

Black Sea Grain Initiative Joint Coordination Centre

Frequently Asked Questions

5 August 2022

What is the Black Sea Grain Initiative?

The Black Sea Grain Initiative was launched in Istanbul by the Russian Federation, Türkiye, Ukraine and United Nations on 22 July 2022. Through this initiative, a mechanism was established for the safe transportation of grain, related foodstuffs and fertilizer, including ammonia, from designated Ukrainian ports to global markets.

The purpose of the Initiative is to contribute to the prevention of global hunger, to reduce and address global food insecurity, and to ensure the safety of merchant ships delivering grain and foodstuffs.

To facilitate the implementation of their Initiative, a Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) was set up in Istanbul on 27 July 2022, under the auspices of the United Nations, comprised of senior representatives of Türkiye, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and the United Nations.

How much grain do you anticipate will reach world markets?

The initial agreement runs for 120 days starting from 22 July. When the Initiative is fully up and running we estimate the export capacity of the three ports covered by the agreement could reach well over 2 million metric tons, up to 5 million per month.

Does the food reach hunger-affected regions of the world?

Crops from Ukraine are sold around the world. Some of the food exported under the Initiative will go to countries experiencing food insecurity. Any shipment purchased by the World Food Programme will go directly to people in need. Exports to any country, however, can help to calm markets and limit food price inflation.

What is the role of the Joint Coordination Centre?

The Joint Coordination Centre's responsibility is to ensure the safe passage of commercial vessels carrying grain, foodstuffs and fertilizers, including ammonia, in and out of three Ukrainian ports - Odesa, Chornomorsk and Yuzhny (Pivdennyi).

The JCC will monitor the movement of commercial vessels to ensure compliance with the procedures communicated to the vessels. The JCC is also responsible for inspections of inbound and outbound vessels to ensure that there is not unauthorized cargo or crew. The JCC will also publicly report on shipments and movements of ships facilitated under the Initiative.

How is inspection carried out?

A joint inspection team from Türkiye, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and the United Nations conducts inspections on behalf of the Joint Coordination Centre on board the vessel to check that cargo and crew is consistent with information that the JCC received and in line with the Initiative.

Will the JCC facilitate the movement of ships carrying other commodities?

The JCC only focuses on the export of food coming from Ukraine from the three Ukrainian ports. It does not facilitate exports of non-food items not included in the Initiative.

Who is in the Joint Coordination Centre?

The Joint Coordination Centre is based in Istanbul and it consists of senior representatives from Türkiye, Russia, Ukraine and the United Nations. Türkiye is the host of the JCC and facilitates along with the UN discussions in the JCC. The UN serves as secretariat.

How does the humanitarian maritime corridor operate?

The Joint Coordination Centre has agreed to a route through the Black Sea that receives the protections of the Initiative. The maritime humanitarian corridor is 111 nautical miles long and 3 nautical miles wide. Vessels authorised to move in the corridor by the JCC are required to remain in the corridor or in defined holding areas off the Ukrainian and Turkish coastlines.

Shipping will be monitored by the JCC using terrestrial and satellite means. Through public navigational announcements, other shipping in the area have been informed of the establishment of the maritime humanitarian corridor.

Who decides on movements of vessels?

The shipping companies decide on the movement of their vessels based on commercial activity and procedures. The Joint Coordination Centre in Istanbul authorizes the movement of vessels in and out of the Black Sea based on the requests it receives from the Ukrainian port authorities.

Who is protecting the commercial vessels moving in/out of the Black Sea?

The JCC shipping procedures will include the security arrangements for the safe passage of commercial vessels and other civilian vessels engaged in the initiative, including for emergency and medical response. The JCC is responsible for monitoring and tracking the vessel's route from the three Ukrainian ports to Istanbul anchorage area and back and is responsible to address any incidents that may occur.

How does insurance work?

This is a matter for the shipping company to arrange. The JCC does not inspect or evaluate ships for compliance with international regulatory obligations, including the requirements for insurance under various international treaties. The JCC is only tasked with confirming the absence of prohibited cargoes or persons aboard vessels transiting the maritime humanitarian corridor.

Is there a fee for the facilitation of the JCC monitoring arrangements?

There is no fee incurred to the shipping companies for the facilitation of their movements under the purview of the JCC.