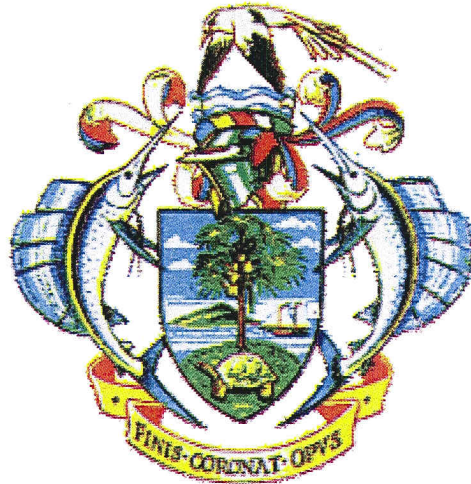


# 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea



## Preliminary Information Submitted by the Republic of Seychelles Concerning the Extended Continental Shelf in the Aldabra Island Region

MAY 2009

SEY-PI-DOC

## PREFACE

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	6
2.	Status of Preparation and Intended Date of Submission	7
3.	Indication of the Outer Limits of the Extended Continental Shelf in the Aldabra Island Region	8
4.	Map Indicative of Outer Limits of the Extended Continental Shelf in the Aldabra Island Region	8
5.	Undelimited Maritime Boundaries	10
6.	Publication of Preliminary Information	11

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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- 1-1** This Preliminary Information document has been prepared by the Republic of Seychelles 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)*, adopted by the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention (SPLOS/183). This document provides an indication of the outer limits of the continental shelf of the Republic of Seychelles, that lie beyond 200 nautical miles (M) from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured (hereinafter referred to as 'the territorial sea baselines') in the Aldabra Island Region.
- 1-2** The Republic of Seychelles is a small island developing state in the Indian Ocean, northeast of Madagascar and approximately 1,600 km east of Kenya. The 155 islands and Islets that comprise the Republic of Seychelles are divided into various groups under Schedule 1 to the *Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles*.
- 1-3** The Mahé Group comprising 42 granitic islands includes Mahé, which is the location of the capital (Victoria). To the west of the Mahé Group is the Amirantes Group of 29 coral islands. There are also two coralline islands found to the south of the Mahé Group and two further coral islands to be found to the north of the Mahé Group. A further 13 coral islands located south-south west of the Amirantes Group make up the Farquhar Group of islands. The Aldabra Group, located west of the Farquhar Group, represents the largest collection of islands, comprising 67 coral islands including Aldabra Island.

- 1-4 The Republic of Seychelles is Party to the Convention, which it signed on the day it was opened for signature on 10 December 1982, and subsequently ratified on 15 September 1991. The *Maritime Zones Act No. 2, 1999* provides for the establishment and delimitation of the maritime zones of the Republic of Seychelles, including the outer limits of the continental shelf, in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of the Convention.
- 1-5 Under Article 4 of Annex II to the Convention, as supplemented by the decisions contained in SPLOS/72 and SPLOS/183 respectively regarding the 10-year period established by Article 4 of Annex II to the Convention, a coastal State for which the Convention entered into force before 13 May 1999 is requested to submit particulars of the outer limits of the continental shelf to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf ('the Commission') by 13 May 2009.

## 2. STATUS OF PREPARATION AND INTENDED DATE OF SUBMISSION

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- 2-1 The Republic of Seychelles notes that it has made two partial submissions in respect of the outer limits of its extended continental shelf as set out below:
- a joint submission with the Republic of Mauritius concerning the region of the Mascarene Plateau, lodged on 1 December 2008 (see: **SMS-ES-DOC**); and,
  - a submission concerning the Northern Plateau Region, lodged on 7 May 2009 (see: **SEY-ES-DOC**).
- 2-2 The Republic of Seychelles intends to make a submission for an extended continental shelf in the Aldabra Islands Region. The submission is currently being undertaken with work continuing on the examination of relevant



bathymetric and seismic data. The Republic of Seychelles expects to complete the Submission by 2011. Pending the lodgement of the Submission, this Preliminary Information document is submitted consistent with operative paragraph 1(a) of the decision contained in SPLOS/183 in order to satisfy the requirement of Article 4 of Annex II to the Convention.

**2-3** The Republic of Seychelles notes that, in accordance with operative paragraphs 1(b) and 1(c) of the decision contained in SPLOS/183, pending the receipt of the submission concerning the Aldabra Island Region, the Preliminary Information provided shall not be considered by the Commission and further, that the publication of this Preliminary Information is without prejudice to any Submission made in respect of this region and its future consideration by the Commission.

**2-4** The part of the continental shelf lying beyond 200 M from the territorial sea baselines of the territory (Aldabra Island) of the Republic of Seychelles is referred to in this Preliminary Information document as the 'extended continental shelf'.

### **3. INDICATION OF THE OUTER LIMITS OF THE EXTENDED CONTINENTAL SHELF IN THE ALDABRA ISLAND REGION**

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**3-1** As provided for under paragraph 1 of Article 76 of the Convention, the Republic of Seychelles has a continental shelf comprising the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas that extends beyond its territorial sea throughout the natural prolongation of its land territory to the outer edge of the continental margin, up to the limits provided for in paragraphs 4 to 6 of Article 76 of the Convention or, to a distance of 200 M from the territorial sea baselines where the outer edge of the continental margin does not extend up to that distance.

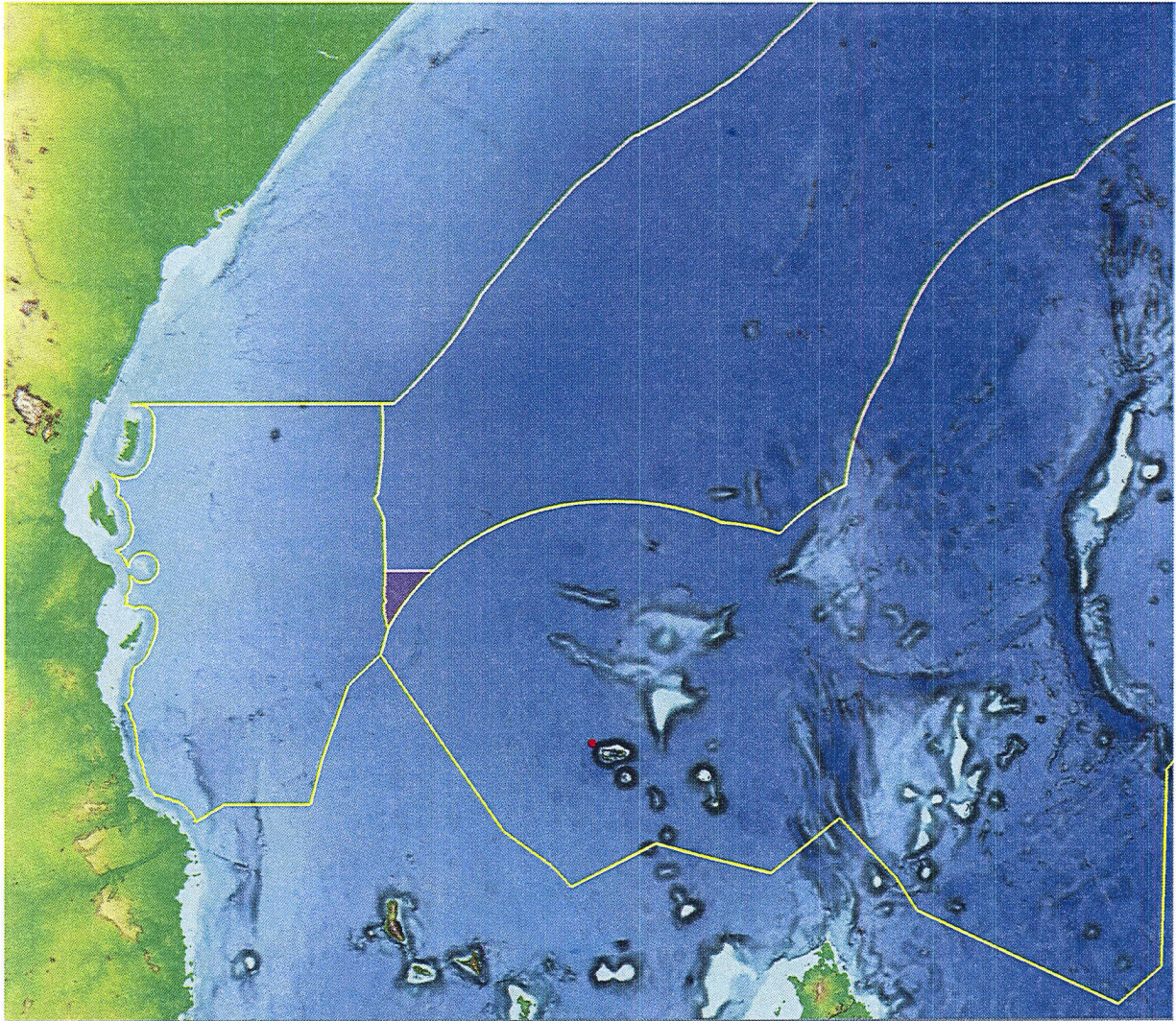
- 3-2** In addition, Article 121 of the Convention provides that, in the case of islands, the limits of the continental shelf are to be determined in the same manner as other land territory.
- 3-3** Paragraphs 4 to 6 of Article 76 of the Convention set out the manner in which a coastal State may establish the outer edge of its continental margin and its extended continental shelf, wherever that margin extends beyond 200 M measured from the territorial sea baselines.
- 3-4** Data considered by the Republic of Seychelles establish that the outer edge of the continental margin in the relevant land territory in the Aldabra Island Region (Aldabra Island) extends beyond 200 M measured from territorial sea baselines.
- 3-5** Pursuant to operative paragraph 1(a) of the decision contained in SPLOS/183, **Sections 4 and 7** of this Preliminary Information document provide an indication of the outer limits of the extended continental shelf in the Aldabra Island Region.

**4. MAP INDICATIVE OF OUTER LIMITS OF THE EXTENDED CONTINENTAL SHELF IN THE ALDABRA ISLAND REGION**

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- 4-1** A map at an appropriate scale which provides an overview of the indicative outer limit of the extended continental shelf in the Aldabra Island Region is included in this Preliminary Information document as **Figure 1 (SEY-PI-MAP-1)**.





**Figure 1** Map Indicative of the outer limits of the extended continental Shelf of the Republic of Seychelles in the Aldabra Island Region.

**SEY-PI-MAP-1**



**5. UNDELIMITED MARITIME BOUNDARIES**

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The Republic of Seychelles notes that there is potential overlap between the area that may form part of the extended continental shelf in the Aldabra Island Region, and the area of extended continental shelf that may be claimed by the Republic of Tanzania.

**6. PUBLICATION OF INDICATIVE OUTER LIMITS OF THE EXTENDED CONTINENTAL SHELF IN THE ALDABRA ISLAND REGION**

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The Republic of Seychelles has the honour to request the Secretary-General to inform the Commission and, to notify member States of the receipt of this preliminary information, and to make such information publicly available in accordance with operative paragraph 1(d) of the decision contained in SPLOS/183.