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If a whole or part of a section has been amended, the date of the amending law appears in square brackets at the end of the section. If a whole section, paragraph or clause has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets at the end of the section.

The Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia  
has adopted a Law:

## **On the Continental Shelf and the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Latvia**

[14 October 1998]

### **Chapter I General Provisions**

#### **Section 1.**

The continental shelf of the Republic of Latvia is the seabed and the depths below it in submarine regions adjacent to the seacoast of the Republic of Latvia but which are beyond the boundaries of the territorial sea and extend to the boundaries determined in Section 3 of this Law.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 2.**

The exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter – exclusive economic zone) is the waters of the Baltic Sea beyond the territorial sea boundaries and which extend to the boundaries determined in Section 3 of this Law.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 3.**

The boundaries of the continental shelf of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter – continental shelf) and of the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Latvia with the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Sweden shall conform with the international agreements entered into by the Republic of Latvia with the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Sweden.

[14 October 1998]

### **Chapter II Rights and Jurisdiction of the Republic of Latvia on the Continental Shelf and in the Exclusive Economic Zone**

#### **Section 4.**

The Republic of Latvia has sovereign rights to explore the continental shelf and utilise the natural resources thereof including mineral resources and other non-living resources of the seabed and the natural resources in the depths below it, as well as living natural resources – sedentary species, that is, species which, during a period when catch thereof is possible, are in a motionless state on the seabed or in the depths

below the seabed, or are not capable of moving without physical contact with the seabed or the depths below the seabed.

#### **Section 5.**

The natural resources of the continental shelf are the property of the Republic of Latvia.

Exploration of the continental shelf and development of natural resources may be carried out only upon receipt of a special permit.

Such permit is required also in cases where the Republic of Latvia itself does not carry out exploration of the continental shelf and does not develop and utilise the natural resources. A list of those living natural resources of the continental shelf which are considered to be natural resources shall be approved and published by the Cabinet.

The exercise of the rights of the Republic of Latvia on the continental shelf shall not restrict the navigation rights of foreign states and other rights provided for in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 6.**

In the exclusive economic zone the Republic of Latvia shall have:

1) exclusive rights to explore, utilise, protect and regulate the living and non-living natural resources of the exclusive economic zone on the seabed and in the depths below it, as well as carry out other activities necessary for the exploration and utilisation of the exclusive economic zone;

2) jurisdiction with regard to:

- installation and utilisation of equipment and devices, the creation and utilisation of artificial islands,
- protection and preservation of the marine environment, and
- scientific research of the sea; and

3) other rights and obligations provided for by this Law.

The Republic of Latvia, in exercising its rights and fulfilling its obligation in the exclusive economic zone, shall take into account the rights and obligations of other states provided for by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and by international agreements entered into by the Republic of Latvia.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 7.**

The Republic of Latvia shall, in conformity with the interests of the State, exercise in the exclusive economic zone its exclusive rights to the conservation of stocks of species of anadromous fish which have developed in rivers of the Republic of Latvia – that is, species of fish which propagate and in the early stages of development remain in rivers, while in the remaining period, at sea – determining the annual total allowable catch, as well as ensuring the implementation of international agreements of the Republic of Latvia with the relevant foreign state with respect to the catch of such anadromous fish beyond the boundaries of the exclusive economic zone.

When entering into international agreements, the economic needs of the Republic of Latvia with respect to the catch of such species of fish and the necessity to conserve fish resources shall be taken into account.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 8.**

Regulations regarding the utilisation and conservation of fish and other living natural resources and procedures for the exclusive economic zone shall be determined by the Cabinet.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 9.**

The annual total allowable catch in the exclusive economic zone shall be determined in accordance with procedures determined by the Cabinet, based on the recommendations of the International Commission of the 1973 Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources in the Baltic Sea and Belts.  
[14 October 1998]

### **Chapter III**

#### **Activities of Legal Persons and Natural Persons on the Continental Shelf and in the Exclusive Economic Zone**

##### **Section 10.**

On the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone legal persons and natural persons may:

- conduct scientific research on natural resources;
- develop natural resources;
- harvest living natural resources;
- install equipment and devices, create artificial islands, and operate such;
- lay submarine cables and pipelines; and
- work with explosives (on the continental shelf).

[14 October 1998]

##### **Section 11.**

Legal persons and natural persons may carry out the work provided for in Section 10 of this Law if a permit has been obtained and a licence has been drawn up for development and exploitation.

The procedures for obtaining a permit and drawing up a licence shall be prescribed by the Cabinet.

[14 October 1998]

##### **Section 12.**

Harvesting and development of living natural resources on the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone shall be permitted only in the amount provided for in the licence issued.

[14 October 1998]

##### **Section 13.**

Foreign legal persons and natural persons (also international organisations) may carry out scientific or economic activity on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone upon receiving a permit as provided for in Section 11 of this Law.

Scientific activity of foreign legal persons and natural persons on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone shall be permitted only in cases where this is required for the exploration of the marine environment for the benefit of peace and humanity.

Legal persons and natural persons who, on the basis of a permit (licence) issued by an authority of the Republic of Latvia, carry out scientific or economic activity in the exclusive economic zone shall comply with regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia in the sphere of taxes, environmental protection and work safety.

[14 October 1998]

##### **Section 14.**

A permit for scientific activity on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone may be refused to foreign legal persons and natural persons if:- the proposed research is related to surveys and development of living and non-living natural resources;

- the proposed activity involves the use of explosives or discharge of substances harmful to the marine environment; or

- the state or international organisation which has requested a permit has not fulfilled its obligations against the Republic of Latvia with respect to previously conducted marine scientific research.  
[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 15.**

Equipment and devices as well as artificial islands may not be installed and created in shipping lanes and in places where such may interfere with navigation, as well as in areas where a special regimen has been specified. A special regimen shall be specified by the Cabinet in areas where there are special navigation conditions, as well as in areas in which, for the purpose of protection of living natural resources and ecological protection, it is necessary to carry out special measures for protection of the marine environment against pollution from ships.

Special regimen areas shall be precisely defined and the co-ordinates of such shall be communicated to international organisations.  
[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 16.**

A safety area up to 500 metres wide shall be determined around installed equipment and devices and artificially created islands.

Warning signs shall be installed around a safety zone.

#### **Section 17.**

The installation of equipment or a device, creation of an artificial island and determination of safety zones shall be communicated to international organisations without delay in accordance with procedures determined by the Cabinet.

#### **Section 18.**

Legal persons and natural persons who have received a permit to install equipment and devices and to create artificial islands shall, after completion of operation, completely remove such within the term specified in the permit.

The authority which issued the permit to install the facilities referred to shall be notified of the completion of operation of the facilities and the complete removal of such.

#### **Section 19.**

The regulations and procedures for the installation of submarine cables and pipelines on the continental shelf, as well as the procedures by which a permit may be obtained for such work, shall be determined by the Cabinet.

A cable or pipeline path may not interfere with the utilisation, operation and repair of already existing cables and pipelines.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 20.**

The jurisdiction of the Republic of Latvia shall apply to the installed equipment and devices, artificially created islands, and installed cables, pipelines and the operation of such on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 21.**

Foreign legal persons and natural persons (also international organisations) which conduct scientific research on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone shall:

- at the request of relevant authorities of the Republic of Latvia, submit information regarding the results obtained in the course of research, as well as the compiled results of the research;
- at the request of relevant authorities of the Republic of Latvia, present the results of the research and samples, submit data of which copies may be taken, if possible, without prejudice to the scientific research;
- create favourable conditions for the exercise of the sovereign rights and jurisdiction of the Republic of Latvia as provided for by this Law; and
- without delay inform the authority which issued the permit for the scientific research regarding significant changes in the research programme or work schedule, as well as threats of an accident.

[14 October 1998]

## **Section 22.**

Marine scientific research on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone, conducted without observing the submitted technical, economic and scientific substantiation and without informing about changes in the programme, may be suspended. Recommencement of the work may be permitted if the violations have been rectified.

The marine scientific research, conducted without a permit or with major violations of the submitted technical, economic and scientific substantiation, shall be discontinued without delay.

[14 October 1998]

## **Section 23.**

If there are reasonable grounds to believe that a ship within the territorial waters or the exclusive zone of the Republic of Latvia has violated the laws of the Republic of Latvia or international agreements regarding the prevention or reduction of pollution of the marine environment as well as the ensuring of monitoring, competent authorities of the Republic of Latvia may:

- request from the relevant ship such information as is required to determine whether a violation has been committed; and
- inspect the ship if, as a result of a violation, leakage has taken place which has caused pollution of the marine environment or serious threats of such and the ship has refused to provide information or the information provided is in conflict with obvious facts.

[14 October 1998]

## **Chapter IV**

### **Control of Activities of Legal Persons and Natural Persons on the Continental Shelf and in the Exclusive Economic Zone**

## **Section 24.**

Activities of legal persons and natural persons on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone with respect to environmental protection, utilisation and protection of natural resources, geological exploration work process and utilisation of mineral resources shall be controlled in accordance with the regulatory enactments that are in force in the Republic of Latvia.

In the exclusive economic zone, only the burial of soil resulting from excavation work is permitted with the permission and under the control of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia.

[14 October 1998]

## **Section 25.**

If there is objective evidence that a ship within the territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone has violated the requirements set out in Sections 21 to 23 of this Law or that leakage has taken place

which has caused harm or has created a threat of harm to the seacoast of the Republic of Latvia or to the biological resources of the exclusive economic zone, the competent authorities of the Republic of Latvia have the right, in accordance with the regulatory enactments in force in the Republic of Latvia, to take decisions regarding the arrest of the relevant ship in port and examine the issue of violations committed in the exclusive economic zone.

The procedures for carrying out the requirements set out in this Section shall be specified by the Cabinet.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 26.**

If in the exclusive zone or at the outer boundaries of such a shipping accident has taken place or a ship has run aground and, as a result of such accident or activities related to the accident, harm may be caused to the seacoast of the Republic of Latvia (also fisheries), competent authorities of the Republic of Latvia may take measures provided for by international law which are required to protect the sea from threats of pollution.

[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 27.**

If a foreign ship has violated this Law and other regulatory enactments in force in the Republic of Latvia and attempts to avoid liability by leaving, in accordance with procedures prescribed by regulatory enactments the right exists to pursue such ship and arrest it in order to hold the person at fault liable. Pursuit may be started when the ship or at least one lifeboat of such after the signal "apstāties" [stop] is within the borders of the exclusive economic zone and shall be discontinued when the ship enters the territorial waters of its own state or a third state.

[14 October 1998]

### **Chapter V**

#### **Liability of Legal Persons and Natural Persons for Violations Committed on the Continental Shelf and in the Exclusive Economic Zone**

#### **Section 28.**

Administrative sanctions shall be imposed on legal persons and natural persons in accordance with regulatory enactments in force in the Republic of Latvia if such persons have committed the following violations on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone:

- 1) illegal exploration and development of natural resources;
- 2) intentional pollution of the sea with substances harmful to human health and to living natural resources, the leakage of such substances from ships, installations, artificial islands, aircraft and other facilities, as well as the pollution with any other waste, materials and objects that may cause harm to recreational areas or the sea;
- 3) pollution of the marine environment as a result of exploration of the seabed and development of mineral resources;
- 4) other violations of the law with respect to prevention of pollution of the marine environment, reduction of such and provision of monitoring;
- 5) conduct of scientific research without a relevant permit;
- 6) installation of equipment and devices and creation of artificial islands and setting up safety areas around such without a relevant permit; or
- 7) failure to provide warning signs at installations and other facilities, violations related to the removal of such items after completion of operation thereof, as well as failure to observe the conditions set out in international agreement or in a permit issued by others.

If the violations indicated have caused substantial harm or resulted in substantial consequences, or if such have been committed repeatedly, the natural persons at fault shall be held criminally liable in accordance with procedures provided for in regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia.

If the violations referred to in Paragraphs one, five and seven of this Section have been committed, confiscation of the ship, fishing gear, equipment, apparatus and other items (with the help of which the violations were committed), as well as confiscation of the illegally obtained natural resources or other materials, shall be applied concurrently with the administrative and criminal sanctions.  
[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 29.**

In the case of seizure or arrest of a ship, competent authorities of the Republic of Latvia shall notify without delay thereof the flag state of the ship, providing information of the violations committed, measures taken and potential sanctions. The crew of the arrested ship and the ship shall be released after a relevant guarantee has been received, which shall be determined in accordance with regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia.  
[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 30.**

The imposition of administrative and criminal sanctions shall not release the persons at fault from the obligation to compensate for harm caused to the living and non-living natural resources of the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone.  
[14 October 1998]

#### **Section 31.**

The procedures regarding protection of the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone shall be determined by the Cabinet.  
[14 October 1998]

### **Chapter VI Special Provisions**

#### **Section 32.**

If the provisions of this Law differ from those of international agreements entered into by the Republic of Latvia or are in conflict with such, the provisions of the international agreements shall apply.

Chairperson of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia

A. Gorbunovs

Secretary of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia  
Riga, 2 February 1993

I. Daudišs

**Transitional Provisions Regarding Amendments to Regulations  
On the Continental Shelf and the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Latvia**

**Transitional Provisions**  
(regarding amending law of 14 October 1998)

With the coming into force of this Law, Cabinet Regulation No. 280 Amendments to the Law On the Continental Shelf and the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Latvia (*Latvijas Republikas Saeimas un Ministru Kabineta Ziņotājs*, 1998, No. 18), issued in accordance with Section 81 of the Constitution, shall be repealed.