

Act No. 9/84
establishing an exclusive economic zone of 200 nautical miles

Article 1

A maritime zone, called the exclusive economic zone, shall be established, situated beyond Gabonese territorial waters and adjacent thereto.

Article 2

The exclusive economic zone shall extend for a distance of 200 nautical miles, calculated from the straight baselines and normal baselines that serve to measure the breadth of the territorial sea.

Article 3

Within its exclusive economic zone, the Gabonese State shall have sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources, whether living or non-living, of the sea-bed, its subsoil and superjacent waters.

The sovereignty of the Gabonese State shall be asserted through its right to undertake the economic exploitation and exploration of this zone, for example for the production of energy from the water, currents and winds.

Article 4

In this zone, the Gabonese State shall have the exclusive right to construct, use and exploit and to authorize and regulate the construction, operation and use of artificial islands, installations and structures for the purposes provided for in article 3 above and other economic purposes.

Article 6

All ships must respect these safety zones and shall comply with generally accepted international standards regarding navigation in the vicinity of artificial islands, installations, structures and safety zones.

Article 7

The Gabonese State shall have exclusive jurisdiction over such artificial islands, installations and structures, including jurisdiction with regard to customs, fiscal, health, safety and immigration laws and regulations.

Article 8

The Gabonese State shall have exclusive competence within its exclusive economic zone with respect to marine scientific research and the preservation of the marine environment.

Article 9

In the exclusive economic zone, priority fishing rights shall be reserved for vessels flying the Gabonese flag or operated by Gabonese nationals or by legal entities under Gabonese law.

Article 10

The Gabonese State shall determine the allowable catch of the living resources in its exclusive economic zone and shall ensure through proper conservation and management measures that its resources are not overexploited.

Article 11

Where the outer limits of the exclusive economic zone as determined in accordance with the provisions of article 2 above encroach on the exclusive economic zone of a bordering or neighbouring State, joint limits shall be established by agreement with the State in question or in accordance with the generally recognized principles of international law on delimitation.

Article 12

Beyond the outer limit of the territorial sea, the establishment of the exclusive economic zone shall not affect the freedoms of navigation, of overflight and of the laying of submarine cables and pipelines, or the use of the sea for other internationally authorized purposes related to the exercise of such freedoms.

Article 13

In exercising the freedoms referred to in article 12 above, foreign States and their nationals shall take into account the sovereign rights of the Gabonese State and respect its laws and regulations in accordance with international law.

Article 14

Any foreign vessel exercising the freedoms referred to in article 12 above shall be prohibited from engaging in the exclusive economic zone in any fishing activity, including the stowage of fishing equipment and gear, research and any pollution or endangerment of the marine environment harmful to the resources of the zone or to the economic interests of the Gabonese State.

Article 15

Over an area described as the contiguous zone, situated beyond the territorial sea and adjacent to it and extending up to a distance of 24 nautical miles calculated from the straight baselines and the normal baselines which serve to measure the breadth of the territorial sea, the Gabonese State shall exercise the control necessary to:

- Prevent infringement of its customs, fiscal, sanitation or immigration laws and regulations;
- Punish infringement of the above laws and regulations committed within its territory or territorial sea.

Article 16

The provisions of this Act shall not be an obstacle to the principles of international co-operation to which the Gabonese State subscribes and which have been embodied in agreements with other States, without prejudice to its sovereign rights and to respect for its legitimate interests.

Article 17

This Act, which supersedes all previous conflicting provisions, shall be registered, issued in accordance with emergency procedures and implemented as a law of the State.