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INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY STUDY

Series A

LIMITS IN THE SEAS

No. 13

STRAIGHT BASELINES: THE FAEROES

The Geographer
Office of the Geographer
Bureau of Intelligence and Research

STRAIGHT BASELINES: THE FAEROES

The Government of Denmark has decreed on April 24, 1963 revised straight baselines to encircle the Faeroe Islands. The decree, which came into effect on March 12, 1964, nullified a 1959 law which had also defined straight baselines. The current lines extend the internal waters of the Faeroes along both the east and north coasts of the islands.

The 1963 decree is as follows:

Prime Minister's Department Decree No. 156
of April 24, 1963

Decree Amending the Decree Respecting the Fishery Patrol in the Sea Surrounding the Faeroe Islands

We, Frederic IX, by God's Grace King of Denmark, etc. etc, make known:

There is hereby decreed the following amendment of Sec. 1 of Decree No. 29 of February 27, 1903, respecting the provisions designed to regulate the fishery patrol in the sea surrounding the Faeroe Islands, as regards the area of the sea surrounding the Faeroe Islands where fishery is exclusively reserved to the Faeroese and other Danish nationals:

Section 1. The boundary within which only Faeroese and other Danish nationals shall be authorized to engage in fishing, shall be a line 12 nautical miles from the base lines described in par. 2, drawn as shown on the map adjoined as an annex to the present Decree.

Paragraph 2. The base lines referred to in par. 1, are drawn between the following 13 points and consist of straight lines, except for the line between point 13 and point 1, which follows the contour of the land.

Point 1	Westernmost point on Munken	61°20'(15") N., 6°39'(42") W.
Point 2	Dry rock off Famara Lighthouse	61°28'(30") N., 6°51'(55") W.
Point 3	Westernmost dry rock off Myggenaes (Mykines) Lighthouse	62°05'(47") N., 7°40'(52") W.
Point 4	Dry rock WNW of Myggenaes Lighthouse	62°05'(53") N., 7°40'(43") W.
Point 5	Dry rock off Myling	62°18'(16") N., 7°12'(32") W.
Point 6	Westernmost point of Fles N. of Kadlur	62°22'(22") N., 6°47'(51") W.
Point 7	Dry rock N of Enniberg	62°23'(41") N., 6°33'(16") W.
Point 8	Point on N side of Fugloy	62°21'(15") N., 6°17'(32") W.
Point 9	Point on NE side of Fugloy	62°20'(36") N., 6°14'(53") W.
Point 10	Easternmost point of Bispen E. of Fugloy	62°20'(24") N., 6°14'(30") W.
Point 11	Easternmost point on Fleserne near Munken	62°20'(24") N., 6°39'(04") W.
Point 12	Southernmost point on Fleserne	61°20'(20") N., 6°39'(08") W.
Point 13	Southeasternmost point on Munken	61°20'(15") N., 6°39'(36") W.

Paragraph 3. The geographical positions referred to in paragraph 2 are all taken from the Danish nautical chart No. 80, edition of 1955.

Paragraph 2. Decree No. 130 of April 27, 1959 regarding the fishery patrol in the sea surrounding the Faeroe Islands shall cease to have effect from the same date.

Done at Christiansborg Palace, April 24, 1963.
Under Our Royal Hand and Seal.

Frederic R.

J. O. Krag

The decree, in effect, has created thirteen straight baseline segments which completely surround the archipelago. The straight baselines enclose, off the east and west shores, a considerable amount of water area which is difficult to associate with the regime of the land. Analysis of the straight baselines is as follows:

Points	Length (nautical miles)	Comments
1 - 2	10.25	The segment closely follows the general trend of the coast of Syderø deviating at an angle of approximately 12°. The rock used as point 2 is immediately off a coastal cape.
2 - 3	44.0	The second longest straight baseline utilized. For nearly 11 miles, does not depart markedly from the general trend of Syderø (Stohuroy). The line then encloses Gutta Grynna, a bight formed by the flanking islands. At one point, the straight baseline is more than 12 nautical miles from the nearest land.
3 - 4	.25	Marked change in direction to enclose the north "coast."
4 - 5	17.9	Even including the waters of the Myggenæs (Mykines) between Myggenæs I. and Vaagø (Gagar), and Vaagø Fjord, between Vaagø and Stromø (Streymoy), the waters do not meet the semi-circularity requirements of a bay.
5 - 6	11.8	The straight baseline does not depart from the general direction of the coast which may be considered deeply embayed, i.e. fjorded.
6 - 7	7.2	Same situation.
7 - 8	7.7	Same situation.
8 - 9	1.5	The segment encloses a small, legal bay on Fuglø, (Fugloy).
9 - 10	.25	Major turning point from north "coast" to east "coast."
10 - 11	60.8	The longest straight baseline employed. It does not depart appreciably, for approximately 7 miles, from the general direction of Fuglø and Svinø. However, from the southern end of the latter island southward, the straight baseline measures 5.5 nautical miles from Nolsø (Nolsoy); 4.75 nautical miles from Sandø (Sandoy); 5.8 nautical miles from Syore Dimon (Store Dimun); and 4.2 nautical miles from Lille Dimon (Litla Dimun). At one point, the segment is approximately 7.8 nautical miles from the nearest land.

Points	Length (nautical miles)	Comments
11 - 12	1.0	Closing the straight baselines on the south.
12 - 13	.25	
13 - 1	<u>.1</u>	Follows coast rather than an SBL segment.
Total	163.00 nautical miles	

The so-called archipelago principle, which is not recognized under international law, has been utilized to delimit the Faeroese straight baselines.

The thirteen straight baselines segments have a total length of 163.0 nautical miles. They vary from .1 to 60.8 nautical miles in length with an average of 12.53 nautical miles. Two of the segments (44.0 and 60.8 nautical miles) exceed 24 nautical miles; five measure 1 mile or less in length.

The ratio of water to land enclosed by the Faeroese straight baselines is less than 2:1. In contrast, the case of the Norwegian straight baselines example, the ratio was 3.5:..