Law of the People's Republic of China on the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Continental Shelf

(Adopted at the 3rd Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Ninth National People’s Congress and promulgated and come into force on the date of June 26, 1998)

Article 1 This Law is enacted to ensure that the People's Republic of China shall exercise its sovereign rights and jurisdiction over its exclusive economic zone and its continental shelf and safeguard its national maritime rights and interests.

Article 2 The exclusive economic zone of the People's Republic of China is the area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea of the People's Republic of China, extending to 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured. The continental shelf of the People's Republic of China is the sea-bed and subsoil of the submarine area that extend beyond its territorial sea throughout the natural prolongation of its land territory to the outer edge of the continental margin, or to a distance of 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured where the outer edge of the continental margin does not extend up to that distance. The People's Republic of China shall determine the delimitation of the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf in respect of the overlapping claims by agreement with the states with opposite or adjacent coasts in accordance with the equitable principle on the basis of international law.

Article 3 In the exclusive economic zone, the People's Republic of China exercises sovereign rights for the purposes in terms of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources of the waters superjacent to the sea-bed and of the sea-bed and its subsoil, and with regard to other activities for economic exploitation and exploration of the zone, such as the production of
energy from the water, current and wind. The People's Republic of China has jurisdiction over the establishment and use of artificial islands, installations and structures, marine scientific research, the protection and preservation of the marine environment in the exclusive economic zone. The natural resources in the exclusive economic zone referred to in this law consist of living and non-living resources.

**Article 4** The People's Republic of China exercises over the continental shelf sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring it and exploiting its natural resources. The People's Republic of China has jurisdiction over the establishment and use of artificial islands, installations and structures, marine scientific research, and the protection and preservation of the marine environment in the continental shelf. The People's Republic of China shall have the exclusive right to authorize and regulate drilling on the continental shelf for all purposes. The natural resources of the continental shelf referred to in this law consist of the mineral and other non-living resources of the sea-bed and subsoil together with living organisms belonging to sedentary species, that is to say, organisms which, at the harvestable stage, either are immobile on or under the sea-bed or are unable to move except in constant physical contact with the sea-bed or the subsoil.

**Article 5** All international organizations, foreign organizations or individuals shall obtain approval from the competent authorities of the People's Republic of China for carrying out fishing activities in its exclusive economic zone, and shall comply with its law and regulations as well as its accords and agreements signed with the states concerned. The competent authorities of the People's Republic of China shall have the right to ensure through all necessary conservation and management measures that the living resources in the exclusive economic zone are not endangered by over-exploitation.
Article 6 The competent authorities of the People’s Republic of China shall have the right to exercise conservation and management of straddling species, highly migratory species, marine mammals, anadromous stocks originating in the rivers of the People's Republic of China, catadromous species spending the greater part of their life cycle in the waters of the People's Republic of China in its exclusive economic zone. The People's Republic of China shall have the primary interest in anadromous stocks originating in its rivers.

Article 7 All international organizations, foreign organizations or individuals shall obtain approval from the competent authorities of the People’s Republic of China for carrying out activities of exploring and exploiting natural resources in its exclusive economic zone and on its continental shelf or for any purposes drilling on its continental shelf and shall comply with the laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China.

Article 8 The People's Republic of China shall have the exclusive right to construct and to authorize and regulate the construction, operation and use of artificial islands, installations and structures in its exclusive economic zone and on its continental shelf. The People's Republic of China shall have exclusive jurisdiction over the artificial islands, installations and structures in its exclusive economic zone and on its continental shelf, including jurisdiction with regard to customs, fiscal, health, safety and immigration laws and regulations. The competent authorities of the People's Republic of China shall have the right to establish safety zones around the artificial islands, installations and structures in its exclusive economic zone and on its continental shelf, and it may take appropriate measures to ensure the safety both of navigation and of the artificial islands, installations and structures.

Article 9 All international organizations, foreign organizations or individuals shall obtain approval from the competent authorities of the People’s Republic of China
for carrying out marine scientific research in its exclusive economic zone and on its continental shelf, and shall comply with the laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China.

**Article 10** The competent authorities of the People's Republic of China shall have the right to take all necessary measures to prevent, reduce and control pollution of the marine environment for the protection and preservation of the marine environment in its exclusive economic zone and on its continental shelf.

**Article 11** All states, subject to international laws and the laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China, enjoy the freedoms of navigation and over-flight in its exclusive economic zone and of the laying of submarine cables and pipelines, and other lawful uses of the sea related to these freedoms in the exclusive economic zone and on the continental shelf of the People's Republic of China. The routes for the submarine cables and pipelines shall be subject to the consent of its competent authorities.

**Article 12** The People's Republic of China may, in the exercise of its sovereign rights to explore, exploit, conserve and manage the living resources in the exclusive economic zone, take such measures, including boarding, inspection, arrest, detention and judicial processes, as may be necessary to ensure compliance with the laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China. The People's Republic of China shall have the right to take necessary measures against violations of its laws and regulations in the exclusive economic zone and on the continental shelf, to pursue the legal responsibilities by law, and may exercise the right of hot pursuit.

**Article 13** The People's Republic of China shall exercise the rights in its exclusive economic zone and on its continental shelf, if not provided in this law, in
accordance with international laws and other relevant laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China.

**Article 14** The provisions in this law shall not affect the historical right that the People's Republic of China enjoys.

**Article 15** The Government of the People's Republic of China shall formulate the relevant regulations in accordance with this law.

**Article 16** This Law shall come into force on the date of promulgation.