



Negotiations to Revive Black Sea Grain Deal

For Prelims: Negotiations to Revive [Black Sea Grain Deal](#), [United Nations \(UN\)](#), [Food Crises](#), [NATO \(North Atlantic Treaty Organization\)](#).

For Mains: Negotiations to Revive Black Sea Grain Deal.

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Why in News?

Recently, the Turkish President has met with the Russian President in order to revive [Black Sea Grain Deal](#), which Russia had withdrawn from in July 2023.



What is the Black Sea Grain Initiative?

▪ About:

- The Black Sea Grain initiative **endeavors to tackle escalating food prices emanating from supply chain disruptions** because of Russian actions in the world's 'breadbasket'.
- The deal brokered by the [United Nations \(UN\)](#) and **Turkey**, was signed in Istanbul in July, 2022.

- The Initiative specifically allows for commercial food and fertilizer (including ammonia) exports from three key Ukrainian ports in the Black Sea – **Odesa, Chornomorsk, Yuzhny/Pivdennyi.**
- **Objective:**
 - Initially stipulated for a period of 120 days, the deal was to provide for a **safe maritime humanitarian corridor for Ukrainian exports** (particularly for food grains).
 - The central idea was to calm markets by **ensuring an adequate supply of grains**, thereby limiting food price inflation.
- **Role of Joint Coordination Centre (JCC):**
 - The JCC was established **to monitor the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative.**
 - The JCC is hosted **in Istanbul and includes representatives from Russia, Türkiye, Ukraine and the UN.** The UN acts also as the Secretariat for the Centre.
 - All commercial ships are required to register directly with the JCC to ensure **appropriate monitoring, inspection and safe passage.** Inbound and outbound ships (to the designated corridor) transit as per a schedule accorded by the JCC post-inspection.
 - This is done so as to ensure there is no **unauthorised cargo or personnel onboard.**
 - Following this, they are allowed to **sail onwards to Ukrainian ports** for loading through the designated corridor.

What are the Reasons Behind Russia's Exit from the Grain Deal?

- Russia claims that the **promises made to it under the deal have not been met**, and it is still facing **trouble exporting its own agricultural products** and fertilisers because of the many sanctions the West has slapped on it.
- While there is no direct restriction on Russia's agricultural products, the country says barriers on payment platforms, insurance, shipping and other **logistics are hampering its exports.**
- Russia has also said that it had agreed to the grain deal in order to help ensure global food security, but Ukraine has since exported mainly to **high-and middle-income countries.**
- Russia cited the failure to uphold a parallel agreement that promised to remove obstacles to its exports of food and fertilizer as the reason for its withdrawal.
- Russia claimed that shipping and insurance restrictions hindered its agricultural trade, despite its record-breaking wheat exports in recent years.

What is Turkey's Stake at Brokering the Deal?

- Turkey has played a crucial role in attempting to reinstate the grain deal. It has consistently pledged to **renew arrangements that helped prevent [Food Crises](#)** in various parts of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.
- Both Ukraine and Russia are **significant suppliers of wheat, barley, sunflower oil**, and other essential goods for developing nations.
- Turkey's close ties with Putin during the 18-month Ukraine conflict have positioned it as a **vital trading partner and logistical hub for Russia's international trade.**
- Despite its **[NATO \(North Atlantic Treaty Organization\)](#)** membership, Turkey has refrained **from imposing Western sanctions on Russia** following its invasion of Ukraine, highlighting its unique diplomatic position.

Why is the Black Sea Grain Initiative Important?

- Ukraine is **among the largest exporters of wheat, maize, rapeseed**, sunflower seeds and sunflower oil, globally.
 - Its access to the deep-sea ports in the Black Sea enables it to **directly approach Russia and Europe along with grain importers** from the Middle East and North Africa.
- The initiative has also been **credited for having made a huge difference to the global cost of living crisis.**
 - This agreement facilitated the safe export of nearly 33 million metric tons (36 million tons)

of grain and other commodities **from three Ukrainian ports despite [Russia's Ongoing War](#)**.

- People hoarding the grain in the hope of selling it for a sizable profit owing to the supply crunch were now obligated to sell.
- Although the initiative alone cannot address global hunger, it can avert the **chances of the global food crisis spiralling** further, especially when the region is yet to scale prior year levels.

How are Russia, Ukraine Grain Exports Faring Amid the War?

- **Russia is consolidating its position as the world's top wheat exporter**, even as Ukraine's shipments are projected to more than halve from their peak and production plunge to a 11-year-low.
- The primary destinations for Russian wheat are the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia, led by Egypt, Iran and Algeria.
 - While the Black Sea Grain Initiative helped Ukraine export 16.8 million tonnes in 2022-23, about 39% of its wheat actually moved via the land route to Eastern Europe.
- Ukraine's markets have **shifted dramatically from Asia and North Africa before the war to mainly Europe**, mostly due to ease of shipment.
 - In fact, glut of Ukrainian grain has led to protests from farmers in some Eastern European countries, who said the **price of their produce had crashed**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year's Question (PYQs)

Q. Consider the following countries: (2023)

1. Bulgaria
2. Czech Republic
3. Hungary
4. Latvia
5. Lithuania
6. Romania

How many of the above-mentioned countries share a land border with Ukraine?

- (a) Only two
- (b) Only three
- (c) Only four
- (d) Only five

Ans: (a)

- **As per the map given below, only Hungary and Romania share their land borders with Ukraine.**



▪ Hence, option A is correct.

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