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# **The Exclusive Economic Zone: an Instrument of National Security?**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the  
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# **Abstract**

New Zealand's exclusive economic zone is one of the world's largest, and is disproportionately large compared to New Zealand's terrestrial claim. This maritime claim promises the benefit of perpetual resource exploitation, and potentially forms a useful buffer in the defence of New Zealand's terrestrial claims. As such, it would seem reasonable to consider the exclusive economic zone to be an instrument of national security. However, is this claim assured and are the expected benefits being realised?

This thesis examines New Zealand's maritime claims in the context of national security. To achieve this, it analyses the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and then comparatively assesses New Zealand's claims in the context of the New Zealand national security framework. It also examines the legitimacy and assurance of those claims.

Finally, the thesis examines the contribution to national security provided by the exclusive economic zone. In doing so, it identifies an unexpected threat to New Zealand's national security, related to the manner in which New Zealand manages matters of strategic importance.

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