

EGA Journal

FALL 2007

Boosting Biodiversity: A Survey of Giving Strategies

EGA at 20: An Interview with Co-Founder Donald Ross

Environmental Grantmaking for Disasters

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Cover photos by: (top row) Maria Bedact, Neotropical Eco Foundation; Hugh Hogan, North Star Fund; (middle row) Duong Van Dung, Mekong Plus; Diane Hargreaves, American Prairie Foundation; Raechel Running, Amazon Conservation Association; (bottom row) Tom Novick; Greenpeace; Trilby Dupont, Arizona Open Land Trust.

Executive Director's Letter

BY DANA LANZA



photo: Djavad Gasi

Dear Members:

I hope that this issue of *EGA Journal*, appearing just a short time before this year's Annual Retreat, finds you well. As many of you are aware, 2007 is a special year for EGA. Not only did we obtain our independent 501-C3 status, but also marked our 20th anniversary. Happy Birthday!

Twenty years ago, 15 foundations organized the first EGA retreat in North Carolina. At the time, these grant-makers simply wanted to meet like-minded professionals with whom to share funding ideas and strategies. Without any formalized recruitment plan, our association has grown to comprise more than 200 foundations around the globe, making EGA the largest explicitly environmental philanthropic association in the world. And as environmental issues gain priority in the years ahead, we can expect our community to grow significantly: The Foundation Center reports that from 1987–2005, environmental giving from all sources increased by a staggering 345 percent. During the same period, environmental giving (as a percentage of all giving) rose 42 percent—from 2.4 percent to 3.4 percent. These past two decades were just the beginning!

To recognize this special moment, we have commissioned several significant articles for this edition of *EGA Journal*: an in-depth conversation between two of EGA's founders, Donald Ross and Jane Rogers; an "EGA, Then and Now" index; and an independently reported piece on member strategies for funding biodiversity and conservation.

We've also planned some exciting, anniversary-related activities for this year's retreat in New Mexico. Beyond preparing an inspiring lineup of large and small sessions, we've organized our opening plenary to reflect on 20 years of environmental philanthropy and offer thoughtful projections on future trends. Throughout the event, we will broadcast a multimedia presentation that contrasts statistics from the environmental movement with trends in environmental philanthropy. For example, EGA members will make approximately \$580 million in grants this year—but what does that mean? This provocative presentation will leave it up to you to decide. (After the retreat, it will be available on the EGA website for your reference and further discussion.)

Should you, the membership, find these sorts of "tracking the field" activities engaging, we'll continue to offer them. EGA's goal is to bring our membership ever-greater strategic resources to help you be the most effective grantmakers possible, and we invite feedback and participation in this trend-tracking work.

Whether you joined us just this year or 20 years ago, thank you for your involvement in EGA. I wish those of you on your way to New Mexico easy travels, and everyone a productive harvest season.

Yours for the environment,
Dana

2007 EGA Editorial Committee

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Bolstering Biodiversity: A Survey of Giving Strategies

BY WENDY LYONS SUNSHINE, FREELANCE ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALIST

Each year the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation gives away \$125 million, virtually all of it intended to protect biodiversity in varying ways. However, said Chief Program Officer Bill Green, “Our approach is eclectic. We don’t have a singular view of biodiversity conservation.”

Moore’s broadly conceived mission includes large-scale, long-term ecosystem protection as well as efforts targeted at a specific region or individual species. For example, the foundation gives \$40 million per year to Conservation International for projects that protect high-risk species and biodiversity hotspots in Brazil, the Andes, Madagascar, and Melanesia. They’ve also committed \$30 million annually for 10 years to help preserve the climatological function of the Andes Amazon rainforest. “We do that by helping to change the land use of 370 million hectares of land, or approximately one billion acres,” said Green, who has called this approach “pragmatic environmentalism.” The strategies may involve strict protection, and/or the creation of national parks, sustainable reserves for forestry or extractive uses, and indigenous peoples’ reserves. Moore’s portfolio also includes marine ecosystem initiatives, such as one that measures the abundance and diversity of wild salmon in the northern Pacific Ocean.

Like Moore’s Green, program officers at other current and former EGA member institutions reveal philosophies as diverse as the species they hope to protect. Some hope to halt extinctions by pursuing a triage approach that focuses on protecting biologically rich “hotspots.” Others believe in preventative medicine—that preserving vast, healthy ecosystems offers the best insurance policy. Most foundations are pursuing sustainable solutions that factor in the needs of both



photo: Michael Webster

A commercial fishing vessel in Chignik, Alaska, hauls in sockeye salmon. The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundations’s Wild Salmon Ecosystem Initiative focuses on maintaining healthy salmon populations.

wildlife and human populations. Climate change, and how that should—or inevitably will—impact conservation funding is another hot topic among foundations surveyed.

Ecological Effectiveness

Creating connected habitats and establishing wildlife corridors are high on the list for the Wilburforce Foundation, according to Conservation Science Program Officer Joel Clement. “Biodiversity is an important piece of our strategy, but it’s not biodiversity hotspots for their own sake,” he explained. “In other words, ecological effectiveness doesn’t happen without a certain level of biodiversity.” Therefore, Wilburforce prioritizes protection of large, “ecologically effective” landscapes (typically unprotected public lands with a strong conservation value) and specific species, such as the wolf, grizzly bear, Pacific fisher, and spotted owl.

Wilburforce spends \$11 million a year toward these goals, reserving 10 percent to build partners’ capacity. One of its projects involves rebuilding a portion of highway I-90 near Seattle to include wildlife-crossing structures such as overpasses or underpasses. Another helps scientists communicate more

Most foundations are pursuing sustainable solutions that factor in the needs of both wildlife and human populations.

effectively with the media and policy makers. “I don’t want to fund studies that just land on a desk,” Clement noted. “We want them to effect change. If a guy does a fantastic study, we want him to be sitting at a congressional hearing and testifying.”

Pinpointing a Need

The Weeden Foundation spends all of its nearly \$2 million budget on protecting biodiversity, either directly or indirectly. Two-thirds of funding goes to sites that are biologically important, yet not typically considered hotspots. “Our strategy, being relatively small, is we like to go where others aren’t going,” said executive director Donald A. Weeden. Thus the foundation protects historically underfunded locations in Siberia and Chile.

“We’re somewhat unique among foundations concerned with biodiversity,” said Weeden, “because we address root causes of destruction—for example, overconsumption of natural resources—that affect habitat or endangered species and thus diminish biodiversity.” So the final third of the foundation’s budget is dedicated to projects such as promoting an environmentally responsible paper industry and reducing population, the latter by backing initiatives such as those seeking to liberalize abortion policy in Latin America.

In contrast, the Mitsubishi International Corporation Foundation doesn’t choose its projects based on biodiversity, per se. With an annual budget of \$700,000, its mission encompasses conservation, education, justice, and sustainable development. “We’re not biologists or experts,” explained Executive Director Tracy L. Austin. “We’re a corporation, but we’ve embraced environmentalism because we think it’s an important principle for a business like ours. We don’t limit ourselves to a particular ideologically defined approach; we embrace it as issues evolve and come and go.” Mitsubishi’s grantees tend to be chosen in response to the parent company’s investments in diverse industries such as chemicals, foods, fuels, oil and gas, and mining, Austin explained. For example, the foundation has

supported an environmentally oriented job-training program in a low-income, heavily industrialized area of New York City’s South Bronx, and paid for watershed ecosystem services in Latin America. Current plans include giving \$250,000 for each of four years to a wildlife conservation project in Patagonia.



Photo: Haroldo Gepp

Capivari River rapids. Mitsubishi International Corporation Foundation supports the Oasis Project of the O Boticário Foundation for Nature Protection, which offers landowners incentives to protect a major watershed of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Considering the Social Context

Environmental success and social success are closely linked for The Christensen Fund, which gives to institutions ranging from UN agencies to NGOs. Its \$10.5 million annual budget serves a dual mission with a global reach. “Our approach is we say we will only maintain diversity on the planet if we maintain cultural diversity,

and vice versa,” said Executive Director Kenneth Wilson. “We look at the integrity of the landscape as very crucial, and human activities are, frankly, part of landscapes.”

Christensen has enabled reoccupation of traditional lands by formerly indigenous peoples, including one project that reestablished traditional aboriginal land-management systems in Australia. “This is crucial,” said Wilson, “because research shows that in Australia, biodiversity is declining on areas where aboriginal land management is no longer occurring,” due primarily to fire-management practices.

Another key interest is traditional crops. Agro-biodiversity, Wilson pointed out, has the potential to keep people connected with their land and their culture. “We have this idea that diversity is only wild. It’s not. Humans are part of evolutionary biology of the planet. We have to work on species that have coevolved with human beings, not just species that have had minimal impact.”

Partnering for Local Power

The role of humans in landscapes is also key for the Brainerd Foundation. For example, when Program Officer Jim Owens sat down to talk with private land owners a few years ago, he was surprised to learn that ranchers were more concerned about the depredations of off-road vehicles (ORVs) than grizzly bears or wolves. “ORVs are bringing in invasive weeds and damaging their ability to maintain their livelihood,” he said. “That was an ‘aha’ moment.”

Realizing that local interest groups—including politically powerful ones like ranchers—hold deep conservation values was a turning point. Now Brainerd skips

projects that “parachute in” and preach about protecting biodiversity in favor of fostering hands-on, collaborative relationships. Concerned that “decisions were being made at a political level without any reference to biological values,” Owens said Brainerd has shifted away from a traditional land-conservation focus to a more systemic approach that includes influencing public policy. One-third of the foundation’s \$2 million budget goes to place-based efforts, and it has also ramped up funding for state conservation-voter alliances.

Local alliances are also an important factor overseas. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation’s conservation program annually allocates \$17 to \$18 million (8 percent of its total budget) to biodiversity projects in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Caribbean. “Our underlying theory of change,” said Conservation Program Leader Michael Wright, “is that landscape conservation work needs to be invested in so biodiversity is protected in the near term, but ultimately, unless there is local capacity to manage these areas, you won’t have protection long term.”

In these efforts, MacArthur is careful to respect the rights of indigenous people. Since 2005, its requests for proposals have asked whether the grant might cause people to be relocated or affect their livelihoods. Wright just returned from a site visit in Vietnam in connection with a three-year grant to study what happens when social goals and conservation goals don’t match up neatly, and require trade-offs. The underlying concern, said Wright, is “How do you deal with benefits that come in the future but costs that come now, or benefits that go to the country but [for which] the community pays?”

Wright sees a challenge inherent in working in our increasingly transient, fast-paced culture. “It’s interesting to see how many of the environmental problems are easier to solve if you can think about them over a longer period of time, but we don’t, and certainly politicians don’t,” he observed.

Despite the challenges, Wright is hopeful. “When I first started working in Latin America many years ago, there were almost no indigenous local NGOs. Now there are hundreds and hundreds. The same thing is happening in Africa. There are some really outstanding young Africans in conservation, so you feel it’s not outsiders arguing for these things; there’s a real indigenous movement.”

Photo courtesy of Mitsubishi International Corporation Foundation



A long-billed curlew at the Mitsubishi Shorebird Reserve in Sinaloa, Mexico.



Pastoralists in the highland mountains of Kashkasu, Kyrgyzstan. The custodians of such landscapes in Central Asia are a focus of support from The Christensen Fund.

Taking the Heat

Several foundations interviewed are working explicitly to mitigate or at least anticipate the impact of global warming on species and ecosystems. The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation is spending millions to preserve the climate-stabilizing role of a key region, for example, while The MacArthur Foundation has been doing climate analysis on its eight funding areas. The Christensen Fund also consults climate models to help steer its giving.

“We chose [to make grants in] southwestern Ethiopia...because it appears to be one of the places that best survived one of the last periods of major drying in Africa,” said Christensen’s Wilson. “The most recent climate model suggests it may be one of the few arid parts of Africa that are not going to get significantly drier in coming decades.”

Meanwhile, Wilburforce has been working with experts to build scenarios of what the North American West may look like as the planet heats up. “We need to know if it makes sense to protect an area or if it is going to wink out,” said Clement. “There will be dramatic changes. Species will follow their natural imperative and go where they can, and new communities will be formed. It’s going to be a different world. We need to adjust and we need to protect what we can.”

Looking Ahead

Along with the rising threat of global warming, program directors who spoke with *EGA Journal* are concerned that ongoing development is straining natural resources. The growing urbanization of the West worries Brainerd’s Owens. “The conservation community has not traditionally worked on growth-management planning,” he noted, “but in many places that’s the major issue right now.” Local interest groups, he believes, will have to “learn a whole new vocabulary and bust through the traditional community value for private-property rights.”

It doesn’t pay to ignore the human element, agree decision-makers. Wilburforce’s Clement is practical, saying that “the only real sustainable solutions involve accommodating the human community in various ways.”

“We expect the population to grow,” observed Moore’s Green. “We have to build our interventions in ways that incorporate and support the growth of human uses of these systems.” To his thinking, the most promising approaches are long term and provide the right incentives. Funding sustainable, comprehensive, market-based systems “is likely the answer,” said Green, “and may be the only answer.” ■

For more information, visit:

Brainerd Foundation: www.brainerd.org

Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation: www.moore.org

Mitsubishi International Corporation Foundation:
www.micusa.com/corporatecitizenship_micfoundation.shtml

The Christensen Fund: www.christensenfund.org

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation: www.macfound.org

Weeden Foundation: www.weedenfdn.org

Wilburforce Foundation: www.wilburforce.org

Storm in the Port: Foundations Join Fight for Clean Air, Justice in Shipping Industry

BY JANET SHENK, PANTA RHEA FOUNDATION

The first view of California's San Pedro Bay is breathtaking in more ways than one. The bay is where the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach meet along 60 miles of shoreline and endless acres of parking lots, rail yards, and battered steel containers, some of them barely visible through the haze. It's the fifth-largest port complex in the world and the largest outside Asia.

Forty percent of all seaborne goods entering the United States arrive here, and imports coming through the port are predicted to triple over the next 20 years. Containers stuffed with cheap consumer goods, destined for the Wal-Marts of the West, carry scrap metal (our largest ship-borne export to China) on their return runs. The scale of the port operation is simply stunning. And so are the problems that come with it.

A "Diesel Death Zone"

The San Pedro Bay ports spew more soot and smog than half a million cars, a refinery, and a power plant combined. Ships, boats, trains, forklifts, cranes, and trucks spew diesel exhaust into nearby neighborhoods, which register the highest incidences of cancer in the region. A study by the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California found that exposure to vehicle exhaust increases the risk for asthma and retards lung development in children, perhaps permanently. Respiratory and cardiovascular diseases afflict port-area workers and residents alike. Locals call it "a diesel death zone."

For foundations looking to remove the walls between the funding silos we often build—some housing environmental issues; others, poverty and exploitation—the beginnings of a multicoastal campaign to clean up major US ports like San Pedro's offer many philanthropic opportunities.

A Blue/Green/Brown Coalition

Guided by colleagues from the Liberty Hill Foundation, staff and board members from the Panta Rhea Foundation made a site visit to the twin ports last

February with several grantees active in the Coalition for Clean & Safe Ports. This diverse coalition, staffed by the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), includes organized port-area residents, grassroots and national environmental groups, labor unions, immigrant-rights advocates, and religious activists. Building on years of efforts to reduce port pollution by the Coalition for Clean Air, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and others, the coalition has worked to build a solid "blue-green-brown" alliance and push for a dramatic restructuring of the port trucking system.

Though cargo ships and other industry-related emissions play their part, it is the double lines of short-haul trucks—more than 3,000 per day—that account for 30 percent to 40 percent of all port-related pollution. Engines idle for hours as the lumbering vehicles wait to transport cargo through working-class, predominantly Latino communities on their way to rail yards and freeways.

Sweatshops on Wheels

More than 600 trucking companies now service the port—many of them small, fly-by-night operations that emerged when the industry was deregulated in the 1980s. Many lack the resources to buy newer, less-polluting trucks. So instead, they compete for the business of multinational shippers and retail giants by lowering standards and externalizing costs. Because the ports have no direct relationship with the trucking companies, there's virtually no oversight of a system that offloads the costs of globalization onto those least able to absorb them.

In addition to air quality and environmental justice, the Coalition for Clean and Safe Ports focuses on a closely related issue: the working conditions of 16,000 or so port truckers, mostly Spanish-speaking immigrants. Trucking companies hire them as “independent contractors,” who are paid on a per-load basis, enjoy no benefits, and are responsible for their own fuel, repairs, and maintenance costs. They work 11- to 14-hour days and earn less than \$30,000 a year after expenses. Although drivers have tried for years to improve their conditions, because they are not employees they lack the legal right to organize a union.

Raising Standards Across the Board

But now, port truckers are organizing alongside their community allies to support an initiative that would make trucking companies responsible for operating safe, “clean” vehicles, and pay drivers—employees under the plan—a living wage. It calls for direct-service contracts between the city-owned ports and the trucking companies, modeled on similar arrangements between publicly owned airports and food-service or shuttle-bus providers. Through a request-for-proposals process, the ports would sign contracts only with carriers that agree to strict environmental, labor, and security standards. Shipping companies would still negotiate rates directly with the trucking companies, but only with those “licensed” to access the port terminals. Public subsidies and grants would help carriers acquire new trucks or retrofit old ones. Coalition members say this arrangement is the only way to achieve the goals of the ports’ Clean Air Action Plan, designed to reduce port pollution dramatically over the next five years.

A Growing Movement

The Clean Air Action Plan is scheduled to take effect in January 2008, with many aspects still to be worked out and many obstacles yet to be overcome. As truckers and port-area residents speak out at community forums, the California Trucking Association is lobbying hard against the plan, and questioning whether local agencies have the authority to regulate trucking ser-



Photo: Slobodan Dimitrov.

Rev. William Smart, co-director of the Coalition for Clean and Safe Ports, speaks at a kickoff press conference for the coalition in November 2006, surrounded by truck drivers, community members, and coalition partners.

vices. Shipping interests and giant retailers are eyeing other ports. But campaigns to raise environmental and labor standards at major US ports are spreading.

Up the coast in Oakland, the country’s fourth-busiest container seaport, the situation is remarkably similar. Following the Los Angeles–Long Beach example, however, the port is now proposing to use its landlord status to enter into direct-service contracts with trucking firms. And a blue/green/brown coalition convened by unions and the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE), which has already won living-wage and local-hiring agreements with the port, is pushing the plan forward.

Holding Corporations Accountable

Panta Rhea’s support for these port campaigns is a way to ensure synergy between two of our grantmaking programs, Corporate Accountability and Ecological Justice. Both programs seek to hold corporations—in this case, big-box importers, shipping conglomerates, and trucking companies—accountable for the consequences of their business practices. We also support efforts to replicate these coalitions and campaigns in other port cities, from Seattle to Miami. Much creative funding work remains for other interested foundations. ■

For more information, visit the Coalition for Clean & Safe Ports at www.cleanandsafeports.org or contact Janet Shenk at janet@pantarhea.org

Getting into the Game on Climate: A Strategy for Environmental Funders

BY STEWART HUDSON AND NICOLE CHEVALIER, EMILY HALL TREMAINE FOUNDATION

The need for climate action is obvious, and political winds have shifted favorably, but funders are still left wondering: *What, and whom, do we fund to address the sweeping issue of global climate change?*

There's no silver-bullet answer, but one means of targeting your funding is to adopt a "portfolio" approach derived from your geographic focus, thematic focus, and approach to or style of grantmaking.

Three Key Questions

In building their climate-change portfolio, funders should ask themselves three key questions, focused on:

1. Location. *Where do you want to fund climate initiatives, and why?* Are you interested in funding locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally? The Connecticut-based Emily Hall Tremain Foundation (EHTF), for example, works primarily at the state level as a strategic move and because of the relatively limited scope of our grantmaking. We have been fortunate to ride the recent wave of local, state, and regional climate action, such as the US Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, in force in Hartford and many other US cities; state-level planning in Connecticut and elsewhere; and the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) in the Northeast. Other funders have helped to achieve the first state-economy-wide cap-and-trade bill (AB32 in California), while still others are engaged at the federal level in support of stronger environmental policy initiatives and renewed international greenhouse gas-reduction efforts.

2. Theme. *What will be the main focus of your grantmaking?* The leading priority areas for greenhouse-gas reduction include promoting energy efficiency; halting construction of new pulverized-coal-burning plants; encouraging mandatory cap-and-trade regimes;



Photo: istockphoto.com

Support for renewable energy sources is a priority area for greenhouse-gas reduction funding.

raising fuel-efficiency standards; and reducing vehicle miles traveled. Other urgent areas include support for renewable energy sources, green buildings construction, and biofuels development. If you are unfamiliar with these topics, identify other funders who share your interests and draw on their expertise in making your selections.

3. Approach. *Will you fund an "inside game" and/or an "outside game"?*

Insider strategies focus on crafting the details of policy solutions and convincing decision-makers of the merits of a given approach. One such strategy involves working with corporate interests to make the business case for climate action. "Outsider" strategies tend to be more advocacy focused and rely on public pressure to achieve success.

While EHTF has tended to invest in insider strategies, we have also found some pivotal outsider opportunities. For example, we made a grant to an advocacy organization to analyze implementation of the Connecticut state climate plan; its detailed critique inspired further action on key energy issues in the last session of the legislature.

Both strategies are proven effective, and can be complementary. What's most important is to determine

In building a climate-change funding portfolio, three questions are key: Where will you fund? What will be your focus? And will you have an “insider” or an “outsider” strategy?

which approach you are most comfortable with. Then you can identify the tack other funders are pursuing, and shape your own choices accordingly. (Funders might also consider convening insider and outsider groups—not to force common strategic choices, but to ensure that the groups know which roles they are playing as part of the larger effort.)

Whom to Fund?

Once you’ve constructed a framework for deploying your climate investments, you can determine which groups and projects to fund. Rather than canvassing dozens of different funders, only to hear as many different answers, we suggest turning to affinity groups.

Some affinity groups, such as the Climate and Energy Working Group housed at the Consultative Group on Biological Diversity (CGBD), focus specifically on climate and related energy issues. They have a strong working knowledge of the grantee organizations engaging in this arena, as well as the funders putting resources towards various aspects of climate change, and can direct you to foundations that have allocated their grants in areas of interest.

Other affinity groups—who may or may not have “global warming” in their names—are organized by themes directly or indirectly linked to climate change, such as environmental health, “smart growth,” and sustainable agriculture. CGBD or EGA can help you identify like-minded networks, as well as connect you with less formal working groups, such as funders focused on communications issues.

Our Real-World Example

Once the questions have been answered and grantees selected, what might a climate-change portfolio look like? At EHTF, we went through this process in 2001 and decided that, as a mid-size family foundation with an environmental grantmaking budget of just over \$1 million, we would begin by focusing on our home state of Connecticut. Eventually, with the help of our colleagues in the Northeast, we were able to broaden our

geographic focus to include other states in the region, such as Pennsylvania. Over the past two years we’ve also funded climate action in the Southeast.

Thematically, we began by funding clean-cars initiatives, but have now joined the One Region funder collaborative, which is engaged in funding broader transportation issues in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. We’ve made direct and indirect investments in energy efficiency and renewables; made grants to state agencies (related to state action plans); and continually strive to identify climate-change communications needs and solutions.

Other Considerations

Though it’s tempting to tell readers what and whom to fund, reality dictates that your choices may be completely different from ours. In any case, bear a few caveats in mind:

- ☀️ Adopting a portfolio approach does not obviate the need to make tough choices among available asset allocations.
- ☀️ Ask how your portfolio can leverage further support, whether from other funding sources, potential policy victories, increased media attention, or some combination of the above.
- ☀️ Most important, don’t be daunted by the effort required to make these choices, or uncertainty about the returns. Any foundation, regardless of size, location, interest, or approach, can find a way to get involved in climate action.

We urge you to get in the game on climate as quickly as possible, and for as long as possible. While the winds have shifted in a favorable direction, they won’t necessarily stay there. The time to act is now. ■

For further information, visit the website of the Climate and Energy Working Group: <http://stage.cgbd.org/visitors/aboutcgbd/workinggroups/climateandenergyfunders>; the Consultative Group on Biological Diversity: www.cgbd.org; and/or EGA: www.ega.org/resources/affinity.php

Tending the Grassroots: Funding the “Creation Care” Movement

BY MATTHEW ANDERSON-STEMBRIDGE, CREATION CARE SUPPORT FUND



Photo: Restoring Eden

Members of the Restoring Eden club at Western Washington University volunteering for trail crew work.

After a decade of financial support from leading environmental donors, evangelical Christian environmental advocates have captivated the attention of policy leaders and the mainstream media. They have gained public prominence by successfully orchestrating publicity campaigns, such as “What Would Jesus Drive?” which brought a moral perspective to the debate around fuel-efficiency standards.

They have built political momentum, by disseminating widely public statements such as the Evangelical Climate Initiative, which convened 80 prominent evangelical leaders who issued a moral call for greater attention to and effort around climate change.

These efforts illustrate the rise of national leadership for a Christian “creation care movement.” Research and analysis by Arabella Philanthropic Investment Advisors for the Wyss Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the Western Conservation Foundation show that the evangelical movement, a powerful source of anti-conservation advocacy for the past 20 years, is undergoing a generational shift. Christian college campuses and a new brand of non-traditional churches are now encouraging a renewed Gospel-centered attitude toward a range of public issues, deriving their views on economic justice, human rights, and environmental preservation from the core tenets of their faith. Key among these interpretations is that humankind’s dominion over the earth means faithful stewardship of the land, air, sea, and creatures God created—hence the term “creation care.”

Greening the Roots

Now student-led environmental campaigns on Christian college campuses, new books on creation care by Christian authors such as Joel Hunter, Tri Robinson,

and Matthew Sleeth, and regional and national conferences sponsored by local churches suggest a burgeoning grassroots component of this movement is emerging—one that is poised to lend even greater credibility to the national leaders’ efforts.

As seen in the traditional environmental movement, newly engaged youth are providing the next wave of leadership and demonstrating a unique ability to mobilize. Nationally, the more than 100 Christian colleges and universities, which provide a liberal-arts education to some 300,000 students, are organizing green activists by offering weeklong issue- and skills-training events in Washington, DC that conclude with visits to Congress members. Study-abroad programs arranged through the Creation Care Study Program take students to Belize or the South Pacific to spark or increase their environmental awareness. And Christian students are joining the national effort to urge college presidents to step up and meet the climate challenge at their institutions.

More than 2,500 non-traditional evangelical or emergent churches nationwide, ranging in size from three to 10,000 congregants, are focused on developing deeply personal relationships with God and wrestling with what that relationship calls them to do in this world. This fall, for example, the 3,000-congregant

Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Boise, Idaho, is hosting its second creation care conference, focused on involving Christians in environmental stewardship.

Challenges Ahead

However, leadership without a more visible base of community support will likely have limited reach. Looming legislative battles at local, state, and federal levels and vocal resistance from Christian opponents of the creation care movement will require even broader grassroots mobilization and test the organizing ability of Christian environmentalism. As part of its maturation, the creation care movement must now seek strategic ways to broaden, deepen, and empower its grassroots. How well these disparate efforts and organizations network together, implement education and advocacy campaigns, create efficient and powerful infrastructure, and organize an identifiable and genuine base will determine the creation care movement's long-term impact on conservation issues.

The Creation Care Support Fund

The Creation Care Support Fund (CCSF) builds on Arabella's findings about today's green Christians. Following EGA's 2006 Fall Retreat, EGA members helped initiate the fund, a new donor collaborative aiming to amplify the voice of national-level creation care leaders by nurturing an expansive, integrated, sophisticated, and identifiable base of grassroots support for environmental-protection efforts grounded in the Christian faith. The CCSF is providing this growing movement with critical support and seeks to serve secular funders interested in these efforts. It also:

- Builds the capacity of leading grassroots organizations to implement effective education and advocacy campaigns within their communities by supporting on-the-ground organizers and core staff positions;
- Improves the strategies of used in grassroots education and advocacy campaigns by providing technical assistance from a professional strategist;
- Multiplies the impact of national-level efforts by strategically engaging grassroots creation care advocates;
- Utilizes new media that target likely grassroots supporters of creation care. *Relevant Magazine*,

theooze.com and other new, emerging church outlets have drawn hundreds of thousands of readers and viewers, but have yet to partner effectively with any widespread creation care organizing efforts.

The Role of Secular Foundations

The CCSF, and its partners and allies, anticipate that the next three to five years will be critical for the development and maturation of the grassroots creation care movement. As awareness of and interest in creation care grows within the Christian community at a rate never before seen, it is essential to provide grassroots opportunities for people to engage in strategically, economically, and socially meaningful ways. What role can and should secular funders, particularly EGA members, play in the development of the grassroots creation care movement?

Clearly, in the near term, investing their considerable financial resources directly is the most important form of support secular foundations can offer, along with respect for and cultural sensitivity to the Christian communities with which they work.

In the long term, however, the creation care movement will need to nurture and secure significant financial support for its efforts from within its own flock. The Christian community already funds and supports a wide range of valued activities such as schools, hospitals, camps, nursing homes, and relief and development organizations. The secular funding community's expertise in organizational development and fundraising for nonprofit education and advocacy groups will be critical for leveraging and developing greater indigenous support for creation care work.

In some ways, the needs of the nascent grassroots creation care movement are similar to those of the secular environmental grassroots movement decades ago. The integration into this work of current best practices, ranging from nonprofit management to strategic planning, is essential. Fortunately, the secular funding community possesses such sharable skills in abundance. With well-conceived and appropriately applied support, the evangelical grassroots creation care movement can build an independent and powerful constituency of Christian environmental stewards for generations to come. ■

For more information, contact matthew@creationcarefund.org

Stories from the Forgotten Coast: Environmentalism and Human Rights Two Years After Katrina

BY ANNIE DUCMANIS, GULF COAST FUND FOR COMMUNITY RENEWAL AND ECOLOGICAL HEALTH

The many marginalized communities of color along the US Gulf Coast have much in common—even before Katrina’s 20-foot storm surge flooded them all on August 29, 2005. Their land is on the verge of disappearing—whether through erosion, urban sprawl, or contamination—taking with it the incredibly rich and irreplaceable culture of these communities of self-described “bayou people.”

Below are excerpts from interviews with leaders from two such communities that have partnered with the Gulf Coast Fund, a collaborative philanthropic initiative between experienced grantmakers and community leaders from across the affected region. Their stories reveal both the unfolding struggles to recover and the successes of innovative, multi-constituency work that seamlessly melds environmental, social, and economic justice. (To read the full text of these interviews, visit www.rockpa.org/gulfcoastfund.)



Photo: Penny Fujitko Willigerodt

Derrick Evans (left) is founder and director of Turkey Creek Community Initiatives (TCCI). Turkey Creek is an African-American community near Gulfport, Mississippi, all of whose members can trace their origins back to the Reconstruction, when

four freed-slave couples were each given 40 acres of land. After decades of battling contamination from creosote plants and other industrial facilities, Turkey Creek is now working to stave off encroaching wetlands destruction and urban development.

AD: What are the main issues your community is facing as we approach the second anniversary of Katrina?

DE: TCCI was working prior to Katrina to address issues caused by the absence of government accountability, like environmental protection and recognition and protection of cultural resources. The Gulf South is a place where marginalized communities are marginalized like nowhere else in the US. Two years out, all of

the recovery we have seen is not due to any help from government [and private sector institutions], but to the billions of dollars of volunteer labor and the wisdom of our community organizations.

AD: How do you see the interlocking issues of environmental, social, and economic justice playing out in your community?

DE: Those issues are played out every day and in every way in Turkey Creek. I know the foolishness of taking on everything that confronts a community. But the thing is, we have no choice. And the emotional, physical, and spiritual toll on us is great. What keeps us going is the victories that we do win. We’re really good at making so much happen with nothing. Since Katrina, we’re working with all kinds of new partners in new ways. Whether it’s helping the Vietnamese community of East Biloxi fight against total displacement, ... or getting African American neighborhoods registered as historic places, it all fits together [as] part of the reconstruction.

AD: How do you think the struggles and successes unfolding in the Gulf Coast relate to the greater story about the state of our country?

DE: Like Southern Reconstruction after [the Civil War], Gulf Coast reconstruction is quintessentially important to the future of the nation. Whatever practices or values win the day here will eventually unfold across the entire country. The method for how to reinvigorate a community or how to let it die will be mastered and perfected in this region in the next five to 10 years. It will then come calling to cities all over this country.

AD: What do Katrina and Rita mean for the evolution of environmentalism?

DE: You’ve got ready-made environmentalists in these communities of color all along the coast. Many of them are Bayou people, who intrinsically understand about the environment. Environmentalists need to recognize that they can not fail to have this region, and the whole Katrina dimensions of it, inform, invigorate, broaden, and redefine environmentalism.

Like what we're seeing in the Lower 9th Ward of New Orleans. No one is expecting black people in the Lower 9th who are struggling to be rebuilt to be talking about being the nation's first carbon-neutral com-

munity, but that's exactly what they're doing. Nobody would think that Turkey Creek residents who are fighting Superfund sites and urban sprawl would be talking about creating a bird-watching sanctuary, but we are.



Ruby Ancar (left), **Rosina Phillippe** (below) and **Paul Sylve** (not pictured) are members of Grand Bayou Community United, a Native American Atakapa and Cajun fishing village—accessible only by boat—where the community can trace its roots back thousands of years. Grand Bayou residents remain scattered in FEMA trailers and their community still looks as it did days after Katrina hit. They are fighting not just to come home, but for green rebuilding, alternative energy sources, and the establishment of the first worker-owned cooperative shrimp and fish dock in Plaquemines Parish.



Photos: Kristina Peterson

AD: What are the main issues your community is facing as we approach the second anniversary of Katrina?

RP: We find that almost two years out, the quick-fix programs that the federal, state, and local government had did not fit with our community and its needs. They had a one-size-fits-all plan, with no alternative solutions.

RA: In the aftermath, rules and regulations kept changing. You would be in compliance to receive government funding, and before you could do anything, they would change the criteria on you again.

RP: We wanted to bulkhead in Grand Bayou to preserve our land. We have been doing this for generations, putting sheet piling at the water's edge to stem erosion. Now people have come in and told us we can no longer bulkhead, that we need a permit we can't afford. The wealthy fishing and vacation developments are allowed to bulkhead, and we no longer are.

Another huge problem is all the dumps. While the parish was under a declared state of emergency, instead of paying to have debris disposed of properly they dug huge trenches, put all the garbage in there, and covered it up. So now [we] have these huge waste sites that have never been monitored, leaching into the water.

AD: How do you see the interlocking issues of environmental, social and economic justice playing out in your community?

PS: Some people say that we should know better than to live in a flood-prone, hurricane-prone area. [But] they want to say that we "choose" to live on Grand Bayou. This is [our home], where we have been since before there even was a state of Louisiana.... Now they want to tell us we can't apply for aid because of where we live. If they drive us out, what's going to stop them from coming for you and your community?

RP: There's been a lot of racial, social, environmental injustice perpetuated against our communities over a long period of time. As long as we were separate and fractured they were able to continue. Since the storm we have seen the benefits of coming together and partnering and forming alliances.

AD: How do you think the struggles and successes unfolding in the Gulf Coast relate to the greater story about the state of our country?

RP: The industries here affect people living in any state....If it doesn't affect you today, it'll affect you tomorrow, personally or economically.

AD: What lessons does your community have for environmentalism?

PS: People are finally realizing that the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO) is a major source of erosion, and why the storm surge was so bad. If they had listened to the people in these regions, just what we know from our way of life, MRGO would never have happened.

RP: If people are forced to move out of the bayou, one of the biggest losses will be the loss of ecological and historical knowledge of the region. We have know-how that can form the foundation of rebuilding in ways that make sense.

RA: You destroy the people and everything else goes. ■

To learn more about the Gulf Coast Fund, visit www.rockpa.org/gulfcoastfund or contact Annie Ducmanis at aducmanis@rockpa.org. The Gulf Coast Fund is a special project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors..

Campaign Finance Reform: Opening New Doors for Environmental Advocacy

BY MARC CAPLAN AND AMBER FRENCH, PIPER FUND

In the past year, advocates in half the US states have significantly advanced efforts to secure comprehensive public-financing programs in what is proving to be an unprecedented groundswell for electoral reform.

Substantial activity is under way to enact new, comprehensive public-financing programs or to implement or significantly improve existing campaign finance reform laws. Additionally, a serious and long-awaited campaign to win public financing for congressional elections has been launched this year with bipartisan support. Fueled by scandals that have rocked federal and state governments, public demand for reform is at an all-time high, and at least three governors have demonstrated strong leadership on public financing for the first time in recent months.

With this momentum, an unprecedented number of new states are poised to win comprehensive reforms of their own, and advocates on a range of social, economic, and environmental issues find themselves at a turning point. If successful, the movement will help loosen the powerful hold of major corporations and other special interests on lawmakers and, in so doing, present new opportunities to advance policy in the public interest. Public-financing programs may also help level the playing field among pro-environment and social-justice-minded candidates and their opponents, and encourage those interested in public service to run for office, free of the obstacle of raising enormous sums of money from special interests.

Current Programs

Comprehensive, statewide programs for publicly financed elections have been in place in Arizona and Maine since the late 1990s. Forty-two percent and 84 percent, respectively, of the two states' legislatures have been elected under this system—along with nine

of 11 Arizona state officeholders, including Governor Janet Napolitano herself. A pilot program in the New Jersey Legislature was expanded to three districts this year. Public-financing programs have also been enacted in several municipalities, including Portland (Oregon), Albuquerque, and New York City. Judicial public-financing programs have been established in North Carolina and New Mexico, the latter backed by strong leadership from Governor Bill Richardson.

The Role of Environmental Groups

In many states moving reform efforts, environmental groups are participating or even leading coalition efforts to advance public financing as part of a larger effort to address the power of moneyed special interests over the political process—an undue influence that weakens or even eliminates environmental laws and policies in the public interest.

🌱 In West Virginia, the 20-year-old Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (OVEC) is working to end mountaintop-removal mining, which not only eradicates some of the most biologically diverse temperate hardwood forest habitat in the world, but also destroys and displaces entire human communities, eroding the unique mountain culture of the state. People who remain face numerous problems including contamination of drinking water, coal waste and sludge impoundment leaks or failures, and blasting-related breathing problems. Many of these social and environmental problems can be traced to the heavy-handed and disproportionate influence the coal industry exerts over politicians through its enormous campaign contributions.

To combat this effect, OVEC leads both the People's Election Reform Coalition, which tracks, analyzes, and publicizes special-interest contributions, and Citizens for Clean Elections, a diverse coalition of 23 organizations that promotes public funding for state legislative races.

🌱 In North Carolina, advocates for campaign finance reform and environmental issues have collaborated

for the past 10 years. In the mid-1990s, reports about the influence of election contributions by the hog industry spurred a successful effort to impose a moratorium on new hog farms. Later efforts resulted in limiting the power of political appointees (often major campaign donors) on the state Board of Transportation. Now, these groups are working to expose the political money behind the electric utilities' manipulation of renewable-energy legislation.

- In Connecticut, several environmental groups, particularly ConnPIRG and Sierra Club, joined the Clean Up Connecticut Campaign to help pass comprehensive public financing in 2005. Their involvement in the campaign stemmed from a long, arduous fight to close several coal-burning power plants known as the Sooty Six, which led environmental groups to recognize that public financing of political campaigns not only eliminates the influence of deep-pocketed contributors who want to weaken environmental regulations but also enables them to help field candidates who want to strengthen such rules. With the reform bill scheduled to become law in 2008, activists from Common Cause are now working with environmental groups to engage pro-environment candidates to run for office.

Funding Opportunities

In addition to the examples above, a number of near-term opportunities exist to advance new public-financing programs for statewide, legislative, judicial, and/or municipal elections. Judicial public-financing efforts in Wisconsin and Illinois may advance as early as this year, while Iowa, Maryland, New Mexico, and Colorado are poised to move various comprehensive public-financing programs in 2008. New York state and some major cities, including Los Angeles, have a real chance at winning comprehensive reform in 2009. State and regional funders should watch for synergy or points of connection between environmental-advocacy efforts in these areas and public-financing campaigns.

Foundations also have an important role to play in supporting the extensive public education and research required for any strong public-interest advocacy work, including campaign finance reform. Environmental funders in particular should encourage grantees to think deeply and strategically about the obstacles to achieving their long-term goals and to include systems-level problems, such as those associated with money



Photo courtesy of Piper Fund

“King Coal,” who doles out campaign cash to influence West Virginia politicians, crashes a rally opposing mountain-top coal removal.

in politics, in any strategic plan. In addition, funders should consider supporting nonpartisan public education, outreach, and training efforts that can engage environmental organizations and civic leaders in tapping public-financing programs in states and municipalities where they already exist.

Opening Up the Democratic Process

Funders and advocates face a range of exciting and challenging new opportunities to open up the democratic process, lessen the influence of moneyed special interests, and more deeply engage environmental leaders in civic life. While responsibility and credit for the ultimate success of this work rests with the advocates, researchers, and organizers who move the issue, funders can help them shape a more democratic future. ■

Collaboration Power! RE-AMP's Organizing Model May Work for You

BY RICK REED, JENNIE CURTIS, AND RUTH ROMINGER, GARFIELD FOUNDATION

Two of the biggest challenges environmental philanthropy faces are the increasing scale and complexity of today's environmental problems. The RE-AMP collaboration seeks to tackle this dual challenge head on.

RE-AMP,* initiated in 2004, is a growing collaboration of eight funders and more than 50 NGOs spread across six states in the upper Midwest whose goal is to create a clean energy system for the region. RE-AMP uses a systems approach to develop its strategy and align the efforts of collaborating organizations. The result is a more effective allocation of foundation resources and a series of integrated strategies that have already produced impressive gains.

Here we provide a few of the structural and procedural approaches that have enabled this still-evolving collaboration to succeed, providing a model other funders can apply to their own broadly focused initiatives.

Finding True North

During RE-AMP's initial phase, foundations and NGOs participated jointly and as equals in a facilitated series of meetings designed to: 1) align the participants behind a shared goal—namely, to determine how quickly and by what amount greenhouse gas emissions in the region need to be reduced; 2) arrive at a common understanding of the forces animating the system—i.e., the dynamic interactions affecting decisions on the region's electrical-power generation; 3) gain insight into high-leverage intervention points; and 4) use this knowledge to develop fully integrated strategies for achieving our goal.

Months of work, including five face-to-face meetings, resulted in agreement on a seemingly audacious, yet necessary, target—an 80 percent reduction in global-warming pollution from the region's electric sector within 25 years. The participants also identified four interventions that, taken together, would gradually achieve this target: cleaning up coal (both halting construction of new “dirty,” conventional coal plants and retiring existing coal-fired generators); increasing ener-

gy efficiency by achieving a 2 percent-per-year reduction in energy use; and dramatically increasing renewable energy generation (to 57 times 2005 levels by 2030).

Undergoing this process was exceptionally valuable. It enabled participants to broaden their perspective beyond the scope of their individual efforts and helped them to understand where and why their work could be effective in changing the larger, more complex system of energy supply and demand. It also opened participants' eyes to the ways in which their work, and the work of others, on seemingly unrelated issues could become mutually supportive.

By the time the first phase was completed, everyone involved could see that achieving the ultimate goal would require an interconnected approach, and that any short-term successes that individual efforts might yield could also lead to unintended consequences, including undermining other critical work. Creating an understanding of our commonalities and interdependencies, and grasping the potential significance of combining a few strategic interventions, set the stage for moving ahead collaboratively.

From Understanding to Action

With a shared goal, a shared understanding of the system, and agreement on an integrated strategy, RE-AMP moved into its implementation phase. First, we created a working group to address each of the four intervention points. Working groups, each with eight to 15 members drawn from groups across the region, were tasked with developing long-term goals, mid-term objectives, actionable strategies, and clear indicators of progress. We also created a Foundation Working Group, composed of representatives of the eight participating foundations, to help funders share information transparently and efficiently coordinate their support for the overall collaboration.



Map courtesy of RE-AMP

RE-AMP's collaboration spans six states in the upper Midwest.

Next, we elected a nine-member steering committee, whose members consist of representatives of five NGOs (including the chairs of each working group) and four foundations. The committee meets 10 times per year by phone and twice in person. Working with a budget of just under \$500,000, the committee assists the individual working groups in becoming more effective, looks for areas of synergy between working groups, responds to evolving circumstances by developing new strategies, and stages an annual collaborative-wide meeting.

System-wide Assets

As part of RE-AMP's integrated strategy, the participating foundations support a media center and a secure online community designed to ensure that public outreach by participating NGOs will be effective and consistent across each strategic area. The center provides news summaries and media services, analysis, and training to RE-AMP member organizations. Members have praised it for helping advocates to stay "on message" and to track which messages are being picked up by the media in the Midwest, as well as for building the ability of individual organizations to get stories placed.

The secure online community (a password-protected website that allows members to participate in listservs and share files) was designed to support sharing information and coordinating work within and between working groups, funders, and the steering committee. Live web conferences that discuss issues using expert presentations have been its most utilized feature.

Results to Date

Several indicators show that RE-AMP's systems approach is proving effective. Clean-energy advocates in the region credit RE-AMP with shifting foundation resources to critically important areas that had previously gone unfunded. For example, more than \$2.5 million per year in new money is now flowing into stopping new dirty coal plants after RE-AMP's analysis showed that approval of even a few new coal plants would make reducing greenhouse-gas emissions in the region impossible. Of the 15 coal plants proposed, only one has succeeded in gaining permits since RE-AMP's effort began.

Advocates also credit RE-AMP's emphasis on integrated action for achieving impressive wins. In Minnesota, for example, new coordinated action between energy-efficiency advocates, renewable-energy advocates, and anti-dirty coal campaigners has resulted in the passage this year of the most far-reaching clean-energy legislation ever seen in the region. It includes a requirement that 25 percent of the state's energy be generated from renewable sources, aggressive energy-efficiency goals, and rules that effectively place a moratorium on new dirty coal plants.

Clearly, collaboration is powerful; we urge funders to "plug in" to what we've learned. ■

* RE-AMP was originally an acronym for Renewable Energy Alignment Mapping Project, but now is simply our "brand."

To learn more about RE-AMP and its collaboration methods, contact Rick Reed at reamp@sbcglobal.net

Prepared and Effective: Environmental Grantmaking for Disasters

BY ERIC KESSLER, ARABELLA ADVISORS

Dangerous levels of arsenic found in 11 coastal areas after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; coastal zone damage and groundwater contamination after the 2004 South Asian tsunami; air pollution and health hazards caused by the more than one million tons of dust produced by the destruction of the World Trade Center in 2001— these are just a few examples of daunting environmental degradation resulting from natural and human-made disasters.

Despite the media spotlight focused on the 2005 storms, reports issued at various intervals thereafter continue to lament missed opportunities and unmet needs associated with preparation for and recovery from these catastrophes. While governments at all levels have received (and deserve) the sharpest criticism, it is time for private philanthropy to assume a much greater role in disaster preparedness and response.

Philanthropy's Limited Response

Since the high-profile natural disasters of the last several years occurred, we have seen an increased emphasis on grantmaking in this area. According to the *Giving USA* report of 2006, in 2005, a total of \$7.37 billion was contributed to disaster-relief organizations for natural and human-caused emergencies. Of this amount, approximately 2 percent (\$160 million) was given by foundations and almost 80 percent by individual donors. These figures demonstrate room for growth in the foundation sector.

The work of EGA members and other environmental grantmakers in funding critical needs and raising awareness and responsiveness since the US Gulf Coast hurricanes has been valuable. But more will be required if we hope to resolve the problems that complicate or limit disaster response and recovery—such as poor infrastructure and logistical obstacles.

Foundations' poor track record points to their need to be both better prepared and more effective. When environmental funders consider their approach to disaster grantmaking, two main questions emerge:

- How do we prepare for a disaster to ensure the continuity of our operations?
- What role can we and other environmental grantmakers play in funding for disasters in our own communities, domestically, and abroad?

Environmental grantmaking for disasters is admittedly difficult. It is often outside the primary scope of such foundations, and relatively few resources are available to guide them. Nevertheless, the work of some forward-thinking foundations offers some guidelines.

Preparing for Disasters

As Hurricane Katrina dramatically demonstrated for foundations throughout the Gulf Coast, trustees and staff need to consider contingencies presented by the possibility of a disaster striking in their own backyard. Catastrophic events can disrupt operations for days, weeks, or even months.

Thus, grantmakers that aim to be responsive cannot neglect internal disaster preparation. Some proactive foundations have created formal written plans to continue their operations, but the majority have not invested significant resources into contingency planning. These preparations may include making arrangements for accessing funds remotely, authorizing a trusted third party to make grants on the foundation's behalf, and ensuring that the computer server has an online or off-site backup system.

Foundations can and should collaborate with their communities to prepare for future disasters. The Bay

Grantmakers that aim to be responsive cannot neglect *internal* disaster preparation, including arranging to access funds remotely and ensuring that the computer server has a backup system.

Area Preparedness Initiative (BAPI), housed at the Fritz Institute and funded by the Walter & Elise Haas Fund, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation, and the Pacific Gas & Electric Company, is a large-scale effort to involve private sector, government, nonprofit, and philanthropic players in planning for the protection of vulnerable populations. BAPI is first conducting a comprehensive study to assess the status of at-risk groups in the area and the current capacity of nonprofit service providers. After identifying gaps in services, the initiative will work to find local solutions to fill the voids.

Funding Disaster Relief

Despite the fact that at least some natural and human-caused disasters are relatively predictable, the need to mobilize funds for disaster relief routinely catches grantmakers by surprise. Donors feel restricted when motivated to act quickly and/or rushed to liquidate assets or divert resources from other priority giving areas. Advance planning enables funders to identify organizations that prepare for or respond to disasters in ways that support their existing issue priorities, such as the environment. For example, within a week of Katrina's landfall, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation in Miami had initiated plans to commit \$1 million for relief and another \$1.25 million for recovery; to provide an architect who would integrate community input; and to send a foundation staffer to Biloxi, Mississippi. Knight had already paid out its 2005 emergency allocation, so the trustees chose to dip into their reserves without cutting their planned funding.

Finding Environmental Connections

Environmental donors have not typically focused on disaster grantmaking, and are not set up for rapid response. In fact, *Giving USA* reported that in 2005, only \$29.7 million (less than 1 percent) of the \$7.37 billion given to mitigate disasters was targeted to address environmental issues.

However, opportunities exist to assist with environmental problems caused by or exacerbated by disas-

ters. For example, *Philanthropy News Digest* reported that in Katrina's aftermath, Louisiana's Department of Environmental Quality was dealing with "unimaginable" environmental challenges that included hazardous substances in devastated industrial areas, water pollution, and damaged gas lines. Obvious funding projects in such situations could include restoring coasts, cleaning up contamination, and/or rebuilding devastated areas using green-building principles and practices.

The Newton Marasco Foundation of McLean, Virginia, found an effective way to support green rebuilding in Mississippi. The foundation drew from its prior experience building environmentally sound and energy-efficient Habitat for Humanity houses in its own community to assist in fixing damaged roofs and water sealing residences in the Gulf.

Like Marasco, environmental donors should seek their own niche in disaster response and earmark funds annually for that purpose, create a special emergency fund, and/or seek out projects and initiatives in line with their funding priorities.

Another interesting option, in light of the difficulty of addressing disaster-related issues, is forming donor collaboratives, such as BAPI or the Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Fund, scheduled for launch in May 2008. Managed by the Arabella Legacy Fund, the new collaborative will convene disaster experts to work with local philanthropic leaders following disasters and pool the resources of major donors to fund effective efforts on a national level.

While disaster-related funding is rarely the core mission of private foundations, it has been virtually absent from the dockets of environmental donors. But as disasters exert a greater impact on the environment, and lack of donor preparation takes a bigger toll on foundation operations and assets, effective grantmakers must begin to plan ahead. ■

Eric Kessler will host an ad-hoc session focusing on disaster preparedness and response at EGA's 2007 Fall Retreat. Address questions about the national Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Fund to him at eric@arabellaadvisors.com

Dispatch from Abroad: European Foundations Eye Global Green Funding

BY RÓISÍN HUGHES, EUROPEAN FOUNDATION CENTRE

Over the last few years, the European Foundation Centre (EFC), a Brussels-based international membership organization of about 200 foundations and corporate donors, has intensified its advocacy work to encourage its majority-European constituents (and the philanthropic sector at large) to direct more funding toward regions and issues of global concern.



A recent survey of EFC members' current and prospective international activities shows signs of progress on this front: Foundations are now demonstrating increased activity, expenditure, and interest outside national and European frontiers.

Conference Spotlights Environment

EFC's 2007 Annual Conference, held June 1–3 in Madrid, marked a highpoint of these efforts. Focusing on the theme "The New Challenges for Global Philanthropy," the event was the largest yet in terms of attendance, with some 600 delegates present.

The climate-change challenge is probably the most critical global problem of the 21st century. Consequently, this year's Conference Programme Committee ensured that this issue was featured prominently, making it a priority to build momentum in the philanthropic sector for funding the cause. Several sessions, as well as a special plenary dedicated to climate change, looked at a series of environment-related issues. Topics ranged from demand for and equitable management of energy resources to the collaborative role of funders in environmental work to how foundations will address a new generation of sustainable-development challenges.

The Climate-Funding Challenge

One plenary speaker, Uday Khemka, managing trustee of the Nand and Jeet Khemka Foundation, whose mission is to support development infrastructure in India, noted that since 2003, his foundation has been focus-

ing almost obsessively on climate change, based on the recognition that it could literally destroy every project the organization was supporting. Climate change, Khemka noted, does not confine itself within the traditional parameters of "the environment"—refuting a misconception that has prevented many foundations from doing more in this area. Thus, associations like the EFC and foundations already engaged with this issue must find ways to deconstruct climate change and shape it into an agenda around which a larger group of funders can be mobilized. Whether their focus is health, security, children, migration, or other concerns, we can help them identify options that provide the best opportunities for philanthropic intervention.

Khemka also provided a four-point strategy for considering these options: identifying where to intervene, what to address, whom to influence, and how figuratively to move the needle through funding—be it through research, pilot projects, scaling up pre-existing initiatives, promoting the issue at the political and grassroots levels, or employing an integrated strategy. [Editor's note: See "Getting Into the Game," page 8, for a portfolio approach to funding climate issues.]



Uday Khemka of the Nand and Jeet Khemka Foundation of India.

Photo: Khemka Foundation

The vast majority of European foundations have not yet gone green. Nevertheless, funder collaborations are blossoming, suggesting that more funding may soon emerge.

Photo: Oak Foundation



Beatrice Schell of the Oak Foundation of Switzerland.

Europe's Unique Role

Speaker Beatrice Schell, environmental program officer at the Oak Foundation of Switzerland, urged foundations to flex more muscle in Brussels by engaging more deeply at the political level on climate change, and

to work with environmental NGOs that are lobbying European Union (EU) institutions on policy development in this area. Thanks to the work of these NGOs and their partners, climate change is finally on everyone's radar this side of the Atlantic, she observed. Thus, now is the time for European foundations to facilitate more dialogue on the issue and to provide the necessary resources for NGOs to scale up their current efforts and explore others, including new technological solutions and adaptation strategies.

Schell emphasized that patience is required to deal with the EU's bureaucracy, and that foundations contemplating moving into climate funding should take a long-term view, confident that democratic solutions are attainable—particularly now that Europe is taking a lead role in tackling climate change through multilateral initiatives and international agreements such as the European Climate Change Programme and the Kyoto Protocol.

Who's Who in Environmental Funding

Along with highlighting climate change issues, the conference revealed that the list of "Who's Who" in environmental funding in Europe is diverse in terms of geographical outreach, activity focus, and level of funding commitment. Among others, it includes:

- ☀ The Shell Foundation (United Kingdom), which spends about \$20 million annually to promote worldwide sustainable solutions to social and environmental challenges in which the energy industry and multinational corporations have a stake;
- ☀ Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (Germany), which promotes model projects that protect the environment, with particular consideration given to small and medium-sized enterprises;
- ☀ Fundación BBVA (Spain), which works on biodiversity and conservation;
- ☀ Fondazione Cariplo (Italy), which encourages local participation of civil society and the lifestyle changes compatible with a sustainable future;
- ☀ Fundação Luso-Americana para o Desenvolvimento (Portugal), which finances public-awareness campaigns, capacity-building for NGOs, and environmental education through transatlantic agreements with American universities;
- ☀ MISTRA (Sweden), which supports strategic environmental research.

Beyond this handful, however, the vast majority of European foundations have not yet gone green. The EFC is beginning research into this trend to get a clearer idea of which of its members are most active in environmental funding and their respective levels of engagement. Findings of the study will be presented at the 19th EFC Annual Conference, May 29–31, 2008 in Istanbul.

Looking to the Future

Nevertheless, funder collaborations are blossoming, suggesting that more funding may also soon emerge. The EFC is currently cooperating with networks including the UK-based Environmental Funders Network; the Climate Change Philanthropy Action Network, which unites foundations and philanthropists worldwide to combat climate change; and the Bellagio Forum for Sustainable Development, another international network of primarily Europe-based grantmaking institutions working in the area of environmental and socio-economic sustainability.

Responding to interests expressed by some participants at the conference, the EFC is also assessing the potential for an EFC-member-led interest group that would provide a way for European foundations active or

interested in the environmental field to meet regularly, share information and experience, and identify opportunities for collaborative funding and partnerships with other stakeholders.

With combined assets in the range of 174 billion euros and an equivalent expenditure of more than 51 billion euros (according to 2003 EFC findings on 26,000 foundations), European grantmakers indisputably have the financial resources to get serious about funding work related to climate change. This year's EFC

conference was a first real attempt to incite the will and encourage a funding shift toward this and other environmental issues. The EFC is confident that discussions at the Madrid conference have primed members for action, and it is only a matter of time before European foundations establish their role, strategy, and tactics to attack climate change with impressive force. ■

The European Foundation Centre is an international association of foundations and corporate funders. For more information about EFC and its 2007 Annual Conference, visit www.efc.be/aga/AGA2007

The EFC Conference: An American Perspective

BY DANA LANZA, EGA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Did you know nearly 40 percent of EGA member foundations make grants outside the United States? This news came as a surprise to many of us this past winter, when EGA launched its International Listserv. As a result of these and other findings, participants began to reflect on the ways in which we engage with the global grantmaking community and associations like ours beyond US borders.

This past June, the European Foundation Centre (EFC) generously invited me to attend their annual conference in Madrid on EGA's behalf. During my visit, I met with several foreign-based foundations and learned about European-based funding strategies, including EFC's ongoing efforts. EFC constructed much of its 2007 conference around three critical and emerging global themes, all of which are closely connected to the environment: Climate, Migration, and Global Health. Several highly effective large, small, and strategic "invitation-only" member sessions gave each issue significant consideration.

I was pleasantly surprised by the heavy focus on these topics. But I—as one of only a few Americans there—also became acutely aware of a desperate need for better trans-Atlantic

communication and collaboration. By the time I left the two-and-a-half day event, this need had become a theme, as participant after participant approached me wanting to know more about EGA, our members, our giving, and our strategies. Clearly, global climate, migration, and health issues are not only matters of urgent concern within the European Union, but also topics on which many EGA members can share their expertise. These issues know no national boundaries, and their effects are constantly moving from local ecosystems to global ones. We cannot solve problems of this scale without a concerted, *planetary* effort that, like carbon emissions, also begins locally and expands globally.

Fortunately, several of the grantmakers I was privileged to meet at EFC's event will join us this fall at EGA's 2007 Retreat in New Mexico. I hope and trust that their participation will foster introductions, relationships, and new projects that cross both physical and disciplinary boundaries. ■

For a complete list of EGA International grantmakers and their areas of interest, visit www.ega.org/members/directory.php



PLEASE JOIN GLOBAL GREENGRANTS AND EGA AT OUR RECEPTION FOR INTERNATIONAL GRANTMAKERS ON TUESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 25 AT THE ANNUAL RETREAT IN NEW MEXICO.

Whose Next “Green Revolution”?

BY HUGH HOGAN, NORTH STAR FUND

The Bill and Melinda Gates and Rockefeller Foundations made a philanthropic splash in September 2006 with their announcement of a \$300 million grant program “to help millions of small-scale farmers and their families lift themselves out of poverty and hunger” across the African continent.

The plan, dubbed the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), has sparked controversy, evoking the heavy-handed technological efforts of the industrialized North in the 1960s and ‘70s to help peasant farmers of the global South.

The new program will focus on planting better seeds, improving agricultural practices, and identifying better markets—with the support of well-trained scientists and extension services. Initially, AGRA will invest \$150 million to develop improved crop varieties for “larger, more diverse and reliable harvests.” It also intends to seek a “more astute application of science” to improve how fertilizers are applied, soil is sustained, seeds are sown, and water is used. Finally, to build more robust markets, AGRA aims to help farmers improve storage systems and create more efficient transportation, processing, and final sale of products. *

The “what” sounds great. The “how” evokes the devilish details. It is crucial that grantmakers ask hard questions about how AGRA will be implemented if they, too, wish to provide marginalized African farmers—most often women without access to technology, markets, and credit—a hand up instead of a short-lived handout. Philanthropy must acknowledge past lessons, lest African farmers face the fallout of the last “Green Revolution.”

My thoughts about AGRA stem from 10 years living and working alongside some of the farmers



Photo courtesy of Hugh Hogan

Foundiougne rice farmer and elder Mousso Diouf, Ndour Ndour village, Senegal.

that the initiative seeks to help. As a Peace Corps-trained agricultural extension agent in Senegal’s coastal Foundiougne district in the 1990s, I gained a journeyman’s education in the agro-ecological culture and practices of Mandinka and Serrer women, who have long farmed rice there. I also gained unsettling insights into both the promises and pitfalls of Western industrial-style agriculture promoted by the Green Revolution.

Rice Farming in Senegal

The tidal salt flats and upland gullies of Foundiougne’s Sine Saloum coast receive barely enough rainfall to sprout rice. Yearly harvests vary widely because of marginal growing conditions, but are crucial for household and village food security—and are particularly important during the “hungry time” from the end of the dry season in April to the arrival of summer crops.

The Peace Corps program met individually and collectively with women peasant farmers from about 20 villages, presenting plans for joint research and experimental plot trials. Our Senegalese agriculture advisor, Alphonse Faye, explained that we planned to strengthen current farming practices and use local resources to boost crop yields—without creating dependence on outsiders or their resources.

In our meetings, the women asked for fertilizer and *pudeur*, or pesticides. Alphonse reminded them of previous efforts that brought new seeds, free fertilizer, and *pudeur* for a time—then disappeared.

In our meetings, the women asked for fertilizer and *pudeur*, or pesticides. Alphonse reminded them of previous efforts that brought new seeds, free fertilizer, and *pudeur* for a time—then disappeared.

High Input, Mixed Results

Years ago, French and Chinese agricultural experts had come to advise the agricultural ministry. Working with Senegalese counterparts, they introduced machines and installed irrigation equipment to farm rice in experimental plots—and brought men into the women’s

Continued on page 36

Walking the Talk: EGA Members “Green” Their Operations

BY TRACY ZHU, EGA INTERN

EGA summer intern Tracy Zhu recently spoke with a cross-section of EGA member funders about their “green practices”—what they are doing to ease the environmental impact of their operations. Nearly all are working on waste reduction by recycling and purchasing paper products with recycled content; many others are arranging to offset their organization’s carbon “footprint” in various ways. Beyond these efforts, funders are demonstrating concern for their employees’ health, sustainable food systems, and more. Following are just a few examples of interesting, replicable ways EGA members are going green.

Healthier Habitats

On a tour around the United Nations (UN) Foundation’s offices, visitors can read about its green features—which include biodegradable carpet, a “green roof” with plants covering more than half of the surface area, and lights with motion sensors—on signs made of recycled bank notes. The recently constructed building, on Dupont Circle in Washington, DC, boasts the gold-level LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental



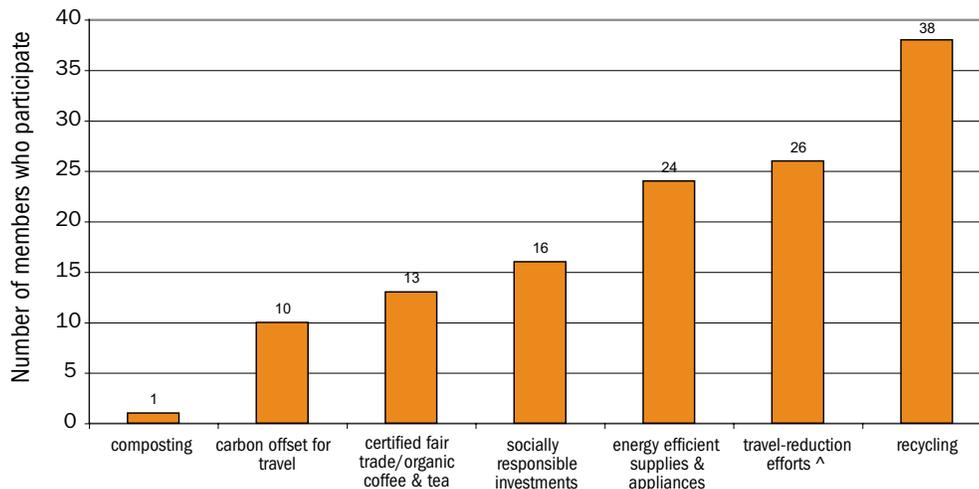
Photo courtesy of UN Foundation

More than 50% of the roof area of the United Nations Foundation’s green building is covered with vegetation to reduce water runoff.

Design) certification, meaning that it has met some of the highest standards for green building, including low-chemical-emitting materials, certified highly efficient appliances, and reductions in construction and demolition waste through recycling and reuse.

When the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) moved to its new building, the medium-sized funder didn’t have enough resources to apply for LEED certification, according to Patrick Deavy, NEEF’s development director. Instead, the staff educated themselves and the construction company they hired about the details they could attend to, such as buying cabinetry that does not emit formaldehyde, an indoor pollutant. They also chose paint colors, including light eggshell and bright yellow, to enhance the building’s natural light, avoiding darker shades that

Survey Results of EGA Members’ Green Practices 2006



52 members who renewed their membership with EGA for 2006 participated in this survey. Survey results represent only a subsection of EGA members.

^includes virtual meetings and work from home

EGA members have bought Green-e certified energy credits from developers such as Native Energy and Community Energy. Carbon offsets can also be purchased through EGA's Green Co-Op (see www.green-e.org and www.ega.org/resources/co-op.php).

emit more volatile organic compounds (VOCs), another indoor pollutant.

In and Around the Office

The corporate giving program of the Aveda cosmetics company applies the three Rs—reduce, reuse, recycle—by recycling CDs, videotapes, and printer cartridges; reducing paper use by printing documents double-sided; and establishing office reuse stations. Employees bring items such as envelopes, picture frames, Styrofoam peanuts, and even tennis shoes to the reuse area to make them available for someone else.

Meanwhile, the Bullitt Foundation has tempered the staff's caffeine habit in its Seattle office (after cotton and tobacco, coffee is the world's third most heavily pesticide-sprayed crop). The foundation has forsaken Starbucks for a smaller local coffee supplier, Kalani, which delivers organic, Fair Trade Certified, songbird-friendly Arabica beans to its office.

Food service doesn't have to be married to disposables, as Bullitt has also demonstrated. When hosting a catered event, the foundation's staff asks caterers to reduce their use of paper and plastic, prioritizing reusable plates and forks over individually packaged items. They also ask caterers about the source of the ingredients, favoring local and organic food, which is fresher and requires less fossil fuel to transport.

Cleaner Commutes

Transportation is the second-largest source of US carbon-dioxide emissions. As part of their greening efforts, some EGA members offer foundation employees alternatives for their daily commute. When they can't take mass transit, the staff and board of the Nathan Cummings Foundation hire cars from the luxury hybrid fleet of the service OZOcar for all work-related travel around the New York area, including trips to the airport. Meanwhile, less than 5 percent of the UN Foundation's employees need to drive to work, as the organization offers fare vouchers through the Metrochek voucher program, which provides free public transportation.

The Bullitt Foundation encourages employees to

use the most energy-efficient form of transportation—bicycling. Understanding that no one wants to sit all day at a desk in sweaty clothes, Bullitt installed a shower in its office—a restored 1900 carriage house.

Energy Savers and Carbon Cuts

Many funders reduce their office energy consumption by using energy-efficient office appliances and lighting. The UN Foundation takes the measure one step further by helping its employees save money on their household energy bills: Each staffer can bring up to 10 standard incandescent light bulbs from home to exchange for the same number of compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). CFLs use 75 percent less energy than incandescents—and last up to 10 times longer.

However, some energy consumption is inevitable. Given that 50 percent of US electricity production is fueled by heavily polluting coal, EGA members are tapping into voluntary markets that offer economical ways to mitigate the resulting carbon emissions. For example, the UN Foundation buys carbon offsets from the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve in central Mexico, a World Heritage site that invests in reforestation efforts. Over time, the trees planted help absorb carbon emissions in an amount equivalent to that generated by the foundation.

Some funders looking to support alternative energy have invested in wind power. After the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF) measured its carbon footprint from its annual heating, electricity use, air travel, and staff commuting patterns, it decided to purchase renewable energy credits (RECs) from the energy developer NativeEnergy. REC purchases allow renewable-energy developers to put the equivalent amount of renewable energy into the electrical grid, thus displacing some of the need to generate energy from fossil fuels. RBF's purchase offset the approximately 420 tons of carbon emissions it generated in 2005.

RBF recently joined with the Center for Resource Solutions to forge the Carbon Neutral Alliance, whose mission is to eliminate barriers for foundations who

want to go “carbon neutral”—that is, to offset their emissions with an equivalent amount of carbon-reducing activities. Formed in 2006, the alliance provides resources to help a foundation measure its carbon footprint, pinpoint the areas in which it can reduce emissions, and offset the remainder in ways tailored to its needs and preferences. According to Jessica Bailey, RBF’s program officer for sustainable development, the alliance helped RBF decide that the investment in NativeEnergy’s Native Alaskan wind farms would best fit its focus on finding solutions to global warming.

A Consistent Message

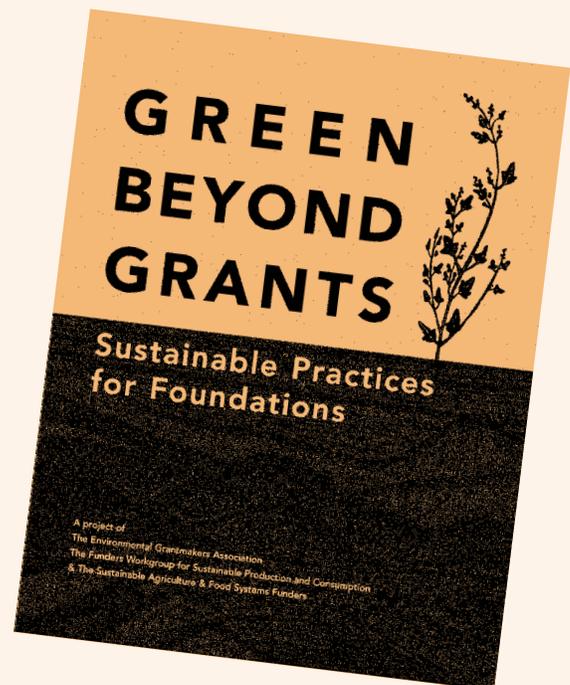
Foundations are recognizing that it’s time to walk the talk, according to Ryan Hobert of the UN Foundation’s Green Office Program. “We expect ourselves to live up to what the foundation expects our grantees to live up to,” he said. Whether funders ask grantees to reduce their carbon footprint or answer questions about sustainability on their next grant application, they can always do more to learn from both grantees and colleagues about innovative ways to reduce their environmental footprints. ■

Go Green Beyond Grants!

The Environmental Grantmakers Association, in collaboration with the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders (SAFSF) and the Funders Workgroup for Sustainable Production and Consumption, recently released the inaugural edition of *Green Beyond Grants*, a guide to begin implementing environmentally preferable practices in your offices and at events.

Greening your foundation’s day-to-day activities complements environmental grantmaking by putting our operating resources to work for a cleaner, safer, and healthier planet. *Green Beyond Grants* describes simple steps to help prevent pollution, protect ecosystems, and alleviate climate change through your organizational practices. The introductory guide provides recommendations in five key areas for reducing your foundation’s overall environmental impact, or “footprint”: energy conservation, green materials and supplies, sustainable food and beverages, waste reduction, and low-carbon travel.

Green Beyond Grants builds on the vision and leadership of the EGA members who created the 2003 manual *Philanthropy as Stewardship*. Whereas the 2003 manual outlines a set of principles to guide giving and provides a philosophical basis for its recommendations, *Green Beyond Grants* offers a more practical primer for those just beginning to green their operations. The guidebook was written by Kim Rogers of the Data Center, based on content compiled from a variety of printed resources and the personal experiences of the staff of SAFSF, the Funders Workgroup, and EGA.



Green Beyond Grants was designed to be a living document that will be updated annually with new ideas to continually improve environmental practices in your foundation’s operations. EGA welcomes suggestions, ideas, and stories from those who have adopted green practices so that we can include them in updated editions.

Wherever your organization stands in its journey to sustainability, *Green Beyond Grants* will help you move forward on your path to reducing consumption and protecting the environment.

Access *Green Beyond Grants* online at www.ega.org/news/docs/GreenOffice.final3.pdf

Additional information on sustainability practices is available from the SAFSF (www.safsf.org) and Sustainability Funders (www.sustainabilityfunders.org).

From Conference Courtesy to Standard Practice: Asilomar Adopts Composting

BY TRACY ZHU, EGA INTERN

Each year at the Fall Retreat, EGA staff work with the host facility to minimize the gathering's ecological footprint—no small task considering that last year's retreat welcomed more than 440 attendees. Our 2006 host, Asilomar Conference Grounds, went above and beyond its own already green practices to help EGA work toward a “Zero Waste” event.

As EGA prepares for the 2007 retreat in New Mexico, we reflect on the origins of a partnership that has endured long after the retreat concluded.

When Ann Leonard, coordinator of the Funders Work Group for Sustainable Production and Consumption, first arrived at Asilomar to prepare for EGA's 2006 Fall Retreat, the conference center introduced her to its GreenPath program, under which it had already recycled some 79 tons of cardboard, saved 174 million watts of electricity and 50,000 therms of natural-gas energy in the past few years, and introduced a wide range of other environmentally sound programs. However, the facility, located at Asilomar State Beach on California's Monterey Peninsula, was not yet composting—i.e., integrating food scraps back into the soil cycle.

“This [composting] is something we'd been looking at for several years,” said Rick Wood, Asilomar's environmental manager. However, the local municipal waste company was not interested in composting for businesses or households. On-site composting was also not an option because state park rules prohibit the use



Photo: Annie Leonard

Asilomar's food scraps land in a giant collection receptacle, headed to become compost.

of fertilizer or compost that could potentially introduce non-native organisms or diseases.

EGA had selected the Asilomar facility in part because of its environmental track record. Leonard and Wood developed a pilot composting program for the four-day retreat, which successfully diverted two tons of environmental funders' organic waste. Six months later, Asilomar now has a permanent composting program that diverts 15 tons of food waste each month that would otherwise end up in landfills. Since October 2006, Asilomar has continued to send its compost to a Salinas Valley, California, organic-fertilizer company that converts it to liquid fertilizer for commercial sale.

Making It Happen

Leonard has lead EGA's Zero Waste Initiative since 2003. In the past, she and EGA staff members have worked with the annual retreat's host facility to implement “Zero Waste” systems to reduce as much waste and energy use as possible, as well as to minimize the toxicity of products and services. According to Leonard, “Zero Waste takes a systems-wide approach to design waste and toxicity out of the system, taking

15 tons of food waste is diverted each month that would otherwise wind up in landfills.

the waste out of the ‘front end’ and then recycling the waste produced.”

For Asilomar, however, the best way to achieve a near zero-waste event turned out to be at the “back end.” Asilomar had already demonstrated a commitment to waste prevention through its GreenPath recycling and energy-reduction initiatives, in addition to reducing its water consumption by seven million gallons and trash disposal by 67 tons over the past few years, according to the facility’s website. Leonard, Wood, and other Asilomar staff surveyed the amount of trash the facility produced and easily recognized that a huge portion of it came from food scraps and preparation.

Leonard then recruited California Liquid Fertilizer, which manufactures liquid organic fertilizer and liquid compost, to take food-scrap waste during the EGA retreat October 8–11, 2006. The company also provided wildlife-proof containers to store food scraps from dining halls and kitchens for a four-day pilot program during the retreat. Before the retreat began, Wood met with the dining and kitchen staff to explain the importance of separating the organic waste from the non-compostable trash.

The pilot program went so well that Asilomar has since purchased small green containers for the dining halls and kitchens and biodegradable bags for its own, now-permanent composting system. Food waste in the wildlife-proof containers is now crushed with a former trash compactor before it is sent to California Liquid Fertilizer.

Broad Benefits from Composting

EGA’s goal was to set in place the pieces needed to create a composting program that would last long after the retreat was over. “The point of working so hard is not to compost for three days but to leave a legacy that would last for years,” Leonard said.

The impacts of the successful compost program extend beyond the boundaries of the state park.

“Composting organics is immensely important when we think about reducing waste, because they are such a huge part of the waste stream,” said Leonard. The diverted food waste from Asilomar’s food-service operations reenters the nutrient cycle as organic fertilizer and compost instead of adding to the increasing burden of landfills. Organic waste in landfills causes a range of problems, from toxic leachate runoff to the release of methane, a greenhouse gas with a global warming potential 62 times that of carbon dioxide over 20 years. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, landfills are also the largest human-related source of methane in the United States, accounting for 34 percent of all methane emissions.

Reducing Asilomar’s waste stream to landfills and its impact on global warming comes at no extra expense, because the local pay-as-you-throw system that charges trash pickup by the ton also applies to organic waste. The compost program also reinforces the facility’s commitment to walking the GreenPath of environmental responsibility. “It doesn’t cost us more or less to compost, but even if it did cost us more, we’d do it because we’re environmentally sensitive and it’s the right thing to do,” Wood said.

Indeed, Asilomar’s composting program has received a good deal of local press and sparked the interest of many local restaurants. According to Wood, the attention could potentially build enough demand to prompt the municipal waste company to start composting. Leonard concluded, “This is a great example of a positive legacy that a foundation (or anyone) can leave by encouraging host facilities to raise the bar on the green standard.” ■

For more information on Zero Waste, please contact the Funders Workgroup for Sustainable Production and Consumption at www.sustainabilityfunders.org or aleonard@ega.org. To find a composting site near your home or office, visit www.findacomposter.com, a searchable data base of regulatory-compliant composting facilities in North America.

Save the Date!

Southeast Climate Action—Challenges and Opportunities: A Funders Meeting

University of Virginia Miller Center of Public Affairs,
Charlottesville, Virginia

November 12–13, 2007

Agenda-in-brief:

November 12: Opening dinner and reception

November 13: Meeting, 8 a.m.–3 p.m.

Current sponsors of the event include the WestWind Foundation, Blue Moon Fund, and Environmental Grantmakers Association.

With more than 2,000 miles of threatened coastline, diverse forest habitat, and significant concentrations of biodiversity, the US Southeast is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of global climate change. While other regions have taken proactive steps to reduce their greenhouse-gas emissions, the Southeast has been slow to respond. However, environmental funders are increasingly turning their attention to this region, where advocates are building a groundswell of support for action. Key states, such as Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina, are poised to become leaders on these issues.

As states, localities, and climate advocates grapple with strategies to reduce carbon emissions—from passing energy-efficiency standards and launching multi-sector climate action plans to fighting pulverized coal-burning plants and promoting green building—the time is ripe for change. Increasingly, opportunities are emerging that can help move the South closer to a clean-energy economy and set the stage for additional regional support for future federal climate legislation.

This grantmakers meeting will provide a forum where interested foundations and donors can discuss a portfolio of funding opportunities and strategize around Southeastern climate-action agendas. Funders will have an opportunity to:

- Gain a greater understanding of both what's happening and what climate-related initiatives are needed at the local, state, and regional levels;
- Identify immediate funding needs and opportunities, with special attention paid to Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida;
- Share information regarding ongoing foundation efforts;
- Identify current and future priorities and needs.

For more information, contact Guinevere Higgins, WestWind Foundation, at higgins@westwindfoundation.org or 434. 977. 5762 x 35.

Save the Date!

State of the States Briefing

Driskill Hotel, Austin, Texas

February 6-7, 2008

Co-chairs: Stewart Hudson, Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation; Michael Northrop, Rockefeller Brothers Fund; Bill Roberts, Beldon Fund

On the cusp of critical local, state, and national elections, EGA's State of the States Briefing 2008 will offer insight into how elected officials at all levels influence environmental change and policy. Fall elections will decide more than 30 gubernatorial races, as well as the hotly-contested presidential race. This year's EGA forum will focus on climate and energy issues, which are both high on the nation's agenda and important to state and local environmental movements.

Our meeting will help identify funding needs and opportunities that support state grassroots environmental efforts. Water quality, environmental justice, conservation, and environmental health issues are just a few of the major concerns embedded in the climate challenge we now face—issues that will be explored in our briefing, which will:

- Show funders how climate and energy issues affect state and community environmental agendas, highlighting both local and broader environmental concerns;
- Offer examples of successful projects supported by philanthropic initiatives in various states, cities, and municipalities across the United States;
- Discuss strategies to support the capacity of state-level advocacy groups;
- Provide a menu of current funding needs and opportunities.

State of the States 2008 will hone in on policy and advocacy strategies from an environmental perspective with concurrent, member-submitted sessions focused on the impact of climate change on the following issues:

- Water quality and access
- Oceans
- Public lands management
- Environmental health
- Smart growth
- Efficiency innovations
- Capacity building

In addition, for a half-day after the event, several affinity groups will offer learning institutes. Confirmed groups include:

- Funders' Committee for Civic Participation
- Health and Environmental Funders Network
- Grantmakers in Film and Electronic Media
- EGA's (new!) States Working Group

For more information or to register contact Lea Palabrica, lpalabrica@ega.org

EGA at 20: An Interview with Association Co-founder Donald Ross

BY JANE ROGERS, FORMER PROGRAM EXECUTIVE, SAN FRANCISCO FOUNDATION

In honor of EGA's 20th anniversary this year, Jane Rogers, former environmental program executive at the San Francisco Foundation and member of the EGA Management Board (1990-92) interviewed EGA co-founder Donald Ross. Rogers and Ross, former director of the Rockefeller Family Fund and host to the EGA Secretariat (EGA's coordinating body) from 1992-1998, discussed the organization's past, present, and future. Excerpts from their conversation follow.

JR: What are your recollections of the founding of EGA?

DR: In 1986, about 15 people in environmental philanthropy, who were working together in one way or another, decided to meet to discuss how to work more closely together. We felt that there were important environmental issues that might be better addressed if funders had more knowledge of each other's thinking, strategies, and planning. We gathered in Washington, DC, to discuss this possibility. It was a lively meeting with lots of interchange. People felt very positively about it and discussed having another meeting, which took place in North Carolina in 1987. From that small root something started and grew and grew. I was stunned in the third year when we had a meeting in Princeton with tables set in a huge rectangle and more than 40 or 50 people present. It looked like the UN.

JR: Yes, and that was the meeting at which Jon Jensen, then at the Pew Charitable Trusts, said, "I think I can put an intern on this project part time." Then the next step took place when we established a governance structure, a dues structure, and were able to retain staff. At that point you and the Rockefeller Family Fund offered to house the EGA Secretariat in your offices. We hired Pam Maurath as our first staff person and were truly in business.

So what major challenges has EGA faced, especially in the early years?

DR: EGA didn't just sail along with an unbroken doubling of size at each meeting and no problems.... There



Photo: Tom Novick

Donald Ross exploring Tibet.

was a large controversy over corporate-funder membership that exploded in San Francisco in 1989 and caused at least one prominent funder to resign.

JR: Yes. We were picketed by Greenpeace because Waste Management Inc. had joined EGA before we had any policies. Then we went through about five years of internal struggle over the issue of corporate membership, whether there should be membership criteria, how they should be applied, and by whom.

DR: The Council on Foundations was threatening to kick us out because we had membership criteria.

JR: The basic debate was: Is this a big tent where people gather regardless of their opinions and the only criterion is that they are funding on environmental issues, or is this a group of like-minded people who get together to forge strategies about how to tackle the substantive issues out in the world?

DR: It was resolved as a big tent.... Another issue was the huge infusion of resource people as conference participants. It raised issues about fundraising behavior, grantee favoritism, loss of intimacy. Along with the

overall growth of membership, it changed the character of the organization from something resembling a private club to a much more public body.

JR: What do you see as EGA's biggest successes?

DR: The most obvious success is EGA's rapid and continuing growth in membership and participation. It suggests that the missionary work of the early years, which included paid advertisements in the Council on Foundations' magazine, paid returns; that the movement is still vital.

The educational purposes for which EGA was formed have been carried out in a great variety of ways, and the organization continues to innovate with the support of staff and new technology. Even people who come in with narrow grantmaking interests learn about a range of issues and find other like-minded funders to work with.

And there was an organizers' spirit that brought us all together in the early years that has continued. EGA has always been about something beyond simple information sharing: We are here to accomplish something. We may differ on certain issues or emphases, but in general we are working hand in hand with our grantees on what we perceive as part of a larger movement.

Another of the biggest successes was muscling into a constellation of large affinity groups in the Council on Foundations, where we were a tiny, insignificant group. I would guess that we must now be in the top three or four.

JR: Also, EGA looks different and behaves differently than it did initially. I believe there was only one other person of color at the retreat in 1991 when [former board member] Jack Chin came with me. When I went to the last meeting in California in 2006, I looked around and saw a very different picture.

DR: When I first entered the foundation world in 1985, there was a tremendous sense of concern about politics and what foundations were and were not allowed to do. Now there is a general understanding that you can come together to learn about politics. EGA has educated its members with special policy conferences after major elections. Now foundations are increasingly thoughtful about how they can factor policy and political issues into their grantmaking.

JR: Have there been any disappointments?

DR: At one point around 1997–99, when the Safe Drinking Water Act was being reauthorized, there was

an opportunity for a fusion of that segment of health funders who deal with public health and that part of EGA that deals with environmental justice and toxics. The people who were testifying in Congress were environmentalists, and the public-health people were not there in spite of the fact that the modern public-health profession got started in response to the discovery of cholera in London's drinking water. We could have brought politics and organizing and campaign savvy to the partnership, and they could have brought size and history and credibility. Together we could have created a fusion that would have made the whole more powerful than the parts.

JR: If you were helping to start EGA today, what would you do differently given the current climate, in both senses of that word?

DR: I don't think I would do much differently. The Reagan Administration was not the catalyst, as some people believed. I think we saw an opportunity to learn from each other and to build a collegial presence, and I don't see the value and need for that as any different today than it was 20 years ago.

JR: What is your vision or hope for EGA over the next 20 years?

DR: I think that if the scientists who have delved deeply into climate change are accurate, and I happen to think that they are, this issue will influence virtually every aspect of life on earth. We need to say, "Look, this is going to affect national security, international security, housing, trade, economy, health, education" and enlist funders in all of those areas to work collaboratively with us. The great difficulty of grappling with climate change is that the issue is so multi-faceted and so big that it is almost impossible for any single institution to tackle it, and I think that holds for any single collection of funders. Really, we're talking about human societies having to change the way we deal with the planet.

So, rising up in our area of primary influence is an issue so big that it offers an opportunity to invite all of our colleagues to jointly attempt to address it. This issue should really permeate the entire philanthropic world and become a much broader way of defining what philanthropy is going to be doing to make itself effective in the coming years. ■

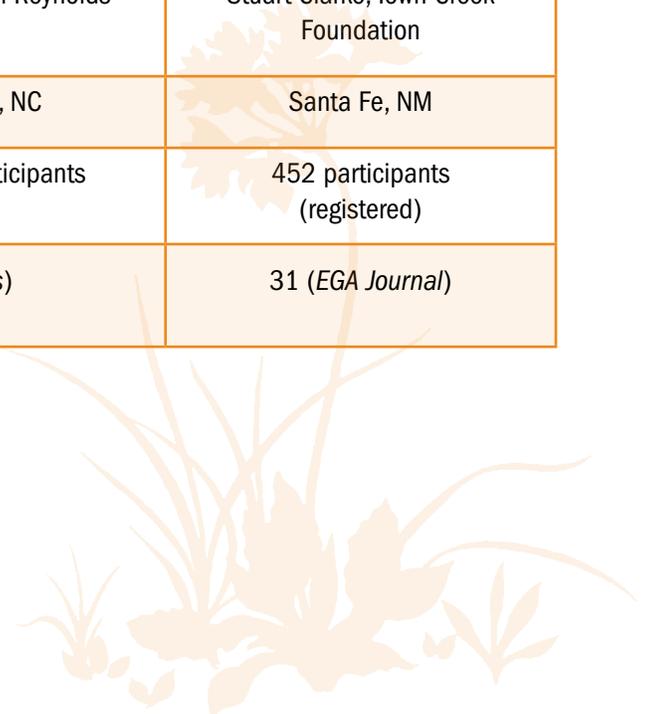
To read the full transcript of this interview, visit the EGA website at www.ega.org/resources

EGA, THEN AND NOW INDEX

	EGA Then (1987-1988)	EGA Now (2007)
Number of foundation members	12	214
Largest environmental grantmaking members (by giving)	*Richard King Mellon Foundation (more than \$12 million) *The Pew Charitable Trusts (more than \$5 million)	**Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (more than \$100 million) **Ford Foundation (more than \$40 million)
Total environmental grants distributed by members	\$68,279,877	\$ 582,773,227
EGA office location	Ann Arbor, MI	New York, NY
EGA budget	\$18,900	\$1,644,1333
Annual dues range	\$50-\$2,000	\$310-\$10,670
Staff composition	1 coordinator	7 staff, 2 interns, 1 fellow, 3 consultants
Lead staff member	Jon Jensen, coordinator	Dana Lanza, executive director
Management committee chair	Joe Kilpatrick, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation	Stuart Clarke, Town Creek Foundation
Retreat location	Winston-Salem, NC	Santa Fe, NM
Attendance at annual retreat	More than 100 participants	452 participants (registered)
Average number of pages, member magazine	7 (<i>EGA News</i>)	31 (<i>EGA Journal</i>)

*Source: *Environmental Grantmakers Directory* (1988 edition)

**Source: The Foundation Center's Statistical Information Service



The Poet and the Environment

BY ELIZABETH J. COLEMAN, BEATRICE R. AND JOSEPH A. COLEMAN FOUNDATION

Poetry’s Power

It has been argued that the cultural (and environmental) degradation of our time will never “be altered... by something of as little import as a poem.” But perhaps only something expressed so personally can effect change. “Poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought,” wrote poet Audre Lorde in her essay “Poems Are Not Luxuries,” “The farthest external horizons of our hopes and fears are cobbled by our poems, carved from the rock experiences of our daily lives.”

Granted, poetry’s argument for the environment is oblique. As 19th century French poet Stephan Mallarmé wrote, “[P]oetry begins with words, not ideas,” and is most cogent when the writer demonstrates rather than persuades. “Showing” lets the reader step into the poet’s skin, instead of receiving a summary or a sermon.

The poet’s solitary walk, pen and notebook in hand, as he or she describes nature with precision and respect—using it as a metaphor for what is most important—exemplifies the private connection between the individual and nature. As critic Angus Fletcher said: “Only by stressing this individual perspective will the aggregate social ensemble...reach a more deeply felt involvement with our world and its future.” The poet’s awe helps us see the result of degrading our natural world, reinforcing the human impulse that does not need to control or change the earth.

Moreover, the individual poem—what Russian poet and novelist Boris Pasternak called “a burning, smoking piece of conscience”—can by its very existence inspire the reader to political action, fighting nature’s destruction and transforming the world. As Soviet dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote: “A great writer is, so to speak, a second government. That’s why no regime anywhere has ever loved its great writers...”.

Poetry and Nature Intertwine

From the beginning of time, poetry has been inspired by the environment, coming—as John Keats wrote in an 1818 letter to his publisher and friend, John Taylor—

“as naturally as the [l]eaves to a tree.” Examples of this interconnection, and of poetry’s culling of subject and imagery from nature, are infinite.

Shakespeare uses nature and its seasons as a metaphor for the beloved in his Sonnet 18:

*Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer’s lease hath all too short a date...*

The beloved transcends the summer’s day because the poem makes her immortal. So, too, poets bring the natural world to life in perpetuity.

Nature is a metaphor for all experience. For A. E. Housman, a cherry tree shows that in appreciating nature, we “seize the time.” The last stanza of “Loveliest of Trees, the Cherry Now,” shows that nature is central to human experience:

*And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.*

Nature possesses a healing effect, as portrayed by Robert Frost in “Snow Dust”:

*The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree
Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I rued.*

Poetry’s forms and sounds themselves echo nature. Walt Whitman said of his seminal volume, *Leaves of Grass*: “[I]ts verses are...liquid, billowy waves...rising and falling, perhaps wild with storm,

The poet's awe helps us see the result of degrading our natural world, reinforcing the human impulse that does not need to control or change the earth.

always moving, always alike in their nature..., but hardly any two exactly alike in size..., never having the sense of something finished and fixed, always suggesting something beyond.”

Like waves, wind, or music, poetry envelops us in a way the visual arts cannot, because it is composed of sound as well as images. “Visage of a Sand Dollar,” my poem of the sea, is a *pantoum*, an undulating wave-like form, with patterned line repetitions. The first three stanzas read:

*The best proof I've seen that God exists
is found on the face of sand dollars, echinoid fish.
Though it makes me wonder if He used paint by numbers,
the design too charming, unencumbered.*

*Found on the face of sand dollars, echinoid fish,
a reflection of tern, dune, sandpiper, sky;
a design too charming, unencumbered,
white caps as in a Japanese print thunder from the sea.*

*A reflection of tern, dune, sandpiper, sky,
my children, young in this picture, skip behind laughing.
White caps as in a Japanese print thunder from the sea.
I want to warn my boy and girl: stay close to me....*

Opportunities for Philanthropy

On a more prosaic basis, what opportunities exist for environmental philanthropists to support poetry? One way is through funding a prize. For example, the Poetry Society of America, the nonprofit that brings poetry to New York subways through its Poetry in Motion program, already sponsors poetry contests, so a grant to that type of organization would be a natural fit. So would education-focused efforts, such as those of the nonprofit environmental and arts education group River of Words which, in affiliation with The Library of Congress Center for the Book, sponsors an annual environmentally oriented poetry contest for youth. Poetry, and the arts in general, offer creative opportunities for funders to awaken people's environmental consciousness by showing them just how personal an issue the environment is for us all. ■



Poppies on permanently protected land, Pima County, Arizona.

Photo: Tifby DuPont, Arizona Open Land Trust

Making Grants as if Movements Matter

Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming

By Paul Hawken

Viking, 2007. 352 pages

BY KEN WILSON, THE CHRISTENSEN FUND



In his modestly written, often lyrical book *Blessed Unrest*, Paul Hawken reaches for optimism beyond the possibilities of enlightened green capitalism and despite the deep murkiness that everywhere surrounds our future. And he finds it in a trend demonstrated every day by the contents of our grant applica-

tion in-boxes: Namely, the quiet but enormous growth and vigorous intertwining of the global environmental, social justice, and indigenous movements into a vast web of determined creativity.

Boosting Society's "Immune System"

Hawken, an environmentalist entrepreneur and author of *Natural Capitalism* and *The Ecology of Commerce*, sees the effectiveness of this "movement of movements" arising from networked learning rather than ideology, leadership, or power, and from grassroots activists' ability to "solve for pattern"—that is, to recognize the intrinsic links between cultural, biological, and economic integrity. In the strongest section of the book, he likens this "movement without a name" to the mammalian immune system, organized—like our own bodily defenses—around biological intelligence and ecological resilience. And he closes with a surprise: an insistence that the culmination of this healthy response to crisis—and a necessity for turning it around—is a spiritual awakening.

Laced with vivid examples, a taxonomy of this vast field, and due recognition of its warts and foibles, *Blessed Unrest* is a call to compassion, advocacy, and recognition by Earth's citizens of their innate and growing strength.

Whither Funding?

That said, a curious omission looms large. The book doesn't even mention the role of financing (let alone foundations) in shaping the development and growth of the nonprofit sector since World War II. Instead, Hawken describes the cause of this explosion in organizations as a reaction to the increase in global problems combined with a growth in consciousness that is reflected in the movement's ideas (a history of which he provides at some length, though as he admits, in a US-centric fashion). But surely one of the things that distinguishes our despoiling age from earlier ones is that most of the hundreds of thousands of wonderful institutions Hawken describes exist in good part because they have found ways to access financial resources for their work—often across extraordinary cultural and continental divides. So big questions remain: How do the resources handled by the myriad institutions now involved fuel the social movements he describes? What has made it possible to mobilize this funding? And what about the so-called "Rockefeller Effect"—does all this funding and formalization sometimes distort or bureaucratize social movements and networks, compromising their ownership and destroying their effectiveness? Have we indeed created a disempowering "NGO industrial complex"?

Thus does Hawken leave environmental funders' role invisible and uncertain despite that, in our infinite variety of ways, selectively pouring money into this rich stew of movements is precisely what we do. Taken positively, this ambiguity suggests that perhaps we should abandon the vanities of leadership, our thematic silos, and our national solutions and, instead, back more actively grassroots' organic creativity and the convergence of indigenous, social justice, and environmental movements in a consciously global and networked fashion. ■

farming system. Without discussing seed varieties or agro-ecological conditions with the women, they distributed “improved” seeds, many of which could not always handle the erratic rains and salt intrusion that plague Sine Saloum rice fields. Fertilizers and pesticides were also made available free or purchased with subsidized credits.

Yields increased in fields where conditions were suited to “high input” agriculture. But over time, the advisors left. The machines broke down, rusting away without local infrastructure to fix them. The free supplies and credits dried up. By the 1980s, the rice-farming system from Foundiougne to the Gambian border remained in the hands of women who had run it for centuries.

A Community-based, Farmer-driven Alternative

Drawing from past lessons, Alphonse’s ideas and approach focused on community-based work that put Foundiougne’s women rice farmers themselves in control of agricultural research and experimentation. We conducted detailed surveys on local agro-ecological conditions, farming practices, calendars, and cultural beliefs, consulting farmers selected by local women’s associations. The women chose fields for on-farm experiments and picked the experimental plots that we jointly monitored and harvested.

We introduced a locally forged seeding rake that the women used to sow rice in rows. Because they could identify and pull weeds sooner, more nutrition reached their growing rice plants, boosting yields. We also enlisted some husbands to plough their wives’ fields before sowing, and arranged for farmers to apply manure on a schedule more tightly coinciding with the rice’s growth phases.

Foundiougne’s rice farmers’ success depends on diversity, meaning different varieties adapted to changing growing conditions each year. Thus we encouraged the women’s diligent seed collection and sharing, and gave them two pounds each of seed varieties to test—which they passed on for others to try at the end of the season.

Right Path or Wrong Turn?

Success stories like this can be found throughout the global South. But before grantmakers join the team of funders focused on feeding 21st-century Africa, they should research what has worked, what hasn’t, and why. Key questions include:

1. Who will benefit? Will subsistence farmers maintain control over seed stock diversity and best places to plant each year? It would prove catastrophic if AGRA simply increases customers for monoculture farming, reliant on Western companies’ hybrid, genetically modified, or “terminator” seeds. Such a move would undermine farmers’ deep ecological knowledge in the name of progress and corporate profits.
2. Will scientists and extension agents conduct research and training while living in the communities they serve? And who will decide what crops are prioritized for study? If AGRA is serious about supporting farmer-led research and implementation, then village-based farmer associations must help set research agendas and methods and disseminate results.
3. Will these new investments support food sovereignty and cultural traditions? If AGRA is serious about helping farmers, especially women, then money must be earmarked for leadership training and organizing in places where patriarchy and government neglect or corruption are entrenched.
4. Will AGRA undermine food security by focusing solely on cash crops or by trying to convince farmers to commercialize subsistence crops through subsidies or incentives? Or will it help raise farm incomes from commercial crops by seeking changes within the World Trade Organization and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade to enable Africa’s poorest farmers to market their goods competitively in Europe, Asia, and the United States?

To answer these questions—and others raised by the previous Green Revolution—AGRA should seek out Africa’s Alphonse FAYES, and use their wisdom to guide the vision and implementation of this Promethean philanthropic undertaking. ■

** Information about AGRA is quoted from Gates and Rockefeller foundation materials.*

To learn more about AGRA, visit www.agra-alliance.org. A more detailed version of Hugh Hogan’s essay is available at www.northstarfund.org/about/senegal-rice-farming.html

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