

Visualising the Oceans: The Australian Experience

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1. Introduction

Depending on one's point of view, Australia is either the largest island or the smallest continent. Either way, Australia certainly has an extensive coastline and maritime jurisdiction (**Fig. 1**). During the last decade, Australia has experienced a growing awareness of this huge marine environment with its maritime rights and responsibilities together with a growth in awareness of broader environmental issues.

I will argue in this paper that the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 was a strong signal that the environmental movement had matured to the point where it is now part of the main political agenda of all developed countries. This effect cuts across the long running Law of the Sea issue in a most interesting way. The Law of the Sea