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Israeli Forester from JNF Appointed to IALC Board

February 10, 2003 - New York, NY and Tucson, AZ – Prominent Israeli forester Dr. Omri Bonneh was appointed to the Board of Directors of the International Arid Lands Consortium, according to Kenneth E. Foster, president.

“Dr. Bonneh’s education and experience with forestry in an arid climate such as the Israel will help the International Arid Lands Consortium in its effort to provide much needed technology to other arid and semi arid regions, especially those in the Middle East,” said Dr. Foster.

Dr. Bonneh served in the Israeli Defense Forces from 1974-1977. He holds both Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in agriculture from Hebrew University, as well as a Ph.D. earned in 1991. In addition, Dr. Bonneh has taken courses in forestry from the U.S. Forest Service. He has worked for Jewish National Fund since 1982, where he has risen from forester in the Forestry Department to Director of the Northern Region in the Land Development Authority.

“I am very pleased and honored for the opportunity to represent the Jewish National Fund on the IALC Board,” said Dr. Bonneh, 47, from Israel. “The IALC provides an excellent opportunity for sharing technical and scientific knowledge.”

Dr. Bonneh is a member of CLEAR (Center on Landscape, Environment and Agricultural Research) and the Authority for the Galilee Development. He has written and published articles in environmental trade journals on forestry issues such as the regeneration and rehabilitation of burned forests, forest management, and the impact of trees on the survival of certain species.

Bonneh’s appointment is significant for the IALC, according to Dr. Foster because, “The IALC is one of the few organizations that brings together scientists from the region for the purpose of providing solutions to common issues. Water availability is an underlying issue of extreme importance to the Middle East peace process. The IALC, by having Israel, Jordan and Israel as members, is helping to alleviate the water crisis with shared knowledge and expertise. We are currently working under a grant from US AID to provide technical expertise to Jordan and Afghanistan.”

Dr. Bonneh will be in Washington, D.C. for his first IALC Board meeting on March 6 where he will be available for interviews.

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The International Arid Lands Consortium (IALC) is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to exploring the problems and solutions unique to arid and semiarid regions. IALC promotes cooperative research and practical application of new knowledge to develop sustainable ecological practices. The member institutions share a mission to enable people of arid lands to improve the quality of life for future generations. IALC members include the University of Arizona, Desert Research Institute – Nevada, Higher Council for Science & Technology – Jordan, The University of Illinois, Jewish National Fund, Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation – Egypt, New Mexico State University, South Dakota State University, and Texas A&M University-Kingsville.