NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE TRANSITION TO A CIRCULAR MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN ISRAEL UNTIL 2035

DRAFT

1. Introduction

   The field of municipal waste management in Israel is in a state of prolonged crisis. Waste generation per capita significantly exceeds the average indicators of OECD countries, landfilling remains the dominant practice, and the existing infrastructure and legal regulation do not ensure the achievement of climate goals, environmental quality, and the fair distribution of environmental risks between territories and population groups.

   At the same time, Israel possesses a unique combination of factors enabling a rapid transition to a more sustainable model: a high level of education and technological development, an active civil society, extensive experience in innovation and start-up culture, and a strong scientific base in ecology, economics, and governance.

   This Strategy formulates political priorities and the main directions of action until 2035 (with a perspective until 2040) for the transition from the linear model "produce–use–discard" to a circular municipal waste management system based on waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and the fair distribution of benefits and burdens.

   The Strategy:

   • sets the vision and fundamental reference points for the waste management governance system;

   • defines seven strategic objectives and the related system of key performance indicators (KPI);

   • outlines a phased plan for reform implementation;

   • describes the institutional architecture, economic instruments, and monitoring system required to achieve the objectives.

   Detailed analytical justifications, a historical overview of legislation, international cases, and technical calculations are set out in separate analytical and technical annexes to this Strategy.

2. Vision and principles of the Strategy

   2.1. Vision

   By 2035, Israel builds a municipal waste management system under which:

   • waste generation per capita steadily decreases, and resources are used more efficiently;

   • most of the waste stream is directed to reuse, recycling, and organics treatment, while landfilling and uncontrolled dumping become marginal phenomena;

   • local communities gain access to circular economy infrastructure - libraries of things, repair centers, exchange and food sharing facilities;

   • environmental and sanitary risks are distributed more fairly, and vulnerable population groups and peripheral territories cease to be the country's "waste backyard";

• waste policy is aligned with climate goals and contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing resilience to climate change.

2.2. Core principles

The Strategy is based on the following principles:

1. Waste management hierarchy
   Priority is given to: waste prevention, extending product lifetimes and reuse, then recycling and organics treatment, then energy recovery of residual streams, and only at the very end - landfilling.

2. Circular economy as a framework
   Waste is considered not as a “disposal problem,” but as part of a broader system of production, consumption, logistics, social policy, and spatial planning.

3. Justice and protection of vulnerable groups
   Priority in investments and support measures is given to territories and communities bearing the greatest burden of environmental risks, as well as socially vulnerable population groups.

4. Scientific grounding and data
   Decisions are made on the basis of up-to-date waste composition (morphology), regular studies, transparent data, and independent evaluation of effectiveness.

5. Phasing and scenario approach
   The Strategy sets a realistic (baseline) and an enhanced (ambitious but achievable) scenario, making it possible to adapt the pace and scale of reforms taking into account political, economic, and social dynamics.

6. Partnership of the state, municipalities, business, and civil society
   Reform success is possible only with the active participation of all system actors: the state, local authorities, business, NGOs, the academic community, and citizens.

7. Transparency and accountability
   Key indicators, decisions, and the results of Strategy implementation are public and available for oversight by citizens and civil society institutions.

8. Strategic objectives until 2035
   The Strategy establishes seven interrelated strategic objectives. For each objective, baseline (realistic) and enhanced (ambitious) scenarios are предусмотрены, the parameters of which are detailed in the KPI system.

Objective 1. Reduction of municipal waste generation per capita

Reduce municipal solid waste generation per capita through waste prevention, the development of sharing, repair and reuse, and the reduction of food losses.

• Baseline target: reduction of municipal waste generation per capita by 2035 by approximately 20–25% compared to the 2025 level.

• Enhanced target: reduction by 30–35% by 2035 with a perspective of reaching –40% by

2040.
Key KPI: volume of MSW in kg/person/year.

Objective 2. Increase in the share of recycling, composting, and reuse
Ensure a transition from dominant landfilling to a system in which recycling, composting, and reuse become the main direction of waste management.
• Baseline target: by 2035, achieving at least 50–55% recycling, composting, and reuse of the generated MSW volume.
• Enhanced target: achieving 60–65% by 2035 with a perspective of further increase by the 2040 horizon.
Key KPI: share of MSW directed to recycling, composting, and reuse.

Objective 3. Significant reduction of landfilling and elimination of illegal dumps
Sharply reduce the share of waste sent to landfills and completely stop the practice of illegal dumping and uncontrolled disposal.
• Baseline target: reduction of MSW landfilling share to 20–25% by 2035.
• Enhanced target: reduction to 15–18% by 2035 with a perspective of reaching ≤10% by 2040.
Key KPI: share of MSW directed to landfilling.

Objective 4. Safe management of household hazardous waste
Create a nationwide system for the safe collection, transportation, and treatment of household hazardous waste (batteries, lamps, medicines, household chemicals, etc.).
• Baseline target: ensuring safe collection of at least 70% of household hazardous waste by 2035.
• Enhanced target: achieving 80–85% by 2035 with a perspective up to 90% by 2040.
Key KPI: share of household hazardous waste entering specialized systems.

Objective 5. Development of a network of local circular hubs and sharing services
Ensure that a significant part of the population has access to infrastructure for reuse, repair, and the exchange of goods and services.
• Baseline target: by 2035, at least 50% of the population have access to circular services, and 20–25% of households use them regularly.
• Enhanced target: by 2035, at least 70% of the population have access, and 30–35% of households are active users.
Key KPIs: share of the population with access to hubs; share of user households; number of operating hubs.

Objective 6. Reduction of food losses and waste across the entire chain
Reduce food losses and waste at all stages - from production and processing to retail, food service, and households.
• Baseline target: reduction of food losses and waste volume by 30% by 2030 and by 40–45% by 2035.
• Enhanced target: reduction by 50% by 2035, with the achievement of SDG 12.3 fixed within the 2035–2040 horizon.
Key KPI: volume of food losses and waste (million tonnes/year and % to the baseline level).

Objective 7. Formation of a sustainable culture of responsible consumption and waste management
Make responsible consumption, separate collection, repair, reuse, and the reduction of food waste a social norm for the majority of the population.
• Baseline target: by 2035, at least 80% of households participate in separate collection; at least 70% of the population know how to handle the main waste streams; a significant share of students receive education on the circular economy.
• Enhanced target: by 2035, at least 60–70% of the population regularly practice several circular behavior models (sorting, reuse, repair, reduction of food waste).
Key KPIs: participation in separate collection, prevalence of circular practices, coverage by educational programs.

4. Key policy directions
   To achieve the strategic objectives, several interrelated policy directions are identified.

4.1. Waste prevention and changing the consumption model
• Development of regulatory and economic measures to reduce single-use packaging and products, and to stimulate reusable solutions and eco-design.
• Support for the service economy (rental, sharing, subscriptions instead of ownership).
• Promotion of repair practices and extending product lifetimes, including reducing the tax burden on repair services.
• Incorporation of waste prevention criteria into public procurement and municipal procurement.

4.2. Organics and biological waste
• Introduction of phased mandatory separate collection of organic waste in large and medium municipalities.
• Development of a network of composting and anaerobic digestion, including large regional facilities and local solutions.
• Phased ban on landfilling untreated organics after sufficient treatment capacity is commissioned.
• Use of derived products (compost, digestate, biogas) in agriculture, greening, and energy.

4.3. Materials recycling and sorting infrastructure
• Modernization and development of the network of sorting facilities to improve the quality of separated fractions and reduce the “return” flow to landfills.
• Support for recyclers through stable long-term contracts and transparent rules of the game.
• Development of regional cooperation between municipalities to optimize logistics and facility siting.

4.4. Household hazardous waste and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
• Creation of an accessible network of collection points for hazardous waste in every municipality, including retail (pharmacies, supermarkets, DIY stores).
• Expansion and strengthening of EPR systems for packaging, electronics, batteries, lamps, textiles, and other product categories.

• Introduction of requirements for labeling hazardous products and simplifying information for citizens.

4.5. Local circular hubs, libraries of things, and repair initiatives
• Support for the creation and scaling of local circular hubs combining the functions of reuse centers, libraries of things, repair café, swap spaces, and food sharing.
• Integration of hubs into social policy (support for low-income families, refugees, new immigrants).
• Training and support for municipalities and NGOs in creating and managing such spaces.

4.6. Food waste and food security
• Adoption of legislation limiting the destruction of edible food and stimulating its transfer to food banks and food sharing systems.
• Development of cold-chain logistics infrastructure and coordination between producers, retailers, HoReCa, and NGOs.
• Educational campaigns for the population on planning purchases, storing, and using food leftovers.

4.7. Education, communications, and citizen participation
• Integration of waste and circular economy topics into all levels of formal education.
• Long-term national communications campaigns with a unified brand, visual identity, and participation of opinion leaders.
• Development of citizen participation instruments: public councils, participation in infrastructure planning, citizen monitoring initiatives.

5. Institutional architecture and governance
   Implementation of the Strategy requires an update of the institutional architecture.

5.1. National waste management authority
• Establishment or repositioning of a dedicated National Waste Management Authority with a clear mandate:
o strategic planning;
o coordination of infrastructure projects;
o administration of key economic instruments (landfill tax, part of EPR payments, etc.);
o operation of a national digital data platform;
o preparation of annual public reports on Strategy implementation.
• Ensuring participation in the Authority's governance by representatives of ministries, municipalities, civil society, the academic sector, and the business sector.

5.2. Role of municipalities and regional corporations
• Strengthening the capacity of municipalities in planning, contracting, control, and work with the population.
• Development of regional waste management corporations where economically and territorially justified.
• Delegation of part of the powers for implementing specific measures (separate collection, hubs, education) to municipal and regional levels while maintaining nationwide standards.

5.3. EPR operators and the private sector
• Clear definition of the roles, duties, and responsibilities of EPR operators, recyclers, and logistics companies.
• Creation of transparent rules for public oversight and reporting for EPR systems.
• Encouragement of innovation and business investment in waste prevention, recycling, and circular services.

6. Financing and economic instruments
   A transition to a circular system requires sustainable and predictable financing.

6.1. Landfill tax and environmental fees
• Gradual increase of the landfill tax rate to a level that creates real incentives for recycling and waste prevention.
• Earmarking a portion of landfill tax revenues to a Circular Fund financing recycling, organics, hubs, and education infrastructure.

6.2. PAYT and tariff policy
• Implementation of Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) systems in various municipal models (by volume, by frequency, by weight) where feasible.
• Adjustment of municipal waste collection tariffs taking into account the volume and quality of separate collection, as well as the social status of households.

6.3. Extended Producer Responsibility and deposit systems
• Expansion of the scope and rates of EPR payments to finance collection and recycling systems.
• Development and modernization of deposit systems (including containers, part of reusable packaging, etc.).

6.4. Circular investment fund
• Establishment of a targeted Circular Fund that:
o invests in recycling and organics treatment infrastructure;
o supports the creation of local hubs and innovation projects;
o provides grants and concessional loans to municipalities and NGOs.

7. Phased implementation plan
   The Strategy envisages phased implementation in three phases.

Phase 1: Preparation and launch of the reform (first 3–4 years)
Main focus:
• adoption of key legislative and regulatory acts;
• establishment of the national authority and the digital platform;
• launch of pilots on PAYT, organics, hubs, and food sharing;
• update of the national waste composition (morphology).

Phase 2: Scaling and consolidation of practices (next 5–6 years)
Main focus:
• expansion of separate collection of organics and other fractions;
• commissioning of major infrastructure facilities;

• scaling the network of circular hubs;
• implementation of PAYT systems in a larger number of municipalities.

Phase 3: Deepening and adaptation (until 2035–2040)
Main focus:
• achieving KPI targets under baseline and enhanced scenarios;
• adjustment of infrastructure solutions taking into account new data;
• integration of waste policy with the climate, social, and economic agenda at a new level.

8. Monitoring, digital platform, and public reporting
   Strategy implementation is based on a monitoring system grounded in:
   • 10 key national KPI covering waste generation, recycling, landfilling, food waste, hazardous waste, circular practices, GHG emissions, and the financial sustainability of the system;
   • regular studies and measurements (waste composition (morphology), household surveys, updates of GHG assessments, infrastructure audits);
   • a national digital data platform ensuring standardized reporting by municipalities and operators and a public online dashboard;
   • an annual public report on Strategy implementation analyzing progress, deviations, and necessary policy adjustments.

9. Risks and change management
   The Strategy recognizes the presence of significant risks:
   • political and social conflict around facility siting;
   • resistance from certain economic groups benefiting from preserving the status quo;
   • limited land resources and competition for territory;
   • institutional weakness of certain municipalities;
   • possible economic crises and shocks.
   To manage risks, the following are envisaged:
   • transparent procedures for public and stakeholder participation;
   • compensation and support mechanisms for territories bearing the greatest burdens;
   • municipal capacity-building programs;
   • a flexible scenario approach allowing adjustment of the pace of implementation of individual measures.

10. Conclusion
    The transition to a circular municipal waste management system is not only an environmental but also a social, economic, and political task. This Strategy proposes a realistic but ambitious path based on international experience, scientific data, and Israel’s local context.
    Its successful implementation will require:
    • sustained political will;
    • coordinated actions by state authorities, municipalities, business, and civil society;
    • readiness for phased work, adjustments, and learning as implementation proceeds.
    The Strategy serves as a framework document setting the direction and main reference points. Specific plans, programs, and projects, as well as detailed technical solutions,

will be developed and updated in the form of annexes and sectoral documents consistent with its objectives and principles.