

The Boris Mints Institute  
for Strategic Policy Solutions to Global Challenges  
The Gershon H. Gordon Faculty of Social Sciences  
Tel Aviv University

# THE BORIS MINTS INSTITUTE

## FOR STRATEGIC POLICY SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report | **2017**



FOOD  
SECURITY



RENEWABLE  
ENERGY

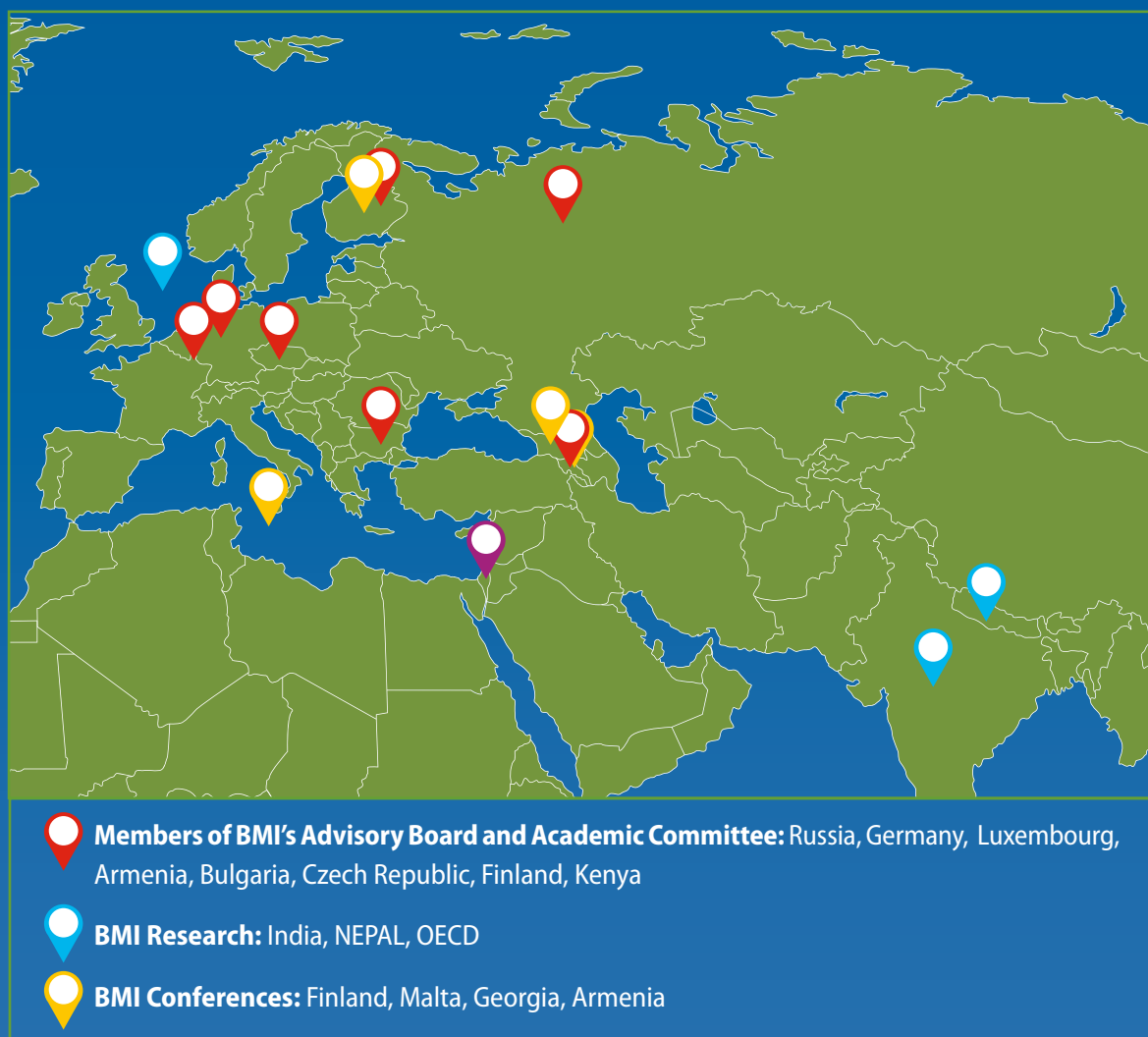


CONFLICT  
RESOLUTION



<http://www.bmiglobalsolutions.org>





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**T**oday the time has come to summarize the first full-fledged year of the Institute functioning. I want to bring up the events and semantic things, which in my point of view are the most important and valuable.

Firstly, I want to mention that this year has been very productive, we had three Institute sessions, out of which two happened away: in Helsinki and Valetta. It is convenient that the chosen format of the sessions' procedure was proved to be effective and comfortable for all of the part-takers. The speeches were very professional and the discussions were meaningful.

Secondly, we started to get partnerships. In the session that we have had on Malta the CEO of the World Bank – K. Georgieva took part and in the fall we will have Prof. Paul Romer, Chief Economist and Senior Vice President of the World Bank attending our session.

Thirdly, we awarded the BMI prize, for the outstanding contribution in research of the global challenges. It has been given to professor Sachs, one of the world's leading experts in the department of economics, as well as the director of the Earth Institute at the University of Columbia.

Another valuable event of the year was the expansion of the Advisory Board, where Jacob Frenkel, who is a famous Israeli economist and the Chairman of the JPMorgan Chase and Joelle Aflalo, the founder of the Matanel Foundation, have joined the board.

Today we have fully formulated our plan of the Institute's work for next year and I am certain that we will be working with the same enthusiasm as we have been in the past year.

In conclusion, I would like to thank everybody for the active and constructive work, commitment and contributions.

Dr. Boris Mints  
BMI Founder and President



**T**he Boris Mints Institute for Strategic Policy Solutions to Global Challenges was inaugurated a little over a year ago thanks to the generous gift of Dr. Boris Mints. In the very short time since its inception, BMI had a huge impact on the lives of many and will continue to expand the reach and the impact to many more. The key to this tremendous success is incredibly simple as most keys to almost any success. We specialize in promoting research that matters!!!

Academia has long been preoccupied with innovative research. Yet, many apolitical and professional assessment bodies find that much research never leads to anything useful to society, no matter how good it is. The common response to this phenomenon is two folds: (1) Professional committees assess the merit of grant proposals to extend funding only to the best proposals; (2) Political decision making bodies cut funding for research. Both approaches are problematic. Grant committees have limited means to encourage applied research. Applied research is simply not very popular among academics for many reasons. Cutting budgets does not help as it is well established that Research and Development is the best investment any society can engage in.

Our approach is different: we engage decision makers and many members of the societies around the globe, to make sure we understand the pressing issues that preoccupy them. At the same time, we are deeply involved in research communities at Tel Aviv University and worldwide. Then, we apply the simple following rule: we support research that is cutting edge on the one hand and is immediately relevant to some major challenges that diverse communities are facing on the other. We support only research that matters and this is why our research matters. It is as simple as that!

This year we supported research on Plant based heat stress whole-cell-bio-sensor; A drone-mounted sonar system for accurate yield estimation; Using plant wastes as a valuable resource for ethanol bio-fuel production; Transitional Justice in Formal Peace Processes; The plight of the middle class in OECD countries and The Challenge of Radicalization of the Political Sphere in Western Democracies. We support mostly Ph.D. students through research grants, hosting leading scholars to improve their education and subsidizing travel expenses to international workshops and conferences.

This year we inaugurated the BMI Prize, awarded to an exceptional individual who has devoted his/her research and academic life to the solution of a strategic global challenge. The inaugural winner is Prof. Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University, who won the BMI Prize for his exceptional academic and public work on sustainable development.

We have summoned two conferences on global issues: In Helsinki we met to explore the economics, politics and business environment of states that form the bridges between the east and the west. The Malta conference focused on Desertification and strategies to alleviate its spread.

In addition to our international conferences, we hosted a joint workshop with UCI University on Water Management Challenges in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions, and a joint workshop with SJTU - University of Shanghai – on political and environmental challenges in metropolitan areas. We held a unique seminar on Renewable Energy, in cooperation with the Eilat-Eilat Renewable Energy Center and hosted the 4th annual conference Israeli solutions for sustainable development.

As always, I must conclude this letter with heartfelt thanks to Dr. Mints for the generous grant to establish the Institute, and all of the researchers that have responded to our call for proposals. Those judged to have the merit to get support and their critically important research are reviewed in this report and our debt to them is simple to characterize: we only live by their success.

**Professor Itai Sened**

Head of the Boris Mints Institute for Strategic Policy Solutions to Global Challenges  
Founding Head, School of Social and Policy Studies,  
Tel Aviv University in Israel

# BMI VISION

The Boris Mints Institute was founded with the intention to encourage research, planning and innovative thinking in order to promote a significant positive change in the world. BMI is focusing on designing strategic innovative plans to enhance the welfare of communities around the globe.

The world is thirsty for innovative, groundbreaking policy solutions to promote environmental sustainability, ensure food security, health and energy to all, and eradicate poverty. Yet, there is a dearth of applied, practical, policy-directed research on these issues. BMI addresses these challenges by operating on two levels: creating unique research grants and scholarships, as well as organizing disseminations and conferences focusing on contemporary global challenges.

BMI supports highly applied, practical and solutions-driven research, which is conducted by bright M.A and PhD students under the supervision of internationally renowned senior scientists. The Institute will ensure that no good idea goes to waste due to lack of funding and bring Israel-developed technologies to the world's neediest populations – thereby enabling Israel to harness its renowned startup mentality in the service of humanity.

As a globally influential research institution, Tel Aviv University is committed to applying its know-how and experience toward solving real-world problems, and is uniquely positioned to operate the proposed Institute.

BMI's DNA requires that its innovative ideas be transferred in real time to policy makers. BMI has already held several academic events and extended significant support for research projects in Food Security, Renewable Energy and Conflict Resolution.

## Steering Committee



### **Dr. Boris Mints, President**

Ph.D. in Engineering. Previously the Chairman of Board of Directors of the "Otkritie Stock Broker" OJSC. Co-Founder of "Otkrytie" Investment Group and Chairman of the Board. Founder of "O1Group". Chairman of the Board of Patrons of the Conference of European Rabbis. Awarded the Dashkova's Prize "Philanthropist of the Year" and Honorary Fellow of Tel-Aviv University.



### **Prof. Raanan Rein, Vice President of Tel Aviv University**

An Elias Sourasky Professor of Latin American and Spanish History, Vice President of Tel Aviv University and the Head of the S. Daniel Abraham Center for International and Regional Studies. Rein is the author and editor of more than thirty books and well over a hundred articles in academic journals and book chapters, in several languages. He is a member of Argentina's National Academy of History, and former President of the Latin American Jewish Studies Association (LAJSA). In 2016 he won the Reimar Lüst Award (co-sponsored by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Fritz Thyssen Foundation).



### **Prof. Tami Ronen-Rozenbaum, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, TAU**

A researcher in the field of the Cognitive Behavioral approach and Positive Psychology, focuses on the function of self-control skills, positive emotions and social support as a way of overcoming distress and developing happiness. In her research, Prof. Ronen-Rozenbaum links a complex theoretical model of understanding human strengths and coping abilities to techniques for developing useful interventions in the field.



### **Mrs. Irina Buylova, Representative of BMI President**

Executive director of Yegor Gaidar Foundation (Russia), a prominent journalist and internationally recognized expert in building effective interaction models for the Russian and international non-governmental organisations and educational, economics and social development institutions. In the 1990 – 2000s covered, as a journalist for the leading Russian media, social policy and development issues in the context of the turbulent Russian state economic and political transition.



### **Prof. Itai Sened, Head of BMI, Founding Head of the School of Social and Policy Studies, TAU**

Prof. Sened is the Founding Head of TAU's new School of Social and Policy Studies at TAU's Gordon Faculty of Social Sciences. He recently returned to TAU after serving for 12 years as Director of the Institute for New Institutional Social Sciences at Washington University, US, established by economics' Nobel Laureate Douglass C. North.



## ➤ International Academic Committee



**Prof. Yossi Rozenwaks**, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, TAU

Research interests: Nanotechnology, Electrostatic force microscopy; Atomic force microscopy; Nanoscale charge injection in memory devices; Solar Cells; Organic semiconductor devices; Biological Field effect Transistors; Charge carrier dynamics in semiconductors and recombination processes.



**Prof. Danny Chamovitz**, Dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences, TAU

Founder of the Manna Center Program for Food Safety and Security. Main research interests: Understanding the role of the COP9 signalosome (CSN) in regulating development and the role of anti-cancer chemicals found in plants in the plant's life.



**Prof. Miranda Schreurs**, Professor of Environment and Climate Policy, Bavarian School of Public Policy, Technical University of Munich

Previously the Director of the Environmental Policy Research Center and Professor of Comparative Politics at the Freie Universität in Berlin and an Associate Professor in the Department of Government and Politics, University of Maryland. Schreurs' work focuses on comparative environmental politics and policy in Europe, the US, and East Asia. A member of the German Advisory Council on the Environment.



**Dr. Segenet Kelemu**, Director General of the International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) Nairobi, Kenya

Dr Kelemu is the Director General of the International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) Nairobi, Kenya. Dr Kelemu is a molecular plant pathologist with emphasis on elucidation of molecular determinants of host-pathogen interactions, development of novel plant disease control strategies including genetic engineering, biopesticides, pathogen population genetics and dynamics, endophytic microbes and their role in plant development. She has experienced the challenges and successes associated with African agriculture first-hand, from tending the field to directing a world-class laboratories.



**Prof. Itai Sened**, Head of BMI, Founding Head of School of Social and Policy Studies at TAU

Research interests: Professor Sened specializes in the study of institutions and how they affect policy at all levels. Institutions may be formal institutions at the national or local level, but can also be informal institutions such as social norms and cultural habits that may enhance or impede economic development and social prosperity.

## ➤ International Advisory Board (in alphabetical order)



### **Mrs. Joelle Aflalo**, Co-Founder of the Matanel Foundation

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A founding member and the general-manager of Gestman SA, as well as a founding member of Cofidom-Gestman S.a.r.l., a regulated company established in Luxembourg and specialized in corporate structuring and investment engineering. In 2006, as an achievement of her constant need to be active in philanthropy for a better world and in line with her spirituality and her sense of responsibility, she founded together with Mr. Gad Boukobza, a charitable foundation named Matanel Foundation.



### **Prof. Armen Darbinyan**, Chairman of the Board, Rector of the Russian – Armenian University, Yerevan, Armenia

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An initiator of economic and political reforms in Armenia, including privatization, development of the private sector and the formation of governmental institutions. The author of national legislation regarding banking, stock companies, anti-trust and state regulation of public services, and others. The initiator and reformer of telecommunications, agriculture, infrastructure and tourism in Armenia. An international expert on economies in transition and awardee “Young Global Leader” of the World Economic Forum.



### **Dr. Simeon Djankov**, Director, Financial Markets Group, London School of Economics

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Declared “Bulgaria’s Most Successful Politician” and awarded the President’s Award of the World Bank. Visiting Professor, London School of Economics, Department of Finance. Previously a visiting Fellow in the Peterson Institute for International Economics, Washington DC. Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the Republic of Bulgaria.



### **Prof. Jacob A. Frenkel**, Chairman,TAU Board of Governors, former Governor of the Bank of Israel

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Prof. Jacob A. Frenkel, Ph.D., serves as the Chairman of the TAU Board of Governors and as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Group of Thirty. Dr. Frenkel serves as the President and Chairman of the Board of Council on Foreign Relations Inc. He served as the Governor of Bank of Israel since July 1, 2013 and previously from 1991 to 2000. From 2001 to 2011, he served as the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the G-30. He served as the President at Merrill Lynch International.





### **Mr. Václav Klaus, Former President of the Czech Republic, Head of The Václav Klaus Institute**

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An academic economist by training, he was forced out of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences after the Soviet invasion in 1968 after the Prague Spring era. He returned after the so-called 'Velvet Revolution' of 1989, as one of the founders of the Civic Forum Movement. He was the country's first non-Communist Finance Minister and served from 1992 to 1997 as Prime Minister of the Czech Republic. In 2003 Klaus was elected President of the Czech Republic and reelected for a second term in 2008. Since 2012 the Head of The Václav Klaus Institute, which is a liberal-conservative think tank with its own research study activities, seminars and conferences. He is a member of the Mont Pelerin Society. He has published more than 30 books and received many doctorate degrees and international awards in various countries.



### **Mr. Seppo Remes, Co-Founder and Chairman of the Board, EOS Russia**

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A Finnish citizen, has Licentiate of Economics degree from Turku School of Economics. Has worked in Russia from 1993-2015. Former CEO of the Investment Company "Vostok Energo" and Director of "Vostok Nafta", both investing in the Russian energy sector. Remes has been a board member of many Russian companies: He was elected as the Director of the Year in 2013 by Independent Directors' Association together with Russian Council of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. In 2007 he founded, together with partners, the "EOS Russia" investment company which is listed at First North, Stockholm, and has chaired the Board of the company ever since. He is an Honorary Doctor from the Russian Plekhanov Academy of Economy, Moscow and Turku School of Economics, Finland.



### **Prof. Itamar Rabinovich, Founder and President of the Israel Institute, Former Ambassador of Israel to USA and President Emeritus of Tel-Aviv University**

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Itamar Rabinovich, the president of the Israel Institute (Washington and Jerusalem), is Israel's former Ambassador to the United States, former Chief Negotiator with Syria in the mid 1990's and the former president of Tel-Aviv University (1999-2007). Currently he is Professor Emeritus of Middle Eastern History of Tel Aviv University, Distinguished Global Professor at NYU and a Distinguished Fellow at the Brookings Institution. Prof. Rabinovich has been a member of Tel Aviv University's faculty since 1971 and served as an Ettinger Professor of the Contemporary History of the Middle-East, Chairman of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Director of the Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Dean of Humanities and Rector.

## ➤ Management



### **Prof. Itai Sened**, Head of BMI, Founding Chair, School of Social and Policy Studies at TAU

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Founding Head of TAU's new School of Social and Policy Studies at the Gordon Faculty of Social Sciences. He recently returned to TAU after serving for four years as the Chair of the Department of Political Science and 12 years as Director of the Institute for New Institutional Social Sciences at Washington University, US, established by economics' Nobel Laureate Douglass C. North.



### **Dr. Alexander Pesov**, Representative of BMI President

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Dr. Pesov has a Ph.D. in Biology and is the author of several scientific publications. Dr. Pesov has previously worked as a journalist, writer and editor of several top soviet journals and newspapers and the vice-president of the International press-centre and club in Moscow. From 1998 till 2012 Dr. Pesov was an advisor to the prime-minister of the Russian Federation - Eugene Primakov, the chief of staff of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation and Vice-Governor of the Voronezh region.



### **Dr. Haim Ben-Yaakov**, Representative of TAU President

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Ben-Yaacov is a Senior executive for regional Development and Public Affairs at Tel Aviv University. He served as CEO of the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress, Head of the Jewish Agency for Israel in Moscow and the Baltic States and as Educational Adviser for the Jewish Agency for Israel. Founded and Manged an Institute for Jewish Studies and Training Community Leaders.



### **Ayelet Fishman. Adv.**, Director of Research and Development

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She received her LL.B. from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and her M.A in Public Policy, with distinction from Tel-Aviv University. She formerly served as the National Supervisor of Elections at the Israeli Ministry of Interior.

**F**rom sustainability issues to fundamental social challenges, the main activity of the Institute is to pursue innovative, interdisciplinary and broad system scope research, followed by the publication of position papers with an emphasis on timely implementation. Research will be conducted by MA and PhD students under the supervision of expert scholars in fields such as applied economics, environmental sustainability and international development. BMI will focus on several focused expertise areas: Energy; Middle Class Crisis and Conflict Resolution; Food Security and Sustainable Development. In each of these fields, BMI is collaborating with an academic partner from TAU, which matches the support given by BMI to researchers and students, thus doubling the resources of each research project.

In addition to research grants, BMI supported the participation of research students in academic international workshops and conferences in all its fields of activity.

BMI grants and scholarships recipients have all made meaningful progress. The progress of each research is detailed at the BMI website: <http://www.bmiglobalsolutions.org/food-security>

## ➤ Food Security



**Manna Center Program  
for Food Safety & Security**  
Tel Aviv University

### **Partner: Manna Center Program for Food Safety and Security, headed by Prof. Nir Ohad, Faculty of Life Sciences**

We are proud to report that the BMI research support had already led to publications in leading academic journals:

- **Prof. Amir Sharon** – Endophytic fungi for increased crop production and plant resistance to diseases and stresses :
  1. Ofek-Lalzar M., Gur Y., Ben-Moshe S., Sharon O., Kosman E., Mochly E. and Sharon A. (2016). Diversity of fungal endophytes in recent and ancient wheat ancestors *Triticum dicoccoides* and *Aegilops sharonensis*. *FEMS Microbiol Ecol.* 92: fiw152
  2. Sharon A., Gur Y., Lallazar M., Llorens E., Sharon O. (February, 2017). FUNGAL ENDOPHYTE SPECIES PCT No. IL2017/050125.
  3. Llorens E., Sharon O., Ofek-Lalzar M., Gur Y., Sharon A (2016). Fungal endophytes from wheat-related wild species. Plant Biology Europe EPSO/FESPB, Prague, Czech Republic.
- **Ph.D. Student Yoav Rothler** – Can information help reduce imbalanced application of fertilizers in India? Experimental evidence from Bihar: *Fishman, Ram; Kishore, Avinash; Rothler, Yoav; Ward, Patrick S.; Jha, Shankar; Singh, R. K. P.* 2016. *Can information help reduce imbalanced application of fertilizers in India? Experimental evidence from Bihar. IFPRI Discussion Paper 1517. Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).*

In 2017, BMI support to food security research was given as research grants to leading TAU researchers:



**Prof. Yosi Shacham-Diamand**, School of Electrical Engineering, Department of Physical Electronics, Faculty of Engineering and **Prof. Adi Avni**, School of Plant Sciences and Food Security, Faculty of Life Sciences – Plant based heat stress whole-cell-bio-sensor (WCBS)



During the recent decades, water consumption worldwide has increased while precipitation in semi-arid and arid zones decreased. The increase in world population and demand for domestic, industrial, environmental and recreational water is forcing agriculturists to manage irrigation water carefully, combating increasing water prices and limited supply. Monitoring heat stress will enable better watering management to obtain high yield with adequate quality. Prof Yosi Shacham-Diamand from the School of Electrical Engineering and Prof Adi Avni from the School of Plant Sciences and Food Security joined forces to develop a Chip on plant. A whole plant biosensor based on plant cells integrated with micro-system technology solid-state platform.



**Dr. Yossi Yovel**, Faculty of Life Sciences and **Dr. Avital Bechar**, Agricultural Engineering, Volcani Institute - A drone-mounted sonar system for accurate yield estimation



Yield assessment is currently performed manually by workers who scan the fields on a daily basis and provide their best average estimate. This procedure is costly and inaccurate and it only allows scanning very limited parts of the field. All attempts to provide alternative technological solutions (using vision or laser) have failed so far. We propose a new approach using bio-mimetic sonar technology to perform yield estimation. Harnessing the proposed technology and integrating it with the precision agriculture framework will enable to assess the yield and plant status at a single plant or single tree level and by that, to optimize the potential of each tree or plant. In this project we aim to develop a method to mount our sensor on an airborne platform such as a drone.

### Continued support for Research students:

- **Yoav Rothler, Ph.D. student**, Department of Public Policy: Can Information Help Reduce Imbalanced Application of Fertilizers in India?
- **Shira Bukchin, M.A student**, Department of Public Policy: A model of smallholder agriculture exposure to climate change impacts

# ➤ Renewable Energy



**Partner: Renewable Energy Centre,  
headed by Prof. Yossi Rozenwaks, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering; Member of the  
BMI International Academic Committee.**

We are proud to report that the BMI research support had already led to publications in leading academic journals:

- **Ph.D. Student Assaf Hochman** - Analysis of Large-Scale Climate Time-Series and their Downscaling over the Eastern Mediterranean:
  1. Drobinski P, Alpert P, Cavicchia L, Flaounas E, Hochman A, Kotroni V (2016) StrongWinds. In: Sabrie ML, Gilbert –Brunet E, Mourier T (Eds) The Mediterranean Region under Climate Change – A Scientific Update. IRD editions, 115-122.
  2. Hochman A, Saaroni A, Abramovich F, Alpert P (2017a) Artificial Detection of Lower Frequency Periodicities in Climatic Time Series using Wavelet Analysis. ScientificReports (under review).
  3. Hochman A, Bucchignani E, Gershtein G, Krichak SO, Alpert P, Levi Y, Yosef Y, Breitgand J, Mercogliano P (2017b) Evaluation of Regional COSMO-CLM Climate Simulations over the Eastern Mediterranean for the Period 1979 – 2011, International Journal of Climatology (under review)
- **M.A. student Maya Livshits** – Structured catalysts in non-adiabatic reactors for alternative fuels production:
  1. M. Livshits, A. Kribus, Optimization of convective heat transfer in solar volumetric receivers. ISES-2016, Tel Aviv, Apr. 2016
  2. L. Avivi, G. Mittelman, A. Kribus, Measurement of Volumetric Convection Coefficient in Porous Media. 34 Israeli Conf. Mech. Engineering, Haifa, Nov. 2016
  3. M. Livshits, A. Kribus, Optimization of convective heat transfer in solar volumetric receivers. 34 Israeli Conf. Mech. Engineering, Haifa, Nov. 2016
  4. Livshits M., Kribus A., Radiative and convective transport in solar volumetric absorbers. Light, Energy and the Environment Congress, Leipzig, Nov. 2016



In 2017, BMI support to food security research was given as research grant to leading TAU researcher:



**Prop. Hadas Mamane**, School of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering – *Using plant wastes as a valuable resource for ethanol bio-fuel production, by tuning the oxidative treatment as a viable techno-economical solution*

The use of specially grown feedstock plants for bio-ethanol production has shown to be unsustainable. Plant wastes, although require pretreatment processes, appear to be the most sustainable feedstock. Because of inadequate low-cost pretreatment methods for lignin removal, plant wastes are rarely being used although considered very promising due to their vast amount. To date, the main pretreatment processes are expensive and hold a variety of deficiencies. An appealing emerging technology is the use of ozone-based Advanced Oxidation Processes (AOP's), where organic compounds (i.e. lignin) are chemically oxidized by an ozone-based process that produces hydroxyl free radical (HO•) or other powerful oxidizing species. Although ozone-based AOP's technologies have high environmental potential, they are rarely being used primarily due to insufficient research in those specific applications and because ozone production requires excessive amount of electricity. This research is aiming to challenge those two problems by tuning the oxidative treatment as a viable techno-economical solution.

### Continued support for Ph.D. Scholarships:

- **Assaf Hochman**, Porter School for Environmental Studies - Analysis of large-scale climate time-series and their downscaling over the Eastern Mediterranean
- **Hadar Traugott**, Faculty of Engineering - Off-shore biorefinery for the biofuel production

In addition to standard research scholarships, BMI supported the participation of Ph.D. student **Gil Barnea** in two special **International Ph.D. workshops** held by BMI International Academic Committee member, Prof. Miranda Schreurs, a member of the BMI International Academic Committee, at the Hochschule für Politik (HfP)/TUM in Munich. The first workshop took place on January 2017 and April 2017 and discussed various aspects of Climate Change and Renewable Energy policy. The PhD workshops at TUM were great opportunity for our student be exposed to studies on these issues in different countries from all over the world and had resulted in an academic collaboration with a PHD student from Hamburg.



Prof. Schreurs and the Ph.D. students



# ➤ Conflict Resolution and the Middle Class

**Partner: The Evans Program for Conflict Resolution,  
headed by Prof. Ephraim Yaar, Faculty of Social Sciences**

We are proud to report that the BMI research support had already led to an academic publication by **Dr. Nimrod Rosler**, a recipient of BMI research grant 2016 for his research on Diaspora and Conflict Resolution:

*Rosler, N., Sharvit, K. & Bar-Tal, D. (in press). Perceptions of prolonged occupation as barriers to conflict resolution. Political Psychology.*

## **Ph.D. Scholarships:**



**Yoav Kapshuk**, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences – *Transitional Justice in Formal Peace Processes*

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Yoav recently submitted his doctoral thesis entitled “Transitional justice in formal peace processes” under the supervision of Prof. Amal Jamal from the Tel-Aviv University School of Political Science Government and International Affairs. His thesis explores how understandings on transitional justice *during* formal negotiations affect the probability of reaching a final peace accord. Yoav created unique database documenting 350 years of peace-making – 72 processes in all – from 1989-2014. The findings of the quantitative analysis – which has been validated by a qualitative research of 5 case studies – indicate that understandings on truth and reconciliation as well as on providing amnesty significantly increase the probability of reaching a final settlement. During Summer semester of 2017 Yoav has been a visiting researcher at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt. Yoav has also recently become a post-doctoral fellow at the Martin Springer Center for Conflict Studies at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.



**Sagit Azari-Viesel**, Department of Public Policy, Faculty of Social Sciences – *The middle class in OECD countries: between mobility and vulnerability.*

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In this research we develop a theory as to why the middle class may play such a central role in the welfare of societies. We move on to articulate what we believe to be a more adequate definition of what it means to belong to the middle class, compared to currently used definitions in the literature. We operationalize the theoretical definitions and articulate the use of Latent Class Analysis as a useful methodology that we apply to examine the middle class in six OECD countries using a rich data set provided by the European Union.

## Research Grant:



**Prof. Alberto Spectorowski**, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences – *The Challenge of Radicalization of the Political Sphere in Contemporary Western Democracies*.

In an attempt to provide a comprehensive explanation to the radicalization of politics and policies in contemporary Western democracies, such as the case of Brexit in the UK, this research brings together two blocks of theories more often viewed separately - those focusing on elections and those focusing on policy-positions and legislation. This study addresses three interrelated domains: voters' positions on issues, parties' positions on issues and their impact on final policy outcome positions on these issues. The three are often studied separately, while this research aims to overcome this "omission of arena" which biases the understanding and interpretation of the phenomenon.

As a result of BMI's contribution and involvement, Israel was accepted as a member of the international research organization **IIASA**. BMI fellow **Karen Umansky**, a member of Prof. Spectorowski's research group, was accepted to the prestigious IIASA Summer 2017 Ph.D. program.

## ➤ Support Scholarships

**Partners: Mrs. Lili Segal, the "Rakia" program and the "Nirim" N.G.O.**

As of 2017, BMI extends support scholarship for social leadership and a substantial contribution to the community. The recipients of these scholarships were mainly Public Policy students, and on 2017 BMI supported 8 students who were carefully chosen according to their community leadership and social contribution. The scholarships were awarded as a part of an academic seminar on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017.



Former Justice Avi Zamir, Supreme Court Justice Hon. Elyakim Rubinstein and Ms. Tamar Almog at the scholarship awarding seminar.

Starting 2017, BMI awards a 100,000\$ prize to an exceptional individual who has devoted his/her research and academic life to the solution of a strategic global challenge, and whose research public action and ideas had transformative impacts on global policy formation a proven contribution to the welfare of a significant number of communities worldwide.

**The Prize Evaluation Committee** was comprised of 3 internationally renowned scholars: Prof. **Shlomo Ben-Ami**, Vice President, Toledo International Center for Peace and former Foreign Minister of Israel; **Prof. Mitchell Small**, H John Heinz III Professor of Environmental Engineering, Carnegie Mellon University, Associate Department Head for Graduate Affairs, Engineering and Public Policy and Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and **Dr. Segenet Kelemu**, Director General of the International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) Nairobi, Kenya. The Evaluation Committee was presented with 6 worthy nominees and following its recommendation, the BMI Board has announced the winner of the 2017 BMI Prize:

**Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs**, University Professor, Columbia University;  
Director, Sustainable Development Solutions Network, USA.



BMI Award ceremony (left to right): Dr. Boris Mints, Founder and President of BMI; Prof. Itai Sened, Head of BMI; Prof. Joseph Klafter, President of TAU; Prof. Jacob Frenkel, Chairman of TAU Board of Governors.

Prof. Jeffrey Sachs is one of the top leading public intellectuals in the domain of sustainable development. Throughout his career, he has established a new model of an academic scholar who, through untiring interactions with numerous governments and international organizations, has been able to not only deeply influence the global policy discourse on a wide variety of topics, but to also actually lead important practical policies and programs.

Prof. Sachs is a well-accomplished, a globally well-known, well-networked and widely influential economist. He has made impacts in many countries and has raised the profile of important sustainable development challenges and issues. He has reached millions and influenced policy makers through his published work (books, articles, newspaper columns) and high profile speeches. His expertise on global economic development, macroeconomics, and advocacy against poverty are well recognized.

His work with the United Nations (as a pro-bono advisor to several secretary generals) is perhaps the most enduring testimony of this commitment. Prof. Sachs is one of the few scholars who simultaneously possess a similar intellectual depth and yet refuse to be satisfied with academic or even popular writing and insist on “getting their hands dirty” in the “real world” of policy and politics in order to affect change.

This unique record is deeply and closely aligned with the spirit and the mission of the BMI – the utilization of academic scholarship to affect global policy. In awarding the prize to Prof. Sachs we signal BMI’s global thinking and commitment to the most pressing problems of our time.

The prize was presented to Prof. Sachs ON May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017 by Prof. Jacob Frenkel, Chair of TAU Board of Governors and Dr. Boris Mints, President and Founder of BMI.

According to the Prize regulations, 10% of the prize will be awarded to a research student. At Prof. Sachs’s request, this support will be extended to Mr. Aniket Shah, a Ph.D. student at Oxford University.

Professor Sachs gave a special talk at TAU: “Israel and the global challenge of Sustainable Development”. The lecture can be seen here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o3gJF-w2z30&feature=youtu.be>

The annual international gatherings of BMI focus on pressing world policy challenges, inviting a handful of leaders to join a small and carefully selected circle of members of the international board of BMI and a handful of outstanding scientists on the topic of the day. In these exclusive meetings, the global challenges are discussed in depth and new ideas are encouraged and carefully assessed.

The presentations from our events are available on our website: <http://www.bmiglobalsolutions.org/>

## ➤ The International System in 2017: A Multi-polar World: main trends in economics, politics and business, Helsinki, Sept. 15-17<sup>th</sup>, 2016

This first BMI international conference focused on the International System in 2017, trying to understand the political and economic environment of business and social affairs and direction of international relations following the Brexit and awaiting the presidential elections in the USA: How do international institutions and bureaucracies with both old and new, superpower and moderator players, such as our host country of Finland, shape and cope with the new realities of the day.

The conference hosted prominent Finnish public figures and academics, as well as world leading experts including, among others: **Mr. Esko Aho**, Executive Chairman of Board of Directors, East Office of Finnish Industries and former prime minister of Finland; **Prof. Simon Hix**, Harold Laski Professor of Political Science, London School of Economics and Political Science, Fellow of the British Academy; **Prof. William T. Bianco**, Department of Political Science, University of Indiana – Bloomington; **Ambassador René Nyberg**, CEO, East Office of Finnish Industries 2008-2013, Former Ambassador of Finland to Russia and Germany; **Mr. Esa Härmälä**, Former General Director at Metsähallitus (state forests and parks), Former General Director (energy) at the Ministry of Employment and the Economy and **Prof. Kari Liukko**, Professor of International Business, Director, The Pan-European Institute.

As a summary of the conference a group of TAU Ph.D. students had prepared an executive report, dealing with the following issues: The Third Millennium Multipolar and Multivector World; Russia as an International Power; Brexit – Causes and Consequences and The Geo-political Assessment of the Global World:

[http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/2ea2a4\\_4b85e36ce0b440e6a926a83964c60f0d.pdf](http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/2ea2a4_4b85e36ce0b440e6a926a83964c60f0d.pdf)



BMI Board members



## ➤ Desertification – A Growing Global Challenge, Malta, March 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>, 2017

In accordance with BMI vision as an institute that affects global policy at the highest level, our 2nd international conference in Malta focused on the global challenge of Desertification.

The conference will be hosted by **Dr. Joseph Muscat, the Prime Minister of Malta**, who took the presidency of the EU in January of 2017.



This fascinating conference addressed the global challenge of desertification and land degradation from a multi-disciplinary point of view, explaining the causes for these problems, describing the current world status and offering effective research-based policy solutions.

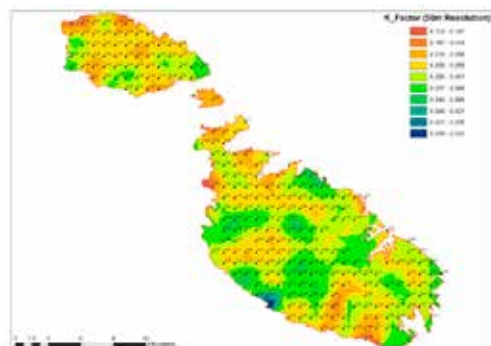
The conference hosted a unique combination of academics and policy makers at the local and international level: **Dr. Kristalina Georgieva**, CEO, World Bank Group; **Dr. Konrad Mizzi**,

Minister within the office of the Prime Minister (Energy Section), Malta; **Dr. Jose A. Herrera**, Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change, Malta; **Mr. Luc Gnacadja**, Past Executive Secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification; Former Minister of the Environment, Benin; **Prof. Uriel Safriel**, Faculty of Nature Sciences, Hebrew University; Former Chair of the Science and Technology Committee, The UN Convention to Combat Desertification; **Dr. Segenet Kelemu**, International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology, Kenya and **Prof. Alon Tal**, Chair, Department of Public Policy, Tel Aviv University.

Following the conference, Prof. Alon Tal and Shira Bukchin (an MA student) have prepared policy paper, summarizing the different views expressed in the conference and suggesting policy solutions:

[http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/2ea2a4\\_9ccb6980c384e409aac39c956479ce1.pdf](http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/2ea2a4_9ccb6980c384e409aac39c956479ce1.pdf)

The conference was supported by the Manna Center Program for Food Safety and Security.



Maltese Soil erosion



A water treatment plant in Malta



## ➤ BMI Research Events in Tel Aviv University, May 18-19<sup>th</sup>, 2017

As a part of the Annual Assembly of TAU Board of Governors events, BMI held several events to review the progress made by BMI research grant laureates, including lectures by **Prof. Hadas Mamane**, Faculty of Engineering (Fighting Land Degradation through land and water research) and **Prof. Eyal Ben-Dor**, Department of Geography (Combating soil degradation from space).

Furthermore, a Research Symposium was held, presenting innovative policy solutions in Food Security, Renewable Energy and Conflict Mediation. The keynote speaker at the symposium was **Prof. Eyal Zisser**, Vice-Rector of TAU and an expert in Contemporary History of the Middle East.



Prof. Eyal Zisser, Vice-Rector of TAU



Ron Harnik, a BMI Fellow

## ➤ TAU-UCI research workshop: Water Management Challenges in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions, September 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

Based on a series of MOU agreements between Tel-Aviv University and the University of California – Irvine (UCI), BMI hosted a workshop which dealt with the global challenge of water management. Researchers from both universities presented their research, exchanged ideas and discussed paths for future cooperation. The workshop has already resulted in research cooperation.

The TAU group included Prof. Sened; Prof. Pinhas Alpert, Professor in Atmospheric Sciences, The Mikhael M. Nebenzahl and Amalia Grossberg & Chair Professor in Geodynamics, Department of Earth Sciences, Faculty of Exact Sciences; Prof. Marcelo Sternberg, Department of Molecular Biology & Ecology of Plants, Faculty of Life Sciences and Dr. Ram Fishman, Department of Public Policy.

The UCI group was led by Prof. David Feldman, Chair – Department of Planning, Policy and Design, School of Social Ecology and included Prof. Gudrun Magnusdottir, Earth System Science, School of Physical Sciences; Prof. Timothy J. Bradley, School of Biological Sciences and Prof. Stanly B. Grant, The Henri Samueli School of Engineering.



Dr. Ram Fishman with the UCI group



Experimentally testing the effects of Climate change- Prof. Marcelo Sternberg

## Cooperation with the Eilat-Eilot Renewable Energy Center:

### ➤ 1. Eilat-Eilot Renewable and Clean Energy Conference in Eilat, Israel on November 27-29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

The conference was organized by the Eilat-Eilot Renewable Energy Center, headed by Mrs. Dorit Banet, an important partner of BMI in facing the global energy challenge. This leading international event focused on the next generation technologies that will spur the RE-revolution forward worldwide and on smart solutions to the real obstacles facing the global Cleantech industry. The conference hosted policy makers, academics and experts from all over the world, thus enabling a fruitful discussion on the future of renewable and clean energy. Prof. Sened and Prof. Schreurs (a member of the BMI International Academic Committee) had presented the latest research in RE policy.

For further details: <http://www.eilatenergy.org/Program/GeneralTentativeProgram.aspx>

### ➤ 2. Renewable Energy Seminar, January 29<sup>th</sup>-February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017

**Partners: Eilat-Eilot Renewable Energy Center, TAU's Renewable Energy Center, Porter School for Environmental Studies and Afeka College of Engineering**



RENEWABLE  
ENERGY  
CENTER

PSSES  
The Porter School of  
Environmental Studies

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY  
Pursuing the Unknown



AFEKA  
המכללה האקדמית לטכנולוגיה ואינדוסטריה  
TEL AVIV ACADEMIC COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

A unique seminar in Renewable Energy took place at the Eilat-Eilot energy center in the Arava region in Israel. This seminar is another step in the effort to train and educate Israel's future engineers, scientists and policy makers in all aspects of renewable energy. The project included 20 students from Tel-Aviv University (Department of Public Policy, Faculty of Engineering and the Porter School for Environmental Studies) and Afeka College, with the support of BMI.

The seminar enabled the students to experience cutting edge RE practices, learn from leading experts and practitioners and fully understand, first hand, the need for multi-disciplinary and innovative policy solutions. The seminar was concluded with excellent feedbacks from the students, and a second seminar is planned for October 2017.



TAU group at a solar field



## ➤ 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Workshop: Israeli Solutions for Sustainable Development July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### In Cooperation with the Manna Center Program for Food Security

This workshop focused on the contribution of Israeli solutions for sustainable development, created in implemented by the Israeli government, academia and private sector, to the global food security and sustainable agriculture, with an emphasis on smallholder farmers in developing countries.

This unique workshop has brought together prominent government official, both Israeli and foreign, as well as academic experts, entrepreneurs and NGOs. Among the speakers at the seminar: Ambassador Gil Haskel, Director of MASHAV (The Israeli foreign aid agency); Dr Anju Kumar, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India; Ambassador Hanan Goder, Israel's Ambassador to South Sudan; Dr. Shmuel Abramzon, Head of Research, National Economic Council; Mrs. Naomi Krieger Carmy, Head of Societal challenges division, Israel innovation authority; Mr. Monil Khatri and Mr. Aashish Dutt, TATA Trusts and selected Private Sector representatives, including Mr. Jalan Kumar Sharma, CEO, Sana Kisan Bikas Bank Limited (Nepal).



Right to left: Ambassador Hanan Goder, Israel's Ambassador to South Sudan; Mr. Niranjana Kumar Thapa, Ambassador of Nepal in Israel; Dr. Ram Fishman – BMI; Mr. Mr. Jalan Kumar Sharma, CEO, Sana Kisan Bikas Bank Limited; Mr. Monil Khatri, TATA Trusts

## ➤ BMI supports an Energy project in Tanzania

BMI supported a team of students from TAU who took part in an energy project carried out by the Non Profit Organization EWB (Engineers without Borders - TAU chapter). The project included installing a solar energy system at the health center in Minjingu, Tanzania, which serves over 4,000 members of the local community, as well as maintaining and expanding a rain collection system in the secondary school there. This project enable the students to put their knowledge to practical use and learn hands-on the major influence of minor policy changes on hundreds of lives.



The effort – and result: Solar power for the health center

In order to allow for an open academic and practical discussion of current global policy challenges, BMI hosts visiting scholars, each an well-known expert in his field, and holds seminars and discussions.

## 1. **Prof. William Bianco**, Department of Political Science, University of Indiana – *Bloomington: The Trump Phenomenon: Social and Policy Implications*, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Shortly after the elections in the USA and following the discussion of international politics in the BMI conference in Helsinki, BMI, in association with the School for Social and Policy Studies, held a workshop in order to understand the social and political aspects of the recent presidential elections in the USA. The keynote speaker was Prof. William T. Bianco, Department of Political Science, University of Indiana – Bloomington. Leading scholars and professionals shared their views and insights on the topic: How should election procedures and rules evolve in order to adapt to new forms of communication? How to deal with the estrangement of large parts of the public?

Among the speakers at the workshop: Prof. Itamar Rabinovich, Former Ambassador of Israel to USA and President Emeritus of Tel-Aviv University and a member of the BMI Advisory Board; Prof. Gil Troy, U.S. Presidential History, McGill University, 2016 fellow, Brookings Institute and political commentator and Dr. Daniel Dor, Department of Communication



Prof. William Bianco



The workshop's panel

## 2. **Prof. Mitchell Small**, Professor of Environmental Engineering, Carnegie Mellon University: Research seminar: Decision Support for Energy and Environmental Systems, May 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Prof. Mitchell Small, Professor of Environmental Engineering, Carnegie Mellon University, and a member of the BMI Prize Evaluating Committee, led a seminar for research students of the School for Social and Policy Studies. The seminar discussed the scientific aspects of energy and environmental systems and the ways to analyze, model and assess them.

# FUTURE PLANS

At BMI we are constantly looking for ways of expanding our activity range and enhancing the institute's global influence. In that spirit, here is a taste of our future activities which had already received our Board's approval:

1. BMI's next conference will take place in Tbilisi, Georgia and Yerevan, Armenia on September 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> 2017. The topic of the conference will be **Small Transition Economies: Local answers to Global Challenges**.
2. BMI will establish affiliated research institutes, to deal with specific policy challenges in cooperation with researchers and policy-makers of the host country. The first affiliated institute will be named: **"BMI Center on Desertification in Malta"** and will operate as described in the document attached.
3. Our next international conference will take place in Prague on March 2018: **"Trajectories for Europe as seen from Prague"**. The conference will deal with the new members of the EU and their attitude towards the rest of Europe.







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