



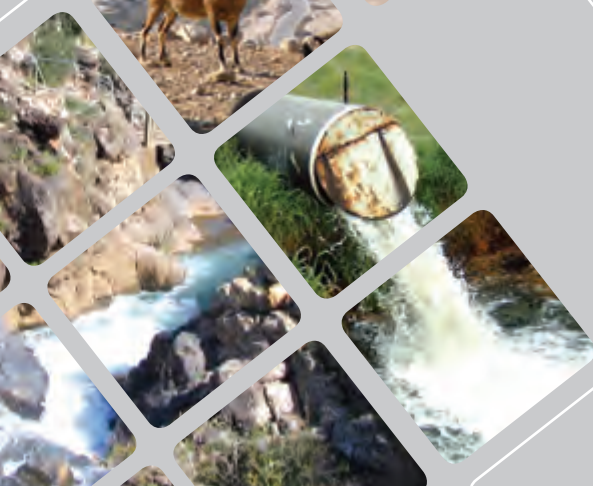
State of Israel



Ministry of Environmental Protection

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN ISRAEL INDICATORS, DATA AND TRENDS

2010



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Office of the Chief Scientist

**State of the Environment
in Israel
Indicators, Data and Trends**

2010

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Foreword by the Minister of Environmental Protection

Environmental issues have long become central elements in the public discourse. The public in Israel is becoming more aware and conscious of its surrounding environment. The impact of the state of the environment on human health, quality of life and economic status is now clear and unequivocal. Questions relating to the state of the environment and the actions taken by the different authorities, foremost among them the Ministry of Environmental Protection, to promote a better environment are frequently placed on the public agenda and discussed by the media. The public seeks reliable and updated information which is based on scientific and comparative data on the state of environmental resources: land, air, water, sea and biodiversity.

Transparency, openness and accessibility of information are foundation stones in the trust I would like to create between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the public in Israel. It is for this reason that I especially welcome this report which provides a comprehensive picture of the state of the environment in Israel and describes the quality of environmental resources, the processes of pollution and the means of treating the wastes produced by human activity.

This objective picture is presented by means of selected, clear indicators which include multi-annual data on different subjects that highlight trends and developments over time. In addition, the report provides the reader with comparative data for other countries. This information constitutes an accessible database for the general public and a reliable tool for effective decision making while promoting public discussion on the different issues.

This is a first of its kind report to be published in Israel in terms of the scope of its data, in line with advanced international standards on state of the environment reporting. It was prepared with the full cooperation of government ministries and the best experts in each field. It is our intention to continue to update this report with new indicators and data based on an ongoing process of study and consultation with a wide gamut of professionals.

I would like to express my thanks to all those who contributed to the preparation of this important document.

MK Gilad Erdan

Minister of Environmental Protection

Introduction by the Director General

This is the way of righteous people and people of good deeds, who love peace, rejoice in the good of humankind, and bring them close to the Torah, that nothing, not even a grain of mustard should be lost to the world, that they should grieve over any loss or destruction that they see, and if they can act to save anything from destruction, they will use all their might to do so."

(Sefer Hachinuch on Deuteronomy 20:19)

Sometimes we do not see the forest for the trees.

Environmental action and environmental management touch on every aspect of life, encompassing a multitude of subjects and fields. Similarly pollution takes a toll on the productivity of natural resources, on our health and well-being.

It is difficult to see the full picture and to assess the state of the environment. Are we moving in the right direction? Are our efforts bearing fruit? Is our system of stick and carrot – environmental enforcement on the one hand and incentives on the other hand – improving the state of our environment?

This report strives to provide some of the answers to these questions by relating to an unprecedented large number of indicators, most of them environmental, some of them economic and social. A review of these indicators provides a wide range of information about the state of the environment in Israel in such areas as waste recycling rates, water source quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and much more.

From the perspective of the Ministry of Environmental Protection, this document helps to outline trends in the state of the environment, the state of pollution and the state of environmental management. These trends can and must help define focus areas and priorities for the Ministry which will be reflected in annual and multi-annual work plans.

I would like to thank the editors of this publication for investing so much effort in its preparation and to express my gratitude to the many other contributors, both within and outside the Ministry, who provided information, comments and constructive criticism.

Att. Alona Sheaffer (Karo)

Director General, Ministry of Environmental Protection

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