

Local Politics and Sustainable Municipal Agenda

Environmental Committees in Local Authorities

By Vitaly Vainblat



Internship Info

- **Intern position at “Life & Environment” - The Israeli Union of Environmental NGOs.**
- **Coordination of national NGOs’ committee on implementation of the Israeli Local Government Act (amendment: 2005).**
- **Duration: 01/03/2009 – 18/06/2009.**

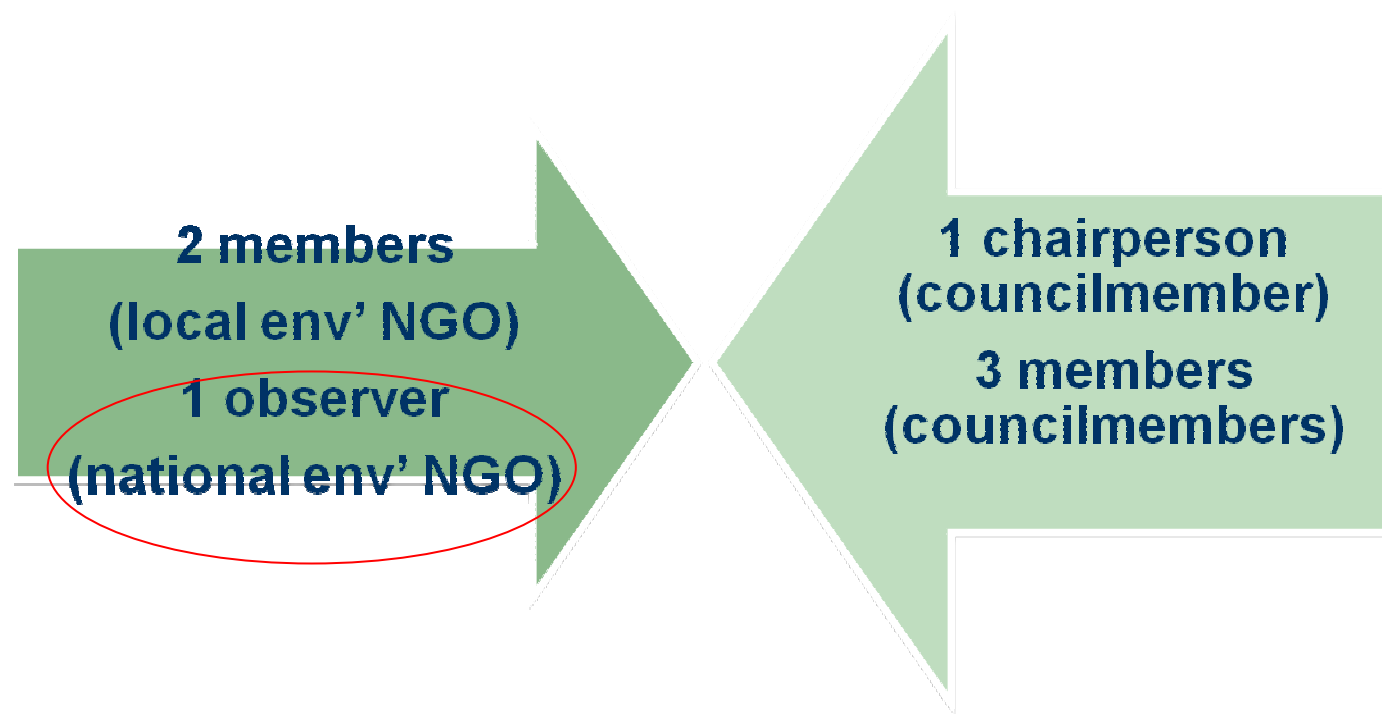
Background

The amendment to the Israeli Local Government Act (2005):

- Every local authorities (total of 253) must establish an environmental committee¹.**
- In addition to elected councilmembers, the panel of the committee shall include two representatives from civil society and one outside observer to from national environmental NGOs.**

¹Before the amendment it was their right but not their obligation.

Committee's structure



In addition to members mentioned above, there are several local officials that are invited to the committee.

Green now

- “Green Now” – environmental awareness campaign towards the 2008 municipal elections.
- National and local environmental NGOs cooperation.
- Contribution to the election of dozens of green oriented politicians.
- Work plan and legislation suggestions.
- Main target – Close the gap between urgent environmental issues and their resolution by the local decision makers.



Environmental Movement Joint Committee



Main Goals

- **Map (diagnose) local environmental committees status (quantitative and qualitative).**
- **Facilitate informational network between all chairpersons.**
- **Coordinate consultation and approval procedures between local authorities and national environmental NGOs.**
- **Recruit observers to the local committees activities.**
- **Document the work process in order to create solid database.**

Achievements

- **Current status in 64 cities: there are 46 appointed committees; 9 cities don't have committees; in 9 cities the status is unknown.**
- **46 chairpersons received first newsletter of the project.**
- **As a result of the consultation process 21 pairs of local environmental NGO's representatives have been approved and appointed as members.**
- **There are close to 30 candidates (from all over the country) for observer positions.**

Future challenges

- **Networking** – Improve network abilities and procedures. Include all members in the network database.
- **Capacity building** – Provide environmental skills to committee's members by training programs.
- **Empowerment** – maximize the circle of NGO engagement with local authorities in order to improve communication and negotiation abilities.



Thank you for your attention

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