

**PALESTINE INSTITUTE
FOR BIODIVERSITY
AND SUSTAINABILITY**



معهد فلسطين للتنوع البيولوجي والاستدامة
Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability



EST. 2014

10 YEARS
OF GIVING FOR THE
SUSTAINABILITY OF
HUMANS & NATURE



SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH
OUR 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY VIDEO

Thank you to our donors, volunteers, staff and supporters who were part of a team that built and operated a growing institution that makes a difference in people's lives and the lives of natural communities.

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WELCOME

On 30 May 2024, the Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability (the Institute, or PIBS) marked the 10th anniversary of its founding. When the initial five-year agreement was signed in 2014 between Professor Mazin Qumsiyeh and Brother Peter Bray, Bethlehem University's Vice Chancellor at the time, to establish the Institute at Bethlehem University, we were not sure whether the donation of \$250,000 from Professor Mazin and Mrs. Jessie Qumsiyeh would sustain the operation for five years. Learning how to write grants and raise funds became a must. We relied on volunteers to create the website and a video to recruit volunteers. Resident volunteers were hosted at the Qumsiyeh's home and the rest is history.

As we reflect on the incredible journey of the Institute, we are overwhelmed with gratitude for every person who has helped us grow like a seed planted in fertile soil.

Our vision of sustainable human and natural communities took root during a meeting led by Prof. Mazin Qumsiyeh, his wife Jessie Qumsiyeh, and a group of 25 dedicated volunteers at the Mar Andrea Campus of Bethlehem University in July 2014. In the beginning, our goals were modest and our stem tender, but our aspirations were boundless. We set out to restore a garden, create a natural history exhibit, conduct research, develop educational programs, create an eco-pond, and initiate funding applications for projects that would make a lasting impact. Little did we know that our journey would far surpass our expectations, blossoming into a thriving institution that has made a significant difference in the lives of people and the natural communities in Palestine.



**Volunteers who attended the signing ceremony
with Bethlehem University on May 30, 2014.**

From left to right: Prof. Mazin Qumsiyeh, Khaled Al-Za'atary, Basil Khoury, Ibrahim Salman, Mubarak Zawahreh, Kareem Abusrour, Brother Peter Bray (Vice Chancellor of BU at the time), Jessie Qumsiyeh, Sabrine Shawabka, and Qais Zawahreh.

A five year plan was set up to achieve these objectives, but we managed to achieve them in only three years (by 2017)! A new and more ambitious five-year plan was then developed by our team. We managed to exceed our own expectations and we're thrilled with the progress noted below:

- Published 128 scientific research articles across diverse fields, from agriculture and biodiversity to climate change and environmental justice, along with over 220 articles in magazines, journals, and key information websites.
- Increased environmental awareness among 12,000 school students, over 1,500 university students, and more than 20,000 visitors (both local and international).
- Formulated national policies and action plans, including the crucial National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP) and Protected Area Network (PAN).
- Developed collections of over 10,000 invertebrate specimens, 500 vertebrate specimens, 1,500 herbarium specimens, 200 geological/paleontological specimens, and 100 ethnographic, historical, or cultural items.
- Successfully implemented 30 grants with a total budget over \$3.3 million.
- Established the Bachelor's program in Environmental Sustainability at Bethlehem University, accredited by the Palestinian Ministry of Education.
- Built strong working relationships with local and national governmental entities and international communities.

Our growth has not been without its share of trials, but living things and entities adapt and we turn challenges into opportunities.



Prof. Mazin and volunteers moving items from Qumsiyeh's garage into the new space at PIBS.

As you will see in the pages of this booklet, our Institute responded to the needs of the people based on our vision of sustainable human and natural communities.

In 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic started and the lockdown, spanning from March 2020 until late 2021, put a halt on most of our operations, specifically on field trips and school visits. But we carried on with our publications, such as our paper on the effect of COVID-19 on Biodiversity. In 2023, the war on Palestine along with the genocide in Gaza intensified, which also impacted our ability to serve our communities and do research and education. Yet, we adapted again, challenged oppression, and took the opportunity to build capacities and raise awareness via a series of online workshops called Settler Colonialism and the Natural Environment.

Our work surpassed norms, we participated in over 100 interviews and forums to raise awareness and produced statements, for example, on the attacks on institutions of higher education and on natural and cultural heritage. We also published research on areas like the impact of war on the environment, on a vision for peace based on justice and sustainability, and on Israeli misuse of “National Parks” and “Nature Reserves.” And we are currently working on a new manuscript about the war’s destruction of natural and cultural heritage.

This booklet stands as a testament to our achievements in research, education, conservation, and community service over the past decade.



Together, we have turned challenges into opportunities. The pages of this booklet tell a story of growth, resilience, and the profound impact we have had on the world around us. While proud of our accomplishments, we harbor aspirations for even greater milestones in the coming years.

With our human resources and with your support we are able to do much to serve natural and human communities. We invite you to celebrate this remarkable journey with us and join hands as we continue to serve natural and human communities, making a lasting difference.



“This is an example of harnessing our indigenous knowledge system and archiving everything about ourselves, our land and our lives as we share the land with all living things.”

– Itumeleng



Initial volunteers who met and set the five year plan with Prof. Mazin and Jessie (many of whom are still involved with us).



A DREAM FULFILLED AND A SEED SPROUTS IN PALESTINE

Professor Mazin Qumsiyeh (Mazin) developed a love for the nature of Palestine through his maternal uncle Dr. Sana Atallah, the first Palestinian zoologist, who often took Mazin on field trips as a child. Mazin helped Atallah prepare specimens for research after the field trips. Just as Atallah began teaching in Iran after obtaining a PhD, he was tragically killed in a car accident at the age of 27.

In the face of this loss, young Mazin resolved not only to fulfill his uncle's mission of researching mammals in the Arab world, but also to cultivate a dream - the dream of building a museum of natural history. This led to an academic journey with undergraduate studies in Jordan University, and Master's and PhD from the United States.

He researched bats, gerbils and jirds of our region and ended up writing books like the Bats of Egypt (including Palestine, 1985) and Mammals of the Holy Land (1996). He was also trained in medical genetics in Memphis, Tennessee, and served on the faculties of medicine at three U.S. universities (Tennessee, Duke, and Yale).



Dr. Sana Atallah

When he returned to Palestine in 2008, Mazin joined Bethlehem University (BU) science faculty and established on BU campus the first clinical cytogenetics laboratory in Palestine. He also taught molecular genetics at BU and Birzeit University, and other science and humanity courses at AlQuds University, all the while taking his students on field trips to all parts of the West Bank to survey and collect specimens for research.

These specimens were to form the initial museum exhibit. Many of those students later formed the initial group of volunteers in helping to establish the Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability (PIBS) including the Palestine Museum of Natural History. PIBS as a seed started in 2014 guided by a vision to foster sustainable human and natural communities.

Our motto is RESPECT: first for ourselves, then for others, then for the environment. Our mission encompasses research, education, conservation, and the promotion of responsible human interactions with our environment. Our goals include researching and disseminating knowledge on the fauna, flora, and human ethnography of the region, utilizing research results to promote sustainable communities (especially marginalized communities).

We continue to grow and flourish rooted deep in our traditions and heritage with our branches reaching new heights. Under difficult circumstances, PIBS is an oasis cultivating hope, biodiversity, and sustainability. We invite you to help us grow even further.



2014

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

☞ Prof. Qumsiyeh and Mrs. Qumsiyeh signed an agreement with Bethlehem University, initiating our journey with a \$250,000 donation and space provided by Bethlehem University, laying the foundation for our work.

☞ Developed an eco-pond for rain harvesting, nurturing sustainable practices.

☞ Created a vertical garden by reusing plastic bottles and demonstrating water-efficient way for planting and greening urban spaces.





2015

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

Constructed a new greenhouse.



2016

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

☞ Installed solar panels, and constructed systems of aquaponics and hydroponics, as well as compost facilities, embracing eco-friendly solutions.



2017

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

- ☞ Built a hideaway structure for observing migrant birds, connecting nature enthusiasts
- ☞ Developed a food forest (biotope), and rosemary hedge pathways, creating a vibrant green space.
- ☞ Built a Biogas unit (digester to produce methane gas), promoting environmental sustainability
- ☞ Developed the Natural History Exhibit, opened our doors to the public in April



1 Rosemary hedges growth
2 Finished Biogas unit



The evolution of the Natural History Exhibit from 1-3

2018

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

☞ Developed and opened the community garden and the children's playground, fostering community engagement.

☞ Developed a plant nursery, contributing to biodiversity conservation.





2019

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

- ☞ Developed an amphitheater, providing a space for educational and cultural events.
- ☞ Developed the Animal Rehabilitation Unit, extending our care to wildlife.
- ☞ Developed and opened the Ethnography Exhibit, celebrating our Canaanitic heritage and grandparents.
- ☞ Launched the Medical Zoology Unit, integrating medical knowledge into our research.
- ☞ Amended the agreement with Bethlehem University for sustainability, reinforcing our commitment.





2020

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

- ☞ Added a barefoot sensory path to the garden, enhancing sensory experiences.
- ☞ Expanded our gardens for in-situ and ex-situ plant conservation, vermicompost, and more, embracing ecological diversity.



2021

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

Developed a Biodiversity Center that includes a molecular laboratory, taxidermy laboratory, herbarium, and a scientific library, enhancing our research capabilities.

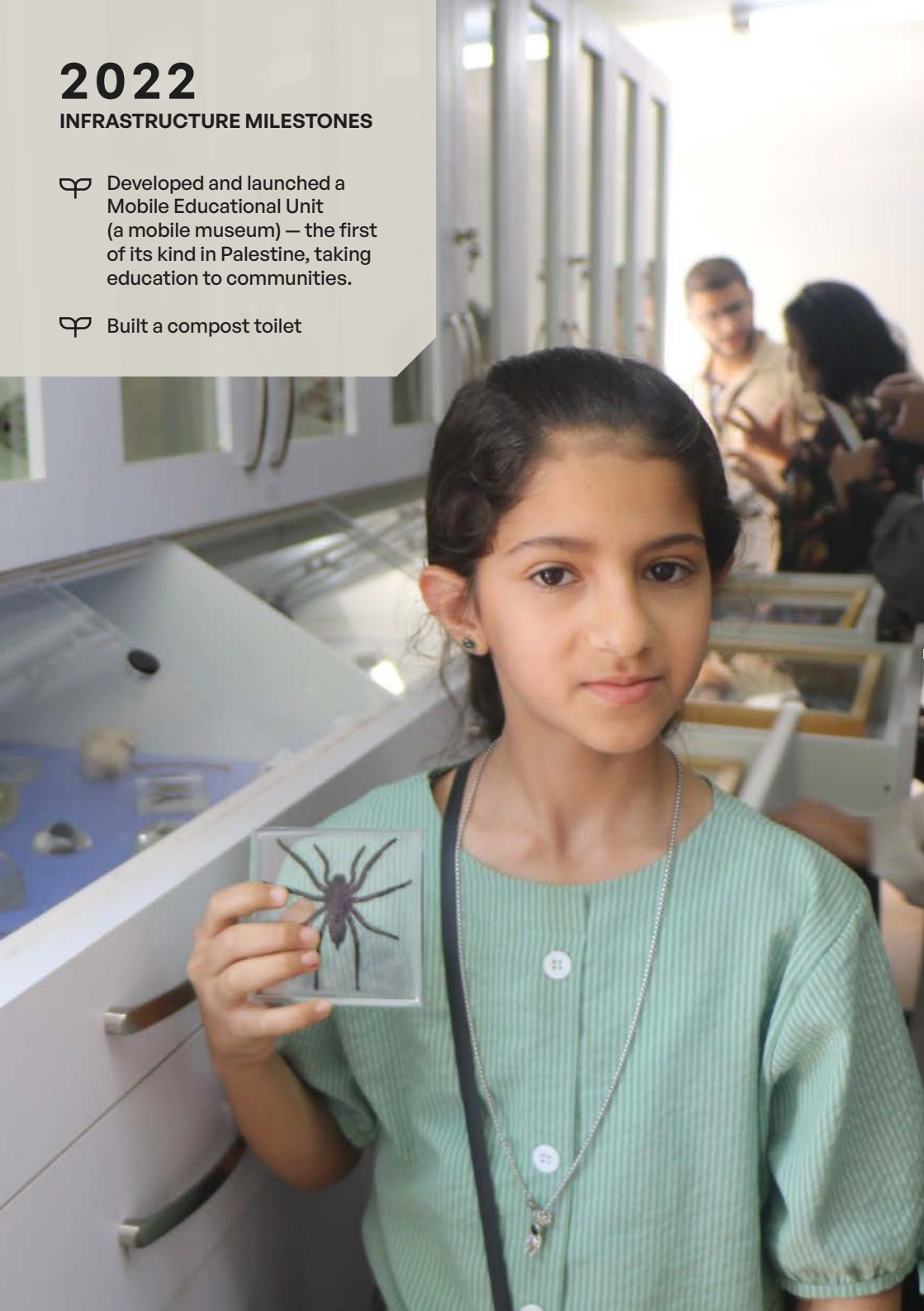


2022

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

☞ Developed and launched a Mobile Educational Unit (a mobile museum) — the first of its kind in Palestine, taking education to communities.

☞ Built a compost toilet

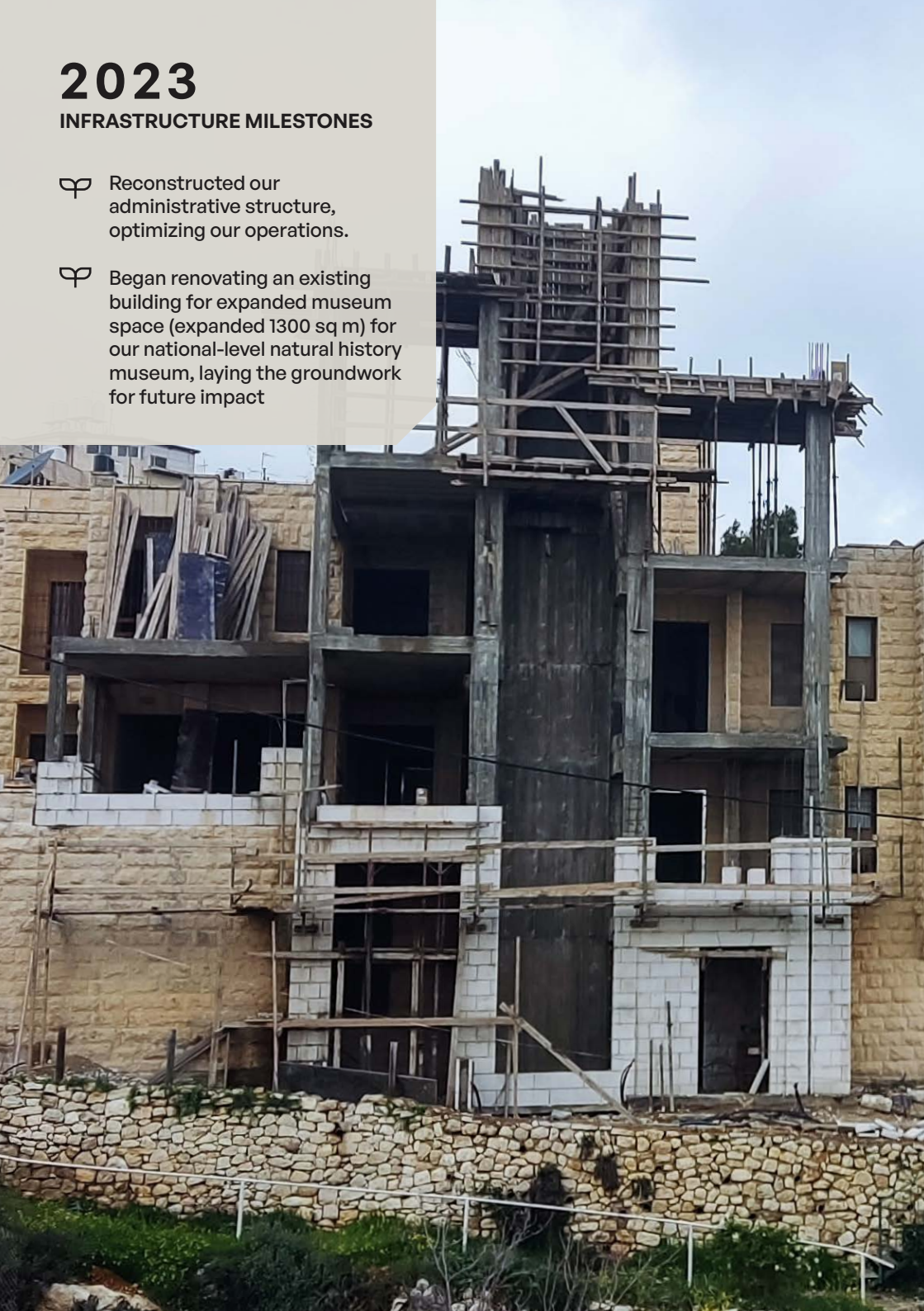


2023

INFRASTRUCTURE MILESTONES

☞ Reconstructed our administrative structure, optimizing our operations.

☞ Began renovating an existing building for expanded museum space (expanded 1300 sq m) for our national-level natural history museum, laying the groundwork for future impact





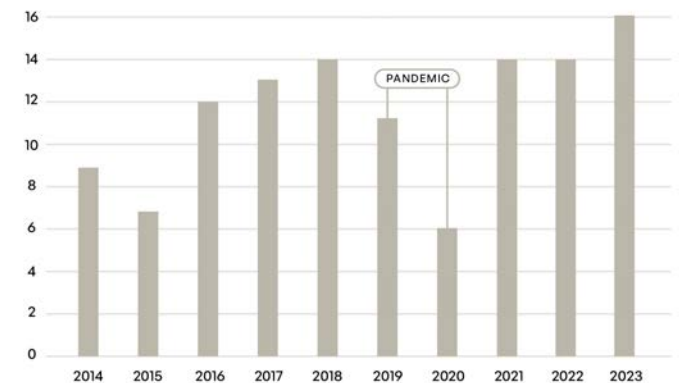
FRUITS
OF OUR
WORK
SO FAR

With significant support from staff, volunteers, donors, and partners, our institute grew to produce fruits that made a long lasting impact in our society.

Research and Higher Education

Research is fundamental to all other work we do in education, conservation, and community service. PIBS published 128 scientific research articles in esteemed journals including Wetlands, Diversity, Parks, and the International Journal of Environmental Studies, covering areas like agriculture, biodiversity, climate change, and environmental justice. The numbers consistently grew, showcasing our dedication to advancing knowledge.

Research Articles Published Every Year



A list of peer reviewed publications can be found in Annex. We also extended our outreach by publishing over 220 articles in magazines, journals, and key information websites, further disseminating our research to wider audiences.

We played a pivotal role in shaping academic programs, contributing significantly to the establishment of the Environmental Studies master's program at Birzeit University and the Environmental Sustainability Bachelor program at Bethlehem University. We continue to nurture future leaders by teaching at institutions in the West Bank, including Bethlehem University, Birzeit University, Dar Al-Kalima University, Arab American University, and Bethlehem Bible College.

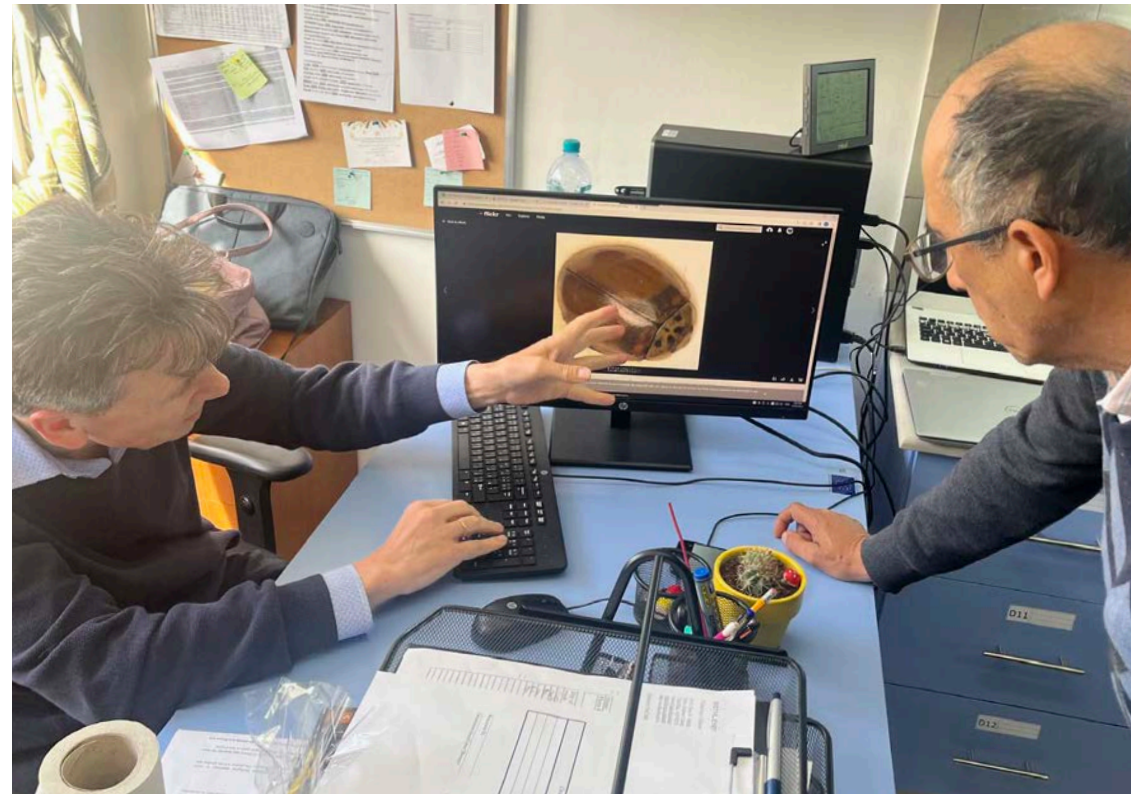
Professor Qumsiyeh guided and supervised over 20 bachelor and master thesis projects, both locally and internationally, covering diverse subjects such as genetics, biodiversity, and tourism. Some students include those in the list to the right.

We also collaborated with esteemed international research groups, including partnerships with Prof. Alfried Vogler from the Natural History Museum London, Prof. Zuhair Amr of Jordan University of Science and Technology, and Prof. Ruediger Prasse of the University of Hanover, Germany.

We empowered university students to enhance their research skills via workshops and courses on research methodologies. We even funded 19 research projects to carry out research in areas of biodiversity and human diversity. Our work has been cited by other researchers worldwide.

Students

Mohamad Salahat
Haya Borqan
Kholoud Hamad
Areej Shalalfeh
Taghreed Obeid
Sulaima Ramadan
Ahmad Zeid Kilani
Nadia Khlaif
Gabriel Umbretti
Ruba Anabtawi
Mohammad Najajrah
Elias Handal
Mohammad Abusarhan
Jihan Gedeon
Eman ElTiti
Israa Shawawreh
Razan Salameh
Tamara Sobh
Amal Handal
Linda Handal
Eyad Handal



Collections

We have steadily increased our collections that are used both in research and education.

We now have over 10,326 animal specimens, over 241 geologic/paleontologic specimens, 146 ethnographic, historical or cultural artifacts, 1,625 plant specimens in the Herbarium, and the living plants/flora in the garden and the associated fauna (hundreds of species).

We anticipate a logarithmic growth of these collections in the next decade including for more interactive exhibits in the expanded 1,300 sq m building space (see page 80).

The audience includes local and international visitors. Among locals we focus on youth (school and university students) and marginalized communities. The ethnography and historical exhibits include promoting the history of Palestine from the first humans here through the Netufian and Canaanitic ancestors to the present.

These collections help us valorize our natural and cultural heritage that are threatened by occupation/colonization.





Environmental Education and Raising Awareness

We now know that plants feed each other and grow healthier by doing specialized fixation of nutrients, enriching the soil all around them, putting out food and oxygen to nourish animals, and those in turn help plants grow (e.g. pollinators). Likewise, our educational efforts reach deep into Palestinian society, leaving a lasting impact. Our engagement spans from elementary to graduate-level students and the broader public.

Serving as facilitators of active learning, we emphasize the wisdom encapsulated in the Chinese proverb: “I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.” Going beyond traditional teaching methods, our approach involves hands-on interactions with nature, creating an enriching and holistic educational experience. These are some of our major accomplishments:

- ⇒ Enhanced awareness of tens of thousands of visitors (ages 4 - 94) to our **Natural History and Ethnography Exhibits and Botanical Garden.**
- ⇒ Produced various educational modules such as **interactive games** tailored to the Palestinian community, brochures and posters on environmental topics to distribute to schools, and animated videos on critical environmental topics.
- ⇒ Established **20 environmental clubs** at various schools, and utilized field trips and workshops to foster behavioral changes such as recycling and upcycling initiatives and sustainable agriculture through developing gardens at schools.
- ⇒ Benefitted hundreds through our **Children’s Educational Programs** (the three year and ongoing Elena Probst and Cremisan projects) which use innovative and engaging activities to foster a love and understanding of nature in children.
- ⇒ Held **over 1100 general workshops**, half of them local and half in over 40 countries or online on varied subjects relating to our vision and mission of sustainability and biodiversity conservation.
- ⇒ Held more than **200 specialist workshops** in areas of biodiversity and sustainability, including 33 workshops in preparation for the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).
- ⇒ Held **two global conventions** on Biodiversity and Human Diversity, the first of their kind in Palestine.
- ⇒ Developed a **smartphone application game** to teach children in Palestine about their agricultural heritage.
- ⇒ Launched a **Mobile Educational Unit (MEU)** in 2022, which is the first mobile exhibit of its kind in Palestine. It has visited 46 schools, benefitting 6011 students in marginalized communities who are unable to visit us. It has also participated in different educational activities such as the Earth Day activity in Cremisan, and the Science Days at Bethlehem University.
- ⇒ Attended **capacity building conferences** in the following countries: Egypt, Greece, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Nepal, Qatar, Spain, Switzerland, UAE, Uganda, United Kingdom, and USA.



“I am Juliette, a mother of three young girls who have consistently participated in activities organized by the Palestine Museum of Natural History (PMNH).

Over the years, they have enjoyed an exceptional experience at the museum, gaining insights into environmental protection, a topic previously unfamiliar to them. The most rewarding part was gaining knowledge about “recycling” as a way to protect their future, as it helped them grasp the significance of recycling for both the environment and their daily lives. They learned the concept of recycling items instead of discarding them, thus contributing to the preservation of nature and environment.

Through PMNH educational activities, my daughters acquired numerous wonderful ideas that enriched their knowledge and implanted a belief that even the youngest individual can make a positive impact...As their mother, I take pride in their growth and ongoing commitment to nurturing the seeds planted by PMNH, encouraging a sense of responsibility toward the environment and making a positive difference for future generations.”

— Juliette





Conservation and Community Service

Much like an olive tree, which generously provides shade, nutrition, lumber, oil, and more, our conservation initiatives are akin to the continuous growth of a seed evolving into a robust, thriving ecosystem. To the right, you'll find some of our most significant accomplishments in the field of conservation and community service.

- ⇒ Signed **Memorandum of Understanding** with the Environment Quality Authority (EQA) in 2020 which accelerated our collaborations especially in conservation issues.
- ⇒ Entrusted by the State of Palestine to lead the construction of the **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2023-2025**.
- ⇒ Worked on conservation through **restoration of key habitats** critically selected at three sites in the **Al-Makhrour valley**. The restoration action focused on improving ecological functionality, preventing soil erosion and enhancing carbon dioxide absorption on site.
- ⇒ Wrote the National Report for the **Convention on Biological Diversity**. This was technically the first required report (a preliminary report was submitted after Palestine signed the convention in 2015).
- ⇒ Led on-the-ground efforts to create a new **Protected Areas Network** which was then approved by IUCN and the Palestinian government.
- ⇒ Developed a database of **environmental injustice** in the Palestinian Occupied Territories.
- ⇒ Represented Palestine at some **Conferences of Parties (COPs)** for both the climate change convention and the convention on biological diversity. Working with various groups, especially from the global South, we try to make a difference in global agendas.
- ⇒ Developed **beekeeping** and created insect motels to increase pollinators in the garden.
- ⇒ **Rescued numerous threatened animals**, including mammals like foxes, hyenas, European badgers, mongooses (Martins), bats, and various birds such as golden eagles, eagle owls, black kites, crows, and reptiles like snakes through our Animal Rehabilitation Unit (ARU).
- ⇒ Assisted in adding Battir to **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.
- ⇒ Started an **ex-situ conservation unit** within the PIBS Botanical Garden which houses six iris species and 19 orchid species.
- ⇒ Started the **Palestine Action for the Planet (PAP)**.



- ⇒ **Conserved the Jinsafut pond** by showing that it contains rare species such as Syrian spadefooted toad (*Pelobates syriacus*), the Pond Water-crowfoot (*Ranunculus peltatus*) and the duckweed (*Lemna minor*). The EQA adopted our management plan and designated the area as a protected habitat.
- ⇒ Held workshops on cultural and **natural heritage conservation**.
- ⇒ **Reexamined environmental laws**, policies, regulations, and international treaties (signed or unsigned) by the State of Palestine.
- ⇒ Created several **management plans for protected areas** such as for Wadi Al-Zarqa Al-Ulwi, Wadi Al-Quff, Wadi Al-Makhroul and Wadi Qana.
- ⇒ Worked with the **Ministry of Tourism** and local Al-Makhroul communities to create a marketing plan for many communities (eco-friendly business plan that includes ecotourism and agricultural tourism).
- ⇒ Developed and utilized alternative energy at our institute such as the use of **biogas and solar energy**, composting (including compost toilet, vermiculture, and regular composting), aquaponics & hydroponics, and rain harvesting systems.
- ⇒ Held **two global conventions** on Biodiversity and Human Diversity, the first of their kind in Palestine, as well as a Biodiversity Conservation Conference.
- ⇒ Engaged in community service activities that **benefited >650 families**

Supported 81 household farmers (22 in Husan, 20 in Battir, 13 in Al Walaja, and 26 in Beit Jala) and trained them on eco-friendly agriculture resulting in an increase of output by 31% on average while reducing costs (not using chemical pesticides and fertilizers). They received seeds and 87000 seedlings and produced approximately 11.4 tons of vegetables.

Supported **women households in four communities** through four grants to four women business groups.



➤ Published papers on conservation

2017 | Nature Museums and Botanical Gardens for Environmental Conservation in Developing Countries.

2017 | Environmental Conservation and Protected Areas in Palestine.

2017 | Research, Education, and Conservation in Developing Countries in a Networked Global Ecosystem.

2023 | Developing Institutions that Serve National Goals: Case Study of the Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability.

2023 | Updating and Enhancing the Protected Areas Network of the State of Palestine: A step Towards Biodiversity Conservation.

➤ **Trained 12 engineers** from Gaza on building and utilizing aquaponics and hydroponics systems.

➤ Processed **over 2700 patient cytogenetic samples**. These include patients with congenital abnormalities, infertility, those with spontaneous abortions, and cancer.





Facebook



Instagram



Visit our social media pages and our website for regular updates and news. Plus, view our annual reports to see our year-by-year achievements.

YouTube



Website



Watch our YouTube channel for various videos including virtual tours of the grounds, educational content, biodiversity and sustainability workshops, and even a video we produced for National Geographic.

Coverage

MAAN News Agency
Wafa News Agency
Palestine TV
Al Hurra TV
Watan News

Donia Al-Watan Newspaper
Dissident Voice Newsletter
Al Hadath Newspaper
Al-Quds Newspaper
New Arab Voice

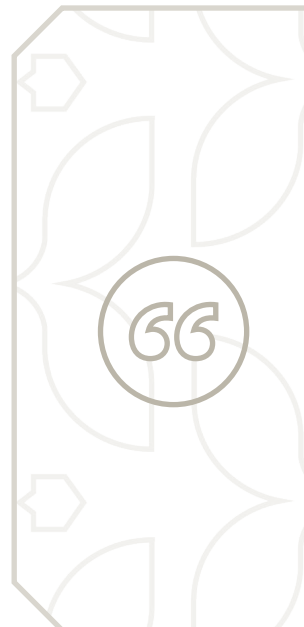
Al Monitor
AlJazeera
Press-TV

Media and Outreach

Just like the sweet scents of jasmine, lemon, and daffodil flowers that permeate our garden air in spring, our knowledge and our outreach reach people through the various media.

- 2014 | Established Facebook & website
- 2017 | Established Instagram page
- 2018 | Turathuna and Al-Makhrour websites
- 2023 | Dedicated a Youtube channel for PIBS

Local, regional, and international media covered our institute and its activities, such as the coverage list to the right.



“We spent a month at the Museum as a family and it was an unforgettable experience which, I dare say, contributed to shaping my children’s outlook and opinions on many important things including environment, nature, museum and conservation work, individual responsibility and personal development... made us realize what the Palestine spirit is all about - **undefeatable optimism, courage, defiance and the ability to enjoy life.**”

— **Katja**

Funding Helps Us Grow

Restricted Grants

The following are 30 grants we received between 2015 and 2023 and are making an impact, as seen in other parts of this booklet.

► 2023 - 2021

2023-2024

Science Based Conservation of Wetlands in two Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in the State of Palestine. CEPF-Birdlife

2023-2024

Rare and endangered flora from newly designated protected areas in Palestine. BGCI.GGI

2023

Erasmus+ SymPhysi - Integrative Training in Nature YouthWork

2021-2024

Environmental awareness for children focusing on the Cremisan area. Salesians of Don Bosco Middle East

2022

Education and awareness for mainstreaming and public engagement in formulation of the new National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). CeBios, Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences

2021-2022

Education and awareness for mainstreaming and public engagement in formulation of the new National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). CeBios, MRV, Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences

2021-2025

North Building renovation and new exhibits. American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (via USAID) AND Munib R Masri Foundation

2021-Ongoing

Annual grant from Elena Probst Foundation for Children Educational Program

2021

Ethnobotany for high value agriculture. Swiss Representative Office

2020 & 2021

Crowdfunding campaign for childrens room and for truck

► 2021-2017

2020 & 2021

Green Oasis in Bethlehem for Plant and Ecosystem Conservation. Mediterranean Basin Hotspot-CEPF-MED project

2020

Botanic Gardens Conservation International. For orchid conservation at the PIBS botanical gardens

2020-2021

Academic Cooperation with the Environment Quality Authority to Refine Strategies for Biodiversity Conservation in Protected Areas in Palestine. Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences. CeBios MRV

2020-2023

Unity and diversity in nature and society. EU Peacebuilding Initiative

2019

Garden Biogas work. Danish Government Funding via Palæstinaorientering

2019-2023

British and Palestinian museum collaboration in research, education, and conservation. Royal Society

2018-2021

Biodiversity Conservation and Community Development in Al-Makhrou Valley in Bethlehem, Palestine. Darwin Initiative Fund

2018 -2020

Biodiversity Conservation in Al-Makhrou Valley, Bethlehem, Palestine. National Geographic Society

2018-2019

Community Garden. This project is granted and directed by the Rotary Club with additional support from the Knights of the Equestrian Order, the Jerusalem Fund, and the Playground for Palestine.

2018

Socio-economic sustainable development and environmental conservation at the northern transition zone to Wadi Qana Protected Area, Palestine. Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences CeBios/MRV

2017-2018

Actions for Environmental Sustainability in Wadi Zarqa Protected Area. UNDP-GEF-SGP

► 2017 - 2015

2017

Cytogenetic studies on biodiversity indicator species of Land Snails (Gastropoda, Mollusca). Bethlehem University Institutional Research Grant

2017

Creating module for environmental training. palestinaorienting.dk

2016- 2017

Empowering Youth in Environmental Stewardship. US Consulate

2016-2017

Models of sustainability at Bethlehem University. Canada Fund for Local Initiatives

2016

Grant for workshops on Sumud and sustainable living. Culture of Resistance

2016

Grant to host a water workshop highlighting sustainability issues in the water sector. GIZ

2015-2016

Sienna University in Italy with Bethlehem University mobility grant for exchange of Scholars (Prof. Qumsiyeh travel to Italy April 2016) ERASMUS

2015

Travel grant for Dr. Faysal Bibi from Museum fur Naturkunde, Berlin. Palestinian American Research Council (PARC)

2015

Pilot project for biodiversity/ permaculture work in Jordan Valley. Telemachus Foundation

Consultancies

2022-2023

Land Research Center. Environmental Impact of Israeli occupation

2022

Designating new protected area network for Palestine (West Bank), subcontract from IUCN (funder CEPF)

2022

Subcontract to provide consultancy (as International environmental consultant) to help build new environmental law and regulations in compliance with signed international conventions (Environment Quality Authority and AlTheqa)

2021 – 2022

Consultancy to build 6th National CBD report and National Biodiversity Action Plan for Palestine. Ministry of Finance and Environmental Quality Authority.

2018-2019

Building a museum in Wadi Rum Maisam and Aqaba region development

2016

Environmental Conservation and protected areas in Palestine: Challenges and Opportunities. The Hanns Seidel Foundation (Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung),

2015-2016

Contract for developing panels for the tour path that stretches from northern areas of the West Bank to the south. Three panels were already researched/completed (Wadi Al-Qalt, Mar Saba, Nabi Yaqeen) in areas like archeology, geology, anthropology, and natural history. Telemachus Foundation and Masar Ibrahim

2013

IUCN: Faunal Survey of Wadi Al-Quf, Hebron Governorate (first preparatory study for a Palestinian administered national park).

Other Support

We traveled around the world networking and getting support. COVID19 put a stop to trips but had a number of virtual meetings in 2020 and 2021. We reached thousands of people with our educational message whether when they visited here, when we visited them in their countries or online. A side benefit is fundraising and we raised in these ten years over \$600,000 from individuals (friends and supporters) that helped our operations producing the amazing results shown here and laying the foundations for more successes to come.



“What fantastic work.
The Palestinians are
an eternal symbol
of unthinkable
resilience”

— **Jessica D.**



Other Fruits of Our Work

Lead in Service in the Following:

- ⇒ Higher Council for Innovation and Excellence
- ⇒ Bethlehem: Capital of Arab Culture
- ⇒ Maan Development Center Magazine Advisor
- ⇒ Member of IUCN SSC Mediterranean Plant Specialist Group 2021-2025
- ⇒ Member of European network of Science Centers and Museums 2019
- ⇒ Honorary member of the ICCA Consortium “territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities”
- ⇒ Member of committee by Ministry of Tourism for drafting museum regulations
- ⇒ Organizing Committee and convener of 2020 and Beyond
- ⇒ Invited to give talks in over 530 venues in 35 countries
- ⇒ Co-founded Scientists for Palestine at MIT
- ⇒ Editor/reviewer for scientific journals including Diversity, Sustainability, Parks, and Jordan Journal of Biological Sciences

For these achievements, PIBS founder was recognized with:

- ⇒ Paul K Feyerabend Award 2020
- ⇒ Ranked best researcher at Bethlehem University and 21st in Palestine 2024
- ⇒ Recipient of Takreem Award 2020
- ⇒ Listed in 100 Peace & Justice Leaders and Models 2018





**OUR ROOTS
ENSURE OUR
FUTURE**

Our Team and Partners

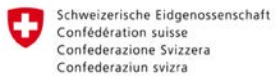
Just as plants thrive with nourishment, institutions, too, flourish through the dedicated staff, partners and supporters. Many people journeyed with us over the decade either as staff, contractors, or consultants. We would like to celebrate this milestone with them:

Abdelsalam Aljanazreh	Majd Salsa
Amal Handal	Dr. Mohammad Alqurna
Amani Amro	Mohammad Najajrah
Anton Khalilieh	Mohammed Abusarhan
Aysha AlWahsh	Mohammed Abuamrieh
Banan Alsheikh	Mubarak Zawahrah
Basil Khoury	Qais Zawahrah
Chris Zaknoun	Rami Abu Saad
Dany Qumsiyeh	Reem Masaad
Duaa Husein	Reena Saeed
Elias Handal	Roubina Ghattas
George Qumsiyeh	Saed Shomaly
Hanin Saliba	Sameer Qumsiyeh
Ibrahim Bandak	Sara Khair
Johanne Gideon	Shadi Adawi
Dr. Khawla Abualia	Summer Shaheen
Linda Majaj	Zohar Regev

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the organizations and hundreds of individuals who have contributed to the growth and sustainability of the Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability (PIBS).

We also acknowledge those who donated in kind such as donating books (e.g., George Kouchakji) and geologic specimens (Dr. Taleb Harithi) and taxidermied bird collection (Mr. Peter Rodenko).

Partners



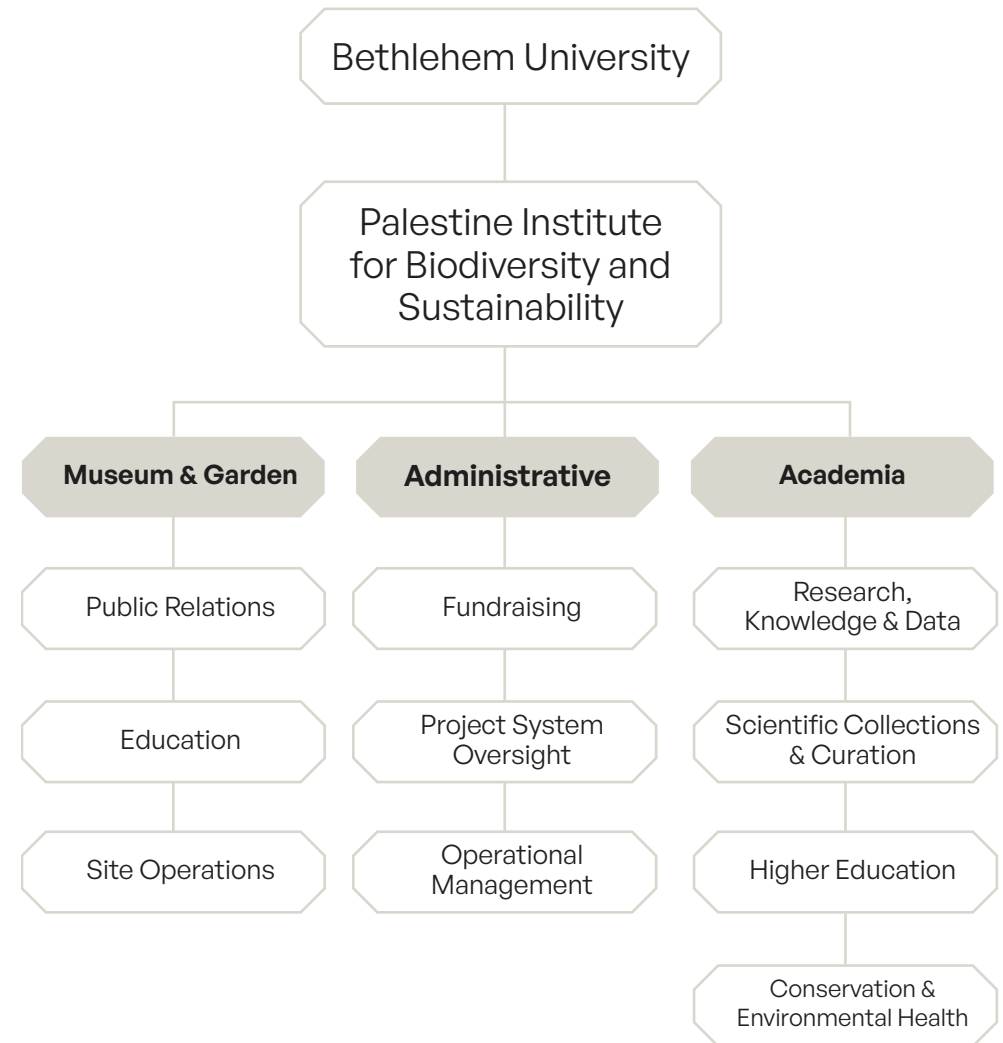
Existing and Envisioned Structure

PIBS started with all volunteers in 2014 and grew to seven paid team members plus two full-time volunteers currently. In 2023, **we restructured our operations** to anticipate future sustainable growth.

The new structure consists of **three sections and ten categories of responsibility**, which could become departments in the future, with Prof. Mazin being the volunteer general director of PIBS. Three deputy directors will lead the three respective sections. Currently, Mohammad Najajrah leads the Museum & Garden section, and Rami Abu Saad serves as the deputy director of the Administrative section. Prof. Qumsiyeh temporarily leads the Academia section (as volunteer) until a new deputy director is recruited. PIBS will actively search for a deputy director of the Academia section and a successor to Prof. Qumsiyeh for the general director post in the next few years.



NEW PIBS STRUCTURE



Anticipated Future Fruits and Needs

Just like a tree grows stronger with each passing day, we're confident that our institute, with your support, will yield even more fruits. Our plans for the coming years are:

- ☁ To complete the wetland conservation project
- ☁ To expand the Animal Rehabilitation Unit
- ☁ To implement habitat restoration and rehabilitation through tree planting
- ☁ To expand educational activities through our mobile museum to cover more marginalized communities.
- ☁ To expand empowerment programs for women
- ☁ To accelerate our research
- ☁ To improve our seed bank
- ☁ To enhance ethnobotanical and ethnozoological research and education
- ☁ To complete our building renovation and expansion project that will expand our exhibit space from 120 m² to 1360 m². This will become a national level Natural History Museum, the first of its kind in the Arab World. We raised \$1.1 million for this project and are \$500,000 short (for areas like landscaping, more interior exhibits, elevator, solar power, and more). We also plan a new green building beginning in 2027/2028 fiscal year.



- ☁ To develop programs on using herbs for culinary and medicinal purposes
- ☁ To develop a healing garden and programs around it to provide an oasis of peace, tranquility and hope for people of Palestine who have suffered from eight decades of occupation and oppression
- ☁ The expanded programs require operational funds which require an institutional endowment

We welcome partnerships to advance our critical work for diversity and sustainability in both human and natural communities in Palestine and beyond.

Visit our website to partner with us or contact us via email at info@palestinature.org or by phone at **970-22773553**.



IN MEMORIAM

We remember dear supporters of PIBS who believed in our visions, supported us, and left us a legacy so we will always remember them.

Angela Al-Masri

Brigitte Jaensch

Rev. David F. and Polly Johnson

Doris and Paulo Albuquerque

Fawz Qumsiyeh

Gale Khoury

Jake and Marty Terpstra

Dr. John Battista

Kevin Zeese

Dr. Luke Hodgkin

Matthew Silvers

Mohammad Abdul-Qavi

Rajaie Qubain

Ruth Moynihan

Stephen Michael Adams

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