



## Cabinet Approves National Plan to Reduce the Dependence on Oil in Transportation

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The Cabinet today (Sunday), 30.1.11, approved a national plan to develop technologies to reduce the global use of oil in transportation. The Government will invest approximately NIS 1.5 billion over the next decade and will work to raise billions of additional NIS from outside sources.

The plan is designed to formulate solutions that will lead to a reduction in the increasing global dependency on oil and oil-producing countries, which causes instability in the global economy and harms the environment through the emission of pollutants and greenhouse gases.

The plan was formulated by an inter-ministerial team chaired by National Economic Council Chairman Prof. Eugene Kandel. In the framework of the plan, the Industry, Trade and Labor Ministry Chief Scientist will create a designated track to encourage investments in the field and will assist companies through the regulatory process. The Ministry will also increase its investments in research and development in these areas.

In order to implement the plan, a director will be appointed for it, in the Prime Minister's Office, to oversee the cooperation between all relevant Government bodies: the ministries of Industry, Trade and Labor; National Infrastructures; Finance; Defense; Environmental Protection; Science and Technology; Transportation and Road Safety; Agriculture and Rural Development; and others. The director will also work to increase cooperation between the Government and non-governmental bodies including foreign governments, and relevant Israeli and international companies and organizations.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that, "I view this as a national and strategic goal of the State of Israel. Oil addiction has led to the Western world's dependence on the oil countries, and significantly damages the environment. This has significant consequences for Israel as well. We are a small country in size but we are great in science and research. Therefore, the intention is to harness strong research, scientific and technological forces and link them with other bodies so that Israel will be the leader, the catalyst in research in this field."

Industry, Trade and Labor Minister Shalom Simhon, in the framework of whose ministry the lion's share of the plan will be implemented and who is signed onto the plan, along with Prime Minister Netanyahu, said that, "The plan utilizes Israel's scientific and technological capabilities in order to implement a strategic goal on

both the national and global levels."