**In 2014, some 5 million litres of crude oil leaked into the Evrona Nature Reserve in what is considered to be one of Israel's worst ecological disasters**

Israel's state-owned Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline Company will pay 100 million shekels (approximately $30 million) in compensation for one of the worst ecological disasters that wreaked havoc on a wildlife preserve in the south.

In 2014, the Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline sprang a major leak, dumping oil into the Evrona Nature Reserve in the Negev Desert. An estimated 5 million litres of crude oil leaked into the reserve. The oil seeped into the ground, [severely damaging the reserve](), the flora and the fauna.

The Evrona Nature Reserve spans some 40 square kilometres and had boasted a unique diversity of wildlife and a large concentration of acacia trees.

Several lawsuits were filed after the 2014 disaster, namely a class action suit on behalf of the citizens of Israel. The proceedings lasted five years.

As part of the settlement reached Thursday after a class action suit against the company, a significant sum will go to the Israel Nature and Parks Authority. About a fifth of the money will be used to safeguard the reserve and prevent future damage.

The pipeline, which links Eilat to the port city of Ashkelon, opened in the 1960s to facilitate the movement of Iranian oil from the Persian Gulf to European markets. Since the rupture in Israeli-Iranian relations in 1979, it has mostly been used to move oil and oil products from Eilat to different parts of Israel.

**Source: Haaretz**

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