

ISRAEL

U.S. Forest Service International Programs

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Since 1987, collaboration between the U.S. Forest Service and the Israeli natural resources management sector has included:

- Completion of 26 research projects related to improving natural resource management in Israel;
- Sixty two technical assistance missions to Israel by U.S. Forest Service experts and U.S. based partners;
- One hundred educational and professional exchanges completed by Israeli experts in the U.S.; and
- The participation of more than 45 Israeli experts in international seminars organized by the U.S. Forest Service.

OVERVIEW

Israel's dynamic landscape and geographic location—at the crossroads of Africa, Asia, and Europe—endow it with a rich environment and diverse natural resources. Though small in area, Israel has a unique geography and varying climate that creates a diversity of ecosystems as one crosses the country from north to south and east to west. As a result of this variation, Israel hosts over 500 species of birds, 116 species of mammals, and 7 million people. Given this biodiversity, Israeli institutions (governmental and non-governmental) have made significant efforts to conserve and restore natural resources over the past century.

The U.S. Forest Service has maintained several close collaborative partnerships in Israel for 30 years, and continues the cooperation today on forestry and natural resource management issues common to both Israel and the United States. Currently, the U.S. Forest Service works with Israeli partners on a range of issues including climate change, ecosystem services, multi-functional forest planning, and remote sensing.

Current collaborative activities seek to continue growing the historic partnership between the U.S. and Israel and address the most pressing environmental issues facing both nations. Israel's forests provide critical ecosystem services for the public – from water and food to open spaces that provide numerous recreational opportunities – but these vital natural resources are severely threatened by increasing land-use pressures driven by a growing population and numerous climate change risks. The U.S. Forest Service supports Israeli efforts to monitor and value ecosystem services and integrate this data into land use planning and management.

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*The unique "Terraces" located in Mount Carmel Forest in northwest Israel.
Photo credit: Brehan Doud, U.S. Forest Service.*

