



A Summary from the Environmental Grantmakers Association's

# Tracking the Field, volume 3: Exploring Environmental Grantmaking

Full report to be released in February 2012



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## INTRODUCTION

This summary of the Environmental Grantmakers Association's *Tracking the Field, vol. 3: Exploring Environmental Grantmaking*, provides the primary findings that will be analyzed in the full report (to be provided to EGA members only in February, 2012). The findings of this document and the full report are broken in to five main areas: total environmental giving for all U.S.-based environmental grantmakers and EGA members specifically, giving by issue from all U.S.-based environmental grantmakers and EGA members specifically, geographic distribution of all environmental grants globally and global and domestic distribution for EGA members' grants, strategies funded by EGA members, and regranting within EGA (grants between EGA members). The full report will also provide a deeper analysis of global giving, cross-sectorial analyses, trends across three years of grant data, and appendices that provide top grantee profiles and a directory of funders by issue. The final section of this document provides the methodology.

The third volume of *Tracking the Field* continues the evolution of data collected, analyzed and presented to build a better understanding of the environmental philanthropic field. Building on the findings of the first two reports (in 2007 and 2009), this report analyzes nearly 9,000 grants made in 2009 by the vast majority of EGA's 200+ members with an added level of detail and rigor. The first report coded over 5,000 grants by issue, listed members by asset level and provided a directory of members by issue. The second report reviewed nearly 10,000 grants, listed the largest members by environmental giving, further honed the area taxonomy, added geographic distribution of environmental grants, listed top grant recipients, provided information outside the EGA community through a partnership with The Foundation Center and offered a deeper analysis in a couple key areas. Similar to the last report, the third volume includes data from The Foundation Center, codes grants by issue and geography, lists the largest foundations by giving and top grant recipients and provides deeper analysis of a couple key areas. It also provides trends in funding, adds a second level to the issue area for a more nuanced classification, adds strategy to the coding taxonomy for additional information, reviews grants between EGA members (regranting) and provides more detailed information on the grantees.

The advances in *Tracking the Field* do not stop with the report. EGA revamped its website in the fall of 2011, providing a new rich tool to access the data in the report. Previously, it was only available as a printed report. EGA members are now able to search the coded grants by primary and/or secondary issue, geography, strategy, grantor and/or grantee—or any combination thereof. In addition to seeing the grants, the website also allows EGA members to review all the grants made by a member and their contact information or a list of all grants received by a grantee.

The continued evolution of the report and website are designed to further EGA's mission to work with members and partners to promote effective environmental philanthropy by sharing knowledge, fostering debate, cultivating leadership, facilitating collaboration, and catalyzing action. These goals coalesce in pursuit of the ultimate goal of EGA and its members: a world with healthy, equitable, and sustainable ecosystems, communities, and economies.

*Tracking the Field* represents an evolving tool to enhance our members' ability to increase knowledge, coordination and collaboration.

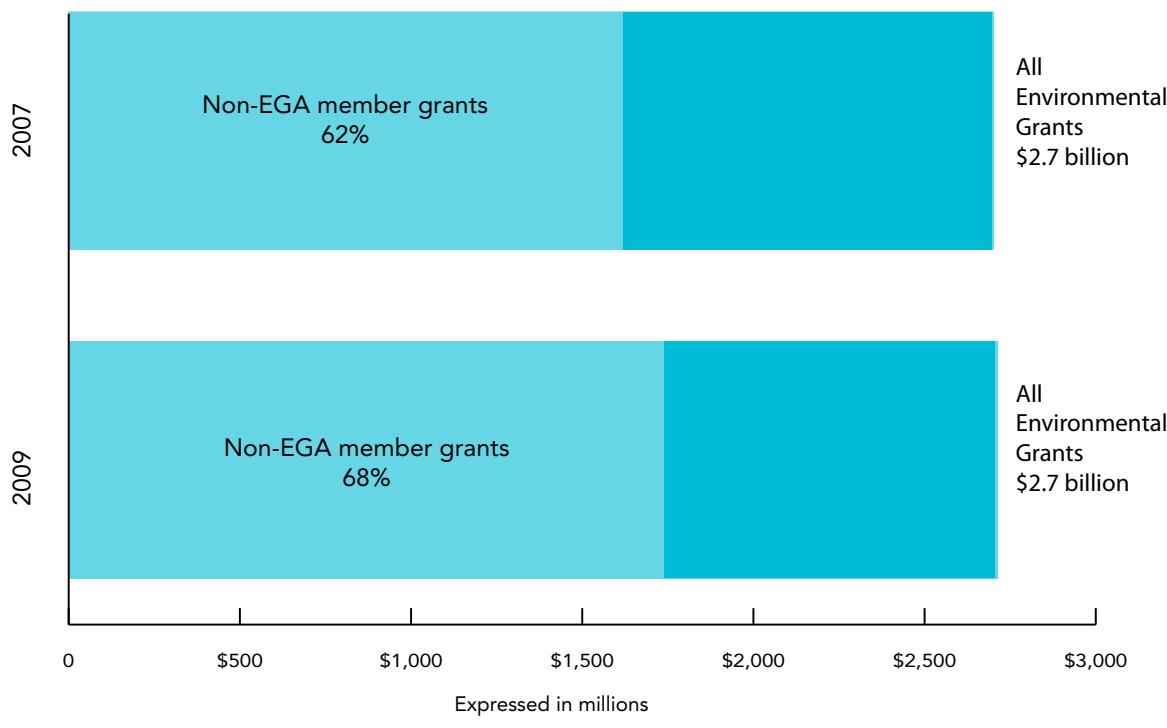
# TOTAL GIVING

The data and trends reflected in this report covers the period from 2007 to 2009 and provide insights into how funders reacted to the times, including the initial stages of the current economic crisis. While there were changes at individual foundations, total grants to the environment stayed steady at approximately \$2.7 billion.<sup>1</sup> The fact that environmental grants didn't decrease along with the philanthropic sector's revenue shows the importance of environmental grantmaking for the philanthropic community.

Additional findings:

- Environmental giving by EGA members to non-profits decreased from just over \$1 billion in 2007 to over \$871 million in 2009 (these figures exclude grants between EGA member foundations which totaled 172 million).
- Foundations with a program focus on Climate and/or Energy issues rose to the top of the list of EGA's ten largest environmental funders.
- The five institutions that received the most environmental grant dollars from all sources are Conservation International, Nature Conservancy, ClimateWorks Foundation, Alliance for Climate Protection, and Energy Foundation.<sup>2</sup> This includes regranting.
- The five non-profits that received the most grant dollars from EGA members are Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, Nature Conservancy, Environmental Defense Fund, Resources Legacy Fund, and Conservation International. This excludes regranting.

## Total Environmental Grantmaking



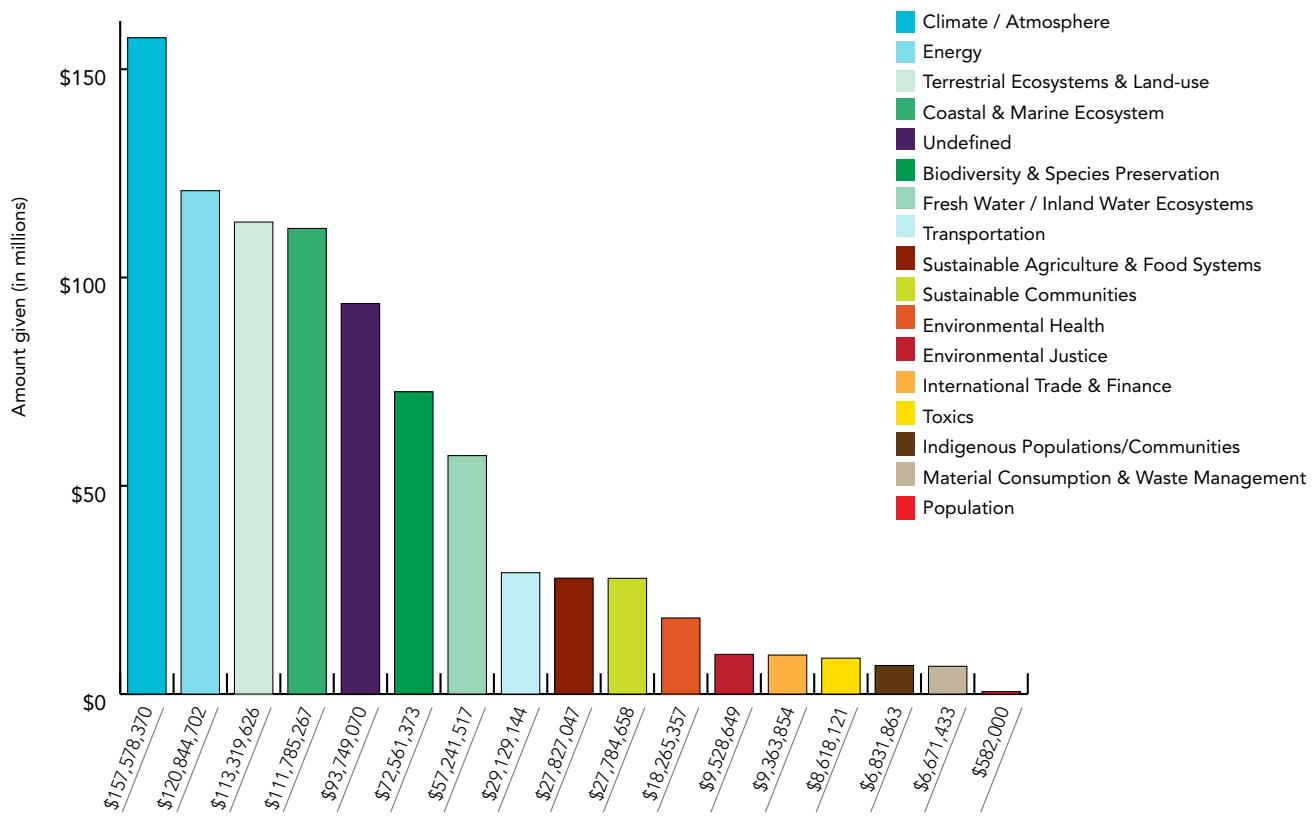
Source: Foundation Center

## ISSUE AREA

The philanthropic community gave \$2.7 billion total environmental grants to all issue areas in 2009, 871 million of which came from EGA members. The largest increase was for climate and energy grants, and this increase was even more pronounced for EGA members. “Traditional” environmental issues—ecosystem and species preservation (Terrestrial, Freshwater and Marine Ecosystems and Biodiversity/Species Preservation) received less funding, but continued to receive the most support from the larger environmental philanthropic community (making up 63% of grant dollars in 2007 and 60% in 2009).<sup>3</sup> EGA’s members provided more of their dollars to climate and energy issues in 2009. In fact, Climate and Energy were the top two funded issues for EGA members respectfully. Additional findings:

- Climate received a bigger piece of the total environmental philanthropic pie, growing from 9.6% to 20.8% for all funders,<sup>4</sup> but even more so among EGA members, growing from 13.7% to 31.9% of total dollars.
- Five issue areas—Climate, Terrestrial Ecosystems, Energy, Sustainable Agriculture and Transportations—each received at least \$10 million more in 2009 compared to 2007.
- The total amount of money going to an issue, either as the primary or secondary issue, significantly elevated the amount of funding for “traditional” environmental issues among EGA members in 2009.
- The inclusion of primary and secondary issues, for the first time in this report, showed the interplay and intersection of issue areas for EGA members.

### EGA Members’ Funding by Primary Issue Area in 2009

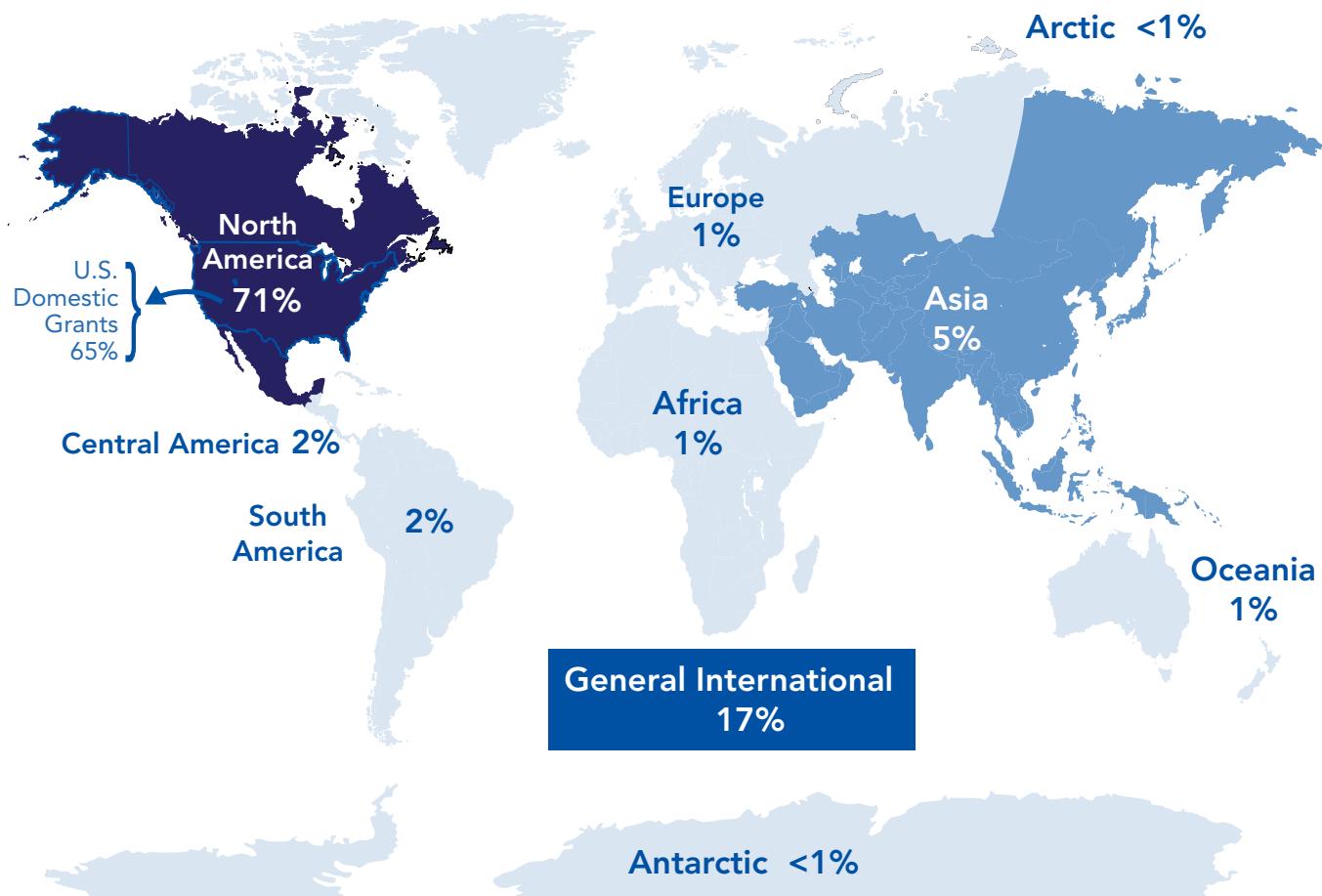


# GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

While the amount of environmental grants going outside the U.S.'s borders remained proportionally the same (for all grantmakers and EGA members specifically), EGA members' domestic grantmaking geographic focus shifted. More specifically:

- In total, 37.9% or over \$597 million was granted outside the U.S. for environmental issues by EGA members and non-members.<sup>5</sup>
- In 2009, EGA members gave almost \$301 million to issues outside the U.S., which was 34.5% of EGA members' grants, and roughly the same as in 2007 (34.1%).
- Significantly more of EGA members' domestic grant dollars focused on issues at the federal level (which increased by 28.4%) and in the Southeast (which increased by 47.8%).
- Except for the Gulf Coast, which had a slight increase, other U.S. regions received less money from EGA members. This was particularly true for funds going to the West, which dropped by 60.2%.

## EGA Members' Grants by Region

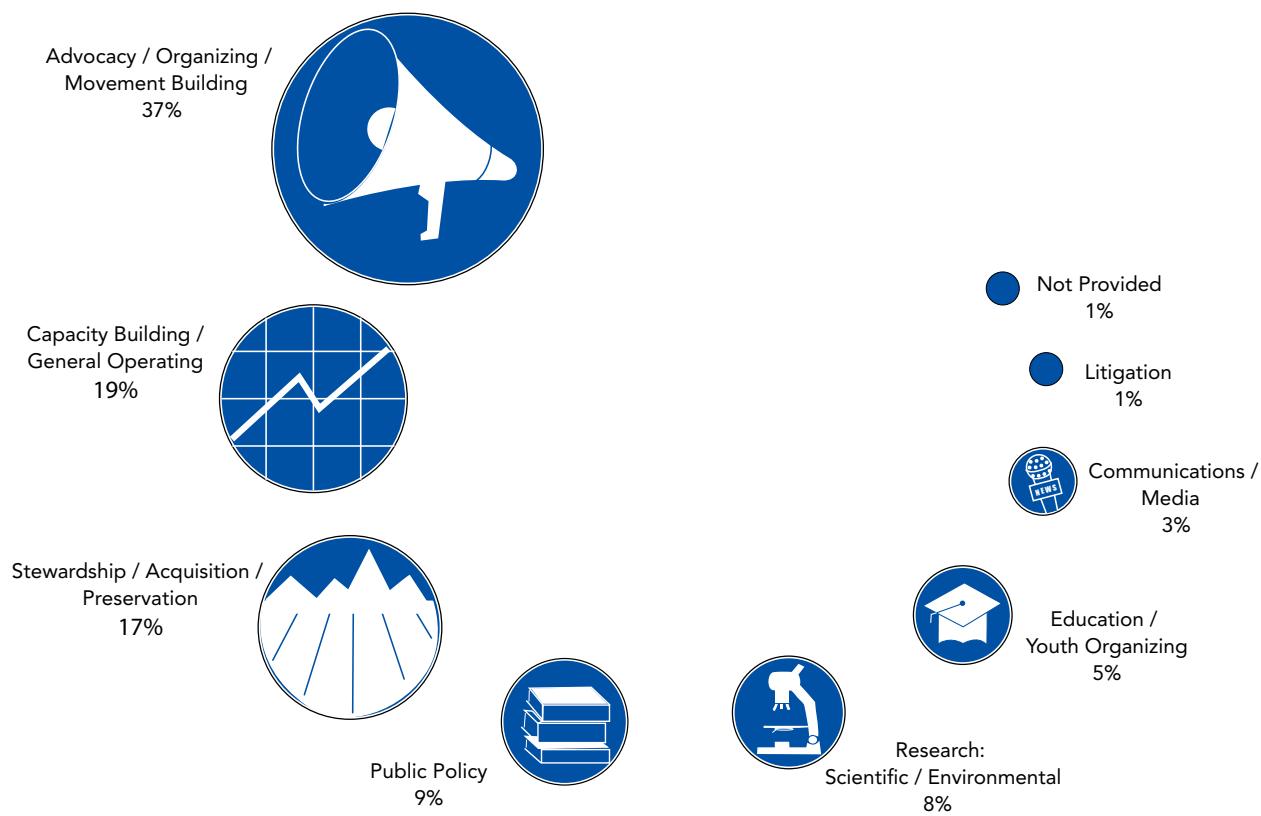


# STRATEGIES

This is the first volume of EGA's Tracking the Field where strategies were added as a new category, allowing us to analyze EGA members' principal grantmaking strategies for the first time since we started TTF in 2005. The points below explore strategies used by EGA members for their whole field (\$871 million). Different strategies emerge with deeper exploration in an issue area. In addition to the strategies taxonomy, the amount granted can also reflect a deliberate strategy employed by EGA members. Key findings include:

- The biggest portion (37.5%) of EGA members' grants use Advocacy/Organizing/Movement Building as a grantmaking strategy. This is actually a combination of a few strategies that are linked.
- Litigation as a strategy received the least amount of funding through EGA member grants.
- Stewardship/Acquisition/Preservation becomes the top strategy when looking at "traditional" environmental issues (Terrestrial, Freshwater and Marine Ecosystems and Biodiversity/Species Preservation).
- In 2009, only 18.2% of EGA member grants were for \$10,000 or less, compared to nearly one-third (32%) in 2007.

## Global Granting Strategies

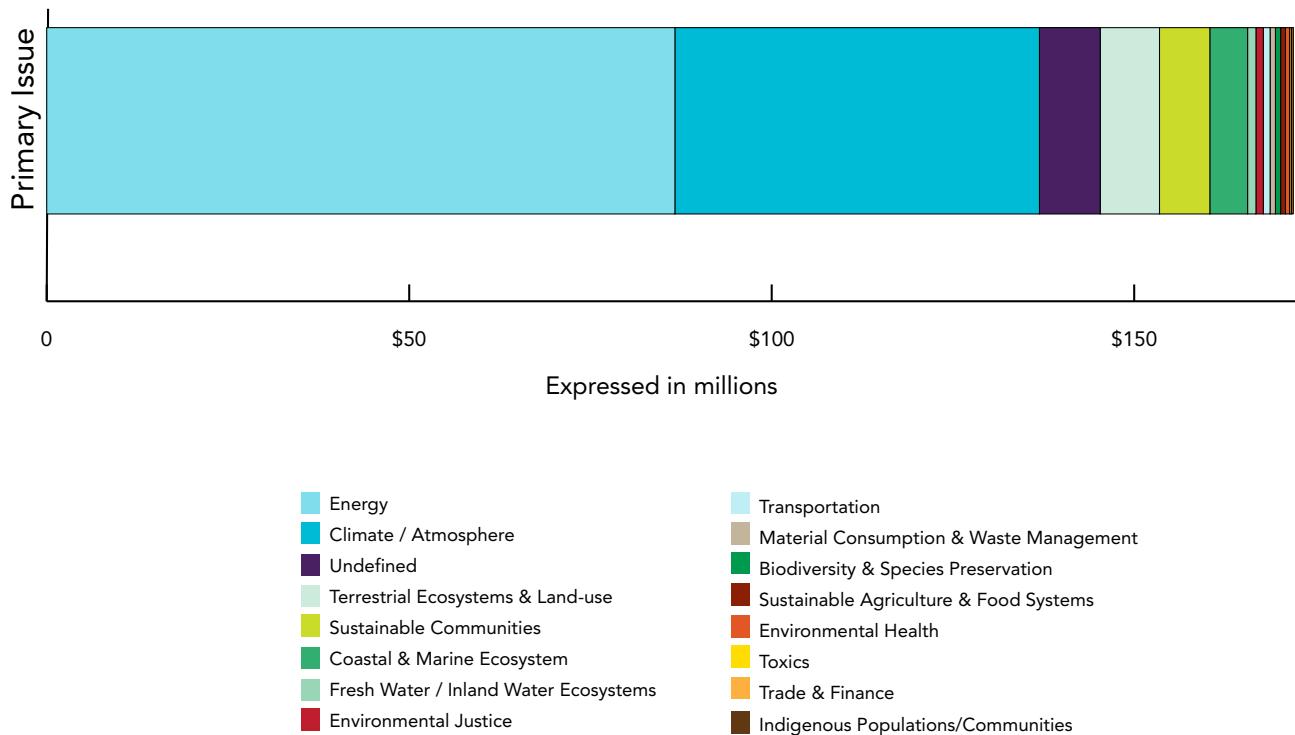


## REGRANTING WITHIN EGA

Over \$172 million was granted from one EGA member to another (regranted). This is not surprising with the emergence of key institutions that are designed to combine resources from various sources and distribute them using a coordinated strategy. Those entities' foci are on climate and energy, so it is not surprising that the vast majority of money regranted was for Climate and Energy issues. Additional findings include:

- Almost 2/3 of the money regranted went outside the U.S.'s borders.
- Those dollars that were regranted and stayed domestically were largely focused at the federal level.

### EGA Members' Regranting by Issue



## CONCLUSION

While funding for individual issues and by individual foundations may have fluctuated, the field as a whole remained relatively steady while adjusting to the times. Environmental philanthropic dollars, particularly in the EGA community, seem to have concentrated on a few issues and geographic areas, potentially in attempts to capitalize on perceived opportunities. This is particularly true for funding to Climate and Energy issues at the Federal level. This is not to say that individual grantees, particularly those that worked on issues and/or in regions that lost money, did not suffer. Unfortunately, there are many accounts of those that have.

*Tracking the Field* and other reports by EGA help funders continue assessing the environmental philanthropic field in hopes of helping them collaborate, strategize and communicate. EGA staff continues to explore new ways to collect, analyze, and present environmental grant data in the most useful manner. Your ideas and comments are always welcome. Email us at [fchiles@ega.org](mailto:fchiles@ega.org) with your feedback and ideas.

## METHODOLOGY

This report provides information that was garnered from analyzing environmental grants. The Environmental Grantmakers Association partnered with the Foundation Center to provide data for grants by the full U.S.-based philanthropic community. To look within the EGA community, EGA developed a relational database by categorizing grants made in 2009 by 196 of our member foundations. This process entailed reviewing 8,847 grants and recording the issuing foundation's name; the city and state where it is headquartered; the amount given (in US dollars); the recipient's name, city, and state; the year the grant was made; and the primary and secondary environmental issue area, strategy, and geographic region the grant affected. When available, the grant description, grantee's mission statement, and grantee's website were also recorded. In coding the data, the researchers used a form which included a menu of environmental issues, strategies, and geographic regions based on a taxonomy that EGA created with similar organizations from across the globe.

The data-collection team used member's website grant list or IRS 990 form to identify EGA members' 2009 fiscal-year grants. For those foundations for which researchers were unable to find grant data, the foundations were asked directly to provide a list of their 2009 grants. When categorizing grants the data researchers looked at the grant description and grantee's website for mission statements and program descriptions.

Many steps were also taken to collect the most accurate data possible. One person—the Knowledge and Program Manager—trained each of the data researchers and merged the data to ensure that each collector was using the same methodology. After the data was collected, each grant was reviewed by two team members in addition to the data collector.

Once the grant list was finalized, it was loaded into a customized relational database. This database was used to filter and group the data for analysis by EGA staff.

## Acknowledgements

**Jason K. Babbie**, Membership Services Program Director, wrote the summary and analyzed the data.

**Franny Chiles**, Knowledge and Program Manager, directed the data collection process, led the creation of a searchable database and analyzed the data.

**Mafruza Khan**, Enhancing the Field Director, edited the summary.

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## Endnotes

1. The Foundation Center, 2011. Represents estimated giving by grantmaking private and community foundations for the "environment," based on subject categories developed by the Environmental Grantmakers Association.
2. The Foundation Center, 2011. Due to rounding, figures may not add up to 100 percent. Based on grants of \$10,000 or more awarded by a national sample of 1,384 larger U.S. foundations. For community foundations, only discretionary grants are included. Grants to individuals are not included in the file. Giving for the "environment" is based on EGA subject categories.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.