

# environmental funding by european foundations

volume 5

environment  
trends  
philanthropy



EFC EUROPEAN  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
FUNDERS GROUP



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# You can't play a symphony alone, it takes an orchestra

**Foreword by Delphine Moralis, Chief Executive, EFC**

For the past year and a half the world has been focused on the Covid-19 crisis, and rightly so. The wave of disruption generated by the pandemic accelerated many of the challenges at the heart of philanthropy, including in particular those related to inequality.



But crises don't come along in an orderly queue to allow us to deal with them one at a time. And while our focus may have shifted responding to the fallout of the pandemic, the urgency of the climate crisis did not decrease... In fact, the health of our planet is inextricable from the health of the people on it.

As we saw philanthropy come to the fore for Covid-19, so, too, must it be part of a holistic, cross-sector approach to tackling the climate crisis. We have less than ten years left to meet the targets set by the Sustainable Development Goals, and with this, to prevent irreversible damage from climate change. Only with a joint effort on the part of all sectors, including philanthropy, can we hope to achieve these goals and safeguard the future of generations to come.

With this very much at the forefront of my mind, I am delighted to introduce the latest edition of our Environmental Funding by European Foundations publication. The fact that this is the 5<sup>th</sup> volume, making it the longest running EFC mapping series, underlines the importance, but also the longevity and complexity, of the challenges we face when it comes to the environment.



This edition represents the most comprehensive study to date into support for environmental initiatives provided by European philanthropic foundations, even surpassing the 4<sup>th</sup> edition in terms of the number of initiatives and funders surveyed. It also aims to start drawing a critically important picture of the different behaviours and attitudes of environmental funders in Europe, as with each edition we get new insights, allowing us to track multi-year trends.

During our 2020 EuroPhilantopics, which focused on the twin crises of climate and Covid, the lead author of this mapping, Jon Cracknell, described the environmental movement as being like an orchestra. This publication builds on this analogy as it attempts to give an overview of the different instrument sections, i.e. the themes, geographies and methods these funders focus on. Knowing who is doing what also allows environmental funders to identify gaps in the field - which sections of the orchestra are overrepresented, underrepresented or in some way disproportional? Like any orchestra, we need all sections adequately represented to achieve harmony.

This brings me to my call to action. While we rightly applaud the tireless work funders are putting into environmental funding, one of the starkest findings of the mapping to my mind is that only around a quarter of the grants were classified as supporting more “radical” discourses. With such an urgent and catastrophic crisis, and with philanthropy priding itself on its independence and ability to take risks, why aren’t we seeing more organisations funding radical projects? By the time volume 6 of this mapping is produced, I hope, and expect, that percentage to be significantly higher, because only a full orchestra with an eclectic repertoire will be able to slow down the pace of climate change, and we all have an instrument to play.

# Executive summary

This report is the most comprehensive study to date into support for environmental initiatives provided by European philanthropic foundations. It builds on the four earlier editions, significantly increasing the number of foundations and grants being analysed, along with the total value of these grants.

The long-term goal remains that set out in earlier editions: to establish as detailed a picture as possible of the state of European foundation funding for environmental issues with a view to raising the profile of environmental funders, building understanding of the sector, improving coordination, and providing analysis that informs discussion of effectiveness in environmental grantmaking.

## KEY FINDINGS



**127**  
FOUNDATIONS



**5,358**  
GRANTS



**745.6**  
MILLION €

granted for environmental work

The report features a detailed analysis of the environmental grants of 127 European public-benefit foundations,<sup>1</sup> as compared to 87 in the previous edition.<sup>2</sup> These 127 foundations include many of Europe's largest providers of philanthropic grants for environmental initiatives, although there are undoubtedly additional foundations that could be included in a report of this kind.<sup>3</sup> The report focuses on the 2018 calendar year<sup>4</sup> as this is the latest year for which comprehensive grants data could be obtained for all 127 foundations.

## Key findings:

- The 127 foundations made 5,358 environmental grants in 2018, worth a combined €745.6 million.<sup>5</sup> **This is the largest volume of grants analysed across the five editions of this research, both in terms of value and the number of grants categorised.**
- As in the fourth edition of the research, the thematic issue category receiving the most funding from the 127 foundations was *climate & atmosphere*, accounting for 18% of grants by value, but for only 374 out of the 5,358 grants. The *climate & atmosphere* category is characterised by larger grants from a relatively small number of foundations, whereas the *biodiversity & species* category has nearly three times as many individual grants, with more than half of the 127 foundations making at least one grant.
- In past editions we have provided figures for the combined grants in the three thematic issue categories of *climate & atmosphere*, *energy*, and *transport*, seeing these as particularly central to efforts to mitigate climate change. In 2018 the grants in these three categories were worth €237 million, just under 32% of the total given.
- As in 2016, the same “Cinderella” issue categories continue to occupy the bottom five places, namely *consumption & waste*, *transport*, *trade & finance*, *fresh water*, and *toxics & pollution*. There have

<sup>1</sup> A list is provided in Annex I.

<sup>2</sup> Published in 2018, based on 2016 data.

<sup>3</sup> Ten foundations that were covered in the fourth edition of this research were removed from the dataset this time, either because they are no longer funding environmental work, or because they were unwilling to provide grants data. Of the 50 new foundations that were added, 30 are based in the United Kingdom. The very “UK-heavy” emphasis from earlier editions remains, with 74 of the 127 foundations being UK-based. This inevitably has an impact on the results.

<sup>4</sup> Or 2018/19 for many of the UK-based foundations (i.e. April 2018 to March 2019).

<sup>5</sup> Grants made to other foundations within the group of 127 have been removed to avoid double counting.



been some welcome increases in absolute amounts of funding in these categories, as well as their “like-for-like” shares (comparing the same set of 77 foundations from 2016 and 2018). It remains the case, however, that environmental funders provide only limited support to tackle the “systemic drivers” of environmental harm. To put this in context, the value of grants directed to protecting birds (€10.2 million) exceeds the whole category of **toxics & pollution**.

- Comparison of the grants made by 77 foundations for which we have data in both 2016 and 2018 shows growth in the total value of environmental grants of 15%, from €568.8 million (2016) to €654.3 million (2018). One very large grant made in 2018 somewhat distorts these figures, so caution is required. But the growth in funding is undoubtedly a positive development.
- When we look at the thematic focus of the 77 foundations for which we have like-for-like data, we see that **climate & atmosphere** retains the top spot. There are notable increases in the amount of funding going to the categories of **agriculture & food**, and **coastal & marine**, both up by more than €20 million. The big winners in terms of percentage growth are, however, some of the “Cinderella” categories, such as **transport** (up 142.7% in percentage terms, albeit from a low base), and **trade & finance**, up 84.9% (again from a low base). Funding for work on **consumption & waste** also rose, by 58.6%.
- Turning to the geographical distribution of the grants we see that 146 countries benefited from at least one grant. A total of 3,842 grants, worth €388.3 million, were directed towards projects in Europe (52.1% of the total), almost exactly the same proportion as in the fourth edition of the mapping.
- There remains a heavy concentration of funding in a small number of countries, with more than 37% of funding going to just five countries: the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Italy and France. Funding for Europe-wide work remains very low, at 5.4% of the total. This continues to stand in stark contrast to the 80% of environmental legislation in EU Member States that is framed at the EU level.

- The allocation of grants within Europe remains extremely uneven. Within the 27 EU countries, Denmark continues to receive the largest per capita allocation of environmental philanthropy grants, worth €682.17 per 100 people, with the Netherlands remaining in second place with €595.29 per 100 people. At the other end of the scale there were 12 EU Member States where we identified less than €3.00 per 100 people of environmental philanthropy grants.
- The report provides a first comparative analysis of the way in which foundations in different European countries support environmental issues. Foundations based in Switzerland and the United Kingdom appear to be much more internationally-oriented in their grant-making than those in some other countries. French foundations appear to lean strongly towards work in the **agriculture & food** category (42.3% of French grants), while Danish and Italian foundations have a clear emphasis towards **sustainable communities** work.
- For the first time in this report we categorised the activity of foundations in terms of the main approaches to environmental work that they support, and the environmental discourses in which they operate. We find that **hands-on conservation work**, **advocacy**, and **research** are the three most widely supported approaches. Turning to environmental discourses, we find that 72.7% of the grants under review are made by foundations working in mainstream environmental discourses. We question whether this is optimal, given the short timeframe available to tackle climate change and other pressing challenges.
- We conclude the report by profiling European environmental funders, clustering them into five provisional groups. We find that the group of foundations pushing for transformative change to the status quo includes just 22 of the 127 foundations, and accounts for 31.2% of the total grants under analysis.

We hope that this fifth volume of **Environmental Funding by European Foundations** will inspire and encourage more funders to share their data and contribute to developing a more complete picture of the state of environmental funding by European foundations. More data and analysis of this kind can only improve environmental funding by serving as a catalyst for more targeted and strategic giving.

## Environmental philanthropy - A dynamic sector

The fifth edition of this mapping research coincides with some encouraging developments in the field of environmental giving, both at a European level and globally:

- A number of large well-established funders, such as the Open Society Foundations and The National Lottery Community Fund have recently set up new grant programmes in relation to climate change, and new foundations such as the Quadrature Climate Foundation are rapidly scaling up their giving. We hope to include grants from these funders in subsequent editions of this research.
- Donor advisory services focused on climate change are also emerging or expanding, for example the Climate Leadership Initiative, Impatience Earth and the climate programme at Active Philanthropy.
- This activity is being underpinned and supported by initiatives on the part of national associations of foundations, such as the Funder Commitment on Climate Change initially developed by the UK Association of Charitable Foundations, and subsequently taken up in France and Spain.
- Dafne (Donors and Foundations Networks in Europe) has initiated a Philanthropy Coalition for Climate, and their December 2020 report, "Climate Philanthropy Networks in Europe Mapping", provides a useful overview of some of the most active networks.<sup>6</sup>
- Meanwhile some of the world's largest philanthropic funders of climate change work are continuing to increase their climate giving, building on the pledge made at the 2018 Global Climate Action Summit.

We welcome these evolving collaborations and we hope that this research will support more alignment among environmental funders. Foundation staff responding to the survey that we carried out for this report highlighted the need for this:

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*"Collaborate more: Co-fund more joint initiatives. Most foundations spend their time in thinking about how to spend 'their money', and their level of ambition is defined by the level of funding they can provide. If we can pool resources, we can then aim higher and work to achieve truly transformational, system-level changes."*

**Leonardo Lacerda**, Oak Foundation

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*"We know that there is much need for collaboration across all sectors... We think it is crucial for funders to continue doing what they do, by financing work that creates change, but we also hope that we can take more time to connect with each other to discuss challenges, successes, and our role as a whole to make a more sustainable world in the long term."*

**Marie Dahlöf**, Svenska Postkod Stiftelsen

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*"Addressing environmental issues in the face of interconnected global challenges is too huge a task for one government, organisation or foundation to tackle alone... Grantmakers need to join forces, to network and [to pool] resources to contribute to addressing these challenges, recognising that no contribution is too small to make a difference."*

**Marie-Christine Cormier-Salem**,  
Agropolis Fondation

<sup>6</sup> Dafne, "Climate Philanthropy Networks in Europe Mapping", 2020.



# Methodology

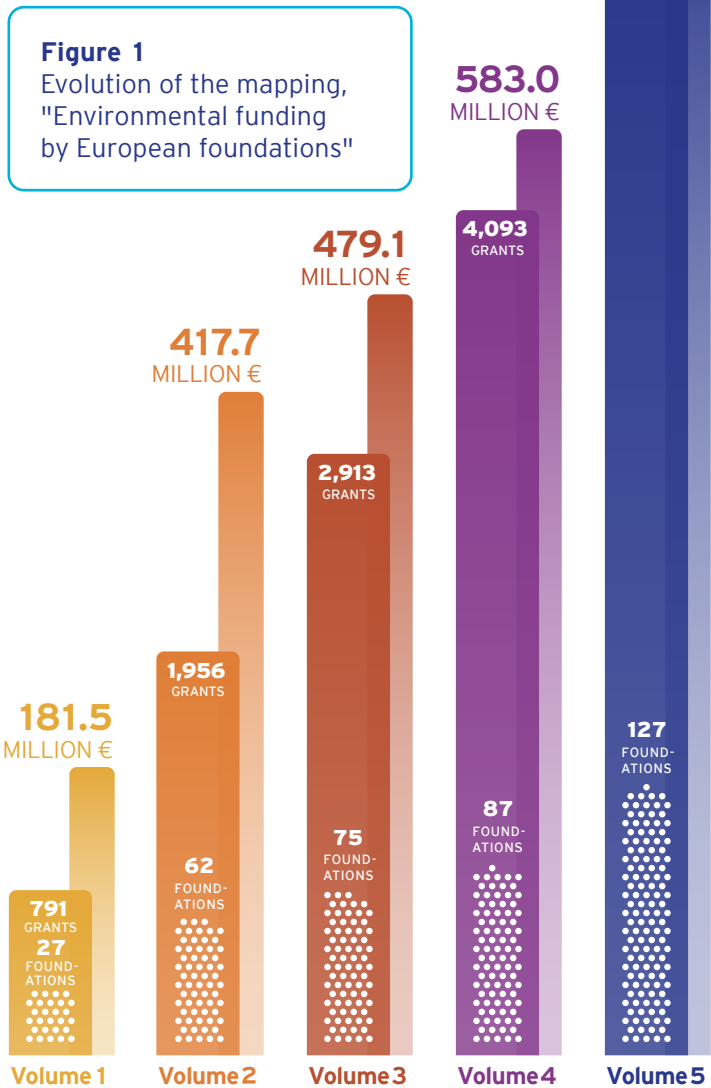
Across the five volumes of this research, we have used a consistent methodology, allowing us to build a rich dataset on environmental funding in Europe. This volume focuses on environmental grants from 127 European philanthropic foundations.

Two types of findings are presented in the report: 1) data that draws on the full dataset from all 127 foundations.<sup>7</sup> This data represents our current best understanding of what is happening across the field of environmental philanthropy in Europe; 2) data that is based on a “like-for-like” comparison between the 77 foundations for which we have grants data for both 2016 and 2018. This data helps us to understand what has been changing in terms of the priorities of environmental funders, whether thematic or geographical. For each table and chart we highlight which of the two approaches has been used.

Unless specifically stated otherwise, readers should assume that the text refers to the full set of 127 funders: So the phrase “average grant sizes are lower in 2018 than 2016” means the average grant size for environmental grants from this group of 127 foundations.

This publication was compiled by gathering grants-level data from a select group of public-benefit foundations from EU and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries. A list of more than 400 foundations that appear to be active in environmental issues was developed through desktop research and in consultation with members of Dafne (Donors and Foundations Networks in Europe). Funders were contacted by email with a request to submit their most recent, complete list of grants for 2018, in the language and currency in which it was available. The data provided by foundations was complemented by grants lists for English and Welsh foundations sourced from annual reports on the Charity Commission’s website, and/or from 360Giving.

For the first time in this edition we have complemented the grants data with observations from the staff of foundations whose grants are included in the mapping. We sent a short survey out and 22 foundations replied. We have included quotes throughout this publication, in order to encourage the sharing of insights across the sector.



We are very grateful to the foundations that shared their grants data with us. We are aware of additional foundations that we would have liked to include in this research, and we hope that they might be willing to take part in subsequent editions. **There are undoubtedly also foundations that we do not have on our radar, and we would very much welcome suggestions from readers of the report. If you take a look at the list in Annex I and can see foundations that you think are missing from the list, then please contact us at [eefgmapping@efc.be](mailto:eefgmapping@efc.be)**

<sup>7</sup> In the latter sections of the report we sometimes use just 117 or 110 of these foundations, for reasons explained below.

Foundations were included in the dataset if they made more than €339,000 (£300,000)<sup>8</sup> in environmental grants in 2018, although this condition was relaxed for foundations based in central and eastern Europe. A handful of foundations included in earlier editions whose environmental grantmaking has subsequently fallen below this threshold have been retained in the dataset in order to allow comparisons between years.

We have added 50 new foundations to the dataset for this fifth edition of the mapping. Some of these would not consider themselves to be “environmental” funders, in the sense that they don’t have an identifiable environmental grants programme. In some cases they made just one or two relevant grants. Providing that the total value of these grants exceeded the threshold above we have included them in the dataset, as our ambition is to try and analyse as much of the environmental philanthropy “market” as possible.

The 127 foundations are diverse, in terms of the way in which they focus their grantmaking activity, but also in terms of organisational form. We could identify five different organisational forms, as follows:

**A** **65 family (or personal) foundations** - where members of the founding family remain involved in the work of the foundation, often as board members, or where one individual directs the giving of the foundation.

**B** **24 corporate foundations** - associated closely with a particular company, even if operating independently from the management of that company.

**C** **17 pooled fund or re-granting foundations** - which typically receive their income either from other foundations, governmental sources, or high net worth individuals, and then re-grant these funds.

**D** **14 independent foundations** - these were often started up by an individual philanthropist, and/or are based on the wealth of a company, but as far as we can tell no family members are now involved in running the foundation.

**E** **7 “lottery” funders** - who are making grants using funds donated by the public through regular lottery games or fundraising appeals.

The grants analysed were made in 2018. Some foundations use accounting periods based on the calendar year, while others, particularly in the United Kingdom, tend to straddle the calendar year. Grants from UK foundations using the United Kingdom’s standard 2018/19 financial year (April 2018 - March 2019) have been aggregated together with calendar year 2018 grants from continental foundations.

Gathering grants-level data from foundations at the European level continues to represent a huge challenge, for a number of reasons:

- Grants-level data is not easily available, as across Europe there are few mandatory public reporting requirements for this kind of information. While many foundations now publish detailed annual financial statements on their websites, complete grants lists are still rare.
- Most data is available only in the official language of the country in which a foundation is registered; this represents both a translation and conceptual challenge.
- There is tremendous diversity of legal and organisational forms of public-benefit foundations<sup>9</sup> across Europe, due to different cultural, historical and legal traditions. This makes it difficult to identify and engage the relevant actors.
- There is no clear consensus among European foundations, or even the foundations within a single country, on what constitutes “environmental funding”. For example, a foundation that defines itself as focusing on research might not consider itself to be an environmental funder, even if some of its grants would qualify for inclusion in this report.

We have been working hard to address these challenges, and to achieve consistency across the different editions of this research, so that we can build up a dataset that can track changes in environmental funding over time, and which allows for like-for-like comparisons. The findings that we present here are the most comprehensive and detailed to date, but this research is best seen as a work in progress in which each edition builds on what has gone before. **If you find this report useful then please help us to improve subsequent editions, either by sharing your grants data with us on a confidential basis, or by helping us identify and reach out to foundations that ought to be included in the research.**

<sup>8</sup> Annual average exchange rates have been used to convert currencies throughout the report, with the annual average relating to the financial period in question.

<sup>9</sup> The EFC defines public-benefit foundations as purpose-driven, asset-based, independent and separately constituted non-profit entities.



# Philanthropic grants to environmental issues - Top-level figures

The 127 foundations that are the focus of this report made 5,358 environmental grants in 2018, worth a combined €745.6 million.<sup>10</sup> This is the largest volume of grants analysed across the five editions of this research, both in terms of value and the number of grants categorised.



While the breakdowns in expenditure across thematic issues and geographies provided below are based on a stronger dataset than in previous editions, they are still not comprehensive, since there is no definitive list of all the environmental funders in Europe, and there are without doubt additional foundations that could have been included in this research.

While €745.6 million is a significant amount of money, it remains a small share of total European foundation giving, which is estimated to be at least €60 billion per year.<sup>11</sup> Research from environmental grantmaking networks in the United States, Canada, Italy, France and the United Kingdom suggests that environmental grants rarely account for more than 5-6% of total philanthropic giving. Recent analysis by the ClimateWorks Foundation in California estimates that just 2% of global philanthropy is directed towards tackling climate change.<sup>12</sup>

The average grant size for the 5,358 grants reviewed was €139,148, very similar to the €142,442 recorded for 2016. The median grant size for 2018 was just €12,000, down from

€17,300 in the previous edition. The fall in the median grant size reflects the inclusion of a large number of smaller grants in the dataset.

A small number of large grants continue to account for a significant share of the total expenditure, with the 10 largest grants accounting for 24.8% of the money given (2016 - 23.4%). There were 113 grants of €1 million or more, and together they accounted for 56.8% of the €745.6 million total (2016 - 57.8%). This pattern is not an unusual one when analysing the funds provided by a set of foundations.

As in previous editions, average grant sizes across the 127 foundations showed huge variation, from more than €9 million to under €2,000. Some 62 out of the 127 foundations had average grant sizes under €100,000.

The 10 largest foundations in the group of 127 continue to provide a large proportion of the total funding, with their grants accounting for 63.8% of the €745.6 million. This share has, however, fallen back from 72% in the previous edition.

<sup>10</sup> Grants made to other foundations within the group of 127 have been removed to avoid double counting.

<sup>11</sup> Lawrence T McGill, "Number of public benefit foundations in Europe exceeds 147,000", Foundation Center, October 2016. Dafne (Donors and Foundation Networks in Europe) report.

<sup>12</sup> Hannah Roeyer et al., Funding Trends: Climate change mitigation philanthropy, ClimateWorks Global Intelligence, September 2020.

# Four ways in which foundations focus their environmental giving

Our research over the years suggests that there are four main lenses that foundations use when developing a focus for their environmental giving. These are represented in the diagram below.

The most common way of finding a focus is **by issue**, so an environmental donor might decide to specialise in, for example, renewable energy, or organic food, or protecting tropical forests. Funders tend to think of themselves as a “food and agriculture” funder, or

in the country where they are located, or have chosen to do this as a matter of policy. Others have an even tighter geographical remit, on a particular region within a country, or just one city. Other foundations have an international remit, in some cases focusing on

a continent, and in other cases being truly global funders (see p.21). Many foundations find a focus for their grantmaking by combining **issues** and **geography**.

A third option is to focus grantmaking **by approach**. That might mean prioritising scientific research, for example, or mainly funding grassroots activism, or focusing on environmental education. Over the last ten years several foundations have invested heavily in building up environmental law capacity in Europe. They have funded organisations like ClientEarth, which works on a wide range of environmental issues in many countries in Europe (and beyond), but with the law at

the centre of their approach.

The fourth lens relates to **values**, or discourses of environmentalism, and defines what different foundations and NGOs understand a “win” to be. This can vary widely from one organisation or individual to the next.



a “climate” funder, and thematic issues are often the natural framework around which funder affinity groups form.<sup>13</sup>

A second option is to focus on a particular **geography**. Some of the foundations within our set of 127 are restricted by law to making grants

<sup>13</sup> See for example the climate funder networks referred to on p. 6.

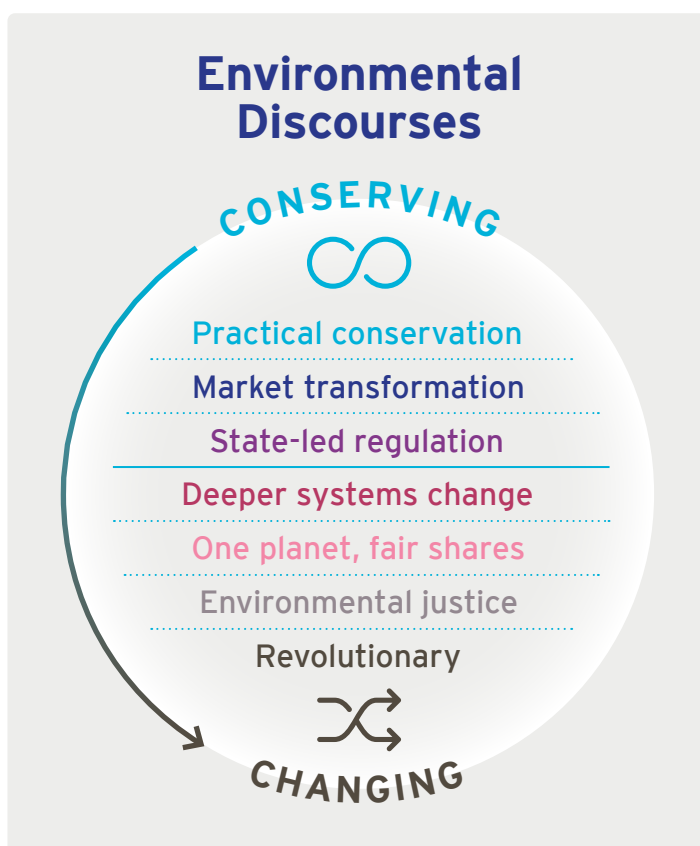


The diagram on this page shows seven different understandings or “discourses” of environmentalism, ranging from the “*conservation*” discourse at the top, to the “*revolutionary*” discourse at the bottom. As one moves down the list of discourses, the challenges to the status quo become more profound, and concerns about democratic reform, equality, justice and rights become more visible. In the chapter on “Discourses prioritised by European environmental funders”, we look at how the grants from the 127 foundations break down across these discourses.

The next four sections of the report explore European environmental grantmaking using these four different lenses.

### Insights from foundation staff - Lessons learned

The diverse ways in which environmental funders support change came across clearly from our survey of foundation staff. The quotes in this section reflect on lessons learned:



*“Invest in organisational development, leadership development, and other capacity building. This helps form the foundation for improved performance and ultimate success.”*

**Lynda Mansson**, MAVA Foundation

*“Give long-lasting core support to relevant actors and ban the word ‘innovative’ from our vocabulary (!): The issue now is not to be innovative but relevant.”*

**Matthieu Calame**, Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer pour le progrès de l’Homme

*“Trust is a core element of our approach: We build long-term relationships with our grant recipients. We make few, multi-year grants and we fund operational costs, existing projects, or develop partnerships to create new regranting schemes. We replicate and expand successful projects and award repeat grants to continue outstanding work.”*

Arcadia Fund

*“We see community engagement, participation and organising on the grass-root levels (from the bottom up) as key in solving environmental (and social) matters.”*

**Veronika Móra**, Ökotárs Alapítvány / Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation

*“Although it is not possible (and reasonable) to fund projects forever, very short grants are rarely the optimal solution.”*

**Kalle Korhonen**, Kone Foundation

*“We make small grants to help strengthen environmental grass-roots movements, in particular through diversifying voices and strategies, enabling innovation, helping movements maximise the levers for social/environmental change.”*

**Eva Rehse**, Global Greengrants Fund UK

# Thematic focus of environmental grants

## Thematic focus for all 127 foundations

As in earlier reports, the priorities of the 127 foundations were explored by assigning the 5,358 grants to 13 thematic issue categories. Annex II of this report provides descriptions of the categories, which were developed in 2008 in a collaborative process involving the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network, Canadian Environmental Grantmakers Network, US Environmental Grantmakers Association, UK Environmental Funders Network, and the EFC. Figure 2 shows how the 2018 grants are distributed across the categories.

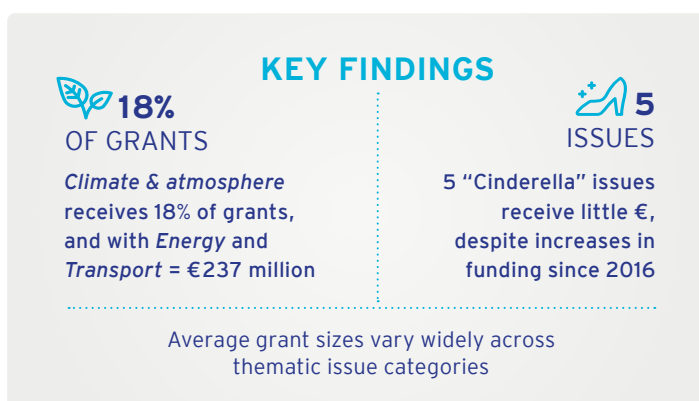
Some of this increase results from the addition of new foundations to the mapping, but if we remove the new foundations from the data we still see an increase of more than 32% in the value of the grants to these three categories. One very large multi-year grant in the *climate & atmosphere* category distorts these figures to a certain extent, but the growth in climate mitigation giving is nonetheless encouraging.

It is worth noting that only 66 of the 127 foundations made a grant in the categories of *climate & atmosphere*, or *energy*, or *transport*. For many of the foundations whose grants are covered in this report, climate change still doesn't seem to be much of a priority, despite the impact that it is having on biodiversity, agriculture, oceans, etc. In this context it seems all the more important that new funders continue to enter the climate philanthropy arena, as alluded to above.

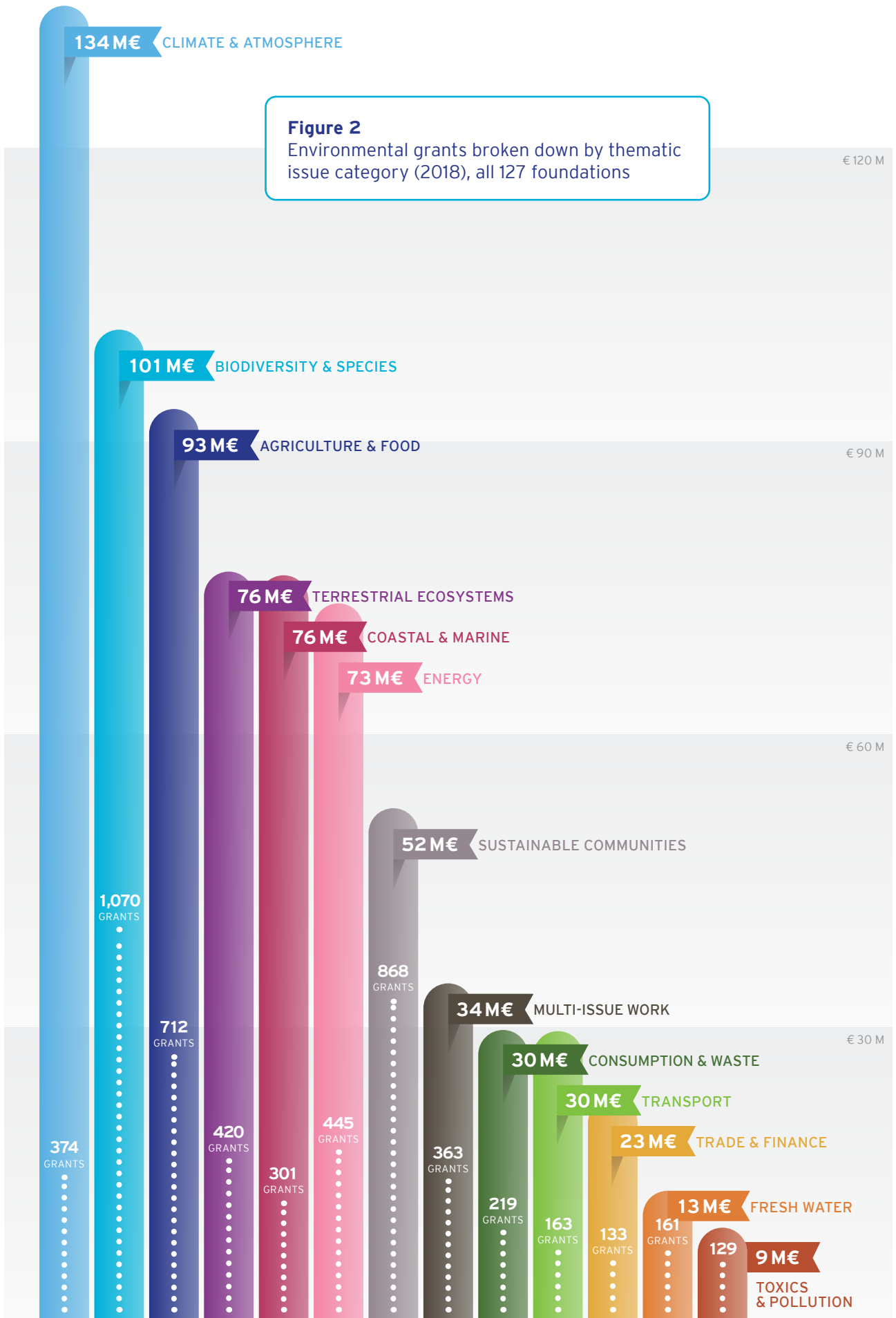
As was the case in 2016, the same "Cinderella" issue categories continue to occupy the bottom five places, namely *consumption & waste*, *transport*, *trade & finance*, *fresh water*, and *toxics & pollution*. Grants in the *fresh water* category declined between 2016 and 2018, but there have been welcome increases in the amounts of funding and the share of total grants in the other "Cinderella" categories between 2016 and 2018. This is true whether one looks at all 127 foundations or just those for which we have "like-for-like" comparative data. Despite these welcome increases in giving, our sense is that much more needs to be done to address the "systemic drivers" of environmental harm. To put the challenge in context, the value of grants directed to protecting birds (€10.2 million) exceeds the whole category of *toxics & pollution*.

As in the fourth edition of the research, the thematic issue category receiving the most funding from the 127 foundations was *climate & atmosphere*, accounting for 18% of grants by value, but for only 374 out of the 5,358 grants. The *climate & atmosphere* category is characterised by larger grants from a relatively small number of foundations, whereas *biodiversity & species* has nearly three times as many individual grants, with more than half of the 127 foundations making at least one grant.

In past editions we have provided figures for the combined grants in the three thematic issue categories of *climate & atmosphere*, *energy*, and *transport*, seeing these as particularly central to efforts to mitigate climate change. In 2018 the grants in these three categories were worth €237 million, up from €171.6 million in 2016.







## Climate change philanthropy - Towards a meaningful definition

In this report we have provided figures for the total amount given to work in the three thematic issue categories of *climate & atmosphere*, *energy*, and *transport*, both for the full set of 127 foundations, and (below) on a “like-for-like” basis for 77 foundations. We have used these three categories as a shorthand for giving towards climate mitigation in past editions of the research, and it seems useful to continue to compare the value and number of grants being made in order to track developments over time.

It is of course the case that work taking place within other thematic issue categories is contributing to tackling climate change. This is certainly the case for efforts to protect forests or to plant new woodlands (which fall within the *terrestrial ecosystems* category). Our provisional estimate of the funding provided on forests and woodlands in 2018 is €11.5 million. It is also true for some of the work in the *agriculture & food* category, for some of the work on *trade & finance* (for example initiatives seeking to change incentives for banks and pension funds, or to reform trade and investment policies), and for some of the work in the *consumption & waste* category (e.g. work geared towards resource efficiency and circular economies). We can, for example, identify 54 grants worth a combined €15.5 million directed towards circular economy initiatives.

We plan to release a separate shorter report in 2021 in which we will use a taxonomy developed by the Climate-Works Foundation in California to give a more fine-grained overview of European philanthropic funding directed at mitigating climate change.

€ 359,086 CLIMATE & ATMOSPHERE

As in previous years, the average grant sizes shown in Figure 3 vary considerably from one category to the next, ranging from €359,086 in the *climate & atmosphere* category down to just €60,249 in *sustainable communities*. The categories *sustainable communities*, *agriculture & food* and *biodiversity & species* are characterised by receiving relatively large numbers of grants, but with average grant sizes that are smaller than in many of the other categories. This is particularly true of *biodiversity & species* where there are many small grants that support individual scientific research projects (PhD students, for example).

€ 252,820 COASTAL & MARINE

### Figure 3

Average grant sizes in each thematic issue category (2018), all 127 foundations

€ 182,083 TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS

€ 181,083 TRANSPORT

€ 170,584 TRADE & FINANCE

€ 164,560 ENERGY

€ 135,315 CONSUMPTION & WASTE

€ 130,742 AGRICULTURE & FOOD

€ 94,759 MULTI-ISSUE WORK

€ 94,579 BIODIVERSITY & SPECIES

€ 82,000 FRESH WATER

€ 73,109 TOXICS & POLLUTION

€ 60,249 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

## Insights from foundation staff - More focus on systemic change is needed

At various points in the report we comment on the low shares of funding directed towards the systemic drivers of environmental harm, and also to the environmental discourses that seek the most profound change in the status quo (see the section of this report on “Discourses prioritised by European environmental funders”). It is interesting that many of the foundation staff responding to our survey highlighted the need to work more on systemic issues, as shown by the selection of quotes below. We welcome this, and we would encourage other foundations to go “upstream” in the way they design their grants programmes to try and tackle causes rather than symptoms.

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*“A source of frustration is the fact that environmental problems are large systemic problems that don’t necessarily follow national or administrative borders.”*

**Veli-Markus Tapio**, Finnish Cultural Foundation / Suomen Kulttuurirahasto

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*“(Issues needing more support are) systemic drivers of biodiversity loss and of harm to nature. In this regard, it is essential and urgent to tackle the key drivers of biodiversity loss, such as unsustainable use of land and sea, climate change impacts on biodiversity, overexploitation of natural resources, pollution, and invasive alien species.”*

Fundación Biodiversidad

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*“With the pandemic, all eyes are on the interactions between climate change, biodiversity loss and increasing human-induced pressures on ecosystems. If there is no better understanding of these complex systems, the scientific community is expecting an accelerated emergence of infectious diseases.”*

**Emilie Chen**, Fondation BNP Paribas

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*“We have a root cause approach to the challenge - climate change - we are addressing. This means that we only fund organisations and projects that address these root causes (e.g., our dependency on fossil fuels, our unsustainable consumption patterns, our broken economic system).”*

**Brian Valbjørn Sørensen**, KR Foundation

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*“We are currently designing our next 5-year strategy. We will be adopting a system-level transformation approach. We will primarily focus on three*

*major systems: Food, Energy, and Natural Security. Our hope is to contribute to safeguarding our future by restoring our connection to nature and changing the ways we feed and fuel our world. Our funding will place people and communities at the centre of our work. The strategy also recognises that change occurs through the optics of human interest (health, air quality, etc).”*

**Leonardo Lacerda**, Oak Foundation

## Insights from foundation staff - Ensuring a “just transition”

We also found it interesting that funders identified a need for more work on “just transition” policies to help ensure that the costs associated with tackling environmental challenges are equitably distributed.

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*“We want to help Germany and the EU implement a fair and ambitious climate change mitigation strategy, by fostering collaboration between science and practice, by supporting civil society actors in their capacity to systematically and profoundly engage in climate action and by strengthening fact-based media reporting.”*

**Lars Grotewold**, Stiftung Mercator

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*“Climate change cannot be approached as a single issue. We need to build coalitions across issue areas, for instance linking decarbonisation of major industries to a social justice programme that ensures the cost of transition does not fall on the poor. In the land-use sector, we need to ensure that the EU doesn’t simply export its emissions to other countries and avoid so-called solutions to the climate that have negative impacts on human rights, biodiversity or other important issues.”*

**Thomas Legge**, European Climate Foundation

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*“The social aspects of stopping climate heating and creating sustainable change will be at least as important as technological solutions: How to engage and connect with diverse audiences for climate actions and how to preserve social fairness?”*

**Anneke Ernon**, King Baudouin Foundation

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*“Covid-19 turned on the light on our broken relationship with nature but at the same time spurred new sensitivity on environmental topics. We are in front of a huge change: to rethink our systems, putting at the centre of our decision the planet for the benefit of the coming generations.”*

**Daniele Messina**,  
Fondazione Monti dei Paschi di Siena



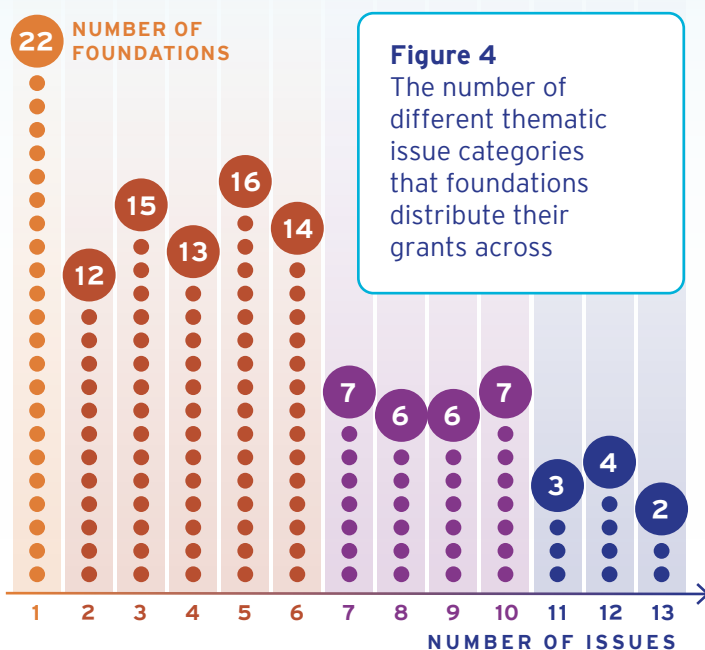
## How many thematic issues do foundations support?

As noted in the previous section, many foundations find a focus for their grantmaking by deciding to concentrate on one or more thematic issues, and foundations often define themselves, for instance, as “agriculture funders” or “marine funders”. Figure 4 below shows how many different thematic issue categories the grants from each of the 127 foundations fall into.

On the left of the chart are foundations that have a tight focus on just one or two thematic issue categories, who we will refer to later on as Issue Specialists. At the other side of the chart are “generalist” funders, whose grants are spread across a wide range of thematic issues. The chart over-emphasises the number of specialised funders to a certain extent, as foundations making just one or two qualifying grants in the dataset are inevitably located at this end of the distribution.

To explore the extent to which foundations have a strong thematic orientation we added together the percentage of each foundation’s grants falling into the two thematic issue categories on which they are most focused. For 59 of the foundations more than 80% of their grantmaking is directed at these top two thematic issue categories, and for 45 foundations this rises to more than 90%. Foundations often have a primary focus on two or three thematic issue categories and then end up making a few “outlier” grants each year that fall outside those categories.

The thematic issue category that was the top priority for the largest number of foundations was *biodiversity & species*, (22 foundations), just ahead of *agriculture & food*, which was the top priority for 21 foundations. The most common pairing was, not surprisingly, *biodiversity & species* plus *terrestrial ecosystems*.



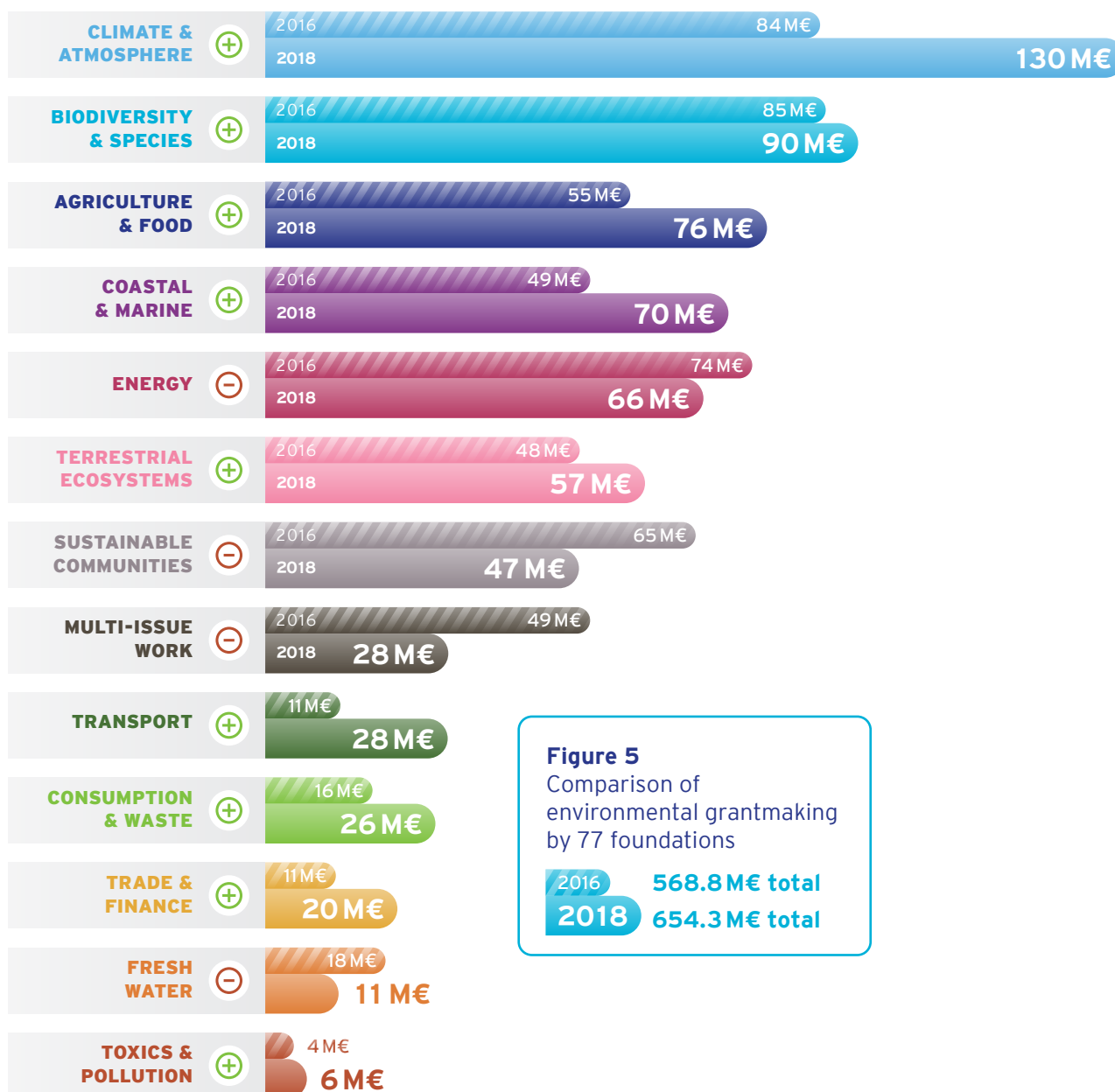
## Like-for-like changes in European environmental philanthropy

Grants-level data are available for 77 foundations for both the fourth edition of this research and for this new edition, allowing for the direct comparison of their environmental grants in 2016 and 2018.

As Figure 5 shows, total environmental giving from the 77 foundations grew from €568.8 million in 2016 to €654.3 million in 2018, an increase of 15%, which we strongly welcome. As noted above, one very large grant in 2018 somewhat distorts these figures, so some caution is required. The number of grants increased from 3,965 to 4,221, and the average grant size from €143,456 to €155,020.

Of the 77 foundations, a total of 41 (slightly more than half) had increased their environmental giving between 2016 and 2018, while for 35 foundations environmental giving had fallen, and for 1 it was exactly the same in both years. The 41 foundations who increased their giving contributed €173.3 million more in 2018 than 2016 (including the large *climate & atmosphere* grant), while the 35 foundations who reduced their grants cumulatively gave €87.8 million less. This shows that there are large fluctuations in giving taking place behind the scenes.

When we look at the thematic focus of the 77 foundations for which we have like-for-like data, we see that *climate & atmosphere* retains the top spot, accounting for €129.9 million in 2018. There are notable increases in the amount of funding going to the categories of *agriculture & food*, and *coastal & marine*, both up by more than €20 million. The big winners in terms of percentage growth are, however, some of the “Cinderella” categories, such as *transport* (up 142.7% in percentage terms, albeit from a low base), and *trade & finance*, up



**Figure 5**  
Comparison of environmental grantmaking by 77 foundations

2016	568.8 M€ total
2018	654.3 M€ total

84.9% (again from a low base). Funding for work on *consumption & waste* also rose, by 58.6%. We find the increase in transport funding particularly encouraging, given our observation in past editions of this research that it receives a very small share of philanthropic funding, despite being the sector of the European economy where carbon emissions are growing quickly.<sup>14</sup>

In contrast we find the total amount of funding falling in the categories of *fresh water* (down 39%), *sustainable communities* (down 27.1%) and *energy* (down 10%).<sup>15</sup> All-in-all these are large shifts in the orientation of grants.

The fact that the total value of grants made to a given thematic issue has increased (or decreased) does not necessarily mean that foundations have been changing the mix of thematic issues within their grant portfolios. It may simply reflect the fact that a foundation that is active on a given thematic issue has increased its overall level of environmental grantmaking. The changes to the percentage breakdowns across the 13 thematic categories are nonetheless important.

<sup>14</sup> European Environment Agency, "Trends and drivers of EU greenhouse gas emissions", EEA Report 03, 2020, p.5.

<sup>15</sup> The proportion of funding going to multi-issue work also fell between 2016 and 2018 (by 43.7%) although some of this fall can be attributed to more precise coding of grants for 2018.

# Geographical distribution of environmental grants

A total of 146 countries could be identified where at least one grant was made, and a full list is provided in Annex III.

The geographical distribution of funding is very broad, but in many of these countries only a handful of grants, or just a single grant, could be detected. A total of 3,842 grants, worth €388.3 million, were directed towards projects in Europe (52.1% of the total by value). This compares to 2,757 grants worth €302.8 million (52% of the total by value) in the fourth edition.

the Common Agricultural Policy, or towards supporting civil society capacity across multiple EU countries.

A total of 256 grants worth €40.1 million were made in support of this kind of work (2016 - 181 grants worth €25.6 million). While the overall value of grants continues to grow in absolute terms, such Europe-wide grants continue to account for just 5.4% of all grants made by the 127 foundations, an increase of just 1 percentage point on the proportions in 2014 and 2016. This continues to stand in stark contrast to the 80% of European environmental legislation that is framed at the EU level. We also find the figure alarmingly low given the EU's global leadership role in environmental policy, compared say to the United States or China.

In a recent report commissioned by the European Cultural Foundation and the Allianz Kulturstiftung for Europe, the authors noted that "philanthropy with a European purpose remains uncharted territory."<sup>16</sup> With some notable exceptions this rings true when we look at the distribution of environmental grants, and we think this is a huge missed opportunity for philanthropic funders. Foundations could more actively support Europe-wide campaigns and initiatives without necessarily having to make grants to organisations outside their own border, but to do so would require a European mind-set, rather than a national one. It would mean actively supporting organisations and networks that provide the connective tissue between national policymaking and the EU institutions, and focusing on the opportunities provided for driving change across the whole of the EU, and not just in the foundation's home country.

## KEY FINDINGS



**146**  
COUNTRIES

146 countries supported  
(2016 - 131 countries)



**52%**  
IN EUROPE

52% of 2018 grants support  
projects in Europe



**37%**  
OF FUNDING

Top 5 countries account for  
more than 37% of funding

Allocation of grants within Europe  
remains extremely uneven

Figure 6 shows the 20 countries receiving the most funding. Only grants that directly benefit one country have been included in the Top 20 ranking in the table.

The heavy concentration of funding in a small number of countries is clear. Italy and France replace China and Germany in the group of the top 5 beneficiary countries, joining Denmark, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

Figure 6 also includes figures for grants made on a Europe-wide basis, and for those that support *international* work that benefits many countries. Europe-wide grants are often focused on EU legislation and policies, such as

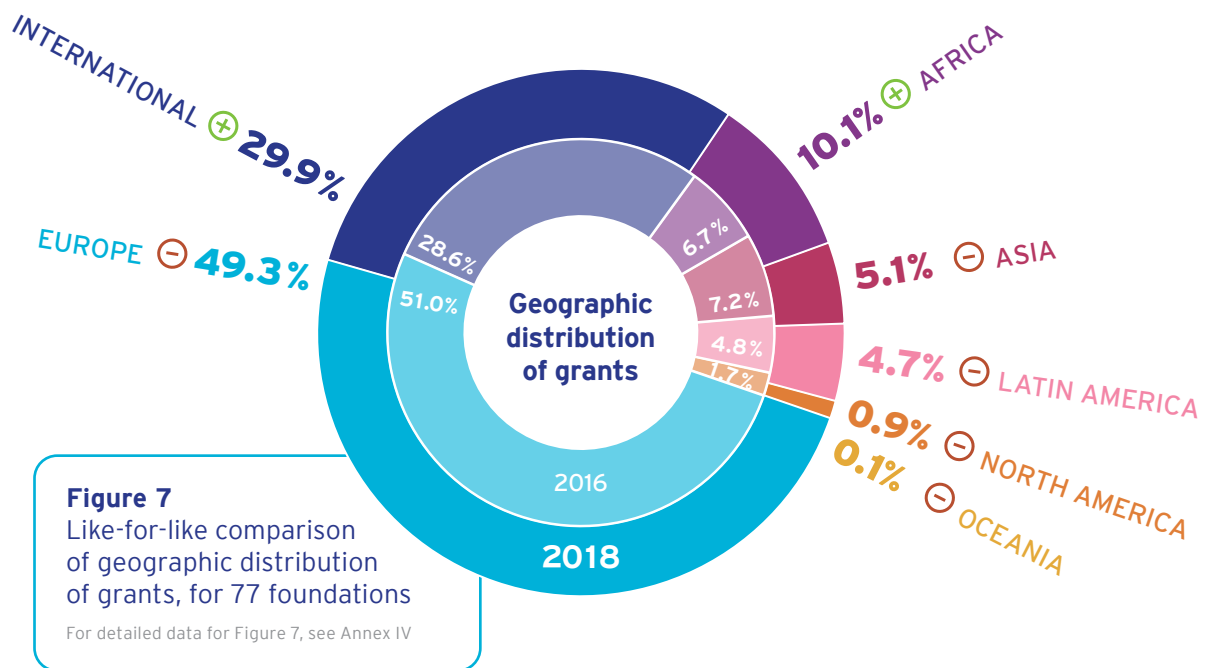
<sup>16</sup> Wider Sense, "Imagine Philanthropy for Europe", commissioned by the European Cultural Foundation and the Allianz Kulturstiftung for Europe, 2020.



**Figure 6** – Geographical distribution of grants by beneficiary countries (2018). Top 20 countries, all 127 foundations

Rank	Country	Value in €	% of all grants by value	No. of Grants	No. of fdns. granting to the country	Rank in top 20 in 4 <sup>th</sup> edition
1	 Netherlands	101,556,329	13.6%	360	7	1
2	 United Kingdom	94,073,115	12.6%	1,037	66	3
3	 Denmark	39,238,307	5.3%	82	6	2
4	 Italy	25,347,645	3.4%	186	11	6
5	 France	19,177,255	2.6%	898	16	7
6	 China	16,313,859	2.2%	18	7	4
7	 Germany	11,254,019	1.5%	141	9	5
8	 Sweden	11,179,931	1.5%	21	3	Not in top 20
9	 Finland	10,857,792	1.5%	238	4	10
10	 Switzerland	10,696,392	1.4%	90	7	8
11	 Brazil	9,120,771	1.2%	49	8	13
12	 India	7,803,963	1.0%	82	14	11
13	 Spain	6,596,936	0.9%	152	8	9
14	 United States	4,865,620	0.7%	14	9	12
15	 Portugal	3,961,744	0.5%	45	8	Not in top 20
16	 Greece	3,696,604	0.5%	8	3	Not in top 20
17	 Kenya	2,876,856	0.4%	60	12	14
18	 Mozambique	2,640,928	0.4%	8	5	18
19	 Belgium	2,593,716	0.3%	126	6	Not in top 20
20	 Afghanistan	2,543,630	0.3%	1	1	Not in top 20
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>		<b>386,395,413</b>	<b>51.8%</b>	<b>3,616</b>	<b>n/a</b>	
	 Europe-wide	40,112,671	5.4%	256	25	–
	 International	209,743,014	28.1%	360	63	–
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>636,251,098</b> <sup>17</sup>	<b>85.3%</b>	<b>4,232</b>	<b>n/a</b>	

<sup>17</sup> The total here does not correspond to the €745.6 million of grants because grants made to more than one country are taken out of the analysis, e.g. a grant supporting work in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea would be excluded.



Going one step further, we would argue that a strong case can be made for investing in building civil society capacity in EU Member States which currently lack philanthropic resources, including those in central and eastern Europe (see Figure 9 on page 22 and Figure 10 on page 23). A useful metaphor for environmental movements is that of an orchestra, in which the different instruments and sections (strings, woodwind, etc.) perform different roles (conservation groups making up the strings section, for example, and direct action groups arguably being part of the percussion...). At the moment Europe's national environmental "orchestras" vary widely, both in terms of size, and in terms of the quality of instruments at their disposal. Foundations could choose to work together to address gaps in capacity across Europe, and to try to make sure that every country has all the different types of organisations needed to drive social and political change.

### Like-for-like changes in European environmental philanthropy

Figure 7 shows how the distribution of grants at the continental level changed between 2016 and 2018, based on a like-for-like comparison of the 77 foundations for which we have two years of data.<sup>18</sup>

Figure 7 reveals a continuation of the trends identified in the last edition of the research, namely a fall in the share of grants being directed towards work taking place in Europe, now down to 49.3% (from 51.0%) and an increase in the share going to *international* work, up to 29.9% (from 28.6%). Larger changes are evident in relation to Africa and Asia. The proportion of grants funding work in North America also fell from 2016 to 2018. The data behind Figure 7 are available in Annex IV.

### International and domestic funders - Two distinct groups

There remain two distinctly different groups of foundations, in terms of the geographical distribution of their grants. Some 54 out of the 127 foundations are very domestically focused, making more than 90% of their grants to initiatives in the country where they are based. A further 9 foundations made between 80% and 90% of their grants to support projects in their own country.

<sup>18</sup> The detailed data tables in Annex IV include breakdowns by continent in 2018 for the full set of 127 foundations.

At the other end of the scale there were 33 foundations that made less than 10% of their grants to initiatives in the country where they are based, and another 8 foundations for which less than 20% of their funding supported projects in the countries where they are headquartered. Figure 8 shows the difference in approach for these international and domestic funders, who are on opposite sides of the graph.

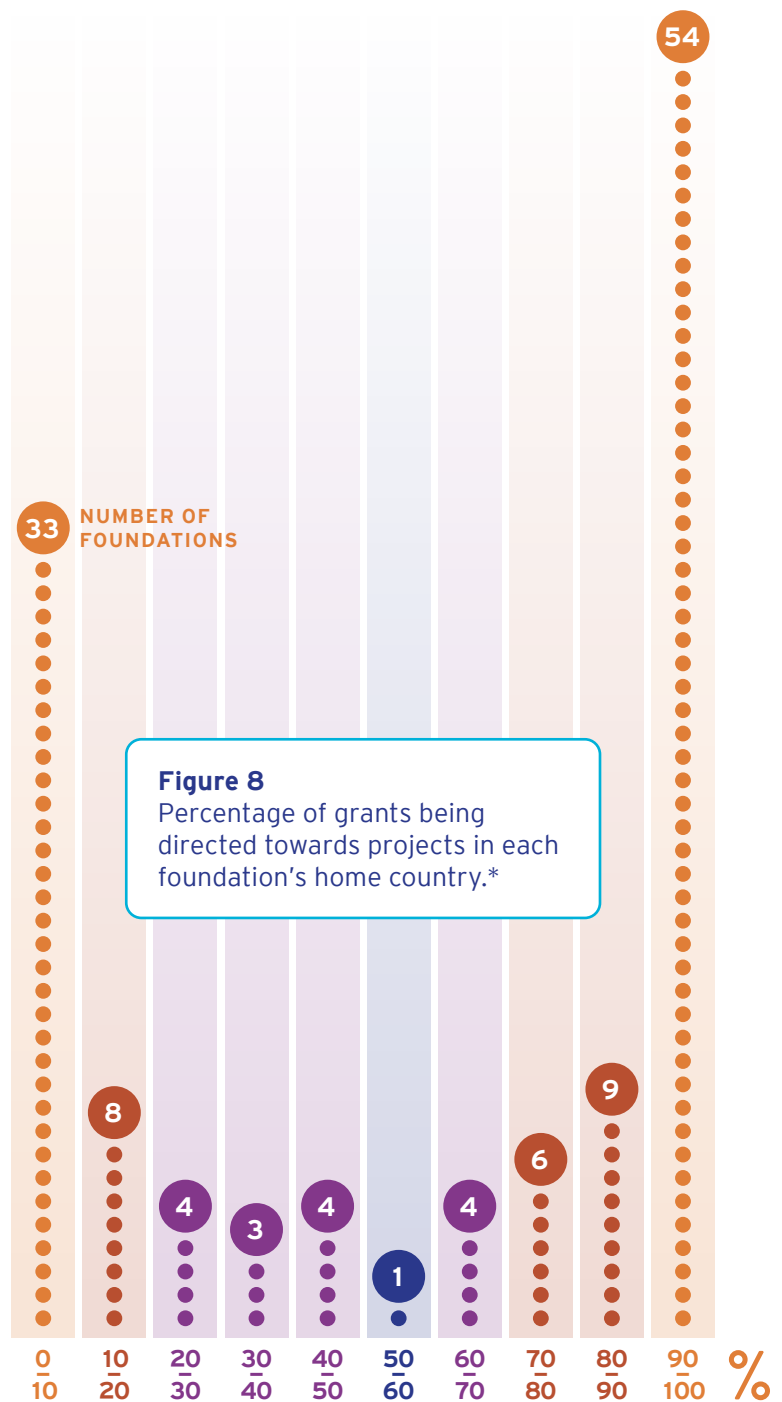
Elsewhere in this report reference is made to the low level of grants being directed to central and eastern Europe, as well as the fact that less than 6% of grants are explicitly supporting Europe-wide work. This is perhaps not surprising, given that half the foundations in the study might be described as domestic funders, with more than 80% of their funding supporting initiatives in the country where they are located.

There are many good reasons for foundations to focus on funding projects in their home countries, and indeed they may be required to do this by their mandates or by national laws. At the same time, it is clear that most environmental challenges are international in nature, and require collective responses by nation states. From this perspective, finding ways to strengthen the capacity of environmental organisations in countries where resources are less readily available seems like it should be a priority in future. Philanthropic capital oils the wheels of social change, and has special characteristics relative to other forms of income for civil society organisations. As the following section shows, the availability of this vital capital across Europe is extremely uneven.

### The distribution of grants within Europe

Earlier editions of this research have highlighted the marked differences between countries within Europe with respect to population size, per capita income, environmental performance (measured using various indices), environmental values, and public understanding of environmental issues.

In the previous edition of the research we presented the findings from an initial survey of civil society organisations (CSOs) working on environmental issues across Europe.



**Figure 8**  
Percentage of grants being directed towards projects in each foundation's home country.\*

\* Figure 8 shows 126 funders rather than 127 as one funder is set up in such a way that it is not possible to include them in this analysis.

This showed that CSOs in the 15 Member States that joined the EU before 2004 had much greater resources than the new Member States that joined in 2004 and subsequently. Figure 9 shows the stark differences in income, staffing, and supporter numbers between CSOs in the pre-2004 group of 15 EU Member States and those from the 13 new Member States.



**Figure 9** – Income, staff and membership numbers for a group of 95 European environmental CSOs (2016)

	<b>EU15 53 CSOs</b>	<b>NMS13 34 CSOs</b>	<b>NON-EU 8 CSOs</b>	<b>TOTALS 95 CSOs</b>
Combined income (€)	592,941,842	18,604,599	62,417,953	<b>673,964,393</b>
Average income (€)	11,187,582	547,194	7,802,244	<b>7,094,362</b>
Median income (€)	3,292,277	216,986	2,257,632	<b>875,000</b>
Combined FTE staff	3,981	394	257	<b>4,633</b>
Average FTE staff	75.1	11.6	32.2	<b>48.8</b>
Median FTE staff	29.0	5.0	15.5	<b>14.0</b>
Income/FTE staff (€)	148,934	47,196	242,635	<b>145,480</b>
Combined members/supporters	7,253,567	72,509	382,335	<b>7,708,411</b>
Average members/supporters	136,860	2,133	47,792	<b>81,141</b>
Median members/supporters	7,500	58	20,013	<b>860</b>

As Figure 10 on the following page shows, grants from European foundations continue to be very unevenly distributed across the 27 EU Member States, despite the fact that EU environmental policy is made via processes that involve all Member States.

















Figure 10 shows the value and number of environmental grants from the 127 foundations that were directed to initiatives in each of the 27 EU Member States, plus 3 other countries. The value of the grants has been divided by the population of each country in order to give a per capita measure that shows the value of grants per 100 people.

The allocation of grants within Europe remains extremely uneven. Within the 27 EU countries Denmark continues to receive the largest per capita allocation of environmental philanthropy grants, worth €682.17 per 100 people, with the Netherlands remaining in second place with €595.29 per 100 people.

At the other end of the scale there were 12 EU Member States where we identified less than €3.00 per 100 people of environmental philanthropy grants, and 6 of these countries received less than €1.00 per 100 people, despite the dataset including 5,358 grants being distributed to 146 different countries.

Readers should not attach too much weight to the specific per capita figures, as these are sensitive to the changes in the number of foundations in the underlying dataset, and also to one-off large grants. The more important take-away is the heavy concentration of grants in a limited number of countries, when looked at either in absolute terms or on a per capita basis. The split between the pre-2004 group of 15 EU Member States is also really clear. The highest ranked of the 13 NMS is Estonia, in 11<sup>th</sup> place. Eleven of the other 13 NMS occupy the bottom half of the table.

**Figure 10** – Geographical distribution of grants to EU Member States and selected other countries, compared to population, all 127 foundations

		<b>Value of grants made to the country (€)</b>	<b>No. of grants</b>	% of EU population	2018 grants (€) per 100 people
	Denmark	<b>39,238,307</b>	<b>82</b>	1.3	682.17
	Netherlands	<b>101,556,329</b>	<b>195</b>	3.8	595.29
	Finland	<b>10,857,792</b>	<b>238</b>	1.2	196.59
	United Kingdom	<b>94,073,115</b>	<b>1,037</b>	n/a	140.11
	Switzerland	<b>10,696,392</b>	<b>90</b>	n/a	125.46
	Sweden	<b>11,179,931</b>	<b>21</b>	2.2	112.11
	Italy	<b>25,347,645</b>	<b>186</b>	13.6	41.81
	Portugal	<b>3,961,744</b>	<b>45</b>	2.3	38.63
	Greece	<b>3,696,604</b>	<b>8</b>	2.4	35.13
	France	<b>19,177,255</b>	<b>898</b>	14.6	29.51
	Estonia	<b>299,256</b>	<b>2</b>	0.3	22.62
	Belgium	<b>2,593,716</b>	<b>126</b>	2.6	22.59
	Latvia	<b>292,475</b>	<b>1</b>	0.4	15.17
	Spain	<b>6,596,936</b>	<b>152</b>	10.5	14.13
	Germany	<b>11,254,019</b>	<b>141</b>	18.7	13.54
	Lithuania	<b>292,475</b>	<b>1</b>	0.6	10.44
	Norway	<b>345,183</b>	<b>6</b>	n/a	6.47
	Poland	<b>2,141,230</b>	<b>55</b>	8.5	5.65
	Slovakia	<b>152,693</b>	<b>53</b>	1.2	2.80
	Czech Republic	<b>272,076</b>	<b>80</b>	2.4	2.55
	Hungary	<b>213,902</b>	<b>35</b>	2.2	2.20
	Luxembourg	<b>10,000</b>	<b>1</b>	0.1	1.66
	Bulgaria	<b>92,244</b>	<b>3</b>	1.6	1.31
	Romania	<b>247,626</b>	<b>54</b>	4.4	1.27
	Slovenia	<b>17,000</b>	<b>1</b>	0.5	0.82
	Croatia	<b>28,880</b>	<b>1</b>	0.9	0.69
	Ireland	<b>22,479</b>	<b>2</b>	1.1	0.47
	Austria	<b>33,369</b>	<b>5</b>	2.0	0.38
	Cyprus	<b>1,921</b>	<b>1</b>	0.3	0.16
	Malta	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	0.1	0.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>344,692,595</b>	<b>3,520</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>n/a</b>

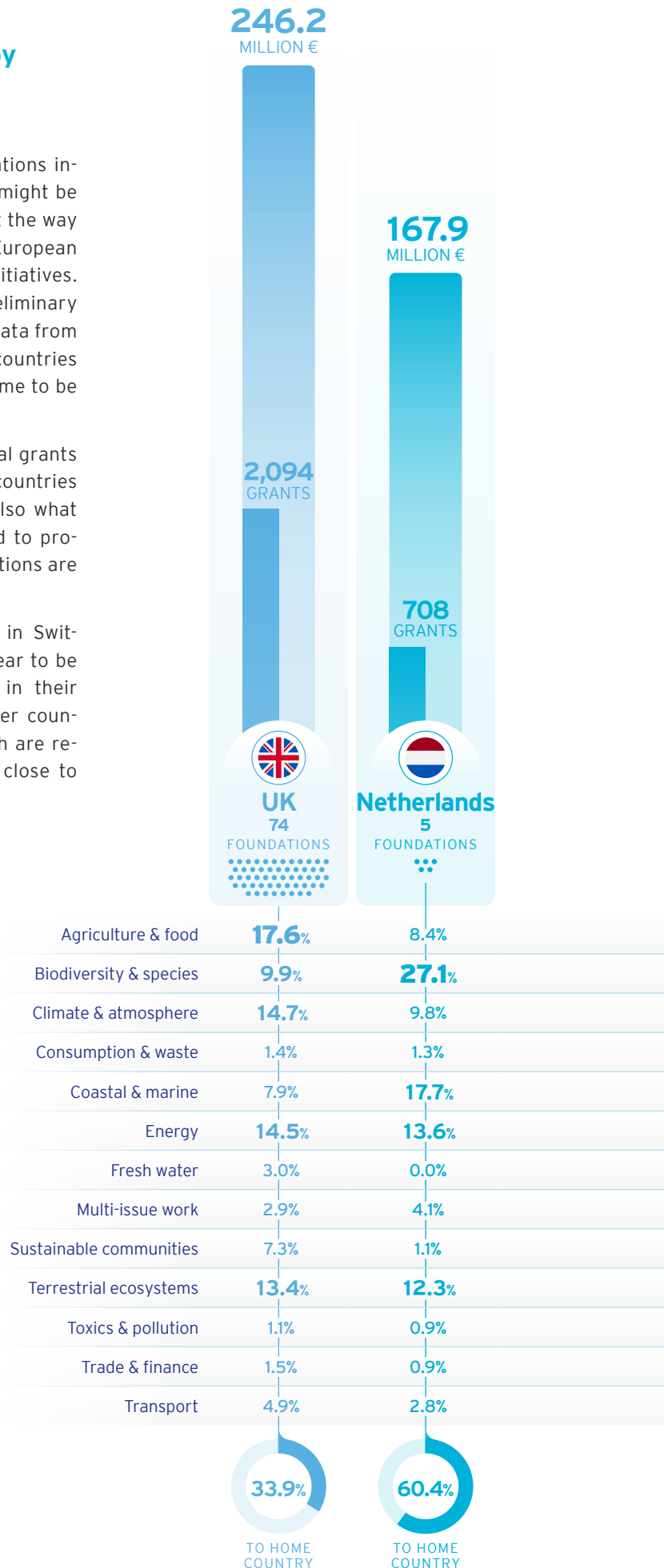
## The distribution of grants by foundations from different European countries

With an increasing number of foundations included in the research we thought it might be interesting to look for the first time at the way in which foundations in different European countries support environmental initiatives. These figures should be seen as preliminary and rather experimental, as we have data from many more foundations in some countries than we do in others. We hope over time to be able to improve this analysis.

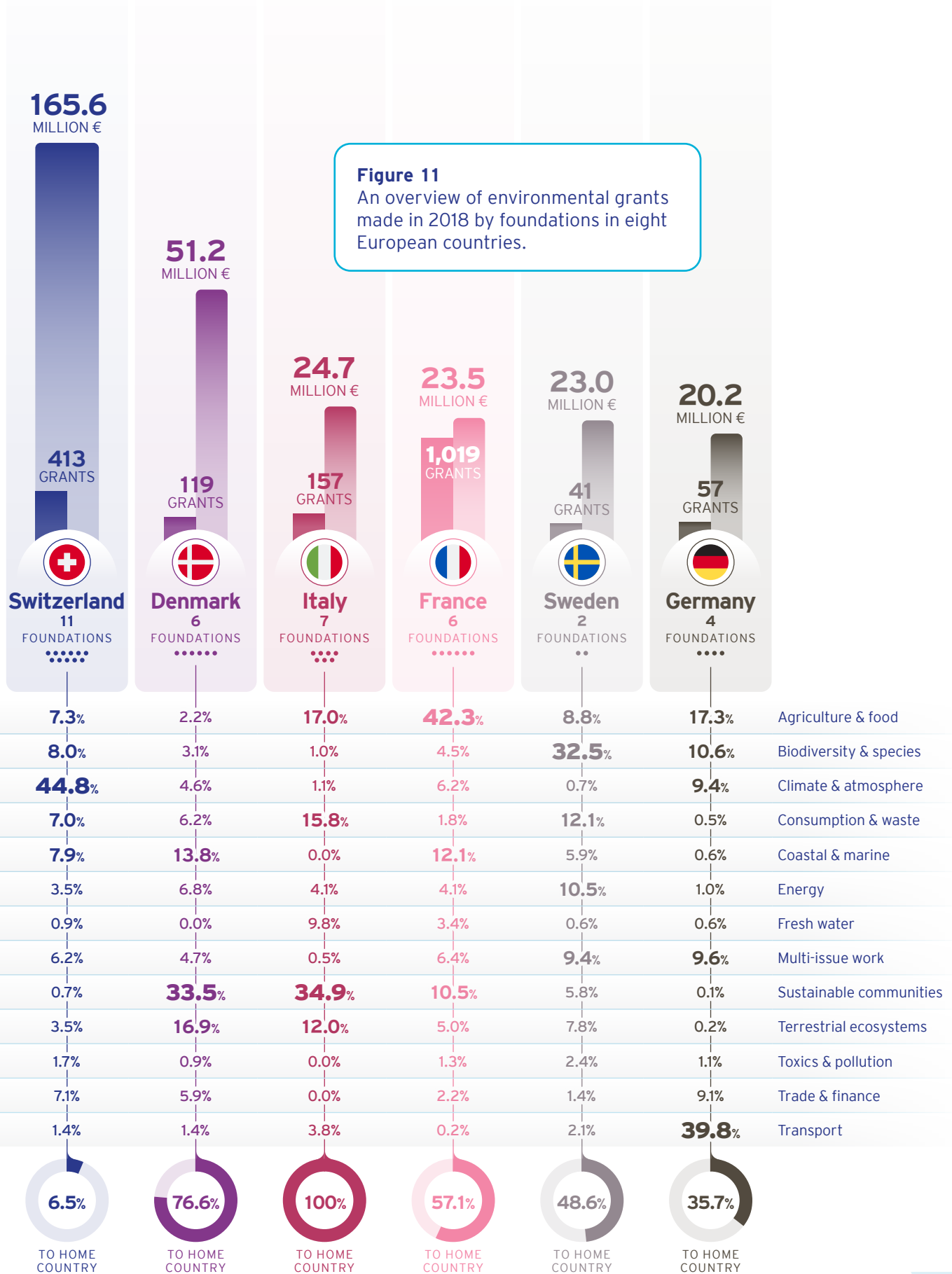
Figure 11 shows how the environmental grants from foundations in eight European countries break down by thematic issue, and also what proportion of the grants are directed to projects in the country where the foundations are located.

We can see that foundations based in Switzerland and the United Kingdom appear to be much more internationally-oriented in their grantmaking than those in some other countries, particularly those in Italy, which are required by statute to fund initiatives close to where they are located.

It also appears that foundations in these eight countries have somewhat different priorities in terms of their thematic focus, with a strong leaning towards **agriculture & food** grants in France (42.3% of the total), and a clear emphasis on **sustainable communities** work in both Denmark and Italy. We think that going forwards there is potential to develop this analysis, but in order to have reliable data we need to increase the number of foundations and grants from each country. We hope that more foundations will share their grants data in the future so that we can improve our collective understanding.







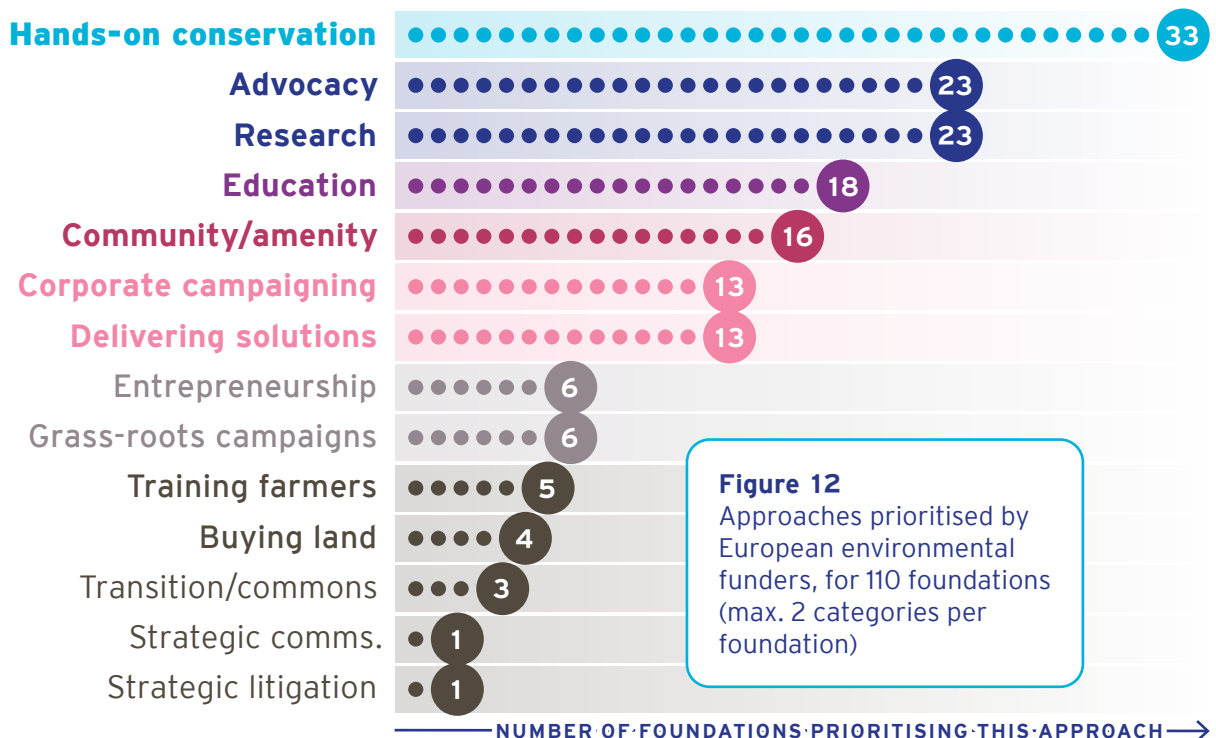
# Approaches prioritised by European environmental funders

Armed with a more comprehensive dataset than in earlier editions of this research we thought it would be interesting to categorise the foundations in the dataset based on the approaches to environmental work that they prioritise.

To do this we carefully reviewed the grants from each foundation, and assigned the foundation's overall grantmaking to a maximum of two approach categories. This was possible for 110 out of the 127 foundations. Annex V provides more information on the categories.

Figure 12 shows which approaches are most widely supported. It is important to remember that these figures reflect the main orientations of the 110 foundations, not every individual grant. For example, is foundation A mainly a funder of advocacy, or does it prioritise environmental education, or entrepreneurship and start-ups?

We can see that three approaches are particularly popular, namely *hands-on conservation*, *advocacy*, and *research*. These approaches correspond to some extent with the thematic issue focus of each foundation, so *hands-on conservation* funders will tend to have lots of grants in the thematic issue categories of *biodiversity & species*, or *terrestrial ecosystems*. Funders working in *climate & atmosphere*, or *energy*, are more likely to be using *advocacy* as an approach. And *community/amenity* approaches dominate in the *sustainable communities* thematic issue category.



## Insights from foundation staff - Time to boost cross-sectoral action

In this section we have provided an initial analysis of the approaches that are most widely supported by the foundations covered in the research. In practice many foundations and their grantees are using a mixture of approaches to achieve change. Foundation staff responding to our survey are keen to see cross-sectoral work increase, in terms of work across issue silos, work that involves different types of organisations, and work that combines a variety of approaches:

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*"I hope there could be less barriers among sectors: Social and cultural issues go together with the environmental ones and the Agenda 2030 shows it clearly. Nevertheless, foundations often work in silos."*

**Elena Jachia**, Fondazione Cariplo

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*"We try to encourage partnerships between sectors (industry + NGO for instance). When we support research and knowledge projects, we make sure that the institutions or people who are intended as the recipients of this new knowledge, are included in the project design somehow... We give priority to projects that have a clear theory of change, with a strong focus on impact."*

**Mikkel Klougart**, Velux Foundations

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*"I think that regardless of any specific environmental issue one addresses, it is imperative that such is viewed in a multi-faceted fashion. We try to promote a cross-cutting, multi-disciplinary approach to research projects. The philanthropic sector must continue to promote and support innovative and multi-dimensional approaches."*

**Marie-Christine Cormier-Salem**,  
Fondation Agropolis

*"Cross-disciplinary and transdisciplinary research can produce significant results. However, what is frustrating is that academic power and career structures are not favourable towards collaboration between different kinds of partners."*

**Kalle Korhonen**, Kone Foundation

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*"Foundations need funding priorities but we must not ignore that unabated climate change will severely undermine any progress in any field of philanthropic activity, because climate change is inextricably connected to everything else. That means that foundations working on topics like health, food systems, biodiversity, social justice, democracy and other societal challenges need to reflect in their theories of change that the impacts of climate change will endanger the stability of our ecological, economic, political and social systems. These thematic interlinkages open up new opportunities for philanthropic cooperation. We, thus, need to break down the thematic silos in order for transformative change to happen."*

**Lars Grotewold**, Stiftung Mercator

# Discourses prioritised by European environmental funders

We referred earlier to the way in which a foundation's values influence its grantmaking strategy, suggesting that it is useful to think in terms of different discourses of environmentalism, within which understandings of "effectiveness" and what constitutes a "win" vary widely.

In this section of the report we describe seven discourses of environmentalism, and attempt for the first time to calculate what proportion of the environmental grants made by European foundations fall within each discourse. The discourses below draw on research by leading environmental sociologists.<sup>19</sup> Allocating the activity of foundations to the different discourses requires some subjective judgments as there are borderline cases, but we have taken great care to be consistent in our approach.<sup>20</sup>

## The variety of environmental discourses

Understandings of what constitutes success differ widely within different environmental discourses. Take the example of protecting the orangutan. For a conservation organisation, the establishment of a nature reserve may represent a major success. A climate-change campaigner, by contrast, might question the long-term viability of such a reserve, given the risk that Indonesian forests will be impacted by climatic changes. An environmental justice organisation might not regard the project as positive at all, if it had negative consequences for the rights of forest peoples.

Seven thumbnail sketches of different environmental discourses follow. The first three are described as mainstream, meaning that their

recommendations are frequently taken up by governments, businesses and other stakeholders. The other four discourses are categorised as alternative, meaning that they tend to encounter heavier resistance from decision-makers - in other words, they fall outside political, corporate, and societal comfort zones. As one moves from the more mainstream discourses to the more alternative ones, increasing amounts of concern are being expressed in relation to justice, rights, inequality, economic growth, and the way in which political systems function. The demand for transformational change to the status quo also increases.

## Mainstream discourses

### PRACTICAL CONSERVATION

Traditionally focused on protecting species and habitats, this discourse is underpinned by science and a sound understanding of good conservation policy and practice. Key concerns include land management, and increasingly, the conservation challenge posed by climate change and resource consumption. Organisations work at local, national and international levels. There are tensions with government but rarely a focus on seeking far-reaching social and political change, with the emphasis being first and foremost on conserving the natural world.

<sup>19</sup> These include Robert Brulle, J. Craig Jenkins, John S. Dryzek, and Riley Dunlap.

<sup>20</sup> This section of the report draws heavily on research first carried out by the UK Environmental Funders Network and first published in Jon Cracknell et al., "Where the Green Grants Went, Volume 4", Environmental Funders Network, 2009.



## MARKET TRANSFORMATION

This discourse, which emerged in the 1990s, is a version of the sustainable development narrative, often presented as a market-based alternative to regulation and predicated on the idea that corporate power can be harnessed as a driver for positive change. The emphasis is on making economic growth consistent with environmental protection through a combination of new technology, voluntary industry standards, and behaviour change. Unlike practical conservationists, actors in this discourse typically operate at some distance from the ecosystems they ultimately seek to protect. Public engagement through green consumerism is a high priority, along with the greening of supply chains, and environmental education, including at the community level.

## STATE-LED REGULATION

This discourse focuses on the use of policy and legislation to set market signals in a way that mitigates the environmental consequences of economic growth. Familiar concepts include “polluter pays” and cost-benefit analysis. Key concerns include the protection of human health from environmental harms. Much work within this discourse is focused on government institutions at the national and international level. Social and political change is pursued, generally in incremental terms.

## Alternative discourses

### DEEPER SYSTEMS CHANGE

Groups working within this discourse seek to shift societal and system priorities fundamentally, rather than just limit the impacts of business-as-usual. A more politically ambitious discourse than those above, it focuses on changing paradigms in whole sectors of the economy like food, energy and transport. Social change is an increasingly high priority. For example, whereas an organisation operating in the *market transformation* discourse might encourage airlines to offer carbon offsetting schemes, a campaign group working in this discourse might be attempting to stop airport expansion altogether as part of a wider re-thinking of transportation.

## ONE PLANET, FAIR SHARES

Organisations working within this discourse explicitly address limits to economic growth and the need to reduce inequality, both within and between countries. Key concerns include curbing consumption, the redistribution of resources, and human well-being. This discourse is strongly global, with specific work carried out from local to international level. The level of social and political change sought is high; and the ideas articulated often encounter strong resistance from policymakers.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental justice organisations focus on the inequitable burden of pollution falling on vulnerable and low-income communities. Their work is framed by the concepts of rights, justice, and empowerment. Some groups focus on global and inter-generational issues, while others concentrate on local impacts arising from sources of pollution. Political change, particularly in the way that democracy is enacted, is a priority. Examples would be fence-line communities living next to industrial sites, or indigenous communities opposing infrastructure development on their ancestral land. The loss of life among environmental defenders working in this discourse has increased markedly in recent years, as one consequence of closing civil society space.

## REVOLUTIONARY

Groups working within this discourse often challenge global capitalism itself, with activists seeking to take back power from corporations and from what are seen as unaccountable elites. Individuals typically belong to national networks of activists, which in turn form part of wider global protest communities, with a revolutionary orientation. Criticisms of the status quo tend to be trenchant, although the alternatives sought are not always clearly articulated. Governments are likely to respond in a hostile manner, with heavy policing.

The descriptions here are deliberately brief, and we recognise that other authors have captured these discourses more elegantly, but we hope readers can see how a “win” for groups working in the *conservation* discourse might look and feel very different to one in the *one planet, fair shares* discourse. Tensions within social movements often arise when organisations are approaching the same set of thematic issues but operating within different discourses.

### How are foundation grants distributed across these discourses?

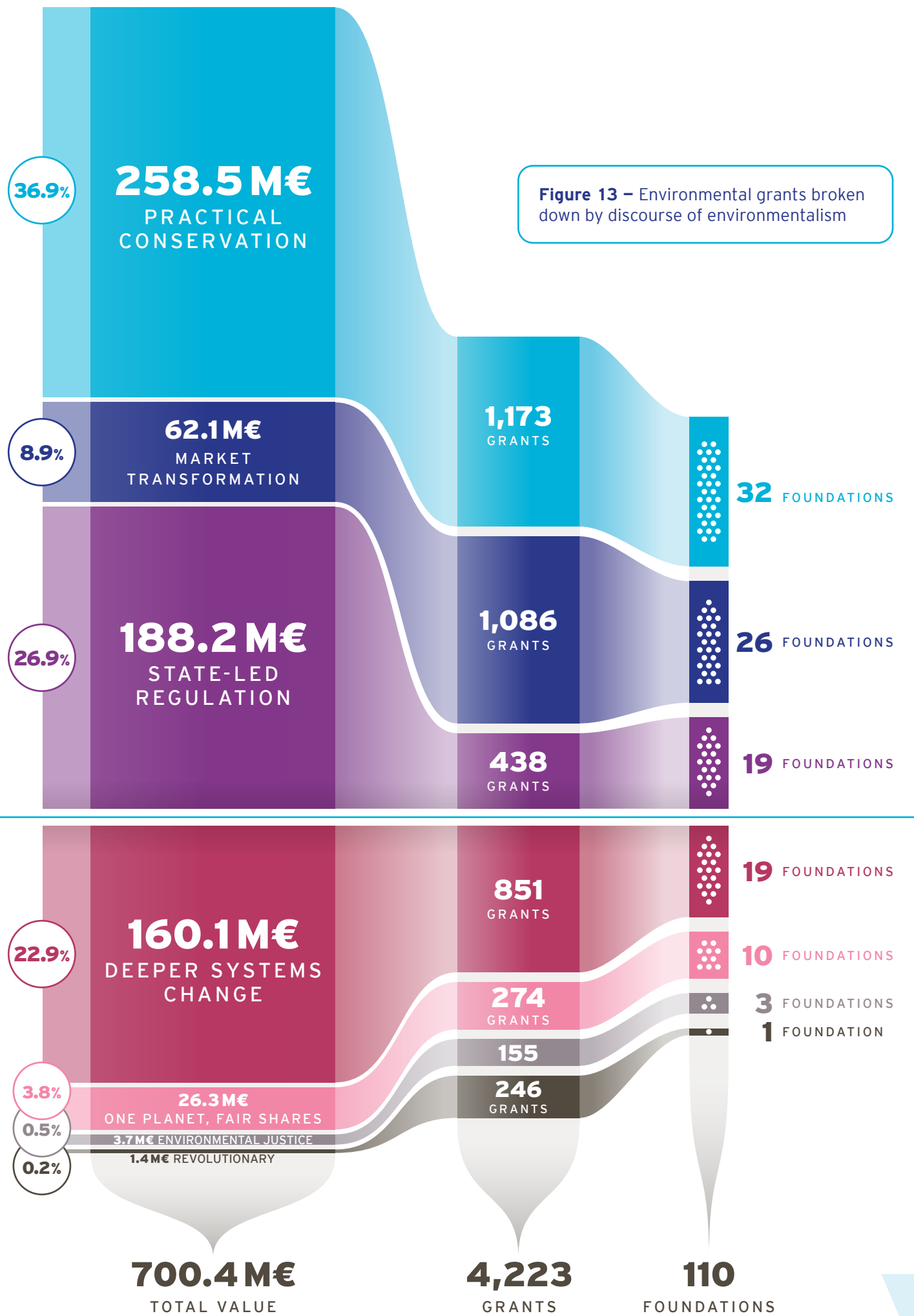
In order to explore the values-orientation of the foundations in this study we have assigned their approach to grantmaking to one of the seven discourses above, based on a careful analysis of their grants, and sometimes reference to their websites or annual reports. The €700.4 million of grants are broken down in Figure 13.<sup>21</sup>

### Implications for funders

As Figure 13 shows, the amount of funding available from foundations decreases steadily as one moves from the more mainstream to the more radical discourses of environmentalism. Some 72.7% of the grants that we categorised are found in the three more mainstream discourses, and just 27.4% in the four more radical discourses. Is this an optimal allocation of philanthropic capital, given that it is more flexible and able to take risks than other forms of funding available to civil society organisations? We have very short timeframes (less than a decade in the case of climate change) to secure profound changes to major parts of our economies (agriculture, energy, transport...).

Has the time come for foundations to be bolder in the kinds of work they support with a view to accelerating system change? We can see the political impetus for action on climate change provided by grass-roots and justice focused movements like Fridays for the Future, or Extinction Rebellion. We see the impact that Black Lives Matter has had on politics in the United States and around the world, not least in the recent US presidential election. It feels as though the social movements that are opening up political space are running well ahead of philanthropic foundations, when it comes to values and discourses. Should philanthropic foundations be stepping up more to fund work that actively challenges the status quo?

<sup>21</sup> The figures here are based on 110 foundations, rather than the full 127. There were 10 foundations where we felt we lacked a sufficient number of grants to be able to say anything useful in this regard, and a further 7 whose grantmaking was so varied that they defied allocation to one of the six discourses.



# Developing profiles of European environmental funders

Having looked at the grantmaking of the 127 foundations through the lenses of thematic issue, geography, approach, and environmental discourse we then brought these different dimensions together in order to set out initial profiles of European environmental funders, with five different groups of foundations. We plan to revise and develop this in the light of feedback and more data. The five groups are as follows:

## 1. The Issue Specialists

45 FOUNDATIONS

As their name suggests, the grantmaking of these foundations is primarily defined by their focus on a limited number of thematic issues. A focus on biodiversity and conservation work is undoubtedly the most common, with 16 of the 45 foundations being *biodiversity & species* specialists, and a further 9 specialising on either *terrestrial ecosystems* (5) or *coastal & marine* funding (4). A further 10 foundations can be considered to be *agriculture & food* specialists. The extent to which these foundations invest in staff who can build up expertise in these issues appears to vary widely, with some foundations operating proactive grants programmes and others being very reactive.

As one would expect, the grants from foundations in this group are highly concentrated on just a few thematic issues. On average more than 91% of grants are being directed to each foundation's two highest priority thematic issues.

The Issue Specialists have little obvious interest in climate change, with just over 12% of their combined grants going to work in the categories of *climate & atmosphere*, *energy*, and *transport*. Just 8 of the foundations in this group of 45 are working in the 4 alternative and more radical discourses described in the previous section.

## 2. The Gift Givers

32 FOUNDATIONS

This group are the opposite of the Issue Specialists, in that they tend to make grants across a wide range of thematic issues, using a wide range of different approaches. We found it hard to discern any particular pattern to their grantmaking. For some of the foundations we have relatively little data on which to draw, but others in this group are making hundreds of grants. They range in size from very small to very large, in terms of their environmental giving in 2018. They had the lowest proportion of grants focused in each foundation's two highest priority issue areas, at just 51.5%. This is not surprising given that many of these foundations are what might be termed generalists.

In some cases it appears that Gift Givers are operating as the flexible "swing capital" within the country where they are located, a source of funding for diverse environmental initiatives that is able to respond to different kinds of requests as and when they arise. This is an important role in terms of providing the oil for the wheels of social change, as mentioned earlier. There is a risk, however, of this kind of reactive grantmaking contributing to the duplication of effort within environmental movements, and to the fragmentation of the sector.



### 3. The Disruptors

#### 22 FOUNDATIONS

As their name suggests, the Disruptors are focused on driving change, whether politically, socially, or in terms of corporate behaviour. They are very internationally minded, with just 5.2% of their grants supporting initiatives in the country where the foundation is headquartered. All but one of these foundations are working within the four alternative discourses set out in the previous section, i.e. *deeper systems change; one planet, fair shares; environmental justice; or revolutionary*.

Ten of the 22 foundations make heavy use of advocacy as an approach, with others focused on changing corporate behaviour, and enabling grass-roots campaigning. In contrast to the funders in the Issues Specialist group above, the Disruptors are heavily focused on trying to mitigate climate change, with 76% of their combined grants going to the thematic issue categories of *climate & atmosphere, energy, and transport*.

### 4. Local Funders

#### 19 FOUNDATIONS

As their name suggests, the grantmaking of these foundations is defined in terms of geography, with all of their grants being directed to projects within the country where they are located. In some cases the geographical focus is sub-national, and limited to one city, or a city plus its immediate surroundings. Our impression is that all 19 of these foundations are required to keep their grants within these geographical boundaries, whereas other foundations choose to restrict their grants to the country where they are based as a matter of policy.

The foundations in this group tend to spread their grants across quite a wide range of issues (5.8 on average), and 12 out of the 19 are working in the *market transformation* discourse. There are lots of grants in the *sustainable communities* issue category, supporting environmental education projects, local amenities, small-scale conservation projects and the like. Average grant sizes are lower for this group than for any of the other five groups, at €62,453, less than half of that for the full set of 127 foundations.

### 5. Research Funders

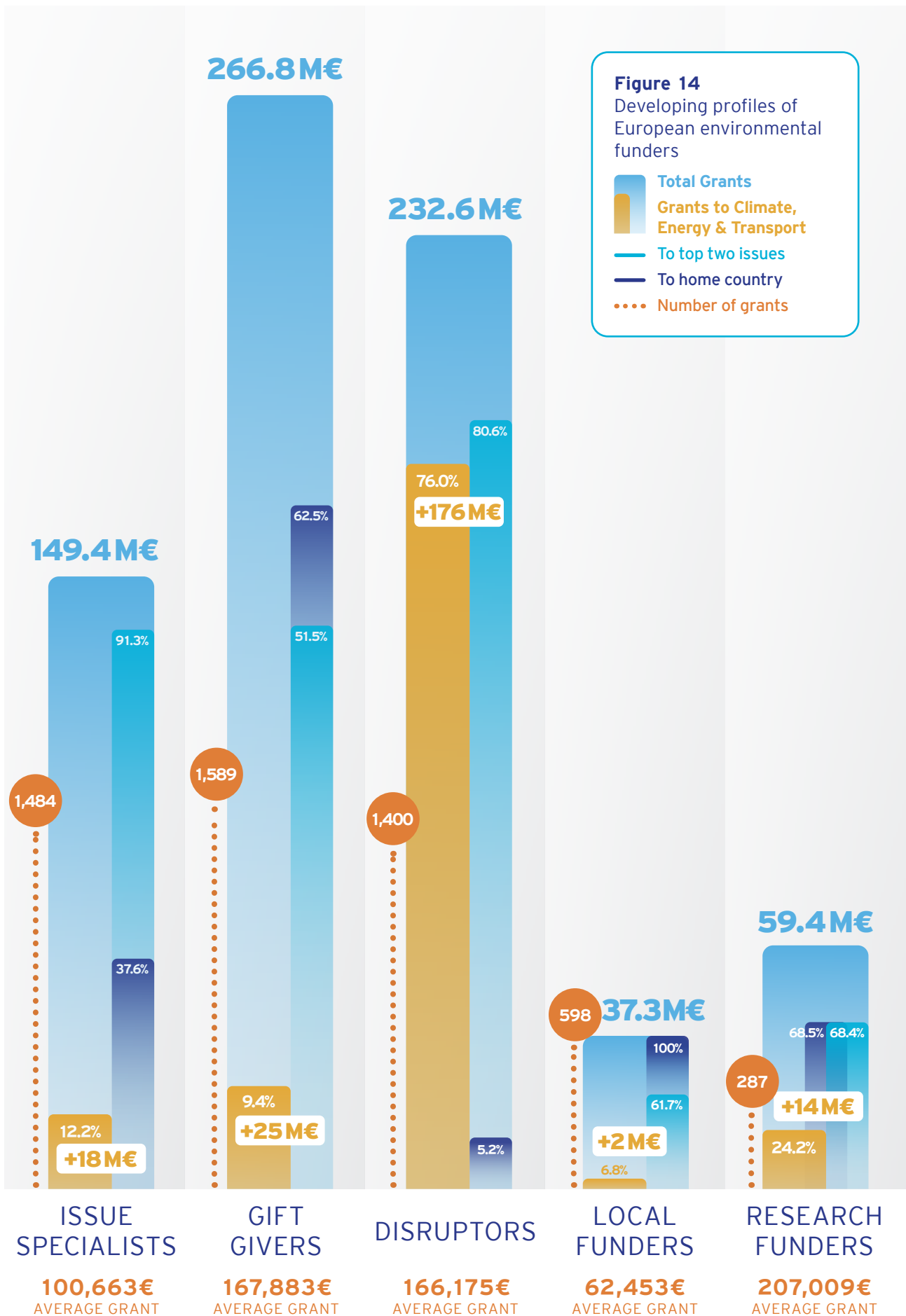
#### 9 FOUNDATIONS

Again, as suggested by the name, these foundations are primarily focused on *research* as a way of protecting the environment. They tend to either make grants to universities, or to individual students (support for PhD research, for example). Some of these foundations have a tight focus in terms of thematic issues and others fund a wide range of projects. Finnish foundations appear to have a strong orientation towards supporting research, relative to those in other countries covered by this report. This group have the largest average grant size, at €207,009, and nearly a quarter of this research funding is directed at the three categories of *climate & atmosphere, energy, and transport*.

#### Seeing environmental funding from a different angle

The profiles set out here provide a new perspective on the overall field of environmental philanthropy in Europe. We can see that much of the funding oriented towards change in government and corporate policy, on issues like climate change, or themes that are central to more radical environmental discourses, comes from a relatively small group of foundations (22 out of 127) that are making grants internationally. This initial set of profiles raises a number of questions:

- What can be done to encourage new foundations coming into the sector to add their weight to the work of the Disruptor group?
- The largest share of the overall funding, more than a third (35.8%), is coming from foundations that don't seem to have a particular focus to their grantmaking (the Gift Givers), and that are largely reactive. Is this a strength or a weakness for the sector as a whole?
- What would it take to increase the number of Issue Specialist foundations working on the "Cinderella" thematic issues, such as *consumption & waste, transport, trade & finance, toxics & pollution, and fresh water*? And is there any prospect of these Issue Specialists moving their work more towards the four alternative discourses set out above, so that they are more directly challenging the status quo?
- For the Local Funders and the Research Funders, who both have roles that are more niche, is there a way for them to ensure that the grants they make are helping to accelerate change at scale, for example by demonstrating alternatives that can be used to change what is seen as politically possible, or by targeting research funding towards gaps identified by funders active in other discourses?



# Issues for foundations to consider

In this final section we draw together some of the observations made elsewhere in the report, and pose some closing questions.

## Some things change...

Since the last edition of this research was published there has been an upsurge in awareness and concern about climate change and the broader environmental agenda. Our television screens have been filled with pictures of forest fires around the world, record-breaking tropical storms, and the catastrophe of Covid-19, with the likelihood of more pandemics in the future if we continue to encroach on the natural world.

The “Green Wave” in Europe had a positive impact on the European Parliament elections of 2019, and recent months have seen important pledges from governments around the world with respect to climate change, even if there is scepticism about the delivery mechanisms. The youth climate movement has played a vital role in all this, and is increasingly linked to the Black Lives Matter movement and other campaigns for social justice.

Will philanthropists stand up and be counted, bringing their much-needed resources to the table? Will we be able to look our children and grandchildren in the eye and tell them that we did everything we could, when just 2% of philanthropic giving is directed towards mitigating climate change? Is this the moment when we really ought to effect a step change in our ambition? The science tells us we have less than ten years to prevent catastrophic climate change. If not now, when?

In this context it is undoubtedly encouraging that new donors are coming into the field of environmental philanthropy, and that overall levels of environmental giving are rising. We also take heart from the increased funding going to work on the systemic drivers of environmental harm, such as trade and finance policies, over-consumption, and transport. And yet...

## Some things stay the same...

We found just 22 of the 127 foundations studied for this report are really what one might term Disruptors, pushing for transformative change to the economic system, to corporate behaviour, or to social values. The great majority of the foundations that we looked at are focused on more incremental change, or on protecting elements of the status quo. What would it take to reverse this situation, given that time is so short?

As we have noted before, philanthropic capital has particular qualities relative to other forms of income for civil society. It can fund work that neither governments nor corporate donors will contemplate, and which members of the public are unlikely to support via donations. It can take risks and it is uniquely well-placed when it comes to supporting disruptive change. How can European foundations maximise their effectiveness as change agents in relation to the environmental agenda?

Is it realistic to think that European environmental funders might begin to embrace a more pan-European approach to their environmental grantmaking, as one way in which to achieve this? Europe has played a global leadership role in environmental policy and looks set to continue in this area. Is this the moment where European foundations should look to actively collaborate in order to help sustain this leadership, and indeed to raise the bar higher?

Doing so would mean looking beyond our national settings, to see how our grants (whether nationally focused or international) fit into wider structures. It would mean thinking about where philanthropic capital is most badly needed in a different way. It would mean thinking about the strength of environmental movements in different countries, and what they lack in terms of resources. And it would require investment in the networks and infrastructure that can link organisations in different countries together, such that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Are we up to the challenge?

Future generations will be hoping that we are.

# ANNEX I Foundations covered in this report

 15 Juni Fonden (Denmark)	 Fondation Hoffman (Switzerland)
 Adesium Foundation (Netherlands)	 Fondazione Cariplo (Italy)
 Aga Khan Foundation (UK)	 Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Bolzano (Italy)
 Agropolis Fondation (France)	 Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Cuneo (Italy)
 AKO Foundation (UK)	 Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze (Italy)
 Arcadia Fund (UK)	 Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo (Italy)
 Ashden Trust, The (UK)	 Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Monte dei Paschi di Siena (Italy)
 Axa Research Fund (France)	 Freshfield Foundation (UK)
 Banister Charitable Trust (UK)	 Friends Provident Foundation (UK)
 Biffa Award (UK)	 Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (Portugal)
 Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK branch)	 Fundação Oceano Azul (Portugal)
 CH Foundation (UK)	 Fundación Biodiversidad (Spain)
 Children's Investment Fund Foundation (UK)	 Fundația pentru Parteneriat / Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation (Romania)
 City Bridge Trust (UK)	 Funding Fish (UK)
 Comic Relief (UK)	 Gaia Foundation (UK)
 David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (UK)	 Garfield Weston Foundation (UK)
 Den Danske Naturfond (Denmark)	 Gatsby Charitable Foundation (UK)
 Denise Coates Foundation (UK)	 Generation Foundation, The (UK)
 Dulverton Trust (UK)	 Global Greengrants Fund UK (UK)
 Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust (UK)	 Grantscape (UK)
 Ernest Cook Trust (UK)	 HDH Wills 1965 Charitable Trust (UK)
 Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust (UK)	 Jeremy Collier Foundation (UK)
 Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (UK)	 JJ Charitable Trust (UK)
 European Climate Foundation (Netherlands)	 JMG Foundation (Switzerland)
 FIA Foundation (UK)	 John Ellerman Foundation (UK)
 Fidelity UK Foundation (UK)	 Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (UK)
 Finnish Cultural Foundation / Suomen Kulttuurirahasto (Finland)	 Kamprad Family Foundation (Sweden)
 Fondation BNP Paribas (France)	 King Baudouin Foundation (Belgium)
 Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer pour le progrès de l'Homme (Switzerland)	 Kirby Laing Foundation (UK)
 Fondation Daniel & Nina Carasso (France)	 Kone Foundation (Finland)
 Fondation de France (France)	 KR Foundation (Denmark)
 Fondation Didier et Martine Primat (Switzerland)	
 Fondation Ensemble (France)	



 Kristian Gerhard Jebsen Foundation (Switzerland)	 Rothschild Foundation (UK)
 Laudes Foundation (Switzerland)	 Royal Foundation, The (UK)
 Linbury Trust, The (UK)	 Rufford Foundation (UK)
 Lunt Foundation (Switzerland)	 Samworth Foundation (UK)
 Lush (UK)	 Schöpflin Stiftung (Germany)
 Maj & Tor Nessling Foundation (Finland)	 Schroder Foundation (UK)
 Mark Leonard Trust (UK)	 Shell Foundation (UK)
 MAVA Foundation (Switzerland)	 Sigrid Rausing Trust (UK)
 Michael Uren Foundation (UK)	 Sophie und Karl Binding Stiftung (Switzerland)
 Mitsubishi Corporation Fund for Europe & Africa (UK)	 Stichting Fonds 1818 (Netherlands)
 Moondance Foundation (UK)	 Stiftung Mercator (Germany)
 Nadace Partnerství/Czech Environmental Partnership Foundation (Czech Republic)	 Stiftung Mercator Schweiz (Switzerland)
 Nadácia Ekopolis/Slovakian Environmental Partnership Foundation (Slovakia)	 Svenska Postkod Lotteriet (Sweden)*
 Nationale Postcode Loterij (Netherlands)	 Svenska Postkod Stiftelsen (Sweden)*
 Network for Social Change, The (UK)	 Synchronicity Earth (UK)
 Novo Nordisk Fonden (Denmark)	 Tellus Mater Foundation (UK)
 Oak Foundation (Switzerland)	 Thirty Percy Foundation (UK)
 Oglesby Charitable Trust (UK)	 Tiina and Antti Herlin Foundation (Finland)
 Ökotárs Alapítvány / Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation (Hungary)	 TreeSisters (UK)
 Pears Charitable Foundation (UK)	 Trust for London (UK)
 People's Trust for Endangered Species (UK)	 Tudor Trust (UK)
 Pig Shed Trust (UK)	 Underwood Trust (UK)
 Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation (UK)	 Velux Fonden (Denmark)
 Postcode Animal Trust (UK)	 Veolia Environmental Trust (UK)
 Postcode Earth Trust (UK)	 Virgin Unite (UK)
 Postcode Green Trust (UK)	 VolkswagenStiftung (Germany)
 Postcode Planet Trust (UK)	 Waterloo Foundation (UK)
 Prince Bernhard Nature Fund (Netherlands)	 Wellcome Trust, The (UK)
 Prince of Wales' Charitable Fund (UK)	 Westminster Foundation (UK)
 Realdania (Denmark)	 Whitley Animal Protection Trust (UK)
 Robert Bosch Stiftung (Germany)	 Wolfson Foundation (UK)
 Robertson Trust (UK)	

\* For the purposes of analysing the data, grants from the Svenska Postkod Lotteriet and Svenska Postkod Stiftelsen were combined. This explains why 128 foundations are shown in this list, while the report refers to 127.

# ANNEX II Environmental funding – Thematic issues

These “thematic issue” categories were developed in consultation with the principal Australian, Canadian, UK, and US networks of environmental grantmakers, in order to promote comparability in analyses of environmental funding patterns. Thirteen main thematic categories are featured, each described and further clarified through a list of keywords and concepts. Feedback from readers on these categorisations would be welcome.

## **Agriculture & food**

Includes support for organic and other forms of sustainable farming; training and research to help farmers in developing countries; campaigns relating to the control of the food chain; initiatives opposed to factory farming; horticultural organisations and projects; education on agriculture for children and adults (e.g. city farms); opposition to the use of genetically modified crops and food irradiation; work on food safety and on the genetic diversity of agriculture (including seed banks); and soil conservation.

## **Biodiversity & species preservation**

Covers work that protects particular species, be they plant or animal, vertebrate or invertebrate. Included within this is support for botanic gardens and arboretums; academic research on botany and zoology; the protection of birds and their habitats; funding for marine wildlife such as whales, dolphins and sharks; projects that aim to protect endangered species such as rhinos and elephants; and defence of globally important biodiversity hotspots, including the use of refuges, reserves and other habitat conservation projects; and wildlife trusts.

## **Climate & atmosphere**

Includes support for work targeted mainly towards climate change and some work directed towards the issues of ozone depletion, acid rain, air pollution and local air quality.

## **Coastal & marine ecosystems**

Includes support for work on fisheries; aquaculture; coastal lands and estuaries; marine protected areas; and marine pollution (such as marine dumping).

## **Consumption & waste**

Includes support for work directed at reducing consumption levels; initiatives that look to redefine economic growth; projects on waste reduction, sustainable design and sustainable production; recycling and composting schemes; and all aspects of waste disposal, including incinerators and landfills.

## **Energy**

Covers work for alternative and renewable energy sources; energy efficiency and conservation; work around fossil fuels; hydroelectric schemes; the oil and gas industries; and nuclear power.

## Fresh water

Includes support for all work relating to lakes and rivers; canals and other inland water systems; issues of groundwater contamination and water conservation; and projects relating to wetlands.

## Multi-issue work

Covers grants which are hard to allocate to specific categories, generally because the grant takes the form of core funding to an organisation that works on a range of different issues, or because the grant supports environmental media titles or environmental education projects covering a wide range of issues. In addition, some grants provided to generalist re-granting organisations are captured in this category, as it is not possible to tell which issues will be supported when the funds are re-granted.

## Sustainable communities

Includes support for urban green spaces and parks; community gardens; built environment projects; and community-based sustainability work.

## Terrestrial ecosystems & land use

Includes support for land purchases and stewardship; national or regional parks; landscape restoration and landscape scale conservation efforts; tree planting, forestry, and work directed to stopping de-forestation; and the impacts of mining.

## Toxics & pollution

Covers all the main categories of toxics impacting on the environment and human health: hazardous waste; heavy metals; pesticides; herbicides; radioactive waste; persistent organic pollutants; household chemicals; other industrial pollutants; and noise pollution.

## Trade & finance

Includes support for work on corporate-led globalisation and international trade policy; efforts to reform public financial institutions (such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and Export Credit Agencies); similar work directed at the lending policies of private banks; initiatives around the reduction of developing country debt; and local economic development projects and economic re-localisation.

## Transport

Includes support for work on all aspects of transportation, including public transport systems; transport planning; policy on aviation; freight; road-building; shipping; alternatives to car use plus initiatives like car pools and car clubs; the promotion of cycling and walking; and work on vehicle fuel economy.

# ANNEX III Countries\* receiving at least one grant

 Afghanistan	 Ecuador	 Liberia	 Senegal
 Albania	 Egypt	 Lithuania	 Serbia
 Argentina	 El Salvador	 Luxembourg	 Sierra Leone
 Armenia	 Eritrea	 Madagascar	 Slovakia
 Austria	 Estonia	 Malawi	 Slovenia
 Azerbaijan	 Ethiopia	 Malaysia	 Solomon Islands
 Bangladesh	 Fiji	 Mali	 South Africa
 Barbados	 Finland	 Mauritania	 South Korea
 Belgium	 France	 Mauritius	 Spain
 Belize	 Georgia	 Mexico	 Sri Lanka
 Benin	 Germany	 Micronesia	 St. Vincent & The Grenadines
 Bhutan	 Ghana	 Mongolia	 Sudan
 Bolivia	 Greece	 Montenegro	 Swaziland
 Bosnia & Herzegovina	 Grenada	 Morocco	 Sweden
 Botswana	 Guatemala	 Mozambique	 Switzerland
 Brazil	 Guinea	 Myanmar	 Taiwan
 Bulgaria	 Guinea-Bissau	 Namibia	 Tajikistan
 Burkina Faso	 Guyana	 Nepal	 Tanzania
 Burundi	 Haiti	 Netherlands	 Thailand
 Cambodia	 Honduras	 Netherlands Antilles	 Togo
 Cameroon	 Hong Kong	 New Zealand	 Tonga
 Canada	 Hungary	 Nicaragua	 Tunisia
 Cape Verde	 Iceland	 Niger	 Turkey
 Central African Republic	 India	 Nigeria	 Turks & Caicos
 Chad	 Indonesia	 Norway	 Uganda
 Chile	 Iran	 Pakistan	 Ukraine
 China	 Iraq	 Palestine	 United Kingdom
 Colombia	 Ireland	 Panama	 United States
 Comoros	 Italy	 Papua New Guinea	 Uruguay
 Costa Rica	 Ivory Coast	 Peru	 Vanuatu
 Croatia	 Jamaica	 Philippines	 Vietnam
 Cuba	 Japan	 Poland	 Zambia
 Cyprus	 Kazakhstan	 Portugal	 Zimbabwe
 Czech Republic	 Kenya	 Republic of Congo	
 Democratic Republic of Congo	 Kosovo	 Romania	
 Denmark	 Kyrgyzstan	 Russia	
 Dominican Republic	 Laos	 Rwanda	
	 Latvia	 Sao Tome & Principe	

\* Countries were self-identified on the grants data



# ANNEX IV

## Detailed data tables

**Data behind Figures 2 and 3** – Environmental grants broken down by thematic issue category (2018)

Thematic Issue	Value of grants (€)	% of all grants by value	No. of grants	Average grant (€)	No. of foundations
Climate & atmosphere	134,298,020	18.0	374	359,086	46
Biodiversity & species	101,199,869	13.6	1,070	94,579	69
Agriculture & food	93,088,576	12.5	712	130,742	74
Terrestrial ecosystems	76,475,014	10.3	420	182,083	70
Coastal & marine	76,098,842	10.2	301	252,820	52
Energy	73,229,146	9.8	445	164,560	43
Sustainable communities	52,295,938	7.0	868	60,249	54
Multi-issue work	34,397,519	4.6	363	94,759	63
Consumption & waste	29,633,910	4.0	219	135,315	42
Transport	29,516,485	4.0	163	181,083	26
Trade & finance	22,687,621	3.0	133	170,584	28
Fresh water	13,202,001	1.8	161	82,000	45
Toxics & pollution	9,431,066	1.3	129	73,109	24
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>745,554,008</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,358</b>	<b>139,148</b>	<b>n/a</b>

**Data behind Figure 7** – Distribution of grants at the continental level - 2016 compared to 2018

	Value of grants (€)	% of total grants by value	No. of grants	2018	Value of grants (€)	% of total grants by value	No. of grants
2016							
Europe	290,331,536	51.0	2,639	<b>322,617,869</b>	<b>49.3</b>	<b>2,950</b>	
International	162,636,027	28.6	387	<b>195,527,748</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>330</b>	
Asia	40,720,623	7.2	388	<b>33,698,036</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>253</b>	
Africa	37,854,554	6.7	326	<b>65,875,103</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>444</b>	
Latin America	27,193,923	4.8	179	<b>30,589,113</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>216</b>	
North America	9,843,272	1.7	37	<b>5,610,287</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>18</b>	
Oceania	223,733	0.0	9	<b>422,080</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>568,803,669</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,965</b>	<b>654,340,235</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,221</b>	

# ANNEX V

## Approach categories

For the analysis in the chapter, “Approaches prioritised by European environmental funders”, we categorised 110 of the foundations based on the approaches to environmental work that they support, allocating each foundation to a maximum of two approach categories. The categories we used are as follows:

### **Advocacy**

Work aiming to influence public policy or political decision-makers

### **Buying land**

Land acquisition for conservation projects

### **Community/amenity**

Projects that help particular communities (often in cities) to live more sustainable lives, often by providing local amenities like green space

### **Corporate campaigning**

Efforts to change the approach of companies, whether in a confrontational or more business-friendly way

### **Delivering solutions**

Provision of services on-the-ground, for example energy efficiency advice, or a farmer’s market

### **Education**

Environmental education for the general public, plus training programmes

### **Entrepreneurship**

Support for new environmental businesses, or innovation within existing companies

### **Grass-roots campaigns**

Community-based campaigns, usually in opposition to environmentally damaging infrastructure or activity

### **Hands-on conservation**

Species-specific conservation work, or sustainable management of land and other environments

### **Research**

This is usually scientific research, but occasionally includes policy analysis

### **Strategic communications**

Work on framing, narratives, story-telling

### **Strategic litigation**

Use of the law to protect the environment, through court cases challenging government or corporate practice

### **Training farmers**

Projects that aim to give farmers new knowledge and skills

### **Transition/commons**

Projects explicitly seeking a transition to new economic models (often involving re-localisation)

# ANNEX VI Additional resources and other geographically focused environmental funder networks

This report sits alongside similar research into environmental funding patterns such as:

- “Tracking the Field”<sup>22</sup> reports, produced by the US Environmental Grantmakers Association (EGA)
- “Where the Green Grants Went”<sup>23</sup> reports, produced by the UK Environmental Funders Network (EFN)
- “Advancing a Sustainable Future: A Profile of Environmental Philanthropy”<sup>24</sup>, produced by the Canadian Environmental Grantmakers Network (CEGN)

## Other geographically focused environmental funder networks:

Asociación Española de Fundaciones, The pact for climate of Spanish Foundations (Spain)  
[www.fundaciones.org/es/noticias-aef/unete-firma-pacto-fundaciones-por-el-clima](http://www.fundaciones.org/es/noticias-aef/unete-firma-pacto-fundaciones-por-el-clima)

Associazione di Fondazioni e di Casse di Risparmio Funders Commission on Environment (Italy)  
[www.acri.it](http://www.acri.it)

Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network (Australia)  
[www.aegn.org.au](http://www.aegn.org.au)

Biodiversity Funders Group (US)  
<https://biodiversityfunders.org>

Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen, Working Group on Environment (Germany)  
[www.stiftungen.org](http://www.stiftungen.org)

Centre Français des Fonds et Fondations, Working Group on Environment (France)  
[www.centre-francais-fondations.org](http://www.centre-francais-fondations.org)

EFC European Environmental Funders Group (International)  
[www.efc.be/thematic\\_networks/eefg](http://www.efc.be/thematic_networks/eefg)

Environment Funders Canada  
<https://environmentfunders.ca>

Environmental Funders Network (UK)  
[www.greenfunders.org](http://www.greenfunders.org)

Environmental Grantmakers Association (US)  
[www.ega.org](http://www.ega.org)

Latin American and Caribbean Network of Environmental Funds (RedLAC) (International)  
[www.redlac.org](http://www.redlac.org)

SwissFoundations Working Group on Environment (Switzerland)  
[www.swissfoundations.ch](http://www.swissfoundations.ch)

Vereniging van Fondsen in Nederland, Working Group Sustainable Policy (The Netherlands)  
[www.verenigingvanfondsen.nl](http://www.verenigingvanfondsen.nl)

<sup>22</sup> See for instance, Environmental Grantmakers Association, “Tracking the Field, Volume 7: Analyzing Trends in Environmental Grantmaking”, EGA & Candid, New York, 2021.

<sup>23</sup> See for instance, “Where the Green Grants Went, Volume 7: Patterns of UK Funding for Environmental and Conservation Work”, EFN, June 2019.

<sup>24</sup> Canadian Environmental Grantmakers Network, “Advancing a Sustainable Future: A Profile of Environmental Philanthropy – 2016 data update”, CEGN, Toronto, May 2018.

# About the EFC

As a leading platform for philanthropy in Europe, the EFC works to strengthen the sector and make the case for institutional philanthropy as a formidable means of effecting change.

We believe institutional philanthropy has a unique, crucial and timely role to play in meeting the critical challenges societies face. More people and causes benefit from institutional philanthropy than ever before, from eradicating deadly diseases and making the world's populations healthier to combating climate change and fighting for global human rights and equality.

Working closely with our members, a dynamic network of strategically-minded philanthropic organisations from more than 30 countries, we:

- **Foster peer-learning** by surfacing the expertise and experience embedded in the sector
- **Enhance collaboration** by connecting people for inspiration and joint action
- **Represent philanthropy** for favourable policy and regulatory environments
- **Build a solid evidence base** through knowledge and intelligence
- **Raise the visibility** of philanthropy's value and impact

**The EFC European Environmental Funders Group (EEFG)** brings together funders active or interested in the fields of environment, sustainable development and climate change. Its fundamental added value is to provide a safe space for funders to network, exchange experiences, reflect on strategies, build synergies, and engage in both formal and informal collaborations.

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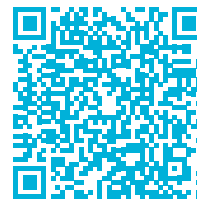
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