

25 September 2024

Progress report
on the implementation
of the Federal Government's policy
guidelines
for the Indo-Pacific
for the year 2024

25 September 2024

Foreword: Germany's Indo-Pacific policy in an increasingly complex international environment

The Indo-Pacific is vital to the prosperity and security of Germany and the European Union. Almost 40 percent of Germany's trade outside the EU is conducted in the region, thus making the maritime routes between the Indo-Pacific and Europe important lifelines for Europe. Supply chains for semiconductors and critical raw materials from the region are essential to the functioning of the German and the global economy. At the same time, Germany's partners in the Indo-Pacific are key actors in the efforts to address global challenges and to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Owing to its close ties with the region, Germany is especially sensitive to developments in the Indo-Pacific, where uncertainties and challenges have increased significantly. Tensions on the Korean peninsula continued to rise last year. North Korea is adopting an even more aggressive stance, is intensifying its arms programmes and, in the context of extensive illegal weapons transfers to Russia, concluded a comprehensive strategic partnership with Russia. Russia is thus increasingly undermining the sanctions regime of the UN Security Council against the North Korean nuclear and missile programmes. Tensions have risen further in the South China Sea in light of China's expansive maritime claims, thus heightening the risk of, also unintended, escalation. Germany is strongly committed to ensuring that international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, is upheld. It also remains clear that the status quo in the Taiwan Strait may only be changed by peaceful means and mutual consent. Germany is committed to de-escalation. Any escalation would also affect German and European interests.

Our partners in the Indo-Pacific are shaping the international environment more strongly than in the past and are thereby expanding their room for manoeuvre. Japan used its G7 Presidency in 2023 to strengthen the significance of Indo-Pacific states as important global actors. During their G20 Presidencies in 2022 and 2023, Indonesia and India prioritised the interests and expectations of what is often referred to as the Global South. The economies of South Asia and Southeast Asia – first and foremost India's economy – are drivers of growth for the global economy and are becoming increasingly important for Germany. This is reflected, among other things, by the fact that China's share in Germany's foreign trade decreased significantly in 2023, while trade with the countries of South and Southeast Asia increased relative to this.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in violation of international law has had a wide range of impacts on actors in the Indo-Pacific, for instance the Korean peninsula and, on the other hand, is impacted by these actors. The Federal Government is taking this into account when considering questions of security in the Indo-Pacific and in Europe together with partners from the region. The sharp increase in supplies of dual-use goods – civil and military – from China for Russia's defence industry is putting security in Europe at risk with their use in Ukraine.

25 September 2024

The conflict between Israel and Hamas, triggered by Hamas' terrorist attack on Israel, has become an important topic of discussion with actors in the Indo-Pacific. The attacks by the Houthis on commercial ships in the Red Sea are compromising the security of commercial shipping between Europe and the Indo-Pacific. Alongside the EU and Western partners, Asian countries are therefore deploying their navies to protect commercial shipping and maritime routes in the strait.

Germany's Indo-Pacific policy is taking this heightened complexity into account in order to protect German interests. Against this backdrop, the Federal Government has identified the following priorities for its Indo-Pacific policy:

- **Expanding partnerships:** Countries in the Indo-Pacific are vital actors for shaping the 21st century. The Federal Government shares the key interest with many of them in a fair international order in which international law is respected, human rights and the rule of law are upheld, and different perspectives and interests stemming from individual development paths are brought into alignment. The Federal Government will deepen its dialogue with key partners on issues relating to the international order on the basis of international law, also in the G20. This includes strengthened cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- **Strengthening European action:** Faced with increasing geopolitical and geostrategic competition, Europe can only effectively defend its interests if it stands united. The Federal Government will work to forge ahead with a common Indo-Pacific policy, pool the resources of the European Union and its member states in the Indo-Pacific more effectively and strengthen the EU's security policy profile in the region. The Federal Government will also endeavour to bring European projects for enhancing the internal market more closely into alignment with the EU's foreign policy objectives. Moreover, it will continue to support the EU's Global Gateway initiative, which is active also in the Indo-Pacific with a large number of projects.
- **Driving economic diversification forward:** In line with the National Security Strategy and the Strategy on China, the Federal Government is continuing to promote an ambitious EU free trade policy in the Indo-Pacific. In order to increase the resilience of Germany's global supply chains and to support our partners' efforts to strengthen sustainable local added value, it is vital to swiftly negotiate and conclude the envisaged trade agreements with partners in the region. Moreover, the Federal Government is seeking to conclude an interregional trade agreement between the EU and ASEAN. Above and beyond this, the Federal Government will work on additional incentives with a view to promoting greater economic diversification. The Indo-Pacific is also an increasingly important region for the recruitment of skilled workers. The focus here is on India and the countries of Southeast

25 September 2024

Asia. The Federal Government is committed to concluding further agreements for recruiting skilled workers for Germany.

- Tackling the climate crisis: The Indo-Pacific is home to a number of countries that are among the biggest emitters of CO₂ worldwide. The climate crisis is threatening the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people in the region. In the Pacific, entire countries are at risk of becoming uninhabitable or disappearing. The Federal Government is committed to supporting these regions and their inhabitants with protecting against, preparing for and adjusting to climate change. It is also stepping up its assistance for countries in the Indo-Pacific in reducing emissions that are harmful to the climate, expanding renewable energies and dealing with loss and damage related to climate change, including within the framework of climate, development and energy partnerships and dialogues.
- Expanding security cooperation, promoting resilience: In order to support partners in the Indo-Pacific with overcoming traditional security challenges, the Federal Government is promoting an open, rules-based regional security architecture and is committed to enhancing capabilities of and enabling partners especially in the field of maritime security. The Federal Government is expanding security and defence policy cooperation with partners in the region and will bring its development policy engagement more strongly to bear in order to enhance resilience and reduce dependencies in the Indo-Pacific.

The Federal Government holds firm to its conviction that the preservation of peace and prosperity, fair development for all people and overcoming the climate crisis can only be successful on the basis of inclusive cooperation. Germany is therefore opposing the formation of blocs in the Indo-Pacific and is offering to cooperate with all countries in the region.

Summary

The most important results of the implementation of the Federal Government's policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific in the reporting period from **September 2023 to August 2024** include the following:

- **Intensifying security policy cooperation:** In May, the Bundeswehr commenced the biggest and most complex of its annual deployments to the region, the Indo-Pacific Deployment 2024 (IPD). In the course of this deployment, the navy and the air force deepened their defence policy relations through port visits and bilateral and multinational exercises. Germany concluded an intergovernmental agreement with Japan that will facilitate future secondments of the Bundeswehr to the country. Germany joined the United Nations Command (UNC), which oversees compliance with the Armistice Agreement on the Korean peninsula.
- **Strengthening economic relations:** The Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and New Zealand entered into force on 1 May 2024. In July, the EU and Singapore concluded negotiations on a digital trade agreement. Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI), the Federal Government's foreign trade and investment agency, opened a new hub for Southeast Asia in Singapore. Germany has improved the conditions of its investment guarantees for German companies operating in Indonesia, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.
- **High-level political exchange:** Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Deputy Chancellor Robert Habeck and Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock visited a total of 13 countries in the region. Germany concluded a strategic partnership with Mongolia and is working towards a strategic partnership with Singapore.
- **Tackling the climate crisis:** With its pledge of 100 million US dollars at the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), Germany provided important start-up support for the Loss and Damage Fund. The Sino-German Climate and Transformation Dialogue met for the first time in Beijing in June 2024.
- **Expanding the profile of the European Union:** The EU became a dialogue partner of the Indian Ocean Rim Association and, with the Samoa Agreement, concluded a long-term partnership with the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific islands. The EU hosted the first forum of the Global Gateway connectivity initiative on 25 and 26 October 2023 with 40 delegations from around the world, including 20 at the level of head of state and government.
- **Recruiting skilled workers:** Southeast Asia and India are important target regions for the recruitment of skilled workers. Germany signed a declaration of intent with Viet Nam on

25 September 2024

the migration of skilled workers. Germany is working on a migration and mobility agreement with the Philippines.

Progress in individual spheres of action

1. Strengthening multilateralism

1.1. The EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and its implementation

The third **EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum** took place in Brussels on 1 and 2 February 2024 with 74 countries and institutions in attendance. This underscores the significance of the Forum as the most important dialogue platform between the two closely interconnected regions. Germany started a regular dialogue between Indo-Pacific envoys from EU member states and the European External Action Service.

The EU was admitted as a dialogue partner of the **Indian Ocean Rim Association** in October 2023. In Samoa on 15 November, the EU concluded a long-term cooperation partnership with the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific islands. The **Samoa Agreement**, which has been provisionally applied since 1 January 2024, replaces the Cotonou Agreement and establishes a modern framework for the EU's relations with the three regions, supplemented by regional protocols. The EU has decided to work towards **security and defence partnerships** with Japan and South Korea, thereby honing its security policy profile in the Indo-Pacific.

1.2. Expanding the partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

The **ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting** took place in Brussels on 2 April 2024. The participating countries reached agreement on a substantive Joint Ministerial Statement. The German Bundestag's Parliamentary Friendship Group for Relations with the ASEAN States visited Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore in March 2024. On 16 May 2024, the Bundestag applied for observer status in the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA). Germany cooperated with ASEAN on a wide range of issues, including strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management in Jakarta, as well as on security, economic and energy policy and on ASEAN-led initiatives concerning confidence-building and the international law of the sea. Germany set aside funds totalling 22.6 million euro to this end.

1.3. International cooperation

The German Ambassador in Suva, Fiji, has been **Special Envoy for the Pacific Island States** since 1 September 2023, thus deepening relations with the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in this capacity. Germany was represented at a high level for the first time at the PIF Summit in the Cook Islands in November 2023. Germany was actively involved in the **Partners in the Blue Pacific** initiative and promoted projects providing aid supplies in the event of disasters as well as those focusing on cyber issues. Germany supports Indonesia's and Thailand's applications to accede to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and will lend its close support to the accession process.

2. Tackling climate change and protecting the environment

2.1. Climate, energy and development partnerships

Further pledges totalling around one billion euro – predominantly in the form of loans – were made for the **German-Indian Green and Sustainable Development Partnership** in November 2023. These funds are intended, among other things, to promote low-emission mobility and climate adaptation measures. The **Sino-German Climate and Transformation Dialogue**, which was agreed on in 2023, was held for the first time in Beijing in June 2024. The **German- Australian Energy Partnership** was expanded to include the protection of critical energy infrastructure.

2.2. Expanding climate risk financing

The **Loss and Damage Fund** was established at COP28 in December 2023. This fund is intended to support countries that are not among the main drivers of climate change, but which are particularly affected by its impacts. Germany provided important start-up support for the fund with an initial pledge of 100 million US dollars. Germany is supporting the **Pacific Catastrophe Risk Insurance Company**, which was established as part of the **Global Shield against Climate Risks**, with a total of 10 million euro.

2.3. International Climate Initiative

In the reporting period, funding totalling more than 19.2 million euro was approved for 11 projects of the **International Climate Initiative** (ICI) with which Germany is supporting partners in the Indo-Pacific, including projects reducing greenhouse gases and adaptation projects, e.g. to promote resilience in Thailand and biodiversity in India. A global project to the tune of 19.9 million euro was approved in September 2023, facilitating the implementation of projects relating to low-carbon urban infrastructure investments also in the Indo-Pacific. The ICI project BOLD Response, which is currently being prepared and aims to strengthen the resilience of Pacific island states against climate-related loss and damage, reflects Germany's contribution to India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).

2.4. Support for climate change mitigation

Through the **Regional Pacific NDC Hub**, Germany supported Pacific island states with regard to feasibility studies and investment plans for their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), e.g. concerning the water supply in Tuvalu. The global project **Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change** entered a new phase in December 2023. With this project, Germany is strengthening its cooperation with Fiji, among other countries, in order to facilitate in a humane manner the voluntary resettlement of communities threatened by climate change.

2.5. Forest, marine and biodiversity conservation

Germany and the ASEAN Secretariat worked together in the context of the **3RproMar** project to combat increasing marine litter. Pilot sites are in Cambodia, Indonesia, Viet Nam and the Philippines. In May 2024, the project founded a **Regional Knowledge Hub for Marine Litter Prevention in ASEAN**. In Viet Nam, the climate-resilient and biodiversity-conserving management of the Mekong Delta was supported.

3. Strengthening peace, security and stability

3.1. A security policy contribution to the rules-based international order

The frigate Baden-Württemberg and the replenishment ship Frankfurt am Main are carrying out the German navy's **Indo-Pacific Deployment 2024 (IPD24)** from May to November 2024. During the reporting period, they took part in the multinational Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise off Hawaii and in monitoring the UN Security Council's sanctions against North Korea as part of the Pacific Security Maritime Exchange (PSMX). At the same time, the air force deployed to the Indo-Pacific together with Spain and France as part of IPD24 from June to August. The air force deepened its cooperation with close partners in the Indo-Pacific with the planning and leadership of the Arctic Defender multinational exercise in Alaska and participation in the Nippon Skies exercises in Japan, RIMPAC and Pitch Black 24 in Australia, in addition to Tarang Shakti in India.

Germany is consolidating its multilateral commitment to **monitoring UN sanctions against North Korea**. A liaison officer post for the **Enforcement Coordination Cell (ECC)** in Yokosuka, Japan, was created on 1 June 2024 to this end, in addition to the liaison officer post for the Information Fusion Center in Singapore. Moreover, Germany joined the **United Nations Command (UNC)** in August 2024, which monitors the ceasefire agreement on the Korean peninsula. Since 23 February 2024, Germany has been involved in the EU operation **EUNAVFOR ASPIDES** with a view to protecting the freedom of maritime routes in the Red Sea, which is a key connecting axis between Asia and Europe.

3.2. Strengthening the security-policy resilience of partners

The Indo-Pacific has been a partner region of the **Enable & Enhance Initiative** of the German Federal Government since 2023. The project activities for strengthening the capabilities of the partners' security forces were stepped up. Germany supported the coastguards of the Philippines and Malaysia, in particular with a view to improving maritime surveillance. In addition, pilot projects were initiated with Malaysia, Indonesia and Viet Nam to develop military capabilities, particularly in the areas of medical care and military engineering as well as UN peacekeeping training.

3.3. Expanding defence and security policy cooperation

The **intergovernmental agreement on the mutual provision of goods and services** between the Bundeswehr and the Self-Defense Forces of Japan (Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement, ACSA) came into force on 12 July 2024 and will facilitate future Bundeswehr deployments to Japan. A **memorandum of understanding on defence science and technology** was signed with Australia on 28 November 2023 with a view to expanding research cooperation.

After a ten-year hiatus, Germany resumed its **defence policy dialogue** with the Philippines in January. During Defence Minister Boris Pistorius' visit on 4 and 5 August 2024, both sides agreed to conclude an agreement on security cooperation. Military cooperation with Fiji commenced in September 2023. At the **strategic dialogue between the defence ministries** of Germany and India in January 2024, a decision was taken to further intensify the exchange. Together with European and Indo-Pacific partners, Germany endorsed a **Statement of Principles for Indo-Pacific Defense Industrial Base Collaboration** on 1 June 2024. The dialogue with Singapore, including on **cybersecurity**, was intensified.

3.4. Stabilisation

A focus of Germany's commitment to stabilisation in the Indo-Pacific was on the expansion of the **German and European security dialogue** with partners via the EU project Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia (ESIWA). In Myanmar, Germany promoted dialogue within the opposition and the establishment of federal self-government with the Dialogue and Consensus Building project. Germany remained engaged in the **peace and reconciliation processes** in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Nepal, as well as in a regional mediation project concerning climate-related maritime conflicts in the Bay of Bengal.

3.5. Strengthening bilateral relations

Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier travelled to Viet Nam and Thailand in January 2024 and also to Mongolia in February 2024 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. A **Strategic Partnership** was agreed in the course of his visit. Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz visited India and China, Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck travelled to South Korea and China, and Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock

25 September 2024

paid a visit to the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. The Nepalese and Philippine Presidents, the Prime Ministers of the Cook Islands, Japan, Malaysia and Thailand, as well as the then Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, who has since become the country's Prime Minister, visited Germany during the reporting period.

Germany and Singapore agreed to work towards upgrading bilateral relations to the status of a **strategic partnership**. The **strategy for German development policy with Asia** was published by Development Minister Svenja Schulze in December 2023, setting out thematic guidelines for future development policy cooperation with Asia.

4. Advocating human rights and the rule of law

4.1. Human rights and rule of law cooperation

Germany is committed to promoting compliance with international law, including human rights, in the Indo-Pacific. In December 2023, Germany and France awarded the **Franco-German Prize for Human Rights and the Rule of Law** to LGBTIQ+ activist Valery Wichman from the Cook Islands. Germany supported projects concerning the rights of women, members of the LGBTIQ+ community and indigenous peoples in the Philippines, among other countries. In India, the focus was on gender equality and in Nepal on support for female victims of civil war. With the assumption of the Co-Chair of the Equal Rights Coalition (ERC), Germany, together with Mexico, advocated for Thailand to become a member of the ERC, a step that was achieved in July 2024.

Germany lent its support to projects, including on access to justice and tackling corruption, within the framework of the **German-Vietnamese Rule-of Law Dialogue**. Cooperation with Japan regarding the legal dialogue between the two countries was continued at a high level in the form of **regular German-Japanese legal symposiums**. Germany maintained its dialogue with Taiwan on mutual assistance in criminal matters, among other things. At the G7 Justice Ministers Meeting under Japan's Presidency, the **Next Leaders Forum** was established as a dialogue format of the G7 with ASEAN countries in the legal/judicial field. Germany attended the first Forum in Tokyo from 25 June to 2 July 2024.

4.2. Humanitarian assistance

Germany supported humanitarian projects in Myanmar and Bangladesh with around 19 million euro. In Pakistan, it lent its support to people impacted by the flash flooding of 2022, including with basic healthcare services, sanitation and food aid totalling around 184 million euro. Germany was the biggest donor to the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in 2023, contributing 100 million euro. Emergency accommodation was constructed by CERF in Vanuatu for people affected by tornadoes, while preventive measures were put in place in Timor-Leste to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters. Germany supported humanitarian mine action in Cambodia, Laos and Sri Lanka with more than three million euro.

4.3. Health cooperation

At the World Health Assembly on 27 May 2024, Federal Minister of Health Karl Lauterbach called once again for Taiwan to be more closely involved in the thematic work of the World Health Organization (WHO). The Federal Government held discussions with India regarding the **regulation of pharmaceuticals**. Existing higher education partnerships, including on the establishment of a cancer centre and on vaccine cooperation, were continued with Indonesia.

5. Strengthening free trade

5.1. Diversification, free trade and investment protection negotiations, support for the engagement of German companies

The **Free Trade Agreement** between the European Union and New Zealand entered into force on 1 May 2024. The European Commission forecasts that trade between Europe and New Zealand will increase by up to 30 percent. In March 2024, a decision was taken to resume free trade negotiations between the EU and the Philippines. The EU's free trade negotiations with India, Indonesia and Thailand were continued during the reporting period. Negotiations with Singapore on a **digital trade agreement** were successfully concluded in July.

In March 2024, **Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI)**, the Federal Government's foreign trade and investment agency, opened an **office in Singapore** as a hub for Southeast Asia. The **German-Indonesian mixed business and investment committee** met for the first time in Berlin in May 2024. The second meeting of the **German-Philippine Joint Economic Commission** took place in Manila in March 2024. In January 2024, the Federal Government concluded a declaration of intent with the Philippines on the development of maritime transport relations. Since the autumn of 2023, the Federal Government has guaranteed German direct investments in India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam with preferential conditions.

5.2. Expanded opportunities for skilled and labour migration

The Federal Government sees great potential for the migration to Germany of skilled workers from the Indo-Pacific, especially from India, Indonesia and the Philippines. Germany has introduced its **Fair Recruitment Healthcare Germany** quality seal and the concept of Global Skills Partnerships (GSP) in India and the Philippines. Waiting times for visa applications in India were reduced to zero in the relevant categories, also with a view to implementing the German-Indian Migration and Mobility Agreement. The Federal Government signed a **declaration of intent with Viet Nam on the migration of skilled workers** in January 2024. In the Philippines, the number of privately recruited care workers continued to rise, and the first Filipino recruits travelled to Germany during the reporting period. The negotiations commenced with the Philippines in March 2024 on a **migration and mobility agreement** are being continued. The Federal Government is preparing the establishment of a **centre for migration and development** in Indonesia that is, among other things, intended to offer advice on options for regular migration.

6. Regions and markets: rules-based networking and digital transformation

6.1. The EU's Global Gateway connectivity initiative

The first **Global Gateway Forum** was held on 26 and 27 October 2023. New projects worth over three billion euro were agreed. Among other things, Global Gateway is supporting the expansion of renewable energies in Bangladesh with 400 million euro and the Chilime-Trishuli high-voltage line in Nepal, which was inaugurated on 17 May 2024 and whose construction was subsidised to a significant degree by Germany with 14 million euro. On the fringes of the Forum, the Business Advisory Group met for the first time at CEO level for an exchange between the European Commission and the private sector. Sixteen of the Global Gateway **flagship projects** for 2024 announced on 29 November 2023 are to be found in the Asia-Pacific region, including smart grid technology in Thailand, an education partnership for digital jobs in Cambodia and port development in Malaysia and Papua New Guinea.

6.2. Digital transformation

There was close cooperation on digital policy matters in the reporting period via the **Digital Dialogues** with India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Indonesia. German **digital centres** in Indonesia and Cambodia cooperated intensively with regional stakeholders and the private sector. Among other things, the digital centres promote digital skills for women and ensure that the manufacture of textile products is more environmentally friendly by using digital technologies such as intelligent water management systems.

6.3. Sustainable urban development and the circular economy

Germany provided an additional 100 million euro with a view to continuing the **Indo-German Green Urban Mobility Partnership**. The **C40 Cities Finance Facility (CFF)**, co-funded by Germany, supported the city administrations of Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur in the preparation of, among other things, photovoltaic projects and the increased use of electric buses. Germany promoted the introduction of circular economy and waste management systems in Indonesia. The **PREVENT Waste Alliance** facilitated the exchange on innovations in the area of the circular economy between relevant partners, including from Indonesia, Viet Nam, India, China and Thailand.

7. Bringing people together through culture, education and science

7.1. Strengthening dialogue

Both the **German-Japanese** and the **German-Korean Forum** drew up recommendations for strengthening bilateral relations at their respective meetings in November 2023. In December, the German Institute Taipei and the Taipei Representative Office in Berlin agreed to establish the **Taiwan-Germany dialogue platform**, which is intended to promote vibrant civil society exchange. The platform met for the first time in Berlin from 13 to 15 May 2024.

7.2. Cultural cooperation

Germany is supporting Tuvalu in its efforts to set up an online platform to digitalise its material and immaterial **cultural heritage**. **Human remains were returned** to Palau by the University of Göttingen and the GRASSI Museum in Leipzig in March 2024. In May 2024, four artefacts from the Kurna community were returned from Germany to their place of origin in Australia in the presence of Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock. Germany returned a historic ship's prow to Samoa in July 2024. Various German-Japanese activities reached over two million – primarily young – people in **gaming and e-sports**.

7.3. Scientific and research cooperation

The second bilateral research presence in the area of **green hydrogen** technologies was opened in Japan in September 2023. Research cooperation on green hydrogen with Australia was expanded by introducing the HyGATE initiative after preliminary studies confirmed the economic viability of imports from Australia. A further 50 million Australian dollars and 40 million euro were made available to this end. The 50th anniversary of the **Agreement on Cooperation in Scientific Research and Technological Development between India and Germany** was celebrated at an event in May 2024. The **Centre of Excellence for Climate Change Adaptation** was set up at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in New Delhi with Germany's support. The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and the Indo-German Global Academy for Agroecology Research and Learning agreed to conduct research into the climate impacts of agroecological practices in India.

Three joint research projects on **battery research** funded by Germany with around six million euro were launched in November 2023 within the framework of research cooperation with Taiwan. Germany signed a declaration of intent with Thailand in April 2024 on strengthening **cooperation in research and innovation**. In May 2024, the Alfred-Wegener-Institut Helmholtz-Zentrum für Polar- und Meeresforschung and the New Zealand Antarctic Institute agreed to future joint research activities in the **Antarctic**.