

MEMMO

April 22, 2016

Green Israel: A Celebration of Earth Day

This Earth Day, Israel joins those around the world celebrating sustainability and environmentally-friendly technologies and policies. As the world confronts climate change, urbanization, population growth, and threatened resources, Israel's private and public sector are partnering to build reliable green technology and infrastructure.

Celebrating Earth Day 2016

- Israel has proudly celebrated Earth Day since it became a global movement in 1990. A number of Israeli cities—including Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, Ashdod, Herzilya, Ashkelon and Petah Tikva—ask their residents and businesses to participate in “Earth Hour,” the international initiative to shut off power for one hour as a way to promote environmental awareness.
- Since 2004, Israel has presented “Green Globe” awards on Earth Day to recognize excellence in environmental activism. Since 2013, Israel has held the ceremony at Ariel Sharon Park—a Green Globe winner built on top of a landfill outside of Tel Aviv transformed for public use.



Israel is a world leader in water technology including drip irrigation and desalination. (Photo: Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

Caring for the Environment Every Day

- Israel is at the forefront of afforestation. Since its founding in 1901, the Jewish National Fund has planted more than 240 million trees in Israel, making it one of only two countries in the world that showed a net gain in trees during the 20th century.
- Israel boasts a wide variety of green organizations, including the 60-year-old Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel and the Arava Institute. These groups work to preserve the country's ecosystem, educate the public, and promote a greener Israel.
- In 2010, Israel launched the nation-wide Fuel Choices Initiative to dramatically reduce gasoline consumption and establish Israel as a global center for research and development of alternative fuel technologies.
- In 2014, Israel's Parliament launched the Green Knesset Project to cut one-third of its energy consumption. As part of the project, the Knesset installed a 400 kW solar panel system on the parliament's rooftop—the largest such system for any parliament in the world.
- Israel is a leader in solar technology development and regularly shares its technologies with the rest of the world. In February 2015, Israeli company Energiya built the first utility-scale solar field in

East Africa. And at home, Israel is building one of the world's largest solar power stations, known as the Ashalim solar-thermal project.

Bettering the Earth Through Water Innovation

- Israel is the world leader in water recycling and treats more than 90 percent of its sewage— 85.6 percent of which is reused for irrigation, landscaping, commercial and industrial water needs; to recharge group aquifers; and for consumption.
- In 2012, the United Nations cited the Dan Region Wastewater Treatment Plant (Shafdan) as a global model. As the largest wastewater treatment plant in Israel, Shafdan uses a special filtration process that improves the quality of reclaimed water so that it can be safely used for all forms of irrigation.
- In 1964, members of Kibbutz Hatzetim developed modern drip irrigation, a technique that minimizes the amount of water and fertilizer needed to achieve high crop yields. With Israel's help, farmers around the world—including here in America—have used drip irrigation successfully.
- The drip irrigation technique regularly exceeds 90 percent water efficiency and represents a 30 percent to 50 percent savings on the quantity of water used for irrigation. The technique has helped to “make the desert bloom.” Israel grows over 60 percent of its vegetable exports and 10 percent of its flower exports in the Arava Valley—one of the most arid regions in the world.
- Worldwide, water utilities lose about 30 percent of the water they distribute in their networks. In 2008, the Israeli company TaKaDu created a cloud-based software service that uses smart sensors and data aggregation to enable water utility companies to monitor their water network and detect leaks and bursts in pipes; TaKaDu has introduced this software around the world.