

## Recent Trends Regarding each actor's "Indo-Pacific Policy" and FOIP

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### 1. Introduction

It has been more than three years since Japan promoted the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" concept and it became well known. Although this idea, or the regional concept and policy theory related to the Indo-Pacific, to which it is closely related, is still in the process of various discussions, it seems that it is generally taking root as a common concept, both in Japan and abroad. Amidst this, and with the announcement of the resignation of former Prime Minister Abe in August 2020, FOIP has once again been attracting attention as a diplomatic legacy of the Abe administration.<sup>1</sup> In particular, starting with the October 6 Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting that was held in Tokyo, Prime Minister Suga's mention of FOIP (October 21) at a press conference after his first overseas visit to Vietnam and Indonesia, and the inclusion of the phrase "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)" in the Chairman's Statement of the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) held on November 14, it has been very interesting to report on the exchanges between the relevant countries as regards the phrase "Indo-Pacific," including the reactions from China.<sup>2</sup> Incidentally, in regards to this matter, it was reported that Prime Minister Suga said to reporters after the ASEAN+3 (Japan-China-Korea) summit meeting prior to EAS that "We want to build a peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific together," but what was reported and temporarily attracted attention was the question of "Will the name FOIP be changed?" but this point was clearly denied by Chief Cabinet Secretary Kato at a press conference on the 15th.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Abe Seiken no 'Legacy' to kongo [Gaikou] Rule ni motozuku kokusai chitsujo wo syudou[The Abe Administration's 'Legacy' and the Future of Leading a [Diplomatic] Rules-Based International Order,]" (in Japanese), The Yomiuri Quarterly "Survey Research" Autumn 2020 Issue, November 10, 2020. "Sekai no Katachi, Nihon no Katachi[Shape of the World, Shape of Japan,] by Professor Kazuya Sakamoto of Osaka University – Sengo wo owaraseta shushou[The Prime Minister Who Ended the Postwar Period,]" (in Japanese) October 19, 2020, The Sankei Shimbun, etc. In overseas literature, "Measuring Shinzo Abe's Impact on the Indo-Pacific" by John Hemmings, East-West Center, Asia Pacific Bulletin, No. 563, is particularly suggestive.

<https://www.eastwestcenter.org/publications/measuring-shinzo-abe%E2%80%99s-impact-the-indo-pacific>

<sup>2</sup> "Nihon to ASEAN no kyoudou seimei, Chuugoku wo isiki sita naiyou ni... [A joint statement by Japan and ASEAN, where the content is giving awareness to China...]" (in Japanese), Yomiuri Shimbun, November 13, 2020. "Chuugoku ha 'Jiyuu de hirakareta Indo Taiheiyou' soshi ni yakki[China Rushes to Stop the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific,']" and "Taichuu senryaku ni huan, Shusyuu 'Indo Taiheiyou' ni genkyuu sezu[Uncertain about Strategy Towards China, Prime Minister Doesn't Mention 'Indo-Pacific']" (in Japanese), The Sankei Shimbun, November 14, 2020, etc.

<sup>3</sup> "Katou Kanbou choukan, ASEAN+3 Shunou kaigi: 'Jiyuu de hirakareta Indo Taiheiyou' kawarazu[Chief Cabinet Secretary Kato, ASEAN+3 Summit: 'No Change to Free and Open Indo-Pacific,']" (in Japanese), November 16, 2020, The Sankei Shimbun. Additionally, this point was explained in more detail in the question and answer session at the Foreign Press Secretary's press conference on November 18, where it was stated that "It is referred to as a strategy or vision depending on the context or other aspects. (Omitted) he [Minister Motegi] answered that the word 'vision' is added to 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' when predicating its realization," which are remarks that explain the "transition and development of FOIP," and, as was mentioned, is the same as the author's understanding.

In this way, the "Indo-Pacific policy"<sup>4</sup> formulated by the countries concerned is not limited to the relationship between Japan's and the US's FOIP and ASEAN's AOIP; portions of each proper name are mutually related to each other, and, in particular, there were documents recently published by Germany and the Netherlands, in September and November, respectively, that bear the name of "Indo-Pacific" in their titles, and so, as the movement to commit to this concept is spreading, this paper discusses the "Indo-Pacific policies" of these related countries.

In April 2018, the author wrote a treatise entitled "The Philosophy and Practice of the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy (FOIP)' Decoded from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website," (hereinafter referred to as the "Philosophy and Practice of FOIP"), and in June 2019 wrote a sequel, entitled "Sonogo no 'Jiyuu de hirakareta Indo Taiheiyou'(FOIP) no hensen to tenkai[Subsequent Transition and development of the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy (FOIP)']" (in Japanese), (hereinafter referred to as the "Transition and development of FOIP"), and, as the next topic, a comparative analysis of the "Indo-Pacific policy" documents issued by relevant countries was being prepared. However, it was necessary to follow a series of movements after the resignation of former Prime Minister Abe, as it was not possible to predict the timing of his announcement. Two months have passed since the Suga administration began (this article's original was written in Dec 2020), and now that the United States presidential election has been settled with Biden's victory. Furthermore using the reference to the "ASEAN Outlook (AOIP)" in the aforementioned EAS Chairman's Statement as one perspective, this paper will comprehensively discuss about the relationship between the "Indo-Pacific policies" of various relevant countries (particularly those of the United States and ASEAN) and the FOIP promoted by Japan."

In fact, recently some research from such a viewpoint has been found, with for example, "The Merits and Demerits of Ambiguity in the Term 'Indo-Pacific': From the Perspective of Political Science"<sup>5</sup> by Nagafumi Nakamura, Project Assistant Professor, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Tokyo, being particularly close to the author's perception of the problem. Nakamura exhaustively discusses the process of forming the regional concept of the "Indo-Pacific" and its classification as a policy goal, something which the author also attempted, and the two axis classification of "Comprehensiveness of Issue Area (Is it used in the context of traditional security, or is it used in a context that includes economic and non-traditional security)" and "Inclusiveness of

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Press Conference by Foreign Press Secretary YOSHIDA Tomoyuki (Wednesday, November 18, 2020)." [https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/kaiken/kaiken6e\\_000021.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/kaiken/kaiken6e_000021.html)

<sup>4</sup> In this paper, the general term "policy" is used for convenience as a general expression. From the viewpoint that "Free and Open" are common and essential values in the discussions related to this topic thus far, the author treats them as a concept common to FOIP as necessary, including those whose proper name does not include them. However, in this paper, "policy" is used as a general term so as not to cause misunderstanding when making comparisons with these.

<sup>5</sup> Nagafumi Nakamura, "Tagiteki na 'Indo Taiheiyou' no kouzai-seijigaku teki kanten kara-[The Merits and Demerits of Ambiguity in the Term 'Indo-Pacific': From the Perspective of Political Science.]" (in Japanese), Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Command and Staff College Review Vol. 9, No. 2 (December 2019), pp. 20-37. <https://www.mod.go.jp/msdf/navcol/SSG/review/9-2-s/9-2-3.pdf>

Membership (Is it used to restrain China, or is it used for cooperation, including with China?)" shown in this paper, along with presenting a list based on it, is very instructive (detailed below).

Additionally, "Japan's Indo-Pacific Diplomacy and Neighboring Diplomacy"<sup>6</sup> by Professor Emeritus Yoshihide Soeya at Keio University, published at about the same time as Nakamura's paper and which also exhaustively and comprehensively discusses FOIP efforts in Japan and major relevant countries, was heavily referenced, and, particularly focusing on AOIP, pointed out that the change that "Japan's Indo-Pacific diplomacy also reemphasizes the regionalist issues that Japan's diplomacy until now has steadily developed under 'ASEAN Centrality Principles' and gives them a new name," when viewed from the perspectives of AOIP's inherent "inclusiveness" and its affinity with FOIP, is also suggestive in connection with the outcome of the aforementioned EAS Chairman's Statement.

Of course, there are also various other discussions,<sup>7</sup> and, although it is not necessarily an analytical material, the "Efforts and Cooperation on FOIP in Other Countries and Regions"<sup>8</sup> chart (refer to the figure below) that was published in the "Diplomatic Bluebook 2020" is useful because it exhaustively covers the "Indo-Pacific policies" of each country and the statements that mention those policies.

Hereinafter, these materials, the analyses of previous studies, and the arguments of foreign literature selected in "FROM THE OCEANS" with focusing on documents published after 2019 will also be referred to in this paper. And based on such analysis about the overview of the each relevant actor's "Indo-Pacific policy," the author would like to consider about the future directions of FOIP<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Yoshihide Soeya, "Nihon no Indo Taiheiyō gaikō to kinrin gaikō [Japan's Indo-Pacific Diplomacy and Neighboring Diplomacy]," (in Japanese), "International Affairs" No. 688 (January and February 2020), pp. 18-32. [http://www2.jiia.or.jp/kokusaimondai\\_archive/2020/2020-01\\_003.pdf?noprint](http://www2.jiia.or.jp/kokusaimondai_archive/2020/2020-01_003.pdf?noprint)

<sup>7</sup> Additionally, even though it is not intended to compare the policies of relevant countries, the background of each actor's commitment to Indo-Pacific policy is discussed in Section 1 of Ken Jimbo's "Indo Taiheiyō no anzen hōshyō Senryaku kūkan to siteno syūren [Indo-Pacific Security: Contraction as a Strategic Space]," (in Japanese), "International Affairs" No. 687 (December 2019), pp. 7-16, is very suggestive. In addition, Kouichi Ishikawa's "Itsutsu no Indo Taiheiyō kōsō [Five Indo-Pacific Visions]," (in Japanese), "World Economic Review IMPACT" (November 4, 2019) is helpful as a brief summary. Outside of analytical articles, "News kara yomitoku Indo Taiheiyō chiiki no ima [Now' in the Indo-Pacific Region, Decoded from the News]," (in Japanese), of "MAMOR" the Ministry of Defense's public relations magazine (December 2019), is also useful as a comprehensive list of the trends in each related country.

<sup>8</sup> "Diplomatic Bluebook 2020," (May 2020), Opening Special Feature "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIPc (FOIP))," p009. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2020/pdf/0d.pdf>

However, German and Netherlands document are not covered in this because they were published after it.

<sup>9</sup> Wrote by chronological order, they are as follows. Details of each will be described later. Titles from languages other than English are tentative translations by the author. The same applies hereinafter.

"INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY REPORT Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region," The Department of Defense, June 1, 2019

[https://media.defense.gov/2019/May/31/2002139210/-1/-1/1/DOD\\_INDO\\_PACIFIC\\_STRATEGY\\_REPORT\\_JUNE\\_2019.PDF](https://media.defense.gov/2019/May/31/2002139210/-1/-1/1/DOD_INDO_PACIFIC_STRATEGY_REPORT_JUNE_2019.PDF)

"ASEAN OUTLOOK ON THE INDO-PACIFIC," ASEAN Secretariat, June 22, 2019

[https://asean.org/storage/2019/06/ASEAN-Outlook-on-the-Indo-Pacific\\_FINAL\\_22062019.pdf](https://asean.org/storage/2019/06/ASEAN-Outlook-on-the-Indo-Pacific_FINAL_22062019.pdf)

"France and Security in the INDO-PACIFIC," French Ministry of Defense, 2018 Edition, updated in August, 2019

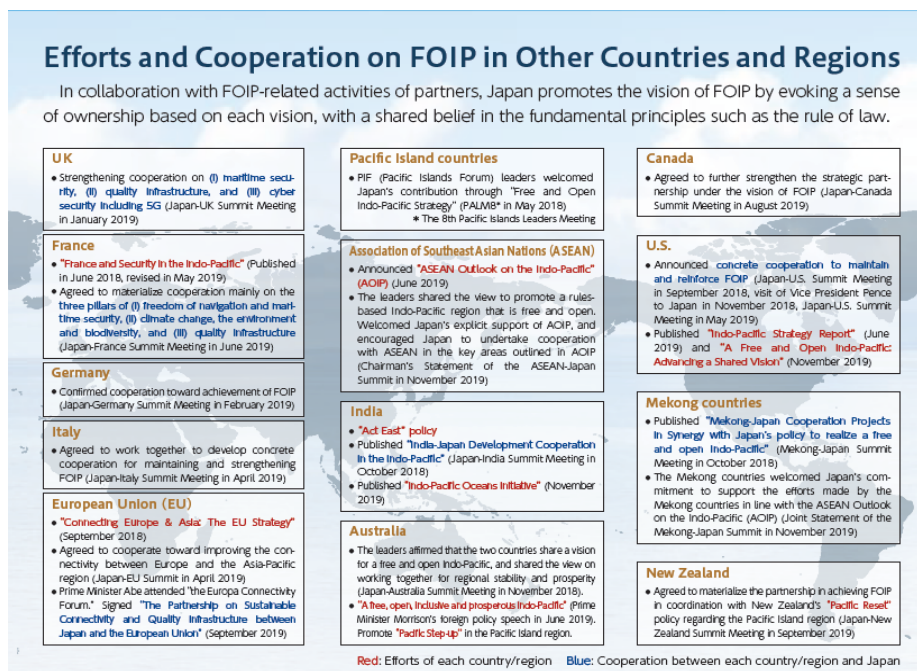
<https://www.defense.gouv.fr/layout/set/print/content/download/532754/9176250/version/3/file/France+and+Security+in+the+Indo-Pacific+-+2019.pdf>

"A FREE AND OPEN INDO-PACIFIC Advancing a Shared Vision," The Department of State, November 4, 2019

<https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Free-and-Open-Indo-Pacific-4Nov2019.pdf>

"Germany – Europe – Asia: shaping the 21st century together: The German Government adopts policy

Reference Figure 1: Efforts and Cooperation on FOIP in Other Countries and Regions



(Source: "Diplomatic Bluebook 2020," (May 2020), Opening Special Feature "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)")

In addition, the list of Indo-Pacific related articles which selected in "FROM THE OCEANS" included in the author's previous article "Transition and development of FOIP" treatise is also attached as the similar list of related articles from April 2019 to September 2020

## 2. Chronology Surrounding the Recent FOIP

The chronology of FOIP and the moves of related countries has been shown in the author's previous papers, so this section describes the situation from then until November 2020.

As a premise for explaining the related chronology, the following is overview of the author's basic understanding of FOIP, based on information disseminated through opinion exchanges with domestic and foreign researchers, presentations at symposiums, magazine coverage, and online news articles.<sup>10</sup>

*guidelines on the Indo-Pacific region,*" Federal Foreign Office, Sep 1 2020.

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/regionaleschwerpunkte/asien/german-government-policy-guidelines-indo-pacific/2380510>

November 13, 2020, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs "The Indo-Pacific: Guidelines for Strengthening Cooperation between the Netherlands and EU with Asian Partners" (As of December 10, 2020, only a Dutch version has been released.) "Indo-Pacific: een leidraad voor versterking van de Nederlandse en EU-samenwerking met partners in Azië,"

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2020/11/13/indo-pacific-een-leidraad-voor-versterking-van-de-nederlandse-en-eu-samenwerking-met-partners-in-azie>

<sup>10</sup> See below for the most recent news articles. Teruaki Aizawa, "Jiyuu de hirakareta Indo Taiheiyou (FOIP) no rikai ni kansuru 'kojin no kansou' sonogo [personanl Impressions for Understanding the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) afterwards]," (in Japanese), Ocean Jigsaw Puzzle Piece No. 196," September 30, 2020, Ocean Policy Research Institute website, <https://blog.canpan.info/oprf/archive/1930>. "Dai 6kai Kaiyou Anzen hosyou Symposium: waga kuni no kaiyou anzen hosyou to kongo no kaijou boueiryoku no yakuwari(kouhen) [The 6th Maritime Security Symposium: Japan's Maritime Security and the Role of Maritime Defense Capability in the Future (Part 2)," (in Japanese),"Suikou", 2020 New Year Issue" (January 2020), pp. 9-11. Interview: "Senmonka ni kiku. Chiseigaku teki ni mita Indo Taiheiyou

- ① FOIP is a concept that is currently changing and that needs to be continuously tracked.
- ② Initially, many believed that FOIP would be a counter to China's "Belt Road initiative", but the Japanese government officially denied this. On the other hand, many experts have pointed out that relations with China are a central concern, and that FOIP has the inherent duality of being a "'Cooperative strategy' to rearise 'Competitive strategy'" in relation to China<sup>11</sup>.
- ③ The view of the international community is also changing, and initially it was thought that the Quad (4-country framework of Japan, the United States, Australia, and India) would be the center, but it is currently shifting to a wider range of multilateral cooperation, including ASEAN countries, Pacific Island countries, and countries such as Britain and France that are outside the region, with the universal "marine governance" of the "Rule of law at sea" being an important incentive for this shift.

The chronology of FOIP is as follows, starting from the publication of the United States Department of Defense "Indo-Pacific Strategy Report" in 2019 (the content of the policy documents will be described in detail in the next section).

On June 1, 2019, the United States Department of Defense released the "Indo-Pacific Strategy Report (IPSR)."

On June 22, 2019, the ASEAN Secretariat released the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)."

On August 30, 2019, at the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7) held in Yokohama, the sentence "We take good note of the initiative of a free and open Indo-Pacific announced by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at TICAD VI in Nairobi." was included in the "Yokohama Declaration 2019."<sup>12</sup> Although the origin point of FOIP is generally considered to be the keynote speech at TICAD6, it is extremely significant that this wording was again included in the Leaders' Declaration, and in the background of this somewhat roundabout expression of "We take good note," there were media reports that some consideration was given to participating countries that emphasized relations with China.<sup>13</sup>

On October 4, 2019, in his policy speech to the 200<sup>th</sup> Session of the Diet, Prime Minister Abe said

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chiiki no tokuchou to genjou[Ask an Expert! Geopolitical Characteristics and the Current Situation of the Indo-Pacific Region]," (in Japanese), "MAMOR," November 2019 issue, p. 23, etc.

<sup>11</sup> Aizawa, "Transition and development of FOIP," p. 23. As for "'Cooperative Strategy' to rearise 'Competitive Strategy,'" see "'Cooperative Strategy' to rearise 'Competitive Strategy': The composite structure of Japan's 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' strategy (vision)" by Mataka Kamiya, SSDP "Society of Security and Diplomatic Policy Studies", February 2019.

<http://ssdpaki.la.coocan.jp/en/proposals/26.html>

<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Yokohama Declaration 2019: Advancing Africa's Development through People, Technology and Innovation," August 30, 2019.

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ticad/ticad7/pdf/yokohama\\_declaration\\_en.pdf](https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ticad/ticad7/pdf/yokohama_declaration_en.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> "Chuugoku tonô chigai kyôuchou, Indo Taiheiyô kôsô meiki, Yokohama sengen[Emphasis on Differences with China: Indo-Pacific Vision Specified in the Yokohama Declaration]," (in Japanese), Mainichi Shimbun, August 31, 2019.

that "Taking the Japan-US alliance as the linchpin, Japan will join hands with the UK, France, Australia, India, and other countries with which we share fundamental values and bring about a free and open Indo-Pacific."<sup>14</sup> It is believed that this reflects the aforementioned view that the international community's perception of FOIP is shifting to one with a wider range of multilateral cooperation in mind. And in the policy speech to the 201st Session of Diet by Prime Minister Abe, he expressed the relevant portion as follows. "On the robust foundation of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, we will aim to bring about a "free and open Indo-Pacific," working together with countries with which we share fundamental values, such as European countries, India, Australia, and ASEAN member nations."<sup>15</sup> So, he emphasized again that Japan-US alliance is FOIP's foundation.

Meanwhile, on November 4, 2019, the United States Department of State announced "A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a Shared Vision."

After that, as is well known, the spread of COVID-19 amidst the intensifying US-China conflict further accelerated the conflict, and the international situation moved significantly. However, under those circumstances, efforts at international cooperation, with a strong awareness of China in the Indo-Pacific region, were being sought, and, above all, the progress of the Quad (upgraded from a Senior Official-level Consultations to a Ministerial) is an important point of interest.

On September 26, 2019, the first US-Japan-Australia-India ministerial meeting<sup>16</sup> was held at the UN General Assembly in New York, and the second round was held in Tokyo on October 6, 2020, at which point it was agreed to make the meeting regular and concurred on further developing practical cooperation in various areas such as quality infrastructure, maritime security, etc, in order to promote FOIP.<sup>17</sup> The cooperation with ASEAN that was mentioned in the introduction and the "full support for AOIP" are also specified here,<sup>18</sup> and it can be said that this symbolizes FOIP's intention towards "wider multilateral cooperation," especially in the form of emphasizing relations with ASEAN.

Then, on August 28, 2020, Prime Minister Abe suddenly announced his resignation. On September 14, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga, who was elected as the new President of the Liberal Democratic Party, announced at his inaugural press conference that he would fundamentally follow the policies of the Abe administration, but at the subsequent press conferences after he took the position of Prime Minister, the continuance of FOIP was not always explicitly mentioned. And, as previously mentioned, the new Prime Minister Suga visited Vietnam and Indonesia from October 18th to 21st, but at the press

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<sup>14</sup> Prime Minister's Office website, "Prime Minister Abe's Policy Speech to the 200th Session of Diet," October 4, 2019. [https://japan.kantei.go.jp/98\\_abe/statement/201910/\\_00003.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/98_abe/statement/201910/_00003.html)

<sup>15</sup> Prime Minister's Office website, "Prime Minister Abe's Policy Statement to the 201st Session of Diet," January 20, 2020. [https://japan.kantei.go.jp/98\\_abe/statement/202001/\\_00004.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/98_abe/statement/202001/_00004.html)

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Ministerial," September 26, 2019. [https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page3e\\_001112.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page3e_001112.html)

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "The Second Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting" October 6, 2020, [https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press6e\\_000244.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press6e_000244.html)

<sup>18</sup> However, the reference to AOIP in the Quad framework was first mentioned in the Senior Official-level Consultations at the series of ASEAN-related meetings in November 2019.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Consultations," November 11, 2019, [https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page4e\\_001157.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page4e_001157.html)

conference in Indonesia, Prime Minister Suga stated that "The '(ASEAN) Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)' that was issued last year by ASEAN and the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' that Japan advocates for, have many essential commonalities, and Japan fully backs this 'outlook.'"<sup>19</sup>

Prior to this, on October 14, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi criticized the FOIP initiative, symbolized by the aforementioned Second Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting, as "in essence aimed at building a so-called Indo-Pacific 'new NATO'."<sup>20</sup> In response to media questions based on this, Prime Minister Suga replied that "We do not think of the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' as being aimed at any particular country, and we can work together with any country that shares our thinking. There are absolutely no ideas about making an Indo-Pacific version of NATO."<sup>21</sup>

Continuing on, in his general policy speech to the 203rd Session of the Diet, Prime Minister Suga mentioned his visit to Vietnam and Indonesia and stated that "Japan will work together with countries with which we share fundamental values, including ASEAN countries, Australia, India, and European countries, and aim to achieve a free and open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law."<sup>22</sup> And, in the portion following this, saying that "A stable relationship with China is extremely important not only for the two countries, but also for the region and the international community." This is a glimpse of the "cooperative strategy to realize competitive strategy" in relation to China can be seen here as well.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, the United States presidential election held on November 3 was "decided as a Biden victory," and although it has been debated whether FOIP will be continued under the Biden administration as well, it had been said that a basic understanding on continuance of FOIP was obtained during telephone conferences between Prime Minister Suga and President Biden.<sup>24</sup>

In connection with this, the problem of the expression "peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific"

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<sup>19</sup> Prime Minister's Office website, "Press Conference by the Prime Minister (for Foreign and Domestic Media about the Visits to Vietnam and Indonesia)," October 21, 2020, [https://japan.kantei.go.jp/99\\_suga/statement/202010/00003.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/99_suga/statement/202010/00003.html)

<sup>20</sup> "Wang Yi: U.S. 'Indo-Pacific Strategy' Undermines Peace and Development Prospects in East Asia," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, October 13, 2020. [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/zxxx\\_662805/t1824140.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1824140.shtml)

<sup>21</sup> Prime Minister's Office website, "Vietnam oyobi Indonesia houmon ni tsuiteno naigai kisyu kaiken: sutsug outou[Press Conference by the Prime Minister for Foreign and Domestic Media about the Visits to Vietnam and Indonesia:QA]," (in Japanese), October 21, 2020, [https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/99\\_suga/statement/2020/1021kaiken.html](https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/99_suga/statement/2020/1021kaiken.html)

<sup>22</sup> Prime Minister's Office website, "Policy Speech by the Prime Minister to the 203rd Session of the Diet," October 26, 2020. [https://japan.kantei.go.jp/99\\_suga/statement/202010/00006.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/99_suga/statement/202010/00006.html)

<sup>23</sup> There is also the view that not using the term "vision" here was a consideration for China. "Suga Gaikou BeiChuu barance juusi Indo Taiheiyou 'Kousou' hazusu [Suga Diplomacy, in Focusing on the US-China Balancing, Removed 'Vision' from 'Indo-Pacific']," (in Japanese), Nihon Keizai Shimbun, October 28, 2020.

<sup>24</sup> In the telephone conference between Prime Minister Suga and Mr. Biden held on November 12, Prime Minister Suga "expressed his desire to coordinate towards realizing a 'free and open Indo-Pacific,'" and in response to this, Mr. Biden "stated that he looked forward to further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance and cooperating towards peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region." Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Telephone Talk between Prime Minister Suga and President-elect Biden," [https://www.mofa.go.jp/na/na1/us/page3e\\_001104.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/na/na1/us/page3e_001104.html)

which the author mentioned in "Introduction" was not only the consideration of relationship with China, but in fact, it was based on the remarks by next President Biden in this telephone talks. The Japanese media later reported this episode in the form of quoting the remarks of a senior official of ministry of foreign affairs.<sup>25</sup> And with regard to subsequent movements, that media had reported as follows. The value of "free and open" is an indispensable element in confronting China, and if this changes to "peaceful" or "prosperous" the meaning of restraint against China will be deminished. It is said that the Japanese government has urged the Biden administration preparation team to inherit "FOIP" because it may fade, and finally it was included in the US announcement as "Free and Open Indo-Pacific".

Then, in the Chairman's Statement for the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) held on November 14, it was reported that there were a variety of exchanges with China, and, as stated in the beginning, the expression "ASEAN Leaders emphasized the importance of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific" was ultimately included."<sup>26</sup> Based on the recent FOIP chronology mentioned above, in the next section the "Indo-Pacific policy" of each relevant actors, including the United States and ASEAN, will be reconfirmed.

### **3. Each actor's "Indo-Pacific Policy"**

#### **(1) The United States' "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy (FOIP)"**

As for the United States' FOIP, in "Transition and development of FOIP," on the question of "Is there any discrepancy in the understanding of FOIP between Japan and the United States?", the conclusion is that "the basic position of both governments is that they have the same idea," in consideration of the common points with Japan's FOIP and from the perspective both of looking at statements from the Japanese and United States governments and looking at what has been shown in information disseminated by the United States.<sup>27</sup> And with regards to the IPSR issued in June 2019, even though there is a view that it shows a decisive confrontation with China, the basic idea has been not changed since a lecture by Secretary of State Tillerson<sup>28</sup> in October 2017, or the release of the National Security Strategy (NSS) in December 2017 and the National Defense Strategy (NDS) in January 2018. It has been stated that this was simply symbolized by the subtitle "Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region" in the United States' Indo-Pacific Strategy Report, and, unsurprisingly, subsequent domestic and foreign analysis on this point was contentious.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> "Biden Seiken, Taichuu de Nihon to asinami [Biden administration keeps pace with Japan in policy toward China]" (in Japanese), January 29, 2021, The Asahi Shimbun.

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "The 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) Chairman's Statement, Paragraph 40, (November 14, 2020)," <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100117705.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Aizawa, "Transition and development of FOIP," (in Japanese), pp. 17-18.

<sup>28</sup> "Defining Our Relationship with India for the Next Century: An Address by U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson" Wednesday, October 18, 2017 10:00 am - 11:15 am CSIS Headquarters [https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/event/171018\\_An\\_Address\\_by\\_U.S.\\_Secretary\\_of\\_State\\_Rex\\_Tillerson.pdf?00nMCCRjXZiUa5V2cF8\\_NDiZ14LYRX3m](https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/event/171018_An_Address_by_U.S._Secretary_of_State_Rex_Tillerson.pdf?00nMCCRjXZiUa5V2cF8_NDiZ14LYRX3m)

<sup>29</sup> There are some similar views with the author on the point that the ISPR aims for multilateral cooperation, such as Takahiro Ishihara pointing out that "particularly interesting is the attitude of



For example, Columnist Prashanth Parameswaran at The Diplomat wrote that "With respect to partnerships, the wide net cast in the IPSR on a range of allies and partners is promising – be it the explicit inclusion of extraregional allies such as UK, France, and Canada in the Indo-Pacific vision or the emphasis on the Pacific Islands."<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, Ankit Panda, also a columnist at The Diplomat, wrote that the strengthening of alliances and partnerships in "the document includes a focus on allies and, in particular, equitable burden-sharing with allies in the pursuit of Indo-Pacific security," with strongly reflected President Trump's intentions. Therefore, he said that each allies and partners had better to understand it doubtly and "it should not be taken very seriously."<sup>31</sup>

Additionally, the article by Zhou Bo, an honorary fellow with Centre of China-American Defence Relations, Academy of Military Science of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, was suggestive<sup>32</sup>. Here, using ASEAN countries as an example, he points out that "all countries vowing not to take sides are actually taking sides in a smart way, that is, on issues rather than choosing partners," and criticized the member countries making up the Quad, saying that "None of them – not even the US – wishes to jeopardise its bilateral ties with China" and that "Today's global China can hardly be straitjacketed in America's Indo-Pacific strategy."

Incidentally, in fact following the United States Department of Defense's IPSR, in November 2019 the United States Department of State also published a report entitled "A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a Shared Vision" in time with the ASEAN-related conference held in Bangkok. Although this report did not receive the same level of attention in Japan as the IPSR, there were some extremely thought-provoking analyses that were conducted, some of which will be outlined here.

Amongst them, a commentary<sup>33</sup> by Koichi Ishikawa, a Research Fellow at the Institute of Asian Studies of Asia University, conducts its analysis while showing summaries of both the ISPR and the preceding "Asia Reassurance Initiative Act: ARIA."<sup>34</sup> This is very suggestive. Here, Ishikawa states

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cooperation with allies and friendly countries." "Bei, 'Indo Taiheiyō senryaku hōkoku' wo kouhyōu[US Publishes the 'Indo-Pacific Strategy Report']," (in Japanese), JMSDF Command and Staff College Strategic Studies Group Topics 068, June 13, 2019, <https://www.mod.go.jp/msdf/navcol/SSG/topics-column/068.html>

<sup>30</sup> Prashanth Parameswaran, "Assessing the US Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Current Opportunities and Future Uncertainties," The Diplomat, June 3, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/06/assessing-the-us-indo-pacific-strategy-report-current-opportunities-and-future-uncertainties/>

<sup>31</sup> Ankit Panda, "The 2019 US Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Who's It For?," The Diplomat, June 11, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/06/the-2019-us-indo-pacific-strategy-report-whos-it-for/>

<sup>32</sup> Zhou Bo, "A US Indo-Pacific strategy that isolates China is small-minded and dangerous," South China Morning Post, June 27, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3016115/us-indo-pacific-strategy-isolates-china-small-minded-and-dangerous>

<sup>33</sup> Koichi Ishikawa, "Asia Anzenhosouhou, kokubou sousyou oyobi kokumusyou no Indo Tiheiyō Senryaku hōkokusyo ni miru Beikoku no Indo Taiheiyō Senryaku[US Indo-Pacific Strategy viewed from the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, the Indo-Pacific Strategy Report of the Department of Defense, the Department of State]," (in Japanese), World Economic Review IMPACT+ No. 16, June 8, 2020, [http://www.world-economic-review.jp/impact/plus/impact\\_plus\\_016.pdf](http://www.world-economic-review.jp/impact/plus/impact_plus_016.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> US President Donald Trump signed the law on December 31, 2018, and it is said to include strengthening security and comprehensive economic cooperation with Asian countries. "Bei, Chuugoku kensei he sinpou seiritsu, Taiwan to Gunji Kyōryoku Suisin [US enacts New Law to constraint China and Promote Military Cooperation with Taiwan]," (in Japanese), Jan 3, 2019, Nihon Keizai Shimbun

that "the reports from the Department of Defense and from the Department of State are based on ARIA" and fundamentally emphasize multilateralism, and he also points out that "the actual movements taken by the Trump administration are not in line with these documents."<sup>35</sup>

In addition, the analysis by Yusuke Takagi, an Associate Professor at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies,<sup>36</sup> is also very suggestive in terms of its comparisons with IPSR. Takagi mentions the basic perceptions of this report and its commonalities with the IPSR, but the most important difference is that it does not name a particular country, that the word "competition" is used instead of "conflict" with regards to the relationship between them, saying that "The US stance of being actively involved in multilateral diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific region is emerging" and that "You hear the voices of US policymakers trying to stay within the framework of multilateral diplomacy." From these points, Takagi points out that "there are two different ways of thinking about the US-China conflict within the US government."

In fact, this kind of negative view towards the US FOIP is largely due to the Trump administration's unstable and unpredictable diplomatic stance via the 'America First' principle, which has turned its back on the existing international cooperation system, and similar arguments are made overseas. A typical example is the by Derek Grossman, of the US's Pacific Council on International Policy in Los Angeles.<sup>37</sup> Here, Grossman points out the discrepancies between the "letter and spirit" of the United States' "Indo-Pacific Strategy" on the one hand and President Trump's "statements" on the other; he also criticizes the Indo-Pacific nations for not being able to overlook these discrepancies if the United States fails to exercise leadership in the international community.

In light of Grossman's criticism and Takagi pointing out that there are "two different ways of thinking about the US-China conflict" within the United States government, it may be possible to think that the views about FOIP between Japan and the United States, which had been discussed for some time, especially the issue of differences in attitude towards China, may have been a matter of interpretation and operation under the Trump administration. From that point of view, the incoming Biden administration, which is said to be oriented towards a return to the international cooperation system,<sup>38</sup> will also aim for a more collaborative and inclusive approach in the direction of FOIP, including in its response to China. The author believes that the aforementioned EAS Chairman's Statement, references to AOIP in the Quad, and an ASEAN-focused stance can be said to be efforts,

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<sup>35</sup> Ishikawa, "US Indo-Pacific Strategy," p. 26.

<sup>36</sup> Yusuke Takagi, "Bei Kokumusyō 'Indo Taiheiyō hōkokusyo' ni miru takokukan gaikō eno kodawari [Commitment to Multilateral Diplomacy in the US Department of State's 'Indo-Pacific Report,']" (in Japanese), *Nikkei Business*, November 14, 2019, <https://business.nikkei.com/atcl/seminar/19/00023/111200110/>

<sup>37</sup> Derek Grossman, "The Biggest Threat to the US Indo-Pacific Strategy? Washington," *Pacific Council on International Policy*, Aug 2, 2019. <https://www.pacificcouncil.org/newsroom/biggest-threat-us-indo-pacific-strategy-washington>

<sup>38</sup> For example, in "Why America Must Lead Again: Rescuing U.S. Foreign Policy After Trump" by Joseph R. Biden Jr., *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2020, President-elect Biden generally says that he will aim for a return to the international cooperation system.

in a sense, to anticipate this shift.

## (2) ASEAN's "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific"

In regards to the relationship between FOIP and ASEAN countries, "Transition and Development of FOIP" quoted the article by Masashi Nishihara, President of the Research Institute for Peace and Security,<sup>39</sup> who argued that the experience of ASEAN, which has played a central role in multilateral platforms ("ASEAN's centrality"<sup>40</sup>) such as the East Asia Summit (EAS) and ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum), should be utilized in the future development of FOIP, which is shifting towards multilateral cooperation,<sup>41</sup> and the author also thinks that this point may be supported to some degree by the extent of the ASEAN-focused stance of the countries involved, such as the mention of AIOP in the EAS Chairman's Statement, as previously mentioned.

The aforementioned paper by Soeya is thought-provoking as to the formation process and significance of AOIP. Soeya describes AOIP as an "ASEAN reaction" due to changes in the stances of various countries trying to deny "anti-China strategic elements," and to promote "considerations for ASEAN countries and other countries under pressure from both the United States and China." He points out "significance of Indo-Pacific cooperation in promoting community building in ASEAN."<sup>42</sup>

Additionally, Takagi had another article<sup>43</sup> wherein he claimed that "two meanings can be read," that "it is necessary to show the difference from the US strategy for the Indo-Pacific by emphasizing the centrality of ASEAN" as well as that "nevertheless, it makes sense to use the phrase 'Indo-Pacific'," and pointing out that "Because the US Indo-Pacific strategy has many attractive portions for ASEAN, we can read ASEAN's intention to further develop the Southeast Asian region by utilizing the US Indo-Pacific strategy rather than denying the Indo-Pacific concept itself."

Many arguments from overseas also positively evaluate this ASEAN stance. For example, "Why ASEAN's Indo-Pacific outlook matters" by Amitav Acharya,<sup>44</sup> Distinguished Professor of International Relations at American University explains how Indonesia has led the idea of AOIP, with Acharya saying that "As a leader of ASEAN, Indonesia is uncomfortable with the US approach," and, with regards to the term "inclusive" that is used here, he states that "The US idea of a 'free' Indo-Pacific identifies domestic political openness and good governance as

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<sup>39</sup> Masashi Nishihara, "Indo Taiheiyou Senryaku wo kasseika seyo[Activate the Indo-Pacific Strategy,]" (in Japanese), The Sankei Shimbun, "Seiron," August 22, 2018, <https://www.sankei.com/column/news/180822/clm1808220005-n3.html>

<sup>40</sup> For details on "ASEAN's centrality," refer to Tomotaka Shoji, "Japan's Security Cooperation with ASEAN:Pursuit of a Status as a "Relevant" Partnery," NIDS Journal of Defense and Security Vol. 16, December 2015. [http://www.nids.mod.go.jp/english/publication/kiyo/pdf/2015/bulletin\\_e2015\\_5.pdf](http://www.nids.mod.go.jp/english/publication/kiyo/pdf/2015/bulletin_e2015_5.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> Aizawa, "Transition and development of FOIP," p. 19.

<sup>42</sup> Soeya, "Japan's Indo-Pacific Diplomacy and Neighboring Diplomacy," p. 25.

<sup>43</sup> Yusuke Takagi, "ASEAN ga happyou sita 'Indo Taiheiyou gaikyou' ga imisuru mono[What the 'Indo-Pacific Outlook' Announced by ASEAN Means]," (in Japanese), Nikkei Business, June 26, 2019, <https://business.nikkei.com/atcl/seminar/19/00023/062500065/#:~:text>

<sup>44</sup> Amitav Acharya, "Why ASEAN's Indo-Pacific outlook matters," EASTASIAFORUM, August 11, 2019 <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2019/08/11/why-aseans-indo-pacific-outlook-matters/>

key ingredients — putting it at odds with China — while Jakarta's stress on 'inclusivity' implies that its policy is not meant to isolate China," pointing out that this is an effort to balance the two. Nazia Hussain, a Senior Analyst at Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), also similarly pointed out in his article<sup>45</sup> that "The AOIP is an initial step towards formally incorporating ASEAN centrality in the evolving Indo-Pacific concept."

Of course, some have also pointed out concerns that this ASEAN stance is overly "Affinitive" with China. For example, Research Fellow Shang-Su Wu at RSIS in Singapore, pointed out that AOIP is evaluated as emphasizing ASEAN's "cooperation, stability, peace, freedom of navigation, and other values," while also pointing out that "There remain questions about how to protect these values in the event of a diplomatic failure," and that "If the diplomatic approach fails, then it is important to improve the anti-submarine capabilities of ASEAN countries as a complementary measure to protect the values of ASEAN as shown in AOIP."<sup>46</sup> Regarding this perspective, the South China Morning Post, a daily English newspaper in Hong Kong, reported on the US-ASEAN exercises held in September 2019, with the article showing a similar tone.<sup>47</sup>

In short, while accepting FOIP's basic idea that an ASEAN-led AOIP is "free and open," it also considers "inclusiveness," which does not uniformly exclude China, and it is appropriate to understand that the "centrality of ASEAN" was emphasized as a device for that purpose. And ASEAN countries, which have conflicting interests and concerns in relations with China, have no choice but to adopt the idea of a "cooperative strategy to rearise competitive strategy," similarly to Japan, and there is broad agreement in that sense on the point made by Wu Shang-Su, etc. In view of these points, the author believes that the ASEAN-focused stance of the various relevant countries, such as the aforementioned EAS Chairman's statement and references to the AOIP in the Quad's efforts, are an inevitable response in anticipation of future FOIP development.

In relation to the above, the commentary by Benjamin Ho, an Assistant Professor at Singapore's RSIS<sup>48</sup>, is an analysis from the perspective of how none other than China perceives AOIP, with Ho saying that China will "be unlikely to commit to voicing any political support for the AOIP. Instead what Beijing is more interested in would be how this would translate into greater practical cooperation between ASEAN countries and itself," and he also points out about this concept that "Nevertheless there are concerns that such initiatives may privilege China and lead ASEAN member states towards

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<sup>45</sup> Nazia Hussain, "ASEAN joins the Indo-Pacific conversation," EASTASIAFORUM, August 16, 2019. <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2019/08/16/asean-joins-the-indo-pacific-conversation/>

<sup>46</sup> Shang-Su Wu, "Undersea Surveillance: Supplementing the ASEAN Indo-Pacific Outlook," Center for International Maritime Security, September 3, 2019. <https://cimsec.org/undersea-surveillance-supplementing-the-asean-indo-pacific-outlook/41314>

<sup>47</sup> "ASEAN steers between two powers with joint US military exercise in South China Sea," The South China Morning Post, September 7, 2019. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3026092/asean-steers-between-two-powers-joint-us-military-exercise>

<sup>48</sup> Benjamin Ho, "How China Sees the Indo-Pacific: What Next After AOIP?," RSIS Commentary, December 30, 2019. <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/rsis/how-china-sees-the-indo-pacific-what-next-after-aoip/>

a Sino-centric multilateral arrangement."

### **(3) The "Indo-Pacific Policies" of Other Relevant Countries**

In terms of the "Indo-Pacific policies" of relevant countries, so far the United States' FOIP and ASEAN's AOIP have been described, which the author pays particular attention to, and from now an overview of other policy documents will be given.

First, "France and Security in the Indo-Pacific," from the French Ministry of Armed Forces, was first published in June 2018 and was a pioneer for "Indo-Pacific policy" amongst relevant countries. Additionally, the website of the Embassy of France in Japan has a Japanese translation, and it is relatively easy to access the contents.<sup>49</sup> The document is more like a pamphlet emphasizing the importance of France's presence in the Indo-Pacific region rather than a strategic document, and, although it covers items such as "Main Security Challenges in the Indo-Pacific," it does not explicitly refer to China. Rather, it shows a strong interest in more comprehensive security, such as "Maritime Security" and "Environmental Security," and emphasizes the importance of international cooperation in dealing with these issues. Françoise Nicolas, a Senior Research Fellow at the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), has published a commentary<sup>50</sup> in which states that "What triggered the change in terminology and gave renewed momentum to France's interest in the Indo-Pacific region is undoubtedly the rise of China and its increasing assertiveness which is perceived by many as a threat to multilateralism and the international rules-based order," while pointing out that its purpose is "neither to antagonise nor contain China" and "is also in line with the vision promoted by ASEAN, which refuses to engage in a confrontational approach to China."

Germany's Federal Foreign Office just released its "Policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific" on September 1, 2020, and the comprehensive discussion of it in a commentary<sup>51</sup> by Ryuji Honmyo of the JMSDF Command and Staff College is helpful. Germany's "Policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific" highlight the need for Germany's commitment to the Indo-Pacific region, and emphasize the goal of "expanding cooperation in the areas of multilateralism, climate change mitigation, human rights, rules-based free trade, connectivity, digital trade, and especially security policy." On the topic of relations with China, which is the main concern of this paper, according to Honmyo, "The word 'China' is mentioned 59 times throughout the document (excluding place names such as the South China Sea), (omitted) and this diplomatic policy is more distant from relations with China than before and

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<sup>49</sup> Embassy of France in Japan website, "Furansu to Indo Taiheiyou chiiki ni okeru anzen hosyou[France and Security in the Indo-Pacific]," (in Japanese), May 29, 2019, <https://jp.ambafrance.org/article14617>

<sup>50</sup> Françoise Nicolas, "France's Indo-Pacific Strategy: inclusive and principled," EAST ASIA FORUM, December 12, 2019.

<https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2019/12/12/frances-indo-pacific-strategy-inclusive-and-principled/>

<sup>51</sup> Ryuji Honmyo, "Doitsu Renpou Kyouwakoku ga 'Indo Taiheiyou Gaikou shisin (Leitlinien zum Indo-Pazifik)' wo kouhyou(Japanese subtitle omitted) [The Federal Republic of Germany Publishes the 'Policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific (Leitlinien zum Indo-Pazifik)': Involvement in the Indo-Pacific Region through Multilateral Cooperation]," JMSDF Command and Staff College Strategic Studies Group Column 178, October 23, 2020, [https://www.mod.go.jp/msdf/navcol/assets/pdf/column178\\_01.pdf](https://www.mod.go.jp/msdf/navcol/assets/pdf/column178_01.pdf)

emphasizes multilateral relations, but still maintains a high level of interest." Additionally, for overseas perspectives on Germany's policy, Coby Goldberg, a Researcher at The Center for a New American Security Asia-Pacific Security Program, wrote the article,<sup>52</sup> and states that while "The German policy might be an important first step in a European rethink on China...it is a notably cautious one," and points out that "German strategic thinking appears meek" as "this indicates both the possibility of a gradual bolstering of regional relationships, and a need for Germany to grow bolder in its approach to China." Germany's approach to China, of paying close attention to both of these possibilities, is also being discussed from the perspective of its similarities with India and ASEAN or with South Korea's stance towards China.

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs released its document, the "Indo-Pacific: Guidelines for Strengthening Cooperation between the Netherlands and EU with Asian Partners," but it was only recently announced, and presently there is only a Dutch language version, so there have not yet been any analyses in Japanese of it (As of December 2020, when the Japanese version of this article was announced).<sup>53</sup> However, as far as the author can tell, its composition, similar to the document from Germany, is a statement of strengthening relations between the Indo-Pacific region, its own country, and the EU, and appears to be fundamentally focused on economic cooperation. It also includes a number of keywords in the FOIP philosophy, such as a "rules-based international order," and, additionally, although China's movements in the South China Sea are mentioned, it is not in the form of criticizing China by name, such as in the United States IPSR. However, as with the German document, it can be seen that the overall tone reflects European countries' changes in attitude towards China, as well as that peace, stability, and economic prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region require the active involvement of Europe, a foreign power, and for that reason it is considered to be in line with the documents from France and Germany in that it emphasizes the importance of building an international cooperation system.

The above is an overview of the policy documents from the three countries that explicitly use the phrase "Indo-Pacific," and although there are some slight differences in tone and nuance from other relevant countries, their active support, in the form of references in existing documents such as defense white papers and via statements at summits, for the FOIP promoted by Japan and the United States is as described in the aforementioned list from the Diplomatic Bluebook.

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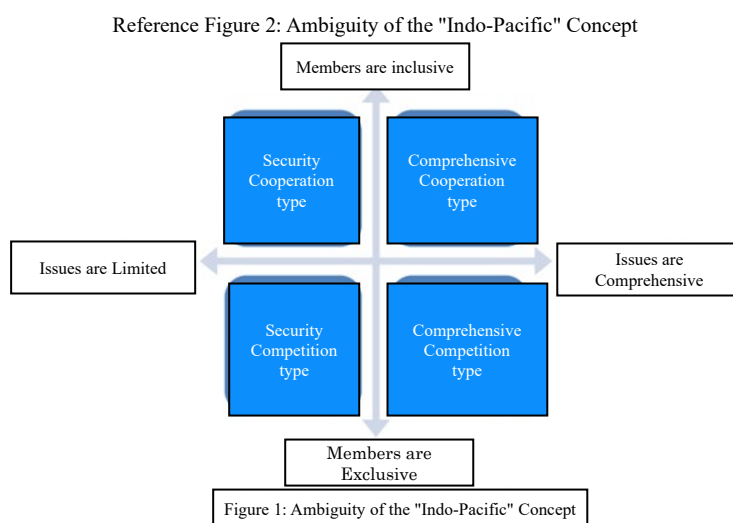
<sup>52</sup> Coby Goldberg, "Germany's Indo-Pacific Vision: A New Reckoning With China or More Strategic Drift?" *The Diplomat*, September 15, 2020.  
<https://thediplomat.com/2020/09/germanys-indo-pacific-vision-a-new-reckoning-with-china-or-more-strategic-drift/>

<sup>53</sup> Overseas there is the following analysis, but its view is similar to that of the author. Sebastian Strangio, "Following France and Germany, the Netherlands Pivots to the Indo-Pacific-The new Dutch policy could foreshadow a joint European policy toward the strategically vital region."  
<https://thediplomat.com/2020/11/following-france-and-germany-the-netherlands-pivots-to-the-indo-pacific/>

#### 4. Recent Trends and Future Prospects Regarding FOIP

As previously mentioned, the recent chronology surrounding FOIP and the "Indo-Pacific policies" of relevant countries, particularly for the Quad framework that includes the United States, or for the broader framework of the EAS in which China also participates, emphasizes the AOIP advocated for by ASEAN, or, considering the current situation of showing a stance of "emphasise the importance" or "pay attention" to the issue, one way of looking at it is as follows.

First, as shown at the beginning of Section 1, the major direction of FOIP is shifting from the Quad-centered one that was initially envisioned to a form that aims for broader multilateral cooperation, and this is exactly what is being embodied as actual policies in relevant countries (this is not to say that the Quad, which is the engine, has lost its importance). With ASEAN, as an actor in that process, and "ASEAN centrality," as a device for that, playing an important role, the points of "Comprehensiveness of Issue Area" and "Inclusiveness of Membership" will be revisited as they are particularly important keywords in this regard. In the treatise by Nakamura, which was mentioned in the introduction, the classification for these two axes is discussed as follows.



Nagafumi Nakamura, "The Merits and Demerits of Ambiguity in the Term 'Indo-Pacific': From the Perspective of Political Science," Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Command and Staff College Review Vol. 9, No. 2 (December 2019), pp. 32.

The translation is by the author.

Nakamura pointed out that "Opinions on the Indo-Pacific Concept are divided over the 'Comprehensiveness of Issue Area,' that is, whether it is primarily used in the context of traditional security, or whether it is used in contexts that include economic and non-traditional security. Additionally, there are also differences of opinion on 'Inclusiveness of Membership,' that is, whether it is used to restrain a rising China, or whether it is used for cooperation, including with China,"<sup>54</sup> and

<sup>54</sup> Nakamura, "The Merits and Demerits of Ambiguity in the Term 'Indo-Pacific': From the Perspective of Political Science," pp. 31-32.

presented the conceptual diagram that is shown in Reference Figure 2. Here, Nakamura tries to classify Indo-Pacific policies into four types according to these two axes: "Comprehensive Cooperation (upper right)," "Security Cooperation (upper left)," "Comprehensive Competition (lower right)," and "Security Competition (lower left)," and this image is quite significant in concretely considering aspects of the original dual structure of FOIP's "cooperative strategy to rearise competitive strategy" that has been repeatedly discussed. Of course, this classification is convenient, as Nakamura himself states, but if one tries to position the countries involved with FOIP on this chart then there are a variety of cases that can be expected, such as a country that straddles multiple areas, the chart's center of gravity changing depending on the time, or a country having different purposes depending on the country they are cooperating with. For example, Nakamura explains that "Japan tends to emphasize comprehensive competition and security competition aspects for countries that recognize the need for restraint against China, and tends to emphasize comprehensive cooperation aspects for countries that are wary of it," and, from the point of view of the inherent duality of FOIP that has been discussed so far, this can largely be agreed with.

Based on this classification, the author believes that, as described in this paper, the recent composition of the relationship between FOIP, which is promoted by Japan and the United States, and the "Indo-Pacific policies" of relevant actors, such as ASEAN, can be explained as follows. In other words, as the former Abe administration's original ideas can be seen in the "Security Diamond Concept," the Japanese government has not brought this ("security competition") to the forefront,<sup>55</sup> even if FOIP seems to have the character of a strategy against China, which is a point discussed in the author's previous article, "Transition and Development of FOIP." Rather, when it comes to "Comprehensiveness of Issue Area," it is self-evident that the "comprehensive" type of FOIP is basically oriented from FOIP's background as a proposal at TICAD, which discussed economic cooperation, and from the so-called "three-pillars" composition of putting that economic cooperation into practice, and, for "Inclusiveness of Membership" as well, former Prime Minister Abe, in the FOIP-related section of his policy statement at the 196th Diet, stated that "In this broad direction, we will also work with China,"<sup>56</sup> so it is well known that the Japanese government is officially aiming for a "cooperative" type of FOIP regardless of the "real intentions" part. Amidst such circumstances, there is a point of debate as to whether or not there is a discrepancy between the FOIP promoted by Japan and the FOIP promoted by the United States, which takes a confrontational stance towards China (Nakamura's treatise describes the response under the Trump administration as "comprehensive competition"). As was mentioned earlier in quoting Takagi's treatise on the point, given that from the beginning "there were two different ways of thinking about the US-China conflict within the US

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<sup>55</sup> Aizawa, "Philosophy and Practice of FOIP," p. 6.

<sup>56</sup> Prime Minister's Office website, "Prime Minister Abe's Policy Statement at the 196th Diet," January 22, 2018, [http://japan.kantei.go.jp/98\\_abe/statement/201801/00002.html](http://japan.kantei.go.jp/98_abe/statement/201801/00002.html)



government" when it came to FOIP, it can be said that the recent trend of emphasizing ASEAN reflects the insistence of policy makers who "try to stay in the framework of multilateral diplomacy," so to speak, and that the United States' FOIP can be understood as having become more or less oriented towards "comprehensive cooperation."

In fact, this issue of "Inclusiveness of Membership" is not necessarily limited to ASEAN's claims, but is also common to the "Indo-Pacific policies" of the European countries outlined in the previous section. For example, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi also used the term "Indo-Pacific" in his keynote speech at the IISS (International Institute for Strategic Studies) Asian defense summit (the Shangri-La Dialogue) in June 2018, but it is reported that he showed an attitude of emphasizing its "inclusiveness," as if to avoid a direct confrontation with China, saying that "India does not see the Indo-Pacific Region as a strategy or as a club of limited members. Nor as a grouping that seeks to dominate. And by no means do we consider it as directed against any country."<sup>57</sup> As such, it is self-evident that if FOIP is to "shift to a wider range of multilateral cooperation" in the future, then it must pursue "Inclusiveness of Membership," and, in that sense, the author, as was mentioned in the previous section, considers it inevitable that the recent tendency to emphasize ASEAN in regards to FOIP, as well as the idea of "ASEAN centrality," that symbolizes its "inclusiveness," have become important keywords.

On the other hand, as a secondary issue that is contrary to this first perspective, it is necessary to pay sufficient attention to how China perceives these tendencies. China's perception of FOIP was discussed in the author's previous work, "Transition and Development of FOIP,"<sup>58</sup> and until the US IPSR was issued China primarily responded with a suppressed reaction, at least when being asked officially. Recently however, coupled with the intensifying conflict between the United States and China and in addition to inferring from the aforementioned EAS Chairman's Statement, Foreign Minister Wang Yi's "Indo-Pacific 'new NATO'" remarks on the Quad, and inferences about FOIP in the TICAD7 Leader's Declaration, there seems to be a particularly increasing sense of caution, about FOIP or the Quad framework and about the term "Indo-Pacific" itself.

As a foreign document that discusses from this point of view, there is the article by Prashanth Parameswaran who came out before,<sup>59</sup> wherein Parameswaran discusses how the Indo-Pacific concept was of particular interest at the 9th Beijing Xiangshan Forum in October 2019, and he reports that a variety of discussions have been held so far, including with Russia and countries involved in

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<sup>57</sup> Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Prime Minister's Keynote Address at Shangri La Dialogue, June 1, 2018  
<https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/29943/Prime+Ministers+Keynote+Address+at+Shangri+La+Dialogue+June+01+2018>

<sup>58</sup> Aizawa, "Transition and Development of FOIP," p. 21.

<sup>59</sup> Prashanth Parameswaran, "Indo-Pacific Conceptions in the Spotlight at China's Xiangshan Forum," *The Diplomat*, October 24, 2019.  
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FOIP. Unfortunately, in this article, he only reports that Chinese experts accused the United States IPSR of being a "military-led strategy" and that Chad Sbragia, the United States' Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for China, made counterarguments, with no concrete descriptions of how the Chinese side perceives the "Indo-Pacific concept." Nevertheless, the fact that such discussions took place at all, in a forum hosted by other than China itself, can be said to be an example of China's extraordinary interest in this matter.

The author's point of view on this matter is that China essentially regards FOIP as a "strategic challenge," continuing to be vigilant and restrained, but on the other hand, has skillfully seized the opportunity, as discussed in this paper, presented by the shift towards emphasizing "member inclusion," in the "Indo-Pacific policies" of relevant countries, which is symbolized by the emphasis on "ASEAN centrality." As the treatise by the RSIS's Benjamin Ho in the previous section points out, this raises the concern that it could eventually "privilege China and lead ASEAN member states towards a Sino-centric multilateral arrangement." And, in fact, this is the point that the author made in the introduction to this paper in paying attention to the proper names of the various "Indo-Pacific policies."

As mentioned above, amidst the "shift to a wider range of multilateral cooperation" in the major direction of "Indo-Pacific policies" from relevant nations, it is extremely rational to emphasize "member inclusion," and, in reality, the author believes that there is no other option unless one wants a full-scale confrontation with China. However, excessive emphasis on relations with China should never lead to abandoning the featured products concept "Rule of Law" from the "Indo-Pacific policies" of relevant countries, which is one of the particularly important ideas of FOIP, and in that sense as well, the series of episodes surrounding the wording of AOIP in the EAS Chairman's statement, mentioned at the beginning, is extremely important. That is to say, Prime Minister Suga's statement at the press conference in Indonesia that AOIP and FOIP have "a lot of essential commonalities" and that they "fully support AOIP," as well as inclusion of the word AOIP in the EAS Chairman's Statement, despite China's opposition, were both basically desirable, but in the process, changing the name of FOIP to something along similar to "a peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific," in consideration of relations with China<sup>60</sup>, as was briefly reported, meant "a different line," so the author understands why Chief Cabinet Secretary Kato and others were quick to deny this report. In the process of actually forming a common concept with the aim of "wider multilateral cooperation," it is possible that the terms used will change in a variety of ways, but, at the very least, the author believes that the "Featured products" related to FOIP's basic ideal of "Free and Open" should never be taken down lightly.

## 5. Conclusion

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<sup>60</sup> In fact, the term was used by US President-elect Biden, as mentioned at the end of Section 1 (See footnote 25).

## Recent Trends Regarding each actor's "Indo-Pacific Policy" and FOIP

This paper discussed the "Indo-Pacific policies" of various relevant countries, including the FOIP promoted by Japan and the United States, as well as ideas on what the proper names of these policies mean. The unexpected resignation of former Prime Minister Abe brought FOIP once again into the limelight, but, in the process, the author believes that some of the issues discussed so far have been sorted out. One of these is an approach that "aims for multilateral cooperation," and, specifically, it appears that the ASEAN-advanced basic principle of "comprehensiveness" emphasizing "cooperation" has become one point of consensus amongst the countries involved, including the United States. However, this is a completely different dimension from encouraging China to participate in a democratic international order, such as the "Rule of Law," which is the basic ideal of FOIP, and, since the emphasis is on "inclusiveness of membership," as mentioned in this paper, responses such as abandoning FOIP's "Featured products" ideal of "Free and Open" would be mistaking the means for the ends and should not be done. In this paper, the author's purpose, in giving an overview of the "Indo-Pacific policies" of relevant countries, was exactly this, to pay attention to the ideas meant by the proper names of these policies.

\*This article was originally written in Japanese and posted as “FROM THE OCEANS, Kaiyou Anzen Hosyō Jūhō Tokuhō [Maritime Security Special Intelligence Analysis Report]” on Ocean Policy Research Institute, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation website, December 24, 2020. Some descriptions have been updated.

Major overseas literature related to FOIP from April 2019 to September 2020 that was introduced in "FROM THE OCEANS"(Maritime Security Information Ten-Day Report of OPRI's website)

As with the author's previous article, "FOIP no hensen to tenkai[Transition and development of FOIP],"(in japanese) the literature discussed here is not limited to those that explicitly mention "Indo-Pacific," but also encompasses those that are considered to be closely related to this. Also, if the original article was not available to link, some links to the reprinted article.

Symbol Classification

F: FOIP or an explicit reference to the regional concept of "Indo-Pacific"

G: Broad discussion of the nature of FOIP (meaning 'General')

AS: Discussion on relations with ASEAN countries (South China Sea related items are classified under this symbol)

AU: Discussion of relations with Australia

CH: Discussion of Relations with China

EU: Discussion of relations with European countries

IN: Discussion of relations with India

IO: Discussion of relations with Indian Ocean coastal countries

JP: Discussion of relations with Japan

ME: Discussion of relations with Midde Eastern and African countries

OT: Discussions of other regions

PI: Discussion of relations with Pacific Island nations

QU: Discussion of the Quad (4-country framework of Japan, the United States, Australia, and India)

US: Discussion of relations with the United States

\*The application of classification symbols to each of the following articles is based on the author's own perspective.

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