

# CLIMATE CHANGE LEGISLATION IN ISRAEL

*AN EXCERPT FROM*

## **The 2015 Global Climate Legislation Study** **A Review of Climate Change Legislation in 99 Countries**



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# Israel

## Legislative Process

Israel is a parliamentary unicameral democracy. The legislative body is called the Knesset and has 120 members who are elected in general elections every four years – although few governments have reached the four-year limit – since 2003 there have been four elections, and the next election took place in March 2015.

Legislation can be initiated by a single member of the Knesset, a group of Knesset members (these would be called private bills), by a Knesset committee, or by the government. A bill requires three readings to pass. After the first reading, it is referred to a committee for preparation for the second reading. The committee may propose amendments as long as they do not diverge from the subject of the bill. The voting on second reading is performed article by article. At this stage the bill may be returned to the Committee, to draft any reservations adopted in second reading, or be put immediately to the vote in third reading. Until the bill is adopted in third reading, the government is entitled to withdraw it.

If a bill has been approved to be placed on the Knesset agenda, it is usually done at least 45 days before it is brought to the plenum for preliminary reading. The plenum can remove it from its agenda, or refer it to a committee, for preparation for first reading. During first reading, the legislative process is similar to that of a government bill. A private members' bill can be withdrawn until the end of the deliberation in the Committee, after the first reading. Since July 2002, any bill whose annual budgetary cost is over ILS5 million (USD1.3 million), and is not supported by the government, can only be adopted with the votes of at least 50 Members of the Knesset, at every stage of the legislation.

## Approach to Climate Change

Israel faces a number of challenges that require clear and robust energy and climate policies – including an average population growth rate of 1.8% per year (2000-2010), soaring energy demand and high emissions per capita (despite negligible total emissions). It is also an arid, coastal country exposed to climate-related risks, mainly water shortages and sea level rise. Regulatory developments in the last few years have been informed by both international and domestic processes, including the process of joining the OECD (completed in 2010), under which Israel was required to undertake various environmental commitments.

Israel is a non-annex-I signatory to the Kyoto protocol, having ratified the protocol in 2004. At COP 15 in Copenhagen in 2009, President Shimon Peres declared that Israel would do its utmost to reduce the amount of GHG emissions

by 20% by 2020, compared to a business-as-usual scenario – a reduction of about 21 MT CO<sub>2</sub>. The commitment led to the formulation of a National Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigation Plan in 2010. An inter-ministerial committee, headed by the director general of the Ministry of Finance, formulated a plan that included various measures in energy efficiency, green building and transportation, relying heavily on the draft national plan for energy efficiency produced by the Ministry of Energy and Water. Policy measures concerning energy supply (including renewable energy), which were in the committee's mandate, were not included in the National GHG Plan.

The National GHG Plan was approved in 2010 and budgeted at ILS2.2 billion (USD573 million) until 2020. However, in 2013 the plan was frozen for three budget years by the Ministry of Finance, as part of wider funding cuts. As a result, the Ministry of Environmental Protection has declared that 'there is almost no likelihood that the declared target of a 20% GHG emissions reduction by 2020 will be achieved.' One justification for freezing the budget was the discovery of offshore gas; however, experts estimate that the gas can lead to a reduction of 6.6 million CO<sub>2e</sub>, only a third of the planned emission reduction.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection launched a voluntary national GHG registry scheme in 2010. The reporting protocol, prepared by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Samuel Neaman Institute for National Policy Research in co-operation with a wide range of stakeholders, includes guidelines for mapping, quantifying and reporting GHG emissions. It is meant to develop capacities and tools for the private sector and industry to calculate their emissions and to help estimate the potential for savings and emissions reductions. Over 50 companies and organisations, including several major companies, have joined the project on a voluntary basis, covering more than two thirds of the total emissions of the country.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection is establishing a national system for GHG management which will include an element for measuring, reporting and verifying (MRV) GHG emissions.

The forum of self-governed cities ('Forum of the 15'), which account for 40% of the population, and are estimated to provide services to 70%-80% of the population, has committed to reduce GHG emissions by 20% compared to 2000 emissions, by 2020. Additionally, after 60 local authorities signed the "Environment Tag" covenant in 2010, the Ministry of Environmental Protection, together with the union of local authorities, operate a programme for efficient resource management and emission reduction in local authorities.

## **Energy demand**

In 2008, the government passed a resolution to promote energy efficiency and to reduce energy consumption by 20% by 2020. In accordance with the resolution, the Ministry of Energy and Water published in 2010 a National Energy Efficiency Plan for 2010-2020. The plan, which is being updated, contributed key inputs into The National GHG plan, and also suggested establishing an energy efficiency fund of approximately ILS200 million (USD52.1 million), to be funded by a 1% levy on electricity bills. The fund has not been set up to date.

A voluntary Israeli Green Building Standard that applies both to new buildings and to building renovations was launched by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Standards Institution of Israel in 2011. It encompasses nine fields: energy, land, water, building materials, health and welfare, waste, transportation, construction site management and innovation. The government adopted a resolution adopting green building measures in July 2014. It calls for the production and updating of energy efficient building standards, and establishment of a green building knowledge centre that will monitor the implementation of the relevant measures in the national greenhouse gas mitigation plan. The decision allocates ILS31.8 million (USD8.3 million) for a three-year period (2014-2016) toward a four-pronged programme.

‘The forum of the 15’ requires all new building permitting requests to include green building principles. In 2013, the Forum adopted the voluntary Israeli Green Building Standard as a guideline. To date, 12 municipalities have accepted the standard as mandatory in their building authorisation process.

The Ministry of Energy and Water carried out a scheme to subsidise replacement of inefficient refrigerators, solar water heating tanks and air conditioners. Solar water heating has been mandatory for residential buildings since the 1980s. These measures are applied in addition to mandatory energy labelling for appliances and minimum energy efficiency requirements for light bulbs.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Ministry of Economy are promoting energy efficiency projects in industry, municipal, agriculture, trade and transportation sectors, to which ILS106 million (USD27.6 million) were allocated for 209 projects in 2011-2012. This included ILS9 million (USD2.3 million) in grants from the Chief Scientist. The Ministry of Economy allocated additional incentives for the application of Israeli technology in these projects. The aggregate net benefit from these projects, as discounted until 2020, is estimated at ILS830 million (USD216 million).

In 2013, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Ministry of Economy launched a new programme, allowing SMEs to hire energy efficiency consultants at a subsidised cost to identify potentials for savings and solutions. A pilot project with the municipality of Beer Sheva was launched in 2014, providing

consulting services and recommendations on energy and resource savings. A national energy efficiency database is developed based on the project.

### **Energy supply**

Feed-in tariffs were introduced in 2008, establishing fixed quotas and prices per technology. In 2009, the government set a target of generating 10% of electricity from renewable sources by 2020, to be achieved by feed-in tariffs and public tenders, subsidising the difference between renewable energy production costs and power prices. In 2010, the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources published a policy document on integrating renewable energy sources in generation of electricity. An inter-ministerial committee was formed in 2011 to assess the costs and benefits of renewable energy (including grid parity price), and to promote market-based mechanisms over the quota scheme. In the same year, the government also established quotas for the generation of electricity from solar energy, wind energy and energy based on biogas, biomass and solid waste sources, reaffirming the 2009 targets. In late October 2014, the government approved a reallocation of the 2011 quotas, mainly shifting quotas to solar PV technologies from other technologies – with an additional 340MW of PV quotas approved. This is projected to reduce electricity costs in over ILS2.4 billion (USD625.6 million) over the next 20 years.

Offshore natural gas discoveries prompted a heated debate on energy security vs. commercial interests to export the gas. A government-appointed committee determined that Israel must secure enough natural gas to supply its own needs for 25 years, limiting to just above 50% the export of the offshore reserves. Critics have accused the committee of over-estimating gas reserves and under-estimating future demand for gas. The government adopted the findings of the committee, but limited export to 40% of reserves. The Supreme Court rejected an appeal on the legality of the government resolution. In 2013, a bill was brought before the Knesset, entitled 'Energy Independence for Israel', aiming to limit exports of gas to guarantee gas reserves for 50 years. The bill was rejected by the coalition members of the Knesset in December 2013.

### **Transportation**

A Green Taxation scheme for vehicles has been in place since 2009, determining the purchase tax level based on pollutant levels, taking into account five major pollutants – CO<sub>2</sub>, CO, PM, NO<sub>x</sub> and HC. The scheme gives clear benefits to electric and hybrid vehicles. In 2013, the green taxation scheme was updated, making the criteria for tax deductions more stringent. Vehicle importers have removed some diesel-powered vehicles from their portfolio, because these are now classified as highly-polluting. A scrapping scheme for old vehicles operated until 2013, offering owner ILS3,000 (USD782) per vehicle. Follow-up research showed that sales of smaller, more efficient cars have increased following the green taxation scheme.

In 2010, the government authorised a multi-million dollar, 10-year national programme on petroleum alternatives in transportation to reduce the share of crude oil in the transportation sector and turn Israel into a centre of knowledge on oil substitutes. Two research centres and three research programmes have been launched, researching biofuels, batteries and fuel cells, energy agriculture, and grant and scholarship programmes. An international USD1 million alternative energy competition was launched in 2012. Start-up investment programmes, applied research grants and a pilot project scheme have been launched in partnership with the Ministry of Energy and Water and the Ministry of Economy.

In 2013, the government passed a resolution on Reducing Israeli Dependence on Petroleum-Based Fuels in Transportation. It aims to reduce the proportion of petroleum-based fuels in transportation in Israel by about 30% by 2020, and around 60% by 2025, compared to the forecast consumption for those years.

The National GHG programme promoted regulation to enhance energy efficiency in vehicles, as well as eco-driving programmes.

### **Adaptation**

In 2009, an inter-ministerial climate change adaptation committee was formed and instructed the preparation of a national climate change adaptation programme.

The committee is headed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, and focuses on the key climate risks Israel faces – water scarcity, drought and increased frequency of extreme weather events. In 2011, the Ministry set up the Israeli Climate Change Information Center (ICCIC), which aims to develop the scientific knowledge base and policy documents that will feed into the national adaptation plan. The ICCIC has since submitted three reports – the first, in 2012, reviewed existing knowledge on the issue, and identified and prioritised knowledge gaps. The second, also in 2012, provided policy recommendations and an international marketing programme for ICCIC deliverables, while the third, in 2013, reviewed adaptation to climate change in local authorities.

The key policy recommendations of the ICCIC are to make information on climate change more available to improve economic efficiency; a change in water resources strategy: implement solutions from least cost to highest cost, with a priority on maximising water supply efficiency, water recycling, water loss prevention and water demand management, investing in desalination plants only as a last resort; regulation that stimulates the autonomous adaptation of markets; promote policies and regulations that support autonomous adaptation actions that would not otherwise be implemented due to lack of public awareness or bureaucratic obstacles. The ICCIC also recommends addressing

other vulnerable areas such as energy, agriculture, tourism, transportation, sea-level rise and local government.

Israel is a partner in CIRCLE 2 – Climate Impact Research & Response Co-ordination for a Larger Europe (ERA-NET). This research and knowledge-sharing network of institutions co-ordinates European research on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation practices on the national and regional levels. Within this framework, an international conference on climate change and forest fires was convened in Israel in 2012, focused on forest fire prevention and ecological rehabilitation under climate change in the Mediterranean basin.

### ***Israel: Legislative Portfolio***

<b>Name of Law</b>	<b>Clean Air Act and the National Plan for reduction of Air Pollution, 2013 (as regulated by government resolution 707 of 25 August 2013)</b>
<b>Date</b>	1 January 2011 (last updated 4 June 2012)
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The Law provides that a multi-year plan must be established for the reduction of air pollution, including GHG emissions.</p> <p>A national plan for the reduction of air pollution was formulated, and was approved in August 2013. A limited budget of ILS140 million (USD 37.8 billion) for five years was approved for the plan.</p> <p>The plan includes renewing the vehicle scrapping scheme; increased monitoring of quarries; a pilot project for CNG buses, and encouragement of public transportation usage.</p>
<b>Name of Law</b>	<b>Environmental Protection Act (pollutant release and transfer – reporting and registry obligations), 2012</b>
<b>Date</b>	1 April 2012
<b>Summary</b>	<p>This law, modelled on the European Union's PRTR (Pollutant Release and Transfer Register), sets a requirement for industrial plants to report emissions of various pollutants, and to report their annual water and energy consumption, including the method in which the reported figures were calculated.</p> <p>It also mandates the setting up of a central public pollutant registry based on the reported data.</p>
<b>Name of Law</b>	<b>The Energy Resources Act 1989</b>
<b>Date</b>	31 December 1989; last amendment 14 March 2011
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The Act requires the government to authorise, by June 2011, a national energy efficiency programme, to update it and to report annually on progress on its implementation.</p> <p>The Act sets an incentive to publicly-funded institutions, according to which any savings which were achieved thanks to energy efficiency measures, will be added to the institution's budget.</p> <p>The act allows the Minister of Energy and Water and the Minister of Finance to put forth regulations regarding ways to promote energy efficiency in the private and public sectors.</p>

## Israel: Executive Portfolio

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Reducing Israeli Dependence on Petroleum-Based Fuels in Transportation - Government Resolution 5327</b>
<b>Date</b>	13 January 2013
<b>Summary</b>	<p>This resolution reinforces the following resolutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Plan for Reducing Global Dependence on Oil for Transportation - Government Resolution 2790 (February 2010)</li><li>• Establishing a national effort to develop technologies for reducing global use of oil in transportation and reinforcement of high-tech industries in the sphere - Government Resolution 1354 (January 2011)</li></ul> <p>It aims to reduce the proportion of petroleum-based fuels in transportation between 2013 and 2025, to about 30% by 2020, and approximately 60% by 2025, in relation to the forecasted consumption for those years, as long as the transition is economically viable – by simplifying regulatory processes, establishing new regulations and policies, and accelerated regulatory incentives and support for technological demonstrations and field tests for alternative fuels.</p> <p>The resolution lays out a governmental action plan, including, among others –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promoting CNG buses</li><li>• Completing standardisation of fuel alternatives</li><li>• Formulating, in co-operation with the Budget Department of the Ministry of Finance and the Tax Authority, an outline for regulation and policies for the new forms of transportation that reduce use of private transportation in cities and at their entry-points</li><li>• Examining methods to increase competitiveness in fuel market</li><li>• Instructing the Tax Authority to examine adapting green taxation policy in order to integrate flex fuel vehicles in Israel</li><li>• Advancing field trials and pilot projects to demonstrate and prove the economic and operational feasibility of petroleum alternatives in transportation in Israel. This has been budgeted with ILS60 million (USD15.6 million) by 2018</li><li>• Establishing an inter-ministerial team, headed by the Director of the National Plan for Petroleum Alternatives, to formulate a comprehensive policy to encourage introducing petroleum substitute-based transportation into cities, including the necessary infrastructure; the director of the National Plan for Petroleum Alternatives will present progress biannually to the government</li></ul>

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Energy Sources Regulations - The Energy Sources Regulations (Minimal Energetic Efficiency for Indoor Light Bulb)</b>
<b>Date</b>	8 February 2012
<b>Summary</b>	The regulations set minimum energy efficiency requirements for light bulbs and ban the import, manufacture for use in Israel, sale or marketing of electric light bulbs that don't meet the requirements.



<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Energy Sources Regulations (Maximum Electric Output in Standby Mode for Domestic and Office Electric Appliances), 2011; and The Energy Sources Regulations (Maximum Electric Output for a Television Receiver), 2011</b>
<b>Date</b>	1 January 2012
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The regulations ban the import, manufacture for use in Israel or sale of appliances, unless approved by an authorised lab that their electrical output in standby mode does not exceed the maximum electrical output stated in the regulations (1-2 Watt, depending on the appliance).</p> <p>The regulations also set forth a maximum electric output for televisions, including full HD ones.</p>

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>The First National Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Plan and Government decision 2508</b>
<b>Date</b>	28 November 2010
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The National Plan for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions aims to reduce emissions by 20% compared to a business-as-usual scenario by 2020.</p> <p>The main strategies relate to energy efficiency, green building, and transportation. A key element was a government-sponsored programme of subsidies administered jointly by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Investment Centre in the Ministry of Economy, aimed at encouraging investments in energy efficiency and GHG reduction projects and at advancing new Israeli technologies. The Chief Scientist in the Ministry of Economy grants additional assistance (ILS40 million, USD10.4 million) to approved projects, based on new Israeli technologies (first installation).</p> <p>Key elements of the National Plan included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing residential energy consumption - (responsibility of Ministry of Energy and Water Resources)</li> <li>• Support for investments in GHG emissions reductions (responsibility of Ministry of Environmental Protection)</li> <li>• Support for Israeli technologies and green innovation (responsibility of Ministry of Economy)</li> <li>• Pilot projects for green building and green building teaching and training (responsibility of Ministry of Environmental Protection)</li> <li>• Pilot project for retrofits ((responsibility of Ministry of Construction and Housing)</li> <li>• Education and awareness (responsibility of Ministries of Environmental Protection and Transportation)</li> <li>• Promotion of energy efficiency (responsibility of Ministries of Environmental Protection and Economy)</li> <li>• Setting standards for energy efficiency (responsibility of Ministry of Energy and Water Resources)</li> <li>• Transportation (responsibility of Transportation Ministry) – including energy efficient components in imported cars and eco-driving education</li> </ul> <p>The approved budget for the implementation of the plan was ILS2.2 billion (USD573 million) until 2020. During 2011-2012 ILS106 million (USD27.6 million) were allocated to 208 projects, with a reduction potential of ~ 450,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>eq per year and a savings potential of approximately ILS100 million (USD26 million) per year in electricity and fuel costs. The programme leveraged investments of more than ILS 550 million (USD143 million) by industries, businesses and municipalities during those first two years.</p> <p>The inter-ministerial committee was set to begin to examine additional reduction measures for the years 2013-2014, including renewable energies. In July 2013, however, the National Plan for the Reduction of GHG Emissions was frozen for three years by the Ministry of</p>

Finance, with the passage of the 2013 budget. This meant the cessation of many of the GHG mitigation programs. Only those that were already funded in previous budgets or that could be funded via other means will continue.

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Energy Resources Regulations (Energy Efficiency and Energy Information of Cooling Appliances), 2004 ; Energy Sources Regulations (Energy Efficiency, Energy Markings And Energy Ratings Of Air Conditioners), 2004;</b>
<b>Date</b>	2 January 2005 1 January 2004
<b>Summary</b>	The regulations set energy efficiency standards for air conditioners, refrigerators and freezers, preventing the manufacturing, sale, import, marketing or exhibition of appliances which fail to meet the standard.
Energy efficiency labelling requirements are also set for the appliances.	

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Energy Resources Regulations (Energy Efficiency of Electrical Induction Motors) 2004; Energy Resources Regulations (Testing Energy Efficiency of Pumping Installations) 2004; Energy Resources Regulations (Examining the efficient combustion of Oil or Gas Heaters), 2004; Energy Resources Regulations (Energy labeling of electric heating furnaces), 1993</b>
<b>Date</b>	2004
<b>Summary</b>	The regulations set energy efficiency standards for induction motors, preventing the manufacturing, sale, import, marketing or exhibition of the following, if they fail to meet the standards set in the regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three-phase asynchronous electrical induction motors,</li> <li>• Pumps (installations composed of an electrical motor and water pump with an electrical consumption of 150,000 KWH per year or more);</li> <li>• Boilers or generators for hot water, hot air or thermal oil with an output greater than 580 kilowatts</li> </ul> <p>Energy efficiency labelling requirements are set for electric heating furnaces and induction motors.</p>

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Energy Sources Regulations (Monitoring Energy Consumption Efficiency, 1993</b>
<b>Date</b>	1993
<b>Summary</b>	This bills mandates the appointment of an energy efficiency monitor in any plant whose annual energy consumption is less than 300 tonne-equivalent fuel oil of other fuels, or any corporation established by law or pursuant to a law unrelated to its energy consumption; the person responsible must be a graduate of an energy commissioners' course at an approved institution or have passed a test by the experts' committee that appointed the commissioner.
The person in charge will be responsible for ensuring speedy repair of faults resulting in loss of energy, to prevent supply of energy to where it is not needed, to take actions to maximise energy efficiency, to guarantee installation of monitoring equipment to train and educate employees etc.	

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Energy Resources Regulations (Performing a Study to Find a Potential to Energy Conservation) 1993</b>
<b>Date</b>	1993
<b>Summary</b>	The regulations instruct plants whose annual energy consumption is less than 2,000 tonne-equivalent fuel oil of other fuels or electricity, to perform every five years a study to find potential energy conservation measures and to update it annually until a new study is undertaken.

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Planning and Construction Regulations 1970</b>
<b>Date</b>	1970; amendment from 1 December 2012
<b>Summary</b>	The regulations mandate the installation of solar water heaters for all residential buildings. The 2012 amendment extended the mandatory installation to the top floors of high rise buildings, which were previously exempt from the regulation.

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