

Yoav Yair, Ph.D

Prof. Yoav Yair earned his Ph.D. in atmospheric sciences at Tel-Aviv University in 1995. He was a faculty member of the Department of Life and Natural Sciences at The Open University of Israel 1999-2014. From 2009-2012 he was the Dean of Development and Learning Technologies at the Open University, where he supervised the testing, dissemination and research of various new technologies in higher education, with focus on video, digital books and mobile reading devices. Later he was appointed the Head of the Department of Life and Natural Sciences there. Since October 2014 he is the Dean of the School of Sustainability at the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya (IDC), where he holds the UNESCO chair in Sustainability. He was part of the Israeli government task force for submitting the Voluntary National Report on the SDGs in 2019, where he wrote on the role of Israeli universities in achieving the Goals.

His main research fields include atmospheric electricity, lightning (on Earth and other planets), space weather, solar-terrestrial relations, transient luminous events (sprites, TLEs) and dust storms. During 1998-2003 he was the project coordinator for the Mediterranean Israeli Dust Experiment (MEIDEX), conducted on board the space shuttle Columbia during its last mission. Afterwards, he led the ILAN campaigns (Imaging of Lightning And Nocturnal emissions) for studying TLEs in the Eastern Mediterranean, involving multiple observation points and coordinated optical and electromagnetic measurements. In 2011, he conducted observations of lightning and TLEs from the International Space Station (ISS) in collaboration with Japan's Space Agency [JAXA] and in 2015, with the European Space Agency [ESA]. He has taken part in European COST actions expert network "Physics of Lightning", "TOSCA: Towards a more complete assessment of the impact of solar variability on the Earth's climate" and "Electronet". In 2021, Prof. Yair will participate in the AMEDEE 2021 Analog Mars mission in the Negev desert in southern Israel, with the Austrian Space Forum.

Prof. Yair is also an expert on ICT and Learning Technologies. With 15 years of experience as developer at the Center of Educational Technology in Tel-Aviv, he moved to be head of the Center for Technology in Distance Education at the Open University of Israel (2004-2009). He served on the board of the Chais Research Center for Learning Technologies at the Open University. From 2012-2014 he headed the national Inter-University Center for Learning Technologies in Israel (MEITAL). Prof. Yair was also a member of the UN CTBTO academic forum on banning of nuclear testing, as an expert on e-learning (2012-2014).

Prof. Yair is the author of several text books in the atmospheric sciences and authored (and co-) over 100 refereed papers. He is an experienced speaker, session chair, convener and organizer of numerous professional meetings (AGU, EGU, JpGU). He also gives public lectures and popular radio talks on various topics in educational technology, astronomy, earth science, climate change and space physics. He is an enthusiastic science communicator, gives public lectures and popular radio talks on various topics in planetary and earth science, climate change and space physics, and is being frequently interviewed by the Israeli media on related topics.