

Scientific survey for delineation of the outer limits of the extended continental shelf

Yukihiro Kato[1]

[1] Hydrographic and Oceanographic Dept. of Japan

According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), coastal states can establish the outer limit of continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles, when geographical and geological feature fulfill certain conditions, while making the sea-bed and subsoil to a distance of 200 nautical miles into a continental shelf.

Coastal states need to submit information including sea bottom topography and geology to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). The CLCS will make recommendations on this submission.

Toward May 2009 which is the deadline of submission, Japanese government is now conducting surveys, including surveys of crustal structure, bathymetric survey and ocean bottom sampling on the areas expected to be extendable beyond 200 NM from the results of continuous surveys by JHOD, Japan Coast Guard (JCG) since 1983.