

# The Planning and Building Law in Light of the Climate Crisis

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## ABSTRACT

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Climate change is one of the most critical and existential challenges facing humanity. Its causes are well known and are the product of human actions: greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere and damage to the natural systems that absorb carbon on Earth.

Dealing with them requires: 1. Reducing emissions. 2. Preserving and maintaining natural systems. 3. Developing methods for removing carbon from the atmosphere. The first goal was partially expressed in the climate bill currently before the Knesset, which includes setting indicators for reducing emissions to zero. However, no parallel set of standards or measurable indicators has been established for the other essential components: preserving open spaces and natural systems, preventing their continued erosion, and improving their capacity for carbon sequestration and storage. These functions are of heightened importance in light of the growing development pressures resulting from Israel's continuously expanding population. The Climate Law is environmental-regulatory in nature and does not contain the tools required to address physical or spatial issues. This is precisely the role of the Planning and Building Law, which governs the design and regulation of Israel's physical landscape. That law was enacted in 1965—two decades before the scientific community began to internalize the threat of global warming and issue public warnings about it. The unique strength of the Planning and Building Law lies in its ability to designate land and determine its use, a capacity absent from other legal frameworks. The main expression of this is ensuring the ecosystems - preserving natural areas that are the carriers of biodiversity and caring for their cultivation and restoration and increasing their efficiency in carbon fixation. In this way, the law will also fulfil the obligations of Israel, which has signed international treaties that call for the preservation of natural areas and even the expansion of natural areas as a proportion of national territory.

**Keywords:** Climate Change, Climate law, Open spaces, Biodiversity, Carbon sequestration.

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## ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

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