

**LAWS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

**TERRITORIAL SEA ACT**

**CHAPTER 1:51**

**Act  
38 of 1969**

**Current Authorised Pages**

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## CHAPTER 1:51

## TERRITORIAL SEA ACT

## ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

## SECTION

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An Act to make provision with respect to the Territorial Sea of Trinidad and Tobago. 38 of 1969.

[31ST DECEMBER 1969]

Commence-  
ment.  
1/1970.  
Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the Territorial Sea Act.

2. In this Act—

Interpretation.

“Island” means a naturally formed area of land which is surrounded by and above water at mean high-water spring tides;

“low-water line” has the meaning assigned to it by section 7;

“low-tide elevation” means a naturally formed area of land which is surrounded by, and above water at mean low-water spring tides but is submerged at mean high-water spring tides;

“nautical mile” means the international nautical mile.

3. The territorial sea of Trinidad and Tobago comprises those areas of the sea having as their inner limits the base-lines defined in section 5 and as their outer limits, a line measured seaward from that baseline, every point of which is distant twelve nautical miles from the nearest point of the baseline so, however, that

Territorial sea.

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where the outer limits of the territorial sea of Trinidad and Tobago intersect foreign territorial waters the outer limits thereof shall be resolved through agreements or other means recognised by international law.

Internal waters.

4. The internal waters of Trinidad and Tobago shall include any areas of the sea that are on the landward side of the baseline of the territorial sea of Trinidad and Tobago.

Baseline of territorial sea.

5. (1) The baselines from which the territorial sea shall be measured shall be—

- (a) the low-water line along the coasts of the island of Trinidad and of the island of Tobago as well as the coasts of all other islands that form part of Trinidad and Tobago; and
- (b) the straight baselines drawn from points shown on a large scale Government Map of Trinidad and Tobago in localities where the coast line is deeply indented and cut into or if there is a fringe of islands in its immediate vicinity.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(a), a low-tide elevation that lies wholly or partly within the breadth of the sea which would be territorial sea if all low-tide elevations were disregarded for the purpose of the measurement of the breadth thereof, shall be treated as an island.

Bed of territorial sea and internal waters vested in the State.

6. The seabed or submarine areas bounded on the landward side by the baselines referred to in section 5 and on the seaward side by the outer limits of the territorial sea shall be deemed to be and always to have been vested in the State.

Official charts.

7. (1) For the purposes of this Act, the low-water line in any specified area shall be the line of low-water at mean low-water spring tides as depicted on the largest scale Trinidad and Tobago Government nautical chart for the time being of that area or, where no such chart of that area exists, the largest scale British Admiralty chart for the time being of that area.

(2) In any proceedings in any court a certificate purporting to be signed by the Minister of Home Affairs or a person authorised by him that—

(a) any specified Trinidad and Tobago Government nautical chart of any area is the largest scale Trinidad and Tobago Government nautical chart for the time being of that area; or

(b) no Trinidad and Tobago Government nautical chart for any area exists and that any specified British Admiralty chart of that area is the largest scale British Admiralty chart for the time being of that area,

shall be admissible as evidence of the matter stated in the certificate.

(3) Every person signing any such certificate shall, in the absence of proof to the contrary, be presumed to be duly authorised to sign it.

8. For the purposes of this Act, permanent harbour works which form an integral part of a harbour system shall be treated as forming part of the coast.

Permanent  
harbour works.

9. This Act binds the State.

Act binds the  
State.