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France's *Indo-Pacific Strategy*

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Foreword

by the President of the French Republic



The French Indo-Pacific strategy, whose principles and lines of action I set out in spring 2018, is based on the major ongoing strategic transformations observed in that space, and France's role through its overseas departments and communities. Over 1.6 million French citizens live in these overseas territories, while three-quarters of the French exclusive economic zone — the world's second largest — is located in the Indo-Pacific. Our armed forces provide a strong presence of over 7,000 soldiers, which is essential to defend our sovereignty and to contribute, alongside our main partners, to regional security.

As a fully-fledged Indo-Pacific country, France also wants to be a stabilizing force, promoting the values of freedom and rule of law. We aim to provide solutions to the security, economic, health, climate and environmental challenges facing countries in the zone. The French Indo-Pacific strategy, which turns these objectives into concrete actions, is based on four main pillars.

First, our actions take place in the area of security and defence. We want the Indo-Pacific to remain an open and inclusive area, with each State observing each other's sovereignty. In this zone, which is the epicentre of global maritime trade and where tensions are appearing regarding maritime borders, it is essential to ensure freedom of navigation and overflight, in full compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.


The second main theme is economic, particularly the connectivity of physical and digital infrastructures, which are sectors in which Indo-Pacific countries have huge needs. Here too, promoting and complying with international standards, particularly regarding trade, is a priority.

The third pillar involves promoting effective multilateralism, based on the rule of law and the rejection of coercion. Multilateralism, which involves all stakeholders, is the best framework in which to reduce tensions and encourage cooperative approaches, rather than operating via blocks. And the need to work together has been all the more obvious due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We can only succeed

by working together to tackle the latest particularly tough global health challenges in the Indo-Pacific region.

The fourth essential component of our strategy is our commitment to common goods. It is largely the Indo-Pacific space that will determine our ability to meet our strict climate and biodiversity requirements. In this part of the world, France is promoting ambitious environmental diplomacy by mobilizing its partners around concrete initiatives for energy transition, the protection of biodiversity and sustainable ocean management.

Finally, the Indo-Pacific must be one of the main priorities of our European agenda. An increased European presence will enable us to better meet the challenges of this vast region, where the European Union has already forged strong partnerships. I look forward to the upcoming adoption of an ambitious EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

Many initiatives have been developed over the past three years, and our partnerships with countries in the region have reached unprecedented levels of cooperation. But much remains to be done. Our aim is to help make the Indo-Pacific a free, safe and open space, which has high ambitions in terms of oceans, the climate and biodiversity, and is integrated with regard to infrastructure and human exchanges. You can count on France's full commitment. We will continue to play a full role in contributing to the stability of this new strategic space, which is at the core of major global challenges. 



Emmanuel Macron
President of the French Republic

Foreword

by the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the French Republic



Because the Indo-Pacific region is becoming the world's strategic centre of gravity and because the security, economic, technological and environmental challenges emerging there are also ours, France and the European Union have interests to defend, values to promote and partnerships to forge there.

That is one of the priorities of the European and international action of France, now acknowledged as a fully-fledged nation of the Indo-Pacific, not only because of our overseas departments and communities and permanent military presence, but also because of our ability to take the initiative with our partners and regarding their cooperation needs, thanks to an exceptional network of diplomatic and consular posts, government agencies, higher education establishments and scientific research institutes.

Since the President of the Republic's founding speech in Sydney in May 2018, we have worked to unite and to act.

In this region marked by polarization and rising tensions, we have proposed to our partners to move forward, with us, on the path of multilateral cooperation based on law and respectful of all sovereignties. This approach clearly fulfils the aspirations of the main countries in the region, with which we have constantly strengthened our ties on the basis of converging views and shared interests. We have also started intensifying our cooperation with regional organizations, particularly ASEAN, which is set to remain central to building a multipolar Asia. We are now proud to be an ASEAN Development Partner.

Thanks to these partnerships, we have been able to carry out tangible actions to strengthen stability in the Indo-Pacific, contribute to settling regional crises, promote the rule of law and international standards, ensure balanced and sustainable economic development, foster the deployment of quality infrastructure and work to preserve our common goods: the climate, the environment and biodiversity, health, marine resources and maritime security, education and digital technology.

We have also supported the deployment of our companies towards the Indo-Pacific, convinced that they can contribute to that progress by entering markets which offer immense growth potential.

Lastly, we have advocated for the European Union to fully play the role it must have in the Indo-Pacific, addressing all the consequences of the geopolitical pivot that is taking shape and making greater use of its cooperation instruments. The adoption of a European strategy for the Indo-Pacific will soon crown those efforts.

That intense diplomatic work, the first results of which are presented in this document, will naturally continue and be stepped up, particularly during France's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2022.

A considerable share of the balances of tomorrow's world are today in play in the Indo-Pacific. We are determined to be there and ready for this historic shift.



Jean-Yves Le Drian

Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs
of the French Republic



Section One -

The Indo-Pacific: a region with polarizing tensions and significant global issues

The main principles and objectives of France's Indo-Pacific strategy were presented in the founding speeches made by President Macron in Sydney (Garden Island) on 2 May 2018, during the Ambassadors' Conference on 27 August 2019, and in Saint-Denis de la Réunion on 23 October 2019 ("Choose La Réunion" summit). The French approach presented by President Macron seeks to maintain a space that is open and inclusive, free of all forms of coercion, and in accordance with international law and multilateralism, which extends from the eastern shores of Africa to the island States of the Pacific. President Macron noted the importance of our major partnerships and underlined the role that our overseas departments and communities in the Indian and Pacific Oceans play in regional cooperation. •

▲ During his visit in May 2018, the President of the Republic launched France's Indo-Pacific Strategy at Garden Island naval base in Australia.

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1.1. Geopolitical balances of power are changing

Currently, the Indo-Pacific is an area that is seeing profound strategic changes. China's power is increasing, and its territorial claims are expressed with greater and greater strength. Competition between China and the US is increasing, as are tensions at the Chinese-Indian border and on the Korean peninsula. All of these elements are changing regional balances of power, and making strategic calculations more complex. To this can be added persistent transnational threats, such as piracy, terrorism, trafficking (drugs, precious stones and wood, protected species, etc.) and unresolved proliferation crises, as well as the disastrous effects of climate change, which are already being felt in terms of security. All of these changes have a direct impact on the entire region, including on French territories.

In this area where seven of the ten largest defence budgets in the world are located, the increasing strategic and military imbalances are a threat with global consequences, and could as such directly impact Europe: 30% of trade between Asia and Europe goes through the South China Sea. Most of the States of the Indo-Pacific region have sought to invest

in a modern military for over a decade. Combined with technological progress, this trend causes a general hardening of operational environments and a potential fracture in regional, as well as global, balances of power.

Oceans, at the heart of tensions

The Indo-Pacific is characterized by its maritime dimension. Maritime transit represents 90% of global trade flows and the oceans are crucial strategic spaces for guaranteeing supplies of goods and energy. Securing shipping lanes is therefore an absolute priority. International mobilization in the fight against Somalian piracy around 2010 was the first indication of the need for a multilateral response to these threats. Today efforts are also being made to fight trafficking in drugs and weapons, as well as human trafficking, and also against illegal, undeclared and unregulated fishing, a practice that is on the rise, that some States use as a destabilizing force.

These non-traditional security threats are on top of conflicts for maritime

boundaries that are a source of great tension between States, including in the South China Sea and East China Sea. Since this concerns freedom of navigation in international straits, France is opposed to any attempted fait accompli, unilateral change in existing systems, or challenge to international law through the use of force.

Preserving an international order based on the rule of law through actions that are based on a multilateral approach

The United States and China are engaged in global strategic competition where the main areas of interaction are located in the Indo-Pacific. Initially centred on economics and technology, this rivalry has extended to the military sphere and, in the medium term, will determine most of the regional strategic issues. Chinese-American strategic competition and the behaviour of certain regional actors, giving priority to bilateral arrangements and power relations in order to favour their own national interests, contribute to the breakdown of the international order,

while global challenges are requiring greater cooperation from States. The risks of uncontrolled escalation are great in this region, which lacks crisis regulation mechanisms. In line with the principles and values demonstrated in its international commitment, France works for a multilateral international order that is based on the rule of law. It shares this goal with its main partners in the Indo-Pacific, including India, Australia, Japan, and ASEAN.

1.2. A structuring axis of the global economy

Strong economic potential

In two decades, the Indo-Pacific region has become the new driver of global economic growth. The Indo-Pacific includes six members of the G20, and the region generates almost 40% of global wealth. According to the IMF, the Indo-Pacific could represent more than 50% of global GDP in 2040, and its markets could represent 40% of global consumption.

Despite the internal economic heterogeneity of the region, it displays significant regional integration. Asian trade is buoyed by value chains that are increasingly concentrated, 60% of Asian trade is inter-regional in nature. Financing for Asian start-ups from inside the region amounts to 70% of all financing sources. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) free trade agreement was signed in November 2020 between 15 States (10 ASEAN countries, China, Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand). It will further strengthen regional integration, which for States also contributes to resilience in the face of global economic shocks.

Growth in the Indo-Pacific region is

supported by a dynamic middle class that will soon represent three billion people in Asia. These people have a taste for high quality goods and services. They are mobile, connected, and increasingly live in urban areas (21 of the 30 largest cities on the planet are in Asia). These urban ecosystems are also laboratories for innovation, where the city of the future is being created, one that is more inclusive and more sustainable. The Indo-Pacific offers great opportunity for French companies, including those in the defence sector, as the region has become the largest global importer of military equipment.

Connectivity, a major challenge

The rapid economic development of this region has brought about the need for significant investment. This is particularly the case in the area of infrastructure for transportation, energy, and telecommunications, sectors where French companies have proven their skills. The field of infrastructure is one that is highly competitive across the region, including the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. France supports a

set of norms and standards, and the deployment of multilateral tools for financing quality infrastructure. This includes, within the framework of the G20, seeking to promote environmental protection, social inclusion, respect of competition rules, transparency, and fiscal sustainability in order to avoid hidden or unsustainable public debt. At the European Union level, the EU-Asia connectivity strategy has the same regulatory requirements.

communication, digital healthcare, mobile payments and e-commerce sectors experienced exponential growth in the Indo-Pacific region. Asia dominates the virtual reality, autonomous vehicle, 3-D printer, robotics, drone and artificial intelligence markets.

An area on the cutting edge of innovation, including in the digital domain

Governments in the region actively support research and development of new cutting-edge technologies, as well as the digital transformation of their institutions. Now one half of the population using the internet is located in Asia. This enormous source of digital consumers fosters innovation and investments in this sector. The region not only benefits from but also issues more than one half of all global investments. The Covid-19 crisis accelerated digital transition on a global scale: The

1.3. The Indo-Pacific at the heart of global issues and the objectives of sustainable development

Effects of climate change

The Indo-Pacific is one of the global regions that is the most directly concerned and impacted by environmental issues and climate change. France supports a significant ambition in terms of climate, and the Indo-Pacific is a priority region for the actions that the country carries out with its partners. In 2019, the region's CO₂ emissions represented 45% of total global emissions, 30% of that coming from China. Out of the ten largest greenhouse gas emitters, five are located in the Indo-Pacific: China, India, Japan, South Korea, and Indonesia.

In the region, the frequency of natural disasters has greatly increased in the past few years. Extreme climate events caused by global warming and the degradation of ecosystems are having a significant impact on developing countries, and these countries lack the means to adequately face such events. Small island States in the two oceans are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, as well as to ecosystem deterioration risks. These disasters increase the vulnerability of populations and constitute a true security risk.

According to the UN, the Indo-Pacific region will be the region that will be the most impacted by climate-displaced persons, and up to 80% of these migrations will take place in this region.

Threats to the richness of biodiversity

The Indo-Pacific region is home to the richest and most fragile biodiversity reserves on the planet. Almost half of the critical biodiversity areas are in this region, where deforestation is reaching critical levels. Working with its partners, France is taking action to promote the protection of oceans and forests, and the understanding of links between biodiversity and public health risks.

Protecting the oceans is essential for the Indo-Pacific countries that depend on marine resources. More than 85% of the populations working in the fishing or aquaculture sectors live in Asia. In the South Pacific, more than half of fish stocks is exploited at non-sustainable levels. Plastic pollution is another scourge of marine biodiversity. The five countries that make the largest contribution to this phenomenon are located in Asia.

Increasing healthcare needs

Healthcare needs are increasing as the population of the area ages due to demographic transition and improving healthcare systems. By 2050, the number of people over 60 will double worldwide, and two-thirds of this increase will be from Asia. Infectious diseases continue to spread, and the urgency for investing in research was particularly shown by the Covid-19 epidemic. To meet these needs, France can rely on recognized expertise from its research network, and from its bilateral partnerships.

Protecting human rights

In a global context where the universal nature of human rights is being called into question, France supports protecting these values, particularly in the Indo-Pacific, as part of its commitment to the rule of law. Through its public development assistance, it is committed to ensuring that the projects and programmes it finances do not infringe on human rights when they are implemented, and that they tend to produce a maximum of positive impacts for supporting human rights. It fosters

projects and programmes for education in human rights, gender equality, protection of advocates, and access to the law and to justice. It continuously analyses progress in human rights in the Indo-Pacific region and uses the political dialogue that it maintains with the region, as well as the actions carried out in multilateral bodies, including within the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (OHCHR), to address the most concerning cases of violations and abuses.



Section Two -

France and the Indo-Pacific, presence and influence

▲ Through the permanent ORSEC (Civil Security Response Organization) mechanism, New Caledonian armed forces annually perform large-scale maritime rescue scenarios.

2.1. Overseas territories, at the heart of the French strategy

With its overseas departments and communities, France is an Indo-Pacific nation in its own right. During his visits to New Caledonia (May 2018) and La Réunion (October 2019), President Macron underlined the essential role that the territories play in French strategy through regional cooperation.

France is the only EU country that has territories in the Indo-Pacific region: the departments of La Réunion and Mayotte, the communities of New Caledonia and French Polynesia, the territory of Wallis and Futuna, and the French Southern and Antarctic Lands. As part of the 1998 Nouméa Accord, the future of New Caledonia will be determined by a third referendum on independence, which will be held on 12 December 2021.

All of our territories represent a population of 1.65 million (more than one million for the two departments in the Indian Ocean). This presence in the two oceans gives France the second largest exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the world (10.2 million km²), with about two-thirds of the French EEZ located in the Pacific, mainly surrounding French Polynesia. France is the only EU power

that is actively present in the region, including with pre-positioned permanent military resources (FAZSOI in La Réunion, FANC in New Caledonia, and FAPF in French Polynesia).

Sovereignty missions and strengthening of French territories

The protection of France's citizens and sovereign territory, and in particular its EEZs, is one of the main missions of the French security and defence strategy in the Indo-Pacific.

The implementation of the Indo-Pacific strategy also seeks to address the concerns and needs of the territories. With that in mind, the priorities are set on:

- support for strengthening economic and educational exchanges with the countries in the region;
- development of potential in terms of attractiveness and innovation for the territories, including in the areas of the maritime economy, new energy sources, and digital technology;

- through regional cooperation, enhancing the expertise of local agencies and research institutes, including in terms of fighting climate change, as well as protecting biodiversity and sustainable management of marine resources.

FRENCH POLYNESIA, A DRIVER OF INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE PACIFIC

Pacific Business Day - In 2018, the first edition of this economic forum hosted the institutional representatives of countries in the Pacific, and Pacific Ocean entrepreneurial figures at the French Polynesian Presidency. The goal of this meeting was to provide the South Pacific with the foundations of an economic platform that fosters direct exchanges between partners, by highlighting know-how, production, and the specificities of each country's resources, as well as the difficulties they all share. Under the guidance of the Managerial representation of the South Pacific (Représentation Patronale du Pacifique Sud), this event welcomed business and political leaders from 15 countries in the Pacific, as well as 70 international guests. It is scheduled to take place every three years in Papeete.

Tech4islands Awards - Since 2019, the Tech4islands Awards competition has been organized by French Tech Polynésie for Oceania, the overseas departments, territories and communities, and the international sphere. It is the only innovation competition organized by and for the islands, aiming to highlight innovative 'Tech For Good' solutions that are environmentally friendly and sustainable for the islands and for the planet. The co-construction of the competition with all of the entities working in research, innovation and business in Polynesia is essential, in order to promote innovative and appropriate solutions that help strengthen the resilience of island societies, economies and ecosystems. The second edition of the competition in 2020 received 186 proposals from 37 countries and territories. •

The role of overseas departments and communities in the Indo-Pacific strategy

The significant role of the French territories in the Indo-Pacific strategy is based on:

→ **Their strategic position**, their considerable maritime domain and the resources it contains, including fishing and mineral resources. The

French territories have the potential to become “storefronts” for the blue economy in their regional environment.

→ **Their active role in regional cooperation**: the French territories are at the heart of essential regional issues, such as monitoring maritime species and fighting against illegal fishing; protecting the environment, and fighting global warming; protecting biodiversity; supporting sustainable development and energy transition; supporting access to research and

LA RÉUNION AND MAYOTTE, AT THE HEART OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

La Réunion is globally renowned for its exceptional geography and its biodiversity. The island is a global biodiversity hotspot, with 60% of its territory made up of sites classified as UNESCO world natural heritage sites. Sustainable development is making good progress: 35% of the island’s electricity comes from renewable energy sources. The blue economy should become one of the island’s growth drivers (large maritime port, incoming and outgoing maritime links). For all of these reasons, La Réunion contributes to the planet’s

sustainable development, and shares its successful experience.

Mayotte, located halfway between the African coast and Madagascar, at the entry of the Mozambique Channel, is surrounded by a coral reef belt that makes it one of the largest lagoons in the world. The lagoon is perfectly adapted to the development of aquaculture, and is home to certain vulnerable species, such as sea turtles. Five protected areas make up the Mayotte Marine Nature Park. •

innovation, and investment in technologies of the future.

- **The existence of an extensive network of agencies and research institutes and centres** (IRD, IFREMER, AFD, Institut Pasteur), that provides an advantage for promoting regional cooperation efforts, including protecting biodiversity, managing marine resources, and healthcare.
- **The French overseas territories also play a role as a driver of ecological transition**, taking into account the island specificities in terms of mobility, energy and food autonomy, waste processing, and water supply.
- Lastly, **the European dimension**: France aims for the presence of its departments and communities to be fully integrated in the European Union's future strategy for the Indo-Pacific. Specifically, it encourages the development of cooperation efforts between the EU or its Member States with the research institutes and universities that are located in French territories. The French territories serve to become footholds for EU actions in the region.

NEW CALEDONIA, COMMITTED TO MEETING ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

In New Caledonia, the network of French actors in research is extensive, with the Nation Research Institute for Sustainable Development (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement - IRD), IFREMER, and Institut Pasteur having bases there, and numerous other French and New Caledonian laboratories and consortia, as well as a university. The French oceanographic fleet also sails the Pacific with its vessel, Alis, that helps year after year to advance knowledge in biodiversity and climate change in the region.

Oceanian culture as well as territorial attachment to biodiversity are at the heart of New Caledonian regional outreach policy. Beyond it being a territory with significant strategic nickel resources, New Caledonia seeks to become a maritime hub and to be a pioneer in terms of

protecting, enhancing and sustainably developing its marine environment.

New Caledonia's renewable energy sources also are a true development advantage for the archipelago, in its effort to become a pioneer in this domain in the region. Furthermore, the territory supports innovation in all sectors, and has a network of ambitious businesses that are looking to expand through their specific expertise and innovation. Some of them recently received the French Tech label, and others are managing a major project that received the Territoire d'Innovation award at the regional level. For example, the latter group offers development of autonomous underwater vehicles, called "Rémoras", which can carry out analyses of water quality as part of environmental monitoring. •

2.2. The French State's network and its agencies

In the Indo-Pacific region, the French State's network includes 25 embassies, some of them having an expanded geographical scope, ensuring representation with a total of 39 States. In addition there are 14 general consulates and 2 representation offices (Taiwan and North Korea).

In French territories, the French State is represented by 2 High Commissions (French Polynesia and New Caledonia), 2 Prefectures (La Réunion and Mayotte), the Superior Administration of Wallis and Futuna, and the Administration of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF).

The network of French government agencies is made up of 24 Business France offices, tasked with supporting French businesses abroad and foreign businesses for their investments in France, and 10 offices of Atout France, that ensure the promotion of French tourism abroad. The Agency for French Education Abroad (Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Étranger – AEFE) manages 96 institutions in the region. The Institut Français furthers French cultural outreach abroad, and is established in 35 countries. The Agence Française de Développement

(French Development Agency – AFD) is active in 24 Indo-Pacific countries.

The other agencies operating in the region also include research bodies (see Section 2.5), as well as Expertise France, which designs and implements international technical cooperation projects; France Volontaires, which advises candidates hoping to participate in an international volunteering programme; and Campus France, which accompanies foreign students in pursuing their studies in France.

2.3. Military and security presence

France maintains a permanent military presence in the Indo-Pacific, spread across five high commands covering the entire region. Implementation of these sovereign forces¹ makes up the keystone of French defence action in the region. They are central to implementing cooperation efforts, through their participation in a large number of joint operations and training. They also play a leading role in terms of evacuation efforts for French citizens and humanitarian aid in the event of natural disasters (HADR, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief).

The armed forces in the southern region of the Indian Ocean (FAZSOI) form a projection platform of forces in this region, which is subject to strategic competition, where allies and partners have limited capacity for action. In the South Pacific, the New Caledonian armed forces (Forces Armées de la Nouvelle-Calédonie - FANC) and the French Polynesian armed forces (Forces Armées en Polynésie Française - FAPF) allow France to ensure the security of its territories, its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and its sovereign airspace.

This capacity for protection and monitoring is extended, due to their zone of permanent responsibility, to the territorial limits of Melanesia and Polynesia. This presence contributes to carrying out missions with a regional scope, beyond sovereign zones, in close cooperation with Australia and New Zealand, and for the benefit of the island States.

The French sovereignty forces closely monitor regional strategic changes, as well as changes in the defence environment. This recognized capacity for analysis supports cooperation with the major partners in the region. The permanent nature of France's capacities and infrastructure and the know-how of its forces in the Indian Ocean, as well as in the Pacific, demonstrate the credibility of its presence, its contribution to regional security and stability, and its support of its partners.

A network of 18 defence missions led by defence attachés, accredited in 33 countries, and about 15 liaison and cooperation officers, ensures geographical coverage that can monitor protection and security for French citizens and French territories,

¹ 3 sovereignty forces (FAZSOI, FANC, FAPF) and 2 presence forces (FFEAU, FEDJ) making up an ensemble of 7,000 troops and units of the three armed forces divisions.

and implement defence cooperation activities.

Lastly, a network of 7 internal security attachés helps to develop bilateral, multilateral, and regional security cooperation actions with twenty-seven countries in the region.

DEPLOYMENTS OF THE FRENCH ARMED FORCES IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

The permanent presence is occasionally strengthened by deployment of ships and aircraft from continental France. Following the deployment of the naval aviation group in 2019, the *Marianne* mission (deployment of the *L'Émeraude* nuclear attack submarine and the *La Seine* support vessel in 2021) demonstrated France's capacity to deploy strategic resources far from continental France and for extended periods, in spite of the difficulties caused by the public health crisis. The French Air and Space Force (Armée de l'Air et de l'Espace) is also

strengthening its presence in the region, in addition to its contribution to the missions of the sovereignty forces, through its participation in the *Pitch Black 2018* (Australia) exercise, and the *Pégase 2018* (South-East Asia) and *Skyros 2021* (Indian Ocean) missions.

These deployments present opportunities for interacting with France's main partners, notably India, Australia, Japan, and the United States, with whom it maintains high-level defence cooperation programmes in all areas. •

Military presence



2.4. Economic footprint

France has created significant economic links with the Indo-Pacific², a dynamic space that provides 36% of current global wealth (19% excluding China) and will provide almost 39% of global wealth by 2024, according to the IMF.

In 2019, about 18% of French imports came from the Indo-Pacific region (around 8.7% excluding China) and about 14% of French exports went to that region (10% excluding China). Trade with the Indo-Pacific represents more than a third of French trade in goods outside of the EU, and is dynamic. It has grown by 49% in 10 years (compared to 27% on average on a global basis)³.

France's direct investments⁴ in the Indo-Pacific represented about 8% of its global investments in 2019 (6% excluding China), amounting to €113 billion. The amount was multiplied by 1.7 between 2010 and 2019, compared to 1.5 globally, excluding the EU. In terms of development in the Indo-Pacific, excluding China, French direct foreign investment stock (€19 billion) grew more rapidly (x 2.3) over the same period. In 2019, the Indo-Pacific region represented 3.8% of investment stocks in France.

It increased 1.7 times in 9 years.

In tourism, France welcomed 7.5 million visitors from countries in Asia and Oceania in 2018⁵, one of the highest increases in tourism (+7.4% compared to 2017) buoyed by India (+16%) and Japan (+11%).

France is mobilized to address the needs of the region with its export support instruments and development assistance. This includes durable infrastructure: according to the Asian Development Bank (February 2017), the infrastructure needs of developing countries in Asia and the Pacific will exceed USD 22.6 trillion by 2030, or USD 1.5 trillion per year. This estimation increases to USD 26 trillion, or USD 1.7 trillion per year when taking into account the expenses incurred to adapt to climate change. Support through aid, trade guidance and financing is through the following commitments:

→ the total amount outstanding for funds from the AFD Group in Indo-Pacific countries was more than €9 billion in 2020, all sectors combined, or about a quarter of the global total. Excluding China (13% of amount outstanding in the Indo-Pacific), it is divided equally

2. The figures cover the region that extends from South Asia to the South Pacific, passing through the Indian Ocean.

3. Source: French customs, 2019 data compared to 2010, excluding military equipment (free on board/cost, insurance and freight).

4. Banque de France estimates for 2019, 2020 report.

5. Latest information available, Source: Atout France and Direction Générale des Entreprises.

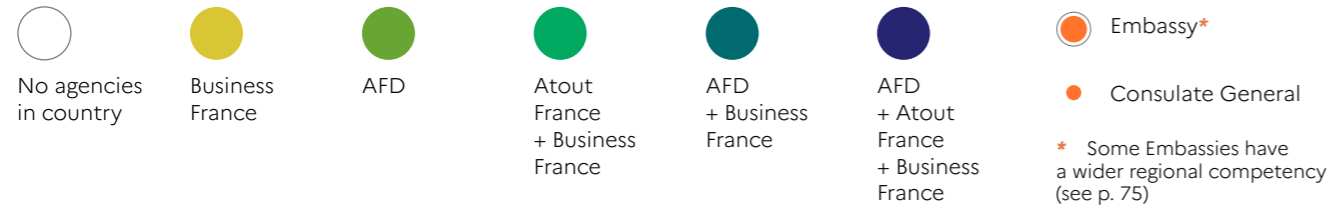
between the two regional sub-groups made up of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia. In 2020, the AFD Group was active in 26 territories neighbouring the Indo-Pacific, for almost €3.9 billion in commitments. Its involvement has priority targets of fighting climate change, and supporting the blue economy and governance;

- at the end of 2019, in terms of credit insurance, the Indo-Pacific represented a total amount outstanding of almost €13 billion, or 19% of global outstandings, all sectors of intervention combined. From the more limited perspective of infrastructure projects, the outstandings were about €1.7 billion;
- furthermore, the Indo-Pacific received a fifth of the global total of loans granted by the French Treasury from 2010 to 2020. More than 90% of that sum was related to infrastructure and digital connectivity. South-East Asia is the largest beneficiary of support granted to the infrastructure sector (15% of the global total). With 21 FASEP (Fonds d'études et d'aide au secteur privé, Fund for studies and support

of the private sector) projects from 2016 to April 2020, the Indo-Pacific also represented 12% of sums granted globally;

- furthermore, France supports the involvement of multilateral development banks (World Bank, ADB and AIIB) in the region, that carry out several public procurement operations, including for infrastructure, that are open to French businesses. As such, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), based in Manila, is a vital actor in economic development in the region. In 2019, its commitments amounted to USD 32 billion. In 2019, USD 56.6 million in bids were won by French companies, of which USD 37.2 million was for consultancy contracts and USD 19.4 million was for supplying goods and works. The World Bank is also very active in the region.

Economic and development presence



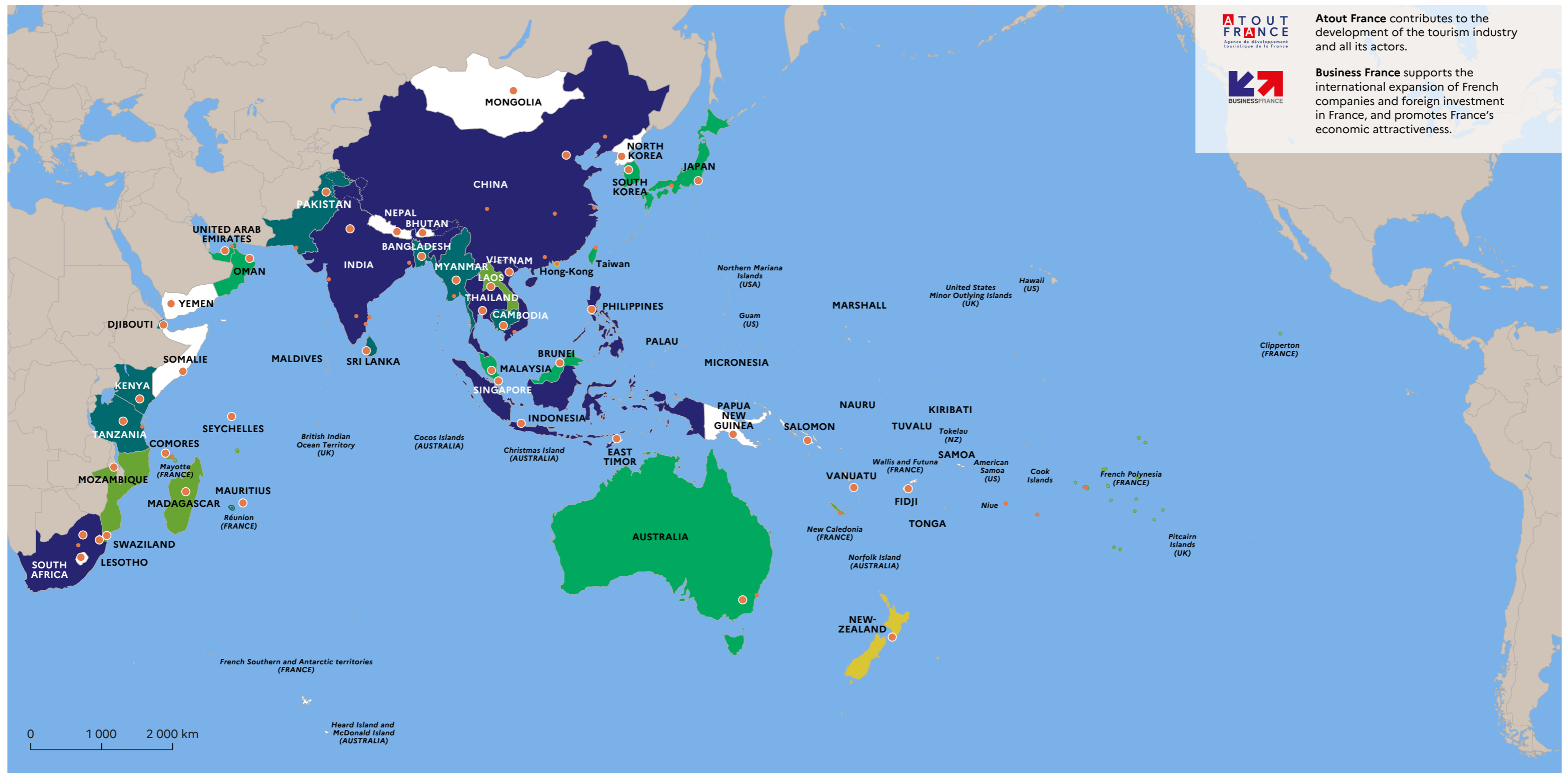
The **Agence Française de Développement** (AFD) is a public body central to French official development assistance.



Atout France contributes to the development of the tourism industry and all its actors.



Business France supports the international expansion of French companies and foreign investment in France, and promotes France's economic attractiveness.



2.5. Partnerships in education, research, and innovation

The Indo-Pacific is an essential region for the development of French educational institutions, student mobility, and cooperation in research and innovation.

Development of French education

Some 53,000 students (51.5% French students / 26.6% national students / 22.6% students from other countries) are enrolled in the 95 French educational institutions in the Indo-Pacific region. Since 2015, we have noted an increase of more than 9% in the number of institutions and staff numbers have remained stable. In terms of students, the percentage of national students is increasing.

While the growth in staff slowed or stopped in certain countries due to the public health crisis, the outlook remains positive in most cases: there is actually a growing demand in developing populations in the region for education with an international focus. The attractiveness of French educational institutions is based on their capacity to develop a multilingual

offer, which contributes, among other things, to an increase in the number of international classes. In order to better integrate students who do not speak French, France encourages the institutions to develop programmes for French as a foreign language (Français Langue Étrangère - FLE) or French as a language for education (Français Langue de Scolarisation - FLESCO) in cooperation with the Agency for French Education Abroad (AEFE).

A significant student mobility challenge

Students in Asia and Oceania represent almost 45% of the global total of students studying abroad, i.e. more than 2 million students on study-abroad programmes. France hosts 50,000 of these students, including 37,000 Chinese students and 10,000 students from ASEAN countries (+28% in 5 years). The public health crisis had a dramatic impact on student mobility from the region going abroad.

The goal is to return to mobility at a pre-crisis level, or if possible, to increase student mobility, by launching university attractiveness strategies:

- extension of the “Études en France” application platform to new countries (Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand);
- strengthening of institutional discussions on structured student mobility;
- implementation of triple degrees, linking France to a partner that offers university capacities at the same level (South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Australia) and to a country with high potential (ASEAN countries and island States of the Pacific);
- making promotional efforts for the Campus France agency region-wide, in order to increase awareness of the French offer.

The institutions present in the French territories of the Indo-Pacific region also offer a significant lever of influence: universities in La Réunion, New Caledonia, French Polynesia, as well as satellite campuses of French institutions, following the model of the ESMOD fashion institute (Japan, Korea, Indonesia, and Malaysia), the École 42 IT academy (Australia, Malaysia, Japan, and Thailand), the Cordon Bleu culinary academy (13 campuses in Asia-Oceania) or the Vatel

hotel training school (9 campuses in Asia and 5 in the Indian Ocean region). Several initiatives are going to be launched, including the creation of regional “French excellence” hubs, the implementation of an “Indo-Pacific label” within the framework of scholarships, and the development of a framework programme of “France/Indo-Pacific Young Talents”.

On the cutting edge of research and development

The context of scientific cooperation in the Indo-Pacific reflects the growing efforts of countries in Asia-Oceania to demonstrate their role as leaders in science. China is the country that is the most active in this area, as it focuses on cooperation efforts to develop its attractiveness for foreign researchers and enhance its scientific advances, through considerable investment, but also with the help of a less restrictive regulatory environment and attractive costs.

In an environment that is increasingly competitive, France has a network of its own research bodies that are present in the Indo-Pacific region (Centre National de la Recherche

Scientifique - CNRS, Institut Pasteur, Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale - INSERM, Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer - IFREMER, Institut de Recherche pour le Développement - IRD, Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement - CIRAD, Unités Mixtes des Instituts Français de Recherche à l'Étranger - UMIFRE), which have established solid partnerships and have recognized expertise in key areas such as health and environmental and oceanographic issues. The main goals are to increase the visibility of these research agencies, and to strengthen their coordination within the framework of regional initiatives with other partners. These research agencies are strengthened by the deployment of international technical experts, the staffing of which have been the object of significant effort, with a goal of quadrupling this staff by 2023.

France's influence also develops through the strengthening of its scientific cooperation efforts with strategic partners in the region: India, Japan (signing of a Franco-Japanese health

roadmap in 2020 that included an Indo-Pacific component), and Australia (signing in April 2021 of a science and innovation roadmap focused on our priority themes: health, energy, environment, space, and Industry 4.0).

Strengthening synergies on priority themes is also accomplished through the deployment of major projects at the regional level: renewal of the Make our Planet Great Again Pacific programme in 2023, support for new solidarity funds for innovative projects (Fonds de Solidarité pour les Projets Innovants - FSPI), and launching calls for regional research projects by our financing agencies and research organizations (ANR, Inserm, Pasteur network).

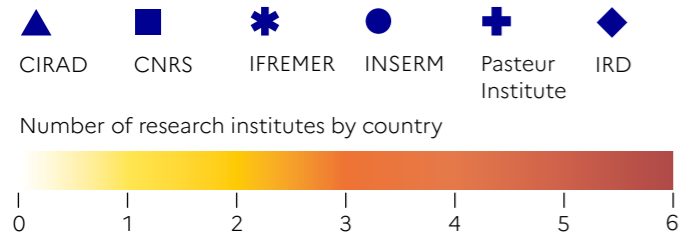
OCEANS, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND HEALTH, AT THE HEART OF THE IRD COMMITMENT

The Institut de Recherche pour le Développement is deeply involved in the Indo-Pacific region via its network of representative offices abroad and in the French overseas territorial communities with outreach in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean, as well as its network of local partners (universities, research organizations, NGOs, etc.), organized via structuring mechanisms, which welcome expatriate researchers and researchers on assignment, and its collaborations with key regional organizations in the area and with French actors in research and development.

The IRD supports scientific projects on themes that cover cross-cutting issues within this vast area, distributed into three main areas:

- **Oceans, coasts and marine resources:** consequences of plastic pollution, protection of coral reefs, sustainable management of coastlines and of the land-sea continuum, marine biodiversity observatories, fishing resources and exploited marine ecosystems, and food security;
- **Climate change and environmental risks:** impact of climate change and ocean feedback, environmental observatories, atmospheric pollution, and land-based risks and submersion;
- **Health:** the One Health approach, the fight against emerging infectious diseases, including COVID-19, the fight against vector-borne diseases (sterile insect technique), and environmental health. •

Scientific and research network



cirad LA RECHERCHE AGRICOLA POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT
CIRAD produces and transfers new knowledge, to support agricultural development in tropical and Mediterranean regions and contribute to debate on major international agriculture issues.

cnrs
 The **CNRS** is a public research body active in all scientific, technological and social fields.

ifremer
IFREMER is a public body contributing, through its studies and expertise, to knowledge of oceans and their resources.

Inserm
INSERM is the only French public research body totally dedicated to human health. It aims to improve the health of all through advancing knowledge of living things and diseases, innovation in treatments and public health research.

INSTITUT PASTEUR
 The **Pasteur Institute** is a non-profit foundation aiming to contribute to preventing and treating diseases, particularly infectious diseases, through research, innovation, education and public health activities.

IRD
 The **IRD** is a public research institution working on international development challenges including improving health, understanding the evolution of societies, and preserving the environment and natural resources.



Section Three -

France's partnerships in the Indo-Pacific

Three years after President Macron's speech in Sydney (Garden Island), the implementation of the French strategy for the Indo-Pacific has started to produce tangible outcomes and significant progress. France's actions are built on major partnerships that it has developed with like-minded countries in the region, and with ASEAN, based on a shared vision of the issues and the solutions that need to be provided. •

© French Embassy in Papua New Guinea

▲ Through the FRANZ mechanism, medical teams were able to access remote villages to help with COVID-19 vaccination efforts in Papua New Guinea.

3.1. Strategic partnerships

Partnership with India

Bilateral relations between India and France have profoundly changed in dimension since the launch of the strategic bilateral partnership in 1998. The strengthening of the major areas of the partnership (including defence, civil nuclear, and space) recently saw a more rapid progression of bilateral cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, including in maritime security (strategic exchange, cooperation between the two Navies and joint exercises, arrangements related to sharing of maritime information), renewable energy sources (the International Solar Alliance, an initiative founded by France and India) and the fight against ocean pollution.

Illegal fishing, the blue economy, and ocean governance (preparation of a roadmap is in progress), and post-disaster humanitarian aid are themes on which France and India seek to take joint action, particularly in regional Indian Ocean organizations (Indian Ocean Rim Association - IORA, and the Indian Ocean Commission - IOC). France joined the IORA in December 2020, and India has enjoyed observer status in the IOC since March 2020.

Partnership with Australia

Australia maintains close ties with New Caledonia and French Polynesia, and is a major partner of France in the Indo-Pacific. The strategic partnership with the country is based on a deep security and defence cooperation effort, consolidated by the Naval Group being chosen in 2016 for the construction of the future Australian ocean-going submarines. The armed forces of both countries participate in numerous joint military exercises in order to develop their interoperability, and a bilateral dialogue on national security was implemented in 2019. Strengthening of the cooperation between the Australian and French security forces was launched in this framework.

Joint actions in the South Pacific were strengthened: the fight against illegal fishing within the Pacific QUAD (with New Zealand and the United States), strengthening of the response to natural disasters via the FRANZ (France, Australia, and New Zealand) agreement, and protection of the environment, including through the KIWA initiative. They foster regional integration of our territorial communities in the Pacific.

This partnership was recently extended to the Indian Ocean where France and Australia work closely together within regional forums, such as the IORA, or the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), which France is now chairing.

Trilateral dialogue: France-India-Australia

France, India, and Australia agreed to begin trilateral cooperation efforts, under the initial guidance of the secretaries general of the foreign affairs ministries (September 2020), then the foreign affairs ministers, on the sidelines of a G7 meeting in London in May 2021, thereby implementing one of the initiatives proposed by President Macron in Sydney in May 2018. Three priority areas of joint action were identified:

- maritime safety and security: deepening of information sharing, cooperation in the area of humanitarian aid and disaster response, increasing the interoperability of the navies;
- management of marine resources and the environment: the fight against illegal and undeclared fishing, marine

pollution and plastic waste, joint projects as part of the International Solar Alliance;

- deepening cooperation within multilateral forums, for example with a view to the Indian presidency of the G20 in 2023.

Partnership with Japan

The Franco-Japanese relationship is one of close political dialogue and cooperation efforts structured in a large number of areas. An example of this dynamic is the strategic bilateral partnership that was established in 1995, which was elevated in 2013 to the level of exceptional partnership.

Strengthening the Franco-Japanese cooperation efforts in the Indo-Pacific region is the first objective set by the bilateral roadmap adopted in June 2019 during President Macron's trip to Japan. The Franco-Japanese working group on the Indo-Pacific held its first session in October 2020, and focused its efforts on four priority areas:

- maritime safety and security;
- climate, environment, and biodiversity;

- quality infrastructure;
- health.

This agenda results in joint military exercises and joint projects between our development agencies (AFD and JICA), including upgrading infrastructure and fostering climate change adaptation. In South-East Asia, we work together on preventing natural disasters as well as on supplies of water and energy.

The implementation of this partnership is also based on space dialogue, Franco-Japanese comprehensive maritime dialogue (the first edition of which took place on 29 September 2019 in Nouméa), and on the memorandum of cooperation adopted by the AFD and the JICA in June 2019.

3.2. Partnership with ASEAN

Given the central role that ASEAN holds in the Indo-Pacific region, intensifying relations with the Association and its member countries is one of the priorities of the French strategy, which has also resulted in establishing strategic or strengthened partnerships with three ASEAN countries: Indonesia in 2011, Singapore in 2012, and Vietnam in 2013.

Strengthened partnerships in defence and security

France maintains enhanced cooperation efforts in defence and security with its ASEAN partners, particularly in areas related to maritime security, support for peacekeeping operations training centres, and the fight against transnational crime. It contributes to the strengthening of the strategic autonomy of its partners, with whom it shares a common understanding of the issues impacting the region, and promotes a coordinated regional approach within the existing regional security architecture. This includes it being a candidate for working group observer status for the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus. In terms of cybersecurity and the fight

against cross-border crime, in 2019, France became an observing member of ASEANAPOL, the regional law enforcement cooperation organization, and aims to obtain the status of dialogue partner in the next three years.

France, development partner of ASEAN

Through its new status as a development partner, France is committed to deepening its relationship with ASEAN. This partnership was officially launched on 4 March 2021, and will cover several sustainable development areas, including global public goods such as health or the environment. As a reminder, France's official development assistance in the region amounted to €1.5 billion between 2014 and 2017.

This new framework will highlight the role played by all French government services, agencies and research institutes in South-East Asia (more than 140 sites), including the AFD. It also offers opportunities for French companies in sectors covered by the partnership, including energy, health, transportation, sustainable cities, water

management, and the digital economy. Lastly, from an institutional perspective, the partnership helps France to be more closely associated with ASEAN's framework initiatives, such as the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Network, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) or the Smart Cities Network.

France decided to increase its resources and its presence in the organization, including placing an international technical expert with the ASEAN secretariat. In order to facilitate the proper implementation of the development partnership, they will have the main mission of identifying projects and participating in their implementation, to highlight them to the secretariat and the member countries, and to inform the French network on initiatives where France can bring added value. New international technical experts will be deployed each year in the ASEAN countries by 2023.

The projects and actions undertaken are a demonstration of the diversity of France's actions in the region, covering, in addition to those already mentioned, the following areas: the blue economy, biodiversity, vaccine research, technical

and professional training, the green and circular economy, connectivity and sustainable infrastructure, support for SMEs, security (including cybersecurity and the fight against cross-border crime), managing disasters, human rights, tourism, and culture.

The AFD's actions in South-East Asia

For the 2015-2020 period, the AFD carried out 170 projects in the region for a total commitment of €3.7 billion. Beyond bilateral cooperation with each member country, the AFD also implements regional projects: a biodiversity hotspot protection project in Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos is in progress, as well as an epidemiological monitoring project linked to climate change (the second phase of which began in 2018 for the fight against dengue fever and leptospirosis), to which a support element in the response to Covid-19 was recently integrated. Another example is the AFD's close collaboration with the Mekong River Commission that includes a project for implementing a network for collection and transmission of hydrometeorological measurements in real time (Vietnam,

Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar).

The AFD participated, alongside other donors, in the Energy Transition Partnership programme launched during the One Planet Summit in 2017. The programme seeks to accelerate the energy transition in South-East Asia by fostering development of sustainable infrastructure and renewable energy in the region.

Furthermore, the Agency plans to finance an air quality improvement project in the cities or provinces of several countries in South-East Asia, including advocacy efforts with ASEAN in order to take into account the air quality issues in public policy at the regional level.

Finally, a year ago the Agency joined the ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility (ACGF) when it started. It is an initiative of ASEAN and of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) that seeks to generate more than a billion dollars in investment in green infrastructure in South-East Asia.

PRIORITY GIVEN TO HEALTH

Health is a priority in the actions that France is taking in South-East Asia, where it has, as is the case with the Institut Pasteur, hubs of excellence in research and training on emerging and re-emerging diseases. A solidarity fund for innovative projects (FSPI) in the field of these diseases has been implemented in the region. It helps carry out actions with rapid impact for the immediate benefit of local populations. It uses the One Health approach, which deals with human, animal, and environmental health in a coordinated and integrated manner. This initiative should help in understanding and preventing the development of infectious diseases, with a view to better informing policy-makers and strengthening the capacity to prevent and address future public health crises. This FSPI is part of the development partnership with ASEAN, and will concern all of the countries in the region. •

3.3. France's actions in the Pacific Ocean

France is the only EU Member State that has territories in the Pacific. It has strengthened its commitment alongside its partners and actors in Oceania to meet the challenges in this region. New Caledonia and French Polynesia are full members of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the main international organization in the Pacific, and Wallis and Futuna is an associate member. The three communities are members in their own right alongside the French State in the other regional organizations, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

An expanded mandate for the AFD

In order to increase France's influence in the region, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs provides for at least 1% of authorizations for commitment to the grant project via the AFD (programme 209) for the island States of the Pacific, i.e. €5 to €10 million per year, which includes strengthening synergies with European financing. The Pacific is also an essential component

for cooperation efforts developed with Australia and New Zealand.

KIWA INITIATIVE

Kiwa is a multi-donor initiative. It was announced during the One Planet Summit in December 2017, and was officially launched in February 2020. It has a budget of €35 million over five years, and it is implemented by the AFD and covers 19 island States and territories in the Pacific that are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Within its governance, the Kiwa Initiative has five international donors (Australia, Canada, France, New Zealand, and the European Union), two regional organizations (Secretariat of the Pacific Community - SPC and the Pacific Regional Environment Programme - SPREP), an international organization (IUCN) as well as the representatives of the Pacific island States and territories around a common objective: **the protection of biodiversity and adaptation to climate change using "nature-based solutions" in Oceania**. For the first time in the region, the initiative helps support common solutions implemented in French territories and island States of the Pacific. •

The AFD's mandate for action in the Pacific was expanded for the first time in 2018 to regional projects in the sector of adaptation to climate change and biodiversity. A new modification of the mandate was decided by the French government in March 2021, to expand to mitigating climate change, via loans and/or grants. As part of its new mandate, the AFD can steer or participate in bilateral projects, and no longer only ones with a regional scope.

It will be able to increase its commitments in the region and to better respond to development-related needs. It can cooperate more closely with other bilateral donors such as Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and India, and multilateral donors such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, and the European Union.

Substantially participating in the regional security architecture

Outside of their sovereignty missions, the New Caledonian armed forces (Forces Armées de la Nouvelle-Calédonie - FANC) and the French Polynesian armed

forces (Forces Armées en Polynésie Française - FAPF) contribute to securing the maritime zones surrounding the French territories by participating in maritime surveillance operations in the EEZs and high seas adjacent to the island States of the Pacific, in close coordination with our Pacific Quad partners (Australia, New Zealand, and the United States). The French forces are also mobilized to respond to natural disasters that happen in the region as part of the FRANZ mechanism, with Australia and New Zealand. This mechanism has been an effective tool, as the frequency and intensity of the disasters are increasing due to climate changes and the island States of the Pacific are the most impacted. It was activated on numerous occasions since its creation, and the last occasion was in April 2020 after the massive destruction caused by cyclone Harold in Vanuatu and Fiji. In this effort France delivered 25 tonnes of humanitarian aid during several operations that were carried out in record time and in spite of difficulties due to the Covid-19 epidemic, and border closings. Lastly France is participating in the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting and is getting involved

in regional thematic initiatives, such as the Western Pacific Naval Symposium, and the future Pacific Environmental Security Partnership.

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

In January 2021, France and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) concluded a partnership agreement, signed by the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Director-General of the SPC. France is a founding member of the SPC, the largest intergovernmental technical and scientific organization in the Pacific. It has 26 members, 3 of which are French communities in the Pacific benefiting from SPC programmes and support, and is based in Nouméa. Its bilingual character is an outreach tool for the *Francophonie*, as well as for the integration of New Caledonia into its Oceanian environment.

This new partnership framework will help strengthen joint and multilateral actions in the four priority domains of public health, climate change, the ocean, and sustainable management of natural

resources, and will foster the promotion of shared values, including gender equality. It benefits from the mobilization of French expertise in the Pacific (organizations based in our territories, such as the Institut Pasteur and Institut Louis Malardé, the IRD, the CIRAD, the IAC, and the CRILOBE for coral reefs).

Furthermore, the SPC was the preferred channel for aid provided to island States of the Pacific in the fight against COVID-19, with the delivery of an additional €2 million in subsidies through the AFD to the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network (PPHSN) at the start of the public health crisis.

PACIFIC FUND

The Pacific Fund was created in 1985, and is one of France's main regional cooperation instruments in the Pacific. It works to foster regional integration for New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna, through co-financing of economic, social, and cultural cooperation efforts made by our territories with the States in the region. Since 1985, more than 1,500 projects have been supported in these priority areas. In 2021 it has funding amounting to €2.85 million, and 55 projects were approved for this year. •

3.4. France's actions in the Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean plays a key role in the French strategy for the Indo-Pacific, as was pointed out by President Macron when he visited La Réunion in October 2019. Two French territories, La Réunion and Mayotte (1 million citizens) are located in the region. The armed forces in the southern zone of the Indian Ocean (Forces Armées dans la Zone Sud de l'Océan Indien - FAZSOI), and the pre-positioned forces in the United Arab Emirates and in Djibouti, contribute significantly to regional security and to the deepening of cooperation efforts, including with India. They carry out support missions for those living in the region and contribute to training efforts for the benefit of neighbouring countries. France has also developed a diversified economic footprint in the Indian Ocean.

Indian Ocean Commission

The IOC is the only political organization of the southwestern region of the Indian Ocean, and the only African organization of which France is a member. It conducts its work in French. Its political potential is important for developing regional actions and for the regional integration

of overseas communities and territories. The IOC has demonstrated resilience in the face of the pandemic, maintaining its institutional calendar and providing its Member States with aid through the AFD. The IOC's Secretary General, Velayoudom Marimoutou (a French citizen) is in charge of implementing the reform adopted in March 2020, which seeks to strengthen the role of the IOC. Since 2020, India and Japan have been admitted as observers, which fosters increased cooperation with these two partners.

The objective of the French presidency of the IOC in 2021-2022 is to relaunch regional cooperation in the Indian Ocean, after interruptions due to the pandemic, to go beyond the previous level. It is part of the favourable context for France in the Indian Ocean, which includes membership in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and chairing the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) in 2021. The largest area of intervention will be maritime security, where the IOC will have solid support, including the MASE programme with the EU. The recovery is also served by combining the environment and the economy using

the “blue economy” approach, which provides solutions to the challenges of the climate and public health. Three other areas make up the priorities to be addressed by the chair: the economy, including the launch of a multi-country business incubator, training and student mobility, and response to natural disasters. Lastly, France will develop the priorities decided at the Summit on the Financing of African Economies held in Paris on 18 May, in line with the IOC and major donors.

Indian Ocean Rim Association

In December 2020, France became a member of the IORA, which brings together the States on the rim of the Indian Ocean, from South Africa to Australia, within a lightweight structure and with concrete projects, including in the areas of the environment and sustainable development. Its working groups focus on specific sectors, such as the blue economy and fisheries management. When conditions allow, La Réunion can host a session of these working groups, in order to highlight French expertise on biodiversity, and its protection. France also works within

the IORA framework with other Member States to develop a regional project for fighting illegal fishing.

The IOC and the IORA share values and objectives, and France will commit, during its term as IOC chair, and as a member of the IORA, to fostering dialogue between their secretariats, and exchanges of expertise. The actions of the IOC can inspire the work of the IORA, which also has to find recovery solutions for cooperation efforts in the Indian Ocean area.

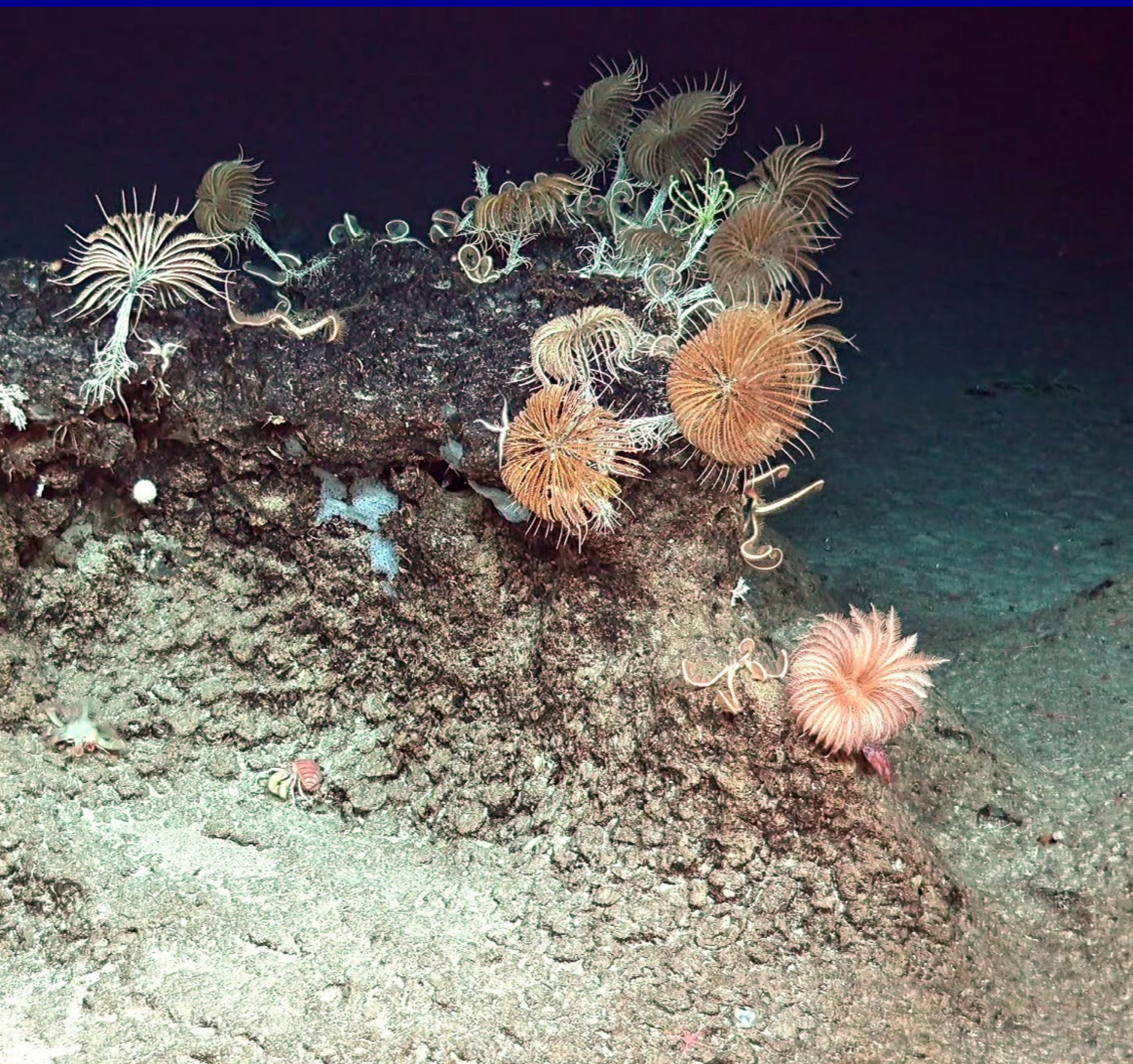
Several initiatives go beyond the IOC framework and could be of interest to the IORA at a later time: the mobility programme, including university exchanges, following on the concept of an “Indian Ocean Erasmus” as was proposed by President Macron; the expanded network of entrepreneurs in the Indian Ocean, which was another of his proposals; the construction of a regional system to deal with major risks. In an initial phase, they will extend to IOC countries and countries of the African coast. India could also join these programmes.

A determined action to promote the development of a regional maritime security architecture

France supports the development of a regional maritime security architecture that gives priority to implementing bilateral and trilateral cooperation, and the widening of regional knowledge and information sharing. Among other things, it contributes to the strengthening of maritime information fusion centres in Madagascar and New Delhi, and in June 2021 France will take over as chair of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), the only forum with the participation of 24 navies of the Indian Ocean.

LA RÉUNION, FOCUSED ON INNOVATION

La Réunion inherited the pioneer spirit of its first inhabitants, who developed virgin land in a very short span of time. It is now recognized as a technology hub in the Indian Ocean, with its infrastructure (cyclotron, etc.), its university which has international outreach, its research centres (IRD, CIRAD, more than 500 researchers), its labels (French Tech Santé, etc.), its competitiveness hub on the tropical bio-economy, its Technopôle, and its excellence hubs (construction in tropical environments, digital technology, renewable energy sources, etc.). Services represent about €300 million in exports, more than sugar cane and its derivative products. The wide variety of initiatives (Digital Réunion, Club Export, green cluster, etc.) show the degree of development potential for services for export, demonstrated by the success of the “Choose La Réunion” event supported by President Macron in October 2019. •



Section Four -

France's objectives and actions in the Indo-Pacific

France's Indo-Pacific strategy is a response to a policy project: placing country and Europe as stakeholders in a region where their interests are significant, and the risk of destabilization is growing, and where there is a proven need to clearly support the values of freedom and defending human rights, as well as protecting the environment.

The implementation of the Indo-Pacific strategy is established through actions that are concrete and diverse in nature. France develops these actions from the bases of its overseas departments and communities, and through its partnerships in the region. These commitments meet specific objectives and are the subject of regular monitoring.

The examples that follow offer illustrations of the actions carried out in four areas or "pillars": security and defence; economy, connectivity, research, and innovation; multilateralism and the rule of law; climate change, biodiversity, and sustainable management of oceans. •

▲ In Nouméa, IFREMER and its Japanese partner JAMSTEC are working to create a permanent seafloor observatory in New Caledonian waters, aiming to assess the impact of climate change and fishing on seafloors.

Pillar 1:

Security and Defence

Main objectives

Five main objectives were defined in the French defence strategy in the Indo-Pacific.

- ▶ Ensuring and defending the integrity and sovereignty of France, the protection of its citizens, its territories, and its EEZ.
- ▶ Contributing to the security of regional areas by promoting military and security cooperation.
- ▶ Preserving, alongside the partners, access to common areas in a context of strategic competition and increasingly restrictive military environments.
- ▶ Participating in the maintenance of strategic stability and military balances of power through international action based on multilateralism.
- ▶ Anticipating security risks brought about by climate change.

Examples of actions

Sovereignty, protection of our interests

- ▶ Monitoring and controlling direct approaches of French territories and adapting the monitoring system for their sovereign areas.

Contributing to regional security through military and security cooperation.

- ▶ Organizing significant multilateral exercises, such as the *La Pérouse* exercise in the Gulf of Bengal, and the *Croix du Sud* exercise in New Caledonia, and French armed forces participating regularly in bilateral and multilateral exercises (the *Varuna* exercise with India, and the *Pitch Black* exercise organized by Australia).
- ▶ New Caledonian armed forces (FANC) and French Polynesian armed forces (FAPF) participating in post-natural disaster rescue operations in the Pacific, particularly under the FRANZ agreement.
- ▶ Policing operations of fishing in the EEZs and their adjacent high seas for the island States of the Pacific, in coordination with our Australian, New Zealand and American partners of the Pacific Quad.
- ▶ France actively contributing, as part of the regional cooperative law enforcement actions, to the fight against terrorism and radicalization, organized crime, illegal immigration, and cybercrime.

Preserving access to shared spaces alongside the partners

- ▶ Affirming compliance with international law and the freedom of navigation through the deployment of air and naval resources from our overseas territories and from continental France, like the *Marianne* mission (deployment of a nuclear attack submarine in the Indo-Pacific region), the *Jeanne d'Arc* mission (deployment of an amphibious group all the way to Japan), our sea crossings in the South China Sea (at least twice per year since 2014), or the *Pégase* and *Skyros* missions of the French Air and Space Force (Armée de l'Air et de l'Espace).
- ▶ Cooperating with our partners (India, Japan, and Australia) in sharing maritime information and contributing to the development of regional capacity in this area (maritime information fusion centres in Singapore, Madagascar, and New Delhi).
- ▶ Participating in regional cooperation between the coast guard structures (France has observer status with the Head of Asian Coast Guard Agencies' Meeting - HACGAM).

Maintaining strategic stability

- ▶ Pursuing the deepening of interoperability with the armed forces of the major partners in the region, in particular India, Australia, Japan, and the United States.
- ▶ Strengthening of exchanges in fighting proliferation, in particular nuclear proliferation. France actively participates in surveillance operations concerning compliance with international sanctions against North Korea.
- ▶ Strengthening of the French presence within the security bodies of ASEAN (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting - ADMM; ASEANPOL) and a plan to accede to the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP).

Environmental security

- ▶ In cooperation with Australia, mapping of climate risks in the Indian Ocean, to anticipate their consequences in the areas of security and defence.
- ▶ Cooperating in the area of climate and environmental security with the Member States of the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting.

- ▶ Participating in the Pacific Environmental Security Forum/ Partnership, a significant US initiative in the area of environmental security in the Indo-Pacific.
- ▶ Cooperating in the area of civil security in order to support the States in the region in facing threats that can impact populations and the environment.

Pillar 2:

Economy, connectivity, research, and innovation

Main objectives

- ▶ Ensuring the diversification of supply of strategic goods and reducing dependencies.
- ▶ Promoting existing international standards and making them prevail, in order to establish a fair competitive framework.
- ▶ Meeting needs in terms of connectivity and infrastructure.
- ▶ Supporting efforts of French companies in the Indo-Pacific region.
- ▶ Deepening partnerships in research and innovation.

Examples of actions

Diversifying the supply of strategic goods and reducing our dependencies

- ▶ Looking for partnerships with countries in the region in order to secure supply chains, including for critical goods.
- ▶ Providing support, including financial support (recovery plan, European loans) for development of the agri-food sectors in the French territories in order to reduce dependence on imports.

Promoting international standards in order to establish a fair competitive framework

- ▶ Promoting sustainable practices for financing development and implementing the common framework for debt treatment.
- ▶ Fighting corruption (OECD Convention).
- ▶ Defending the rules of international trade, and modernizing the WTO.
- ▶ Giving priority to the implementation of the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment (environmental protection, compliance with the Paris agreement, social inclusion, competition rules, transparency, and sustainability) and supporting the deployment of multilateral tools to help prepare infrastructure projects (specifically, the Source platform⁶).

Connectivity and infrastructures

- ▶ In order to better address the needs of the region in this priority area, pursuing the implementation of the Europe-Asia Connectivity Strategy and looking for concrete application points for strengthening cooperation in terms

6. Digital platform for preparing infrastructure projects, directed and financed jointly by the multilateral development banks.

of the environmental (ICAO, IMO) and transportation offer, including as part of bilateral European partnerships.

- ▶ Particular effort on renewable energy production infrastructure, as part of France's bilateral partnerships (India, Indonesia, Japan, island territories in the Pacific) and in the overseas departments and communities.
- ▶ Recent expansion of the AFD's mandate in the Pacific in the area of mitigation and in bilateral projects, which will help it to better address needs.

Supporting French businesses

- ▶ Supporting our businesses using export support tools.
- ▶ Carrying out outreach efforts on the Indo-Pacific strategy, aimed at businesses.
- ▶ Mobilizing Team France Export in areas such as the blue economy.
- ▶ BPI and AFD intervening in the overseas territories in the Indo-Pacific region.

University, research, and innovation partnerships

- ▶ Deepening of university and scientific cooperation, and mobility in these areas with our major partners, including India, Australia, Japan, Singapore, Indonesia, and Vietnam.
- ▶ Strengthening of cooperation in health research, a major area given the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; highlighting actions of the international network of the Institut Pasteur's local bases in the region in their development of innovative projects.
- ▶ Mobilizing French agencies in the region (IRD, CIRAD, CNRS, and INSERM) on research cooperation efforts with a regional scope in priority areas: oceans and management of marine resources; climate change and biodiversity; health.

FIGHTING THE ZIKA VIRUS AND THE RECURRING EPIDEMICS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

After its emergence in Latin America at the end of 2015, the World Health Organization declared that Zika was an “international public health emergency”. The Pacific, and specifically French Polynesia, found itself leading in the events that led to the global mobilization to fight Zika. French Polynesia thus contributed greatly to improvements in diagnosing, monitoring and overall knowledge of Zika. The studies carried out by the Institut Louis Malardé in Papeete provided crucial data on the epidemic dynamic of Zika in the Polynesian context. The technologies and approaches used for these studies can be transposed to other contexts.

The “Risk factors for the emergence and recurrence of epidemics linked to the Zika virus in the Pacific region (R-ZERO PACIFIC)” programme was carried out at 4 sites (French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Fiji and Samoa). It took place over 3 phases, from 2017 to 2020, and was built to evaluate the risk of re-emergence and recurrence of Zika epidemics in the Pacific. The data collected and the results of the studies contribute to forecasting future public health emergencies for continental tropical regions that have recently been affected or that are at risk. •

Pillar 3:

Multilateralism and the rule of law

Main objectives

- ▶ Promoting multilateralism in countries in the Indo-Pacific region.
- ▶ Contributing to strengthening regional centres of cooperation.
- ▶ Fostering strong involvement and better visibility of the European Union.
- ▶ Ensuring the central nature of the rule of law and the primacy of the law of the sea.

Examples of actions

Promoting multilateralism

- ▶ Strengthening coordination between international organizations and like-minded partners in the region.
- ▶ Supporting a multilateral response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Indo-Pacific region: strengthened communication with the G20 countries, French presence in regional health organizations (regional offices of the WHO, and ASEAN working groups).

Strengthening regional centres of cooperation

- ▶ Enhancing the partnership with ASEAN: implementation of the

development partnership concluded in 2020 and appointing a seconded expert to the secretariat of the organization; launch of a regional solidarity fund for innovative projects (FSPI) focusing on infectious diseases.

- ▶ Supporting the increased power of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) during the 2021/2022 French presidency. Simultaneous development within the new status as a full member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and within this framework, developing joint projects with India, Australia, and Indonesia, including in the areas of the fight against illegal fishing, the blue economy, and maritime safety.
- ▶ Support provided through the AFD to the COVID-19 response within the framework of the Indian Ocean Commission. Regional actions in the Pacific with Australia and New Zealand (for example, mobilization in March-April 2021 of the FRANZ mechanism to benefit Papua-New Guinea).

Indo-Pacific strategy of the EU

- ▶ Adopting an ambitious EU strategy, adapted to the significant nature of the Indo-Pacific issues and the

expectations of partners in the region; by implementing this strategy, seeking to increase EU visibility; taking the Indo-Pacific into account in the leading priorities of the French presidency of the EU in the first half of 2022.

- ▶ Contributing to the highlighting of the EU/ASEAN strategic partnership with a view to the 45th anniversary of their relationship in 2022.
- ▶ Promoting EU partnerships with regional organizations: Indian Ocean Commission, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Pacific Island Forum.

Central nature of the rule of law and the primacy of the law of the sea

- ▶ Promoting the French models of ocean governance and maritime security, using bilateral dialogue (global maritime dialogue with Japan, development of similar formats with Indonesia and India), and participating in multilateral initiatives (HACGAM, PACSAR programme of search and rescue at sea in Oceania).

FRANCE AS CHAIR OF THE IOC IN 2021/2022

After having met the emergency aid challenges in 2020 due to the pandemic, France will take action in 2021 and 2022, with the Member States and observers, including India and Japan:

- to open up cooperation silos in the region, focusing on relationships between institutions, such as the IOC and the IORA, or the regional agencies of the United Nations, and by reinforcing links between multilateral programmes carried by the IOC and other actors in the area of the blue economy or maritime safety. During France's term as chair, the private sector and civil society, within the IOC and beyond the organization, will also be involved using initiatives that extend to African and Indian neighbours;
- to mobilize the States and all the actors in the region around selected clear

objectives in four central sectors for the future and recovery post-COVID: maritime safety, sustainable economy, natural risks, and mobility of young people. In 2019, in his speech in La Réunion, President Macron outlined strategies for the Indian Ocean in different areas that are deeply interconnected, in the larger Indo-Pacific context;

- to associate the main stakeholders, the agenda of the French presidency will be dynamic, event-based, and shared between Mayotte and La Réunion, where several official and informal meetings will highlight their contribution to the region, as well as with the island States and the neighbouring African countries through events in the Instituts français and Alliances françaises. •

Pillar 4: Climate change, biodiversity, sustainable management of oceans

Main objectives

- ▶ Increasing partner involvement in the region in fighting climate change and in making progress on energy transition.
- ▶ Acting to foster strengthening of actions for biodiversity.
- ▶ Developing partnerships for ocean protection.
- ▶ Contributing to improving natural disaster response.
- ▶ Enhancing the use of the skills of our territories and regional cooperation on all of these issues.

Examples of actions

Fighting climate change, and promoting the energy transition

- ▶ Mobilizing countries in the region, through bilateral dialogue, on the fight against climate change in the areas of mitigation and adaptation, and on the ambitious objectives aiming for climate neutrality and reaching an emissions peak as soon as possible.
- ▶ At a high level, supporting all initiatives for transitioning away from fossil fuels, in particular mobilizing for ending the use of coal, and in particular for Japan.

- ▶ A specific effort being made for solar energy, through bilateral partnerships and support granted to the International Solar Alliance (ISA, of which France is the co-founder alongside India), including the STAR-C programme (training of solar energy experts).
- ▶ Actively participating in the Indian initiative, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the invitation in turn to join the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (Global ABC).

Strengthening of actions for biodiversity

- ▶ Mobilizing countries in the region including through bilateral dialogue, to adopt an ambitious global framework as outlined in COP15.
- ▶ Continuation of the KIWA initiative on adaptation to climate change and the protection of biodiversity in the Pacific.
- ▶ Promoting the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, in particular with the ASEAN countries.
- ▶ Launching a Franco-Indian initiative on a moratorium on single-use plastics

as part of the Indo-French Year of the Environment in 2021.

Partnerships on governance of oceans and on the blue economy

- ▶ Implementing partnerships with our main partners on the blue economy, through a maritime dialogue, including with Indonesia and India, and the cooperation in the regional bodies in the Pacific and in the Indian Ocean.
- ▶ France participating in the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative as leader of the “maritime resources” pillar.
- ▶ Mobilizing in the region the States that are party to negotiation on the Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) on conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas that are international jurisdictions.

Response to natural disasters

- ▶ Contributing to the improvement of the capability to respond to natural disasters in the Pacific (positioning of humanitarian aid supplies), the ASEAN countries, and the southwestern region of the Indian Ocean.

Putting the skills of our territorial communities and regional cooperation efforts to use

- ▶ Supporting regional partnerships with French research centres located in the territories, including in the area of the management of maritime resources.
- ▶ Increased involvement within the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).
- ▶ Implementation of the Franco-Japanese project for a “deep marine observatory” in Nouméa, which seeks to measure the impact of climate change and fishing on marine ecosystems.

FRANCE'S COMMITMENT TO THE BLUE ECONOMY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

In September 2019, the IORA's 22 Member States unanimously adopted the Dhaka declaration on the blue economy, which highlights its role in ending poverty, supporting food security, mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, preservation of marine and coastal biodiversity, as well as improving livelihoods. For the countries in the southwestern region of the Indian Ocean, the blue economy is recognized by the IOC as an objective to be promoted.

The blue economy therefore benefits from a strong institutional framework, and concrete commitments. One of the main working groups of the IORA devotes its work to it, and the IOC is in the process of adopting a regional action plan for the blue economy (Plan d'action régional pour l'économie bleue - PAREB).

France supports the practical implementation of commitments made regarding the blue economy in the region. This theme is fundamental as part of the French presidency of the IOC (April 2021 – April 2022) which will propose

strengthening the synergies between the IOC and the IORA. Through the AFD, France also supports the IORA in this area, by financing a programme for strengthening the IORA's capacities, including in the area of the blue economy (€1 million over three years).

In 2021, France is implementing a civil society support programme in the area of the blue economy, by financing projects led by local NGOs, such as beach clean-up days or fisherman training. During France's term as chair of the IOC it will also propose the declaration of 17 July as Blue Economy Day in the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), through its programmes and financing, supports the protection of protected marine areas, as well as the resilience of coastal areas. A research project led by the IRD will lead to a research report on the blue economy in the Indian Ocean being published in early 2022 and sent to the IOC, with the aim of rounding out the PAREB. •



Section Five -

Reinforcing the commitment of the European Union in the Indo-Pacific

The EU is already very present in the Indo-Pacific region, which ranks second in the regions receiving EU exports. It is the leading investor and a major development partner in the region. The Indo-Pacific includes five of the EU's strategic partners, and four of its ten main trade partners. The EU's commitment in the Indo-Pacific is seen in a positive light, and its major partners in the region - India, Japan, Australia, and ASEAN - want it to be more involved, including contributing to peace and stability in the region, and promoting rules-based multilateralism. •

▲ Teams from the EU Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid at work after Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines in 2013.

5.1. Presence of the EU in the region

Historically, the European Union's will to engage in dialogue with Asia has been around for some time: the ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) dialogue was launched in Bangkok in 1996, and is the result of a joint initiative of President Chirac and the Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan-Yew. Since its founding, the ASEM has expanded, going from 25 members in 1996 to 53 partners: 30 European countries, 21 Asian countries, and two international organizations (the European Union and ASEAN). This intergovernmental framework for informal dialogue fosters exchanges, including on the three political, economic and financial, and socio-cultural "pillars", with this last pillar being directly handled by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF).

Furthermore, the European Union works to develop concrete sector cooperation efforts with its partners: in the area of connectivity, a specific strategy, "Connecting Europe and Asia", was launched in 2018, in order to promote sustainable and quality connectivity based on rules and high social, environmental, and sustainable standards.

The EU's commitment is also demonstrated by its presence in the regional security bodies, and the development of bilateral cooperation efforts as part of its participation in the operations and missions of the Common Security and Defence Policy (South Korea, New Zealand, Australia, and Vietnam) or in the ESIWA project (Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia).

Lastly, in 2019, concerning trade, the EU signed a strategic partnership agreement and an economic partnership agreement with Japan, which is currently the largest agreement in terms of free trade. Other free trade agreements were signed with countries in the region (South Korea, Singapore, and Vietnam).

5.2. A European strategy for the Indo-Pacific

 In the initiative of France and other Member States such as Germany and the Netherlands (who themselves adopted, at a national level, policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific), discussions began within the EU in 2020 with a view to adopting an ambitious European strategy for the Indo-Pacific, helping to mobilize all European instruments. This discussion allowed the Council of the EU, on 19 April 2021, to formally adopt conclusions that establish a new inclusive strategic framework for the Indo-Pacific region. In these conclusions, the Council invites the European Commission and the High Representative to work to deepen these policy orientations by developing joint communications that will cover, from among its priorities:

→ **strengthening cooperation efforts with Indo-Pacific partners**, as well as regional organizations or bodies (ASEAN, ASEM, IORA, PIF, SPC, etc.) and mobilizing the financial instruments of the EU for this purpose; promoting effective multilateralism, in particular via a strengthened relationship with ASEAN; developing a consistent approach for all of the

Indian Ocean, and a heightened strategic commitment for the EU in the Pacific;

- **the contribution of the EU to the political agenda of the international community on major global issues:** promoting human rights; fighting global warming and working to decarbonize economies; protecting the environment, biodiversity, and natural resources; governance of oceans and sustainably managing biological and fishing-related marine resources; global health, including securing supply chains with a view to guaranteeing access to quality medical equipment, and promoting a global response in the form of the COVAX facility);
- **the economic agenda**, with a focus on post-COVID recovery, diversification of supply chains, including for strategic raw materials, and pursuing development of economic and trade relationships with the countries in the region;
- **in the area of security and defence, the EU wishes to develop its partnerships with like-minded States**, including on issues of maritime safety and security, cybercrime, and the fight

against terrorism. The proposed actions include the strengthening of involvement of the States participating in the ATALANTE operation, the extension of the geographic scope of the CRIMARIO II initiative (Critical Maritime Routes - Indian Ocean) to South-East Asia and the project of reproducing the experience of CRIMARIO in the South Pacific. Strengthened cooperation efforts will be sought with the countries in the region or within the framework of the ASEAN regional forum. The possibility of a second experience of coordinated European maritime presence in the Indo-Pacific will be considered, based on the programme launched in the Gulf of Guinea;

→ **connectivity, ensuring a high level of quality** based on international norms and standards, fair competition, promoting the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment in the four areas of the European strategy: digital technology, transportation, energy, and exchanges between people. It means meeting the significant investment needs in the region and promoting European principles and priorities;

→ **promoting collaboration in the areas of research, innovation, and digital technology:** the European Union wishes to strengthen cooperation in higher education, scientific cooperation and technological cooperation, including through the Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ programme, including promoting mobility. Governance in the digital technology area will also be enhanced in order to establish norms and standards that encourage the emergence of digitalization in the region, and the security of sensitive infrastructures (such as 5G networks) and, more generally, in cyberspace.

This new strategic European framework should be finalized by the end of 2021. The Indo-Pacific will also constitute a leading priority in the French presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2022.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP OF THE EU WITH ASEAN

The European Union has formed several strategic partnerships with like-minded States and organizations in the Indo-Pacific, the most significant of which is the partnership with ASEAN. A new step was taken on 1 December 2020 with the relationship between the EU and ASEAN being upgraded to the level of a strategic partnership. In 2022, the EU and ASEAN will celebrate the 45th anniversary of their bilateral relationship.

The strategic partnership shows a joint commitment to hold regular summits with leaders. Founded on shared values and principles - respect of international law, promotion of multilateralism and strengthening of the cooperation of the two parties - it has five major priorities:

- cooperating in health, including vaccination (the EU announced a budget of more than €800 million dedicated to ASEAN countries);

- promoting trade founded on rules and with specific attention given to sustainable development;

- promoting connectivity that is sustainable, and rules-based (adopting the joint declaration on connectivity during the 23rd ministerial meeting in December 2020);

- promoting effective multilateralism and a rules-based international order;

- Security, including on non-traditional issues (maritime safety, cybersecurity, the fight against terrorism).

Other strategic partnerships were established, including with India (2004), Japan (2001), and South Korea (2010). Lastly, the European Union is renewing the institutional and legal framework of its relationships with the States of the South Pacific. Understandably, it can depend on the French communities in the region to strengthen these relationships. •

Glossary

ACRF	Asean Comprehensive Recovery Framework
AEFE	The Agency for French Education Abroad
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AFD	Agence française de développement
ADB	Asian Development Bank
HRC	Human Rights Council
CDRI	Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure
CIRAD	Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement
CNRS	Centre national de la recherche
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
SPC	the Pacific Community
ITE	International Technical Expert
FANC	Armed Forces of New Caledonia
FAPF	Armed Forces in French Polynesia
FASEP	Fund for studies and support of the private sector
FAZSOI	French Armed Forces in the Southern Zone of the Indian Ocean
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
FLE	Français langue étrangère
FLESCO	Français langue de scolarisation

FSPI	Fonds de solidarité pour les projets innovants
FP	Fonds Pacifique
IDE	Investissement direct à l'étranger
IFREMER	Institut français de recherche pour l'exploitation de la mer
INSERM	Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale
IONS	Indian Ocean Naval Symposium
IORA	Indian Ocean Rim Association
IPOI	Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative
IRD	Institut de recherche pour le développement
PROE	Programme régional océanien pour l'environnement
RCEP	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
TAAF	Terres australes et antarctiques françaises
UMIFRE	Unités mixtes des instituts français de recherche à l'étranger
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone

Embassies with wider regional competency

French Embassy in the Philippines: Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau

French Embassy in Fidji: Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga and Tuvalu

French Embassy in New Zealand: Cook Islands and Samoa

French Embassy in Sri Lanka: Maldives


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