

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES IN ISRAEL

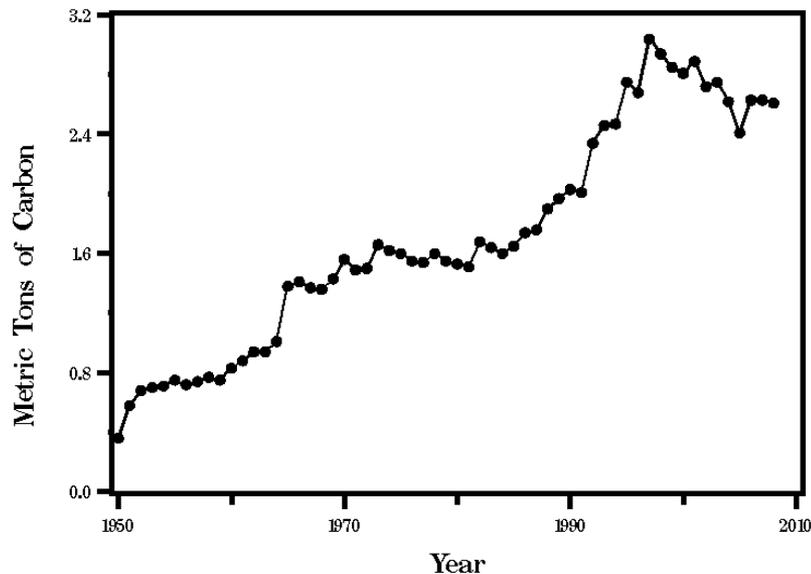
Eran Feitelson and Itay Fischhendler
Department of Geography
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

A Brief Overview of Israeli Climate Change Policies

- 1980s Encouragement of solar panels (mainly for water heating)
- Ratification of UNFCCC (1996) and Kyoto Protocol (2004): Israel is a non-Annex 1 country; establishment of inter-ministerial committee (1996)
- 2008-9: Government decisions to reduce electricity consumption (by 20%), set goals for alternative energy (10%), set Ministries DGs committee to address mitigation and adaptation; Reports (McKenzie, Chief scientist MOE)
- 2010: National Program to reduce GHG emissions by 20% from BAU scenario (including funding: 2.2 bn NIS)
- 2011: specific targets for different renewables, with goal of 5% of total energy by 2014

What happened in practice

Per capita GHG emissions



Implementation of National Strategy

- Research
- Monitoring of GHG emissions
- Voluntary verification of GHG reductions
- Encouragement of alternative energy (primarily solar)
 - Rooftops
 - Farms

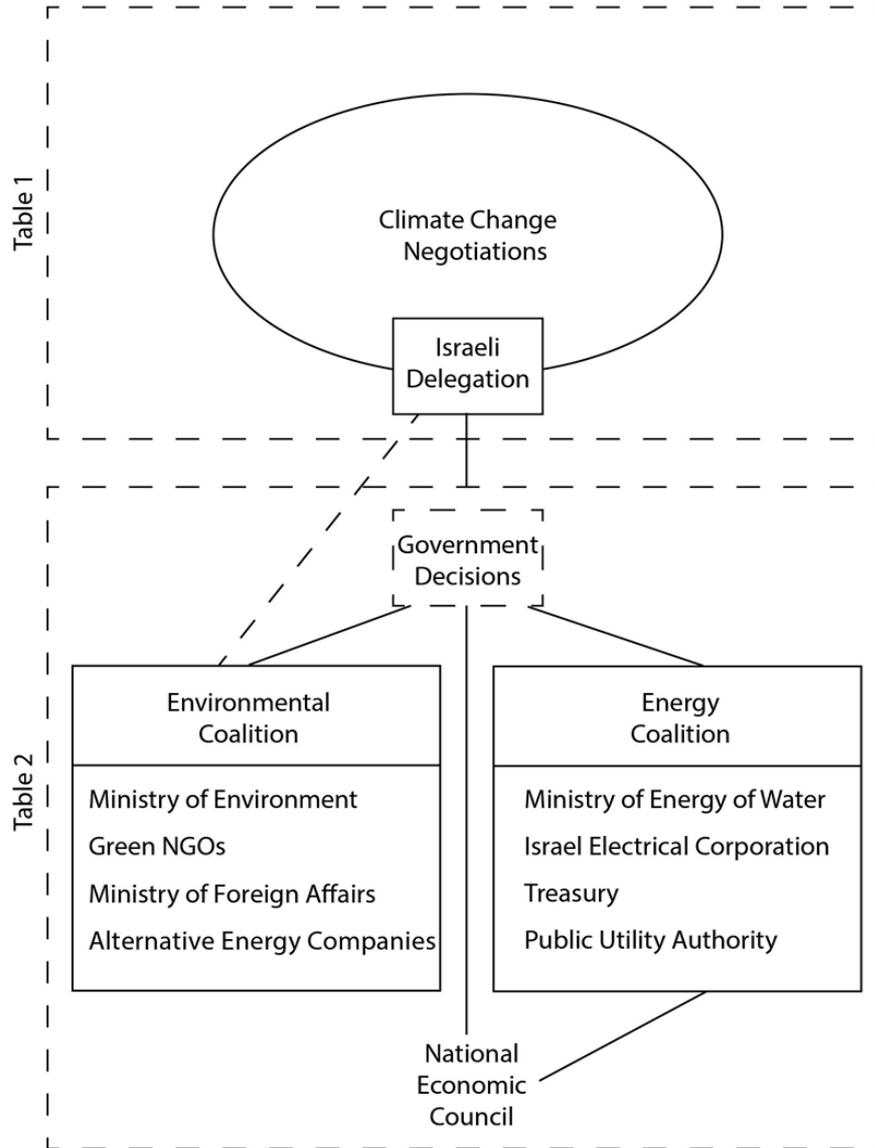
The Run-up to Paris

- 2013: Budget for GHG reduction eliminated
- Aug. 2015: National strategy annulled
- Government decision 542 (Sep. 2015) sets New targets:
 - 8.8 tons/capita by 2025 and 7.7 by 2030
 - Reduce electricity use by 17% vis-vis BAU scenario by 2030
 - Reduce private Km driven by 20% by 2030
 - Renewables will account for 13% by 2025 and 17% by 2030
- Requires ministers to advance operational steps within 45 days
- Allocate 300 Mn NIS for 2016-9

Question: what explains fluctuations?

- The actors and their relationships
 - At the international level (Table 1)
 - At the intra-national level (Table 2)
- The advocacy coalitions' rationales
- The shifts in power between coalitions

The actors: Table 1 and Table 2



The Arguments of Each Coalition

Environmental Coalition

- Cost effectiveness:
 - Of alternative energies
 - Of energy conservation in new buildings
 - Externality costs should be included in CBA of energy sources
- Energy independence
- International obligations

Energy Coalition

- 20% improvement is sufficient to get to OECD average
- There is excess production capacity and hence no need for new sources
- Cost of alternative energy is high due to cost of network connection
- Investments should be made only in what is economically justified

The factors that affect the dynamics

Toward Environmental Coalition

- OECD accession process (2006-9)
- Decline in solar panel costs
- Prime Minister's decision to travel to Paris
- Kendel commission (reducing subsidies for renewables)

Toward Energy Coalition

- Gas finds
- Decline in price of fossil fuels
- Investments in coal-based power stations;
- Adaption measures
- (debt of IEC and power of its worker union)

Adaptation Measures

- Large scale seawater desalination
 - Over 500 MCM
 - Increases amount of recycled wastewater, and subsequent shift in water for agriculture
- Coastal cliff protection actions

Postscript: Post-Paris

- Government Action Plan (10/4/16):
 - 300M NIS, + 500 NIS in government guarantees
 - Encourage energy savings
 - Energy savings in government buildings & reporting of energy use
 - Encourage shift from coal to gas
 - Encourage greater efficiency in transport
 - Encourage green buildings
 - Encourage renewables
- Consultations regarding specific actions
- Critiques: Green NGOs – inadequate measures and funds

Conclusions

- Climate change mitigation policies of a small country is primarily a function of internal power balance between advocacy coalitions
- External political events can affect in some cases the power balance between coalitions (OECD accession, PM travel to Paris)
- Sunk cost in existing energy infrastructure is a major impediment for alternative energy use
- IPCC reports have almost no effect on mitigation policies of small countries
- Do adaption policies have a detrimental effect on mitigation goals?