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France and Australia's partnership in the Indo-Pacific

Australia is an essential partner for France in the Indo-Pacific region. The two countries cooperate to address regional challenges, fostering its stability, security, resilience and economic performance. The boost to the bilateral relationship initiated by President Macron and Prime Minister Albanese in July 2022 came to fruition in December 2023, with the adoption of a Roadmap to deepen cooperation in key fields such as defence and security, resilience and climate action, education and culture. Joint projects address fields such as the energy transition, critical minerals, humanitarian assistance and scientific research. Australia also has close ties with France's Pacific communities, particularly New Caledonia and French Polynesia.

Innovative cooperation fostering sustainable development and the energy transition

The December 2023 Roadmap has brought about new flagship bilateral cooperation projects like the Australia-France Centre of Excellence for the Indo-Pacific, which includes the Franco-Australian Centre for Energy Transition (FACET), key to promoting joint projects between public and private stakeholders. FACET is a multi-stakeholder platform to foster the exchange of innovative energy solutions, promote global adoption of sustainable practices, forge multilateral partnerships for climate action and further energy transition education.

France and Australia are also stepping up joint action in the Pacific in support of sustainable development, with many projects led for example by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD, French Development Agency). One of the flagship projects Australia participates in is the KIWA Initiative, which seeks to further the adaptation of 19 Pacific countries and territories to climate change and to protect their biodiversity, using nature-based solutions. France and Australia are also committed together to renovating and greening port infrastructure in the Pacific.

Enhanced humanitarian assistance and maritime safety cooperation

There is active cooperation between France and Australia in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, which benefits the whole Pacific region. The tripartite FRANZ Agreement, whereby France, Australia and New Zealand jointly organize immediate civilian and military assistance in the Pacific, has proven its effectiveness over more than three decades: some 40 natural disaster response operations have been conducted, most recently in Vanuatu in December 2024, following the earthquake that devastated Port Vila.

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The new momentum to deepen exchanges and cooperation across a broad range of security themes, including maritime safety, is also helping boost the resilience of regional countries. Deeper operational cooperation between French and Australian armed forces is supported by reciprocal access to the two countries' military facilities in the Indo-Pacific. This cooperation seeks notably to fight illegal, undeclared and unregulated (IUU) fishing, within the framework of the Pacific Quadrilateral Defence Coordinating Group (France, Australia, New Zealand, United States).

The partnership between France and Australia in the region has also been expanded to the Indian Ocean, where the two countries work closely together in regional forums such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).

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Moreover, France and Australia are cooperating with India in a trilateral dialogue format, particularly in fields related to maritime safety, climate resilience and regional organizations.