# Track 1.5 India-France Bilateral Dialogue on the implementation of the India-France Indo-Pacific Roadmap – New Delhi, December 2023

In July 2023, the statement released at the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Indo-French Strategic Partnership: Towards a Century of French-Indian Relations, renewed the direction of the relationship between the two countries until 2047. The second goal set in this declaration is to provide « concrete solutions to make Indo-Pacific an area of stability and sustainable development ». The determination of both countries to strengthen their cooperation in the region was concurrently materialised by the establishment of an India-France Indo-Pacific Roadmap, succeeding the Joint Strategic Vision of India-France Cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region published in March 2018.

The expansion of the geographical scope of bilateral cooperation, from the Indian Ocean Region to the entire Indo-Pacific area, paves the way for new joint efforts across the entire spectrum of sectors covered by the roadmap: strategic issues, but also intensification of coordination in maritime security, expansion of development cooperation, protection of marine resources and combatting illegal fishing, deployment of renewable energies in the region, resilience of populations against natural disasters, as well as scientific research in the field of health.

In this context, and on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Franco-Indian strategic partnership, the Foundation for Strategic Research (FRS) and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) propose the launch of a 1.5 France-India bilateral dialogue on the implementation of the new Indo-Pacific roadmap. Leveraging the significant expertise of the two think tanks in organising trilateral Track 1.5 dialogues (India-France-Australia; India-France-UAE) bringing together a wide variety of stakeholders, this initiative pursues two main objectives.

- Firstly, to **accompany and durably operationalise the implementation of the India-France Indo-Pacific Roadmap** in one or several cooperation domains covered by the partnership. Environmental security, which holds a significant place in both the 2018 joint strategic vision of the IOR and the Indo-Pacific 2023 roadmap, could constitute a particularly promising area of focus. The fundamentally transnational nature of this issue allows the Franco-Indian bilateral relationship to extend its reach to more effectively address the challenges faced by numerous countries in the Indo-Pacific by pooling efforts. Additionally, it fully aligns with the respective regional aspirations of the two countries (SAGAR and IPOI for India, Indo-Pacific strategy for France).

- Secondly, to **create an informal and multi-actors platform** that brings together relevant Indian and French stakeholders to conduct a collective reflection capable of generating concrete initiatives and projects supporting the objectives outlined in the roadmap. This platform will include experts from think tanks and academic circles, ministries of defence, navies, ministries of foreign affairs, development agencies, and other pertinent entities from both countries.

In this context, FRS and ORF propose organising the inaugural edition of this 1.5 dialogue in New Delhi, on the sidelines of the Observatory of Multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific's conference scheduled for December 12. As a launching session, this half-day closed-door event may consist of two 90-minute roundtable discussions. The first roundtable aims, in an introductory manner, to discuss the concrete achievements of the strategic partnership over the past 25 years and the evolution of the bilateral relationship towards new areas of cooperation in the Indo-Pacific context. The second roundtable would aim to assess the added value of joint efforts for the benefit of other countries in the region across several sectors integrated into the roadmap, particularly in the realm of environmental security.

This first session will thus broadly facilitate the identification of more specific high-value cooperation areas. The implementation of these areas can be further discussed in upcoming editions.