



Briefing produced by:  
PENGON/FOEI Palestine member Stop the Wall Campaign



## **EU Funding for Mekorot: Aiding and abetting the Israeli settlement project**

### **Summary**

Mekorot is the Israeli state water company. It has monopoly control over all water sources in the occupied Palestinian territory and diverts most of the water to illegal Israeli settlements, leaving Palestinians with chronic water shortages. UN reports have criticised Mekorot's role in Israeli violations of international law, in particular its deep and clear participation in Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory and illegal Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian land.

Mekorot since the 1950s is running Israel's national water carrier and is responsible over a single integrated water management system that includes as core areas of water supply the illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. This implies that any of Mekorot's operations affects the entire system and makes 'differentiation' as mandated by EU policies and international law impossible.

Despite this, Mekorot continues to participate in EU funding projects. This completely ignores and runs counter to the repeated calls of the European Parliament, MEPs and civil society for the EU Commission to ensure that "*no settlement-related activity can benefit from any EU cooperation programme such as Horizon 2020*"<sup>1</sup>.

The technology developed and made available with EU funding risks being applied by Mekorot to maintain the large part of its operations that are illegal activities in Israel's settlement enterprise.

This shows the failure of the application of the 2013 guidelines in effectively achieving Israeli accountability for its violations of international law and human rights and with this the failure of the EU to comply with its obligations under international law.

**In order not to aid and abet the Israeli settlement project, we recommend the European Union to immediately exclude Mekorot from FP9 and all other financial instruments.**

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## What is wrong with Mekorot?

### ***Mekorot gives vital and structural support for the illegal settlement enterprise:***

- Mekorot support for colonial settlement has continued since the 1967 occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights. The company took monopoly control over all water sources in the occupied territories<sup>2</sup>, implementing policies that bolster Israeli settlements at the expense of Palestinian communities.
- Mekorot exploits Palestinian water sources, supplies the settlements and transfers Palestinian water across the Green Line. 70% of the water allocated to settlements in the occupied Jordan Valley originates in Mekorot drillings<sup>3</sup>.
- Mekorot operates some 42 wells in the West Bank<sup>4</sup>, mainly in the Jordan Valley region, which mostly supply the Israeli settlements.

### ***Mekorot is a central tool in the displacement of Palestinians:***

- Mekorot works in close partnership with the Israeli military<sup>5</sup>, confiscating irrigation pipes from Palestinian farmers and destroying the water supply of Palestinian communities.
- Israel's relocation camp, to which the Palestinian community of Khan al Ahmar and others are supposed to be forcibly transferred, are within the perimeter of the wastewater sewage treatment plant that is part of Mekorot's water management. Anybody forced to be living there will face health hazards and continuous pollution.

### ***Mekorot operates a system of water apartheid:***

- Mekorot deprives Palestinian communities wherever they are located from the possibility of access to water: Palestinian consumption in the OPT is about 70 litres a day per person – well below the 100 litres per capita daily recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) – whereas Israeli daily per capita consumption, at about 300 litres, is about four times as much<sup>6</sup>. Mekorot has refused to supply water to Palestinian communities inside Israel<sup>7</sup>, despite an Israeli high court ruling recognising their right to water. A French parliamentary report called this water apartheid<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/adri-nieuwhof/israeli-water-firm-drying-palestinian-springs-says-un-report>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.whoprofits.org/sites/default/files/who\\_profits\\_-\\_fact\\_sheet\\_mekorot.pdf](https://www.whoprofits.org/sites/default/files/who_profits_-_fact_sheet_mekorot.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE15/027/2009/en/e9892ce4-7fba-469b-96b9-c1e1084c620c/mde150272009en.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ewash.org/en/?view=79YOcy0nNs3Du69tjVnyyumlu1jfxPKNuunzXkRpKQNYjwQ3TTGG>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE15/027/2009>

<sup>7</sup> [http://adalah.org/eng/Articles/1926/Water-in-the-Naqab-\(Negev\):-Source-of-Life,-Tool-of](http://adalah.org/eng/Articles/1926/Water-in-the-Naqab-(Negev):-Source-of-Life,-Tool-of)

<sup>8</sup> <http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ben-white/translated-french-parliament-report-israels-water-apartheid>



### ***International condemnation:***

- The United Nations report of the independent international fact-finding mission<sup>9</sup> on the implications of the Israeli settlements on the rights of the Palestinian people as well as the latest report on the settlements by the Secretary-General of the UN<sup>10</sup> denounce Mekorot's role in the settlement enterprise.
- All cooperation with Mekorot inherently benefits from or contributes to the illegal settlement enterprise. Dutch public water company Vitens states<sup>11</sup> that "Whether it comes to knowledge about extraction of water or to the benefits that can be achieved with smart grids, these cannot be separated from what the UN writes about the policy of Mekorot (\*) towards the Palestinian territories and the settlements."

## **How does the EU support Mekorot and its violations of human rights?**

Mekorot is receiving EU Research and Development funding and with this:

- The EU legitimizes the operations of Mekorot and gives a green light to Israel's corporations and government agencies to continue to advance the settlement project and continue the displacement of the Palestinian people.
- The EU funds the technological capacity of Mekorot to implement these violations with millions of EU taxpayers Euros:
  - During the FP7 cycle Mekorot received €474,394.36 of funding
  - During the Horizon 2020 cycle, the EU financed 3 projects with a total of € 866,300 EU contribution.
- We are not aware the EU has done any due diligence to fulfil its obligation to ensure funding is not aiding and abetting Israel's illegal settlement project and displacement.
- The projects are listed in the table below.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/FFM/FFMSettlements.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session25/Documents/A\\_HRC\\_25\\_38\\_ENG.DOC](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session25/Documents/A_HRC_25_38_ENG.DOC)

<sup>11</sup>

[http://www.vitens.nl/overvitens/organisatie/nieuws/Documents/2014.01.07%20Aandeelhouders\\_toelichting%20beindiging%20samenwerking%20Mekorot.pdf](http://www.vitens.nl/overvitens/organisatie/nieuws/Documents/2014.01.07%20Aandeelhouders_toelichting%20beindiging%20samenwerking%20Mekorot.pdf)



<b>Project</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>EU contribution</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Contribution to the settlement project/ displacement</b>
STOP-IT - Strategic, Tactical, Operational Protection of water Infrastructure against cyber-physical Threats	Ongoing 2017-06-01 to 2021-05-31	€ 8 255 319,50	<a href="https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/210216_en.html">https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/210216_en.html</a>	Mekorot will very likely apply the findings in securing water facilities for the illegal settlements while continuing to destroy the Palestinian water infrastructure.
DEMOWARE Innovation Demonstration for a Competitive and Innovative European Water Reuse Sector	2014-01-01 to 2016-12-31	€ 5 999 666,26	<a href="https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/111557_en.html">https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/111557_en.html</a>	Technology relevant to the water reuse and waste management sector are used by Mekorot across the occupied West Bank, including in relation to the Og waste management plant.
MARSOL Demonstrating Managed Aquifer Recharge as a Solution to Water Scarcity and Drought	2013-12-01 to 2016-11-30	€5 176 078	<a href="https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/111411_en.html">https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/111411_en.html</a>	The developed technologies, i.e. infiltration ponds, river bed infiltration, direct injection wells, and river bank filtration are supporting the entire Mekorot run Israeli water management system, including the settlements.



Sustainable Water management Improves Tomorrow's Cities' Health	2006-02-01 to 2011-04-30	€14 749 996	<a href="https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/79794_en.html">https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/79794_en.html</a>	The solutions regarding urban water management will support the entire system of Israel's water management, including the settlements.
TECHNEAU: technology enabled universal access to safe water	2006-01-01 to 2010-12-31	€13 183 992	<a href="https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/78559_en.html">https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/78559_en.html</a>	There is no reason to suppose that Mekorot is not using the outcomes of the project - adaptive supply system options and new and improved supply and monitoring technologies and management practices - in the OPT.
Water reclamation technologies for safe artificial groundwater recharge	2005-10-01 to 2008-12-31	€3 560 440	<a href="https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/75508_en.html">https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/75508_en.html</a>	This project is particularly cynical as Mekorot had effectively destroyed the entire groundwater system in Gaza before the so-called 'disengagement' and until today systematically dries out Palestinian wells by draining the groundwater in the occupied West Bank.