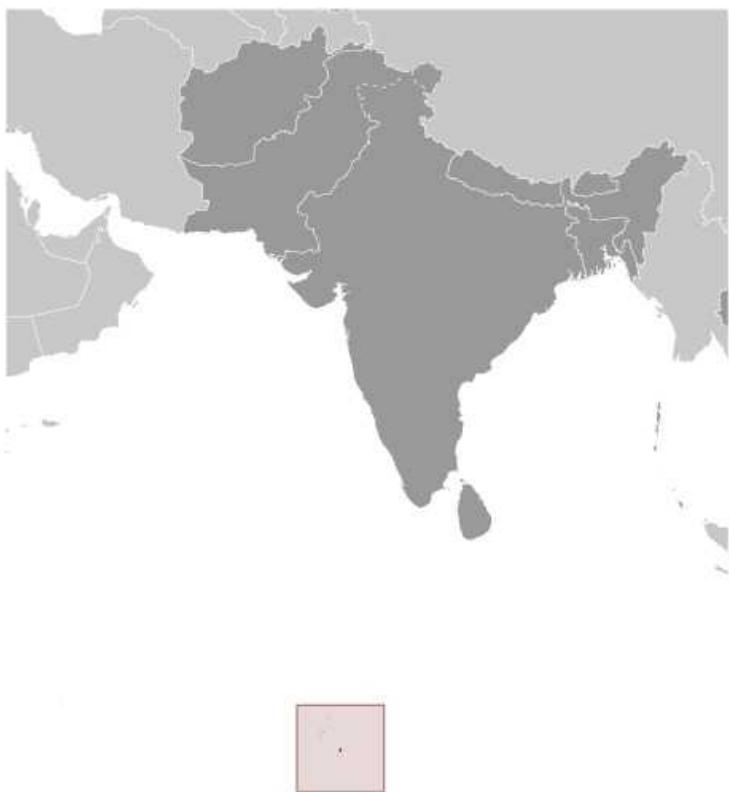




# British Indian Ocean Territory



**Background** Formerly administered as part of the British Crown Colony of Mauritius, the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) was established as an overseas territory of the UK in 1965. A number of the islands of the territory were later transferred to the Seychelles when it attained independence in 1976.

**Capital** name: administered from London; often regarded as being on Diego Garcia

**Area** total: 60 sq km

land: 60 sq km

water: 54,340 sq km

**Climate** tropical marine; hot, humid, moderated by trade winds

**Natural resources** coconuts, fish, sugarcane

**Executive branch** chief of state: King CHARLES III (since 8 September 2022)

head of government: Commissioner Nishi DHOLAKIA (since 16 December 2024); Administrator Bob FAIRWEATHER; note - both reside in the UK and are represented by Commander Andrew WILLIAMS, RN, Officer commanding British Forces on Diego Garcia (since January 2025)

**Economic overview** small island territory economy; economic activity mainly on Diego Garcia with national military installations; recently settled disputes with Mauritius have increased oil exports; established marine reserve has limited commercial fishing

**Exports - partners** Malta 42%, Brazil 11%, Switzerland 9%, France 8%, Egypt 6% (2022)

**Exports - commodities** ships, refined petroleum, asphalt, diamonds, jewelry (2022)

**Imports - partners** US 34%, Switzerland 13%, China 11%, Italy 11%, France 7% (2022)

**Imports - commodities** ships, refined petroleum, diamonds, aircraft, aluminum (2022)