

International Day of Forests

KKL-JNF FOR THE FORESTS, FOR LIFE

KKL-JNF Forestry Figures

Growth Over a Century

The State of Israel is one of the few countries in the world that has more trees today than it did a century ago.

In **1901**, when KKL-JNF was founded, Israel had barely 1,400 hectares (3,500 acres) of forest.

In **1942**, the country had 3,500 hectares (8,750 acres) of planted forests.

In the early **1970s**, there were ~60,000 hectares (150,000 acres) of planted forests.

As of **2019**, KKL-JNF had planted more than 100,000 hectares (247,105 acres) of forests.

Notable Forests

Israel's first planted forest was the Herzl Forest (today Hulda Forest), in which the first ~18 olive trees were planted in 1907.

The country's largest forest, the Yatir Forest, extends over ~3,800 hectares (9,500 acres).



Yatir Forest, Albatross - KKL-JNF Photo Archive

Tree Types and Forest Distribution

Distribution by Species

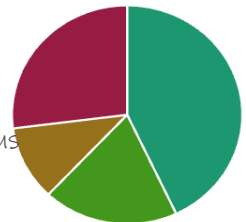
- 43% – Coniferous and mixed-species
- 19% – Planted broad-leaved, woodland, orchard, and native trees
- 11% – Acacia, tamarisk, eucalyptus
- 27% – Areas with a predominance of woodland, garrigue, and scrubland

Coniferous and mixed

Broad-leaved & native

Acacia, tamarisk, eucalyptus

Woodland & scrubland



Evolution of Tree Types

In 1960, ~85% of all planted trees were pine and only ~3% were natural woodlands.

In 2008, ~70% of all plantings were native and broad-leaved trees and 30% were pine trees.

In recent years, 55% to 65% of all saplings planted in forests are native and broad-leaved tree species; the rest are coniferous species, of which more than half are pine, planted mainly in picnic and recreation sites and areas designated for the public.



Michael Huri - KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Distribution by age

- New forests (0-10) – 10%
- Young forests (11-20) – 10%
- Between young and mature forests (21-30) – 20%
- Mature forests (31-60) – 41%
- Veteran forests (60+) – 16%
- Unknown – 3%

Tree Lifespan

- The assimilation and survival rate of planted forest trees is 94%, according to the national annual average.
- The average lifespan of a pine tree is ~80 years
- Olive and oak trees live to 600 years and more

KKL-JNF Nurseries

KKL-JNF has 3 tree nurseries, in which ~1,000,000 saplings are grown each year,



Conifer

~220,000 saplings



Native woodland

~270,000 saplings



Acacia

~ 20,000 saplings



Pollen and nectar-producing trees

~ 120,000 saplings (eucalyptus)



Orchard trees

~40,000 saplings

The rest of the trees are distributed to regional and local authorities, IDF bases, and educational institutions.



Bonnie Sheinman - KKL-JNF Photo Archive



KKL-JNF Forests Contribution to Environment and Climate Crisis



KKL-JNF forests absorb ~1.8 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equivalent to the annual carbon emissions of ~900,000 private vehicles traveling at ~20,000 km (2 tons of carbon dioxide per vehicle, per year).

Photo: Ilanot Forest, Bonnie Sheinman – KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Trees and forests in and near cities contribute greatly to air quality, absorbing dust, creating shade to protect from harmful UV rays, and enabling urbanites to enjoy nature at their doorstep.

Photo: Switzerland Forest, Ilan Shaham KKL-JNF Photo Archive



The country's forests constitute important ecological corridors for species of flora and fauna, as part of the national plan for contiguous open spaces.

Photo: Biriya Forest - Yaron Charka KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Trees and forests in cities and industrial zones constitute a barrier to noise and pollutants.

Photo: Switzerland Forest, Kamal Alian – KKL-Photo Archive



Trees and forests adjacent to agricultural areas constitute a buffer zone and absorb excess chemical fertilizers and pesticides. These buffer zones also provide an incubator for natural enemies of insect pests, thereby helping to reduce the use of pesticides.

Photo: Adi Tene – KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Hundreds of bird species are observed annually in forests and open spaces managed by KKL-JNF. For tens of millions of migratory birds, KKL-JNF forests are favorite stopover sites in autumn and spring.

Photo: Susan Yosef -KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Trees and forests prevent flood damage and soil erosion during extreme rainfall.

Photo: Givat HaMoreh Firest, Rami Chachma- KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Forest maintenance and conservation

Conserving the Unique Natural Values of Forests

KKL-JNF forest management ensures that a wide variety of unique natural values can be found, including a spectacular array of colorful flowers such as anemones, irises, crocuses, orchids and more carpeting forest floors; and important bird nesting sites for diurnal and nocturnal raptors, burrow-digging bee-eaters, and rollers (Coraciidae).

Post Wildfire Rehabilitation

The rehabilitation of forests damaged by fire is based on natural renewal, to the extent possible, in accordance with forest management theory and policy. In the first phase, burnt trees that pose safety hazards are extracted. Forest treatment is planned based on a survey that monitors natural regeneration dynamics. After one or two years, additional intervention is assessed as needed..

Forest Renewal

Over the past decade, KKL-JNF has been revitalizing its older forests using advanced techniques based on modern forest management principles. These efforts have significantly improved the survival and growth of newly planted saplings in challenging environments. At the end of a forest's growth cycle, renewal focuses on promoting the natural regeneration of local species, complemented by planting native and coniferous trees suited to each habitat.



Johannes Guagnin - KKL-JNF Photo Archive



KKL-JNF Spokesperson's Office



Ilan Shaham- KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Forest Damage: Israel's forests face three main threats

Illegal Logging – Many trees are felled unlawfully each year. KKL-JNF works to ensure that offenders are apprehended and prosecuted.

Forest Fires – About 600 fire incidents occur each year, burning ~800 hectares (2,000 acres) and destroying ~50,000 trees on average. KKL-JNF has established over 200 firebreaks and operates specialized firefighting units with compact fire trucks and fire-suppressing foam.

Pests – Local and invasive insects threaten forest health. The KKL-JNF Forestry Division collaborates with the Volcani Institute to develop solutions

Rescue Gardens for Conservation

KKL-JNF foresters collect species of native orchard trees from remote corners of the country where their existence is endangered. The aim is to conserve the biological basis of Israel's orchard culture. The fruit trees are grown in optimal conditions, ensuring the continuity of the gene pool of the special varieties of Israel's orchards.



Rami Chachma - KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Kamal Alian - KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Boaz Sher - KKL-JNF Photo Archive

4,500 Hectares (11,250 Acres) of Orchards

KKL-JNF cultivates carob and olive groves, both newly planted and ancient, restoring Israel's cultural landscapes while enhancing biodiversity. Integrating broad-leaved and fruit trees enriches forests, making them more sustainable and enjoyable for visitors. Planting is adapted to each region: fruit trees near water sources, and drought-resistant species like acacia in arid areas such as Yatir Forest.



Leisure and Recreation

Infrastructure

KKL-JNF develops diverse recreational infrastructure, including picnic areas, nature and heritage trails, cycling routes, and community activity spaces—all with accessibility in mind. Today, there are 1,071 picnic and leisure sites, many of them accessible for visitors with limited mobility, along with scenic lookouts, hiking trails for all levels, and hundreds of cycling paths. Additional amenities include 'walk for health' trails, playgrounds, fitness stations, information points, and well-marked roads with signs and maps.

Community Forests

25 Community Forests: KKL-JNF collaborates with 25 urban communities adjacent to forests, where residents, municipalities, and KKL-JNF work together to care for and cultivate these green spaces. These forests serve as 'green showcases' and activity hubs for the communities. Many volunteers, known as 'community forest trustees,' dedicate time and effort to nurturing the forests, conducting surveys, and guiding city residents on nature and cultural heritage.

~1,300 KM of Cycling Trails

KKL-JNF designs and develops forest cycling trails that provide opportunities to engage in a healthy and popular forest sport.



Ilan Shaham - KKL-JNF Photo Archive



JiniPix - KKL-JNF Photo Archive



Avi Balaban - KKL-JNF Photo Archive

Information is based on the KKL-JNF Spokesperson's Office and the Forestry Dep.

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