

ANNEX I

Preliminary Information Indicative of the Outer Limits of the Continental Shelf and Description of the Status of Preparation and Intended Date Of Submission Pursuant to Article 76 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

**The Commonwealth of the Bahamas
May 11th, 2009**

1. Introduction

1. The Commonwealth of The Bahamas is a party to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, (“UNCLOS” or “the Convention”), having signed the Convention on December 10, 1982 and ratified July 29, 1983. The Bahamas is cognizant of its obligation, under Article 76(8) of UNCLOS, to submit information to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (“the Commission”) on the limits of the continental shelf of The Bahamas, where the continental shelf extends beyond 200 nautical miles.
2. Article 4, Annex II of UNCLOS provided that, where a coastal State intends to establish the outer limits of its continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles, it “shall submit particulars” of the limits to the Commission, along with supporting scientific and technical data, within 10 years of the entry into force of the Convention for that State. In the case of The Bahamas, which had ratified the Convention in 1983, UNCLOS entered into force on November 16, 1994, 12 months after the deposit of the deposit of the sixtieth instrument of ratification or accession.
3. The Eleventh Meeting of States Parties to the Convention, in 2001, decided¹ that for States Parties for which the Convention had entered into force before May 13, 1999, “it is understood that the ten-year time period referred to in article 4 of Annex II to the Convention shall be taken to have commenced on 13 May 1999...”. (SPLOS/72,

¹ “Decision regarding the date of commencement of the ten-year period for making submissions to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf set out in article 4 of Annex II to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea”; SPLOS/72; 29 May 2001.

- 29 May 2001, paragraph (a)). Accordingly, for The Bahamas the time period for submission referred to in Article 4, Annex II of UNCLOS expires 13 May 2009.
4. The Eleventh Meeting of States Parties also decided that the issue of the ability of States, and in particular developing States, to fulfill the time requirements for submission would be kept under review (SPLOS/72, paragraph (b)). The Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties in 2008 decided² that it was understood that “that the time period referred to in article 4 of annex II to the Convention and the decision contained in SPLOS/72, paragraph (a), may be satisfied by submitting to the Secretary-General preliminary information indicative of the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles” and a description of the status of preparation and intended date of making a submission to the Commission under Article 76.
 5. The Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas provides the following preliminary information indicative of the outer limits of its continental shelf, and a description of the status of preparation and intended date of making a submission to the Commission under Article 76, pursuant to the *Decision regarding the workload of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and the ability of States, particularly developing States, to fulfill the requirements of article 4 of annex II to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as well as the decision contained in SPLOS/72, paragraph (a)* (SPLOS/183).
 6. The Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas notes that, pursuant to paragraph 1(c) of SPLOS/183, the provision of this preliminary information “is without prejudice to the submission in accordance with the requirements of article 76 of the Convention and with the Rules of Procedure and the Scientific and Technical Guidelines of the Commission, and the consideration of the submission by the Commission...”.
 7. The Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas further notes that pursuant to paragraph 1(c) of SPLOS/183, pending the receipt of a submission in accordance

² “Decision regarding the workload of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and the ability of States, particularly developing States, to fulfill the requirements of article 4 of annex II to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as well as the decision contained in SPLOS/72, paragraph (a)”; SPLOS/183; 20 June 2008; at paragraph 1(a).

with Article 76, the Commission shall not consider the preliminary information submitted in this document.

2. Potential Claims of Other States

8. The Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas recognizes that there may exist overlapping claims by other States to areas contained within the indicative outer limits of the continental shelf provided with this document. The preliminary information contained in this document is without prejudice to the delimitation of the extended continental shelf with opposite or adjacent States. It is provided for the sole purpose of satisfying the requirements of SPLOS/183 and Article 4, Annex II of UNCLOS.

3. Preliminary Information on Outer Limits

9. Figure 1, attached, is a graphic depiction of information indicative of the outer limits of the continental shelf in the region of the Blake Plateau, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 1 (a) SPLOS/183. This information was prepared as part of a preliminary desktop study carried out in advance of and during a workshop conducted by the Government of the Bahamas in April 2008.

3.1. Methods Employed

10. In the preparation of this preliminary information, formulae lines were delineated consistent with Article 76(7) (maximum 60 nautical mile segments), and derived from a combination of the two methods provided for in Article 76(4)(a):
 - A line delineated by “reference to the outermost fixed points at each of which the thickness of sedimentary rocks is at least 1 per cent of the shortest distance from such point to the foot of the continental slope” (Art. 76(4)(a)(i)); and
 - A line delineated by fixed points not more than 60 nautical miles from the foot of the continental slope as provided for Article 76 (Art. 76(4)(a)(ii)).

- In the delineation of both lines, the definition of the foot of the continental slope referred to in Article 76(4)(b) was employed.

11. The lines delineated in accordance with Article 76(4)(a)(i) and (ii) were constrained by a combination of the limits set out in Article 76(5):

- The fixed points comprising the line drawn in accordance with Article 76(4)(a) either are not to exceed a distance of 300 nautical miles from the baselines from which the territorial sea are measured; or
- The fixed points referred to above are not to exceed a distance of 100 nautical miles from the 2,500 metre isobath line.

3.2. Data and Software Utilized

12. The data utilized to create the lines provided for under Article 76(4)(a) and (5) included the following:

- ETOPO5 Global Bathymetric Dataset
- ETOPO2 Global Bathymetric Dataset
- GEBCO1 Global Bathymetric Dataset
- Un-processed Original (Single-Beam) Ship-tracks (GEODAS)
- Proprietary SEGY Seismic Lines (both Bathymetry and Sediment thickness information).

13. For the purposes of the preliminary desktop study, the baselines from which the territorial sea was measured were the draft archipelagic baselines of The Bahamas (2005). The archipelagic baselines have since been finalized and deposited with the Secretary General on 11 December 2008.

14. The preliminary desktop study was carried out using specialized CARISLOTS software to implement the requirements of Article 76 (4) and (5).

4. Status of Preparation and Intended Date of Submission

4.1. Status of Preparation

15. In accordance with paragraph 1(a) of SPLOS/183, the Government of the Bahamas wishes to advise that it has taken a number of steps to advance its preparations for a submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, in accordance with the requirements of Article 76 and with the Rules of Procedure and the Scientific and Technical Guidelines of the Commission. These steps include the following:

- A Committee has been established within the Government with responsibility for matters related to declaration of jurisdictional claims, delimitation of maritime boundaries with neighbouring States and preparation of a submission under Article 76;
- The CARISLOTS software was acquired and Government personnel trained in its application;
- The 2008 Workshop and preliminary desktop study were conducted, as described above, and with external technical assistance as required. Preparation for the workshop included acquisition of data as listed above;
- The archipelagic baselines of The Bahamas were defined and promulgated, and submitted to the Secretary-General in accordance with Article 47(9) of the Convention, on 11 December 2008. The definition of the baselines included, where appropriate, field verification patrols to confirm the existence, status and location of relevant geographical features.

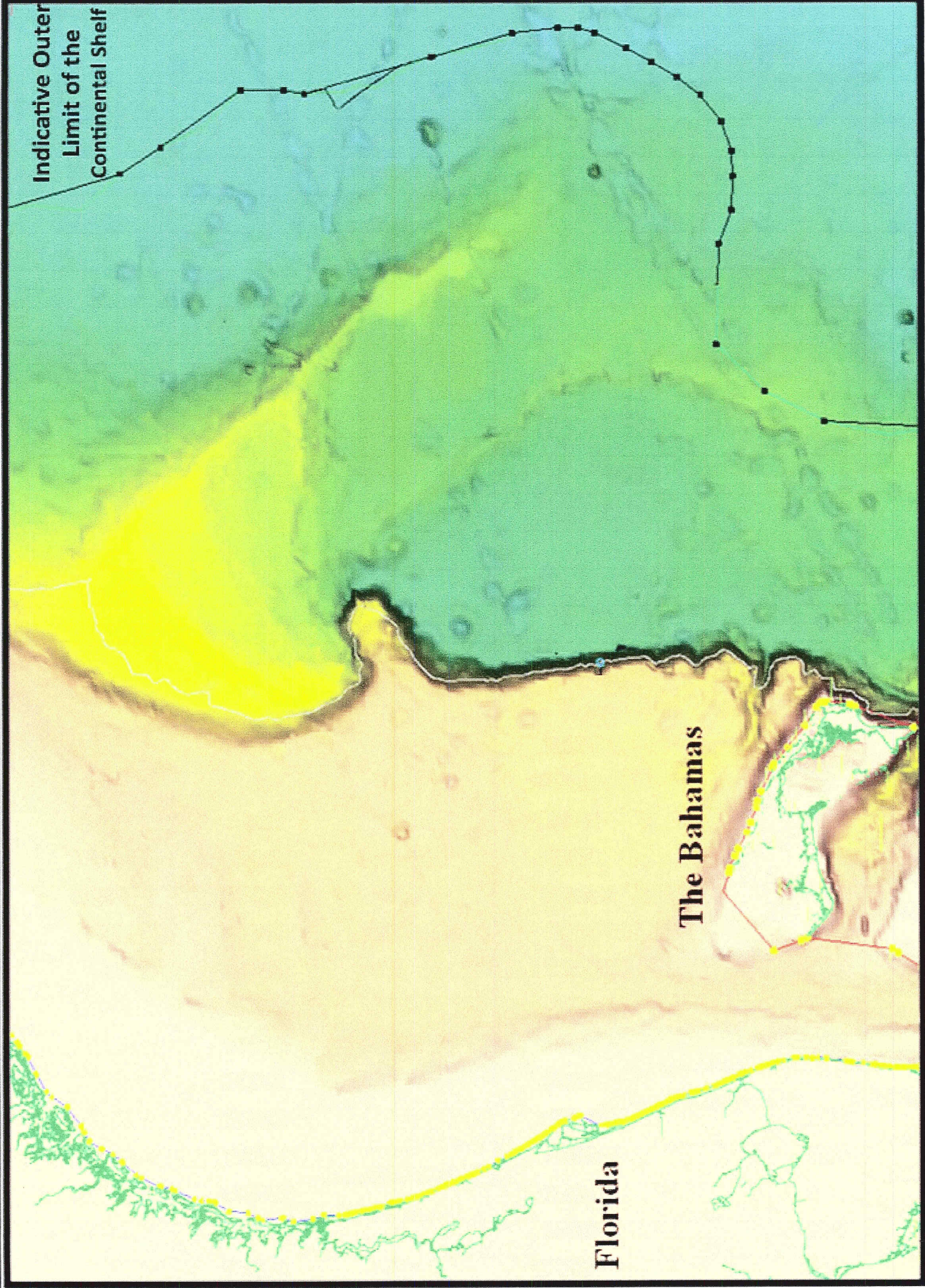
16. The Government of the Bahamas is actively pursuing further steps and planning as required for the submission under Article 76. This will include:

- Further training for technical personnel in the data analysis and methodologies required for preparation of a submission;
- Upgrading of software currently in place;
- Investigation of technical assistance available from the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and other sources;

- Acquisition of further bathymetric and sediment data required for preparation of the submission in accordance with Article 76 and the Scientific and Technical Guidelines.

17. The Government of the Bahamas intends to make a submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, in accordance with the requirements of Article 76 and with the Rules of Procedure and the Scientific and Technical Guidelines of the Commission, on or before 13 May 2019.

Indicative Outer
Limit of the
Continental Shelf



The Bahamas

Florida