



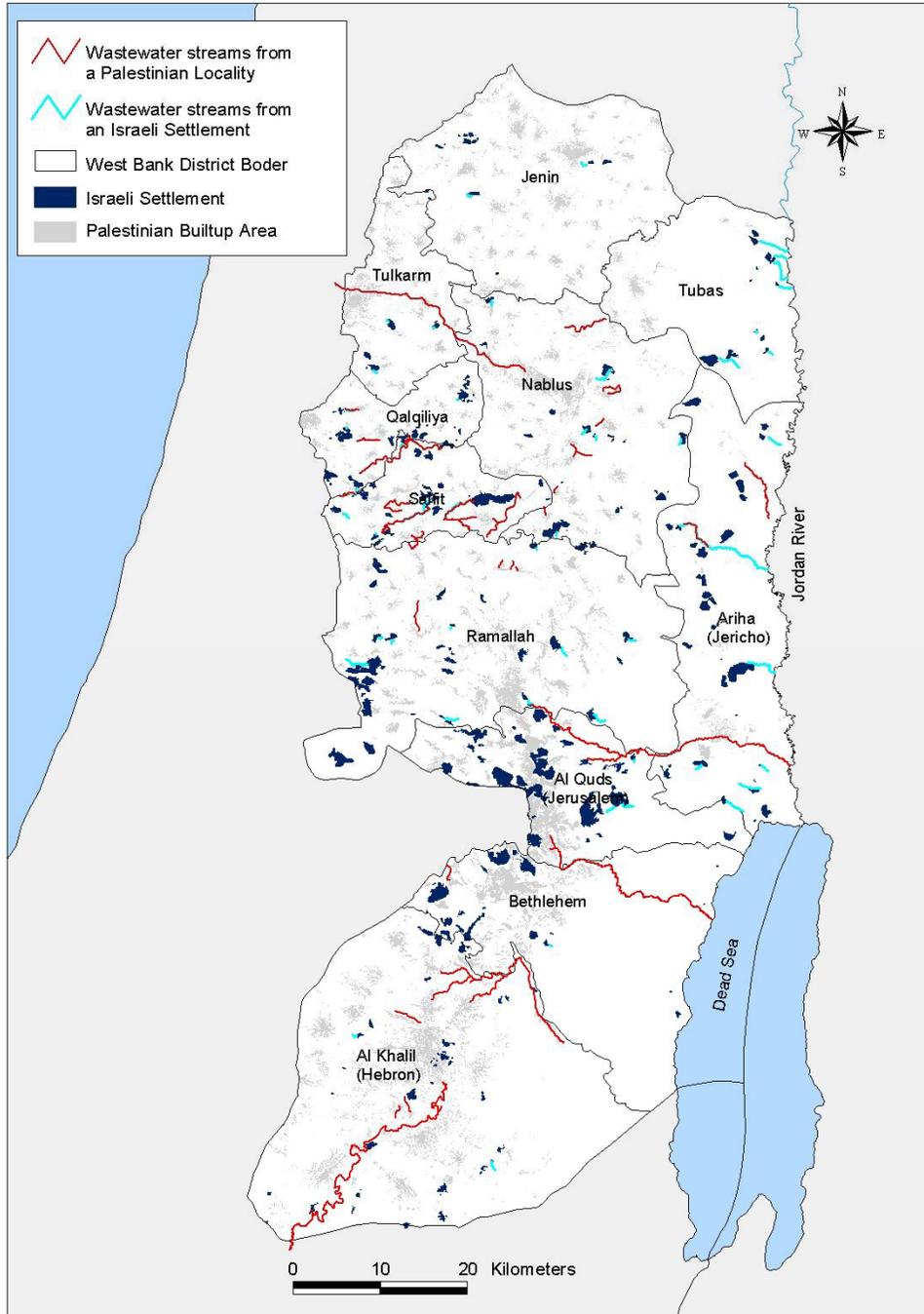
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The Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem (ARIJ) Refutes the Report of the Israeli Occupation Authorities, which accuses the Palestinians polluting the environment and water sources

The Ministry of Environmental Protection in cooperation with the Israel Nature and National Parks Protection Authority and the Israeli Civil Administration published last week a report on the monitoring of pollution in the West Bank, pointing out that the wastewater flowing from Palestinian communities is the main source of the contamination of water sources, while the report didn't specify the practices that the Israeli settlers did against the Palestinian environment, which contribute significantly to the degradation and depletion of natural resources and transform the Palestinian areas to a garbage dump. It is known that the illegal Israeli settlements built on the occupied Palestinian lands get rid of their untreated wastewater in the valleys and the Palestinian agricultural areas without any commitment to the environmental standards or indifference to Palestinian citizens living in the vicinity of the valleys and those who live from the products of the agricultural land affected. The quantity of the wastewater generated annually by about half a million Israeli settlers living in the West Bank including East Jerusalem amounts to 54 MCM, this quantity is different from what the Israelis mentioned in their report of which were estimated at about 17.5 MCM annually, since this amount doesn't include the wastewater generated from about 230 thousand settlers living in the settlements in East Jerusalem governorate, which Israel doesn't count them with the number of settlers living in the settlements in the West Bank. While the estimated annually amount of wastewater generated from the Palestinian communities in the West Bank is 52 MCM. Thus, the amount of wastewater generated by the settlers is more than the amount generated from 2.3 million Palestinian citizens. This can be attributed to the fact that they consume much more water for domestic purposes. An Israeli settler consumes water equivalent of 5 times as much as a Palestinian citizen. Map (1) shows the wastewater streams flowing from the Israeli settlements in the West Bank.



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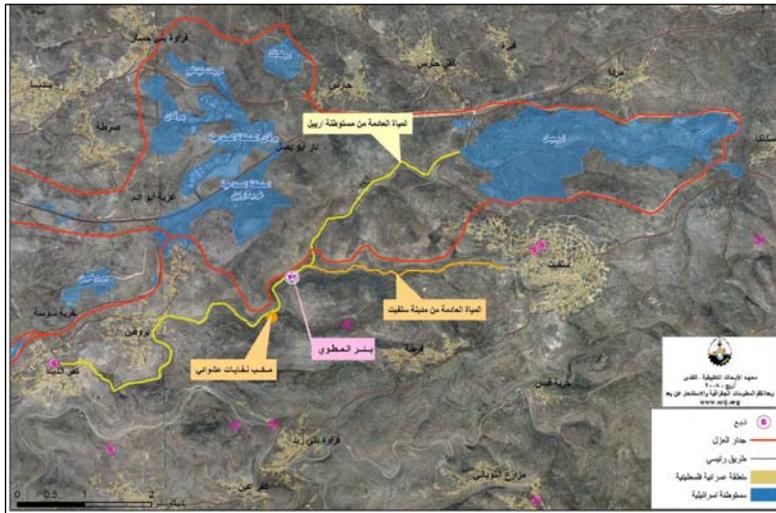
Map (1): the wastewater streams flowing from the Israeli settlements in the West Bank.



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Since the occupation of the West Bank in 1967, Israel worked to neglect the development projects for water and sanitation sector in the Palestinian Territories, while the Israeli authorities collect taxes from the Palestinians but that the proceeds of these taxes were mostly acted in the interests of the occupation authorities and settlers, and the facts indicate that the management of water and sanitation sector was still in violation by the Israelis, even during the various stages of the peace process, the Israelis have been evacuated the agreements within the peace process related the protection of the environment and sustainable use of natural resources. Although the Palestinian Authority has drawn up plans and strategies related to the wastewater and its treatment but it collided with the Israeli refusal to suspend, Israel has deliberately and impeding the implementation of the projects related to water and sanitation in the Palestinian territories. For example, the wastewater generated from Ariel settlement located in Salfit governorate, flows in Al-Matwe valley which is one of the sources feeding the aquifer in the western basin in the region. The wastewater flows to reflect the neighboring agricultural lands and continue towards Borkan village and kafr al-Dek village towards the green line (map 2). It was supposed that a wastewater treatment plant to be constructed in Al-Matwe Valley within the limits of the Salfit town, funded by the KFW German cooperation. However, obstacles and conditions set by the Israeli side prevented the success of the project. Israel, where required for the approval and authorization given for the construction of the Wastewater treatment plant in area "C" that this project will be a joint project to treat also the wastewater generated from Ariel settlement. Because of that the Palestinians rejected the Israeli proposal because it's a clear recognition and explicit legitimacy of the illegal Israeli settlements on the Palestinian Land. This was also the case in Bethlehem governorate regarding the wastewater flowing in Wadi Al-Nar valley, as the Israelis want to establish the wastewater treatment plant in Al-Nabe Mousa area and to treat the wastewater generating from the East Jerusalem Israeli Settlements and Ma'ale Adumim in the area. Also the Israeli occupation authorities rejected the request of the Palestinian to treat the wastewater in Tulkarem governorate and insisted on the transfer of the wastewater to behind the Green Line to treat them there and take advantage of the treated wastewater to reuse in the agriculture, at the same time Israel discount one shekel for each meter of wastewater from the budget of the Palestinian Authority. It should be

noted here that 150 projects was suspended and freezing in the area regarding improving the basic infrastructure services, particularly water and sanitation services for Palestinian population, because Israel refuse these projects for security reasons. While the Israeli settlements water projects in the Palestinian areas doesn't require any agreement, Israel retained (maintained) its responsibility of the water and sanitation systems in the West Bank settlements during the transition period.



Map (2): wastewater generated from Salfit city and Israeli Settlements in Wadi Al-Matwe valley

It is clear that the Israeli strategy in this regard is the control of all Palestinian water resources, where Israel presently seized more than 80% of fresh water resources and is currently seeking to exploit the water and wastewater treatment to be used for agricultural purposes, loaded the Palestinian side the cost of treatment while the Palestinian does not benefit from this treated water which is considered an important source of water. And the strange in all this is that the Israeli occupation authorities try to recruit the funds for the wastewater treatment plants through the donor countries under the slogan of helping the Palestinians and at the same time they legitimize the settlements.

Also, the Israeli report didn't mention the role played by the Israeli factories in the destruction of the Palestinian environment, where these factories dispose its industrial wastewater, which contains hazardous materials and toxic heavy



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metals and pigments, all without any treatment near the Palestinian communities and adjacent valleys, threaten the Palestinian population in those areas of significant health risk in addition to groundwater pollution and the destruction of nature and burning crops, as in the Barkan Israeli industrial zone and areas west of Ariel settlements which was built on the lands of Salfit governorate in 1981, also it is considered one of the largest Israeli industrial zones in the region. As well as in the case of Tulkarem areas, especially west of the town of Tulkarem, where there are many Israeli factories, including factories of agricultural pesticides, paints, dyes and plastics.

In the light of the foregoing, the Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem (ARIJ) calls upon the international community and donor countries to insist and exert pressure on Israel to apply the agreements signed with the Palestinian side and give the Palestinians full freedom to manage their natural resources and the application of environmentally sound management of solid wastes and wastewater which include the establishment of wastewater treatment plants in the suitable areas. Acknowledging the right of Palestinians to ensure compensation form the Israel's damages and crimes against the Palestinian environment.