone the control necessary to prevent infringement of its customs, fiscal, immigration or sanitary laws and regulations within the territory of Maldives and its territorial sea and to punish the infringement of the above laws and regulations committed within the territory and the territorial sea of Maldives.

Entry of foreign vessel into Maldives internal waters

11. No foreign vessel shall enter the internal waters of Maldives except with prior authorization from the Government of Maldives in accordance with the laws and regulations of Maldives.

Entry into archipelagic waters

12. Foreign vessels shall have the right of continuous and expeditious archipelagic passage in the sea lanes designated by the Government of Maldives from among international navigation channels. Such passage shall be in accordance with the regulations made under this Act.

Entry into the territorial sea

13. (a) Save such vessels engaged in innocent passage compatible with international laws, no vessel shall enter the territorial sea of Maldives except in accordance with the laws and regulations of Maldives.

(a) No foreign warship or foreign nuclear-powered ship or ship carrying nuclear or other inherently dangerous or noxious substances shall enter the territorial sea of Maldives for any purpose except with prior authorization of the Government of Maldives and in accordance with the laws and regulations of Maldives.

Entry into the exclusive economic zone

14. No foreign vessel shall enter the exclusive economic zone of Maldives except with prior authorization from the Government of Maldives in accordance with the laws of Maldives.

Entry into and passage through the airspace

15. (a) Except in accordance with international standards and applicable regulations in force in Maldives, no foreign aircraft shall engage in any overflight across the airspace or via air routes above the land territory, internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial sea of Maldives. Except as provided above, no aircraft shall enter the foregoing airspace or air routes.

(b) No foreign military aircraft shall engage in overflight across the airspace or air routes specified in subsection (a) of this section except with the authorization of the Government of Maldives. Except as provided above, no military aircraft shall enter the foregoing airspace or air routes.

Rights under international law

16. In addition to matters provided in this Act, Maldives shall enjoy in relation to its maritime zones all other rights and jurisdiction States enjoy under international law as regards maritime zones.

Regulations

17. The Government of Maldives has the jurisdiction to adopt regulations in respect of the maritime zones of Maldives and airspace thereabove.

Definitions

18. In this Act:

(a) *Archipelagic baseline* shall mean the lines established in accordance with the coordinates specified in Schedule 1 to this Act;

(b) *Nautical mile* shall mean the international nautical mile consisting of 1852 metres;

(c) *Warships* shall mean naval vessels and vessels of such description that could be engaged in warfare due to the weapons on board such vessels;

(d) *Military aircraft* shall mean air force aeroplanes of such description that could be engaged in warfare due to the weapons on board such planes.

Repeal

19. Law No. 30/76 (Law relating to the exclusive economic zone of Maldives) and Law No. 32/76 (Law relating to the navigation and passage by foreign ships and aircraft through the airspace, territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Maldives) shall be repealed upon this Act taking effect.

SCHEDULE 1

Archipelagic base points of Maldives

Serial

No.

Point code Latitude Longitude

1. B1 07° 03' 54" N 72° 47' 45" E
2. B2 07° 04' 35" N 72° 48' 07" E
3. B3 07° 04' 47" N 72° 48' 21" E
4. B4 07° 05' 44" N 72° 50' 34" E
5. B5 07° 06' 35" N 72° 53' 50" E
6. B6 07° 06' 35" N 72° 54' 13" E
7. B7 06° 58' 07" N 73° 12' 46" E
8. B8 06° 57' 37" N 73° 13' 14" E
9. B9 06° 55' 31" N 73° 13' 53" E
10. B10 05° 23' 20" N 73° 38' 20" E
11. B11 05° 22' 05" N 73° 39' 31" E
12. B12 04° 27' 28" N 73° 43' 21" E
13. B13 03° 27' 27" N 73° 46' 13" E
14. B14 02° 08' 04" N 73° 35' 10" E
15. B15 00° 25' 51" N 73° 35' 18" E
16. B16 00° 18' 25" N 73° 26' 37" E
17. B17 00° 39' 45" S 73° 13' 07" E
18. B18 00° 41' 30" S 73° 11' 12" E
19. B19 00° 42' 22" S 73° 10' 02" E
20. B20 00° 42' 24" S 73° 09' 08" E
21. B21 00° 42' 11" S 73° 08' 40" E
22. B22 00° 41' 13" S 73° 07' 30" E
23. B23 00° 40' 23" S 73° 06' 52" E
24. B24 00° 39' 18" S 73° 06' 23" E
25. B25 00° 35' 33" S 73° 04' 33" E
26. B26 00° 23' 55" N 73° 00' 08" E
27. B27 00° 29' 21" N 73° 59' 09" E
28. B28 00° 32' 22" N 72° 59' 38" E
29. B29 02° 25' 09" N 72° 53' 05" E
30. B30 02° 47' 50" N 72° 49' 14" E
31. B31 03° 37' 38" N 72° 41' 49" E
32. B32 03° 47' 09" N 72° 41' 49" E
33. B33 03° 52' 15" N 72° 42' 03" E
34. B34 04° 01' 50" N 72° 42' 11" E
35. B35 04° 05' 13" N 72° 42' 36" E
36. B36 04° 13' 46" N 72° 44' 14" E
37. B37 06° 14' 12" N 72° 33' 19" E

Annex 2
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Article 47
Archipelagic baselines

1. An archipelagic State may draw straight archipelagic baselines joining the outermost points of the outermost islands and drying reefs of the archipelago provided that within such baselines are included the main islands and an area in which the ratio of the area of the water to the area of the land, including atolls, is between 1 to 1 and 9 to 1.
2. The length of such baselines shall not exceed 100 nautical miles, except that up to 3 per cent of the total number of baselines enclosing any archipelago may exceed that length, up to a maximum length of 125 nautical miles.
3. The drawing of such baselines shall not depart to any appreciable extent from the general configuration of the archipelago.
4. Such baselines shall not be drawn to and from low-tide elevations, unless lighthouses or similar installations which are permanently above sea level have been built on them or where a low-tide elevation is situated wholly or partly at a distance not exceeding the breadth of the territorial sea from the nearest island.
5. The system of such baselines shall not be applied by an archipelagic State in such a manner as to cut off from the high seas or the exclusive economic zone the territorial sea of another State.
6. If a part of the archipelagic waters of an archipelagic State lies between two parts of an immediately adjacent neighbouring State, existing rights and all other legitimate interests which the latter State has traditionally exercised in such waters and all rights stipulated by agreement between those States shall continue and be respected.
7. For the purpose of computing the ratio of water to land under paragraph 1, land areas may include waters lying within the fringing reefs of islands and atolls, including that part of a steep-sided oceanic plateau which is enclosed or nearly enclosed by a chain of limestone islands and drying reefs lying on the perimeter of the plateau.
8. The baselines drawn in accordance with this article shall be shown on charts of a scale or scales adequate for ascertaining their position. Alternatively, lists of geographical coordinates of points, specifying the geodetic datum, may be substituted.
9. The archipelagic State shall give due publicity to such charts or lists of geographical coordinates and shall deposit a copy of each such chart or list with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Annex 3

Maldives Archipelagic Straight Baselines

Segment - Segment distance (n.miles)

1-2	0.8	19-20	0.9
2-3	0.3	20-21	0.5
3-4	2.3	21-22	1.5
4-5	3.6	22-23	1.0
5-6	0.2	23-24	1.2
6-7	20.3	24-25	4.2
7-8	0.7	25-26	59.3
8-9	1.1	26-27	5.5
9-10	98.1	27-28	3.0
10-11	1.3	28-29	112.4
11-12	54.5	29-30	22.9
12-13	59.8	30-31	50.1
13-14	79.8	31-32	9.5
14-15	101.7	32-33	5.1
15-16	11.4	33-34	9.5
16-17	59.4	34-35	3.4
17-18	2.6	35-36	8.7
18-19	1.4	36-37	120.3
		37-1	51.5