**The Stream Rehabilitation Unit – 2021 Annual Summary**

**General:** The four central aims of the Stream Rehabilitation Unit are: **reducing stream pollution, reinstating natural water flow in streams, promoting integrated basin planning and management, and increasing public participation in the fight for stream rehabilitation**. In addition, the staff provides solutions to internal and external requests related to streams, such as pollution and hazards, assistance to activist communities. and more. During 2021, the staff initiated formulation of a vision for the Stream Rehabilitation Unit of the Society for Protection of Nature in Israel.

1. Reducing stream pollution – In 2021 we drafted a proposal to create economic incentives for reducing stream pollution and increasing effective enforcement. The proposal was adopted by MK Gabi Lasky and is now being processed in the Knesset. Similarly, many letters were sent to the municipalities regarding ongoing stream pollution and requests that the situation change.
2. Reinstating water flow in streams - We promoted environmental solutions for connecting the Upper Kinneret region. This region is currently disconnected from the national water system and relies on natural springs. The government recently decided to connect the region to the national water system and thus release some of the natural water to nature. However, the method by which this would be done has significant environmental consequences, particularly under climate change. Therefore, we appealed to the High Court demanding a public discussion on existing alternatives; this indeed led to such a discussion being held. Similarly, we presented our environmental perspective to decision makers, at conferences, and in journals, and we prevented a decision by the Water Authority that would have resulted in irreversible actions on this issue with no option of further discussion. In addition, we promoted an original alternative – using desalinated water designated for the Sea of Galilee by a separate government decision, to instead supply water to the disconnected northern regions, thus releasing the natural springs while ensuring a steady source of water for farmers. Finally, we blocked the plan to replace the pipe in Ein Davsha spring, which contradicted the plan to release the spring as part of the aforementioned reintroduction of spring water to nature.
3. Planning the implementation of the basin approach – We led the writing of the water chapter in the Strategic Plan for Open Landscapes 2040, which is being promoted by the Planning Administration. The strategy implements a holistic approach to planning river basins and is expected to have a significant influence on strengthening long-term stream conservation. Similarly, to planning institutions, we represented environmental interests with respect to streams and water resources, while implementing a sustainable runoff management approach and promoting nature-based solutions for flood prevention. Finally, we completed a stream planning guide – designed for professional agencies – which reflects modern approaches to stream rehabilitation in the planning world. Furthermore, we completed our position paper on integrated basin management, which proposes a list of the institutional and regulatory changes required to adopt the integrated basin approach, and presented it to the team of directors for flood prevention in the Office of the Prime Minister.
4. Public participation in the fight for streams – We initiated and led the ‘Carnival in the Stream’, a weekend that included 40 tours and activities revolving around streams, with the participation of thousands, and media exposure. We established 4 groups of stream activists in collaboration with Yarkon Drainage Authority, led 8 regional training courses for a shared forum for nature conservation and education, led the fight to release Ein Davsha spring, and provided ongoing professional guidance for the working plan of the Western Galilee Field Studies Center and the Arab community, in collaboration with the Western Galilee Drainage Authority.