



FRANCE AND SECURITY IN THE **INDO-PACIFIC**



MINISTÈRE
DES ARMÉES

Foreword by the Minister for the Armed Forces



France pays particular attention to the Indo-Pacific region. Its stability is paramount for international security, as stated in the 2017 Defence and National Security Strategic Review.

In the Indo-Pacific area, North Korea challenges the international community by conducting nuclear trials and ballistic missile tests, thereby breaching the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

The military assertiveness of a growing number of established or emerging powers presents many challenges to multilateralism and increases the instability and unpredictability we are confronted with.

Terrorism, which has severely struck Europe over the last few years, is reshaping and spreading to the Indo-Pacific. This worrying evolution requires a joint mobilisation of the international community.

The maritime domain remains an area of tensions due to the challenging behaviour of some States with regards to United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the persistence of acts of piracy.

Finally, the effects of climate change and environmental degradations represent a major issue in the Indo-Pacific, and as far as in the Antarctic, exacerbating security risks.

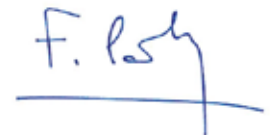
These major challenges can only be overcome through cooperation. Upholding stability in the Indo-Pacific, which is a source of overall prosperity thanks to its economic dynamism, demographic growth and technological innovation, is essential. This has to be set within the framework of an international order based on dialogue and the respect of multilaterally set rules.

As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and a founding member of the European Union and NATO, France plays a specific role on the international stage. With territories and population in both the Indian and Pacific Oceans, France is a nation of the Indo-Pacific region and holds a distinctive place in this part of the world, from the African coastline to the seaboard of Americas. France permanently maintains sovereignty and presence forces in the region to defend its interests and to contribute to the stability of the region alongside its partners, primarily India, Australia, the United States, Japan as well as Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand, Indonesia and Vietnam.

With the 2019-2025 Military Programming Law, France started an exceptional military build-up to adapt its defence system to evolving security challenges. These challenges also make supporting the capacity building of our partners essential.

The present document is a new edition of "France and security in the Asia-Pacific" published in 2016. It illustrates France's policy on defence and security in the Indo-Pacific and demonstrates our country's long-term unwavering commitment to developing strong linkages with the States of the region, in favour of our common security.

Florence Parly

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be "F. Parly", written over a horizontal line.

The security of the Indo-Pacific is a strategic challenge for France

The Indo-Pacific concentrates 60% of the world population and one third of international trade. Its stability is crucial: any crisis or conflict in this area is likely to affect adversely the interests of France as well as Europe's.

The Indo-Pacific constitutes a maritime and land geographical area, shaped by interactions around strategic centres of gravity – India, China, Southeast Asia, Australia. It comprises the Indian, Pacific and Southern Oceans and forms a security continuum spreading from the East African coastline to the Western American seaboard.

France is rooted in the southern part of the Indian Ocean with the islands of Mayotte and La Réunion, the Scattered Islands and the French Southern and Antarctic Territories. France is also anchored in the Pacific Ocean with its territories in New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, French Polynesia and Clipperton Island. Our armed forces stationed overseas and our permanent military basing allow France to fulfil the security responsibilities of a resident power of the Indo-Pacific.

This region is not spared by the increasing tensions on the international level.

Terrorism remains a major and immediate concern. Despite military progress in Levant, the threat is reshaping and spreading to new regions, thriving on chaos, civil war, and the fragility of some States. France is engaged on the frontline of the international fight against terrorism, alongside countries of the Indo-Pacific, in theatres of operations located in Africa and in the Levant.

Multilateralism is increasingly challenged, especially in the Indo-Pacific. Some major powers are choosing postures that overtly favour power-based relations, generating anxiety and unpredictability worldwide. The growing polarisation of the region threatens the upholding of the multilateral order that enabled the economic prosperity of the Indo-Pacific.

The threat multiplier effect of climate change directly concerns the Indo-Pacific. The most vulnerable countries will see their economic growth prospects highly reduced, whereas the most resilient ones, owing to their size or their power, will gain a geostrategic advantage.

France in the Indo-Pacific Key figures

465 422 km² (including *Terre Adélie*) in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Almost 9 million km² of economic exclusive zone (world's second largest EEZ) in the Indo-Pacific.

1.6 million French citizens living in French overseas departments and territories.

At least 200,000 French Nationals living in the Indo-Pacific States.

In 2018 :

France exported up to 66.438 billion euros to the Indo-Pacific (defence equipment not included), i.e. 34% of French exports outside European Union (14% overall).

France imported up to 95.930 billion euros from the Indo-Pacific (defence equipment not included), i.e. 40% of French imports outside European Union (17% overall).

FRANCE IN THE INDO-PACIFIC



Main Security Challenges in the Indo-Pacific

The 2017 French Strategic Review emphasises the rapid and intense evolution of the threats identified in the 2013 White Paper: terrorism, the worrying return of rivalry and power assertiveness, the weakening of the rule of law and multilateralism as well as the increase of unconventional challenges.

North Korea's ballistic and nuclear programs do not only threaten Northeast Asian stability but also the international order and the non-proliferation regime.

In the South China Sea, the large-scale land reclamation activities and the militarisation of contested archipelagos have changed the status quo and increased tensions. The potential consequences of this crisis have a global impact considering that one third of the world trade transits through this strategic region. Such a case highlights how multilateralism is questioned by assertive policies which are threatening the stability of the whole region.

Terrorism is another challenge. The end of Daech does not mean the end of this global threat due to Foreign Fighters returning home and the spread of terrorism to new regions such as South Asia and South-East Asia.

Scientific and technological breakthroughs are bringing in new opportunities, but also new risks. There is little doubt that accessibility to deep underwater resources, the expansion of power projection and, in parallel, of anti-access / area denial capabilities, and the centrality of cyberspace and satellite equipment, are going to exacerbate rivalries between States in the Indo-Pacific.

Facing those challenges, France is developing a network of strategic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific with countries such as India, Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand, Indonesia and Vietnam.

To deal with those risks and tensions, France supports and wishes to contribute to the building of a regional security architecture. In addition to being active in several multilateral dialogue platforms of the Indo-Pacific, France has especially taken steps to work closer with the ADMM+, multinational cooperation structure which gathers Defence Ministers of ASEAN and its "Plus" Partner countries.

By participating in multilateral cooperation fora, France brings to the Indo-Pacific its experience as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, its operational know-how, particularly in the maritime security domain, and a major contribution to the establishment of an area of peace and stability, based on the full respect of international law.

A Commitment to Security at All Levels

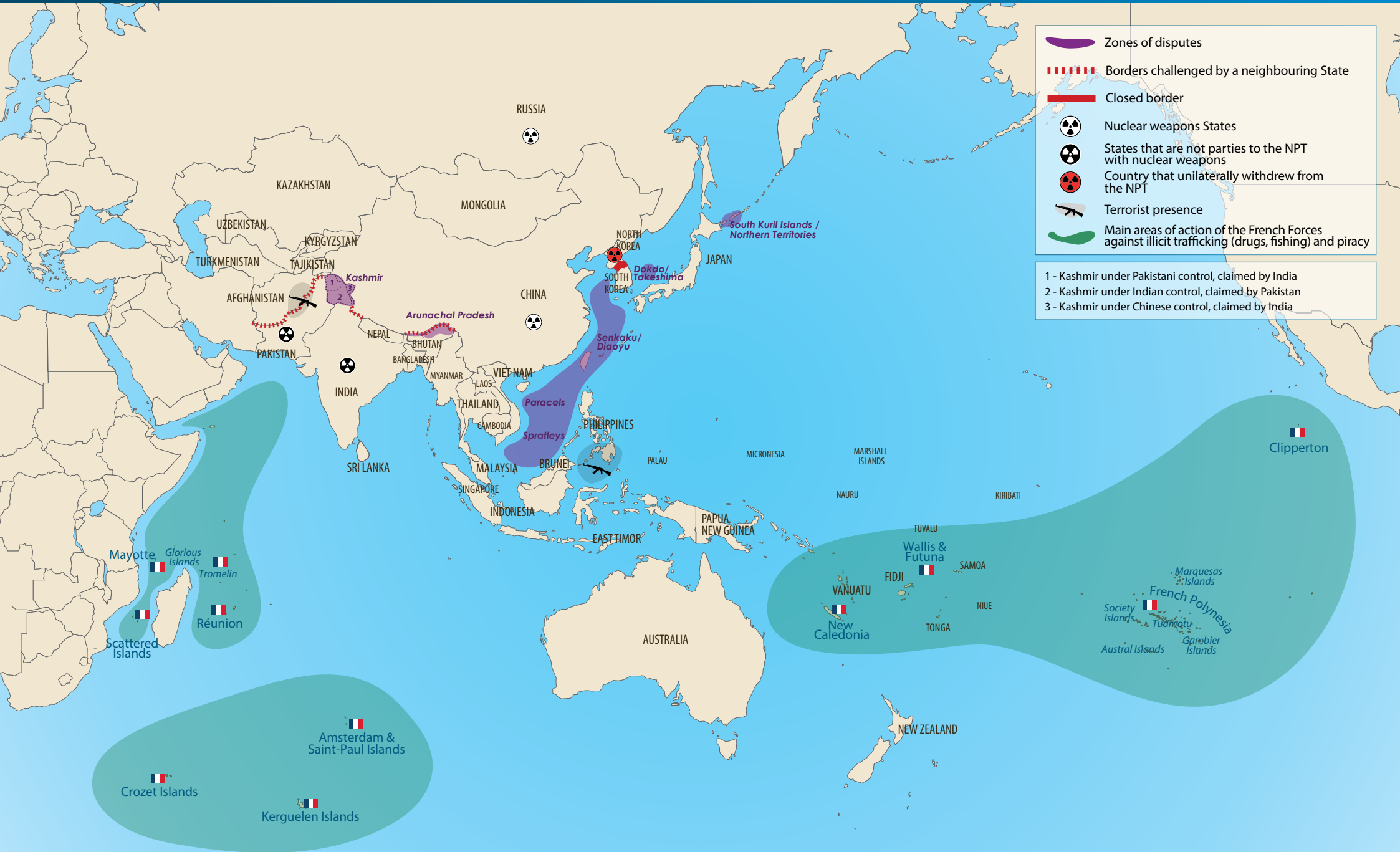
France is playing a major role in the United Nations Security Council and within the European Union to ensure the full and effective implementation of sanctions against the **North Korean** regime. This approach should coerce the regime to cease its proliferating activities and to return to the negotiation table.

France supports the strict application of the United Nations Convention on **Law of the Sea**. France, as a first-rank maritime and naval power, regularly exercises its right of maritime and air navigation wherever it is needed, in particular in the Indo-Pacific region.

The French Armed Forces in the Indo-Pacific also play an active role in **operations against illegal trafficking** (drugs, illegal fishing, etc.).

As for the **struggle against climate change**, France has been instrumental to reach the Paris Agreement in 2016. In the defense field, France has organised the first international conference "The implications of Climate Change for Defence" ahead of the COP21.

SECURITY ISSUES IN THE INDO-PACIFIC



A significant French military presence

France's military presence in the Indo-Pacific is adapted to its defence and security needs. Permanently, 7,000 personnel are stationed throughout the whole area: 4,100 in the Indian Ocean and 2,900 in the Pacific Ocean.

These forces ensure the protection and safety of French territories, as well as the surveillance of our exclusive economic zones. They undertake HADR operations, fight against trafficking, contribute to the "Action of the State at Sea" and are involved in a number of defence cooperation activities in all aspects.

In the north of the Indian Ocean, the French forces station in the United Arab Emirates (FFEAU) and in Djibouti (FFDJ) permanently combat aircraft (6 Rafale in the UAE, 4 Mirage-2000 in Djibouti), 8 helicopters and 1 tactical transport aircraft.

In the south of the Indian Ocean, the French Armed Forces (FAZSOI) are divided between La Réunion and Mayotte islands and use 2 surveillance frigates equipped with 1 helicopter each, 1 supply and support vessel, 2 patrol vessels (including 1 polar patrol vessel) and 2 tactical transport aircraft.

In the Pacific Ocean, the French Armed Forces in New Caledonia (FANC) and in French Polynesia (FAPF) operate 2 surveillance frigates equipped with

1 helicopter each, 3 patrol vessels, 2 multi-mission ships, 5 maritime surveillance aircraft, 4 tactical transport aircraft and 5 helicopters.

Furthermore, France maintains a close network of 18 resident and non-resident defence attachés accredited in 33 countries of Asia and Oceania. With the help of deputy defence attachés, "armament" attachés, permanent advisors in charge of military cooperation and a liaison officer at USINDOPACOM, they develop the bilateral defence cooperation in all aspects.

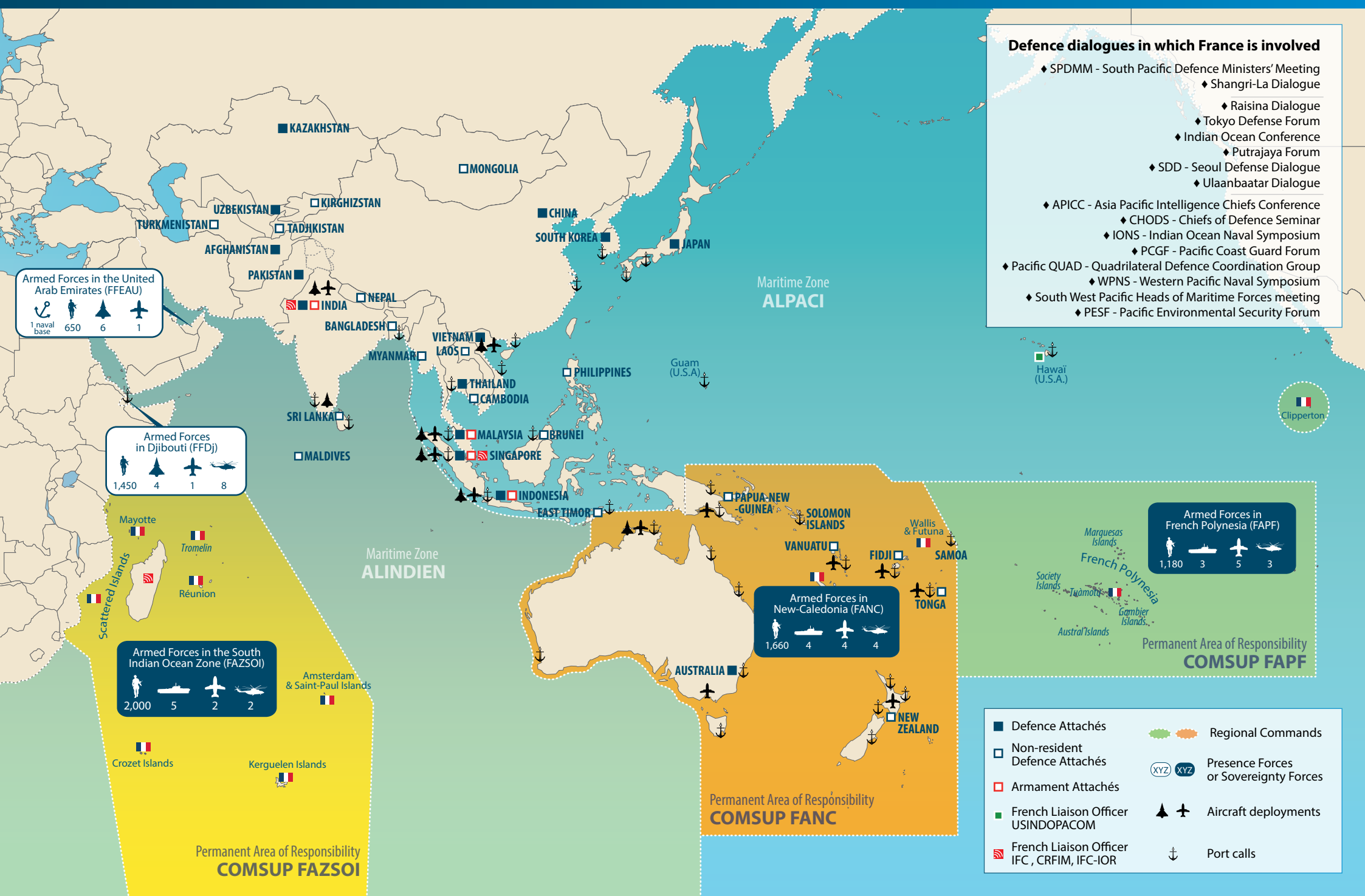
France supports the regional centres dedicated to the surveillance of maritime spaces and sea lanes of communication of the Indo-Pacific. Three French officers actively contribute to these efforts within the Information Fusion Center of Singapore (IFC), the Regional Centre for the Fusion of Maritime Information (CRFIM) located in Madagascar as well as within the Information Fusion Center – Indian Ocean Region located (IFC-IOR) in New Delhi.

To optimize its presence in this vast area, France relies on joint regional commands:

- **COMSUP FAZSOI:** Commander of the French Armed Forces in the South of the Indian Ocean.
- **COMSUP FANC:** Commander of the French Armed Forces in New Caledonia.
- **COMSUP FAPF/ALPACI:** Commander of the French Armed Forces in French Polynesia and Commander of the Pacific Ocean maritime zone.
- **COMFOR FFEAU/ALINDIEN:** Commander of the French Armed Forces in the United Arab Emirates and Commander of the Indian Ocean maritime zone.
- **COMFOR FFDJ:** Commander of the French Armed Forces in Djibouti.

For further details on the areas of responsibility, see map page 7.

FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDO-PACIFIC



A real commitment to the security of the Indo-Pacific

As a maritime, air and spatial power, France possesses high-level intelligence gathering means and significant force projection platforms. France is therefore able to contribute to each aspect of international security with its allies and partners.

France organizes regular multilateral exercises in the Indian Ocean (*Papangue*) and in the Pacific (*Equateur, Croix du Sud, Marara*). These exercises can gather up to several thousand military personnel coming from a dozen partner States.

France participates to many multilateral military exercises in Southeast Asia (*Cobra Gold, Komodo, Pitch Black, Tempest Express, Coores, Marixs*), in Northeast Asia (*Khaan Quest, Ulchi Freedom Guardian, Key Resolve*) and in the Pacific (*Rimpac, Southern Katipo, Tafakula, Americal, Kakadu, Pacific Partnership*). These exercises aim to increase mutual understanding and to create bonds between the different armed forces.

Many bilateral exercises are also organised at each French Navy and Air Force assets visits in the region. The regular high-level bilateral exercises *Shakti* (Army), *Varuna* (Navy) and *Garuda* (Air Force) embody the strategic partnership bonding France and India.

France actively faces the numerous challenges and fights illicit activities threatening maritime

security. With a presence in all the oceans, France faces increasing constraints on the exercise of its sovereignty, the surveillance of its maritime domain and the control of on-going activities. At the regional level, France has made an effort in the establishment of a network of maritime surveillance centred on multilateral cooperation engagements and on the optimisation of resources.

Fighting against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems is crucial for international security.

France, as a permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations, has participated to a series of resolutions imposing sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and played a leading role at the European Union level for deciding additional sanctions. France is also a member of the UN Command Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC) and contributes militarily to the monitoring of the application of the UN Security Council's resolutions thanks to its aircraft and ships based in the Pacific.

France supports the training of Indo-Pacific countries' troops to peacekeeping operations. The French advisor based in the PKO training center in Oudong (Cambodia) regularly organises training sessions for troops preparing to deploy in French speaking countries. French language courses are also offered to many States of the region.

A strong commitment to Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)

The Indo-Pacific region is strongly hit by natural disasters. **France regularly offers its support** to the States of the region by **mobilising its Army, Naval and Air Force assets** to bring the required assistance.

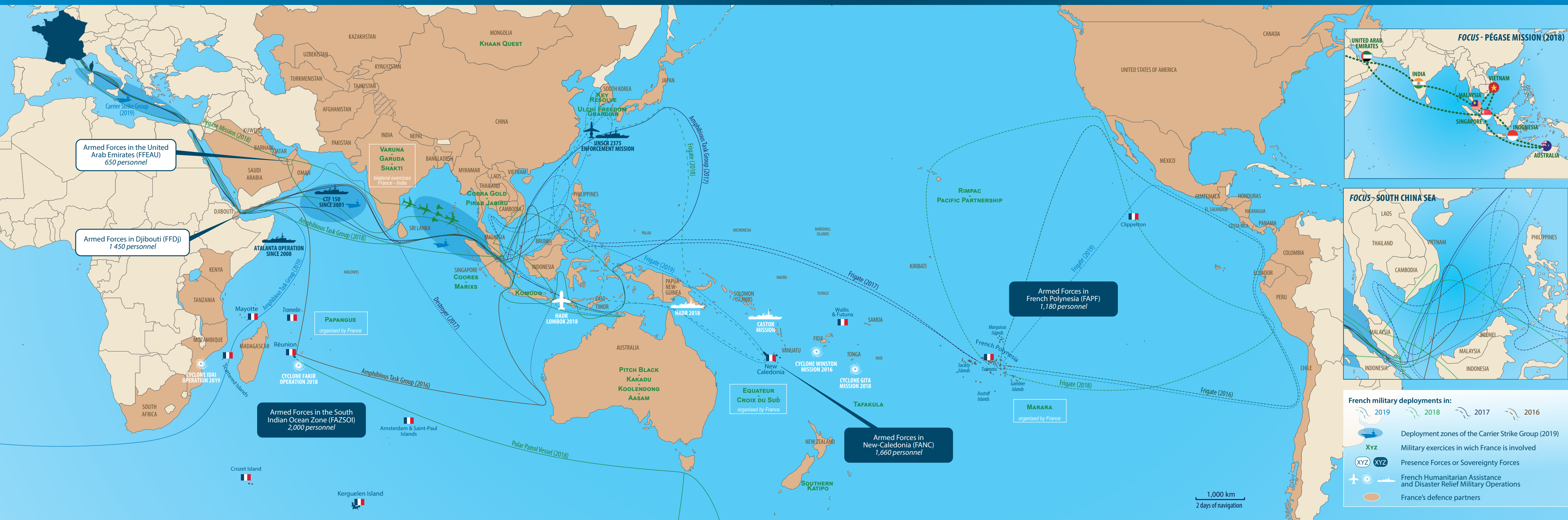
In the South Pacific, **France works together with Australia and New Zealand, in accordance with the FRANZ Agreement** which enables the three States to coordinate their humanitarian assistance actions to the Island States.

A **French advisor for civilian security** is based in Singapore. He is in charge of civil protection and crisis management's cooperation activities in Southeast Asia. A **liaison officer** is also assigned to the Singapore based *Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Coordination Center*, which aims at coordinating the military aspect of HADR operations.

AN UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO REGIONAL SECURITY



2016 - 2019 FRENCH FORCES ACTIVITIES IN THE INDO-PACIFIC



Environmental security: a shared responsibility

Droughts, floods and rising water levels, soil erosion are not just natural events. They are also military events. They redraw maps, create new tensions, displace population.

The increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, the depletion of fishing resources and water stress hinder the resilience of States, generate new illicit trafficking and lead to high scale sanitary risks. By creating new security vulnerabilities, these phenomena bring new conflicts. The Indo-Pacific area is particularly concerned.

In her speech given at the Munich Security Conference in February 2018, the French Minister for the Armed Forces, Mrs Florence Parly, announced that France would get engaged in “an entire sector of environmental security preventive measures”, that should be “a guide of cautiousness and a guide for action”.

France has been playing a pioneering role in the strategic integration of the link between defence and environment, after organising, in 2015, the first international conference at ministerial level dedicated to the defence and security consequences of climate change, and after contributing to reaching

the Paris Agreement as president of the COP21. The French Ministry for the Armed Forces set up, in November 2016, a geopolitical observatory of the security and defence challenges of climate change. This Observatory monitors a coordinated study gathering the States party to the South Pacific Defense Ministers’ Meeting (SPDMM), which aims at assessing the impact of climate change on the regional defence cooperation.

The outcome of this study will be immediately used to optimize the implementation of the FRANZ Agreements, signed on 1992 by Australia, France and New Zealand to coordinate civil and military assistance on Pacific island countries affected by natural disasters. The more frequent use of this mechanism highlights the increasing pressure on the armed forces.

This stronger pressure is also noticeable on the maritime domain awareness. As a member of the Pacific QUAD (Quadrilateral defence Coordination Group) – along with the United States, Australia and New Zealand –, whose objective is to coordinate the security effort in the Pacific, France supports island nations in establishing a sustainable management of their natural resources, particularly fisheries. There is little doubt that the constant, and worrying, rise of overfishing in the South Pacific will expend to the South of the Indian Ocean and to the Southern Ocean, and as far as the shoreline of Antarctica.

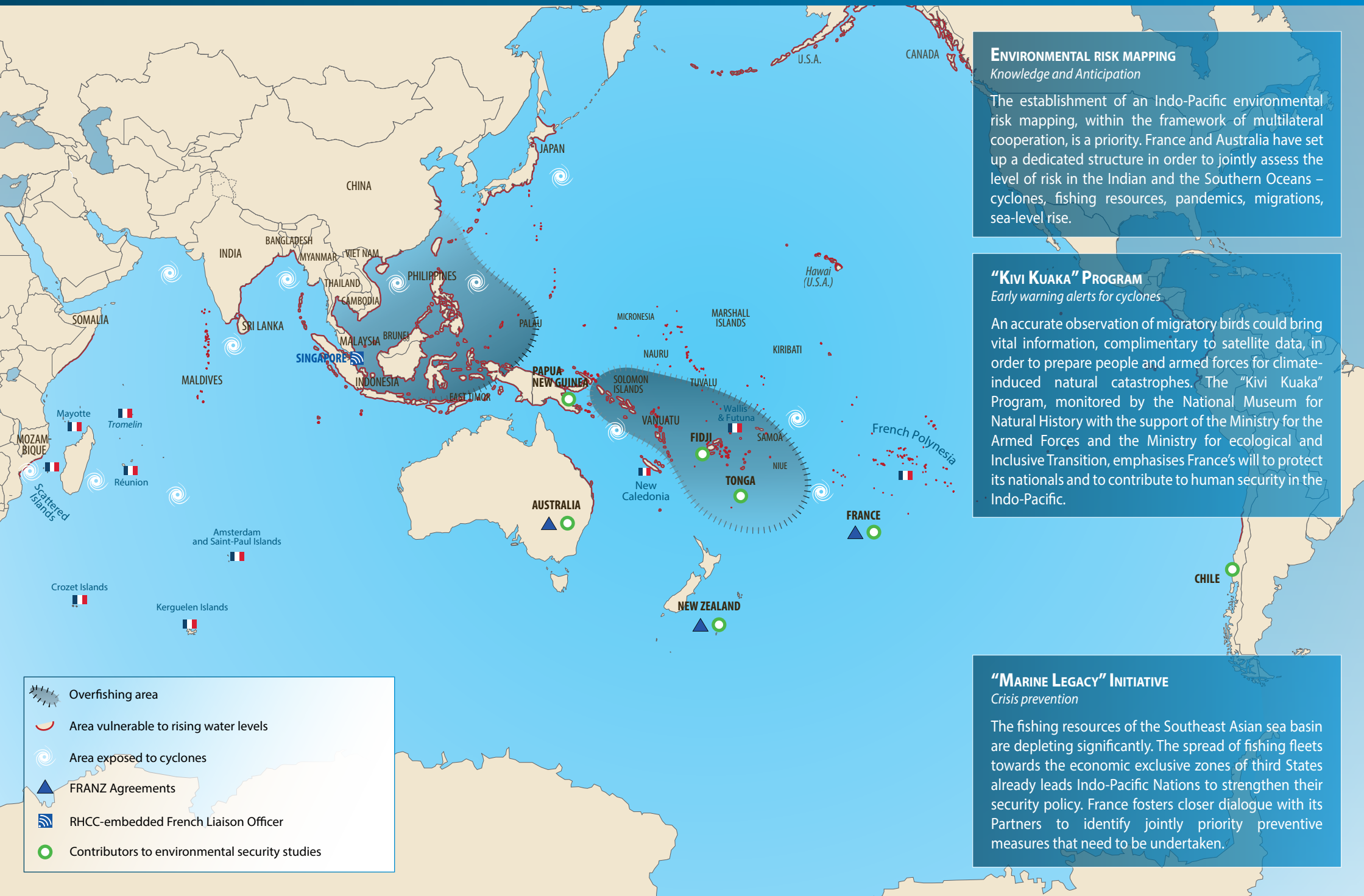
An innovative French approach

France is able to permanently perform assessments combining maritime surveillance and environmental security issues thanks to its regional Commands and staffs, its embedded officers in the different maritime Information Fusion Centres (IFC) and in the Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Coordination Centre (RHCC).

In order to implement a pragmatic and efficient long-term policy of environmental security preventive measures, France is focusing on three lines of action: in-depth assessment of environmental risks, sponsoring of targeted scientific programs and organisation of regional seminars to raise awareness and encourage mobilisation. These paths open new fields of cooperation with Indo-Pacific States.

France wishes in priority to hold dialogue with the stakeholders committed to sustainable development and security in Southeast Asia, which it believes to be a centre of gravity with regards to economy, ecology and security for the whole Indo-Pacific. From that perspective, France organised two conferences in 2017, in Vietnam and in Indonesia, and will pursue this course of action in other ASEAN Member States.

ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY CHALLENGES IN THE INDO-PACIFIC



ENVIRONMENTAL RISK MAPPING

Knowledge and Anticipation

The establishment of an Indo-Pacific environmental risk mapping, within the framework of multilateral cooperation, is a priority. France and Australia have set up a dedicated structure in order to jointly assess the level of risk in the Indian and the Southern Oceans – cyclones, fishing resources, pandemics, migrations, sea-level rise.

"KIVI KUAKA" PROGRAM

Early warning alerts for cyclones

An accurate observation of migratory birds could bring vital information, complementary to satellite data, in order to prepare people and armed forces for climate-induced natural catastrophes. The "Kivi Kuaka" Program, monitored by the National Museum for Natural History with the support of the Ministry for the Armed Forces and the Ministry for ecological and Inclusive Transition, emphasises France's will to protect its nationals and to contribute to human security in the Indo-Pacific.

"MARINE LEGACY" INITIATIVE

Crisis prevention

The fishing resources of the Southeast Asian sea basin are depleting significantly. The spread of fishing fleets towards the economic exclusive zones of third States already leads Indo-Pacific Nations to strengthen their security policy. France fosters closer dialogue with its Partners to identify jointly priority preventive measures that need to be undertaken.

Global commons: a challenge for multilateralism

Rivalry among states is growing over the access to strategic shared areas. The lack of regulation in some fields (spatial, cyber) or the challenges posed to the established rules in others (maritime space, air domain and polar regions) call for a reinforcement of multilateral dialogues in order to promote stability.

Some of the fundamental provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea are not respected in the China seas. There is a strong need for an international mobilisation to counter the progressive weakening of the law of the sea that could lead to the rise of interstate tensions.

The issue of freedom of civil and military circulation also concerns the airspace. Along with maritime areas, airspace is increasingly subjected to the risk of illicit trafficking and terrorism. The diminution of interstate trust could contribute to increasing these threats.

The demilitarised Antarctic region is characterised by its status of “natural reserve dedicated to peace and science”. This status is questioned by some powerful states coveting the primary raw materials of the continent, as well as the mineral and fishery resources of the Southern Ocean. The difficulty of establishing extended protected maritime areas

within the framework of the Antarctic treaty system illustrates the need for increased alertness, in order to ensure that the Antarctic is not turned into an area of competition.

In the spatial field, the multiplication of public and private actors has several effects: it trivialises the access to the exo-atmospheric space, increases the risk of proliferation, intensifies industrial competition, and fuels interstate rivalry.

Within cyberspace, the frequency, scope and technological sophistication of malicious actions increase. Some States support these actions and therefore get closer to the use of force and armed attack, which could result in important damages.

Counterterrorism and cyber security policies focus on the detention, cross-referencing and exploitation of digital information in order to protect personal data, to trace and counter cyber-attacks.

Faced with these new global challenges, France will continue to promote the rule of law based on the United Nations Charter over the use of force in international relations.

The French ambitious cyberdefense policy

The 2018 Strategic Review on Cyber Defense builds up a robust national apparatus for the adequate protection of data. It seeks several objectives:

A better integration of our cyber defense means, based on better coordination between the different services involved.

The strengthening of our cyber protection device; the reinforcement of the State networks resiliency and of operators of vital importance, as well as of other essential services.

The regulation of cyberspace, through the respect and implementation of international law and of certified standards of behaviour.

A reinforcement of our technical, structural and operational cooperation with our allies and partners, mainly within the European Union and NATO.

"L'Astrolabe", a polar patrol vessel committed to the Antarctic Treaty System



178 years after the expedition led by the French Navy Captain Dumont d'Urville, the first man ever to set foot on Antarctica (20 January 1840), the French Navy is back in *Terre Adélie*.

With the maiden voyage of "L'Astrolabe", in November 2017, the French Armed Forces added a new competency to the spectrum of their capabilities: ice navigation. This mission has been carried out strictly in accordance with the

framework defined by the Antarctic Treaty System.

This polar patrol vessel is the result of a partnership between the French Navy,

the French Administration for Sub-Antarctic and Antarctic Territories (TAAF) and the French Polar Institute *Paul-Emile Victor* (IPEV). Her mission consists in ensuring the logistic supply by sea of the two scientific stations *Dumont d'Urville* and *Concordia* (a Franco-Italian station). These stations are managed, from a functional and a research program perspective, by the IPEV (jointly with the *Programma Nazionale Di Ricerche in Antartiche* in *Concordia*). The preservation of the international status of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean - "Nature Reserve dedicated to peace and science" - is a priority for France.



Naval and Air Power projection

Freedom of maritime and air navigation is a fundamental principle of international relations, guaranteed by the United Nations Convention on the Law Of the Sea (UNCLOS).

This principle is essential to the credibility of the decisions made by the United Nations Security Council, each time they are to be enforced by military means. It also contributes to the strategic autonomy of States, which is beneficial to maintaining a rules-based international order.



France detains Power projection capabilities that only a limited number of States are able to avail themselves. The Carrier Strike Group centred on the aircraft carrier "Charles de Gaulle" can be deployed over all the seas of the globe, for long periods

of time while embarking navalized *Rafale* fighter jets as well as *Hawkeye* airborne early warning and control aircraft. The interoperability with the French Air Force (*Rafale*, strategic airlift A400M, tanker aircraft A330-MRTT, etc.) and with the allied U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific is absolute. It is notably ensured by strategic satellite systems, which are implemented under the set of international rules framing the use of the outer space.

France is particularly attached to the principled management of the global commons through legal procedures and dialogue.



Structuring partnerships in the armament sphere

France is the sixth largest economy in the world. It has comprehensive and independent military resources, as illustrated by its autonomous design and manufacturing of nuclear deterrence capabilities, satellites, fighter aircraft, submarines, ships, tanks, combat vehicles, missiles of all kinds, and all equipment contributing to C4ISR (*Computerized Command, Control, Communication, Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance*).

This capacity is unique in Europe, based on strong and innovative industrial resources. Its defense technological and industrial base is made of a dozen world-class firms and around 4,000 small and medium companies. Sustaining the vitality of this ecosystem is a major concern to protect French sovereignty.

Guaranteeing the supply and the operational readiness of armed forces' equipment, in particular of those engaged in the deterrence policy, is a condition for French freedom of action. In this respect, it constitutes a pillar of its strategic autonomy, as it was reaffirmed in the Strategic Review on defense and National Security.

The armament cooperation policy of France is characterised by its experience, its openness to industrial cooperation, transfer of technology and expertise, as well as the provision of long-term training, logistics support and assistance.

France is the fourth-largest armament exporter and contributes to building and modernising its allies and partners' defense capabilities. In the Indo-Pacific, Australia, India, Malaysia and Singapore are France's most important Partners in the armament sphere. France is also developing cooperation in this field with most of the Indo-Pacific States and attends on a regular basis to the defense equipment exhibitions organised in the region.

By strengthening its partnerships, France is materialising in a concrete manner its cooperation policy in the military sphere, a key element of its foreign policy. The on-going momentum allows capitalising on armament communities to foster interoperability and to consider joint operations.

France exports control policy is strict and in line with its international commitments and the principles of transparency as well as protection of human rights. These efforts aim at preserving international stability.

A long-term capacity support

The establishment of **trust-based relations** between France and its partners is a prerequisite for all armament contracts. It is pre-requisite for such long-term engagements, which represent a significant human, technical and budgetary investment for the importer.

France's objective is to develop a **close and long-term relationship** in order to create favourable conditions for the conclusion of structuring trade deals for the bilateral relationship. Contracts signed with India, Australia as well as those with Malaysia and Singapore constitute some examples of this approach.

The armament cooperation policy of France is characterised by its **openness to industrial cooperation, transfer of technology and expertise**, adapted to the needs of the partner nation. France offers numerous excellence industrial centres covering a wide spectrum of defence capabilities. The future submarine programme with Australia, and the A400M ATLAS one with Malaysia are perfect illustrations of France's commitments in those domains.

This engagement comes with the development of a long-term political dialogue.

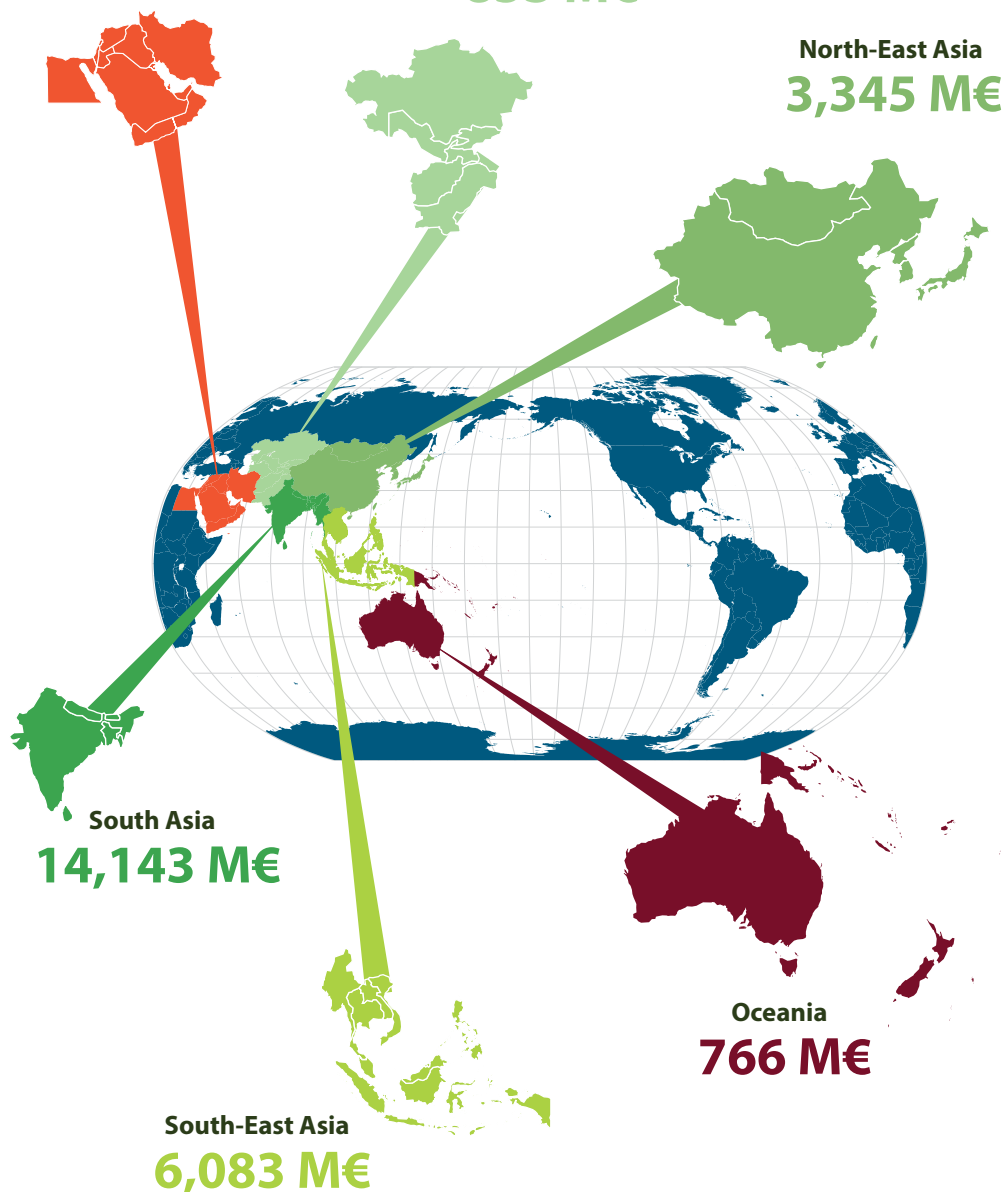
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF FRENCH ORDERS 2008-2017

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North-East Asia
3,345 M€



Asia
29%

Africa
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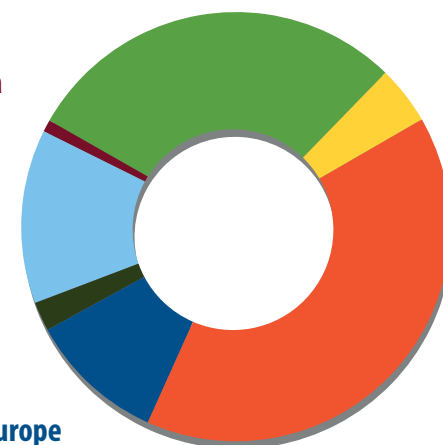
Oceania
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Americas
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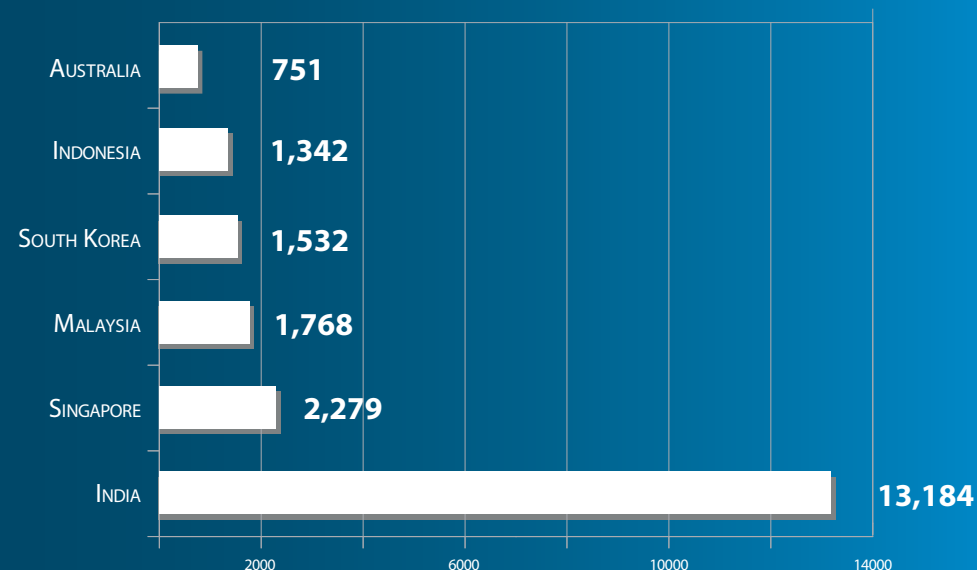
Other
2.2%

Europe
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Near and Middle East
40%



MAIN PARTNERS OF FRANCE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC AS REGARDS TO ARMAMENTS in millions of euros (2008-2017)







2018 Edition - updated in May 2019

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