

Impacts of Climate Change in Israel

Climate Change in Israel will lead to an influx of climate refugees, unrest, and instability in the region. With an increase of refugees seeking asylum, Israel has two outlooks that can lead to a political divide - refugees can be either admitted or rejected from entering Israel. Some may argue that an influx of refugees will create job and resource scarcity, while others may argue that, by rejecting their requests for asylum, Israel is violating international human rights. Food and water scarcity that will result from climate change will create more displaced people in the Middle East, resulting in possible wars as well as providing opportunities and increased support for extremist groups who may offer viable alternatives. Over the next decade, 7-10 million people in the Middle East and North Africa will be forced to leave their homes.

Food and water insecurity, as well as fuel insecurity, can very quickly lead to unrest. For instance, Israel imports 90% of its grains and legumes, and is therefore extremely dependent on their availability and affordability in breadbasket nations. Resource scarcity can provoke nationwide unrest, and competition over transboundary resources (such as the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River) can elevate this to even higher levels.

Climate change will also likely lead to governments being less capable of handling unrest.

Apart from food, water and fuel insecurity, more frequent extreme weather events will increase the need and the costs of emergency relief. When environmental conditions converge with political and economic ones, stability and security are in great jeopardy. This pertains to Israeli-Palestinian stability. Just 3% of Gaza's shrinking water supply remains safe for human consumption, and contaminated water causes 26% of all illnesses in Gaza. If the state of emergency in Gaza's water and sewage sector continues, an endemic disease outbreak or other public health crisis is imminent, with the risk of it spreading to Israel and Egypt.

Public health will be negatively impacted by climate change not just in Gaza, but all throughout Israel. Extreme heat and cold events can lead to illnesses or death. Drought and extreme heat can create great influxes of patients in hospitals, overcrowding them and leading to a higher chance of the spreading of more serious diseases. Temperature increase will bring an invasion of vectors, such as mosquitos. A lack of available drinking water can increase cases of cholera and typhoid. Cardiovascular and respiratory diseases will be exacerbated by air pollution.

Despite the great threat of climate change in Israel, many politicians prioritize national security and economic growth. However, tackling climate change can help

Israel promote these key concerns by saving resources, providing energy security, delivering economic opportunities and high-quality jobs, and improving the overall quality of life. Social gaps will also increase as a result of climate change, as increased taxes, medical and housing expenses will disproportionately affect impoverished people. The challenges of water and energy security and their links to ongoing and future climate change will risk the reinforcement of existing social inequalities. Food prices skyrocket as a consequence of a decline in crop yields, a decline in the nutrition content of food crops, a catastrophic decline in insect populations, desertification, chronic water shortages, and conditions too hot for human habitation in significant food-growing regions. In 2018, Israeli food prices were already 19% higher than other OECD nations, and this is expected to increase.

Due to climate change, the internal cohesion of Israel will be under great stress, as a result in the dramatic rise in migration and changes in agricultural patterns and water availability. Armed conflict between nations over resources is likely, with social consequences ranging from increased religious fervor to outright chaos. Climate change is a national security concern in Israel, and a regional security threat in the Middle East.