









# Master Plan for Open Spaces on the Golan Heights Provisions of Plan Draft, 2015









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Architect Ella Mannheim, Amitai Stern – GIS computing, drawing maps and sketches

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### **Structure of the Document**

This document consists of the following chapters:

**Introductions** that include an outline of the boundaries of the plan, its purposes and objectives as defined by the regional council upon ordering the project and updated by the steering and work committees; the national policy for plans made on the Golan compared to the vision of its residents, and the concept of the master plan for open spaces between the two; a description of the plan's documents; definitions of the main terms of the plan, and the methodology used to prepare the master plan.

Planning directives— the plan divided the Golan into several planning areas as specified in the planning areas' sketch. The plan on chapter directives presents the plan's directives for each area and the unique areas included therein, as well as other general planning-related issues.

Appendix A – Directives concerning tourism-based projects under the search for tourism development region, which relies on a master plan for tourism development in the Golan

Appendix B – An abstract of the preliminary work stages, such as current-status survey, the vision's definition, the purposes and objectives, the methodology used for analyzing the value of open spaces, and locating a focal planning regions. Each chapter was circulated to the work committee members, discussed in this forum and published to the wider public on the environmental unit's website at the Golan Regional Council.

An additional document of the plan is the administrative interface (attached in a separate file) – a document that includes principle recommendations concerning the decision-making processes and the administration of the open spaces in the Golan, including an outline for the creation of an administration specifically for this subject.

### Introductions

# A. 1. The plan's boundaries

The master plan for the open spaces in the Golan relates to the open spaces within the Golan Regional Council only. The area units, regarded as constructed areas, are not included in the planning.

The areas excluded from the plan include: settlement areas, employment areas, army camps, various constructed projects and areas under planning for future construction – approved and retained plans, and those that are in advanced stages of preparation.

The Druze settlements in the Golan and the Katzrin Local Council are not included in the plan. However, cooperation with those two bodies is essential for meeting the plan's objectives, since natural continuity does not recognize municipal boundaries. The plan recognizes the tremendous importance of harnessing these settlements into the planning and cultivation process of the open spaces, and efforts to that end should be invested by any means. Efforts will be made to incorporate the representatives of these settlements in the open-spaces administration and to promote planning for the open spaces in their surrounding area.

# A. 2 The plan's targets and objectives:

# The plan's targets:

- 1. To create a planning tool for directing the uses of the open spaces in the Golan in a manner that balances the conservation of natural resources, landscape and unique heritage on the one hand with agricultural development, tourism and alternative energy infrastructures on the other.
- 2. To create an authorization system for planning policy and administration of the open spaces to be developed under the plan with the residents of the regional council, interested parties, authorities and state bodies.
- 3. Sustainable development in the open space of the Golan region to achieve a winwin situation.

# The plan's objectives:

A. To facilitate the expansion of the agricultural uses on the open spaces and their associated water infrastructures in the Golan, in accordance with area data.

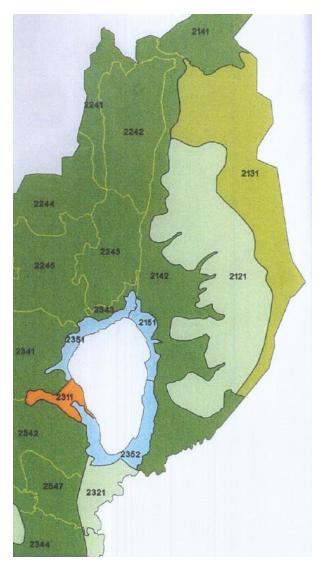
- B. To facilitate forestation in the Golan region with local plant species, in the areas designated as suitable for the ground's ecological conditions, while maintaining the primeval undergrowth landscapes and plant life as characteristically low and open for the Golan. In addition, planting should take place in small patches for tourism, holiday-making and pasture shading purposes.
- C. To determine areas and ground units for the preservation and cultivation of the natural habitat, landscape and heritage, in accordance with ecological and landscape-based concerns, in tandem with cultural and heritage-related values that are specific to that location, while maintaining continuity of open spaces.
- D. To characterize areas for sustaining and developing tourism activities in the open spaces against the backdrop of the master plan for tourism in the Golan, in accordance with the Golan's landscape and heritage.
- E. To identify areas in the Golan where alternative-energy projects should be restricted or permitted (wind/solar) in accordance with the nature of the area and the characteristics of its environment.
- F. To identify areas that allow for the creation of water plants, water-collection and rainwater reservoirs.
- G. To enable the expansion of the camping area within the Golan settlements according to their needs, and according to national planning policy as well as the regional council's policy.
- H. To encourage partnerships, including educational and cultural human interactions between the open spaces and the adjacent population.
- I. Construction of mechanisms for resolving future problems and disagreements pertaining to the uses of the open spaces in the Golan.
- J. Use of the plan's products as an informational and educational tool concerning the importance of the open spaces, their value and the means of preserving and nurturing them.
- K. To be used as planning-based groundwork for preparing a statutory plan in the Golan on all levels.

National Outline Plan 35 determines three kinds of qualities: a conserved integrated quality in western Golan; a rural quality in central Golan; a preserved national quality in eastern Golan. The plan defines the roles of these qualities as follows:

**Rural quality:** targeted by the development of rural settlements, including regions for employment, agriculture and tourism purposes, provided they do not harm the general agricultural-rural nature and maintain a continuity of open and agricultural spaces as much as possible.

**National conserved quality**: This seeks to conserve large and continuous spaces of open area with natural, agricultural and landscape features intended to encourage mainly recreational, tourism-related, holiday-making and employment-based activities, as well as those involving the security establishment, provided they are integrated into the landscape and reduce harm to the environment while enabling agricultural development and settlement expansion therein.

Integrated conserved quality: This seeks to form a continuous natural, agricultural, landscape, settlement and heritage strip, while creating a green path from north to south. The quality strives to achieve optimal integration of the characteristic values, with limited development in the center of the country and cautious development in the peripheral regions.



On a national level, the Golan region is one of the few regions in Israel with a rural quality that is more development-oriented. Normally, other rural locations, especially in the central region, are included in the outline plan under the integrated conserved quality, which is more conservation-oriented. This means that National Outline Plan 35 views most of the Golan region as an area designated first and foremost for development of the rural sector.

The vision for the Golan, as articulated by the Golan Regional Council, recognizes it as an area designated for maintaining the balance between conservation and developmental trends.

To become a unique region, where any individual can create his/her home and fulfill him/herself within a diversified, quality-conscious and welcoming community.

A life-sustaining community based on liberty, responsibility, initiative, social justice, a bond to heritage and love of mankind, the country and its people.

To create an impetus for performance and develop and promote initiatives, while maintaining natural and landscape values, and to encourage an environment brimming with humanitarianism, simplicity and tranquility for the benefit of its residents, its visitors and its future generations

In this spirit, the proposed master plan for the open spaces tries to find a balance between developmental trends on the one hand, and conservation on the other. The plan locates spaces for the development of agriculture, tourism and energy needs, alongside areas for conserving extensive agriculture and pasture land.

# 4 The plan's status as compared with other plans

The plan is a guiding policy document that relies on insights from the analysis of the needs and features of the location and its space, including approvals by the interested parties. It is therefore not a statutory plan that overrides valid outline plans on national, regional and local levels that apply to the region.

As a policy document, the plan serves as a framework for promoting outline plans at various levels and for performing activities that do not require a permit according to the Israeli planning and building code.

To clarify its intentions, the master plan is formulated as a design tool that either "permits" or "prohibits" the use of a certain location, whether for assimilating it in another plan or as a guideline for performing any activity, yet this directive is regarded as an agreed viewpoint taken by those who are partners to the preparation of this document, even if it was not anchored within a statutory plan.

# A. 5 The plan's documents

The plan includes the following documents:

- 1. A sketch of the areas under planning that determines ground units with differing characteristics in the Golan region, as associated with their desired uses.
- 2. Directives a literal document that determines the directives concerning the permitted ground uses in each of the areas under planning and the nature of their development.
- 3. Administrative interface document determines the forums for decision making on the Golan's open spaces, and regulated procedures for submitting applications and decision making.
- 4. Maps of natural resources, culture and landscape sketches that characterize ground units in the Golan region based on the sensitivity of their open land resources. The plan includes three value-specific maps:
  - Ecological values
  - Landscape values
  - Cultural and heritage-based values

# 6 Methodology

The planning process included the following stages:

- 1. Learning and analyzing uses of the ground: uses of the ground in the Golan's open areas; determinations of national and regional plans concerning the Golan.
- 2. Identifying the interests of the various bodies in the open spaces of the Golan region concerning agriculture, forestation, grazing, renewable energies, tourism, nature conservation, the army, water and more.
- 3. Geographical mapping of the various interests and cross-referencing them to identify overlapping points and/or conflicts. It was established that the points that overlap between the required areas of the various interested parties are not many, and not every overlap is a conflict, since some of the ground uses can dwell in a common ground unit without harming each other.

An open-spaces analysis is conducted by referring to three aspects: ecological values, landscape values, and cultural and heritage values. The following is description of the methodological principles and the reasoning for preparing the various planning documents.

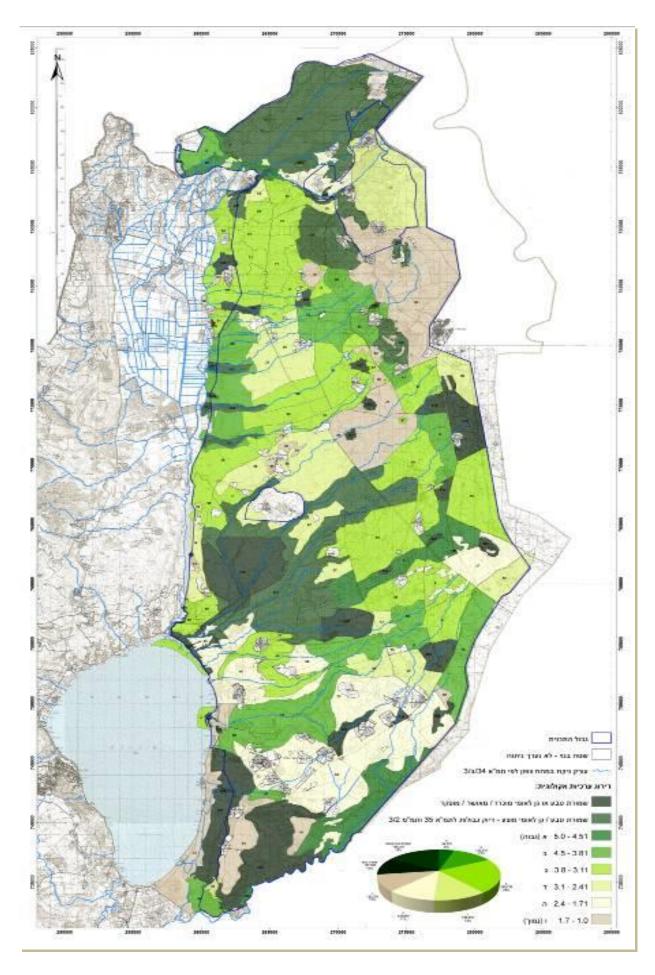
# Mapping ecological values -

The analysis was conducted in the following stages:

- 1. Dividing the Golan region into ground units with relatively homogeneous features.
- 2. Analyzing each ground unit according to a series of indices and submitting grades for each index according to its own value.
- 3. Summary of grades for each surface unit for a final grade that determines the value for each surface unit.

The analysis process was conducted on the geographical data system and on Excel spreadsheets that allow for full transparency of the values-measuring standards, as well as flexibility for future changes.

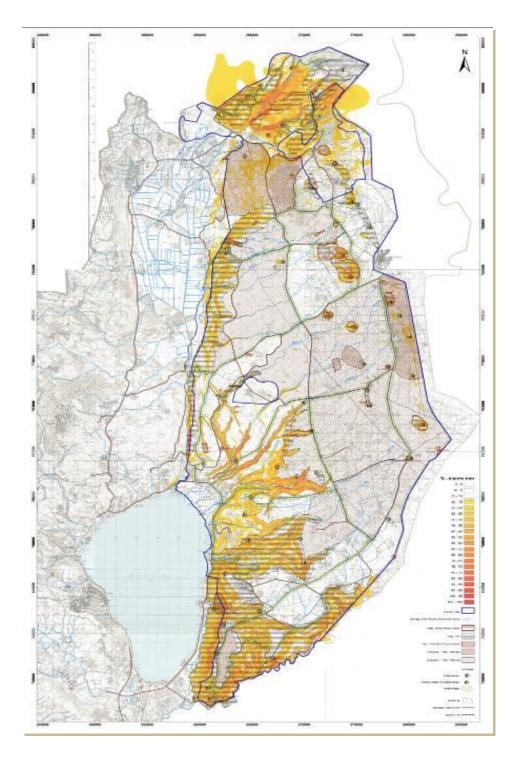
The information is based on experts' assessments (in the absence of a comprehensive and updated survey of the natural values in the Golan region). Environmental experts and ecologists who represent authorized institutions took part in the analysis, as well as a range of experts who are also residents of the Golan.



# Mapping values in a landscape

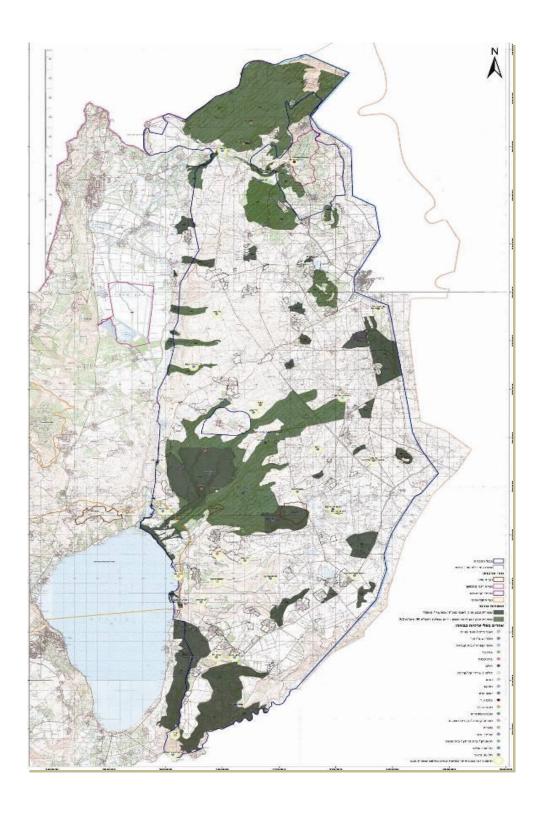
Mapping values in a landscape identifies the most important landscapes and elements in the greater Golan landscape from an observer's point of view (volcanic hills, basalt canyons, cliffs, bodies of water, agricultural landscapes, groves and more). Furthermore, the map marks important observational posts and landscape routes.

The map was prepared through assimilation of the assessments of experts who live in the Golan and with comments from this plan's steering committee.



# Mapping cultural and heritage-oriented values

The map includes notation of archeological, historical and cultural-landscapes sites. The Golan region contains many point-specific sites. The map marks the most important ones among them.



# Division into planning regions for and areas for designated uses

The master plan for the Golan region's open spaces classifies the region's open spaces into **planning areas**. The **planning** areas are characterized grounds, since designated uses that are proposed in this plan may integrate very well with the region's features, its physical components and the entire range of values embodied therein.

The plan does not relate to ground designations as defined by the planning and building code, but rather a more flexible definition, which includes various related uses and designations with respect to a multifunctional approach and the multiuse of the ground resources. The areas for development in this respect are similar to the qualities of National Outline Plan 35, by being a relatively flexible planning framework that encompasses extensive ground units, which may include a relatively high variety of uses.

The **relative amount** of the various uses in each of the ground units creates the difference between the various kinds of planning areas.

Since the master plan is a designated plan for open spaces, planning is refers only to these areas. Constructed areas or areas designated for construction and development in the Golan region were marked on the areas for planning sketch as a separate region, in order to define the boundaries of the open spaces referenced in the plan.

In principle, the plan proposes areas for development, areas for conservation, and integrated areas, for which a dynamic balance between conservation and development is proposed.

Generally speaking, it does not mean that the ground unit of the planning area will be used for development or conservation, rather that it will be possible to locate within it, in a relatively free manner, areas in which development and/or cultivation of a certain type will take place according to the nature of the planning area.

# The proposed areas for development in the plan are:

- **Areas for agricultural development** that will mainly target agricultural development in the Golan region, according to agricultural needs. In other areas of the Golan, agricultural development will be affected by various limitations according to the nature of the region.
  - **Search area for the development of renewable energies** in which renewable energies will be permitted in open spaces. In other regions of the Golan renewed-energy initiatives will be limited only to constructed areas.
- **Search area for tourism development** will consolidate the major tourism-related projects in the open spaces according to the Golan Regional Council's master plan.
- **Integrated area** that will have various uses for development and/or conservation that are suitable for the open space and the nature of the area, in line with existing and future needs except for spaces marked as designated for searching for forests, reserves and gardens, or labeled as Golan meadow areas.

# The areas for conservation that are proposed in the plan include:

- Area of natural, landscape and heritage values aimed at conserving the open spaces, as well as the natural, landscape and heritage values.
- The Golan meadow area is characterized by a typical open Golan landscape.
- Forested areas by virtue of the deposited and approved plans, including a search space for the addition of forests limited by the nature of the space.
- **National nature reserves and gardens** by virtue of approved and deposited plans, including a search space for the addition of natural reserves and gardens limited by the nature of the space.

The sketch is divided into numbered ground units that are identical to the ground units indicated in the plan's three value maps, in order to provide a better understanding between the plan's documents and an easy reading of the area's features as they relate the ground units.

# **Determining the plan's directives**

The plan's directives connect the planning areas, spaces and search areas for defined purposes and uses and for value maps, where different directives will be provided for the planning areas concerning the areas located in the ground units with varying levels of sensitivities.

In this manner the plan will constitute a flexible framework which can be updated as the natural-resources and landscape value maps are updated. This flexibility has particular importance considering the fact that the value maps were prepared based on existing knowledge, and there is a desire to have them updated and make them more accurate in view of detailed natural and environment surveys that will be conducted in the Golan region in the future.

The directives for the various planning areas include details of the following topics:

- Accessibility/the plan's objective What are the planning objective and the needs that the planning area is required to fill?
  - Background for locating the area What were the considerations for the geographic location of the various ground units that are included in the planning area?
- Planning directives ground uses in the planning area, as well as directives concerning the development/conservation of the ground uses.

In addition to the directives of the areas for planning, the plan's directives include general directives for subjects and ground-related uses that may be found in any of the planning areas, such as: water infrastructures, water reservoirs, fire areas, tourism sites, and more.

The plan's directives include a chapter on principle recommendations for the interaction between various bodies and parties operating within the open spaces in the Golan, on issues requiring cooperation or a functional interface between them. Among those: farmers, foresters, shepherds, individuals in charge of reserves and gardens, tour operators, security forces and more.

The plan pins its hopes on implementing the principles of the operational mechanism for the Golan's open space, which it recommends to operate as an "open spaces administration." This administration will serve as a forum for coordination, discussion, clarification of problems and conflict resolution. The roles of the administration and its composition were jointly formulated with the work committee that has followed up on the plan's preparation, in an outline that can integrate with existing organizational frameworks, without creating new mechanisms while saving on budgetary and personnel resources.

Under the planning directives, the plan determines that on occasion, a specific use will be permitted according to a detailed plan or a building/use permit as required by law. A detailed plan or a building/use permit are exactly as their names imply according to the planning and building code. An action exempted from a permit or a plan, which is not legally bound by law, can be implemented without a plan or a permit as stated.

# A. Directives for planning areas

# B. 1 Area marked for agricultural development

# Planning approach/objective

To facilitate agricultural development in the Golan Heights and expand the cultivated areas in accordance with the settlements' needs in the area.

# - Background for locating the area

The planning area was located according to agricultural needs, so that it includes the most suitable areas for agriculture while finding a balance vis-à-vis natural and ecological needs.

# - Planning directives:

# A. Ground uses

The planning area will be used first and foremost for the development of cultivated grounds in the most suitable manner for the general needs of farmers and for the characteristics of the area. The following uses will also be permitted: waterworks, foresting and grazing. Other ground uses will be at a lower priority. Everything is subject to the limitations of Section C to this plan: "Directives for Special Areas."

# B. Planning directives

Subject	Directive
1. General information	Areas labeled in the planning areas sketch as grounds for reserves, gardens and forests, as well as within search areas for tourism development and renewable energies, the detailed directives that pertain to the same use will apply in this document.
2. Agricultural cultivation	<ul> <li>A. There is a priority for a continuous agricultural development, when the uncultivated spaces will also be continuous as much as possible.</li> <li>B. This area will centralize the agricultural structures in the Golan, which will also serve agricultural areas in other regions. Various agricultural structures will be erected according to a detailed plan or according to a building permit, with the approval of a planning institution, as legally required, and upon receiving an opinion from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Defense, and a discussion held at the open spaces administration. The opinions will be provided within 60 days upon transfer of the application. If an opinion is not received, it will be viewed as a positive opinion.</li> <li>C. It is preferred to locate agricultural structures adjacent to the constructed areas.</li> <li>D. Establishing plantations requires the opinion of the Ministry of Defense. The opinion will be provided within 60 days upon transfer of the application. If an opinion is not received, it will be viewed as a positive opinion.</li> <li>E. Hazards resulting from an overabundance of a specific animal species that causes harm in other areas will have to be resolved with the cooperation of the open-spaces administration and subject to a consultation with the competent authorities.</li> <li>F. The open-spaces administration will initiate from time to time a survey concerning the use of the designated areas for agriculture, with the intention that these areas will be put to the best possible use, in financial and sustainable terms.</li> </ul>
3. Forestation	<ul> <li>A. Reforestation, in addition to existing forest grounds, can be implemented according to a detailed plan with the approval of a planning institution, and subject to the directives of National Outline Plan 22.</li> <li>B. Approval for a forestation plan will be accompanied by an opinion from the defense establishment. The opinion will be submitted within 60 days upon transfer of the application. If an opinion is not received, it will be viewed as an affirmative opinion.</li> <li>C. Approval for a forestation plan in the planning area will be</li> </ul>

	followed by an opinion from the agricultural committee at the Golan Regional Council and a discussion at the open-spaces administration. In general, where it is possible to implement agricultural use on the ground, agricultural use will take precedence over forestation.
4. Agricultural developmen t on grazing lands	Agricultural development in areas that were used for grazing prior to the development process will be conducted according to the Ministry of Agriculture's guidelines, conditioned by a consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture and by obtaining an opinion from the cattle ranchers' representatives on the Golan Regional Council's agricultural committee and a discussion held at the open-spaces administration.
5. Pasture	A. In this area, the structures required for working the pastures will be centralized in a manner that serves all pastures in the Golan. Structures in the service of grazing will be permitted according to a detailed plan or a building permit approved by a planning institution, as required by law, as well as in accordance with an opinion of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Defense. There will also be a need to hold a discussion at the open-spaces administration. The opinions will be submitted within 60 days of transferring the application. If an opinion is not received, it will be viewed as an affirmative opinion.  B. Shaded groves will be allowed for planting according to the cattle rancher's/farmers' agricultural needs, according to a planting plan with the approval of the Golan's agricultural committee, in consultation with the open-spaces administration, and after an opinion is obtained from the defense establishment. The opinions will be submitted within 60 days of transferring the application. If an opinion is not received, it will be viewed as an affirmative opinion.
6. Agricultural tourism	<ul> <li>A. Agricultural tourism initiatives will be permitted, beyond the initiatives outlined in the master plan for tourism of the Golan Regional Council, such as visitors' centers, self-picking of crops, farm tours etc., upon obtaining an opinion from the Ministry of Agriculture and a discussion held at the open-spaces administration, subject to the approval of a detail plan/permit, as required by law.</li> <li>B. The size, location, and design of the agricultural tourism initiatives, including their integration in the agricultural space, shall be in accordance with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development policy.</li> <li>C. If the creation of new structures for servicing agricultural tourism is required, an opinion from the Ministry of Defense will be required. The opinion will be submitted within 60 days of transferring the application. If an opinion is not received, it will be viewed as an affirmative opinion.</li> </ul>
7. Reservoirs and water infrastructur	The establishment of reservoirs and water infrastructures will be permitted (pipelines and installations), according to a permit or plan as required by law, with the approval of the competent

es	authorities, in consultation with the open-spaces administration, and upon obtaining an opinion from the defense establishment. The opinion will be submitted within 60 days upon transferring the application. If an opinion is not received, it will be viewed as an affirmative opinion.
8. Ground units with special guidelines	Ground units numbered A/50 and A/27 will be examined in the botanical survey to be conducted by May of 2014, and its conclusions will be brought for discussion at the open-spaces administration. Based on this survey, the boundaries of the ground cells will be made more accurate. If the survey is not conducted by this date, the areas' boundaries will be as those determined in the planning areas sketch.

- B. 2 A nature, landscape and heritage values region
- B. 3 An integrated region
- B. 4 A Golan meadow region
- B. 5 A region for construction/development
- C. Guidelines for special areas
- C. 1 Reserves and gardens region in an approved/deposited plan
- C. 2 Proposed addition to a reserves and gardens region search area
- C. 3 Forest area in an approved/deposited plan

For areas designated in national, regional, and local plans for the various forest areas, the following guidelines will apply:

Topic	Guidelines
1. Forest area	<ul> <li>A. The relevant plan guidelines in effect will apply to these areas, including National Outline Plan 22 mutatis mutandis, National Outline Plan 35 and National Outline Plan 3/2.</li> <li>B. The guidelines according to the deposited copy will apply to the areas that are included in the deposited plans, as long as an approval is not granted for the plan. Any application for a deviation from the guidelines stipulated in the deposited copy will be handled in</li> </ul>
	accordance with the law.
2. Detailed plans	A. A detailed plan for the forest will be prepared for the regions designated for forests in the national and regional plans.
	B. A detailed plan for the forest will include at its preparation stage a reference to the topics and issues included in this plan, respectively, including the type of

- forest, and the interface with other uses within its region and/or its bordering areas.
- C. A detailed plan for a forest will be brought for discussion at the open-spaces administration prior to its statutory advancement at the planning institutions. If the plan enables new planting, an opinion from the defense establishment will be required. The opinion will be submitted within 60 days of transferring the application. If an opinion is not received, it will be viewed as an affirmative opinion.
- C. 4 Proposed addition to the forest region search area
- C. 5 Reservoir and waterworks areas in the approved/deposited plan
- C. 6 Proposed addition for reservoirs and water plant regions search area
- C. 7 Search area for developing renewable energies
- C. 8 Search area for tourism development
- D. Additional guidelines
- D. 1 Grazing
- D. 2 Waterworks
- D. 3 Tour paths
- D. 4 Agricultural cultural landscapes
- D. 5 Agricultural structures
- D. 6 Fire regions
- D. 7 Archeology

The open-spaces administration will arrange for an archeological survey of the antiquities' sites in the Golan Heights, with the participation of the Antiquities Authority which will serve as a basis for making decisions concerning the antiquities' sites in the Golan.