

CANARY ISLANDS SUBDIVISION

The Canary Islands marine subdivision comprises the jurisdictional waters adjacent to the archipelago, which is made up of seven major islands, four islets and a multitude of rocks in the central-eastern part of the Atlantic Ocean.

It has three national maritime borders, one with Portugal, one with Morocco and a third with the Western Sahara. The subdivision also borders on the high seas and the Area in the Atlantic Ocean.

Together with the North West Atlantic Subdivision, this is the only area of the sea where the exclusive economic zone can extend to its maximum width of 200 nautical miles. This is important inasmuch as the Canary Islands Subdivision generates the greatest area of exclusive economic zone on the national scale, with over 60% of the total.

The subdivision represents 45% of the surface area of all maritime

jurisdictions on the national scale. As with the North West Atlantic Subdivision, the continental shelf can be extended beyond the 200 nautical mile limit on the basis of Article 76 and Annex II of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The submission that Spain will make to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf is currently in its preparation stage.

Due to its insularity this subdivision generates an extensive coastline which represents 18.38% of the national total. In broad terms, a distinction can be found on all the islands between the northern coasts, with high cliffs, and the southern coasts, sandy and of a more open nature and with a greater number of beaches. A characteristic feature in the whole archipelago is the narrowness of the continental shelf.

BASIC DATA

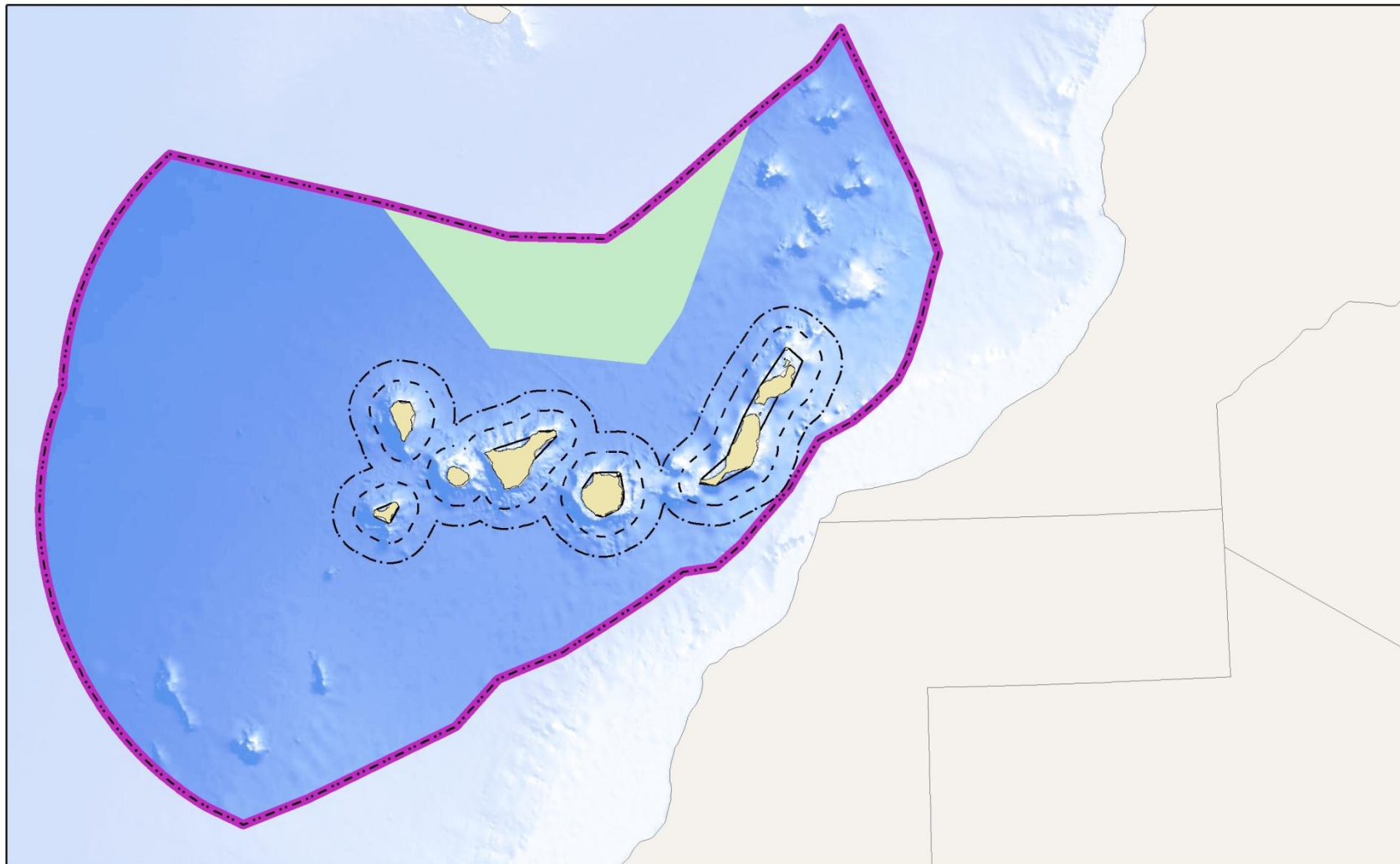
Jurisdiction	sq km	% of State
Internal waters	2 347	15.99
Territorial sea	31 753	31.22
Contiguous zone	40 349	34.42
Exclusive economic zone	456 237	60.17
TOTAL 1 (according to the delimitation line declared by Portugal)	447 093	-
TOTAL 2 (according to the delimitation line declared by Spain)	490 337	43.77
	km	% of State
Length of coastline	1 379	18.38

Governance

Legal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• European Union's Marine Strategy Framework Directive• The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD)• Royal Decree No. 2510/1977, of 5th August, on Jurisdictional Waters• Act No. 10/1977, of 4th January, on the Territorial Sea• Act No. 15/1978, of 20th February, on the Exclusive economic Zone
Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•
Instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•

Observations

Two totals are established: one if we take the delimitation line declared by France for its jurisdictional waters and a second if we take the line declared by Spain.



REGIONAL STRUCTURE JURISDICTION OF MARITIME SPACE	Canaries sub-division		MARINEPLAN Dept. of Human Geography University of Seville
	——— Straight base lines - - - Limit of territorial sea ·-·-· Limit of contiguous zone	·-·-· Limit of exclusive economic zone ——— Limit of sub-division ■ Unresolved jurisdiction	Source: Prepared by authors