

ARGENTINA



Outer Limit of the Argentine Continental Shelf

Argentine Partial Revised Submission to the
Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





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PARTIAL REVISED SUBMISSION

A. Introduction

The Argentine Republic signed the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on 5 October 1984 and ratified on 1 December 1995. The Convention entered into force for Argentina on December 31, 1995.

On April 21, 2009, Argentina submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations information on the limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured, in accordance with paragraph 8 of article 76 of the Convention.

Argentina made a full submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS), including the outer limit of the continental shelf of its entire territory: continent, the South Atlantic islands and Argentine Antarctic Sector, comprising 6336 points of WGS84 geographic coordinates.

The Argentine submission started to be considered in August 2012, after the Subcommittee in charge of considering the Argentine submission, consisting of 7 members, was created. Between August 2012 and August 2015, frequent working meetings were held with the Subcommittee.

On March 11th 2016, the CLCS adopted the Recommendations in regard to the submission of the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf.

In the northern region, the first two limit points located in the north, close to the boundary with Uruguay, RA-01 and RA-02, were not included in the Recommendations.

Consequently, this partial revised submission is made so that the CLCS considers the fixed points of the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf referred to as RA-01 and RA-02.



B. State body in charge of preparing the submission

Once UNCLOS came into force, a special body was created in the Argentine Republic for the purposes of preparing the final submission aimed at delineating the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf pursuant to international law and to national Law No. 23.968¹.

Law No. 24.815² established the Comisión Nacional del Límite Exterior de la Plataforma Continental (COPLA) [National Commission on the Outer Limit of the Continental Shelf] as an inter-ministerial commission under the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, and also composed of the Ministry of Economy and Public Finance, and the Naval Hydrographic Service.

From the very beginning, the Commission has been assisted by a General Coordinator and a Technical Subcommittee. To fulfill its terms of reference, the Commission's work is supported by several state agencies and universities related to this field.

Argentina has undertaken the task of establishing its longest limit as a State policy, and has upheld a continuity of the working team since 1997. COPLA has carried out its tasks with skilled professionals specifically hired for the purpose, also counting on the other state agencies linked to the subject.

C. Members of the CLCS who provided advice for the submission

Mr. Carlos Marcelo Paterlini, member of the CLCS, and Dr. Karl Hinz (+), former member of the CLCS, provided advice to COPLA in the preparation of the present submission.

D. Partial Revised Submission

On this opportunity, Argentina makes a partial revised submission concerning the RA-01 and RA-02 points of the outer limit of its continental shelf, which are not included in the Recommendations of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in regard to the submission made by Argentina on April 21, 2009.

¹ Law No. 23.968 *Maritime Spaces* (B.O. 05/12/1991).

² Law No. 24.815 *Comisión Nacional del Límite Exterior de la Plataforma Continental* (B.O. 26/05/1997).



E. Provisions of article 76 invoked to support the submission

Argentina has gathered and analyzed all the geomorphological, geological, geophysical and hydrographic elements whose results are summarized in the Main Body of the present partial revised submission, and has established the outer limit of its continental shelf on points RA-01 and RA-02 in accordance with paragraphs 4 through 10 of article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf has been delineated as a result of applying the sediment thickness formula and the 350 M constraint line, as set forth in article 76, paragraphs 4 (a) (i), 4 (b) and 5 of UNCLOS.

In order to achieve this result, Argentina followed a three-step process as stated in paragraph 2.3.3 of the Scientific and Technical Guidelines of the CLCS (Guidelines):

- Firstly, it applied the two affirmative formulae, which allowed it to delineate the outer envelope or *formulae line*.
- Secondly, it applied the two constraints, which allowed it to delineate the *constraint line*.
- Finally, the combination of the aforementioned lines allowed it to delineate the *inner envelope*, which made it possible to determine points RA-01 and RA-02.

F. Northern end of the outer limit

The maritime spaces of the Argentine Republic border, to the north, those of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

The lateral maritime boundary between Argentina and Uruguay was established by article 70 of the *Tratado del Río de la Plata y su Frente Marítimo* [Treaty of the Río de la Plata and its Maritime Front] in 1973:

“The lateral maritime boundary and that of the continental shelf between the Eastern Republic of Uruguay and the Argentine Republic are defined by the equidistance line as determined by the adjacent coasts method, which begins at the center point of the baseline represented by an imaginary straight line connecting Punta del Este (Eastern Republic of Uruguay) and Punta Rasa del Cabo San Antonio (Argentine Republic).”



The boundary between the Argentine and Uruguayan continental shelves beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines is still to be demarcated.

As Argentina expressed in the submission made on April 21, 2009, the outer limit of the continental shelf of both countries in the bordering area shall be represented by a line connecting the southernmost point of the outer limit of the Uruguayan submission which complies with the rules of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to the northernmost point of the outer limit of the Argentine submission which complies with the same rules, respecting the distance between one and the other as set forth in art. 76.7 of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In view of the above and taking into account that the maritime lateral boundary between the Argentine Republic and the Eastern Republic of Uruguay has not been demarcated yet in the area between 200 nautical miles from the baselines and the line of the outer limit of the continental shelves of both countries in this boundary area as referred to above, Argentina requests the Commission to formulate its recommendations applying article 4 (a) of Annex I of its Rules of Procedure.

G. Description of the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf

1. Margin type in the area of the revised partial submission: Passive Volcanic Continental Margin – Río de la Plata Craton

The Argentine continental margin, in addition to being one of the most extensive in the world, is, from a geological point of view, a complex margin which includes several types of margins classified in the Scientific and Technical Guidelines of the CLCS.

The passive volcanic continental margin extends from the boundary with Uruguay up to approximately 48° S and comprises the Río de la Plata Craton margin (35° S to 45° S) and the Patagonian margin (45° S to 48° S), area where the greatest sediment thicknesses are found.

This partial revised submission refers to the northern portion of the Río de la Plata Craton margin, close to the boundary with Uruguay. The 1 per cent sediment thickness formula was applied to the seismic profile of each line named ARG.



Figure 1 shows a map of the Argentine Submission made on April 21ST 2009, and Figure 2 zooms in on the area of the RA-01 and RA-02 fixed points of the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf.

2. Description of the fixed points of the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf

Argentina has used the “RA” denomination for the fixed points of the outer limit of its continental shelf.

The first fixed point of the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf is RA-01, determined by applying the 1 per cent sediment thickness formula, and it is located close to the boundary —not yet demarcated— between Argentina’s continental shelf and that of Uruguay as per the “Treaty of the Río de la Plata and its Maritime Front” signed by both countries on November 19, 1973.

RA-02 is the following fixed point that complies with the 1 per cent sediment thickness formula.

3. Maps

Figure 1: Map of the Argentine Submission made on April 21st 2009

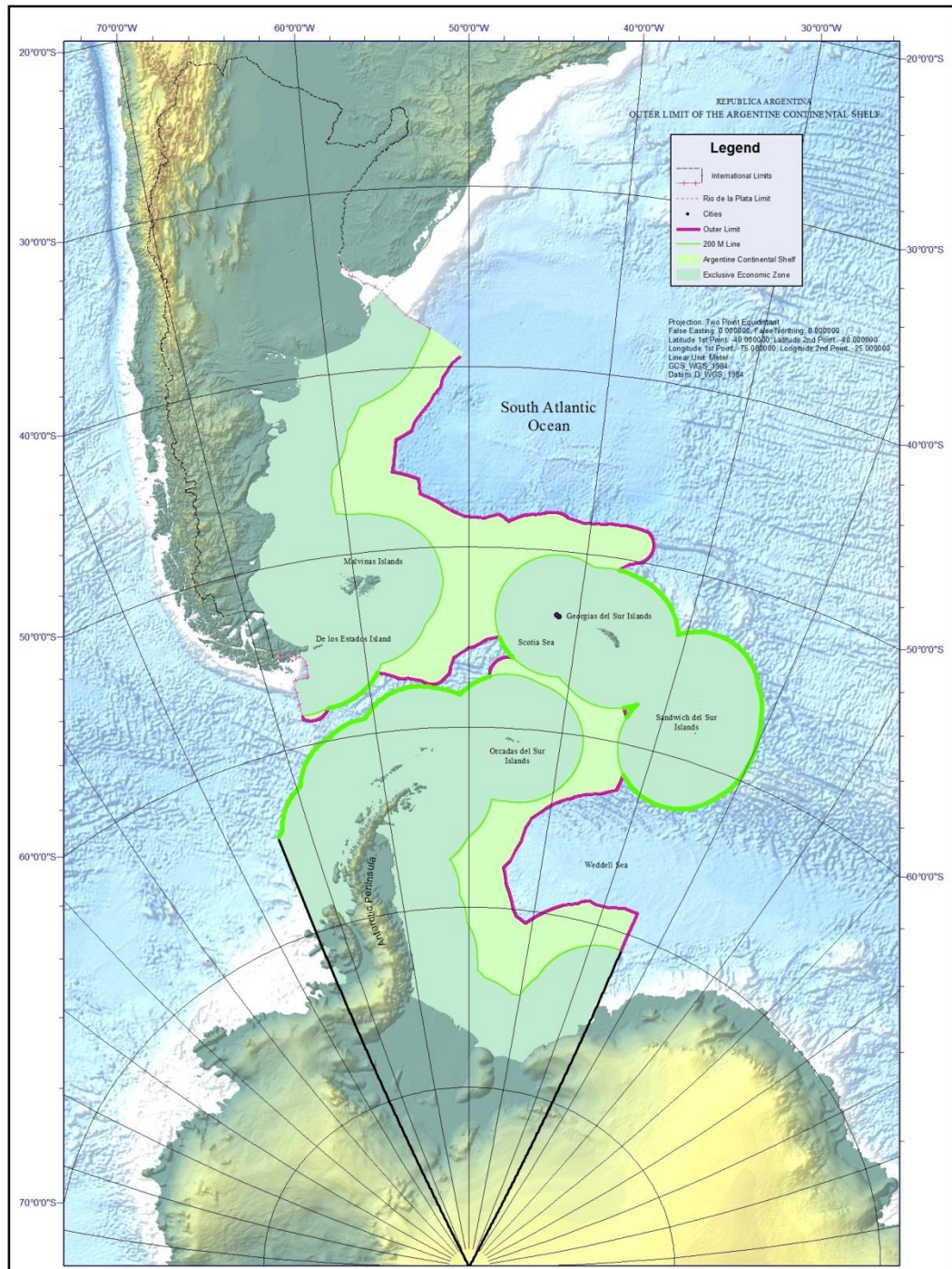
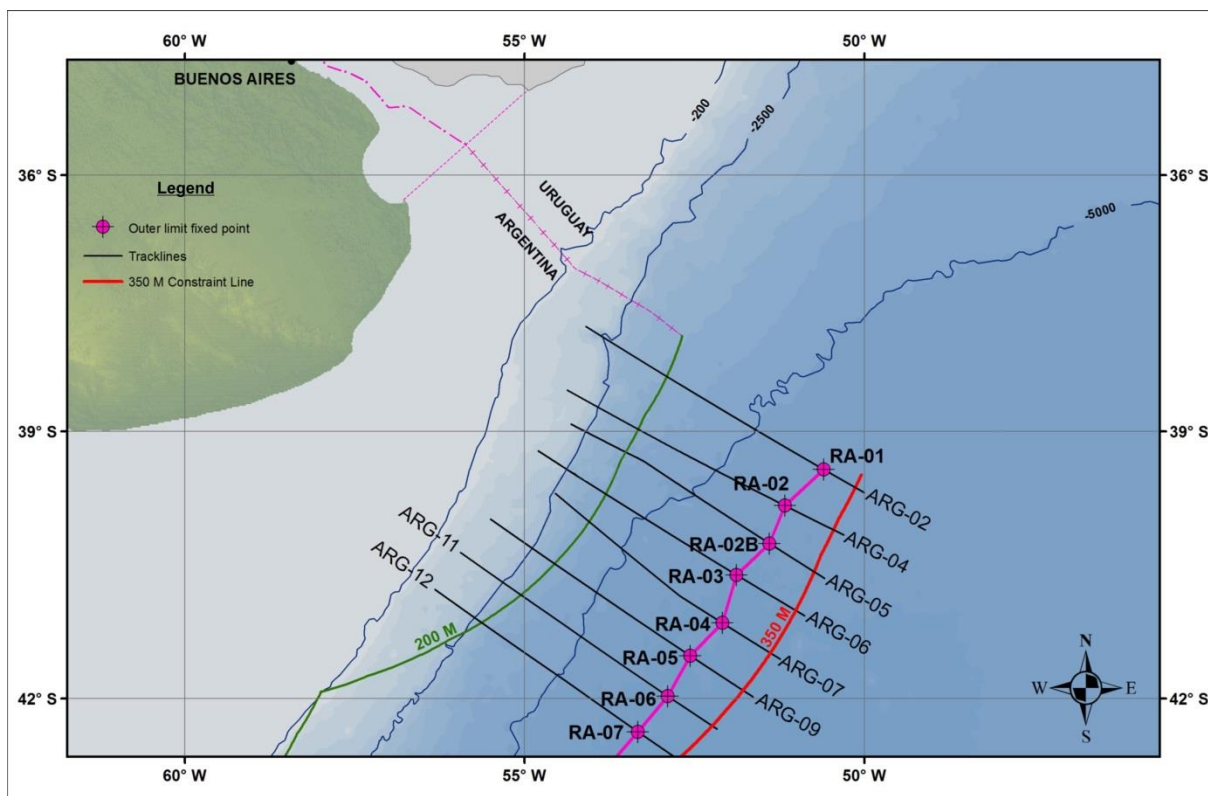


Figure 2: Area of the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf points RA-01 and RA-02



Points RA-02B to RA-07 are the ones accepted by the CLCS on the Recommendations adopted on March 11th 2016



4. Coordinates of the RA-01 and RA-02 points of the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf

Coordinates of the fixed points defining the outer limit of the Argentine continental shelf											
RA Points	Coordinates								Art. 76 provision invoked - Method	Distance from previous point	
	Latitude	Longitude	Latitude S			Longitude W				Miles (M)	Meters* (m)
RA-01	-39.436672	-50.596350	39°	26'	12.02''	50°	35'	46.86''	76.4(a)(i)-1% Sediment Thickness	0.00	0.0
RA-02	-39.846225	-51.171694	39°	50'	46.41''	51°	10'	18.10''	76.4(a)(i)-1% Sediment Thickness	36.25	67,135.0
RA-02B**	-40.274408	-51.394858	40°	16'	27.87''	51°	23'	41.49''	76.4(a)(i)-1% Sediment Thickness	27.65	51,207.8

* The distance from previous point in meters results from multiplying the distance in nautical miles by 1,852

** The outer limit fixed point RA-02B is the one accepted by the CLCS on the Recommendations adopted on March 11th 2016. It is appended to this table in order to reflect the distance to point RA-02.