

# What Are the 'Help on the Way' Bombs Doing to Iran's Environment?

*Hidden costs of imposed war: over 5m tons of carbon dioxide emitted in two weeks*

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*U.S.-Israeli strike kills natural resources commander, deepens civilian target concerns*

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*Military aggression against Iran: environment remains a victim of violations of international law*

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*War and ecocide: environmental fallout of military attacks on Iran*

**By Maedeh Zaman Fashami**

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*Tehran urges UN to hold Washington, Tel Aviv accountable for ecocide*

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*Iran takes legal action to seek reparations for U.S.-Israeli environmental crimes*

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In a detailed assessment released on March 28, Shina Ansari, the head of the Department of Environment, said that vital infrastructure across multiple sectors has been compromised. ▶ **Page 4**

**Pezeshkian to Americans: Iran has never started a war**



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has addressed the American public in a detailed letter, urging them to look beyond political narratives and reassess their understanding of Iran's history and intentions. In the message released on Wednesday, he emphasized that Iran has never initiated a war in its modern history and has consistently avoided aggression, expansionism, and domination.

Pezeshkian described Iran-U.S. relations as deeply misunderstood, shaped by competing narratives and longstanding geopolitical tensions. He highlighted that despite

facing invasions, external pressure, and decades of sanctions, Iran has maintained a defensive posture and responded only to threats against its sovereignty.

The Iranian president also pointed to historical turning points, particularly the 1953 coup, as a source of enduring mistrust between the two nations. He criticized continued U.S. policies, including military presence in the region and sanctions, arguing they have contributed to instability and hardship for ordinary Iranians.

At the same time, Pezeshkian underscored Iran's domestic progress, noting significant improvements in education, healthcare, and technological development despite external pressures. He stressed that the Iranian people hold no hostility toward Americans and distinguish between governments and citizens.

Calling for a shift away from confrontation, Pezeshkian invited Americans to seek a more balanced perspective on Iran and consider dialogue over conflict. He added that the future depends on choosing engagement and mutual understanding rather than continued tension.

**Leader lauds Hezbollah chief's wisdom, reaffirms Iran's support for resistance**

TEHRAN - The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, has expressed his appreciation to religious scholars and figures in Iran and abroad for their messages of condolence following the martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

In a series of messages issued on Wednesday, he thanked senior clerics, seminary scholars, Sunni religious leaders across Iran's provinces, and prominent figures from the wider region and beyond for their expressions of solidarity.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was martyred in a joint U.S.-Israeli airstrike on his residence and office in Tehran on February 28, at the outset of a large-scale military campaign against Iran.

In a separate message addressed to Naim Qassem, Secretary-General of Hezbollah, the Leader stressed that Iran's strategic course remains firmly anchored in continuing the path of Ruhollah Khomeini and the martyred leader—namely, support for resistance against the principal adversaries of the Islamic world, the United States and Israel.

He described steadfastness and resistance as defining features of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's leadership, a period marked by the sacrifice of senior commanders, including Lt. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, as well as other figures from the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps and Army.



Praising Hezbollah's legacy of struggle, he referred to figures such as Ragheb Harb, Abbas al-Musawi, Hassan Nasrallah, and Hashem Safieddine. He expressed confidence that Sheikh Naim Qassem's leadership, wisdom, and resolve would counter adversarial plans and help restore stability and security in Lebanon.

Ayatollah Khamenei concluded by reaffirming that the Islamic Republic's policy remains committed to supporting resistance in the face of the American-Israeli axis.

**Iran expands strikes on US, Israeli targets with drones and missiles**



TEHRAN - Iran's military forces have intensified their operations against U.S. and Israeli positions, launching a new wave of drone and missile strikes across Israel and the wider West Asia region, according to official statements released on Wednesday.

The Iranian Army said it had carried out drone attacks targeting the positions of U.S. Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) and refueling aircraft, as well as associated radar and electronic warfare facilities. The strikes reportedly focused on locations linked to U.S. military activity, including sites at Ben Gurion Airport and installations in the United Arab Emirates.

In its statement, the Army said it used long-range Arash-2 drone systems, capa-

ble of operating at distances of up to 2,000 kilometers, describing the attacks as a response to the U.S. and Israeli airstrikes on Iranian territory.

Separately, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps announced a new phase of coordinated strikes on hostile targets. The force said the latest wave featured more than 100 heavy missiles, 200 rockets, and multiple attack drones.

According to the IRGC, the strikes hit targets in several Israeli cities, including Eilat, Tel Aviv, and Bnei Brak. It also targeted U.S. military assets in Bahrain, including a helicopter unit at Al-Udeiri Base, reporting that one helicopter was destroyed and others damaged.

**US miscalculations and global energy fallout of Iran war**

Failed assumptions and strategic blunders



TEHRAN - The U.S.-Israeli war against Iran, launched on February 28, began with what analysts now describe as profound strategic miscalculations. Washington operated under the delusional belief that a decapitation strike, targeting Iran's Leader and top officials, would trigger an immediate collapse of the Iranian government, enabling the U.S. to "pick the next leader of Iran," as President Donald Trump himself stated.

Top U.S. economist Jeffrey Sachs characterized the decision-making process as lacking "sophisticated analyses," attributing the crisis to a small, insular group of advisors "who think like gangsters" with no expertise or deep knowledge. According to Sachs, President Trump overrode professional military and diplomatic counsel who advised against the operation.

The New York Times reported that even Energy Secretary Chris Wright and other White House officials believed until the eve of war that oil prices would only experience brief fluctuations, ignoring warnings that Iran might close the Strait of Hormuz, through which approximately 20 percent of global oil passes, and wage an economic war.

None of the anticipated outcomes materialized. The Iranian government did not collapse, no popular uprising occurred, and Tehran responded with sustained missile and drone campaigns while effectively closing the Strait of Hormuz to hostile actors.

**Energy market devastation**

The conflict has triggered a global energy crisis of historic

proportions. Brent crude surged to nearly \$120 per barrel before stabilizing around \$110, marking a 60 percent increase since hostilities began. Natural gas prices in the European Union have risen by approximately 70 percent.

EU Energy Commissioner Dan Jørgensen announced that the energy shock has added roughly \$16 billion (14 billion euros) to the bloc's fossil fuel import costs in just one month. "We should be under no illusion that the consequences of this crisis for the energy markets will be short-lived," Jørgensen warned. "Because they won't. Even if peace were declared tomorrow, he stated, energy prices "will not go back to normal in the foreseeable future".

The Financial Times reported that oil soared 60 percent in March as the Iran war choked global energy supplies, with analysts warning of prolonged disruptions to global oil supply chains.

**Global economic toll**

The International Energy Agency has called the war in Iran "the greatest global energy security threat in history." Beyond immediate price spikes, the crisis threatens to trigger a global recession through energy inflation. The Financial Times has warned that higher costs for everything, including semiconductor inputs, might pop the AI bubble sustaining the American economy.

A food crisis comparable to that following Russia's invasion of Ukraine could follow, as the war disrupts not just food prices but global fertilizer flows, another fossil fuel-dependent product, at the brink of planting season. JPMorgan analysts noted that the conflict now exposes two major corridors of global energy trade simultaneously, the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, "narrowing rerouting options and increasing system-wide supply-chain risk".

Macquarie Group estimates that if disruptions continue through June, Brent crude could hit \$200 per barrel.

**Diplomatic and strategic consequences**

The United States has privately conceded that reopening the Strait of Hormuz may not be possible within the president's timeline for ending the war, with officials estimating restoration could take weeks or months. U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf, particularly the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Kuwait—whom Iran has formally protested to the United Nations for allowing use of their territory in the attacks—are now grappling with insecurity stemming from America's discredit and the collapse of American military hegemony and prestige.

As Jeffrey Sachs warned, citing Henry Kissinger's famous adage: "To be an enemy of the United States is dangerous, but to be a friend is fatal".

**Tehran mourns Admiral Tangsiri with grief and defiance**

TEHRAN - A sea of mourners flooded the streets of Tehran on Wednesday to honor Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri, the fallen commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps Navy, in a funeral marked by both profound sorrow and unyielding resolve.

Following an earlier ceremony in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas, where thousands first gathered to pay tribute, the farewell in Tehran unfolded on a far grander scale. Crowds from all walks of life converged on Enghelab Square, their voices rising in unison, their grief etched across every face. Draped in flags and carried on the shoulders of the people, the coffins of Admiral Tangsiri, 12 fellow fighters and Jamshid Es'haghi [the advisor to the Armed

Forces chairman who was martyred along with his family members in a strike on his house in Tehran] moved slowly through the heart of the capital—each step a testament to sacrifice, each tear a tribute to devotion.

The ceremony, held on Islamic Republic Day, carried a symbolism that resonated deeply. It was not merely a farewell, but a declaration—that the memory of those who fall in defense of their nation does not fade; it ignites.

Born in 1962, Tangsiri was a figure shaped by decades of conflict and commitment. A veteran of the Iran-Iraq War, he rose through the ranks to command the IRGC Navy, a position he has held since 2018, following his appointment by the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution,

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. To many, he embodied steadfastness—an officer whose words and actions reflected a lifetime of defiance and duty.

His assassination, announced just days ago, sent shockwaves across the nation. According to official statements, he succumbed to injuries sustained during recent Israeli-U.S. strikes—an end that, for many mourners, only deepened the sense of both loss and purpose.

As chants echoed through the streets and black banners fluttered against the skyline, the message from Tehran was unmistakable: the fallen are not forgotten. In the hearts of the people, they endure—not only as memories, but as symbols of resistance, unity, and an unbroken will.

**LATEST NEWS**

■ **First Iranian Christian martyr laid to rest**

The funeral of Avanos Simonyan, the first Iranian Christian martyr in the on-going Israeli-U.S. war on Iran, was held in Isfahan alongside 49 other local martyrs. The ceremony drew a strong presence from the Armenian Christian community and other citizens, symbolizing deep solidarity across different faiths in defending Iran.

■ **Army official says US hides casualty figures, urges American families to contact deployed troops**

Brigadier General Ali Jahan Shahi, commander of the Iranian Army's Ground Forces, has accused the United States of concealing casualty figures among its troops deployed to West Asia, in a message addressed to American military families.

Writing on X, he urged families of U.S. service members stationed in the region to contact their relatives within the next 24 hours, adding, "We will see what happens."

■ **Data contradicts Trump's 'present' claim on Strait transits**

A Lloyd's List Intelligence analysis shows that since March 1, 71% of vessels

transiting the Strait of Hormuz are linked to Iran—either Iranian-owned, trading with Iranian ports, or part of the shadow fleet. The data undercuts President Trump's claim that Iran allowed ships through as a "present." Shadow fleet transits rose to 88% last week.

■ **Starmer: 'I'm acting in UK national interest' on Iran war**

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer has reaffirmed his decision not to join the U.S. in Israeli war on Iran, despite facing "a good deal of pressure" to change his position. "Whatever the noise, I'm going to act in the British national interest," Starmer told reporters on Wednesday. He reiterated that the conflict "is not our war and we're not going to get dragged into it."

■ **Iranian Army: Air defenses down 150 enemy drones since start of war**

The Iranian Army has said its air defense systems have intercepted and destroyed 150 hostile drones since the outbreak of the war.

In a brief statement, the military described the operations as part of ongoing efforts to secure the country's airspace and counter aerial threats, adding that defense units remain on high alert.

■ **Iran says Leader in 'full health'**

Iran's Foreign Ministry has confirmed that Leader Mojtaba Khamenei is in "full health," attributing his absence from public appearances to the current wartime conditions, according to a report by the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA).

In the same statement, the ministry sharply criticized the United States, arguing that confidence in American diplomacy has diminished worldwide. It accused Washington of leveraging negotiations as a means to impose its demands or pave the way for the use of force. The ministry also reaffirmed Iran's commitment to self-defense, warning that it would act to prevent any recurrence of a conflict that many countries around the world believe the United States entered under Israeli influence.

■ **Sirens sound across central Israel**

The Israeli Home Front Command reports fifth Iranian missile salvo aimed at central Israel in under 10 minutes.

The front command said the fifth wave of projectiles reached the area, activating sirens near Nablus. Greater Tel Aviv experienced four siren alerts within ten minutes, signaling the attack's intensity. Al Jazeera reported multiple warheads hit Bat Yam and Holon, south of Tel Aviv.

# Hidden costs of imposed war: over 5m tons of carbon dioxide emitted in two weeks

TEHRAN – During the first two weeks of the imposed war by the United States and Israel against Iran which started on February 28, more than five million tons of carbon dioxide has been released in the atmosphere of the country, an official with the Department of Environment (DOE) has said.

Iran has already been grappling with numerous environmental challenges, like water scarcity, pollution, soil erosion, and climate change. War exacerbates these problems, and disrupts the sustainable management of natural resources, *doe.ir* quoted Abu-Ali Golzari as saying.

When a war breaks out, the public attention mainly focuses on political and human aspects, and less attention is paid to the environmental crisis of the conflicts.

According to a recent primary research analysis by Queen Mary University of London, Climate and Community Institute, in cooperation with Lancaster University, some 5 to 5.6 million tons of carbon dioxide were set free in the first fourteen days of



the war, alone. The figure clearly reveals how wars can directly aggravate climate crisis.

The analysis also shows that the amount of greenhouse gas emitted in the first two weeks is almost equal to annual emissions in Iceland or emissions from 1.1 million vehicles consuming petrol. The comparison clearly indicates the climate shock, the official added.

The wartime greenhouse gas emission is not merely attributed to fighters. According to studies carried out by research-

ers, there are many other resources for diffusion of harmful gases.

In case of Iran, the demolition of buildings and infrastructures, the explosions of oil storages and oil products, fuel consumption (planes, destroyers, and equipment) for military operations, the destruction and replacement of military tools, and firing missiles and drones in the first two weeks of the war accounted for 2.4 million tons, 1.88 million tons, 529,000 tons, 172,000 tons, and 55,000 tons

of released pollutants, respectively, Golzari further noted.

The destruction of residential areas, schools, and medical centers also have a big share in spreading carbon dioxide, as their reconstruction will require a large amount of cement, steel, and energy.

While the world is trying to cut greenhouse gas emissions, and lower the earth temperature, the wars do the opposite, practically.

The other effective factor is the use of fossil fuels to compensate for the disruption of energy in the market.

Damaging energy infrastructure, with the probable risk of chemical emission, releasing pollutants in the air, and consuming more fossil fuels have both short-term and long-term impacts on the environment.

Paying attention to the environmental consequences of the war is not just a concern for the specialists; it is considered to be a part of national security, and the well-being of the generations to come, the official highlighted.

## U.S.-Israeli strike kills natural resources commander, deepens civilian target concerns

TEHRAN – The martyrdom of Majid Zakariyai, commander of the protection unit of Iran's Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization, has added to growing evidence that U.S.-Israeli airstrikes have extremely extended beyond military targets.

Zakariyai was wounded in an airstrike on March 28 and died a day later in hospital after succumbing to his injuries. His death follows a series of attacks affecting a wide range of sectors, from cultural heritage sites and residential areas to hospitals, schools, and civilian populations.

The strike that led to his death targeted the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization, a government body tasked with protecting forests, water resources, and ecosystems.

At least eight people were killed in the attack, according to official figures. Among the victims were Zakariyai, Seyyed Saeed Mousavinejad Naeni, Davoud Omrani, Mor-teza Maqsoodi, Ali Montazeri, and Asghar Meshkani.

A number of officials condemned the strike, describing it as an attack on a non-military organization. Kamran Pourmoghadam, deputy head of forestry affairs at the organization, said the airstrike occurred around midday as personnel, many from the protection unit, were on alert during the Nowruz holidays to prevent potential environmental damage, including fires and destruction of natural resources.

Pourmoghadam described the incident as part of a broader pattern aimed at spreading fear, arguing that targeting an environmental

and scientific body underscored the widening scope of the conflict.

In a message of condolence, Reza Aflatouni, head of the organization, described Zakariyai and his colleagues as defenders of the country's ecological security, saying their deaths reflected commitment and sacrifice. He added that their legacy would endure as a symbol of resilience.

According to relevant authorities, the case would be raised with international bodies, with efforts underway to seek accountability and compensation.

Funeral ceremonies for Zakariyai were held in his hometown of Qaemshahr in Mazandaran province, where large crowds gathered. During the procession, his daughter, wearing her father's uniform and

holding his photograph, called for a response to those she described as aggressors and pledged to continue the path of her father and others martyred.

Officials and observers say the attack on an environmental institution highlights what they describe as a broader trend in which no sector has been secure from cultural heritage and civilian infrastructure to organizations central to long-term development.

Despite repeated assertions by the United States and Israel that their operations are precise and aimed at minimizing civilian harm, Iranian authorities say the growing number of strikes on civilian and non-military entities contradicts those claims.

## Military aggression against Iran: environment remains a victim of violations of international law

United Nations experts say that beyond immediate destruction, armed conflicts disrupt ecosystems, deplete natural resources, contaminate the environment, and jeopardize the health of the planet for future generations.

The Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (ENMOD) was adopted in 1976 to prohibit the use of environmental modification techniques as a means of warfare. In addition, Additional Protocol I (1977) to the Geneva Conventions includes two key provisions — Articles 35 and 55 — prohibiting methods or means of warfare that are intended, or may be expected, to cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment.

However, the adequacy of these two instruments was called into question during the 1990-1991 Persian Gulf War. The extensive pollution caused by the deliberate destruction of more than 600 oil wells in Kuwait, along with subsequent claims of \$85 billion in environmental damage, led to growing calls to strengthen legal protections for the environment during armed conflict.

Since the start of terrorist attacks by the United States and the Zionist regime against Iran, numerous infrastructures — including oil storage facilities — have been targeted in acts of aggression.

A spokesperson for the Office of the United Nations High Commission-

er for Human Rights (OHCHR), speaking at a press conference in Geneva, raised concerns about the health and environmental consequences of attacks by Israel and the United States on oil depots in Iran due to the release of toxic pollutants into the air.

The spokesperson stated that these impacts raise "serious questions regarding compliance with the principles of proportionality and precaution under international humanitarian law," emphasizing that the sites struck did not appear to have been used exclusively for military purposes.

Christian Lindmeier, spokesperson for the World Health Organization (WHO), also warned that the "black rain" and "acid rain" reported in Tehran following the attacks pose real dangers to public health in Iran, according to Al Jazeera.

Public concern over the targeting or misuse of the environment during wartime first reached its peak during the Vietnam War, widely regarded as the longest war of the 20th century and a military defeat for the United States. In the U.S., the conflict gave rise to what became known as the "Vietnam Syndrome," reflecting widespread public aversion to American military interventions abroad.

Over the past six decades, civilians have been the primary victims of war. Protecting civilians and civilian property during armed conflict therefore forms the cornerstone of international humanitarian law (IHL). IHL is also intended to be implemented

effectively and in a timely manner to provide greater protection to vulnerable civilian groups such as women, children, and displaced persons.

There have been numerous other instances in which armed conflicts have directly and indirectly caused significant environmental damage. For example, dozens of industrial sites were bombed during the 1999 Kosovo conflict, resulting in toxic chemical contamination in several sensitive areas — including Pancevo, Kragujevac, Novi Sad, and Bor — and raising concerns about potential pollution of the Danube River.

In another case, it is estimated that during the 2006 conflict between Israel and Lebanon, between 12,000 and 15,000 tons of fuel oil were spilled into the Mediterranean Sea.

According to The Guardian, the armed conflict in Iraq that began in June 2014 and concluded in 2017 with the recapture of territory previously controlled by ISIS left a deep environmental footprint. As militants retreated, they set fire to oil wells, releasing a toxic mixture of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, particulate matter, and heavy metals such as nickel, vanadium, and lead into the atmosphere.

Although the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) states that it works with member states and partners to strengthen environmental protection before, during, and after armed conflict, environmental protection must receive the same

level of political priority as human rights protection.

Assessments of the consequences of past wars have shown that targeting fuel reserves can have multifaceted environmental effects. Oil fires release harmful substances into the air, including sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and lead. These pollutants can spread over wide areas before settling into the soil, causing serious short-term health impacts on people and wildlife — particularly those with pre-existing respiratory conditions.

Groundwater contamination also threatens agricultural land and communities that rely on groundwater and surface water for irrigation, drinking, and domestic use. Prolonged exposure to such pollutants may lead to respiratory disorders, liver damage, and kidney problems.

For this reason, human rights experts emphasize that just as civilians must be protected from killing, abuse, and material loss, the right to a healthy environment is itself a human right deserving greater attention within the international community.

More broadly, the environmental footprint of war — and its impact on populations and natural resources — requires a stronger legal framework to ensure accountability, provide timely assistance to affected communities, and condemn acts of aggression that have been imposed on Iran in recent weeks by the United States and Israel.

## War and ecocide: environmental fallout of military attacks on Iran



By Maedeh Zaman Fashami

Wars and armed conflicts don't only have human casualties; the environment is one of their biggest victims. Historical experiences, from the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, the Kosovo conflicts, the war in Lebanon, the genocide against Gaza, to the U.S.-Israeli coalition's actions against Iran, have shown that destruction of infrastructure, explosions, fires, and pollutants from military operations have severe and long-term effects on soil, water, air, and wildlife. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has repeatedly highlighted the issue.

Recent U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran, particularly targeting oil depots and industrial facilities, are a stark and alarming example. According to The Guardian, these attacks have caused "black rain" in Tehran, a mix of pollutants, smoke, and petroleum compounds in the air posing serious threats to both human health and the environment. These events illustrate that even countries committed to environmental protection under international protocols are vulnerable to unpredictable military attacks.

This report highlights the international mechanisms in place to protect the environment during war, examines the violations seen in recent attacks, and explores their environmental and climate consequences.

**International legal mechanisms for environmental protection**

One of the earliest international frameworks is the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (ENMOD), adopted in 1976. This convention bans the use of environmental modification techniques as a tool of warfare and prohibits any action that could cause "widespread, long-lasting, or severe damage to the natural environment," emphasizing state responsibility.

Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions, an amendment to the original conventions, includes Articles 35 and 55, which obligate countries to protect the environment during armed conflicts. Additionally, the First and Second Additional Protocols of the 1977 Geneva Conventions emphasize environmental protection and civilian safety during war.

Article 55 of the First Protocol specifically prohibits actions that could lead to "widespread, long-term, and severe damage to the natural environment." These protocols provide an initial legal framework for assessing environmental damage in wartime, though enforcement has always been challenging.

Moreover, international humanitarian law and human rights law recognize the protection of a healthy environment as a human necessity. International organizations have repeatedly stressed that environmental protection should hold the same political importance as human rights, since a healthy environment underpins peace and the fulfillment of human rights.

This perspective frames environmental protection not merely as a technical issue but as a legal and humanitarian obligation during conflict.

**Violations by U.S. and Israel**

Recent U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran targeted oil depots and critical infrastructure, causing serious environmental and human consequences. These actions not only violate international humanitarian law but, by striking civilian infrastructure, constitute clear examples of environmental crimes (ecocide).

They violate both the Geneva Protocols and the ENMOD Convention. Long-term consequences include air pollution, acid rain,

public health threats, and regional crises affecting water and electricity supplies.

These attacks have contaminated air, soil, and water, caused black rain, and harmed wildlife. Doug Weir, director of the Conflict and Environment Observatory, noted that satellite imagery and open-source data indicate over 300 problematic environmental events in Iran, and limited data access due to internet restrictions means many damages remain undocumented.

An initial research analysis by Queen Mary University of London, in collaboration with the Climate and Community Institute London and Lancaster University, found that in just the first 14 days of the war, approximately 5-5.6 million tons of CO2 equivalent were released into the atmosphere, roughly equal to Iceland's total annual emissions or the output of 1.1 million gasoline cars.

Breakdowns of emissions include:

- \* 2.4 million tons from building and infrastructure destruction
- \* 1.88 million tons from fires and explosions in oil storage and petroleum products
- \* 529,000 tons from fuel used in military operations
- \* 172,000 tons from the destruction and replacement of military equipment
- \* 55,000 tons from missiles and drones

This shows that the environmental impact of war extends far beyond fuel use by military vehicles.

**Air and soil pollution:** Black rain in Tehran from oil depot explosions and particulate matter illustrates the short-term, direct effects. Soil contaminated with petroleum compounds and heavy metals threatens both surface and groundwater, while pollution in the Persian Gulf has long-term impacts on marine ecosystems, including coral reefs and mangroves.

**Wildlife:** Rare and endangered species in Iran face habitat destruction, altered feeding patterns, and stress from explosions. Forced displacement of animals, changes in migration routes, population declines, threats to species survival, and disruptions in reproductive cycles are examples of these effects.

**Role of the UN and UNEP**

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has worked to strengthen environmental protection before, during, and after armed conflicts. However, in practice, environmental protection during war often does not receive the same political weight as human rights. UNEP assessments show that a healthy environment is fundamental to peace and human rights, and should be considered alongside civilian protection.

Despite international conventions and protocols, countries often justify attacks on strategic or military targets. Recent events in Iran demonstrate that even sensitive infrastructure like water treatment facilities, power plants, and industrial centers can be targeted, creating serious risks for human health and the environment.

Modern warfare, especially attacks on civilian infrastructure, carries extensive environmental and human consequences. While international laws exist to protect the environment, enforcement is rare, and countries often cause widespread damage under the pretext of military objectives.

Recent attacks in Iran, and the black rain in Tehran, illustrate that weak enforcement has immediate and indirect effects on human health and wildlife. Environmental protection must be prioritized alongside human rights and civilian safety in international policy to prevent future ecocide.



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## Tehran urges UN to hold Washington, Tel Aviv accountable for ecocide

TEHRAN — In a diplomatic missive that underscores the escalating humanitarian and ecological catastrophe during the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran, Shina Ansari, the head of the Department of Environment, has called upon the United Nations to intervene against what she described as a systematic campaign of “environmental crimes” perpetrated by the aggressors.

The ongoing military aggression has shifted from conventional warfare into a deliberate assault on the biological and atmospheric integrity of the region, Ansari warned in a formal letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

The letter, dated March 10, provides a harrowing timeline of the aggression, noting that since the commencement of large-scale military operations on February 28, American and Israeli forces have consistently targeted non-military, civilian infrastructure.

Among the most devastating incidents cited was a strike on an elementary school in Minab, a city in the Hormozgan Province of southern Iran.

It involved multiple missiles in rapid succession, killing 180 civilians—most of whom were children.

This massacre, Tehran asserts, is indicative of a broader strategy that disregards the lives of the most vulnerable and violates the fundamental tenets of international humanitarian law.

The crisis took a definitive environmental turn on the night of March 7, when precision strikes targeted multiple fuel storage facilities in the Tehran metropolitan area.

The resulting infernos sent massive plumes of toxic residues into the sky, releasing a lethal cocktail of hydrocarbon compounds, sulfur oxides, and nitrogen oxides.

Ansari informed the UN chief that these pollutants triggered a state of emergency in



Tehran and the neighboring industrial hub of Karaj.

The Department of Environment officially classified the air quality as critical, warning that the dense toxicity poses a “mortal danger” to the elderly and those with chronic cardiovascular or respiratory conditions.

The threat reached a new level of urgency following rainfall on the morning of March 8 in Tehran province.

Experts have warned that the interaction between precipitation and suspended chemical pollutants created a hazardous “acid rain” effect.

This phenomenon threatens to inflict irreversible damage on human pulmonary systems, contaminate the nation’s dwindling water reservoirs, and collapse fragile natural ecosystems.

In response to the atmospheric poisoning, the Department of Environment placed all regional medical centers on full alert and issued a stern advisory for the millions of residents in the capital and Karaj to remain indoors, describing the current outdoor environment as a biohazard zone.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

## Iran takes legal action to seek reparations for U.S.-Israeli environmental crimes

TEHRAN — Iran has launched a comprehensive legal and technical inquiry into the extensive environmental degradation caused by the recent American-Israeli campaign of aggression, characterizing the strikes as a calculated assault on the nation’s ecological health and natural heritage.

In a detailed assessment released on March 28, Shina Ansari, the head of the Department of Environment, said that vital infrastructure across multiple sectors has been compromised.

She emphasized that the war has left a lasting scar on the country’s protected lands and industrial heartlands, describing the damage as a core component of the enemy’s hostile agenda.

The environmental chief provided a grim inventory of the structural damage sustained by the nation’s administrative and personnel networks.

She noted that several provincial and county-level offices were either damaged or completely destroyed since Washington and Tel Aviv began their campaign of aggression on February 28.

Specifically, environmental protection offices in the counties of Dehaqan (central Isfahan province), Salmas (northwestern West Azarbaijan province), Bonab and Osku (northwestern East Azarbaijan province), alongside the Environmental Training Center in the Geno Protected Area (southern Hormozgan province), have suffered significant structural damage.

Despite these setbacks, she said that her organization had successfully relocated personnel to nearby administrative hubs, ensuring that there was “no interruption in the provision of organizational services.”

Beyond administrative infrastructure, the aggression has penetrated deep into Iran’s sovereign natural reserves.

Military strikes have scarred portions of the country’s protected areas, which are strictly managed to preserve unique biodiversity.

Ansari highlighted the Sefidkouh protected area in western Lorestan province and the Haftad Gholleh protected area in central Markazi province as regions that sustained “significant damage to natural arenas and biodiversity.”

She said that a team of specialists is currently engaged in a precise technical evaluation of these losses.

These findings are being compiled into a formal legal dossier to be presented to competent international jurisdictions, as Tehran moves to demand global accountability and reparations for what it deems environmental crimes.

The maritime domain has faced similarly acute challenges, with recent events threatening the delicate balance of Iran’s coastal ecosystems.

In the northern province of Gilan, a missile strike on a frigate moored near Bandar Anzali led to a significant discharge of diesel fuel and lubricants into the Caspian Sea.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

# Toxic fallout from strikes on Iran to affect whole world, official warns

TEHRAN — The environmental devastation caused by US and Israeli airstrikes on Iran will not be contained within the country’s borders, Arman Khorsand, a senior Iranian environmental official has warned.

In the past month, the airstrikes by the United States and the Israeli regime on Iran have raised serious concerns about the environmental impact on the country, especially after the attacks on civilian infrastructure like oil depots or power facilities.

Mehr News Agency reached out to Arman Khorsand, Head of the Center for International Affairs and Conventions at the Environmental Protection Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to discuss the ways to pursue this issue legally and examine what environmental damage it could have for our country.

The following is the full text of the interview:

**For the first questions, please let us know that what measures has the Environmental Protection Organization of Iran taken to prevent or lower the environmental impacts of the attacks?**

In the name of God, thank you very much for your efforts because nowadays media is also a big part of our national defense against the savage aggression of the enemies, the two outlaw regimes that have broken all the rules of civilized society, civilized world and indeed I believe that the whole world now knows that these two regimes are the biggest threats to the peace and security of the world and to its environment.

So to start the debate and to start the issue, I have to mention that on one hand side, there is this fact that this national heroic defense that the nation of Iran is representing with its armed forces, with its leadership, with its nation who are ready on the streets every night is our national pride and glory.

This is a fact, there is no doubt about it and what we are talking about the impacts of the war and aggression has nothing to do with the pride and the glory coming out of this heroic defense and this will be registered on the long history under the big book of Iranian history as a very shining paper, very shining point of our history that we stood against the apparently the biggest armies of the world and we kept our pride, we kept our influence on the Strait of Hormuz on the whole region and we showed the world that we are a nation capable of defending ourselves. And this is one part of the issue independently as a source of pride and glory.

On the other hand, every armed conflict in the world is a big threat to the environment, there is no doubt about it. And there is no doubt about it that our country, the region and the whole world are the victims of these two outlaw regimes’ actions. They break all the rules of armed conflicts, all the rules of international environmental laws, all the rules of basic human decency and civilization.

So let’s start the story from months ago when the outlaw dictator of US started threatening our nation by talking about his [so-called] beautiful armadas being sent to the region that now it became topic of joke for the whole world. At that time, we know that, even the threats, even announcing threats against peace and security is also breaking the international laws and regulations. But you know our region especially and particularly the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman for years



and decades, especially from 1991 from the first crisis of Iraq invading Kuwait at that time has been the subject of military operations of international forces coming to this region and these two important water areas, seas, they also have been affected deeply by the presence of international forces here, especially the ships that have been here and the damages that they could make to the whole circle of environment in the region.

So we have been always examining this subject and especially before the beginning of aggression the vice president and head of the organization has sent a letter to all the ministers of environment in the region. Especially particularly to the Arabian countries, the parties to a so-called organization which is ROPME which is supposed to protect the environment of Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, warning them about the presence of international illegal forces and their ships in the region and the damages that it can make to the environment.

We have also sent letters to the Secretary General of the United Nation and the head of UNEP, United Nation environmental program, warning them about this presence and its consequences on the environment. This was the first step and also domestically we have done everything that we could make preparing for [facing] a possible act of aggression [by the enemy] and then after the beginning of the war, after this illegal, unprovoked savage aggression began against Iran, again the vice president and head of the organization have sent letters to all environmental bodies internationally, Secretary General of the United Nation, the head of UNEP and all the conventions were involved in these matters and you know that the armed conflicts does not only affect the waters or so, the impact comes on the environment in its totality.

Even the wild animals, they are also affected of these air raids when the bushes, when the jungles getting hit by the bombs, there is a bush fire the wildlife is also affected, the trees are affected, the plants are affected, the air, the soil, the water, everything. And then after the savage and unprovoked attack on the oil depots around Tehran, we again started registering the damages, sending letters and registering the crime in the international bodies with the help of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and our colleagues in different provinces, they also assessed and examined the consequences of the damages.

But, there is a big but here, that unfortunately with deep sorrow, we have to say that the international bodies and organizations, they failed and they failed miserably in this matter.

I’m also a teacher of international law and I have taught international law for years to my students. And what I can see as a teacher every year after the year

is that what we are teaching to our students of international law becomes more and more like a funny joke when the superpowers or the so-called countries that they were supposed to protect the international peace and security, they break all the rules of civilized society, then what remains from those mechanisms? After the second world war, the people of the world, the countries, the governments, they decided to set aside a part of their sovereign rights, put it in the hands of United Nation, put it in the hands of Security Council to protect the international peace and security and they were supposed to provide the world with peace and security.

And what we are witnessing right now is that a month after this heinous crime, this act of aggression that in one example they massacred more than 160 school girls and school boys, there is no even a clear condemnation coming from those bodies.

Every year with millions of dollars the leaders of the world they gather in a so-called gathering called COP the Conference of the Parties for UNFCCC, United Nation framework for the climate change.

Where are they?

Why we do not hear any single condemnation from United Nation from the UNFCCC from UNEP from other bodies condemning these heinous crimes?

The outcome of the aggression, the US and Israeli regime aggression on Iran, according to an estimation, is equivalent to the carbon footprint of more than 60 countries. You know that this is a very very serious matter for the COP for UNFCCC to reduce the carbon footprints of the different countries, encouraging them to use less fossil fuels, encouraging them to use renewable energy, encouraging them to do different things and suddenly in the middle of these efforts what we see is that two outlaw regimes start an act of aggression that frees tons of toxic gases, carbon monoxide, black carbon, and other toxic gases into the air and with deep pain we have to say, we do not see even the courage of condemnation from UNFCCC and UNEP.

So what are you (relevant international bodies) doing?

This reckless attack will affect the environment? Yeah, I have to say that what is our estimation, what we can see from the international sources, like Guardian also reflected in a report that until now what has come out from this aggression is equivalent to the carbon footprint of approximately 60 countries for a year. And you know that it’s not only the depots or it’s not only the power plants or refineries that attacks on them would lead to the spread of toxic gases, even targeting the houses, the targeting the buildings that we witnessed that our savage en-

emies they have done it openly and they are attacking civilian areas, you know the debris also releases a lot of toxic gases and also carbon into carbon monoxide into the air.

So if I want to wrap up this part of my words, I have to talk clearly with those organizations that have been the recipients of our letters that if you do not do something right now, at least verbally, this is the minimum that you can do, then you can announce your end because there will not be a single other country that they can put trust in you.

The basic idea of setting aside part of your sovereign rights and investing it in other international bodies is that they are supposed to do something at the day of danger, at the day of crisis, they have to be present and what we see is a failure, an absolute failure when you do not have the courage to condemn a clear act of aggression, a clear breaking of all international rules, at least verbally, then it’s very far fetched to think that they can do something actually on the ground. So as the end of my first part of statement, I have to say we have done whatever that we could do almost possible in our hands as international options, however we believe that the recipients of our actions are at the moment at least at a complete failure.

But this is our duty as the government to do whatever which is possible to be done legally and we keep pursuing it, this is the right of our nation and we will not step back even a single bit from our rights. What the other party is doing, that’s another story. That will remain in the history. That will be a pattern for the future of international efforts for the climate change, for everything. So I hope a little bit that we will see a bit of awakening in those organizations.

**You spoke about the pollution released after the airstrikes on general buildings or oil depots. Are there any documented or recorded instances?**

Yes. Like a week ago the report made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs based on the reports coming from our organization, the Minister of Health, the Red Crescent, other organization and also the ministry of the cultural heritage, they also gathered reports about all different aspects of the war crimes committed by the two outlaw regimes of US and Zionist regime and these report was gathered and in a comprehensive manner prepared by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and has been sent and registered in the United Nations as an effort. And also, the prior estimations and examination about the environmental damages has been done by our organization and has been sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and then by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to international bodies.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))