



**NFTY Action Theme 2006-2007**  
***Shootfei Adamah: Partners of the Earth***

**Resolution on Environmental Issues:**  
**NFTY Acts to Improve the State of the Environment**

Background: As a Jewish Movement, we have the responsibility to take care of the environment around us. Currently, the physical condition of our planet is deteriorating quickly. It is affecting our lives already, and there is no doubt it will affect the lives of our descendents. We have an obligation, as North American Jews, to practice tikkun olam (repairing the world) through pursuing Environmental Justice.

WHEREAS, over 20 million barrels worth of oil are deposited in the oceans annually, which results in the deaths of millions of sea animals; and

WHEREAS, about 1.2 billion people do not have access to sources of safe drinking water on a regular basis, and 2.4 billion do not have access to satisfactory sanitation facilities; and

WHEREAS, water has already been a source of violence, as evidenced by past conflicts between Israel and Jordan over the Jordan River basins and by the Bolivian Water War; and

WHEREAS, many of the conflicts in Israel stem from water issues; and

WHEREAS, Ismail Serageldin, the Vice President of the World Bank, stated in 1995: "If the wars of this century were fought over oil, the wars of the next century will be fought over water"; and

WHEREAS, Americans use 50 million tons of paper annually from 850 millions trees and throw away over 200 million tons of trash per year; and

WHEREAS, the energy saved from one recycled aluminum can is enough to operate a television for 3 hours and is equivalent to half a can of gasoline; and

WHEREAS, the annual total human health costs of outdoor air pollution is more than \$20 billion worldwide; and

WHEREAS, more than 4 billion tons of carbon dioxide, which some studies have shown to significantly contribute to global warming, is produced by cars and factories in the United States;

WHEREAS, WHEREAS, over the past 50 years, the Earth's average temperature has increased at the fastest rate in recorded history, and it is projected that temperatures in the United States will likely increase by about 3 to 9 degrees Fahrenheit over the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, the world's population has doubled over the past 30 years, while energy consumption per capita has simultaneously increased eightfold; and

WHEREAS, within the United States, there are 600,000 known or suspected hazardous waste sites, which have been shown to raise the risk of birth defects; and



WHEREAS, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, 49 new sites are added to the Superfund list every year, and one in four Americans (65 million people) currently lives within 4 miles of a site; and

WHEREAS, 1.5 acres of rainforest are cut down every second, resulting in 137 species of plants, animals, and insects lost every day, and contributing to the projected loss of all the Earth's rainforest within the next 40 years; and

WHEREAS, a URJ resolution in 1969 urged Jews to "become actively interested in the problem of environmental pollution and the protection of the environment through study, cooperation and action"; and

WHEREAS, progress toward a better environment must be based upon extensive study of problems and their possible solutions, as well as be weighed against the possible negative effects on the human population in that area; and

WHEREAS, individuals are not separate entities from the environment in which they reside and as such we are responsible to uphold the commitment set out in Pirkei Avot affirming that "the work is not yours to complete, but neither are you free to desist from it"; and

WHEREAS, Maimonides once said that meditating on nature is one of the most important ways a person can fulfill the commandment to love God with all one's heart (Mishne Torah, Yesodei Hatorah 2:2).

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED that the NFTY Action Theme of 2006-2007 be "Shootfei Adamah: Partners of the Earth": NFTY acts to improve the state of the environment; and

LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that NFTY strongly urge its members, all arms of the Reform movement, and the URJ to effect change on a personal, local, national, and global level through appropriate action; and

LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that NFTY takes action that includes but is not limited to: participating in and running programs designed to raise awareness, take action, and take steps toward advocacy about the environment; coordinating letter-writing campaigns to officials; organizing recycling and waste-reduction projects; forming and participating in environmental groups and rallies; organizing and participating in environmental clean-up days; writing petitions; supporting programs, such as the NFTY Forest in Israel, dedicated to the renewal of trees and wildlife; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY take further action in defense of the environment by: celebrating environmental holidays including Tu B'Shvat, Arbor Day, Earth Day, and Ozone Awareness Day; studying all aspects of the environment; organizing benefits, inviting speakers, running programs, and working alongside organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund, Trees for Life, Rainforest Alliance, the Environmental Protection Agency, The National Environmental Trust, Greenpeace, Sierra Club, Union of Concerned Scientist, Environmental Defense, the North American Commission on Environmental Cooperation, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, the Jewish National Fund, the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, the Jewish Global Environmental Network; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTYites acknowledge that the consequences of our actions inherently affect both ourselves and the world around us.

Respectfully submitted,



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