

# National Parks, Nature Reserves, Memorial Sites and National

## Sites Law, 1992 (Summary)

A National Parks, Nature Reserves and National Sites Council ("The Council"), nominated by the Minister of the Environment, is established by this Law to advise the Ministers of the Interior and Agriculture as to any matter relating to the implementation of this Law.

### National Parks

\* National parks are areas meant for "the public enjoyment of nature or for the preservation of areas of historic, archeological, or architectural importance."

\* The Minister of the Interior, after consulting with the Minister of the Environment, may declare an area to be a national park after the following conditions have been met:

-- All local authorities in whose jurisdiction the park will be located must be granted an opportunity to provide input as to the nature and use of the park.

-- If the area of the park includes a holy place or an historical site, the Minister of the Interior must comply with the requirements of the Minister of Religious Affairs or the Minister of Education and Culture, to ensure the protection of the holy or historical site, respectively.

-- If the area of the park is a nature reserve, the Minister of the Interior must consult with the Minister of Agriculture.

-- If the area of the park includes a military area, or is nearby a military area, the Minister of the Interior must meet the requirements of the Minister of Defense. Prohibitions and regulations imposed under this law do not apply to the Israeli Army in a military area.

An area designated as a national park may not be changed, or its designation as such revoked, unless the Interior Minister cancels his declaration. No building work or other activity will be permitted unless it has been approved by the National Parks Authority. The Minister may not cancel the declaration of a national park without the approval of the Minister of the Environment, The Council, the local authority in which the park is located, and the Interior and Environmental Committees of the Knesset.

\* A National Parks Authority, appointed by the Minister of the Environment, will manage the national parks and report to the Minister on matters relating to national parks. The Authority will be composed of "government officials, local officials, members of scientific organizations and members of the public concerned with improvement and preservation of the Israeli landscape, development of vacation and natural sites, and the preservation of areas of historical and national importance."

### Nature Reserves

\* Following consultation with the Minister of the Agriculture, the Minister of the Interior may declare an area of scientific or educational interest to be a nature reserve. A nature reserve is "an area in which animals, plants, inanimate objects, soil, caves, water and landscape are protected from changes in their appearance, biological makeup, and natural development."

\* The Minister of the Agriculture shall appoint a Nature Reserves Authority to manage the affairs of nature reserves. The eleven member authority is to be made up of government officials, members of scientific and public bodies, and representatives of the public. Among the responsibilities of the Nature Reserves Authority are "to initiate and plan the establishment of nature reserves, to manage and develop the reserves and to protect natural assets..."

\* Following consultation with the Israel Academy of Science, the Minister of Agriculture shall appoint a professional committee of zoologists, botanists, geographers, ecologists, and planners to advise the Nature Reserves Authority.

\* The Nature Reserves Authority may set rules for the use of nature reserves, following consultation with the local authority in whose jurisdiction the reserve lies, and with the permission of the Minister of Agriculture.

### Protected Natural Assets

\* A "protected natural asset," as defined by this Law, means "any thing or class of things in nature, whether animal, vegetable or mineral, whose preservation, in the opinion of the Minister of Agriculture is of value." The Minister of Agriculture may declare, after consultation with The Council, any natural asset to be a protected natural asset throughout Israel or any specific part of it.

\* A person may not damage, destroy, pick, uproot, poison or otherwise change a protected natural asset except with the permission of the Director of the Nature Reserves Authority.

\* Selling protected natural assets is prohibited except with the permission of the Nature Reserves Authority. A person may not own a protected natural asset unless he receives permission from the Nature Reserves Authority.

\* The Minister of Agriculture may promulgate regulations to protect natural assets from damage.

### National Sites and Memorial Sites

\* The Minister of the Interior, following consultation with The Council, may declare a place to be a "national site." As is the case with national parks, the Minister must also consult with those in whose jurisdiction the site lies. National sites are protected from damage or alteration. The Minister of the Environment may promulgate regulations delineating the means of preservation and protection of a national site. When a national site carries special local importance, the Minister of the Environment may give the local authority the authority to manage the site.

\* A "Memorial Sites Council" will be appointed by the Government upon the recommendation of the Ministers of Defense, Labor, and the Interior. The Council is authorized to advise the Ministers of the Interior and Defense as to all issues concerning memorial sites. The Minister of

the Interior, following consultation with the local authority and the Memorial Sites Council, may declare an area a memorial site. Upkeep and maintenance of memorial sites is the responsibility of the local authority in whose jurisdiction the site lies. The Minister of the Interior, after consulting with the Minister of Defense, is authorized to promulgate regulations concerning memorial sites.

Bylaws and Regulations. The Ministers of the Environment, the Interior, Agriculture and Defense may promulgate regulations as to the implementation of this law, each according to his area of authority.