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News: Sri Lanka to take over as Chair of Indian Ocean Rim Association

- Several Foreign Ministers, including those of India, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Iran, Malaysia and South Africa, will participate in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Council of Ministers meeting in Colombo on October 11, 2023, according to the Sri Lankan government, which is preparing to take over as Chair of the regional grouping this week.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

- Indian Ocean Rim Association is an **international organization** consisting of **23 states bordering Indian Ocean**.
- Established in 07th March 1997, IORA has its Headquarters in **Ebene, Mauritius**.
- Members are: Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, **France**, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Somalia, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, UAE and Yemen.
- Dialogue Partners are: China, Egypt, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, US, Turkey and South Korea.

- France became the 23rd member in December 2020 to join. This is **probably the first time that a country whose mainland is not on the Indian Ocean has been brought into the fold of the IORA**. France applied for membership citing its **overseas territory of Réunion Island in the western Indian Ocean**.
- France first joined IORA as a dialogue partner in 2001, just four years after the association was formed.
- Since **all decisions in IORA are taken by consensus**, objection from even a single country stops a process.
- The membership is open to “**sovereign states of the Indian Ocean Rim willing to subscribe to the principles and objectives of the Charter**”.