



مركز الميزان لحقوق الإنسان
AL MEZAN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Al Mezan Exposes Ecocide in Gaza: Israel Responsible for Environmental Catastrophe

16 October 2024



Gaza, 16 October 2024 — Al Mezan Center for Human Rights (Al Mezan) has released a new report titled "[Ecocide: Israel's Deliberate and Systematic Destruction of Gaza's Environment](#)", which highlights the severe and long-term environmental damage caused by Israeli military actions and policies in Gaza since October 2023 and its consequences on 2.3 million Palestinians.

The report analyzes multiple forms of environmental degradation caused by Israeli actions in Gaza. It examines Israel's deliberate targeting of critical water sources and infrastructure, which has resulted in severe water shortages and contamination. Additionally, the report explores the destruction of Gaza's waste management sector, focusing on the collapse of liquid waste (sewage) systems, the

accumulation of solid waste, and the unsafe disposal of medical and hazardous waste. The analysis also addresses soil damage caused by the rubble of destroyed homes and buildings, which has contaminated arable land and hindered agricultural activity. The deterioration of air quality due to Israel's continuous bombing campaigns, as well as the growing issue of noise pollution linked to military operations, are also discussed.

The report finds that Israel's actions in Gaza amount to ecocide, and then examines how ecocide is employed as a tool of genocide. Through its systematic destruction or damage of vital components of the environment, including water, soil, and air, Israel has severely undermined the ability of Gaza's ecosystem to sustain life. The extensive targeting of water infrastructure, waste management systems, and agricultural land, alongside the widespread use of explosive ordnance in densely populated areas, has caused irreversible environmental damage. The report highlights that these acts are not isolated, but part of a broader, intentional strategy aimed at eroding the foundation of human survival in Gaza.

By intentionally and systematically targeting or eroding key components of a healthy and clean environment, Israel has deliberately inflicted living conditions calculated to bring about the physical destruction of 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza, while also causing them serious mental and bodily harm—two genocidal acts foreseen in Article 2(c) and 2(b) of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) respectively.

As we write, the widespread destruction of Gaza's environment, including vital ecosystems and resources, has reached a point where the survival of the over two million Palestinians – half of whom are children – is severely threatened. The sharp depletion of essential resources such as clean water, air, and arable land not only threatens the current population but also compromises the ability of future generations to live and prosper in Gaza.

Hussein Hammad, Al Mezan's researcher, stated, "Israel's ecocide in Gaza, impacting the three essential components of the environment – soil, water, and air – has become glaringly apparent across various areas of Gaza, particularly in the overcrowded areas where internally displaced Palestinians are forced to live. The most alarming aspect is that the consequences of this environmental catastrophe are both immediate and long-term, posing serious threats of epidemics and diseases that could jeopardize the health and future of generations for years to come. Despite the magnitude of Israel's environmental destruction in Gaza, it continues unchecked, met with complete international silence."

The report concludes with a series of recommendations for urgent action, calling on the international community to take immediate steps to address the ongoing ecocide and genocide in Gaza, including:

- **Enforce an immediate ceasefire** in Gaza to halt Israel's genocidal military campaign and environmental destruction.
- **Implement a two-way arms embargo** on Israel to stop the flow of weapons fueling the genocidal violence and environmental degradation.
- **Impose lawful sanctions** on Israel to ensure compliance with international law and the three legally binding provisional measures orders issued by the International Court of Justice.
- **Ensure Israel immediately, fully, and unconditionally lifts the siege, closure, and blockade** on Gaza, ending all associated unlawful restrictions on the movement of people and goods.
- **Guarantee unimpeded delivery of essential humanitarian aid** to Gaza, including medical, food, and clean water supplies, to address the immediate needs of the population.

- **Restore access to vital infrastructure** for over two million Palestinians in Gaza, ensuring access to clean water, electricity, and sanitation services.
- **Increase support for environmental recovery initiatives** in Gaza, providing the resources necessary for long-term ecological restoration.
- **Call for an investigation and prosecution** of individuals within the Israeli government and military by the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, for acts of genocide and ecocide committed in Gaza.
- **Hold perpetrators accountable** for the widespread destruction of Gaza's environment and the genocidal violence inflicted upon its population.

For media inquiries or to request an interview with representatives from Al Mezan, please contact: advocacy@mezan.org

Read the full report, click [here](#).