

Report: Israeli life in 2030

Special Report of the Ministry of Environmental Protection: "Israel 2030" - that life would be like here in 20 years • Now we need only to

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The alarm clock sends you to another wintery morning, but you don't have to turn on the light, nor the heating system. The smart house system knows how to regulate the temperature in the rooms you are going to be in advance, and opens the shades.

In a minute, you will enter the shower and open the tap. No more cold water that have to run for long seconds. You will get warm water thanks to the system that will be set for the right temperature. The water you use can also be used for flushing the toilet and watering the garden. The soap, shampoo and even the tooth-paste will be made of safe materials for the environment and men.

Instead of arguing with the children to get ready for school quickly, they will be able to take their time. School will be a short walk from home and you will even be able to take the bus to work and get there at the exact hour you need to get there. If you insist on a car, you won't have to buy it. There will be many renting places all over the country, where

you will be able to rent a car for a few hours. This will of course save the insurance, garage repairs and parking.

After you say good bye to the children, you would be able to get to work in ten minutes. On the way you would be able to drop the organic food scraps in the neighborhood compost and buy coffee at the co- operative neighborhood coffee shop that will be run by your friends and neighbors. When the coffee is less than 1 shekel, there would be no reason not to buy it out.

Under the office there will be small coffee shops and small stores like on a Moshav and there will be no need to go shopping in big shopping malls.

The work place will allow parents to leave at 4 p.m. twice a week to be with the children. There will also be a “minute bank”. You would be able to teach other children piano, for example, and in return your children will receive tutoring or sports lessons.

Everyone will do something for someone else and all will benefit.

Believe it or not, but this utopia vision that seems to be taken out of Hertzels book or from the visions of the first settlers in Israel, is written here and now. Responsible for it are: economy, society, environment, planning and public policy, ecology, energy and water specialists, who wrote a detailed report about “Israel 2030” together with the Ministry of Environment and the Jerusalem Institute for the study of Israel. They analyzed the trends and processes that occurred here in the past 20 years. In the report, they clarify that the script is a story that describes a possible future, taking into consideration processes that might lead to the vision.

As an matter of fact, the script is only one of five. There are less optimistic scripts, including one in which there is no critical change of conception as to what the situation is today.

The forecasts were developed by Prof. Shlomo Hasson from Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Amongst the leading writers of the report were: Galit Cohen, vice president of planning and policy in the Ministry of Environment, Valery Brachia, the director of the center of Environmental policy of the Jerusalem Institute for the research of Israel.

All the scripts assume that the population in Israel will reach 11 million people in 17 years and that the average life expectancy will increase from 81.6 years to 86 years.

The connection between economical growth and pollution will be disconnected thanks to the usage of friendly technologies, such as cars that would be less polluting.

“The vision of existence described earlier, even if it is not the most realistic one, is definitely the ideal vision: vivid, but pleasant cities, everything close to your home, accessible and comfortable public transportation, small businesses, economical growth based on recycling, less energy consumption and as so, less expenses on electricity and water, cheaper services to the consumer, smaller expenses for the middle class, smaller gap between rich and poor, has anyone mentioned Socialism?

The idea is that the document will be used as a basis for the new government strategic planning for the meaningful decisions", says Galit Cohen.

The influence on the environment and the quality of life is not only in the hands of the office, but in the hands of all government offices that are supposed to work in co-operation. Only when we, the citizens see that the government operates in a co-operative way for a better future, can we take the responsibility for the environment and aim for our children and grandchildren to live here in a pleasant environment.

Are you sure you are talking about Israel?

All is based on trends and changes in the world. Who ever says that it can't be that Israelis won't use cars, should look at Manhattan. Not everyone there has a car, because parking is expensive and the public transportation is good. When you talk about a vision, you should decide what you want to give your citizens. The whole world deals with the quality of life and we all know that the incentives should be economical, because this is what works best.

Economical incentives that would encourage buying services rather than products will also have a social value.

Cohen says that the forecast was conceived from a thorough analysis of existing trends and procedures and of those expected to be in the future.

"It is known, for example, that the population will grow. Where will everyone live? It is clear that they must live in the city and in order for people to live in the city, it must have a high quality of life, so we need to find the way to improve the quality of life in the city and we must improve the infrastructures so that people can get to work and we must give economical incentives so they can reach this quality of life".

"Air pollution, severe shortage of open spaces and water pollution are not heavenly decrees", says Minister Gilad Arden, "and we can choose ways and directions that will guarantee our quality of life here even for 20 years from now. In the past years we have managed to assimilate more and more social environmental long term considerations in the actions of the state offices. The goal of this work is to allow a long term national planning, in which all government offices will participate for a sustainable better future".