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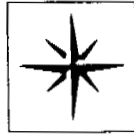
no. 56

ITS IN THE SEAS

Reviews

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No. 56
CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY
(NORTHEASTERN BALTIC SEA)
FINLAND-SOVIET UNION



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LIMITS IN THE SEAS

No. 56

Continental Shelf Boundary: Finland-Soviet Union
(Northeastern Baltic Sea)

October 19, 1973

The Geographer
Office of the Geographer
Bureau of Intelligence and Research

The Governments of the Republic of Finland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics signed an agreement on May 5, 1967, delimiting the continental shelf boundary between the two states in the northeastern Baltic Sea. The Agreement entered into force on March 15, 1968, after exchange of ratifications. Both Finland and the Soviet Union are parties to the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf.

The Agreement states that:

FINLAND-U.S.S.R.: AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS CONCERNING THE BOUNDARY OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF BETWEEN FINLAND AND THE SOVIET UNION IN THE NORTH-EASTERN PART OF THE BALTIC SEA

Signed at Helsinki on 5 May 1967; Came into force on 15 March 1968. *UN Treaty Series*, vol. 640, p. 111.

The Government of the Republic of Finland and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,

Having regard to the successful development of relations between Finland and the Soviet Union founded on the 1948 Finnish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance,

Desiring to define the boundary of the continental shelf between Finland and the Soviet Union in the north-eastern part of the Baltic Sea,

Having regard to the agreement reached in this matter between Finland and the Soviet Union by an exchange of letters on 20 May 1965,

Taking into account the Agreement of 20 May 1965 between Finland and the Soviet Union concerning the boundaries of sea areas and of the continental shelf in the Gulf of Finland,

Bearing in mind the Geneva Convention of 1958 on the continental shelf,

Have decided to conclude this Agreement and have for that purpose appointed as their plenipotentiaries the undersigned, who, having exchanged their full powers, found in good and due form,

Have agreed as follows:

Art. 1. The Contracting Parties agree that the boundary of the continental shelf between the Republic of Finland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the north-eastern part of the Baltic Sea in the section to the west of the line joining the Hankoniemi peninsula, the island of Osmussaari and Cape Poosaspaa¹ and up to the line joining the Finnish navigational mark on the island of Grimsoarne and the Soviet lighthouse at Ristna on the island of Hiiumaa shall be the median line.

The said median line begins at the point whose co-ordinates are 59°32.0' north latitude and 23°10.0' east longitude, established by article 3 of the above-mentioned Finnish-Soviet Agreement of 20 May 1965, and runs in a westerly direction through the points whose geographical co-ordinates are the following: 59°25.2' north latitude and 22°45.5' east longitude; 59°23.1' north latitude and 22°10.3' east longitude.

The median line ends at the point whose co-ordinates are 59°19.0' north latitude and 21°47.0' east longitude and which is situated on the line joining the Finnish navigational mark on the island of Grimsoarne and the Soviet lighthouse at Ristna on the island of Hiiumaa.

Art. 2. The boundary of the continental shelf between the Republic of Finland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics referred to in article 1 is indicated on Soviet chart No. 444, scale 1:200,000 (date of issue: 17 July 1965), which is annexed to this Agreement.

All the co-ordinates referred to in this Agreement conform to the system of co-ordinates employed in the chart.

Art. 3. This Agreement shall be ratified and shall enter into force on the date of the exchange of the instruments of ratification.

The exchange of the instruments of ratification shall take place in Moscow as soon as possible.

Analysis

The continental shelf boundary (CSB) in the northeastern Baltic Sea is an extension of the CSB delimited in a 1966 agreement between Finland and the Soviet Union. The

1. On the attached chart, Cape Poosaspaa is the same as Spithami N.

previous Finland-Soviet Union CSB in the Gulf of Finland¹ extends eastward of Point 1 of the northeastern Baltic Sea CSB.

The delimitation of the CSB in the northeastern Baltic was plotted on U.S. Naval Oceanographic Chart No. 44015, 1st Edition, October 1953 (revised October 2, 1972).

The CSB extends for a distance of 44.5 n.m. The four terminal points have an average depth of 47.5 fathoms with an average distance between the points of 14.8 n.m.

The principle of equidistance has been employed in delimiting the CSB. On the attached chart, the points do not appear to fall precisely equidistant between Finnish and Soviet terrain. This error, however, is attributable to the small scale of the chart used to analyze the CSB.

Point 1 of the northeastern Baltic CSB corresponds to Point 21 of the 1966 CSB Agreement between the two states.

The western terminal (Point 4) of the CSB could have been continued farther westward before the Finland-Soviet Union-Sweden tripoint is reached. The reason for terminating the CSB at Point 4 has not been specified.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Terminal for Turning Point	Distance Between Points (n.m.)	Depth (fathoms)	Finland Territory	Distance Land to CSB Point (n.m.)	USSR Territory	
1		40	Islet south of Russaro	14.8	Osmussaari I.	
	14.50					
2		45	Bengstar	19	20	Tahkuna N.
	17.50					
3		49	Islet (unnamed)	21	22	Tahkuna N.
	12.50					
4		56	Grimsoarne	23	24	Ristna (western extremity of Hiiumaa)

1. See U.S. Department of State, Office of the Geographer. *Continental Shelf Boundary: Finland-Soviet Union*. International Boundary Study, Series A, Limits in the Seas, No. 16 of May 25, 1970.

The coordinates of the CSB Agreement are based on the Russian system. To convert the coordinate values to the U.S. Naval Oceanographic chart, all the CSB coordinates must be reduced by 18 seconds. Following are the coordinate values used in plotting the CSB:

Chart

59°31'42"
23°09'42"

59°24'54"
22°45'12"

59°22'48"
22°10'00"

59°18'48"
21°46'48"