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Week 23: Environmental Effects of Occupation


WEEK 23 JUNE 4 TO JUNE 10 **ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF OCCUPATION**

40% of surface water pollution comes from Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Israeli-occupied East Jerusalem.

Israeli transfers industrial waste to treatment plants in the West Bank, causing pollution, without Palestinian consent.

West Bank Palestinians each consume 107-156 cubic meters of water per year; a Jewish settler uses 650-1,714 cubic meters per year.

In Gaza, 95% of water is unfit for human consumption due to pollution.



Sources: EWASH, OCHA oPt, OHCHR, Al-Haq, Palestine-Israel Journal

<http://kuminow.com/EnvironmentalEffects>

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Dear ,

A quick note: We're trying to simplify the newsletter, making it easier to read and focused more on the issue being addressed by Kumi Now this week. It has been reorganized and a few things have been cut. We will end the newsletter each week with a book or film recommendation...If you have anything you'd like us to recommend, [drop us an email](mailto:kumi@kuminow.com) at kumi@kuminow.com.

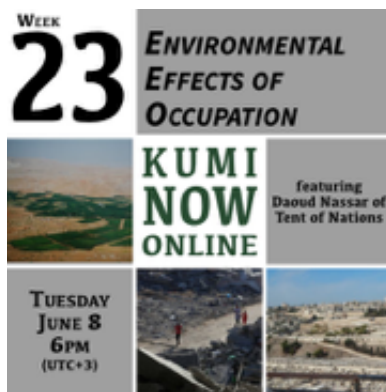
Happy [World Environment Day](#)! On Tuesday **Rifat Kassis**, founder of **Defense for Children International** spoke to us about about the deadly effects that the occupation and Israel's direct actions and violence have on Palestinian children. The replay of the session is now available [on YouTube](#) and [on our website](#). The website includes his bio, the advocacy instructions, and links shared during the gathering.

We would love it if you could share the session with your community. You could use language such as:

Last week we learned about the horrors of child fatalities that are a direct result of Israel's occupation of Palestine. Our guest was Rifat Kassis, founder of Defense for Children International. Learn more in the latest Kumi Now online gathering. <https://youtu.be/TlySgtxxR3o>

And now, let's move on to Tuesday's online gathering:

Next Online Gathering



June 8: Week 23 - Environmental Effects of Occupation

[Full information on the gathering is here.](#)

June 5 is World Environment Day. While Palestinians as a people are under constant threat and assault from the occupation, the environment around them, and on which they rely, bears similar attack. A community can't hope to heal in an environment that is sick, and conversely, a society that is suffering is unable to aid the environment in its own recovery.

Our guest will be **Daoud Nassar** of **Tent of Nations**.

Time: Tuesday, June 8, at 6:00pm East Jerusalem, Palestine time (UTC+3) That's...

- Pacific (Seattle/Vancouver): 8am
- Central (Chicago): 10am
- Eastern (New York/Toronto): 11am
- Atlantic: 12pm
- Newfoundland: 12:30pm
- Greenwich (London): 4pm
- Central Europe (Paris/Stockholm): 5pm
- South Africa: 5pm
- Manila: 11pm

Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94679502800> (There's no registration page, so please set an alarm for yourself and use this link on Tuesday.)

Remember, if you'd like to receive a reminder about the gathering an hour before it begins, please use the [registration form at the bottom of the page](#).

This Week's Kumi Now Entry

Please note: To match the dates in the book, we will now be posting a new entry each Friday, and this newsletter should go out each Friday or Saturday.

Sharing and publicizing: The graphics in this newsletter are designed to be the perfect size and shape to share to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. So each week you can help the cause simply by sharing these images online. It's one more option you have to help.

Kumi Week #23: Environmental Effects of Occupation

Week 23 of Kumi Now is now available [on the website](#). June 5 is World Environment Day. While Palestinians as a people are under constant threat and assault from the occupation, the environment around them, and on which they rely, bears similar attack. A community can't hope to heal in an environment that is sick, and conversely, a society that is suffering is unable to aid the environment in its own recovery. With this in mind the Kumi Now community this week looks at the environmental effects the occupation and what we can do so that together we can *rise up*.

Please read the essay on this issue and the story from Raja Shehadeh. And here are a few more facts for you:

WEEK 23 JUNE 4 TO JUNE 10 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF OCCUPATION

Just the facts... *Palestinians have been denied access to the Jordan River, their main surface water resource, since 1967.*

40% of surface water pollution comes from Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Israeli-occupied East Jerusalem.

Restrictions to grazing land have undermined herding livelihoods and increased the dependency on humanitarian aid.

There are 122 trillion cubic feet of recoverable gas off the Mediterranean coast. Palestine can access none of it.

As a result, the oPt is dependent on Israel for its energy and imports 100% of its petroleum.

Combined Israeli restrictions on agriculture cost the Palestinian economy US \$2.2 billion each year.

Israel earns US \$3 billion each year from Dead Sea products.

Israeli transfers industrial waste to treatment plants in the West Bank without Palestinian consent and causing pollution.

Israeli companies extract 17 million tons of West Bank stone annually, almost all for the Israeli market, despite prohibitions in international law against exploiting an occupied territory.

In Gaza, 95 percent of water is now unfit for human consumption due to pollution.

Sources: EWASH, OCHA oPt, OHCHR, Al-Haq

<http://kuminow.com/EnvironmentalEffects>

Understanding the Environmental Effects of Occupation: Just the Facts...

- Palestinians have been denied access to the Jordan River, their main surface water resource, since 1967.
- 40% of surface water pollution comes from Israeli settlements in the West Bank Israeli-occupied East Jerusalem, including settlements there.
- 16 Palestinian communities are dependent on springs as their only source of drinking water.
- Access restrictions to grazing land have undermined herding and agricultural livelihoods and increased the dependency on humanitarian assistance.
- 30% of drinking water in Gaza is lost through network leaks.
- Israeli quarry companies extract 17 million tons of West Bank stone annually, almost all for the Israeli market, despite prohibitions in international law against exploiting an occupied territory.
- The transfer of Israeli industrial waste to treatment plants in the West Bank, without Palestinian consent, contributes to the environmental scarring of the occupied territory.
- In Gaza, the collapse of the coastal aquifer is contributing to a significant health crisis among two million Palestinians.
- There are 122 trillion cubic feet of recoverable gas off the Mediterranean coast of Gaza, Israel and Lebanon. Palestine can access none of it.
- As a result, the oPt is almost completely dependent on Israel for its energy and imports 100% of its petroleum.
- Israel earns \$3 billion each year from Dead Sea products, and its 15 hotels on the shore generate around \$291 million.
- Israel's national water company, Mekorot, routinely cuts the water supply to Palestinians — sometimes by as much as 50 percent — during the summer months in order to meet demand in the settlements.
- In Gaza, 95 percent of water is now unfit for human consumption due to pollution.
- Combined Israeli restrictions on agriculture cost the Palestinian economy \$2.2 billion each year.
- The World Bank estimates that Palestine would boost its economy by \$3.4 billion if it was able to exploit its own resources.
- West Bank Palestinians each consume 107-156 cubic meters of water per year; a Jewish settler uses 650-1,714 cubic meters per year.

These facts are drawn from:

- ["EWASH Advocacy Task Force: Water resources in the West Bank"](#)
- ["Occupied Palestinian Territory: Humanitarian Facts and Figures"](#) from **OCHA oPt**
- ["Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967"](#) from **OCHCR**
- ["Facts on the Ground: How Natural Resources Fuel the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict"](#) from **AI-Haq**
- ["The Environmental Impact of Jewish Settlements in the West Bank"](#) by **Violet Qumsieh** for **Palestine-Israel Journal**

Learning More

You can learn more by reading the article ["An Environmental Nakba: The Palestinian Environment Under Israeli Colonization"](#) by **Mazin B. Qumsiyeh** and **Mohammed A. Abusarhan** for **Science for the People** and the report ["Environmental Nakba: Environmental injustice and violations of the Israeli occupation of Palestine"](#) from **Friends of the Earth International**.

To go deeper, we are developing an extensive list of [Additional Resources](#) at the bottom of this week's entry as well as a [YouTube playlist](#) on the subject.

Once you understand the situation you'll want to get involved. Here's the Kumi Action for

this week:

Kumi Action



The **Palestine Museum of Natural History** does amazing work, and deserves your support. Help it out by doing one (or more!) of the following:

- Run a quick fundraising drive and send a contribution to the museum at <https://www.palestinenature.org/donations/>.
- The Palestine Museum of Natural History is very close to well-known tourist destinations such as Rachel's Tomb and Banksy's Walled-Off Hotel. But it receives much less traffic. If you or someone you know is planning to visit Palestine, and specifically Bethlehem, add the museum to your itinerary: <https://goo.gl/maps/qGyw9wwYSol2>
- And if you aren't planning such a visit, you can help others find it. Contact a local travel agent or tour company and provide them information on the Palestine Museum of Natural History. Alternately, promote it online on a site like TripAdvisor.

Share news of your donation or advocacy for the museum on social media. Include a link to this page of the Kumi Now website along with the hashtags #KumiNow and #Kumi23.

You Should Know

One or two people, companies, or organizations generally related to the issue of the week you should know, and how you can follow them online.



Palestine Museum of Natural History (PMNH) and Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability (PIBS)

The **Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability (PIBS)** and the **Palestine Museum of Natural History (PMNH)** were established to research, educate about, and conserve Palestine's natural world, culture, and heritage. They use this knowledge to promote responsible human interactions with our environment.

They were founded in 2014 by the well-known activist and professor Dr. Mazin Qumsiyeh and his wife.

You can find the institute and museum on their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#). Videos from their workshops are sometimes posted to Dr. Qumsiyeh's [YouTube channel](#).

Dr. Qumsiyeh also publishes a weekly Human Rights Newsletter. It is definitely worth your time to [subscribe](#). You can also check out his [website](#), and follow him on

[Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



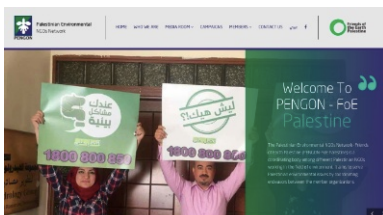
Palestine Heirloom Seed Library (PHSL)

As Vivien Sansour [explains](#), “The **Palestine Heirloom Seed Library** and its Traveling Kitchen project seek to preserve and promote heritage and threatened seed varieties, traditional Palestinian farming practices, and the cultural stories and identities associated with them. Based in the village of Battir, a UNESCO World Heritage site outside Bethlehem, the Library also serves as a space for collaborations with artists, poets, writers, journalists, and other members to showcase and promote their talents and work. Working closely with farmers, we have identified key seed varieties and food crops that are threatened with extinction and would provide the best opportunities to inspire local farmers and community members to actively preserve their bioculture and recuperate their local landscape. The Library also has launched a global platform for conversations about biocultural heritage. Its Traveling Kitchen is a mobile venue for social engagement in different communities, promoting cultural preservation through food choices.”

You can learn more about the Palestine Heritage Seed Library on Vivien Sansour’s [website](#) and follow it on Facebook. And you can follow Vivien Sansour on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

You can learn more about Vivien Sansour and the seed library by watching [“The Seed Queen of Palestine”](#) from Al Jazeera English and [“Vivien Sansour: Seeking Seeds, Sourcing Resilience”](#) from the Abraham Path Initiative. And of course, join us this Tuesday for the next Kumi Now online gathering.

You can buy seeds from the library [here](#).



Palestinian Environmental NGOs Network (PENGON)

The **Palestinian Environmental NGOs Network-Friends of Earth Palestine (PENGON-FoE Palestine)** is a coordinating body among different Palestinian NGOs working in the field of environment. It aims to serve Palestinian environmental issues by coordinating endeavors between the member organizations, strengthening and building the efficiency within each organization, and enhancing relations within the Network as well as with other organizations domestically and abroad.

The network includes Kumi Now partner **Stop the Wall** and several other organizations, including **MA'AN Development Center**, **Applied Research Center - Jerusalem (ARIJ)**, and [about a dozen others](#).

You can find PENGON on their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



Tent of Nations

Tent of Nations is an educational and environmental family farm. Their mission is to build bridges between people, and between people and the land. They bring different cultures together to develop understanding and promote respect for each other and our shared environment. To realise this mission, they run educational projects at an organic farm located in the hills 9 kilometers southwest of Bethlehem, Palestine. The farm is a center where people from many different countries come together to learn, to share, and to build bridges of understanding and hope.

You can find Tent of Nations on their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Upcoming Weeks

And here's what we have coming up in June so you can plan ahead and decide how you want to be a part of Kumi Now:

KUMI NOW ONLINE: JUNE, 2021

Week 22	Week 23	Week 24	Week 25	Week 26
				
June 1 <i>Child Fatalities</i>	June 8 <i>Environmental Effects of Occupation</i>	June 15 <i>Tourism and Pilgrimage</i>	June 22 <i>Palestinian Refugees</i>	June 29 <i>Nuclear Israel</i>

EVERY TUESDAY | 6PM PALESTINE TIME | KUMINOW.COM

Each week below will have an online gathering with a guest or guests speaking on the topic. The time and Zoom link are the same each week.

The weekly newsletter will always contain reminders of the upcoming online gatherings and the Zoom link. But if you're like me and need a reminder right before the sessions begin, you can [register to receive a reminder email one hour prior to each online gathering](#). And no more digging through your inbox looking for the Zoom link! Just [use the registration form at the bottom of the page](#).

June 15: Week 24 - Tourism and Pilgrimage



[Read the full entry online.](#)

For the northern hemisphere, students and families around the world are beginning their summer vacations. While in the southern hemisphere students may be looking forward to a winter break. Many people take these times to travel: to visit family, as tourists, or as pilgrims. Whether or not you are spending your own travel money to go on holiday or pilgrimage in Israel and Palestine, you can, as part of the Kumi Community, help have an impact.

For our Kumi Action we will share information about Palestinian historical and tourist sites.



June 22: Week 25 - Palestinian Refugees

[Read the full entry online.](#)

Palestinians who were either forced from or fled their homes in 1948 and 1967 hoped for a quick return to their houses and land. Few would have foreseen that, decades later, they and their descendants would be living as refugees or internally displaced Palestinians. As the United Nations celebrates June 20 as World Refugee Day,¹ we want to work to restore hope to those original Palestinian refugees and their descendants.

For our Kumi Action we will send copies of U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194 to those that really need to read it.



June 29: Week 26 - Nuclear Israel

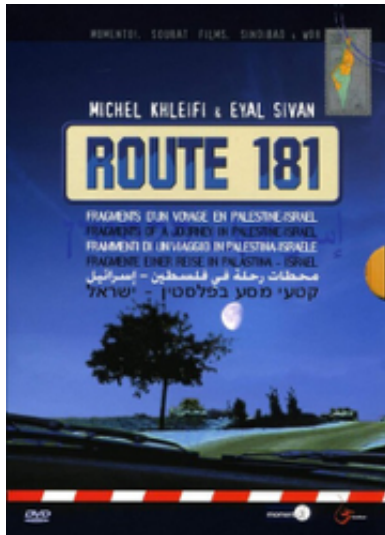
[Read the full entry online.](#)

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was signed on July 1, 1968. According to the U.N., "More countries have ratified the NPT than any other arms limitation and disarmament agreement, a testament to the treaty's significance."¹ Only five countries are not party to the treaty: North Korea, South Sudan, India, Pakistan, and Israel.

For our Kumi Action we will design nuclear hazard signs and give them to Israel.

You Should Watch or Read...

One (or maybe two) recent or not-so-recent film, book, video, article, or other piece of art that you should consider reading or watching this week. Have a recommendation? Let us know.



Route 181

This week, the **Palestine Film Institute** has chosen the first half of **Route 181** (2002, documentary, 270 minutes) for the film of the week. You have until Wednesday to watch them for free [on their website](#). More about the film:

"Route 181, offers an unusual vision of the inhabitants of Palestine-Israel, a common vision of an Israeli and a Palestinian.

In the summer of 2002, for two long months, Eyal Sivan and Michel Khleifi travelled together from the south to the north of their country of birth, traced their trajectory on a map and called it Route 181. This virtual line follows the borders outlined in Resolution 181, which was adopted by the United Nations on November 29th 1947 to partition Palestine into two states.

As they travel along this route, they meet women and men, Israeli and Palestinian, young and old, civilians and soldiers, filming them in their everyday lives. Each of these characters has their own way of evoking the frontiers that separate them from their neighbours: concrete, barbed-wire, cynicism, humour, indifference, suspicion, aggression...Frontiers have been built on the hills and in the plains, on mountains and in valleys but above all inside the minds and souls of these two peoples and in the collective unconscious of both societies.

Route 181, Fragments of a Journey in Palestine-Israel, takes us on a disorientating journey across this tiny territory with vast ramifications."



Obaida

Following up on our online gathering with **Rifat Kassis**, founder of **Defense for Children International**, we wanted to suggest you watch "[Obaida](#)", a short film produced by **Defense for Children International Palestine** a couple years ago. Obaida was shot dead by Israeli soldiers last month. You can learn more about Obaida and what happened on a [recent episode of Democracy Now!](#)

What's Next

We hope to see you in the online gathering on Tuesday, after which you'll receive another newsletter next Friday/Saturday, focused on our next issue, [Tourism and Pilgrimage](#). As always, there is more to come!

Sincerely,

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kumi@kuminow.com



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