

Mauritius, Seychelles to jointly manage Indian Ocean shelf

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View of a beach on Praslin island, Seychelles, on March 6. Mauritius and the Seychelles on Tuesday signed a pact to jointly manage a continental shelf in the Indian Ocean spanning 396,000 square kilometres in what was described as a pathbreaking accord.

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The pact came after the two island nations obtained conjoint rights on the Mascarene Islands continental shelf in March last year. The treaty was signed during a visit by Seychelles President James Michel.

"It's a world first in that it's the first time that two island nations have reached an agreement on managing the [continental shelf](#) without calling

a referee," said Joshua Brien, a Commonwealth official specialising in maritime frontiers.

The accord outlines the exploration and management of the seabed to pool out petrol and gas reserves and [mineral deposits](#) as well as [living organisms](#).

A second treaty concerns the management of marine resources.

The treaties were signed by Mauritius Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam in the presence of Commonwealth Deputy Secretary General Ransford Smith.

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