



# 2026 Impact Report



**החברה להגנת הטבע**  
The Society for the Protection of  
Nature in Israel

# A letter from our CEO



**Man is nothing but the image of his native landscape.**

**Saul Tchernichovsky**

Shalom,

It is said that in Israel, we experience a decade of history every single day. In such a fast-moving reality, the work of conservation can feel like a paradox. We plant seeds today that may not bear fruit for a generation. We fight battles for landscapes that many will only appreciate years from now.

But this year, that long-term perspective became our greatest strength.

If we are indeed the image of our native landscape, then we have a sacred duty to ensure that our land reflects the best of us: our resilience, our deep roots, and our capacity for renewal.

Over the past year, our supporters have allowed the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI) to stand as a steadfast guardian of this land. Our reach extends from the banks of the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea – and even further, 200 nautical miles out to the edges of our exclusive economic zone, where we are redefining marine protection for the next century.

In the following pages, we have focused on the priorities that define this era of our work. You will see how we are restoring the war-torn landscapes of the North and the Negev, and how our **Nature Heals** program is using those very landscapes to mend the hearts of our youth and our

soldiers. You will see how **Start-Up Nature** is proving that Israeli innovation can rewild the earth while protecting our climate.

With our hostages finally home, we can, at last, look toward the horizon. It is a horizon of healing and repair.

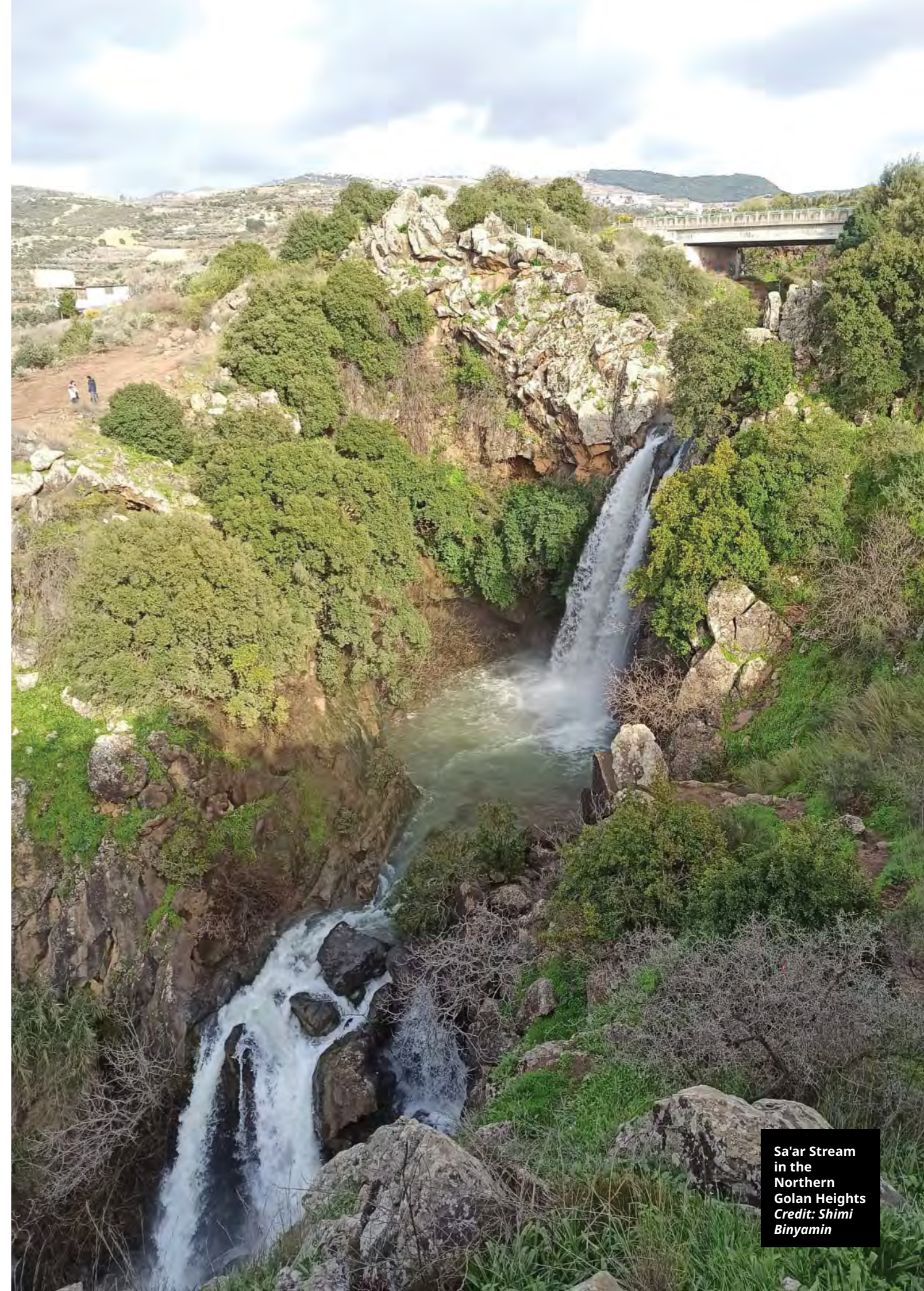
I want to thank our donors, sincerely, for walking this path with us. They are more than supporters, they are true partners in the quiet, persistent work of building a sustainable Israeli future. I invite you to read these stories of impact, knowing that none would be possible without them.

With gratitude,

**Dan Alon**  
CEO

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel

**P.S.** My door is always open. If you would like to discuss our vision or any of these projects in greater depth, please reach out to me directly. I would welcome the conversation.



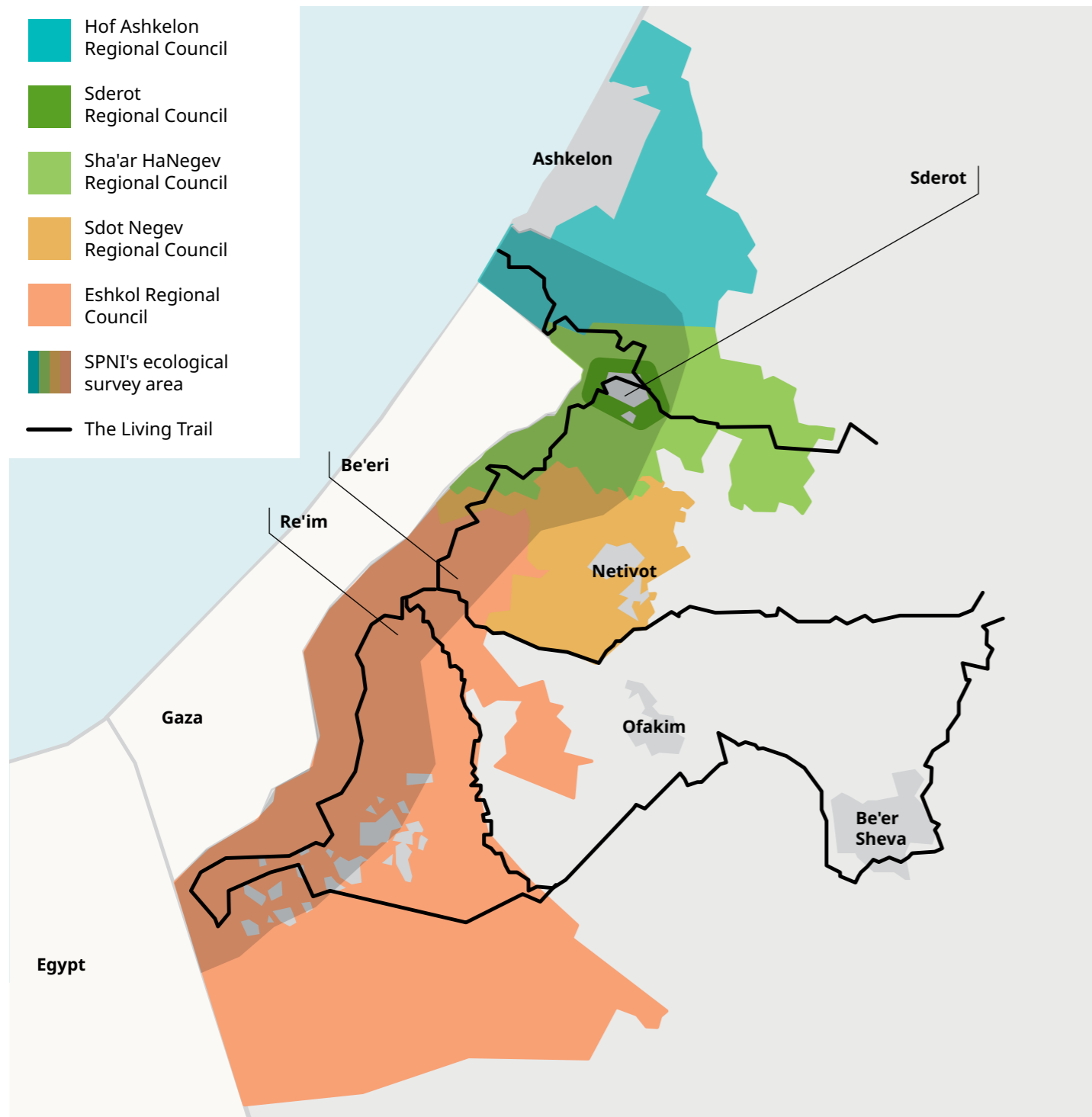
Sa'ar Stream  
in the  
Northern  
Golan Heights  
Credit: Shimi  
Binyamin

# Restoring The Western Negev

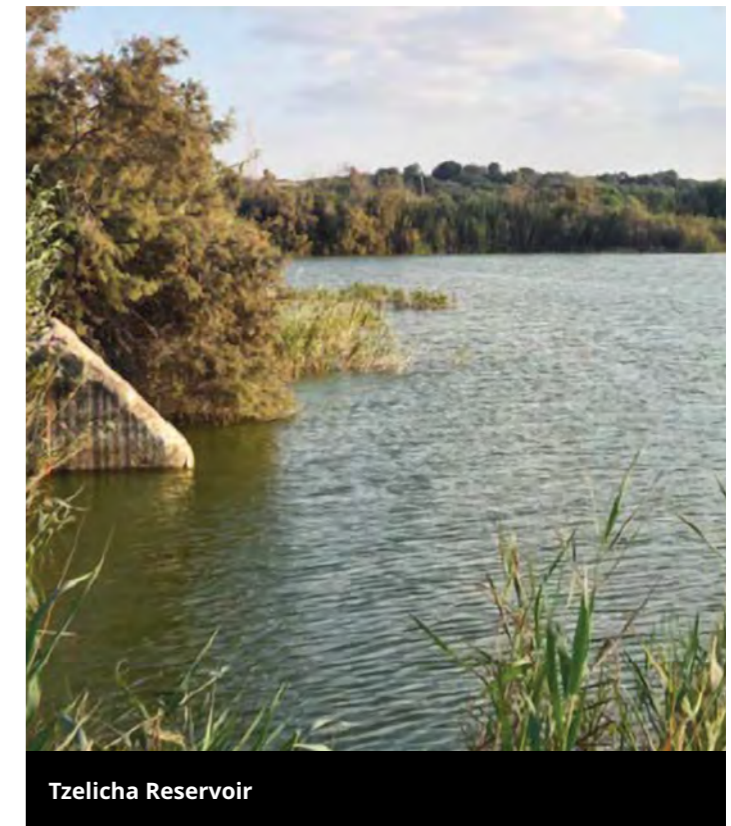
After October 7, SPNI worked with local communities of the Western Negev to ensure that nature and local communities would be at the heart of the recovery plans, not ignored. SPNI is now guiding the planning of the NIS 377 million restoration effort, ensuring local and national partners safeguard the natural landscapes and open spaces in one of Israel's most beloved regions.

## SPNI's projects and partners in the Western Negev:

-  Hof Ashkelon Regional Council
-  Sderot Regional Council
-  Sha'ar HaNegev Regional Council
-  Sdot Negev Regional Council
-  Eshkol Regional Council
-  SPNI's ecological survey area
-  The Living Trail



Shokeda Forest



Tzelicha Reservoir

## Creating a Blueprint for Rehabilitation

Our experts identified over 1,700 acres of damage in the Gaza envelope, including nine different ecosystems. This data is guiding the country's plans to rehabilitate the Western Negev's landscapes.

### SPNI is actively restoring open spaces in:

- Tzelicha Reservoir
- Upper Sderot Hills
- Nir Am River
- Sha'ar HaNegev Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Zimrat Hill
- Shokeda Forest

## Building the Living Trail

SPNI is working together with the communities of the western Negev to define the region's future — one that emphasizes its natural beauty and pastoral heritage rather than the horrors of October 7.

To realize this vision, SPNI is planning the Living Trail. More than a hiking path, it is a powerful economic engine designed to boost the local economy by connecting visitors to local businesses and heritage sites while remaining deeply grounded in the region's rich nature.

In 2025, we formed a coalition of local authorities to advance this project and successfully completed the first stage of planning.

## Uniting Local Communities

SPNI has been the catalyst for the creation of the first-ever planning forum for 11 local authorities to collaborate on planning issues across the Western Negev. This forum fosters collaboration among these different authorities with competing priorities. Your support will ensure that the investments needed to rebuild the Western Negev will be sustainable and strategic.

# Rehabilitating Israel's North: A Blueprint for Resilience

Northern Israel is the country's most ecologically rich region, yet fourteen months of conflict have left it at a critical breaking point. With over 55,000 acres scorched and delicate water systems disrupted, the road to recovery cannot be left to chance. SPNI has stepped into the breach to lead the environmental response — developing the "shovel-ready" blueprints and strategic frameworks necessary to ensure that the North's restoration is as resilient and vibrant as the landscape itself.

## Laying the Groundwork for Long-Term Recovery

While the government has committed billions to northern reconstruction, environmental needs often risk being addressed late or superficially. SPNI took the decisive step to ensure that when funds are released, the work is ready to begin. Over the past year, our team of ecological and planning experts developed a **Comprehensive Master Program for Northern Rehabilitation**. This regional landscape-based framework encompasses dozens of specific restoration projects that integrate hydrology, ecology, and community needs. By fully mapping and costing each initiative, we have de-risked the process, creating a professional roadmap that translates vision into immediate, implementable action.

## From Planning to Implementation: The West Galilee

In parallel with our long-term planning, SPNI is already delivering results on the ground. We partnered with the **West Galilee Cluster** — a strategic alliance of local authorities — to move environmental rehabilitation into the implementation phase. SPNI spearheaded a complex professional submission to the Open Spaces Fund, securing **NIS 1.7 million** in immediate funding for concrete restoration projects. This success serves as a national model for how collaborative, data-driven planning can secure the resources needed to heal our most damaged landscapes.



A mountain gazelle roams through the burned forest in northern Israel in search of food. Credit: Liron Shapira, SPNI

### Northern Israel's four distinct geographical regions:

- Western Galilee Streams
- Northern Peaks: Golan Heights and Hermon
- Land of Flowing Waters: Hula Valley and Galilee Panhandle
- Heart of the Mountain: Meron Region

## Areas Protected by the 2025 SPNI Comprehensive Master Plan for Northern Restoration



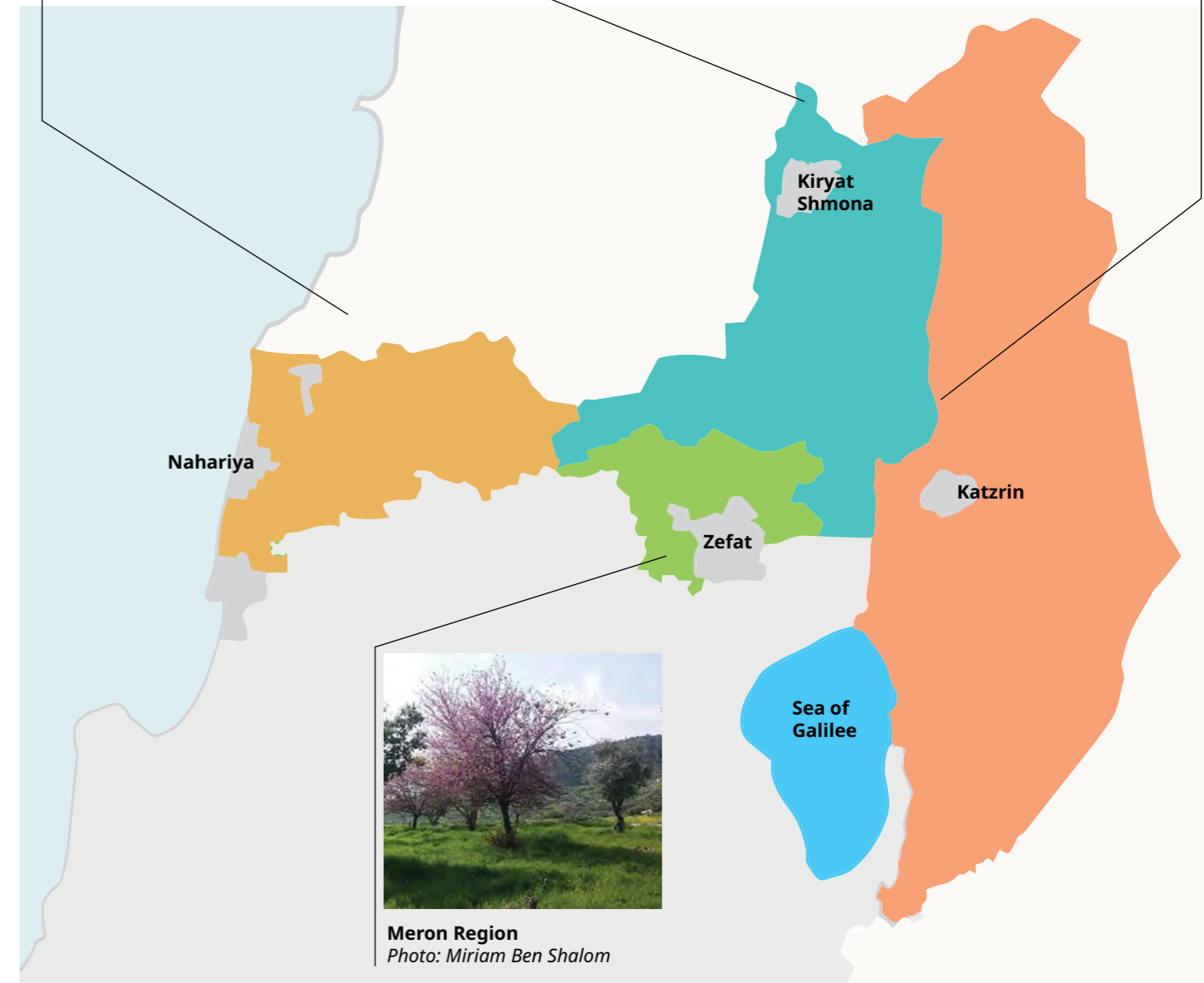
Blood of the Maccabees (*Helichrysum sanguineum*) in flower near Kfar Veradim



Metula Valley



Ein Shekef Spring near Katzrin



Meron Region  
Photo: Miriam Ben Shalom

The north has suffered extensive and cumulative damage that will require long-term, large-scale environmental restoration work. Each region has its own natural character and the restoration projects are tailored for each one.

# Nature Heals: Harnessing the Power of Nature

After two years of war, millions of Israelis require mental health treatment. Responding to the Ministry of Health's call for non-pharmacological care, SPNI launched Nature Heals. This program harnesses the restorative power of the land to provide effective, scalable treatment for trauma, depression, and anxiety. Since October 7th, 2023, we have helped over 130,000 evacuees, soldiers, and survivors of terror attacks find a way forward through the quiet strength of nature.

## Helping Traumatized Teens Through Nature

Our Resilience Journeys have helped over 1,000 teens who were evacuated for long periods after October 7 through structured, nature-based experiences. Each journey is a four-day traveling camp that combines hiking, teamwork, and guided reflection, creating a safe space for emotional recovery and personal growth.

The journeys take the teens deep into nature, away from daily stress and toward new ways of seeing themselves and each other. In the wilderness, the noise of the past two years falls away, helping teens connect with their innermost feelings, creating conditions for personal reflection and growth. Challenges in nature become opportunities to practice self-control, teamwork, and problem-solving — life skills that carry far beyond the trail.

As part of the program, participants film their journey, documentary style. Grounded in the present, they can open up about their experiences over the past two years as the first crucial step in processing their trauma.

Across Israel, the need for youth mental-health support has never been greater. Thanks to you, hundreds of teens can rebuild stability, hope, and a sense of self.

## A Lifeline in the Dark: Nature in the Shelters

In June 2025, Israel launched a strike on Iran's nuclear sites, and with it, a brief but fierce war erupted. The country shut down. People were instructed to stay close to shelters. Schools closed.

SPNI quickly mobilized. Within 48 hours, we began daily live online webinars, providing relief and connection to over 10,000 terrified children and adults. Over the 12 days of missile barrages, SPNI organized 11 emergency webinars. Sessions varied from nature talks by our professional team to creative workshops that provided an escape from the extremely difficult days and nights.

Thanks to you, families across Israel found comfort, focus, and calm through nature — even in some of the most frightening moments of the past two years.

**“Nature gives you answers. It gives you peace and tranquility. And it's the best psychologist there is.”**

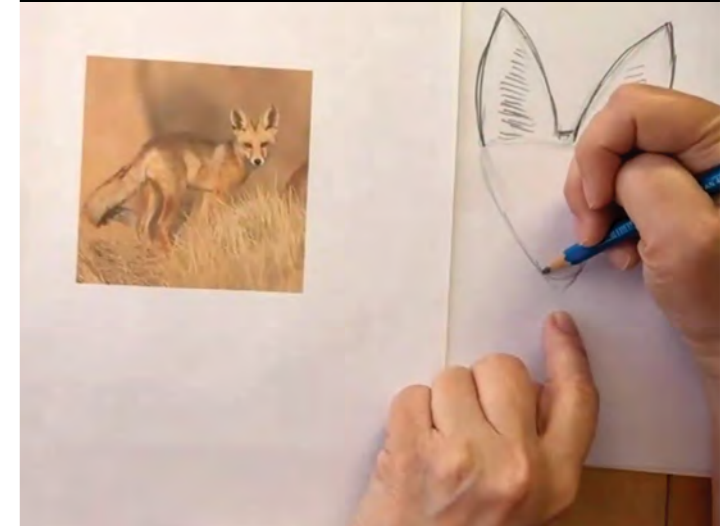
**Ma'ayan, Resilience Journeys Participant from Karkom (Eastern Galilee)**

## Establishing an Eco-Therapy Retreat

SPNI, Sheba Medical Center, and the Eilat Municipality have jointly established a transformative eco-therapy retreat in Eilat for IDF soldiers and survivors of terror.

Located on the grounds of our Eilat Field School, overlooking the Red Sea, experts in trauma treatment offer psychological therapy in a peaceful, natural setting. The retreat has hosted over 900 reservists, trauma survivors, and families from across Israel, who are benefiting from the cutting-edge combination of traditional therapy and eco-therapy.

An animal drawing session led by author and illustrator Miri Leshem-Pelly, which brought together hundreds of children sketching in their shelters.



**20,000**

Israelis including soldiers, families and teens benefited from Nature Heals activities

**92%**

of parents observed that the Resilience Journeys provided their child with a sense of success and capability

**10,000**

households joined our live webinars during the Twelve-Day War

**900+**

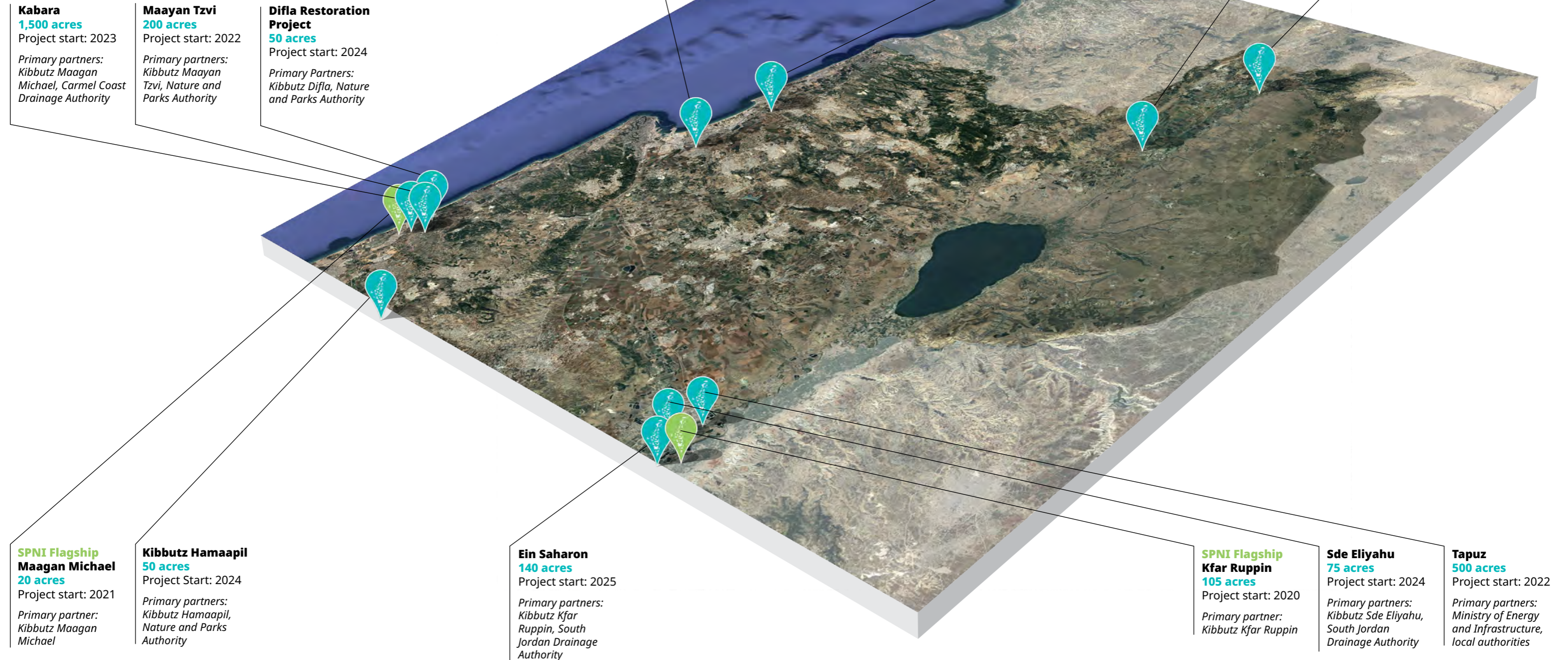
soldiers and survivors of terror benefited from our Eco-Therapy Retreat



Resilience Journey participants are challenged in a team-building exercise. Credit: SPNI

# Start-Up Nature: A New Era in Israeli Conservation

Start-Up Nature was born from a bold idea: not just to preserve but to restore Israel's lost wetlands. With 13 rewilding projects in motion, we are on track to achieve 25% of the country's long-term conservation goals by restoring over 3,000 additional acres by 2030. With your partnership, we are revolutionizing Israeli conservation through innovative water management, habitat design, and community involvement.



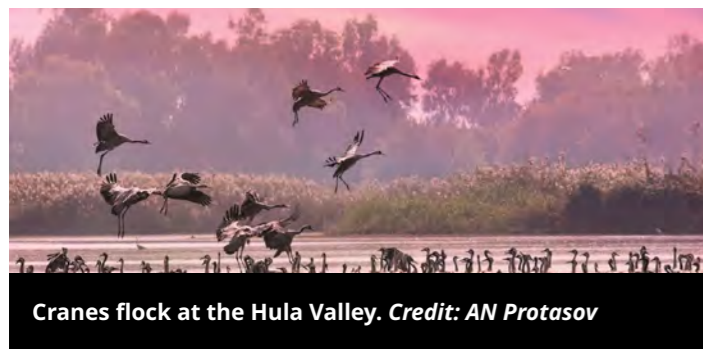
## A Bird's Eye View of SPNI's 2025 Achievements

As Israel's largest and oldest environmental NGO, the impact of our work is felt across the nation's land, seas, and skies. Over the last year, SPNI has promoted innovative strategies that bridge the gap between high-level policy and grassroots action to protect the land we love. In 2025, we harnessed the skills and passion of our organization to deliver the following results:

### Ensuring Safe Passage for Millions of Birds

Israel serves as one of the world's most critical migratory flyways, and SPNI is dedicated to its protection. Our birding network continues to grow with the opening of the **Ramat HaNegev Birding Center** and the **Ma'agan Michael Birding Park**, creating new research hubs and eco-tourism destinations. To ensure our work is strictly data-driven, we collaborated with Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Ben-Gurion Universities to monitor endangered species and assess the long-term impact of our restoration projects. This year also marked the tenth anniversary of our **Raptor Nestcam** project; by live streaming the nests of vultures and eagles to millions of viewers worldwide, we shared the successful fledging of a new generation of raptors with the global community.

This national impact is fueled by intensive work at our flagship sites. At the **Jerusalem Bird Observatory (JBO)**, volunteers ringed 7,830 birds and delivered educational programs to over 10,000 students. In the south, the **Eilat Birding Center** ringed over 15,700 birds and welcomed 150,000 visitors. Furthermore, we successfully completed an ecosystem restoration at the Eilat sewage treatment plant, transforming a utility site into a vital sanctuary for biodiversity and ecotourism.



Cranes flock at the Hula Valley. Credit: AN Protasov

### Shaping Israel's Future Through Education

Your support allows SPNI to create a seamless educational journey from preschool to military service, fostering a lifelong bond between Israel's youth and the land. Beyond our own classrooms, SPNI serves as the **national knowledge center** for environmental education. Our content development team provides the specialized curricula and digital tools relied upon by the Ministry of Education, the IDF Education Corps, and youth movements across the country — multiplying your impact across the entire nation.

Our commitment to social cohesion remains a cornerstone of this mission. In the Arab, Druze, and Circassian sectors, our team of 26 expert guides — 90% of whom hold academic degrees — delivered culturally adapted programs to thousands of students nationwide. A particular highlight was the expansion of our **"Green Entrepreneur" (Yazam Yarok)** clubs, where students take the lead on hands-on community projects to solve local environmental challenges. By investing in high-quality, professionalized education for every sector of Israeli society, you are ensuring that all youth have the tools to become informed, active, and passionate guardians of our environment.



Our educators are instilling a love of nature into the next generation. Credit: SPNI



A common kingfisher in Tel Aviv. Credit: Yoav Perlman, SPNI

### Recharging Israel's Rivers

This year, SPNI secured a landmark commitment from the Water Authority to integrate the Upper Jordan and Sea of Galilee regions into the national water system. This initiative includes the construction of reservoirs designed to naturally release winter rainfall back into our streams. Beyond policy, we are investing in the next generation of guardians, hosting our inaugural **Streams Leadership Conference** for 160 grassroots activists. From High Court petitions to local activist training, we are ensuring that Israel's veins of life flow strong, clean, and protected.



The Jordan River. Credit: Dov Greenblat

### Protecting Israel's Seas

Through the **Blue Half** project, SPNI is redefining marine conservation. Our long-term advocacy has expanded Mediterranean protected areas from just 0.3% in 2012 to 8% in 2025. This year, we achieved a significant legislative milestone: **50% of our territorial waters are now legally protected** from destructive bottom-trawling — a victory we intend to extend to 100%. On the ground, 23,000 SeaWatch app users reported over 5,800 incidents, directly enabling our team to rescue trapped marine life and remove lethal "ghost nets" from our reefs.



A Reef Locus in Israel's Mediterranean Sea. Credit: Shevy Rothman, SPNI



Persian fallow deer in the Upper Galilee. A small number of Persian Fallow Deer were brought to Israel from Iran at the time of the fall of the Shah in the 1970s. Today, several hundred live in the wild in northern Israel.  
*Credit: Liron Shapira, SPNI*

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## Making Israeli Businesses Greener

Through **TevaBiz**, a joint initiative with the Ministry of Environmental Protection, SPNI takes an active approach to reducing the corporate sector's ecological footprint. By providing expert guidance and nature-based solutions, we help businesses integrate biodiversity into their core operations.

This year, we successfully mentored four major partnerships across diverse sectors:

### Urban Innovation:

Developing digital eco-mapping tools with **Yefe Nof** for environmentally sensitive construction in Haifa.

### Sustainable Agriculture:

Helping Jezreel Valley farmers at the **Valley Farmers Center** protect local streams by preventing soil erosion and agricultural runoff.

### Habitat Restoration:

Restoring habitats at **Kibbutz Neot Smadar** to create a vital "refueling station" for migratory birds.

### Natural Buffers:

Supporting the **Tzabar Kamah Agricultural Association** in implementing native plant buffers to prevent farm runoff from polluting regional rivers.

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## Revolutionizing Clean Energy Generation

SPNI is proving that clean energy and nature protection can thrive together. This year, we advanced the **Tapuz Project**, a revolutionary initiative repurposing 1,000 acres for solar energy while dedicating 500 acres to rewilding carbon-absorbing wetlands. Simultaneously, we successfully advocated for the extension of tax exemptions for rooftop solar and storage, making renewable energy more affordable for homeowners. By promoting solar power within the built environment, we are hitting our climate goals without sacrificing a single acre of untouched natural space.

Cover photo: A wolf surveys the landscape of the southern Judean desert at sunset.

*Credit: Yuval Dax, SPNI*

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**Together, we can secure a thriving, sustainable Israel for its people, its nature, and generations to come.**

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**Israel's future depends on bold action today. Join us in protecting the land and nature that sustain a safe, prosperous, and resilient tomorrow.**

**Partner with us to secure **Israel's future.****

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**Jay Shofet,  
Director of Partnerships  
and Development**

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