



Israeli NGOs Call for Determination in Israel's Climate Policy

The State of Israel is at a crossroads. It can either step up and present itself as a model for resource preservation – in particular in regards to energy, land and water conservation – and export creative and pioneering technologies to help the world deal with the climate crisis. Or it could carry on with its business as usual approach and continue to shift the growing environmental burden onto the private sector and general public.

The *Paths to Sustainability* Coalition of Israeli environmental NGOs calls upon the government of Israel to formulate a comprehensive, ambitious and bold climate policy and to allocate the resources necessary for its implementation. Israel must set clear and substantial greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets, on par with the standards of developed countries of the world, and in accordance with Israel's level of economic development.

Recent studies estimate Israel's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will double by 2030, as opposed to the norm of reduction targets set by developed countries and to the progress made in negotiations toward a new international climate agreement. We believe that a "business as usual" policy and inaction on climate issues is morally wrong, fiscally foolish, and will not be accepted by the global community.

A new international climate agreement is expected to have extensive impacts on global economic systems. Substantial growth in Israel's GHG emissions will have negative impacts on the country's export industries and their ability to compete in global markets, and could cause severe financial damage. However, unique opportunities for economic growth will arise from engaging in the international efforts to reduce GHG emissions and address the climate crisis.

Israeli environmental NGOs demand that the government reevaluate Israel's emission reduction potential by exploring the effects of behavioral changes as well as technological means, and implement policies to encourage and promote these changes, specifically regarding energy efficiency measures and transportation issues. Israel must allocate appropriate budgets to attain these goals as soon as possible.

The preparatory work undertaken thus far will not suffice and we call upon the Israeli government to develop an advanced climate policy, based on principles of socially and environmentally sustainable development. Public participation must be ensured throughout this process.

Israel's environmental NGOs will provide substantial public support for the implementation of advanced climate policy measures, which will require commitment and political daring. We will continue to assist, cooperate and contribute our knowledge, time and resources towards the genuine and appropriate preparation of the State of Israel to the climate crisis.

Key Actions for an Israeli GHG Reduction Policy:

Energy



A comprehensive and detailed plan is necessary for the Israeli energy economy, which is based on burning fossil fuels, to prepare it for the era of GHG emission reductions.

First and foremost, the plan to construct a new coal power plant must be stopped immediately, since this would increase Israel's emissions by some 10%.

A national energy efficiency plan must be devised and implemented, utilizing public funding to overcome market failures. This plan should support energy conservation in building and construction.

The introduction of **renewable energy** sources must be accelerated by removing barriers and implementing a comprehensive action plan.

Transport



Israel's transport system is characterized by great dependency on the private car. Therefore, an essential change to Israel's transportation policy is required.

Such policy measures would bring about **mass transit systems**, generate **new technology to improve public transportation**, and encourage **bicycling and walking**, as alternatives to the private car.

Also necessary is the introduction of **incentives and economic tools** for transportation management, including budgeting of infrastructure initiatives.

Construction of new roads must be limited, while light railways, public transportation lanes and bicycle lanes should be developed.

Water



The growing water shortage in our region is expected to exacerbate due to climate change. This would increase water distribution inequalities and **amplify the tension and instability in the region**. Therefore, Israel must promote **regional management and fair distribution of water resources**.

Desalination is costly and generates further GHG emissions, and must only be used as a last resort. **The reduction of water consumption in all sectors** will have an important role in adaptation measures in Israel and throughout the world.

Israel can use its experience and reputation as a world leader on **efficient water use in agriculture**.

Waste



Waste separation systems must be established, including **treatment of organic waste** for the production of compost and biogas.

A packaging law must be promoted to manage packaging waste treatment and recycling.

Building



A comprehensive **Green Building Standard** must be adopted and used in the construction of new public buildings, which will serve as demonstration sites. **Retrofitting** of existing buildings should be encouraged and incentivized.

Open Spaces



Israel must adhere to principles of planning that support **concentrated development**, advancing policies of condensed building in cities alongside preservation of open spaces.

Paths to Sustainability Coalition

The *Paths to Sustainability* Coalition promotes national policies that address the climate crisis and its impacts and issues of sustainable development. The coalition, comprised of dozens of environmental NGOs, has been active since 2002. It publishes professional reports critiquing government policy on environmental issues; lobbies in the *Knesset* and vis-à-vis governmental factors; and participates in relevant national and international fora.