

Mayotte in France's Indo-Pacific Strategy

Located at the geostrategic crossroads between the Mozambique Channel, East Africa and the Indian Ocean, Mayotte, as a French territory and EU outermost region, has a key position in France's Indo-Pacific Strategy.

The measures enacted by the Interministerial Committee for Overseas France (CIOM) meeting of 10 July 2025 work to strengthen this position: the Mayotte strategy, backed by the budget act for overhauling the territory providing for €4 billion over six years, aims to further the archipelago's long-term development. The inclusion of Mayotte in its regional environment is a priority development area.

Enhanced cooperation and regional integration

Building on the objectives set in measure 9 of the 2023 CIOM meeting and reaffirmed in the Mayotte strategy set out at the 2025 meeting, an interministerial strategy is being crafted to develop regional trade, thereby reducing Mayotte's dependence on the markets of metropolitan France and Europe.

Mayotte also takes part in two European INTERREG programmes to support cooperation projects conducted by local government bodies, companies, research centres and associations in the areas of the economy, environment, culture and social protection.

INTERREG's Mozambique Channel programme, allocated €10.2 million for 2021-2027, is overseen by the Mayotte Departmental Council. It was established to remove obstacles to regional cooperation and to generate fresh momentum in relations among players in the region. The programme supports collaborative operations tackling challenges and addressing common issues observed in the territories.

INTERREG's Indian Ocean programme, overseen by the La Réunion Region, has been allocated €62.2 million for the period 2021-2027. This programme helps build ties with partners in the area with a common development approach to tackle global challenges related to the environment and climate, health, research development, the economy, training and youth employment, as well as the promotion of cultural heritage.

An active academic and innovation hub

The Dembéni Technopole, inaugurated in 2024 and co-funded with more than €10 million by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), aims to position the island as a regional hub for innovation and act as a port of entry to European and French markets for Mayotte's economic players. With support from Business France, these economic players are enhancing their cooperation with Kenya and neighbouring African countries. Moreover, Mayotte has a Tier 3 data centre, inaugurated in 2022 and supported by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD, French Development Agency), which is a strategic infrastructure for digital sovereignty, making it possible to reduce dependence on other territories and to boost the resilience of local digital services.

The development of higher education in Mayotte is another major lever for development and cooperation. The transformation of the Centre Universitaire de Mayotte into a fully operating university marks an important stage in structuring the local university system. The inclusion of the Université de Mayotte, with the Université de La Réunion, in regional university networks,

particularly the IORA Indian Ocean University Network (UNIOR), alongside countries such as Australia, India, Mauritius, the Seychelles and South Africa, will also further academic and scientific exchanges. Mayotte could also benefit from a vocational training and mobility programme led by the Indian Ocean Commission that is currently being implemented.

A player in green diplomacy

Mayotte, encircled by a coral reef, is home to France's largest marine natural park, covering nearly 70,000 km². The Lagoon of Mayotte, which has recently become a candidate for the UNESCO World Heritage List, is also home to vulnerable species, including sea turtles. Mayotte Marine Natural Park, which is a laboratory for biodiversity protection in the region, contains five protected areas. It is a key partner in the VARUNA programme, funded by the AFD, which enhances cooperation among overseers of marine protected areas in the southwestern portion of the Indian Ocean.