

BOICOT A ICL

**SUPORT
AL GENOCIDI A
PALESTINA**

**SALINITZACIÓ
DEL RIU
MINERIA
NO SOSTENIBLE**

MORTS

ACCIDENTS LABORALS

**CONCESSIONS
D'AIGUA**

**SEQUERA
FÒSFOR
BLANC**

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*Gràcies a totes les persones i col·lectius que han
participat en la creació d'aquest dossier i que segueixen
sostenint la lluita contra ICL.*

INTRODUCTION

We live in turbulent times, where the imperialist phase of capitalism causes wars, increased exploitation, the plundering and squandering of natural resources.

In Palestine, we have witnessed a televised genocide, in the form of massive bombings, multiple massacres, planned starvation, detentions and torture. Despite global protests, warnings from United Nations bodies and arrest warrants from the International Criminal Court, the State of Israel enjoys almost absolute impunity for committing such barbarity. This is because it enjoys the diplomatic, military and economic support and complicity of the governments of the United States, the European Union states, and by extension, many other states, including Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and others. As well as the economic incentives of large multinational corporations that profit from its military occupation economy.

Being aware of the importance of such impunity and complicity, since 2005 a broad consensus of Palestinian civil society organisations called for an international Boycott campaign, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against the State of Israel, in order to put pressure on Israel to end the military occupation and the current genocide.

It is within the framework of this campaign that the Boycott ICL campaign is created. Israel Chemicals Ltd (ICL) is an Israeli multinational company that has a presence in the Catalan Countries and the Spanish State through the exploitation of the potash mines in Sùria (Bages) and its presence at the Port of Barcelona, the production and marketing of fertilisers from Murcia, and a project to produce electric battery components in Sallent (Bages).

ICL is one of the main drivers of the economy of the State of Israel, especially in the Negev region, around the Gaza Strip, through the exploitation of potash and phosphate mines. In addition to exploiting the occupied territories of Palestine '48 (the current State of Israel), it also has a direct impact on the occupied territories of the West Bank, particularly with regard to the exploitation of the Dead Sea and the agricultural development of the settlements in the Jordan Valley. It maintains several support programmes for Israeli army soldiers who have committed the genocide in Gaza, its US subsidiary markets the white phosphorus that ends up being used in Israeli army bombs, and several shareholders and directors have a direct link to the Israeli military industry.

It is for these reasons that we are promoting the boycott of ICL, just as it has been promoted in other countries where it has a presence, such as the USA and Brazil. To contribute to the pressure of the BDS campaign and to prevent the profits that ICL extracts from our territory from being used to finance the genocide.



Protest in Manresa, September 2025

In parallel, ICL has been reported and judicially condemned for contaminating the waters of various rivers and aquifers in our territory, including the Llobregat river, with its saline mining waste. Despite the condemnatory rulings, its corporate power and complicity with governments — above all with the various administrations that have passed through the Generalitat de Catalunya — have meant that to this day it has still not ecologically restored the waste mountains, and its production continues to generate more. This contributes to expanding the ecocide we are living through, in this case linked to the contamination and squandering of fresh water.

This corporate power has also allowed it to use the purchase of labour as a blackmail tool to continue its poor environmental practices, as well as to introduce various elements of labour precarity that have caused a high rate of workplace accidents, including fatal ones.

The ICL Boycott campaign aims to denounce and prevent this Israeli multinational from maintaining its economic activities in our territory for as long as it continues its ties with the military occupation and genocide in Palestine, and for as long as it contaminates the territory and violates labour rights.

We therefore call on all economic, political and social actors who maintain ties with this company to cut them. And on everyone who can spread the campaign to do so. Because contributing to cutting off the source that feeds the genocide in Palestine should be a moral imperative. And because we cannot allow multinationals to contaminate our territory and blackmail us with jobs.

The BDS campaign is effective. ICL's own annual financial report for 2022 acknowledges that, as an Israeli company, it may be affected by "economic boycotts or other sanctions on its products."

In the past year (2024–2025) we have succeeded in getting cultural institutions such as the Teatre Kursaal of Manresa and educational ones such as UManresa (linked to the University of Vic) to cut their ties for the reasons set out above. It is a difficult task because benefits are often perceived in maintaining those ties. But the level of barbarism is such that none of these benefits should compensate for it.



Protest in front of the Kursaal Theater of Manresa, March 2025 .

WHAT IS ICL?

Israel Chemicals Ltd. (ICL Group) is an Israeli multinational company that develops, produces and markets fertilisers, metals and other specialty chemical products. It is notable for its potash production. Its origins lie in the establishment of a mining project in the Dead Sea area before the creation of the State of Israel. One of its founders, Moshe Novomeysky, a committed Zionist, served as treasurer of the Haganah (Zionist paramilitary group) in 1921–1922. In 1951, following the creation of the State of Israel, the mining company was nationalised and renamed Dead Sea Works. In 1968, ICL was created as a government-owned company bringing together various mining and chemical companies, among them Dead Sea Works. From the 1990s onwards ICL was privatised, and in 1999 the Ofer family (one of the wealthiest in Israel) acquired the majority of shares in the investment group Israel Corporation, which holds the majority of shares in ICL. Idan Ofer, who currently heads Israel Corporation, is one of the richest people in Israel (with a fortune valued at 20 billion dollars).

ICL entered Catalonia in 1998. Following the privatisation of the public mining company, it acquired the exploitation rights to the potash mines of Súria and Sallent (Bages), under the name Iberpotash. It subsequently adopted the name ICL Iberia and acquired various agro-industry companies in the Region of Murcia.

As of 2023, ICL has a total turnover of 332 million euros in the Spanish State, making it the highest-billing company in the Bages region. Of this amount, 162 million euros came from sales reported by Fuentes Fertilizantes, making it the second highest-turnover company in the area of the Murcian region where it is based. In total, in 2024 ICL Iberia had 879 workers, as stated in its corporate responsibility report.

ICL IN THE CATALAN COUNTRIES AND IN SPAIN

ICL Iberia Súria

In 1998, ICL (under the name Iberpotash) purchased the companies and exploitation rights to the potash mines of Súria and Sallent/Balsareny. After closing its operations in Balsareny and Sallent in 2020, due to judicial rulings over the mismanagement of waste, the accumulation of workplace accidents — some of them fatal — and the productivist objective of focusing on other shafts, ICL concentrated all of its potash mining extraction at the Cabanasses mine in Súria. According to its own sources, it produces approximately one million tonnes of potash per year, 80% of which is for export.

ICL Iberia Barcelona Port

In 2020, it inaugurated the ICL Iberia Barcelona Port terminal (Tramer), located at the Port of Barcelona, with a surface area of 7 hectares and a draught of 14 metres. This allowed it to expand its export capacity for the potash extracted at the Súria mine, increasing the vessel loading capacity from 800,000 tonnes to 4 million.

ICL maintains a contract with the company Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya (FGC) for the transport of potash from the Súria mine to the port of Barcelona. It has its own line from the mine to Manresa, where it joins the FGC passenger and freight rail infrastructure. In 2019 this contract was renewed for a period of 30 years, allowing it the use of 4 daily trains of 21 wagons running 7 days a week.

ICL Specialty Fertilizers

In 2011, ICL acquired the business group Agromediterráneo (Fuentes Fertilizantes), with factories in Totana and Cartagena (Murcia), considered the largest producer of specialised solid and liquid fertilisers in the Spanish State. It then began working with distributors of the new ICL-branded products throughout the Spanish State. Through this company, ICL receives, processes and markets the raw materials it imports from occupied Palestinian territories. The company has around 300 workers in Totana, according to local sources, although others report a figure of between 44 and 50 (as of 2024).



A ICL Specialty Fertilizers truck



Map of the different distributors in the Iberian Peninsula

Fomento y Desarrollo Agrícola, S.L. (FOMDESA) i Logística de Fertilizantes Fuentes, S.A.

To handle the reception of materials such as phosphoric acid and potash from Israel, ICL relies on this company to carry out port unloading operations and actively collaborates with others for the consignment of shipments, such as the Pérez y Cía. group or Ership S.A.U. In Cartagena, FOMDESA has a premises inside the port (Escombreras dock) and another within the city, in the San José Obrero neighbourhood (Los Patojos). The company is registered as employing between 20 and 100 workers (as of 2024).

On the other hand, Logística de Fertilizantes Fuentes handles the operation of national and international road transport services. This company is registered as employing 31 workers. The three companies together could account for the total of 300 workers mentioned previously.

Proposed new electric battery components factory in Sallent

In January 2025, ICL announced its new project to install an electric battery components factory (cathodes) in Sallent, on the grounds where the now-closed mining facilities are currently located. The project involves collaboration with the Chinese company Dynanonic, and has already received 18 million euros in public subsidy through the Electric Vehicle PERTE (Strategic Project for Economic Recovery and Transformation) of the Ministry of Industry and Tourism.



From December 2025, the plans for the factory have been stopped.

LINK BETWEEN ICL AND THE MILITARY OCCUPATION OF PALESTINE

Identification with the Zionist project and economic support for Israel

ICL's main activity in Israel is potash mining in the Dead Sea and phosphate mining in the Negev, as well as the marketing of fertilisers. According to statements from the company itself, it contributes a large amount of economic resources to the State of Israel, particularly in the desert region of the Negev, considered a historical landmark of Zionist colonialism.

In an article from December 2023 on the blog of the Israeli parent company, it is stated: "ICL's history is intertwined with the history of Israel and the company is deeply committed to the state and its principles of unity and solidarity."

In 2020, ICL published a report on its impact on the State of Israel, highlighting its contribution of 1.2% to Israeli GDP and positioning itself as the "economic backbone of the Negev." It also highlighted that 95% of ICL's revenues, which come from exports, contribute to Israel's balance of payments.

In 2024, it reported that it also contributes to the development of tourism in the Dead Sea region by creating thousands of jobs. In this same report, it states that "the majority of Israeli citizens have a direct or indirect stake in ICL through their pension savings plans and provident funds, with ICL shares being a cornerstone of the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange."

ICL's Shareholders

Since ICL's privatisation from 1992 onwards, its shareholding control has been maintained by the business conglomerate Israel Corporation, currently in the hands of Israeli magnate Idan Ofer. Among the minority shareholders are financial companies such as Altshuler Shaham Investment House and The Phoenix Holdings Ltd., which also have investments in the Israeli arms industry through shares in the company Elbit Systems.

The State of Israel maintains a special clause to prevent a non-Israeli group from taking shareholding control of the company. Its principal shareholder, Idan Ofer, one of the heirs to the family fortune of Sammy Ofer, is one of the wealthiest people in Israel (with a fortune valued at 20 billion dollars), and currently holds shares in a series of business conglomerates, including Israel Corporation and Kenon Holdings, as well as the shipping companies Eastern Pacific Shipping, XT Shipping and Ace Tankers.

In October 2023, in the midst of the genocide operation in Gaza, he and his partner resigned from the Executive Board of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in order to pressure the university for not having suppressed a student association that in a letter had denounced the Israeli occupation as the cause of the conflict. They subsequently withdrew the donation they had planned to make to the university and made a donation to the Israeli association "Brothers in Arms," which following the attacks of 7 October had put its entire infrastructure towards supporting the victims of the attack and the soldiers sent to Gaza.

The Harvard students who signed the letter were pressured and hounded by a group of magnates who threatened to exclude them from all employment, and their images were displayed on an advertising truck driven around the university campus.



ICL's Shareholders

Extraction of Palestinian natural resources and contamination of the territory.

As an Israeli extractivist company, we can consider all of ICL's operations in historical Palestine to be exploitation of resources from occupied territories. ICL, through its subsidiary ICL Dead Sea, exploits the potassic mineral resources of the Dead Sea, through the salt pans located in the southern basin, which due to the loss of water from the Dead Sea has become separated from the larger northern basin. Through its subsidiary ICL Rotem, it extracts minerals from phosphate rocks at the Rotem, Oron and Zin mines, located near the Dead Sea within the Negev desert.

The entire area of the Dead Sea that would fall within the West Bank, where the Palestinian State is supposed to be established together with the Gaza Strip, is located in the so-called "Area C." This area is under military occupation and is administered solely by Israeli authorities, which prevents any access to or activity at the Dead Sea by the Palestinian population and Palestinian administrations.

As denounced by Who Profits, ICL diverts water through a canal from the northern basin to the southern one, contributing to the extraction of water and resources from the area that should remain in territory administered by the Palestinian Authority.

According to a 2013 World Bank report, if Palestine were able to exploit the Dead Sea's resources, it could obtain some 918 million dollars per year, almost equivalent to the entire Palestinian manufacturing sector — and this without counting the benefits derived from tourism in the Dead Sea area.

All these materials extracted from occupied Palestinian territories are marketed and reach destinations including, among others, the Spanish State, and more specifically the south-eastern Levant area (Region of Murcia), thus making complicit the agro-industry sector and the governments that allow this trade.

Water is a scarce resource and the Israeli occupation uses it for its colonialist project to the detriment of the Palestinian population. It has built the National Water Carrier of Israel, which transfers fresh water from the Sea of Galilee to supply the cities and settlements of the Negev, where ICL's mines are also located — thereby depriving the River Jordan, which feeds the Dead Sea, of water. In this way, Israel deprives the Palestinian population of access to the water resources of the River Jordan, both for crop irrigation and for human consumption.

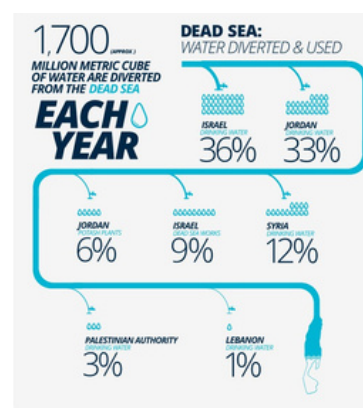
ICL's various mining operations at the Dead Sea and in the Negev desert have received numerous environmental complaints. This means that in addition to exploiting resources from historical Palestine, it is also contaminating its territory. In early 2023, ICL Rotem was placed at the top of the list of environmental offenders issued by the Israeli Ministry of Environmental Protection, for repeated violations of laws and regulations every year from 2019 to 2021, referring to the discharge of wastewater, infrastructure failings, and excessive air emissions. In December 2023, a leak of mine wastewater containing a radioactive by-product was discovered.

With regard to ICL Dead Sea, environmental organisations have denounced the company for saline spills that contaminate the surrounding environment, for contributing to the drying up of the Dead Sea by only returning half of the water they pump for mining extraction processes, and for causing land subsidence.

In the potash extraction process it generates saline waste which it dumps at the bottom of artificial ponds, causing flooding. In 2012 it committed to drawing up a plan to transport the salt to the northern part of the Dead Sea, but as organisations such as the Society for the Protection of Nature have denounced, ICL intends to pile the hundreds of millions of tonnes of saline waste on dry land and install solar panels on top of it.



Map of the territorial control of the West Bank



Infographic on the use of the Dead Sea's water

Contribution to the economy of the settlements in the West Bank

The State of Israel has never stopped expanding, whether through the conquest and military occupation of territories in various wars, or through the creation of colonies. Currently, it is estimated that there are some 700,000 Israeli settlers in settlements within the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which makes it impossible to implement the Oslo Accords in the sense of providing a stable territory for the Palestinian population under its own administration.

UN courts have ruled that these settlements are illegal and violate international law. As such, companies that exploit or provide goods and infrastructure to these settlements would be committing crimes linked to the military occupation.

ICL has various ties with the colonies in the West Bank and the Syrian Golan. The organisation Who Profits has documented the supply of various ICL products to several agricultural colonies in the Jordan Valley in the West Bank in June 2019, such as those of Naama, Mehola and Na'aran.

ICL advertises the services of its regional agronomists in the occupied territories of the Jordan Valley (West Bank) and the Golan (occupied Syrian territory).

In 2014, ICL participated in an agricultural experiment on the use of pesticides at the Tomer colony in the Jordan Valley (West Bank).

In 2016–2017, ICL participated in an agricultural experiment on almond trees in an orchard at the Ram at Magshimim colony in the Golan.

ICL appears as a notable client on the website of the metallurgical company Krashin-Shalev, which has its main factory in the Barkan settlement in northern West Bank.

It also appears as a client of Amir Marketing, which operates in West Bank settlements and in the Syrian Golan.

In 2014, following Operation "Protective Edge," in which the Israeli army caused more than 2,000 deaths in Gaza, ICL offered some 2,000 Israeli citizens from villages near Gaza free transport and a day's rest at a tourist agency located at the Kfar Etzion settlement in the West Bank.

ICL sponsored and participated in the 52nd meeting of the Israeli Institute of Chemical Engineers in 2017, at which speakers from Ariel University, located in a West Bank colony, took part.

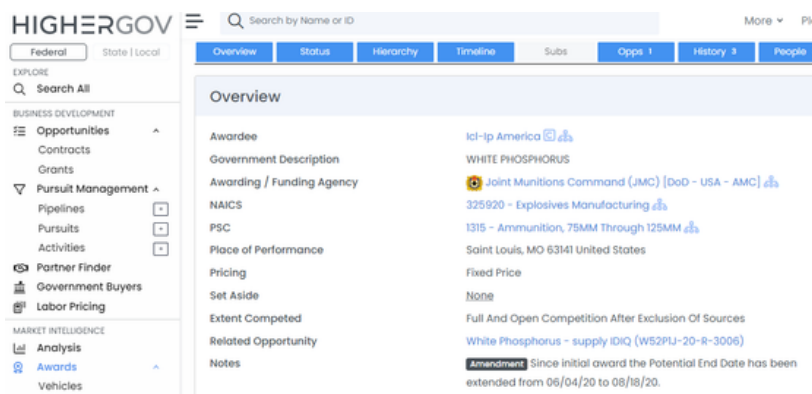


Clients of Krashin-Shalev

White phosphorus bombs

ICL's US subsidiary (ICL-IP America) has marketed white phosphorus for the munitions department of the United States Army. Through fragments of white phosphorus bombs dropped by the Israeli army on Lebanon, it has been possible to demonstrate that these originated from the United States Army.

On the website of Highergov, a private organisation dedicated to "providing the most comprehensive data available on government contract and grant markets," one can view the contract between ICL-IP America and the Joint Munitions Command of the Army Contracting Command Rock Island of the United States Army, under the headings of explosives and munitions manufacturing, in relation to white phosphorus from 2020 to 2025. Also linked to Pine Bluff Arsenal.



Screenshot of the Highergov website.

According to the website Corruption Tracker, dedicated to documenting corruption in the arms trade, ICL supplies Monsanto (now Bayer) with phosphates for the chemical production of white phosphorus, which are then marketed to the state-owned company Pine Bluff Arsenal, described as the only place in the Western Hemisphere where white phosphorus munitions are filled.

According to the 2017 report by the Observatory of Human Rights and Business in the Mediterranean, ICL also supplied white phosphorus to the United States Army from 2008 to 2013.

In October 2023, after local journalists witnessed an attack by the Israeli army using white phosphorus bombs on the Lebanese village of Dheira, a Washington Post journalist certified from the remains of the projectiles that these originated from Pine Bluff Arsenal. Although the remains came from projectiles manufactured prior to ICL's contracts with Pine Bluff Arsenal, it is assumed that without the new production runs the old stock would not have been sold.

A December 2023 article in the Arkansas Times also references, drawing on Amnesty International reports, the link between white phosphorus bombs dropped by the Israeli army on the Gaza Strip on various occasions and the Pine Bluff Arsenal located in Arkansas, USA. Hispan TV covers the reported white phosphorus attack on Al-Shifa hospital in November 2023.

White phosphorus is a chemical substance that ignites when exposed to oxygen and burns until deprived of oxygen, producing intense and long-lasting fires and causing unbearable wounds when it comes into contact with skin, as well as respiratory and eye problems.

Because it is highly flammable, it is subject to Protocol III of the Geneva Conventions, which prohibits the use of incendiary weapons against civilian targets and their use from the air in densely populated civilian areas.

In 2010, following various complaints, the Israeli government admitted to having dropped white phosphorus bombs on inhabited areas of the Gaza Strip during Operation Cast Lead in 2008–2009. Among the targets of these attacks were a UN warehouse and a UN school.

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ASIA OCCIDENTAL / PALESTINA

Israel ataca el mayor hospital de Gaza con fósforo blanco

Publicada: sábado, 11 de noviembre de 2023 10:59

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Los médicos transportan a un niño palestino herido al hospital de Al-Shifa en la ciudad de Gaza tras un ataque aéreo israelí, 11 de octubre de 2023. (Foto: AFP)

El ejército israelí ha atacado con munición prohibida de fósforo blanco, el mayor hospital de Gaza, Al-Shifa, denuncia la ministra de Sanidad palestina.

News report on one of the white phosphorus attacks carried out on a hospital in Gaza.

Support to the Israeli army

ICL has expressed its support for the Israeli army and its activities in multiple ways, from social media communications to the funding of various programmes and projects aimed at the welfare of soldiers.

Among these, a notable example is the programme called "Adopt a Soldier." According to its own website, this is a programme "managed by the Association for the Benefit of Israeli Army Soldiers, which connects commercial companies and donors with military units, providing moral and physical support. The project aims to provide assistance to Israeli army soldiers who bear a heavy burden from their day-to-day routine, which causes exhaustion and high-risk situations."

In its 2018 philanthropy report, it stated that ICL adopts two regiments: the "Desert Patrol Regiment (585)," composed mainly of Bedouins, and the "Rimon Regiment" of the "Givati Brigade."

On its current website it announces that it adopts the "Desert Recon Battalion," a regiment composed mainly of Bedouins assigned to patrolling the borders of the Gaza Strip.

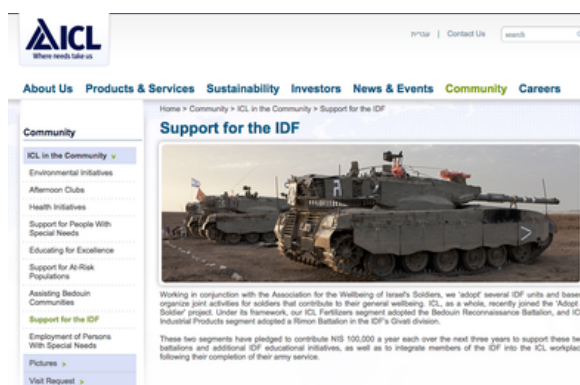
Another notable programme to which it contributes financially is that of the association "Big Brother for Lone Soldiers," which is dedicated to providing financial support and accompaniment through volunteer soldiers to those soldiers who have no family members nearby — many of them because they live in other countries and travel to Israel to do military service and participate in the military occupation operations in Palestine and other territories.

It is estimated that some 1,300 people migrate to Israel each year to serve in the army and participate in incursion operations in occupied territories.

In the midst of the Israeli army's offensive against the Gaza Strip, in December 2023 ICL celebrated the Jewish festival of Hanukkah by visiting various military bases in the area under the slogan "Light for Victory."

The first military base they visited was that of Tse'elim, home to the 14th regiment of the armoured corps "Machatz/Bison." This base was built in 2005 and a Palestinian city scenario was recreated there to train soldiers for incursions into the Gaza Strip.

At the visit to the Urim military base (also used for international espionage operations) with paratroopers, ICL's communication stated: "We were delighted to see them for a moment after returning from operational activity, and to share moments of joy and light with them during this difficult time."



Screenshot of the ICL website where they speak about their support for the Israeli army.

In January 2024, under the slogan "A hot shower for every soldier," ICL presented its support for an initiative by one of its retired workers involving the manufacture of portable water tanks with a water heating mechanism so that Israeli soldiers can shower with hot water in the very combat zone of the Gaza Strip, where they are carrying out the genocide.

According to statements by the architect of the project: "Simple things like a shower. This daily action, which is not possible in the field during combat, takes on great significance. We meet soldiers who are receiving a hot shower after several weeks, and it is moving to see how much good it does them."

In May 2025, ICL announced its participation in a cybersecurity study scholarship programme aimed specifically at soldiers who have participated in the genocide in Gaza. In their own words: "graduates in combat service and active reserve during the Iron Swords War."



ICL truck with supplies for the IOF.

In December 2025, ICL was one of the companies awarded by the Israeli Ministry of Defence for its support of reservist soldiers. "On behalf of hundreds of thousands of reservists — thank you," Katz said. "You are the vanguard of the State of Israel."



Israeli Defence Minister Katz at the "Defense Minister's Shield" award, presenting the prize to ICL.

A president from the military industry.

Several ICL executives have or have had direct ties with both the Israeli Ministry of Defence and the military industry sector. Particularly notable is the current president Elad Aharonson. He has been president of the ICL Group since March 2025. From March 2021 to March 2025 he had been president of ICL's Growing Solutions department.

From 2015 to 2021 he was vice president and general manager of the ISTAR division of the arms company Elbit Systems, dedicated to laser sensors. From 2011 to 2015 he was vice president and general manager of the UAS division of Elbit Systems, dedicated to explosive-capable drones.

The Hermes 900 drone, marketed during Aharonson's time at Elbit Systems, was used in various espionage and bombing operations in Palestine, particularly in the 2014 military operations, causing hundreds of casualties, including 164 children.



Elad Aharonson next to a Elbit Systems drone.



**Mr. Elad Aharonson
the New President & CEO
of ICL Group**



Image of the CEO of ICL from their webpage.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND TERRITORIAL DAMAGE

ICL has a broad negative environmental and social impact in Catalonia. Whether through water pollution and consequently soil contamination, or through the usage of enormous public funds and water resources invested in managing these environmental liabilities. Also through its landscape impact, and even the collapse of a neighborhood.

Salinisation of rivers and aquifers

ICL contaminates the water in the mining area and the Llobregat river, which supplies water all the way to Barcelona. Mainly due to waste management from potash extraction, ICL is a company that has contaminated and continues to contaminate the water in the Llobregat basin that supplies water to Barcelona, the Cardener (a tributary of the Llobregat), and rivers, streams, and aquifers in the area. What does this entail? As the salt level in the water increases, it has fewer uses for humans and livestock and fewer species can live there, and for those that do live there, their development worsens. Water salinization above a certain level makes it non-potable by conventional means, and due to the water from the mining area, the salinity rises so much that it exceeds this level. It also affects agriculture, when farmers find that the sources that irrigate their lands or animals are contaminated, with over 30 complaints recorded for this reason. The pathways of contamination are various and so are their impacts, detailed below.

Saline waste mountains

The salt runoffs from the Bages potash basin are mountains of salt formed mainly by common salt, discarded during the potash extraction process. In addition to transforming the natural landscape, these "sweat" salty water due to humidity, and when it rains, the saline water flows downhill. ICL is responsible for 4 runoffs, including the Fusteret de Súria, which is still growing and continues to receive expansion permits despite the penal order to be restored. The total mass exposed to air and water exceeds 80 million tons.



Aerial view of one of the salt mountains

A 2014 criminal sentence condemned three ICL executives to prison for breaching environmental laws, ordered the halt of waste dumping at the Cogulló spoil heap in Sallent and its restoration throughout 2008. It also demanded the environmental recovery of the Sallent and Fusteret de Súria spoil heaps until they no longer contaminate the water — something which, in the plan currently proposed, means the removal of ICL's spoil heaps over 75 years. However, at the current rate of restoration of one of the heaps, La Botjosa, it is estimated it would take 180 years to remove them. Will ICL really be held accountable to remove them at an adequate pace? Or will they leave in a few decades with their pockets full and the spoil heaps still standing? What is more, the 6.9 million euro bond they would have to pay if they fail to restore them is no more than a tiny fraction of what it would later cost public institutions to remove them.

Although, due to complaints from environmental groups, ICL has recently been required to build a trench to collect part of the salt water from the spoil heaps, this trench overflows when there is heavy rain. Furthermore, the maintenance of the trench and the management of the brine (salt water) costs around 30–40 million euros per year.

Therefore, the salt mountains are a current threat to the water of our territories, but one that risks growing in the future if the trenches cease to be maintained or if it becomes impossible to continue sending water through the brine collector due to lack of resources.

Brine (salt water) collector

The brine collector is an infrastructure completed in 1988, consisting of a 120 km pipeline that carries part of the salt water contained in the mines out to the sea. Its construction led to a reduction in contamination from the mines, but its leaks and breakdowns have on many occasions caused the total contamination of agricultural and forested land. A new brine collector is currently under construction to increase brine transport capacity; it is partly publicly funded and is expected to be operational from the Cogulló spoil heap by 2027.



Images of the consequences of the brine collector spill as it passed through Sant Joan de Vilatorrada in 2023 (image from "El medi natural del Bages i el Moianès")

Water usage

ICL has been granted a total of 12.8 million cubic metres of water by the ACA (Catalan Water Agency), more than the annual consumption of a city of 233,000 inhabitants such as Terrassa. Part of this granted water comes from a recent concession of 6.8 million cubic metres of already treated water from the Manresa wastewater treatment plant, which instead of being returned to the river would go into ICL's hands. We are talking about a total volume similar to that of 10 Olympic swimming pools per day.

Part of this granted water is meant to be used for the restoration of the spoil heaps, which involves dismantling them and transporting the material through the collector out to the sea. However, at present, the majority of the water is used to sustain potash extraction and production. The water required to restore all the spoil heaps using this method would be equivalent to 3 full La Baells reservoirs or 4 La Llosa del Cavall reservoirs. Meanwhile, the Súria spoil heap continues to grow and water is becoming an increasingly fragile resource due to the climate crisis.

Water plants to desalinate the Llobregat river

As mentioned, the contaminated water of the Llobregat river exceeds the capacity to be made drinkable by conventional means. For this reason, the Catalan Water Agency had to upgrade the water treatment plants at Abrera and Sant Joan d'Espí in 2009, spending 122.7 million euros to incorporate a reverse osmosis process — a costly mechanism for separating salt from water that raises the water bills across the Llobregat basin, making itself felt in the pockets of a large part of Catalonia. It is estimated that the salinisation of the Llobregat has generated a debt of over 300 million euros for the Catalan public administration.

The neighbourhood of “l'Estació”

Due to the underground cavities left by mining activity, in 2009 the Estació neighbourhood of Sallent had to be abandoned due to the risk of subsidence, with the significant impact this had on the lives of its 110 inhabitants. Had ICL returned the excavated material underground, it would have avoided increasing the size of the spoil heaps and prevented dangers such as the collapse of the Estació neighbourhood.

Heavy metal contamination

In addition to salt, according to the ODHE, highly toxic heavy metals have also been found in the water contaminated by ICL.

Agro-industry

It is also worth noting that ICL uses this potash to manufacture more than 100 agricultural fertilisers, the vast majority of which are not suitable for organic farming, and which contribute to the agro-industrial farming model that depletes agricultural soil to the point of risking desertification, making it increasingly dependent on synthetic chemical fertilisers and reducing its organic matter.

The destruction of agricultural soil caused by this model is a consequence that must be reversed. Potash extraction should be limited and directed towards a new ecological and regenerative agricultural model, rather than being in the hands of capitalist companies such as ICL that sell it to the highest bidder, regardless of the social and environmental consequences.

Greenwashing and electric cars

One example of ICL's greenwashing is the plan, together with the municipalities of Súria and Sallent, to build a solar panel park on the saline spoil heaps of Cogulló and Fusteret. It is blatant that they wish to disguise as sources of ecological transition these polluting mountains which must be restored under criminal orders — something we fear may serve as an excuse to further delay their removal.

During 2025, ICL announced it would undertake a new electric battery project in Sallent. This confirms their intention to remain in our territory, with preferential treatment and government subsidies, while having failed to settle their outstanding debts to our ecosystems by restoring the saline spoil heaps.

The energy transition cannot be left in the hands of large corporations like ICL that seek only private profit, exploiting and hoarding resources from the Global South such as lithium while seriously violating human and environmental rights. Furthermore, they direct their production towards unsustainable projects in the Western world, such as the electrification of private cars for an elite few, when the materials needed for this transition are finite and should be prioritised for public transport accessible to all and free from dependence on fossil fuels.

Far from contributing to the ecological transition as they would have us believe, they actively work against it, making it impossible to build resilient and lasting structures across the planet as a whole.

THE BOYCOTT ICL CAMPAIGN IS PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL BDS CAMPAIGN

Having presented the harmful effects ICL has on the territory and its role in the genocide in Palestine, the urgency of reversing or changing the situation so that these atrocities are not carried out is evident. But why is a boycott necessary? Where does this strategy come from? Is it really effective?

The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against the state of Israel emerged in 2005 following a declaration by more than 170 Palestinian civil society organisations addressed to the international community. This declaration calls for coercive measures to be applied "until the state of Israel complies with international law and the universal principles of human rights." The BDS movement draws inspiration from the campaigns carried out against the racist apartheid regime in South Africa, which were led by the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM), which reached the United Nations, where a committee was specifically created to impose economic sanctions on South Africa.

There are multiple ways to boycott, but in general they can be grouped into the following categories: economic (corporate and consumer boycott of Israeli products or companies linked to the Israeli occupation); academic (severing relations with Israeli universities or educational institutions linked to the occupation); cultural (artists refusing to perform in Israel under the auspices of Israeli authorities, or boycotting Israeli artists who perform with the support of the Israeli state and/or who justify its actions against Palestine); sporting (refusing the participation of Israeli teams under the auspices of Israeli authorities in international competitions); and institutional (a complete severing of institutional relations with the state of Israel). Divestments refer to money that international companies withdraw from Israeli or international companies that benefit from the violation of the rights of the Palestinian people. Finally, sanctions are the punishment that the international community applies to states that threaten peace and security in the world — a measure that, as mentioned above, was successfully imposed and proved key in ending South Africa's apartheid regime.

The victories of BDS campaigns against Israel are numerous and have been highly decisive in forcing states and organisations to break ties with the genocidal state of Israel. Among others, these include the closure of the Catalan Government's "Acció" department offices in Israel, and the severing of the sister-city relationship between Barcelona and Tel Aviv. UManresa (linked to the University of Vic) and the Kursaal theatre in Manresa have also been persuaded to cut ties with ICL.

Although they require more sustained effort over time, BDS campaigns generate profound changes that in the long run increasingly isolate the genocidal state of Israel. It is one of the most effective ways for citizens to act and break with the complicities that sustain and legitimise the genocide that the Palestinian people are living through.

CAMPAIGN DEMANDS

ICL Out ! : ICL must leave immediately and permanently

1. In solidarity with Palestine: due to ICL's involvement in the genocide of the Palestinian people, we follow the premises of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement against the State of Israel.
2. Because they are destroying the territory: due to their repeated ecocidal practices and hoarding of resources.
3. For the exploitation of the working class: to put an end to the permanent blackmail of workers, the precariousness and job insecurity generated by the bonus system and subcontracting, with a high rate of workplace accidents, including several fatal accidents in recent decades.

After ICL, what?

1. A participatory process on what the future of the mine should be, guaranteeing:
 - Workers Justice
 - Preservation of Employment: guaranteeing the economic and social wellbeing of mine workers in the short, medium and long term (both the company's own staff and all those subcontracted and made precarious by ICL).
 - Trade Unionism: trade union oversight of the entire process to ensure workers' rights.
 - Ecosocial Justice
 - Ecological restoration: repairing the historical environmental and social damage, principally the danger posed by the salt mountains (to be paid for entirely by ICL).
 - Future of water use: prioritisation of river water and its reserves for essential sectors such as farming; no squandering or privatisation of water reserves (aquifers, reservoirs, etc.) and guaranteeing an adequate flow of the Llobregat, or deciding collectively which sectors we prioritise river water and accumulated reserves for.
 - Preservation of Ecosystems: putting an end to the salinisation and heavy metal contamination of rivers and aquifers in the area.
 - Ecosocial Transition: the entire process must be carried out in coherence with a context of climate crisis and resource crisis; we must degrow activity in sectors that are not essential to sustaining life and guarantee a dignified future for coming generations.

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