



Middle East Spotlight

Israel at the Forefront of Sustainable Development

The Jewish state helps better the world in countless ways, including efforts to preserve natural resources and improve the environment.

For decades, Israel has prioritized the environment in both the public and the private sector. The Jewish state is the world leader in water recycling, with more than 90 percent of sewage treated for reuse. In addition, Israel's famous drip irrigation technology, which was first invented on a kibbutz in 1964 to help "make the desert bloom," regularly exceeds 90 percent water efficiency and is used in the United States and in water-scare countries around the globe.

But Israel's water preservation capabilities are merely one of countless sectors in which the Jewish state is bettering the environment.

When it comes to agriculture and sustainable development, Israel is among the world's leaders in helping developing countries overcome resource scarcity. Israel's MASHAV Agency for International Development Cooperation is one example—which actively works in Africa to run educational training programs in sustainable development. By working with African governments, Israel helps analyze key challenges and supply technological and knowledge-based grants to solve them.

In the field of renewable energy, the Jewish state is at the forefront of solar technology. 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. In February 2015, Israeli company Energiya built the first utility-scale solar field in East Africa. Israel is also building one of the world's largest solar power stations, known as the Ashalim solar-thermal project, in the Negev.

And consider afforestation—the establishment of a stand of trees in an area where there was no forest. Israel is one of only two countries worldwide that showed a net gain in trees during the twentieth century. Since 1901, the Jewish National Fund has planted more than 240 million trees in Israel.

Finally, Israel boasts a growing number of green organizations, including the 60-year-old Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel and the Arava Institute. These two groups are among the many organizations working to preserve the ecosystem, educate the public on sustainability and environmental issues, and promote a greener planet.

When it comes to improving the environment, the United States can partner with our democratic ally Israel as a steadfast partner and innovator—just another way in which the U.S.-Israel alliance benefits both countries and the entire world.

To learn more about how you can help advance the U.S.-Israel relationship, visit www.aipac.org.