

Moroccan Continental Shelf and Maritime Boundaries Delimitation

M. El Mostaine and A. Lahlou

ONHYM Morocco

Morocco has just ratified the 1982 United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and, as a coastal state, is required to deposit, within ten years, with the Secretary General of the United Nations charts showing straight baselines as well as the outer limits of the Territorial Sea (TS), the Exclusive Economic Zone (ZEE) and the Continental Shelf (CS) extension.

Furthermore and consequently to the development of the petroleum exploration in the deep offshore, Morocco needs to define its Maritime boundaries with Spain in the Mediterranean Sea, the facing Atlantic islands (Madera, Canary and Cape Verde) and the adjacent countries.

The challenge is to develop a strategy in defining desk-top study, gather and acquire the supporting scientific, technical and legal data, undertake the necessary geological and geophysical studies and establish the required documents and information for the submission of the Moroccan maritime territorial claims to the UNCLOS. This strategy will also allow Morocco to adequately negotiate maritime boundaries with the facing and adjacent countries.