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# TODAY'S ANALYSIS

## (11 July 2024)

### TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- INDIA TO RATIFY UN HIGH SEAS TREATY
- ORDER OF THE SAINT ANDREW THE APOSTLE
- MCQs



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## INDIA TO RATIFY UN HIGH SEAS TREATY

The Indian government on Monday said it **would soon sign and ratify the High Seas Treaty**, a new international legal architecture for **maintaining the ecological health of the oceans**.

The treaty, negotiated last year, **is meant for reducing pollution**, and **for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity** and other marine resources in ocean waters.

### WHAT ARE HIGH SEAS?

High seas are areas **outside the national jurisdiction of any country** because of which the treaty is also known as the agreement on **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions (BBNJ)**. It is formally called the **Agreement on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction**.

India, like most other nations, **was a party to the nearly 15 years of negotiation** that resulted in the finalisation of the treaty last year. As such, the decision to sign and ratify the treaty is not unexpected.

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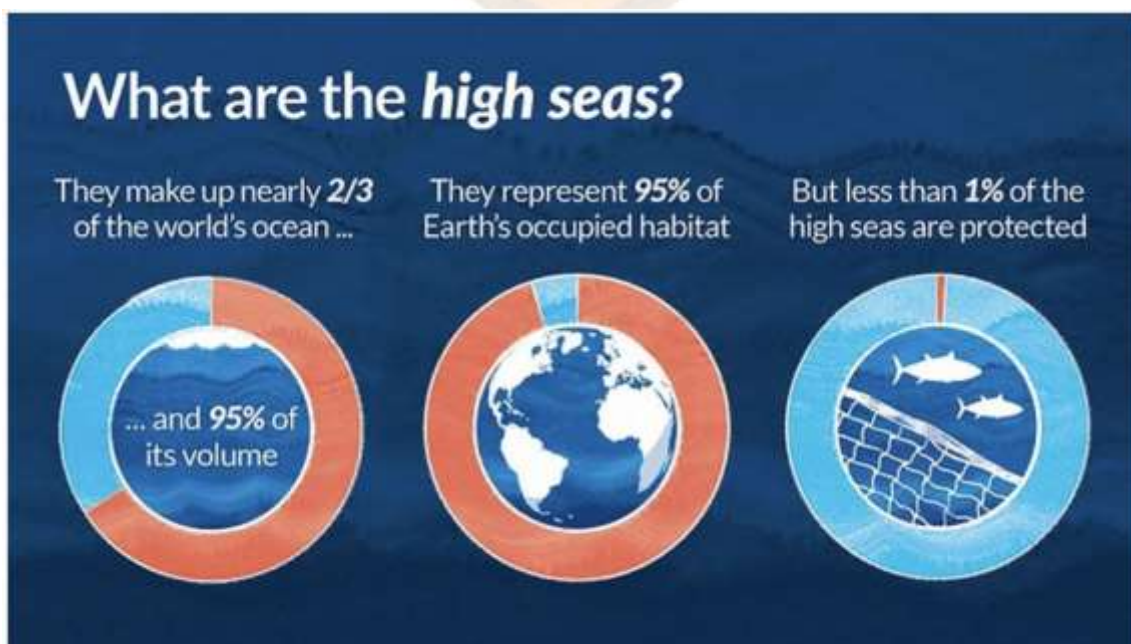


## HOW MANY COUNTRIES HAVE SIGNED THE TREATY?

**91 countries** have already signed the treaty, while eight of them have also ratified it.

## UN HIGH SEAS TREATY

- **91 nations signed the document**, officially known as the **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Treaty**, after agreeing to its terms in March, 2023 following roughly **15 years of discussion**.
- The treaty is meant “**to prevent a cascading of species extinctions**” brought on by **overfishing, oil extraction, deep-sea mining and other activities** with environmental impacts that occur in the high seas.



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## ABOUT THE TREATY

- It is the **first-ever treaty to protect the world's oceans that lie outside National boundaries.**
- It is also known as the **'Paris Agreement for the Ocean.'**
- It is a **legally binding treaty** that aims at **protecting, caring for, and ensuring the responsible use of the marine environment**, maintaining the **integrity of ocean ecosystems, and conserving** the inherent value of **marine biological diversity.**
- The treaty is **built on the legacy of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**, which is the **last international agreement on ocean protection**, signed 40 years ago in 1982. UNCLOS established an area called the **high seas.**

## HIGHLIGHTS

- It **aims to place 30% of the seas into protected areas by 2030**(a pledge made by countries at the UN biodiversity conference in 2022).
- It will **provide a legal framework for establishing vast marine protected areas (MPAs)** to protect against the loss of wildlife and share out the genetic resources of the high seas.

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- It also **covers environmental assessments to evaluate the potential damage** of commercial activities, such as deep-sea mining.
- The treaty **aims at strengthening resilience and contains provisions based on the polluter-pays principle** as well as mechanisms for disputes.
- The treaty **offers guidance**, including through an integrated approach to ocean management that builds ecosystem resilience **to tackle the adverse effects of climate change and ocean acidification**, and maintains and **restores ecosystem integrity**, including carbon cycling services.
- Treaty provisions also **recognize the rights and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples** and local communities, the **freedom of scientific research**, and need for the **fair and equitable sharing of benefits**.
- The treaty also **considers the special circumstances facing small-island and landlocked developing nations**.
- It **will establish a conference of the parties (CoP)** that will meet periodically and **enable member states to be held to account on issues** such as governance and biodiversity.
- The treaty **also includes a pledge by signatories to share ocean resources**.

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## NEED FOR THE UN HIGH SEAS TREATY

- **Ocean and biodiversity**

- The high seas comprise 64 per cent of the ocean surface, and about 43 per cent of the Earth.
- These areas are home to about 2.2 million marine species and up to a trillion different kinds of microorganisms.

- **Ocean and global climate**

- Oceans are an integral part of the global climate cycle, and perform a range of ecological services including absorption of carbon dioxide and Excess heat.
- Hence, this treaty is being considered as a landmark in the efforts to keep the planet habitable.

- **Unregulated human activities**

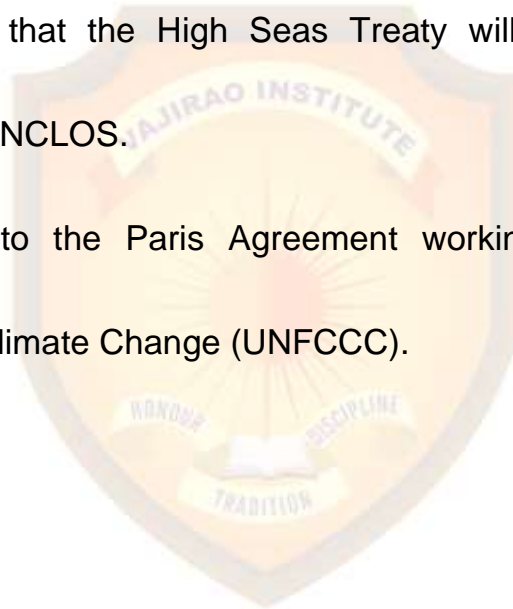
- Climate change is already influencing, and is being influenced by, ocean systems, and is exacerbating the pressures on marine biodiversity from unregulated human activities.
- It is these specific challenges — a combination of climate change, biodiversity, and pollution — that the High Seas Treaty seeks to address.

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- **UNCLOS and concerns regarding the biodiversity**

- Though UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) asks countries to protect the ocean ecology and conserve its resources, it does not provide the specific mechanisms or processes to do so.
- Hence, it is believed that the High Seas Treaty will work as an implementation agreement under the UNCLOS.
  - This is similar to the Paris Agreement working under the UN framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).



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## ORDER OF THE SAINT ANDREW THE APOSTLE

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** was on Tuesday awarded **Russia's highest civilian honour, the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle**, during his visit to the country.



The award for the **PM** was announced in 2019, for “**exceptional services in promoting special & privileged strategic partnership between Russia and India and friendly relations between the Russian and Indian peoples.**”

### WHAT IS THE AWARD & WHO GETS IT?

The award is **given to prominent government and public figures, military leaders, and outstanding representatives of science, culture, art, and various sectors of The economy for exceptional services to russia.**

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## CAN IT BE AWARDED TO FOREIGN NATIONALS OR ITS AN EXCEPTION?

It can also be awarded to heads of foreign states for outstanding services to the Russian federation.

## WHO WAS SAINT ANDREW?

Its name comes from **Saint Andrew**, who is believed to be **one of the apostles or 12 original followers of Jesus**.

After Christ's crucifixion, the apostles are said to have travelled great distances to spread his message. **Saint Andrew** travelled to **Russia, Greece, and other Places in Europe and Asia**, and founded the **Church of Constantinople**, which later led to the establishment of the Russian Orthodox Church.

**More than 90 million people** follow the Church in Russia, **out of** the country's population of around **140 million**.

## THE SCOTLAND CONNECTION

**Saint Andrew** is regarded as the **patron saint of Russia and Scotland**.



The '**X**' symbol on the flag of Scotland comes from **the saint's symbol**, called the '**Saltire**'.

**It is believed that he was crucified on a cross of a similar shape.**

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## WHO ESTABLISHED THIS AWARD?

**Tsar Peter the Great (1672–1725)** established the **Order of Saint Andrew** in **1698**. The chain of the Order consists of **17 alternating links**, and features a **gilded image of the State Emblem of the Russian Federation, a double-headed eagle**. It also includes a **badge, a star, and a light blue silk moire ribbon**. For those recognised for **distinction in combat**, the **badge and star are adorned with swords**.

The order was **abolished in 1918** following the Russian Revolution, which overthrew the Tsarist regime. It was **re-established in 1998** by an Executive Order of the President of Russia.

## NOTED RECIPIENTS

Past recipients largely include influential figures in Russia, such as:

- Military engineer and gun designer Mikhail Kalashnikov,
- Author Sergey Mikhalkov,
- The Last Leader of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev,
- Russian Orthodox Church leader Patriarch Alexy II, and
- The current head of the Russian Orthodox Church Patriarch Kirill.

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## FOREIGN RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARD:

- Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2017, and
- The former President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev.
- President of Azerbaijan, Heyder Aliyev

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**15 Civilian Honours From Across the Globe**

**2023**

- Greece's Grand Cross of the Order of Honour
- France's Grand Cross of the Legion
- Egypt's Order of the Nile
- Republic of Palau's Ebakl Award
- Papua New Guinea's Order of Logohu
- Fiji's Order of Fiji

**2021**

- Bhutan's Order of the Druk Gyalpo

**2020**

- US Government's Legion of Merit

**2016**

- Afghanistan's State Order of Ghazi Amir Amanullah Khan
- Saudi Arabia's Order of King Abdulaziz

**2018**

- Palestine's Grand Collar of the State of Palestine

**2019**

- Bahrain's King Hamad Order of the Renaissance
- Maldives' Order of Nishan Izzuddin
- Russia's Order of St Andrew the Apostle
- UAE's Order of Zayed Award

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## MCQs

1. Consider the following statements and mark the correct one:
1. The UN High Seas Treaty aims at ecological conservation of high seas.
  2. High seas are beyond the Exclusive Economic Zones of the Countries.
- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 & 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2



**Ans. (C)**

2. Consider the following statements and mark **how many** of them are correct:
1. The UN High seas treaty is the first treaty for the high seas.
  2. More than 100 countries have signed the treaty in 2023.
  3. The UN High Seas Treaty is legally binding.
- (A) Only 1 statement is correct  
(B) Only two statements are correct  
(C) All the statements are correct  
(D) None of the statements are correct

**Ans. (B)**

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3. Which of the following are provisions of The UN High Seas Treaty?
1. It aims to place 30% of the seas into protected areas immediately.
  2. It is based on the "Polluter Pays Principle".
  3. It aims at equitable distribution of resources.
  4. It bans fishing in the high seas.
- (A) Only 1,2 & 3  
(B) Only 2 & 3  
(C) 2,3 & 4  
(D) All of the above



**Ans. (B)**

4. Which of the following statements is/are true wrt the Order of St. Andrews the apostle?
1. It is russia's highest civilian honour.
  2. Narendra Modi is the second foreign dignitary to receive this award after Xi Jinping.
- (A) Only 1  
(B) Only 2  
(C) Both 1 & 2  
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans. (A)**

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5. Which of the following statements is correct about Order of the Saint Andrews the Apostle?

- (A) It was initiated in 1872 by Tsar Peter the Great.
- (B) It was initiated in 1898 and has continued since then.
- (C) It was initiated in 1998 by the President of Russian by an executive order.
- (D) None of the above.

**Ans. (D)**



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