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LIMITS IN THE SEAS

No. 54

STRAIGHT BASELINES

SENEGAL

This paper is one of a series issued by The Geographer, Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the Department of State. The aim of the series is to set forth the basis for national arrangements for the measurement of the territorial sea or the division of the continental shelf of maritime nations.

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No. 54

Straight Baselines: Senegal

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The Government of Senegal has created a straight baseline system for approximately two-thirds of the coastline of the state. The decree text follows:

DECREE No. 72-765 of July 5, 1972

Concerning the application of Article 1 of the Law No. 61-51 of June 21, 1961 on the delimitation of territorial waters, the contiguous zone and the continental platform extending from the coasts of Senegal.

The President of the Republic:

In view of the Constitution, in particular Articles 37 and 65;
In view of Law No. 61-51 of June 21, 1961 concerning the delimitation of the territorial waters, the contiguous zone and the continental platform extending from the coasts of Senegal; modified by Law No. 68-30 of July 24, 1968, in particular Article 1, paragraph 2 thereof; The Supreme Court decisions;
On the report of the Minister of Rural Development,

DECREES:

Article 1. The breadth of the Senegalese territorial waters is measured, in part, from a straight baseline system which joins the following reference points which have been provided by the Hydrographic Service of the Navy:

1. From the extreme point of the Langue de Barbarie (15°49'30"N, 16°31'38"W) to south of the estuary of the Senegal (15°48'05"N, 16°31'52"W);

2. (a) From the Ile de Yoff (14°46'20"N, 17°28'40"W) to the Almadies lighthouse (14°44'30"N, 17°32'40"W);

(b) From the Almadies lighthouse (14°44'30"N, 17°32'40"W) to Cap-Manuel (14°39'00"N, 17°26'00"W);

(c) From Cap-Manuel (14°39'00"N, 17°26'00"W) to Pointe Rouge (14°38'00"N, 17°26'00"W);

(d) From Pointe Rouge (14°38'00"N, 17°26'00"W) to Pointe Gombaru (14°29'50"N, 17°05'25"W);

(e) From Pointe Gombaru (14°29'50"N, 17°05'25"W) to Pointe Sarene (14°17'05"N, 16°55'50"W);

(f) From Pointe Sarene (14°17'05"N, 16°55'50"W) to Pointe Senti (14°11'05"N, 16°52'00"W);

(g) From Pointe Senti (14°11'05"N, 16°52'00"W) to Pointe de Sangomar (13°50'10"N, 16°45'35"W);

(h) From Pointe de Sangomar (13°50'10"N, 16°45'35"W) to the north point of the Ile des Oiseaux (13°35'51"N, 16°40'12"W).

3. From the south point of the Ile des Oiseaux (13°38'24"N, 16°38'30"W) to the northern boundary with The Gambia (13°35'28"N, 16°32'51"W).

4. (a) From the southern boundary with The Gambia (13°04'15"N, 16°45'05"W) to the southern point of the Presqu'ile de Oiseaux (12°45'10"N, 16°47'25"W);

(b) From the southern point of the Presqui'ile de Oiseaux (12°45'10"N, 16°47'25"W) to a point at 12°39'06"N, 16°47'06"W;

(c) From a point at 12°39'06"N, 16°47'06"W to the Presqu'ile de Boulabou (12°35'27"N, 16°45'48"W);

(d) From the Presqu'ile de Boulabou (12°35'27"N, 16°45'48"W) to the tower at the entrance to the Casamance (12°31'36"N, 16°46'24"W).

5. From Cap-Skiring (12°24'30"N, 16°46'15"W) to the frontier with Portuguese Guinea (12°20'25"N, 16°43'15"W).

Article 2. For the extent of the Senegalese coast which is situated beyond these limits noted in Article 1 of the present decree, the breadth of the territorial sea is measured from the low-water line of the coast conforming with the provisions of Article 1, Paragraph 1 of the Law No. 61-51 of June 21, 1961.

Article 3. The Minister of State, in charge of Public Works, Urbanism and Transport, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Rural Development are charged, as appropriate, with the execution of the present decree which will be printed in the Journal Officiel.

Done in Dakar, July 6, 1972.

ANALYSIS

The general effect of the Senegalese law is to create five distinct straight baseline systems which are separated by three areas of Senegalese low-tide coastal baseline and by the

baseline of The Gambia. The northern-most sector, in effect, closes the mouth of the Senegal River which, for much of its course, forms the boundary between Senegal and Mauritania. The mouth, however, is situated entirely within Senegalese territory. The second and third systems extend from the north of Cape Verde to the northern boundary with The Gambia. For the most part, the mainland baseline enclosed within the straight baselines comprises a series of minor undulations none of which constitutes a juridical bay. The systems, nevertheless, exclude several Senegalese islands from use as turning points for the straight baselines. An error in geographical coordinates also appears to have occurred in the printing of the law.

The fourth system primarily closes the Casamance (Kasamanze) river but also includes a major portion of a generally featureless coastal area. The final system contains a single segment north of the boundary with Portuguese Guinea.

Designation		Length (n.m.)	Comments
1		1.35	The line extends from the southern tip of the peninsula of Langue de Barbarie southward to "close" the Senegal River mouth. According to large-scale charts, the peninsula, at present, is a series of islands. The system, as a result, does not effectively enclose the Senegal.
2	a	4.25	Beginning not on the mainland but on the island of Yof (Yoff), the segment extends southwestward to the lighthouse on Pointe de Almadies. Ile de Ngor and four other small islets are seaward of the 0straight baseline segment.
	b	8.50	The segment trends south-eastward to Cap Manuel, the western headland of the Baie de Goree, excluding the (two) Iles de la Madelaine. The intervening coast is not deeply indented; the segment intersects the mainland at Pointe de Fann, however.
	c	15.3	The coordinates for Pointe Rouge appear in error; the cited values plot 1 nautical mile south of Cap Manuel. It is assumed that Cap Rouge (see attached map) was the intended turning point for the system. If so, the previous longitude (for Cap Manuel) has accidentally been repeated for Cap (Pointe) Rouge. The line encloses a baylike indentation of Goree, the harbor area of Dakar.
	d	9.8	The system continues southward to connect with Pointe Gombaru, enclosing a generally straight and featureless coastline.
	e	15.7	Extending to Pointe Sarene, the segment parallels a gentle undulation of the coastline.
	f	7.1	The same general conditions prevail as the line joins Pointe Senti (Gukwe) to the system.
	g	22.0	The longest system in the system connects Pointe de Sangomar. The same undulating coastline prevails.
	h	11.4	The segment closes the deltaic mouth of the Salum and

Designation		Length (n.m.)	Comments
			Jumbas rivers. The Ile de Sable and several low-tide elevations are situated seaward of the line segment limiting the closure's effect on the extent of the territorial sea. The Ile de Oiseaux (Bird) serves as the baseline to the next system (2.25 nautical miles).
3		6.3	Section 3 consists of a single segment from the southern cape of Ile de Oiseaux to the seaward terminal of the Senegal-The Gambia boundary.
4	a	19.1	The four segments of the system parallel a smooth and generally featureless coastline in the north while closing the mouth of the Kasamanze (Casamance) River in the south with the final segment
	b	6.2	
	c	3.75	
	d	4.0	
5		5.2	The fifth and final system closes a minor coastal indentation north of the Portuguese Guinea boundary. Its effect on the territorial sea is minimal.

SUMMARY

The 15 segments of the Senegalese straight baseline system total approximately 139.95 nautical miles. The longest segment measures 22.0 nautical miles while the shortest measures 1.35 nautical miles. The average length of a segment is only 9.33 nautical miles. Thus in the length of line, the system could be rated conservative. However, the coastline from which the system is developed is neither deeply indented nor fringed with many islands. The river mouths, of course, are closed within the provisions of the Convention on the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone without the need for straight baselines.

The system does not extend significantly the territorial sea even though the coastline would not normally be considered as meeting the requirements of the Convention for straight baselines. Several islands, which could have served as turning points for the system, have been excluded and lie seaward of the straight baselines.

Senegal Straight Baselines

NOTE

The coast between Sand I. and Bliss R. and the Gambia R. is charted 1½ miles too far southeast.

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