



Citizens for the Environment Voluntary Association Summary Report for the Year 2016

The **Citizens for the Environment** Voluntary Association is an environmental social organization that was founded in 1990 to promote awareness of environmental issues and public health, to influence decision-makers, to publish professional information, to help communities to achieve the realization of human rights and to combat all environmental hazards, all of the above in cooperation between Jews and Arabs.

The organization operates throughout the State of Israel, particularly in the northern part of the country.

Since its inception the Association has managed to promote public awareness of environmental issues, to support dozens of groups of citizens, to encourage leadership among many communities, to influence on the environmental behavior of polluting factories and institutions, to promote legislation and affect on the implementation of environmental laws.

[Association Site >>>](#) [Facebook Page >>>](#)

The **Citizens for the Environment** Voluntary Association operates in four main areas of action:

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| Knowledge is power | Promoting awareness, publishing information in the field of the environment and public health, by conducting surveys, studies and reports on the environment and public health: industrial pollution, monitoring and enforcement, water and sewage, waste, radiation, occupational health of workers, freedom of information. |
| Policy change: | Policy change among decision makers, at all levels, at the local and Central Government, promoting the implementation of environmental legislation, and activity in order to increase enforcement by public, media, legal and advertising activity, stationery and alerts, debates in the Parliament, ministries meetings in Government offices, and more. |
| Civil enforcement | Civil enforcement and exhaustion of rights to a healthy environment – managing legal proceedings through which the principle of "the contaminator shall pay" is implemented on the one hand, and improving the inhabitants' reality the on the other hand. These procedures are an important layer in changing the functioning of the authorities, the behavior of the pollutants and help the residents to change the reality in which they live. |



Activity in the community

Helping groups get ready for action, mainly around contaminated areas, encouraging leadership among disadvantaged populations and activities to encourage sustainability, while providing support and guidance over time to community activities, as well as legal instruments within the framework of the "civil enforcement" activity.

Remarks:

- a. **Citizens for the Environment Voluntary Association** (in short: CFE)
- b. [Activity Summary Report for the year 2015](#)

Knowledge is power – promote awareness, publishing information and publicity in the field of the environment and public health, by conducting surveys, studies and reports on environmental and public health: industrial pollution, monitoring and enforcement, water and sewage, radiation, waste, occupational health of workers, freedom of information.

The series of ["Industrial Hush" Reports](#) includes, from 2010 until today, 19 reports. All the reports and the complete information are published in full in the Voluntary Association's site, in a friendly and accessible way and are open for the public study and use. This is the biggest and best concentrated repository of information on the above mentioned issues.

1. The [first](#) report examined 25 plants from the Western Galilee area. March 2010.
2. The [second](#) report examined 22 plants from the Western Galilee area. March 2011.
3. The [third](#) report examined 30 plants from the Lower and Upper Galilee area. January 2012.
4. The [fourth](#) report examined 10 plants from the Tefen Industrial area. February 2013.
5. The [fifth](#) report checked the environmental information published by the authorities according to clause 6a. July 2013.
6. The [sixth](#) report - Workers' exposure in hazardous materials plants. December 2013.
- The seventh report: - 13 reports on the Haifa Bay issue:
7. [Interim report](#) - Situation picture. May 2014.
8. Air contamination from the Haifa Port. August 2014.
9. [The air monitoring array in the Haifa Bay area. Semi - annual](#). November 2014.
10. [Inventory of the pollutions and transfers to the environment for the year 2013](#). January 2015.
11. [Pollutions from the plants in the Haifa Bay area. Comparison with the PRTR Data](#). January 2015.
12. [The air monitoring array in the Haifa Bay area. Annual Report](#). February 2015.
13. [Environmental sampling in the Haifa Bay](#). November 2015.
14. [Inventory of contaminating pollutions to the air during 2014](#). November 2015.
15. [Surprise inspections at the chimneys in the Haifa District plants in November 2015](#)
16. [Contaminating pollutions from the transport and industry in the Haifa Bay](#). December 2015.
17. [The "Industrial Hush" at the Haifa Bay area continues - 2015 Annual Summary](#). December 2015.
18. [Registry of the pollutions and transfers to the environment during 2015](#). December 2015.
19. Haifa Bay Plants Data Sheets. January 2017.



In 2016, we published several reports, documents and commentaries:

- Comparative report that analyzes the factory emissions as reported by the enterprises themselves to the 2015 Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR). This is a report we publish each year in response to the publication of data on the emissions of the Ministry of Environmental Protection. One of the most important conclusions that we were able to show in the report is that a large part of the Haifa Bay enterprises increased their emissions in 2015, in contrast to what was claimed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection. All the data is displayed on an [interactive map](#) and is open for public use.
- [Analysis of the data on air quality in Yom Kippur 2016](#) - which demonstrates that the claim that Yom Kippur air quality improves drastically because there is no transportation on this day is incorrect, or even misleading. Transport is a significant source of pollution, especially in the cities, but in industrial areas, or where there exists another contamination source such as a pirate dumping ground for example, then their impact is much greater than from traffic and also in days like Yom Kippur, we have encountered high values of air pollution.
- [Report on environmental hazards in the Haifa Bay](#), in cooperation with the Green Trend, which gave an updated situation picture as of June 2016 about the hazards in the Haifa Bay in general, and also in comparison with the State's statements.
- We published comprehensive information about the uses and distribution of ammonia in Israel, during the Ammonia Container Campaign in Haifa Bay.
- [Haifa Bay Plants Data Sheets](#)

This is actually the 13th and final report in Haifa Bay reports – together they constitute an almost complete repository about environmental pollution in Haifa: the monitoring array, the Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR), transport and industry, the ammonia tank, the emissions inventory, attitude towards the Ministry of Environmental Protection reports, Haifa port, emissions from factories, and more.

- **South Acre emissions mapping survey** - Unlike the petrochemical complex of the Haifa Bay, the northern area of the Haifa Bay, which has quite a few significant sources of pollution, is getting less public attention in recent years and therefore there is insufficient information on existing pollution sources there. The public living in the area there has many complaints and concerns; many of them have approached us in recent times. Therefore we initiated a study to gather updated and relevant information for mapping the emission sources in the Accre Bay area, the kind of materials that are emitted and the public receptors. In 2016 we conducted an area mapping, gathered information, and sent a detailed freedom of information request to the Ministry for Environmental Protection. We are now at the stage of analyzing the information and samples we received from the authorities. In addition, we continue to represent the region residents in the Dialogue Committee that was established between the Steel Mill enterprise and the area residents and the authorities.
- **Commentary Articles on national and local media**
Following is a list of articles on these environmental issues published in Hebrew in national and local media:
- [And thank you to Minister Litzman, Who are the Gatekeepers?, And there is no independence, True and false in the National Plan for the Haifa Bay, Ammonia and Reliability](#) (in Hebrew it is a [wording game](#)), [Your factories pollute more than my car, The Ministry for Secret services, Hanukka \(Chocking\) money](#) (in Hebrew it is a [wording game](#)), [Finally the miracles will come to an end.](#)



▪ **Promoting the Environmental Information Act**

The Environmental Information Act that we initiated in 2005 caused a revolution in the field of environmental information publications initiated by the authorities and greatly eased for us as well as for the public the task of finding the required information. Yet much of the information is not published by the authorities, and we have to go through hard work in order to get the information by applying petitions according to the law and even [administrative appeals under the freedom of information act](#) against the authorities, particularly the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

We perform [regularly a follow-up](#) monitoring of the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act and of information initiated by authorities. In the year 2016 we approached all government hospitals and the City Unions that did not publish information on their websites, and we held correspondences with each one of them. Following this procedure, four hospitals started to publish information on a regular basis and several City Unions improved their information or began to publish partially.

▪ **Raising the issue of publicity in Arabic media by the Ministry of Health**

[We addressed the Minister of Health](#) requesting that the ministry's campaigns regarding nutrition and health shall be published in Arabic as well.

▪ **Haifa Port** - Following the special report we published in 2014 on the [aspects of air pollution from the Haifa Port](#),

we continue to monitor the environmental behavior in the Port and the implementation of the environmental requirements that the Port was given. In the year 2016 we had a lot of correspondence on this matter with the Port and with the Ministry for Protection of the Environment, met with the port management and made a tour to get a close view on how the requirements were being implemented and collected information and monitoring results.

▪ **The establishment of a Research Fund** which sponsors today 6 studies that were selected through a process of publishing a call for applicants in 2016 [in addition to the establishment of the Research Fund we also established a Special Committee to choose the researches].

- ✚ Cancer and the link to heavy metals in soil
- ✚ Relationship between exposure to heavy metals and IVF treatments
- ✚ Policy document for Haifa Bay
- ✚ The contribution of urban runoff to the pollution of the Haifa Bay coast of and its impact on public health
- ✚ Micro-plastic in sediment as a marker of pollution and anthropogenic disturbance in Haifa Bay
- ✚ Mapping of emissions to the air in the Accre area.

▪ **Residents' meetings and lectures**

Throughout the year we met with several groups of residents and dealt with a variety of subjects, gave lectures and held dialogue with different groups. In each of the sessions and connections new partnerships and cooperation were created that give us a chance to communicate, give and mainly receive information, feedback, ideas and new initiatives from the field and also create seeds of activists: a residents and activists meeting at Kibbutz Yagur where we hosted the journalist Michael Miro who projected a film he had prepared, [a residents' meeting in Kfar Vradim](#), a lecture to students at the [opening ceremony of the Law Year at the Academic Center of Law](#)



[and Business](#), [participation in a Panel on the subject of Preventive Precaution Principle](#), hosting the [Environment Women Forum](#) in which are active women from all over the country that are engaged in environment and sustainability, meeting with businessmen in the Jezreel valley, home meeting with Jacob Ziv in Kfar Vradim, meeting with Harashim residents, and more...

- **Continuous monitoring on the treatment of radiation excesses in educational institutions**

Following the report on [Radiation in the Educational Institutions](#) that we published on the 31st of August 2015 - we continued monitoring the issue, and we held correspondence with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Environmental Protection, as well as with 13 municipalities where excessive radiations in educational institutions were found and were not handled or only partially handled.

Policy change among decision makers, at all levels, in the Local and Central Government, promoting the implementation of environmental legislation and activity aimed at increasing enforcement, by public, media, legal, advertising, stationery and alerts activity, discussions in the Parliament, meetings at various Government ministries, and more.

- 2016 started with one of the most important records in the history of environmental struggles in the State in an issue that is the core of the CFE Voluntary Association's work, namely, the industrial activity impact on health and on the environment, with conclusions of the first year of [epidemiological survey](#) in the Haifa Bay that revealed the frightening amount of morbidity around the petrochemical industry in the Haifa Bay. The revelation of the severe industrial pollution and its strong impact on the health of residents of Haifa Bay is one of the most significant achievements of [our flagship project](#) - the "[industrial hush](#)" that has achieved the most significant, the biggest impact this issue had ever gotten so far on one side, and an illustration of the concept of "[industrial hush](#)" that became manifested in a very striking way immediately afterward, when the State decided to "nationalize" the research and established a Special Committee to examine its conclusions. This Committee published in August a message that practically "buries" the survey and allows the continuation of "silence" and the State's denial about the causal relationship between industrial pollution and excess morbidity in the Haifa Bay.
- We launched a [joint campaign](#) (together with the "Green Trend" "Moving" and "Courage") against the expansion of The Refineries, which also included a joint appeal to the Attorney General to approve the Council to convene a rehearing after the Ministry of Finance, through the [Planning Manager, rejected all the appeals filed opposing the expansion of the polluting industry in the Haifa Bay](#), which would allow the industry to grow to enormous proportions.

As a result of the joint activity, and other legal appeals and addressing, the Attorney General decided on the 11th of November 2016 that the National Council is authorized to convene a rehearing and debate again and on the 11th of November 2016 the Ministry of Health published a white paper calling the National Council not to accede to the enterprises' demand to approve plans without the conditions intended to safeguard public health.

- We published information about the events in [Carmel Olefins plant](#) and participated in discussions held in the Court in the framework of enforcement proceedings against the plant.



- We passed notes and [critical information on new emission permits](#) issued to factories in Haifa in September 2016. Following the comments given to drafts, we caused to change the permits emission conditions given to the Oil Refineries complex plants.
- Participation in four discussions of the State Audit Committee when discussed the conclusions of the report of the State Comptroller regarding the treatment of pollution in the Haifa Bay, one of these discussions was due to our initiative and organization and was conducted at the University of Haifa. [Discussion summaries can be found on the site.](#)
- We addressed in an unprecedented way to the [Attorney General requesting to open a criminal investigation](#) against the professional senior level of the Ministry for the Protection of the Environment on suspicion of breach of trust crimes and non-fulfillment of official duty under sections 284 and 285 of the Penal Code in relation to the Ministry's severe failure in the handling of the industrial environmental pollution of Haifa Bay following the [exposure](#) of conflicts of interest in the Ministry's senior level in the Haifa District.
- [We addressed the Minister for Protection of the Environment, the Attorney General, the Civil Service Commission and the State Comptroller regarding the deficiencies in the appointments](#) of senior officials in the Haifa District.
- We [filed an objection Document](#) to the proposal of the Minister for Protection of the Environment to annul license fees and permits for factories.
- We addressed the Minister for Protection of the Environment demanding to [publish information about administrative hearings](#), we passed information to the Transparency Committee in the Knesset that held on the 23th of November 2016 a discussion about administrative hearings that the Minister for Protection of the Environment conducts under a cover of secrecy and without any transparency to the public neither in the protocols nor in the decisions.
- We prepared information for queries to the Ministers of Health and Protection of the Environment on the subject of contaminants emissions in the Haifa Bay, and morbidity data and the epidemiological survey.
- We have uncovered a new shady business plan (that did not succeed) [in the framework of the Law of Arrangements](#), the intention of which was to cancel several enforcement procedures under the jurisdiction of the Ministry for Protection of the Environment and converting the Ministry for Protection of the Environment to unnecessary by transferring the powers to provide conditions in licenses under the Businesses Licensing Act regarding infrastructure business (including energy), from the Ministries for Protection of the Environment, of Health, fire - fighters and more to the Ministry of Energy.

ליאורי, זוהי פסקה עם נוסח משפטי מובהק, ממליץ שתבדקי את התרגום, עם עו"ד או כו"ב.

Civil enforcement and exhaustion of rights to a healthy environment – conducting legal proceedings which the principle of "the contaminator will pay" on the one hand, and improvement of the reality of the inhabitants on the other hand are implemented in fact. These procedures are an important layer in changing the performance of the authorities, the behavior of the pollutants and in helping the residents to change the reality in which they live. The Law of "the contaminator will pay" that we initiated in 2007 allows today to the Government and the courts to impose heavier penalties. The enforcement procedures adopted nowadays by the authorities do not suffice yet.

During the year 2016:



- **We Initiated a series of civil suits in the wake of polluting events:**
 - Class action lawsuit against [Israel Railways](#) following the incident of Bromine leaks in the south.
 - Class action lawsuit against [Elcon Plant](#) because of severe odor hazards and air pollution.
 - Class action lawsuit against the "Mey Sheva" corporation (Beer Sheva water and sewage Utilities Corporation) because of the pollution of the Patish and Besor Rivers with sewage.
 - Class action lawsuit against the "Mey Yuvalim" corporation (?? water and sewage Utilities Corporation) because of the pollution of the Lachish River with sewage.

- **We conducted multiple legal proceedings in the framework of various residents' struggles which led to results and successes such as:**
 - [Closing an illegal waste passage station in Pekiin](#), following a petition filed against the Pekiin local Council and a ruling requiring the Council to deal altogether with the waste problem in the village.
 - Enforcing the authorities of Mate Asher and Mazra'a to handle waste fires in their jurisdictions with the verdict of the [District Court in Haifa that approved our petition](#) against the local authorities and against the Western Galilee Towns Association and forced them to take care of the problem of waste fires and their public health hazards.
 - The establishment of a Dialogue Committee for complaints of residents against the Steel Hood Factory, following the Contempt of Court procedure against the plant. In the framework of the Committee where we represent the citizens, all claims against the factory are discussed together with an external expert and representatives of the Ministry for Protection of the Environment and the Association of Towns. As part of the process, more strict requirements for the factory were established and new termination procedures for the plant were determined, the plant carried out a number of improvements and other complaints continue to be discussed.
 - The foundation of a Research Fund named after Assaf Shani that was donated by the Steel Hood Factory, following the above-mentioned Contempt of Court procedure. Because of the previously mentioned Fund, together with the Izhar Fund, 6 selected important studies are nowadays funded, studies / surveys following the publication of a call for the submission of nominations in 2016:
 - Cancer and the link to heavy metals in the soil.
 - The relationship between exposure to heavy metals and IVF treatments.
 - A Policy Document for the Haifa Bay.
 - The contribution of the urban runoff to the pollution of the Haifa Bay coasts of and its impact on public health.



- Micro-plastic in sediment as a marker of pollution and anthropogenic disturbance in Haifa Bay.
- Mapping of emissions to the air in the Accre area.

The activity in the Community helped the groups to get organized into the activity, particularly around contaminated areas, encouraging leadership among disadvantaged populations and activities to encourage sustainability, while providing support and guidance over time to community activities, as well as legal instruments within the framework of the "civil enforcing" activity.

In the year 2016 escorted several communities and residents' groups in environmental struggles:

- The struggle against the Steel Hood Factory in the Ein Hamifratz and Kfar Masaryk region.
- The fight against moving the Frutarom Factory to the Gilboa Regional Council - accompanying the struggle for two years, and a great achievement at the end of 2016 with the referendum results immediately followed the decision of the Council not to allow the move of the Frutarom factory to the Gilboa region.
- Accompanying the Evron and Mazra'a residents struggle to prevent waste fires.
- Accompanying the Pekiin residents struggle to prevent waste fires.
- Accompanying the Beit Jan residents struggle against illegal antennas.
- Accompanying the struggle of residents in Githa, Januah Jat, against the quarry working illegally - the quarry's work was temporarily suspended.
- The struggle against the oil drillings in the Golan - the oil drilling was stopped for the time being.

Circle of partnerships in 2016.

Our Circles of Partnership grow and change from year to year. In the year 2016 we worked in collaboration with additional organizations, municipalities, private lawyers, specialists, business companies and academic institutions in cooperation in general, as well as through lectures, placement of students in the framework of training programs / clinics' involvement, etc.

We continue to work with students from the Clinic for Environmental Justice at the Tel Aviv University, The Clinic for Environmental Regulation at the Bar Ilan University, the Legal Clinic in the Carmel Academic Center and from the Involvement Unit at the Tel Aviv University.

Staff and Management people, in 2016.

Advocate **Jamila Hardel Hakim**, Manager
Liora Amitay, volunteer, ran the Voluntary Association until September 2016.



Ayala **Hudra**, information manager.

Oded Zehavi, volunteer specializing in the Legal department, until October 2016.

Board of Directors of the Citizens for the Environment Voluntary Association in 2016.

Dr. Janet Mikhail: G.P., resident of the Pekiin Village.

Baruch Katlab: Water technician. Resident of Kibbutz Gaaton.

Jack Ben Zaken: Contractor, resident of Kfar Vradim.

Habib Huri: Graphic designer, Fassuta.

Tzila Shenhar: Activist, resident of Kfar Vradim.

Raheli Gazit: Manager of the Senior Voluntary Association, Kibbutz Ein Hamifratz. –

Control board.

Adv. Salwa Wakim: Independent advocate, resident of the Rama village, – **Control board.**