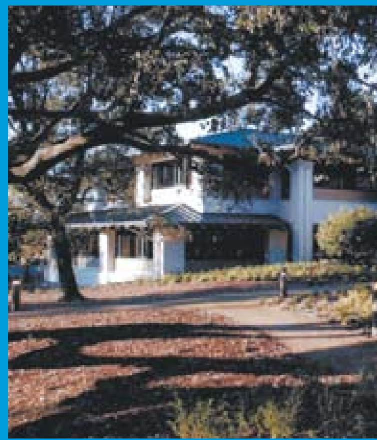
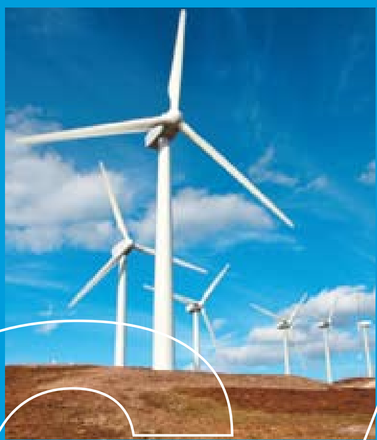




EGA Journal

SPRING 2008

Special Issue: Funders Challenge Climate Change

Contents

Cover Photos by: Top row, left to right: Daniel Moss, Grassroots International; Paul S. Hamilton/Reptile Research. Middle row, left to right: Courtesy of 1Sky; courtesy of Global Greengrants Fund; courtesy of The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Bottom row, left to right: Eric Waters; Rafa Irusta, istockphoto.com; courtesy of Lambi Fund of Haiti.

Executive Director's Letter

BY DANA LANZA

photo: Djevad Gasi

Dear Members:

I hope this springtime issue of *EGA Journal* meets you with seasonable weather. If not inside conducting the important work of bringing resources to the environmental movement, ideally you are outside, planting your garden, attending your children's sporting events, or simply enjoying a good book in the sunshine.

Wherever you are, climate change is no doubt on your mind. As many of us know, 2007 was one of the two hottest years in recent decades. Most of us have experienced unusual weather events and their impacts on the places where we live and work. As the staggering global statistics about climate change mount our individual observations, we find ourselves alternately shaken by shock, fear, denial, and scarcity, then lifted by courage, vision, hope, and tenacity. "We can overcome this," we tell our colleagues, our families, ourselves.

This issue of *EGA Journal* is dedicated to what is arguably the most significant challenge of recorded human history: climate change. Invited by our Editorial Committee to submit ideas around the broad theme of global warming, you, the members, responded with a truly inspiring array of stories. The articles within detail the many ways we environmental grantmakers are responding to the crisis before us with honesty, creativity, reasoned innovation, and intransigence.

In addition, we commissioned a cover story that summarizes and elucidates some of the emerging climate funding initiatives underway within the association. The article was preceded by a one-hour webinar, "Climate 101," that showcased a few of the strategies described here.

These efforts are just starting points as EGA begins to seed ways in which we can better help you address climate change through your existing, and new, philanthropic efforts. Working through the Council on Foundations and other channels, EGA intends to position itself as a platform for basic climate change information and networking resources for the philanthropic community as a whole. Ultimately, our hope is to bring new dollars to environmental grantmaking, and to clean and green investments, while identifying leverage points between our grantmaking and that of our funding colleagues outside of EGA.

As we move forward, in times like these it's important to draw on our inner resources as well as our professional ones. While we may sometimes feel that we simply do not possess enough knowledge, political will, or capital to address the climate challenge, we must resist the temptation to fall into scarcity thinking. As spring approaches, I encourage all of you to participate in the regeneration of the year by bearing intentional witness to the abundance of our planet. Everything we need to make a quantum leap forward into a carbon-free future is right here, right now.

By gratefully acknowledging "bounty" in all its many manifestations in our lives, we recognize our strengths, instilling within ourselves the courage to create deep change. Working together with appreciation and respect for our differences in vision, strategy, and being will help us to construct the many necessary components to ensure our collective future.

In gratitude,
Dana

The Climate Change Challenge: Finding Your Funding Niche

BY MIRANDA SPENCER, EDITOR, *EGA JOURNAL*

Global warming may pose the biggest challenge environmental grantmakers have ever faced. Where and how can philanthropists begin to engage effectively? In the past few years, likeminded funders—along with concerned NGOS—have coalesced around the issue, adopting a variety of strategies that attack climate change from different angles. Here we present an introduction to several approaches that allow EGA members to target or expand their funding of climate-change initiatives in ways appropriate to their mission and giving style.

Climate and Energy Funders: Pushing US Policy

The Climate and Energy Funders (C&EF), a working group of the Consultative Group on Biological Diversity and an EGA affinity group, was founded in 2002 to help funders coordinate and increase resources directed to these issues. In 2004, it set its vision as supporting efforts to move the United States to a leadership position in the global transition to a clean-energy economy.

C&EF's approach is anchored to the near-term specific goal of securing a national greenhouse-gas-reduction policy by 2010 that includes a mandatory federal cap on carbon emissions. As the funders explain in their Framework Document, "the United States' total carbon pollution is the most important variable in this debate, a simple metric to focus on and very difficult to significantly affect except by targeting it directly."

Photo courtesy of CCPAN

Caps on carbon emissions, such as from power plants like these, are one goal of the Climate and Energy Funders.

To guide their members' work, C&EF provide both a larger framework of long-term investments—key strategies for domestic action on global warming—and a set of urgent annual priorities centered on important current state and regional initiatives that can serve as models for broader actions.

Besides achieving state and regional policy wins, the core strategies include mobilizing the public and engaging key constituencies (including cultivating new allies such as farmers and the religious community); partnering with and pressuring industry (to, for example, support uniform national emissions standards and eradicate new coal-fired plants); applying international pressure (particularly in Canada and the European Union, where climate policies are further along); and accelerating a clean-energy economy (including increasing institutional demand for green energy and mandates such as renewable energy standards).

Recent successes include helping coordinate foundations to support advocacy work on California's Global Warming Solutions Act (AB32); winning various state campaigns for utility efficiency; and raising funds for opposition to coal-fired power plants in Florida.

Focusing on US climate policy is "a highly effective leverage for philanthropic dollars," says Program Manager Paige Brown, because in the absence of federal action, other sectors have been stepping up with promising programs, from carbon cap-and-trade regimes in 10 East Coast states to hundreds of mayoral initiatives to meet Kyoto targets in their cities. Efforts like these at every level of government help build momentum, she explains, and position the United States to move from laggard to leader in international climate negotiations.

Climate & Energy Funders At-a-Glance

Members

Private foundations and individual funders interested in climate and energy issues

Money

$120 million in funding invested (as of 2006)

Methods

Convenings, conference calls (such as January's "What Happened in Bali?"), direct outreach to individual foundations and foundation networks; working with EGA to educate the broader grantmaking community on climate change issues and opportunities relevant to their work.

How to Get Involved

Join the C&EF listserv; participate in the monthly calls (announced on EGA's listserv); contact Paige Brown at pbrown@cgbd.org to find other funders doing similar work and share your own funding strategies.

Website

www.cgbd.org/visitors/aboutcgbd/workinggroups/climateandenergyfunders/

Facilitated by CCPAN, diverse funders from around the globe can now engage in dialogue (often face-to-face) to forge cooperative partnerships, share best practices, and coordinate actions in regionally appropriate ways.

Climate Change Philanthropy Action Network: Forging International Links

Global warming stands to undercut all the other types of work funders do; given the scale and urgency of the problem, "collaboration is an absolute imperative," says Denise Lee, director of global climate change initiatives of the Nand & Jeet Khemka Foundation. Yet, "we noticed funders don't really talk to each other."

To fill that gap, in fall 2006 Khemka launched the Climate Change Philanthropy Action Network (CCPAN): a global peer network of committed donors united around climate-change mitigation. The initiative emerged from the Iceland Climate Change Summit, where philanthropists, experts, entrepreneurs, and others met to exchange ideas. Facilitated by CCPAN, diverse funders from around the globe can now engage in dialogue (often face-to-face) to forge cooperative partnerships, share best practices, and coordinate actions in regionally appropriate ways.

Through forging these international links, CCPAN aims to scale up and streamline climate-change mitigation efforts. "Yesterday's philanthropy was, 'I went over to Africa and met someone interesting and now I'm going to fund him,' explains Lee. "Now we say, `Here's the issue we're interested in, here are the [key players] for that issue, here are our core competencies, and what [can we] do with that? …Where are the big leverage points?'"

However, explains Lee, rather than "focusing on a specific outcome and then prescribing the approach," CCPAN simply creates a space for things to happen. "Our goal is to disseminate effective strategic models and identify [gaps] so we can catalyze collaboration at a global level that will lead to more effective giving, and more giving."

To a degree, the networks that have formed break down along action areas and/or by country or region—

for example, business, government policy, and building public awareness—but creative collaborations are encouraged to unfold organically.

Many initiatives with global reach and participation have been accelerated at CCPAN convenings, including the Earth Love Movement, an environmental communications campaign conceived by several of the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders to enlist corporate marketing executives in the fight against global warming through branding—producing and being identified with low-carbon products. Launched at Davos, the "love" has been spread in Germany, China, and elsewhere with corporate and foundation funding.

Aggregating diverse, global climate funding information is also central to CCPAN's strategy. It is building a user-controlled online portal for the World Wide Web for current and potential funders that will map out climate-change mitigation opportunities by who, what, where, and how, and provide a catalog of existing projects/actors along with financial breakdowns highlighting holes that funders can fill.

CCPAN At-a-Glance

Membership

Individual philanthropists, family foundations, corporate foundations

Money

Total funding not tracked; the founding Khemka Foundation has devoted some $100,000 to administering it

Methods

Community building through convenings (most recently in Taiwan to discuss Asia-specific climate issues); sending delegations to international meetings (e.g., the UN Climate Change Negotiations in Poland this December); online portal (in development)

How to Get Involved

Come to a convening or initiate your own; propose a project or funder interest group; help develop the portal. Contact Denise Lee: ccpan@khemkafoundation.org

Website

www.ccpan.org

Design to Win: Philanthropy's Role in the Fight Against Global Warming

This recently published report by California Environmental Associates, overseen by a world-class scientific advisory committee and six EGA member foundations*, distills the findings of an in-depth analysis of scientific literature, economic research, and expert opinion on climate change and how best to mitigate it. Its conclusion: "If we don't act boldly in the next decade to prevent carbon lock-in, we could lose the fight against global warming…Our best hope for staying in the game is to limit new sources of greenhouse gases so that technological breakthroughs can save us down the line." That, they say, will mean nothing less than a "makeover of the global economy" long term and a reduction of greenhouse gases by some 30 gigatons by 2030.

Fortunately, philanthropy—wielding the advantages of patient investing and international reach—can be a powerful force in a battle that must be fought simultaneously on many fronts. *Design to Win*'s arsenal of interventions is built on a set of "priority strategies" requiring some $600 million in new funding—but which alone can potentially eliminate one-third (11 gigatons) of the targeted emissions.

These strategies include concentrating efforts geographically (focusing mainly on the United States, European Union, China, and India); spurring policy reform that caps and "puts a price on" carbon and requires storage and sequestration for unavoidable emissions; and supporting green initiatives in five carbon-intensive sectors of society—power, industry, buildings, transportation, and forestry. Throughout, *Design to Win* points funders to sector-specific grantmaking opportunities and concludes with a three-point "menu" of necessary investments: supporting existing NGOs and cultivating new ones; creating nation-specific expertise; and build international best-practice centers.

The report may be downloaded at the URL listed below. At press time, organizing efforts around its recommendations were still in their early stages.

*The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Energy Foundation, Joyce Foundation, Oak Foundation, and William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. These funders are also the report's financial sponsors.

—*Miranda Spencer*

1 Sky: Building a Single Movement

1Sky, conceived in April 2007, seeks to bring diverse global-warming action advocates together under one umbrella—hence the name 1Sky and its tagline "One Climate. One Future. One Chance." But while funders have played and will play an indispensable role (the Rockefeller Family Fund is currently its fiscal sponsor) this campaign aims to unite as many US constituencies as possible in a single movement. The goal: to use their cumulative weight to push science-based US climate legislation commensurate with the severity of the climate crisis by next year—and to ensure it is enforced and strengthened over time.

The 1Sky Policy Platform has three elements: **Mobilize America for Solutions**, **Secure Our Future**, and **Transform Our Energy Priorities**. Respectively, their goals are, among other things: to create five million new jobs through investment in a new energy economy and energy conservation; to reduce global warming pollution at least 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and at least 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050; and to end development of conventional coal plants, steering away from fossil fuel dependence and toward a "clean energy future" supported by strong standards and incentives for efficiency and renewables.

However, 1Sky isn't a new organization but a collaborative campaign designed as a rallying point for supporters from a broad cross-section of society. As such, it is as much about mobilizing and choreographing a critical mass of people as it is about establishing policy. If many speak with one voice in support of the same platform, the demand for climate action will be like "a giant megaphone Congress will finally be able to hear" over the din of the oil and gas lobbies, as founding member John Fogarty of Physicians for Social Responsibility puts it.

The campaign's main strategies are communicating its message to millions of voters; activating an "unprecedented" field mobilization across the country, using creative tactics and supporting grassroots efforts; educating decision makers and the public, using the 2008 elections as a focal point; and advocating for 1Sky solutions in Congress and state governments.

Since its official rollout last December, 1Sky has helped coordinate and participate in numerous events and programs with its partners. For example, the 1Sky Policy Platform was the focus of the nationwide Step It Up events for Earth Day 2007 in all 50 states, calling for leadership on global warming, and of Power Shift, a youth summit of 44 organizations at which 6,000 students gathered in Washington DC and 3,000 participants lobbied Congress.

Interested grantmakers have many support options, from direct donation to 1Sky (the Rockefeller Brothers Fund gave $1 million) to supporting groups allied with it to working for it directly (Town Creek Foundation Trustee and EGA co-founder Betsy Taylor is president of its board).

1Sky supporters rally in front of the US Capitol in Washington, DC.

1Sky At-a-Glance

Membership

Any and all sectors of US society, which so far include foundations as well as national, regional, and local groups and prominent individuals from the environmental, faith, student, labor, science, business, military, government, and many other communities.

Money

$2 million raised so far, mainly from EGA member foundations (most of its work has been pro bono)

Methods

Serving as a hub to mobilize a movement via communications, field work, GOTV (Get Out the Vote), advocacy, capacity building, partnering

How to Get Involved

Seeking collaborators, ideas, and funding. Contact Campaign Director Gillian Caldwell at gillian@1sky.org or Board President Betsy Taylor at Betsy@1sky.org

Website

www.1sky.org (This interactive portal offers ways to get involved—including sign-ups and logo downloads, action updates, and latest endorsements.)

Photo courtesy of Ceres

Ceres President Mindy S. Lubber, who directs the Investor Network on Climate Risk, addresses 400 investor and Wall Street leaders at the 2005 Investor Summit on Climate Risk at the United Nations in New York City.

Ceres' Investor Network on Climate Risk: Focusing on Finance

The Investor Network on Climate Risk (INCR) is founded on the idea that corporations' influence on the environment is enormous. So it focuses on "leveraging the collective power of investors" to spur companies, Wall Street, and policymakers to respond to the financial risks and investment opportunities presented by climate change.

INCR is a project of the nonprofit Ceres, founded in 1989 as a national network of investors, environmentalists, and other public interest groups working with companies and investors to address sustainability challenges. Ceres' growing concern over climate change—which president Mindy Lubber worries "could have a worse economic impact than the Great Depression"—led it in 2003 to hold the first Institutional Investor Summit on Climate Risk at the United Nations. The summit launched the INCR to organize institutional investors—and their combined financial clout—to pressure businesses to integrate climate change risk into their strategic planning and throughout their operations.

One pressure tactic is the Climate Risk Disclosure Campaign. Last fall, INCR members made headlines by submitting a petition requesting that the Securities and Exchange Commission require publicly traded companies to spell out possible material losses from climate change (climate regulations, extreme weather events, etc.). More than $6 trillion in investor dollars and key Senate leaders now back the campaign. Climate-change risk is financially quantifiable, Lubber points out, and "what gets measured gets managed." And better management is in companies' interest as well as the planet's.

Another INCR tactic is encouraging institutional investors (such as pension funds and foundations) to vote their proxies on climate-related shareholder resolutions at corporate annual meetings (see sidebar, page 7). "Proxy votes are heard loud and clear in corporate boardrooms. They can't dismiss us as tree-huggers," Lubber said, noting the record high voting support for climate resolutions at annual meetings in 2007.

These strategies are working, says Lubber. For example, "Three years ago, zero [companies] published climate reports. Now, dozens of them do."

INCR is also mobilizing support for strong climate policies. In March 2007, Ceres and INCR recruited a dozen major companies and investors with more than $4 trillion in assets on its "Climate Call to Action," issuing a joint statement calling for an aggressive national climate policy that reduces carbon emissions 60 to 90 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

Foundations, with millions invested to sustain their endowments, can exert their power by joining INCR itself, by funding Ceres, or both. Stephen Heintz, president of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF)—an EGA member foundation that devotes its largest portfolio, $8 million, to climate mitigation initiatives—finds INCR a "good fit" with its priorities because it brings "nontraditional voices to environmental issues" that lead to action. Since 2003 the fund has given Ceres four grants totaling $630,000. Influencing the financial markets this way, says Heintz, has been one of the most successful projects RBF has funded. He notes, "Finance has a different relationship to the political process than the environmental movement—such as access to the the Treasury Department."

INCR At-a-Glance

Membership
More than 60 institutional investors including asset managers, state and city treasurers, public and labor pension funds, foundations, etc.

Money
INCR members manage collective assets totaling more than $5 trillion.

Methods
Changing corporate behavior on climate change by leveraging the financial markets to evaluate climate-related business impacts; urging mandatory disclosure of climate risk by public companies; encouraging proxy voting support for climate-related resolutions.

How to Get Involved
Join the investor network, fund Ceres, or both

Website
www.ceres.org

Resources

Design to Win: Philanthropy's Role in the Fight Against Global Warming
www.ef.org/documents/Design_to_Win_Final_Report_8_31_07.pdf

Hewlett Foundation's *Taking Action on Climate Change*
www.hewlett.org/NR/rdonlyres/5DB1D7A5-0ADA-4575-90DC-6A3B3127725F/0/Hewlett_Climate_Change_Guide_for_Grantmakers.pdf

DailyClimate.org
The website offers a daily compilation of news about climate change from mainstream media sources around the world. It is published every morning (US East Coast time) by Environmental Health Sciences.

Proxy Power:
Voting with Your Shares

BY MICHAEL PASSOFF, AS YOU SOW FOUNDATION

Every year hundreds of shareholder resolutions are put forward on environmental and social issues that relate directly to foundations' work. Voting one's proxy on these proposals is a basic first step in aligning investments and mission. It supports strong management practices, including corporate social and environmental responsibility, which in turn protects long-term shareholder value—and thus the value of your foundation endowment.

Yet when it comes to using the proxy process, foundations tend to follow management recommendations passively, whether or not the advice is aligned with their own interests and values. With the majority of public companies holding their annual meetings in the spring, environmental grantmakers will soon have many opportunities to be proactive and support those proxy issues that most closely match their missions.

In fact, environmental issues account for the widest variety of resolutions slated for 2008, with more than 80 already filed on topics including toxic products, animal welfare, water use, nanotech, forestry, recycling, Alaska oil drilling and GMO / cloned food. Global warming-related concerns constitute the majority of these proposals. For example, in April, shareholders of both Bank of America Corp. and Citigroup Inc. will vote on resolutions to cease financing coal operations, and Chevron will be asked to report on environmental damage from its Canadian tar-sands operation; in May, ConocoPhillips, Ford Motor Company, and a dozen other companies will vote on setting greenhouse-gas emission reduction goals, while ExxonMobil shareholders will vote on renewable energy research.

The prominence of climate change in corporate discussions represents years of work by concerned shareholders to bring this issue directly into corporate boardrooms. While the first global warming proposal was filed 17 years ago with little support, in 2008 shareholders have filed more than 40 resolutions on global warming-related issues—and are actively involved in nearly 50 company dialogues.

This promising trend provides foundations with another useful tactic to employ in their climate-change funding strategies. To learn more about proxy voting, download The As You Sow Foundation's guidebook *Unlocking the Power of the Proxy* and the *Spring 2008 Proxy Preview* (available by March 31) at www.asyousow.org. The *Preview* highlights key issues, describes current social and environmental proposals, and provides a list of companies and upcoming proxy votes. ■

Carbon Offsets: A Closer Look

BY ADAM WOLFENSOHN, WOLFENSOHN FAMILY FOUNDATION

On September 19, 2007, EGA's Green Practices Committee hosted a call to discuss options for foundations seeking to go "carbon neutral" * and to introduce the Carbon Neutral Alliance (CAN).

Leading the call were Jessica Bailey, Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF); Lars Kvale, Center for Resource Solutions (CRS); Eric Waters, EGA operations manager; Joe Rappaport, former EGA Enhancing the Field consultant; and myself—Adam Wolfensohn, Wolfensohn Family Foundation (WFF).

The call began with a brief recap of the committee's activities, which have included publishing the "Green Beyond Grants" handbook and establishing EGA's Green Co-op, both of which were created to encourage green practices among foundations. The co-op, a purchasing collaborative, now has more than 45 members, and the committee is discussing the possibility of opening membership to NGOs and grantees as well.

Jessica Bailey launched the larger discussion by describing RBF's first-hand experience in going carbon neutral. A grantmaking foundation in New York whose largest program is in combating global warming, RBF focuses its work on encouraging US legislative action on the issue. The fund realizes that even if it achieves its most ambitious legislative goals, foundations would not be regulated under those rules. Thus, given the proactive work it was engaging through its funding and thought leadership, RBF also felt a great need to "walk the talk" on global warming.

The foundation already has a number of programs aimed at environmental sustainability, but did not deal directly with greenhouse-gas emissions. Therefore, it made a commitment to go carbon neutral in its own operations in 2004. RBF's first challenge was to calculate its carbon footprint. Did it include the work of grantees? Carbon embedded in the manufacture of office furniture? Travel? To begin with, RBF drew a circle around its energy consumption (sourcing data from utility bills) and air travel (sourcing data from credit card bills). CRS then took these data and calculated RBF's carbon footprint. The foundation then arranged to reduce its utility footprint through the purchase of green (renewable) power, but it still needed a way to offset business travel—which it did through purchasing credits from Native Energy, a company that invests in building wind farms and methane digesters.

In 2005, RBF's board and staff enthusiastically expanded its offsetting program to account for its staff's commuting patterns and train travel, and also committed to help foundation colleagues take their own organizations through a similar process. Without sufficient staff time to accomplish this goal itself, the foundation (in collaboration with the Center for Resource Solutions and the Wolfensohn Family Fund) established the Carbon Neutral Alliance in 2006 to serve as a "one-stop shop" for foundations seeking to go carbon neutral.

I spoke briefly about WFF's similar experience in offsetting our own emissions, emphasizing that the process of carbon neutrality has integrity only when the emissions reductions are pushed as far as possible before moving to purchase offsets for the remaining emissions. Once an organization begins purchasing these offsets, however, it will be faced with a bewildering array of options. One I recommended—purchasing carbon credits—is also a vehicle to further one's philanthropic goals. RBF, for example, chose to purchase credits generated by wind power to encourage the growth of the US renewable energy industry. WFF chose a portfolio of credits, but emphasized deforestation credits (those that prevent logging or that plant trees, for example) because of their strong ancillary benefits to biodiversity. Such mission-driven choices presuppose that all the credits are of a high quality—that is, they actually represent carbon emissions reductions, Offsets can be generated through efficiency, renewable-energy generation, use of biofuels, forestry projects, methane capture, and many other greenhouse-gas reduction activities.

which is not the case with every offset offered on the market.

To address this consumer-protection need, Lars Kvale turned the conversation to quality standards for carbon offsets and the role of the CNA. CNA was established to help foundations calculate, reduce, and offset their greenhouse-gas emissions. It is a program of CRS, a San Francisco-based nonprofit best known for its Green-E certification scheme, which sets quality standards for green power purchases. Since early 2006, it has also been working to create a Green-E for carbon credits, which would provide a quality mark for offsets. CRS plans to launch a program by the end of 2008 that would set standards for the offsets market so that quality is assured, whatever type of credit one selects.

Kvale then moved the discussion to the key criteria for quality carbon offsets. Offsets are typically measured in tons and can be generated through efficiency, renewable-energy generation, use of biofuels, forestry projects, methane capture, and many other greenhouse-gas reduction activities.

According to Kvale, two of the most important characteristics to look for in assessing carbon-reduction projects are clear accounting and "additionality." Clear accounting means there must be clarity in carbon accounting of the offsetting project from both a technical and a bookkeeping perspective. In forestry projects, for example, it can be technically very challenging to calculate how much carbon is actually being sequestered. In any project, one must be careful that the tons are being sold only once to avoid double counting. Additionality means there must be a high degree of confidence that the emissions reductions purchased would not have occurred in the absence of the offsetting project. For example, a methane capture project that would not have been financially possible without the sale of carbon credits would be additional, whereas an efficiency project that simply meets local building codes would not.

Arranging to have trees planted is one common form of offset.

The call was then opened to questions, which touched on many of the other thorny issues faced when assessing carbon credits. Are they certified or voluntary? Future or current? Related to renewable energy credits? Socially impactful? and so on. The call concluded with another invitation to all foundations to contact the CAN for support in going carbon neutral. ■

*"Carbon neutral" refers to the process of analyzing one's carbon footprint (the emissions generated by one's activities), reducing emissions wherever possible, and offsetting the rest through the purchase of carbon credits. "Offsetting" broadly refers to removing a quantity of CO2 equal to that emitted.

Resources

Carbon Neutral Alliance: http://carbon-neutral-alliance.org

Center for Resource Solutions: www.resource-solutions.org

Clean Air, Cool Planet's "Consumers Guide to Carbon Credits": www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/ConsumersGuidetoCarbonOffsets.pdf

TheGreenOffice.com

Green Building and Green Neighborhoods: Opportunities for Funders

BY BRUCE BOYD AND MARK VALENTINE, ARABELLA PHILANTHROPIC ADVISORS; AND BEN STARRETT, FUNDERS NETWORK FOR SMART GROWTH AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

According to the most recent government and industry statistics, buildings account for 40 percent of the nation's energy use and almost 40 percent of its carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions.

As the majority of America's political and economic leadership shifts from denying the severity of the climate crisis to scrambling to figure out how to avoid the most extreme predictions and prepare communities to adapt to withstand near-term forecasted impacts, it is clear that greening the building sector must be an important part of the larger climate strategy.

The US Conference of Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, the William J. Clinton Foundation Energy Efficiency Building Retrofit Program, and Bank of America's recently announced $20 billion environmental plan all are evidence that there is far more wind in the sails (or wind turbines) of the green building movement than was the case even two years ago.

While these are encouraging signs, the fact is that green building represents well under 10 percent of new construction. There clearly remains much work to do if green building is to become a standard rather than an exception. The challenge is to build upon the momentum that has been developed; the funding community can play a vital role in meeting this challenge.

Opportunities

Many opportunities (and challenges) exist for funders interested in catalyzing stronger market demand for green buildings.

- **Retrofit the existing building stock.** Understandably, much of the focus of the green building sector is on new construction, as that is where the most innovative, cutting-edge technologies and design solutions are being deployed. However, significant opportunities exist for funders to support efforts to rehabilitate and retrofit existing buildings, especially in older cities. These efforts can take the form of modifying the building envelope, incorporating renewable energy systems into existing structures, or simply upgrading a building's existing lighting, heating, and cooling systems. One easy first step is to offer grantees and/or key community organizations support for conducting energy audits, which may reveal significant savings that can be achieved through weatherization, window replacement, lighting upgrades, etc.

Photo Courtesy of US Green Building Council

The NRDC Southern California Office, Robert Redford Building in Santa Monica, CA is LEED for New Construction Platinum Certified.

- **Apply a "green screen" to new capital projects and support the up-front planning process.** Unless funders follow the lead of the Gund and Cleveland Foundations in insisting that all capital grantees meet at least the base level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard or a local equivalent, taking the green building market to scale will be difficult. Evidence abounds that even in the most remote parts of the country, meeting LEED Silver requirements costs nothing or little more than traditional construction. In addition, while capital grants are critical, equally important is support for integration of green components early in the design process, which saves time and money for project developers.

- **Support advocacy and public policy reform.** According to the US Green Building Council (USGBC), 55 cities, 11 counties, 8 towns, 22 states, 33 schools, and 11 federal agencies currently have guidelines, requirements, ordinances, incentives, executive orders, or other policies associated with LEED standards. However, most of the green building activity in the United States is clustered in a handful of metropolitan regions—Austin, Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Portland, New York City, San Francisco, and Seattle—where a willingness to invest in green building arose out of a combination of civic leadership, a strong philanthropic presence, and a deep understanding of the links between environmental health, economic well-being, and the built environment. Not included in this list are many of the highest growth areas in the country, including many communities in the Southwest and Southeast. These booming suburban and exurban communities not only need to be convinced of the financial and environmental benefits that come with building green, but also need easier access to resources and tools that allow them to achieve these benefits. In addition to extending the reach of building mandates, funders can also support efforts designed to update building codes and appliance (e.g. heating and cooling systems) efficiency standards.

The intersection of land use and green building policy is another important place to be active. From the perspective of reducing CO_2 emissions, greening buildings in auto-dependent suburban settings falls into the category of necessary but not sufficient. The goal should be to both reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and promote the adoption of green building standards. The widespread adoption of the recently unveiled LEED for New Development (or LEED-ND) pilot standard holds the potential to be an effective way to integrate local land use and building policies.

- **Use the growing concern about climate change to create green building jobs.** Opponents of measures to reduce climate change are fond of quoting studies that claim that millions of jobs will be lost due to diminished economic activity. Equally credible studies, however, argue that moving the nation down the path toward a clean-energy economy could create hundreds of thousands, and perhaps millions, of new jobs. These so-called "green collar" jobs would be for people with skills in conducting energy retrofits, green renovation and construction, the production of green building products, and other areas. There is a particular opportunity for "blue collar" workers to be trained to participate in this industry. Funders can facilitate this process by creating a bridge between the environmental, environmental justice, and labor communities.

Join the Green Building Learning Network

For funders interested in learning more about green building and green neighborhood issues, the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities (www.fundersnetwork.org) hosts a Green Building and Green Neighborhoods Learning Network. Through the Learning Network, the Funders' Network provides briefings, commissions research and reports on activities in the green-building field, and organizes quarterly conference calls on topics ranging from innovative efforts to embed green building education into architecture schools to new models for demonstrating the value of green buildings. Your foundation need not be a member of the Funders' Network to participate.

- **Complement traditional grantmaking with new tools.** An increasing number of, but still relatively few, foundations are complementing their grantmaking with program-related investments (PRIs) and investments of capital from their endowments. Looking at the scale of the challenges that lie ahead, more philanthropic leadership of this type could prove crucial in addressing climate change.

Challenges

To ensure these strategies are effective, a number of challenges must be overcome. Foremost among them is that skepticism still reigns in some parts of the market. Evidence that green buildings perform as projected is still mostly anecdotal. Getting better data on operational building performance is a critical need. Optimally, a definitive study on the costs and benefits of green buildings would be undertaken by a consortium of institutions that has the requisite breadth of technical expertise and is immune to charges of partisanship.

While the air is thick with news about the promise of green building and green neighborhoods, there is still much work to be done. Clearly, foundations have played an important role in supporting the field of green building and neighborhood design as it has matured and expanded. More foundations need to become engaged in these efforts if the green building movement is to grow quickly enough to make a meaningful contribution to reducing the nation's carbon footprint. ■

Mountaintop Removal Mining: The True Cost of Coal

BY HEIDI BINKO, WESTWIND FOUNDATION; MILLIE BUCHANAN, JESSIE SMITH NOYES FOUNDATION; AND HEETEN KALAN, NEW WORLD AND PANTA RHEA FOUNDATIONS

Flip a switch. The light you read by might come at the cost of mountains bulldozed, communities decimated, and even lives taken. Mountaintop removal mining (MTR), a form of strip-mining in which companies clearcut forests and blast mountaintops to reach coal deposits, demonstrates the true cost of coal.


Photo: Vivian Stockman

Laid bare: Mountaintop removal mining on Kayford Mountain, about an hour south of Charleston, WV.

Until recently, MTR in Appalachia was largely hidden from the environmental philanthropic community. But as its link to climate change and our energy picture comes to light, the public has become aware of Appalachia's destruction. Building upon years of work by coalfield communities, grassroots advocates have further propelled the issue into the spotlight by helping Americans trace the source of their electricity to MTR sites. With 37 states burning MTR coal, the plight of Appalachia must be central to our national energy debate.

Now, as the campaign to end MTR reaches a critical juncture—with congressional support growing for legislation that would stop the mining—investment in a few strategic areas is needed. As we struggle to define the role of coal in a clean-energy economy, we must ask: How much are we willing to sacrifice for cheap energy?

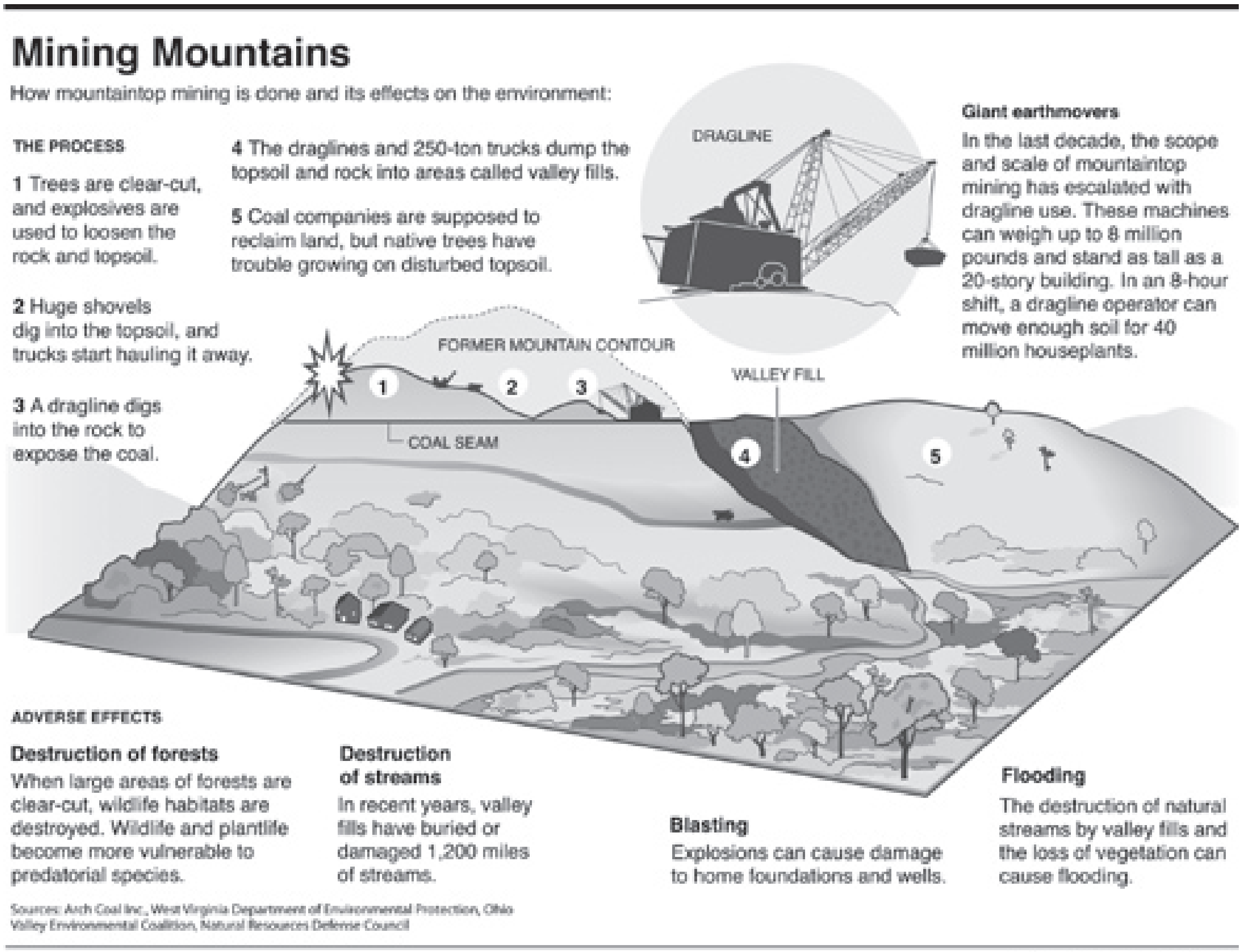
Why Mountaintop Removal?

Central Appalachia provides much of the country's coal, second only to Wyoming's Powder River Basin. Less expensive than other fuels, coal is in demand to stoke the coal-fired power plants that generate half of the United States' electricity. In recent years, companies have relied on mountaintop removal mining—an inexpensive process that employs few workers—to extract coal in Appalachia. Companies use huge machines to reach coal deposits, then push what remains of mountaintops into nearby valleys and streams. Although Congress passed the Clean Water Act in the 1970s to protect the nation's waters, a 2002 Bush Administration rule change created an industry loophole, effectively permitting MTR mining.

The resulting scale of devastation is almost unimaginable (*see photo above and on page 14*). MTR is destroying one of the most diverse forest ecosystems on earth—a North American biodiversity hotspot. To date, MTR has destroyed 470 mountains and polluted 1,200 miles of streams—half the length of the Mississippi River, according to the US Geological Survey. With many mines larger than Manhattan, scientists predict that more than 1.4 million acres will be lost by 2010.

Devastating Impacts on Human Health

While MTR's effect on the landscape is stunning, its impact on human lives is dire. Throughout the region, drinking wells are contaminated by a toxic cocktail that results when chemicals are used to wash coal. The sludge ends up in gigantic impoundments and is injected into abandoned mines that leach toxics. An Eastern Kentucky University study revealed that the state's children suffer from an alarmingly high rate of nausea and vomiting, symptoms traced back to dissolved minerals in streams. Recent studies show that mercury levels in West Virginia waterways are so elevated that fish are unsafe to eat. And recently, floods, coal truck accidents,



Alisa Nance/*The New York Times*

and mining blasts have taken lives. In Virginia, a boulder dislodged by a mining operation killed a boy in his sleep as it rolled through his house.

MTR's impacts extend far beyond communities living near mining sites. The region contains the headwaters of rivers that provide drinking water supplies for millions of Americans. Although advocates have asked health professionals to study MTR's impacts on water quality and its long-term effects on human health, downstream consequences are unknown.

The Campaign to End MTR

A few years ago, MTR was an under-reported environmental tragedy. Thanks to the members of The Alliance for Appalachia, 12 grassroots organizations working collaboratively to stop MTR, the issue has garnered mainstream media attention. Even national environmental organizations—recognizing MTR's link to climate change, habitat destruction, and downstream health impacts of mining—are mobilizing around the issue.

Recently, the *Wall Street Journal* profiled a groundbreaking online tool that allows individuals to enter their zip code to determine if their utility sells electricity produced from MTR coal. The tool reveals previously hidden energy links between utilities, coal-burning power plants, and mines. We now know that states as far away as Maine, Florida, and even Iowa—along with 34 others—burn MTR coal.

Proponents of coal argue that it is a relatively cheap source of energy. But, coalfield residents note, this cost does not include externalities. While cities such as Boston burn MTR coal, they are not accountable for the consequences of its extraction. More than any other example, MTR best demonstrates the problem with coal: Even as we contemplate new "clean" coal technologies, the social and environmental costs of getting coal out of the ground remain.

Advocates say that MTR coal mining, which represents less than 5 percent of our energy picture, is unnecessary. Nations could stop burning the coal, reduce carbon emissions, and save money simply by improving energy efficiency.

Funding Opportunities

The campaign to end MTR has generated tremendous momentum. Although advocates face many obstacles—and powerful forces can still thwart change—conditions have never been as favorable. With additional support, on-the-ground organizations can take advantage of the campaign's momentum and stop MTR. For foundations, the time to invest is now. Support is needed for:

Grassroots leadership development. Former coal miners and religious and community leaders have built strong Appalachian organizations, but need resources to strengthen these networks and increase their visibility.

A national, federal legislative campaign. The Clean Water Protection Act, which closes a major loophole that allows MTR, is gaining ground. Currently, 122 congressional leaders support the act, but advocates require funding to cultivate additional sponsors, both in and beyond coal states.

Litigation. Since the late 1990s, coalfield residents have sued coal operators and regulatory agencies for violating the Clean Water and the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation acts. Litigation has often been the only means available to enforce existing environmental laws and effectively slow MTR while advocates work toward long-term solutions.

A communications strategy. Although grassroots groups have successfully raised public awareness about MTR, the organizations could benefit from a proactive communications strategy.

Economic alternatives research. Advocates are researching alternatives to create new revenue streams, such as the development of wind farms on Appalachian ridges. More research is needed to assess their potential and build support among constituencies.

Corporate accountability campaigns. Coal companies have an abysmal record of environmental, health, and safety violations. Shareholder resolutions targeting these companies and their financial backers are progessing, but need more support. ■

For more information on the campaign to stop mountaintop removal coal mining and the funding opportunities outlined above, contact Heidi Binko (binko@westwindfoundation.org), Heeten Kalan (hkalan@igc.org), or Millie Buchanan (millieb@igc.org).

Resources

The Alliance for Appalachia: www.ohvec.org

Does Your Utility Use MTR Coal?

Visit www.ilovemountains.org/my connection

Photo: Vivian Stockman

Another view of mining on Kayford Mountain. The "explosives" referred to on the sign are used to loosen rock and topsoil.

A Million Trees for Haiti: Global South Partners Address Climate Change

BY LEONIE HERMANTIN AND KAREN ASHMORE, LAMBI FUND OF HAITI

At EGA's 2005 Fall Retreat, Karen Ashmore met 2004 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Wangari Maathai. From that first meeting, the Lambi Fund of Haiti (LFH), of which Ashmore is executive director, and the Green Belt Movement (GBM), of which Maathai is founder and leader, initiated a multi-year partnership and mutual exchange program to address climate change with a large-scale reforestation movement in Haiti. Extensive deforestation in Haiti—described by one recent UN report as "one of the most degraded countries in the world"—not only aggravates climate change but also threatens the country's farmland, watersheds, and biodiversity. Flooding from hurricanes, a result of both deforestation and soil erosion, destroys Haiti's agricultural region.

Photo: Hannah Chen

Deforestation in the Artibonite Valley in Haiti. These hills ued to be green.

Over the years, LFH had funded several Haitian community organizations to reforest their surrounding areas, but wanted to take reforestation to the next level with a world-class collaboration. The LFH-GBM partnership represents a historic effort with the Global South to plant one million trees in Haiti, an island nation of 27,000 square kilometers.

As one of the most prominent civil society organizations, the Green Belt Movement is an ideal partner. Based in Kenya, it advocates for human rights and supports good governance and peaceful democratic change through protecting the environment. While Maathai founded it in 1977 as a grassroots tree-planting program to address the challenges of Africa's deforestation, soil erosion, and lack of water, it is now a vehicle for community empowerment. Working with Kenya's diverse population (including 40 different ethnic and linguistic groups), the movement has planted more than 30 million trees throughout the country. Soil erosion has been reduced in critical watersheds; thousands of acres of biodiversity-rich indigenous forests have been restored and protected.

Founded jointly in 1994 by Haitians and Americans, LFH also has a history of effectiveness. A foundation whose mission is to assist the popular democratic movement in Haiti, LFH works throughout Haiti's rural communities, which constitute about 60 percent of the country's total population of eight million. Taking its lead from the peasant and women's organizations it supports, the fund focuses its funding in five main project areas: sustainable development, community microlending, animal husbandry, conservation of Haiti's waning natural resources, and organizational and leadership training. LFH's original, bottom-up development model has succeeded because it relies on Haitians themselves to determine the needs and most effective solutions in each community. Such community participation is what is needed to reforest Haiti.

An Ambitious Plan

This joint project will address the problems of Haiti's land degradation, in particular deforestation and soil erosion, by promoting improved land-management practices through sustainable agriculture and large-scale and small-scale reforestation initiatives. Its main goals are to build local and national capacity to support sustainable land management and to develop community-led projects on reforestation and management that address land degradation.

Photo: Karen Ashmore

A tree nursery run by Konbit 2004—a peasant group in southern Haiti funded by the Lamba Fund of Haiti.

Specific objectives include:

- Plant one million trees in Haiti.
- Provide training and technical assistance to community organizations.
- Facilitate peer-led exchange and solidarity between Kenya and Haiti to share best practices, including recognition of advocacy and support by peasant women.
- Stage pilot demonstrations and implement scale-up of the reforestation program.
- Sponsor regional conferences and public education campaigns to strengthen reforestation movement-building.
- Provide microfinancing to support small-group implementation of projects related to reforestation.
- Complete documentation and evaluation of the project.

Facilitating Mutual Exchange

Two years of open and ongoing dialogue between LFH and GBM have produced a number of concrete recommendations that were eventually adopted as the building blocks for a strong partnership. One critical issue identified was the quintessential need to learn about each other. While reforestation is the ultimate goal, the two partners are embarking on a collaborative effort between organizations operating within very different cultural contexts. GBM's and LFH's vision, philosophy, and strategy each had to be assessed in order to create clear, measurable, and attainable goals that considered organizational, political, and socioeconomic limitations.

In October 2007, adhering to the joint work plan calling for peer-to-peer exchange, four leaders of the GBM arrived in Port au Prince, Haiti and traveled to the Haitian countryside with LFH leaders to visit with local peasant-led groups working on reforestation. The visit offered GBM representatives the opportunity to learn about Haiti's degraded environment and its impact on both rural and urban communities. It also allowed GBM and LFH representatives to gain a deeper understanding of each other's philosophy, methodology, accomplishments, and challenges.

Next Steps

The next steps in implementing the reforestation goals are to assess the trip and discuss areas of mutual interest in which LFH and GBM will partner to improve Haiti's environment through sustainable grassroots efforts. Representatives from LFH will meet with GBM and some of its grassroots partners in Kenya later this year, learning directly from the people leading the reforestation projects with GBM in Africa.

In preparation for the visit to Kenya, LFH staff and stakeholders are conducting a seminar assessing existing reforestation strategies, identifying practices that work and those in need of improvement. Participants will review GBM's Kenyan approach to reforestation and discuss what may or may not work in Haiti. This effort is central to the partnership's success, as it ensures that strategies adopted include the input of key partners and stakeholders whose support will be critical to translate the plans into action.

At the summit, both partners—now armed with more complete information about each other—will form an action-driven plan, and will map out strategies for sustainable reforestation in Haiti, nurtured by a strong commitment to a common vision, the flexibility to seek resources jointly, and a willingness to adapt.

LFH and GBM plan to devote almost one million dollars to the project over the next three to five years. With a base of seed funding established, the two organizations are inviting other funders to partner on this groundbreaking and historic project in a country that is impoverished economically but rich in culture and tradition. Those interested in more information can contact the executive director at karen@lambifund.org. Join this exciting opportunity to make a difference and address with tangible results the impact of climate change in the Global South. ■

The Greenest Workplace

For several years, daily publishing duties kept Jenifer Altman Foundation trustee Pete Myers out of the woods during birding hours. Then he realized that he could take his work into the woods each morning by building a computer platform behind his house and carrying equipment out before dawn. EGA members who read EnvironmentalHealthNews.org and DailyClimate.org, Pete's daily publications, can now imagine what a truly green workplace looks like.

THE STORY OF STUFF

www.storyofstuff.com

The Funders Workgroup for Sustainable Production and Consumption and the Tides Foundation are pleased to announce their new short film, "The Story of Stuff," which can be viewed online at **www.storyofstuff.com**.

All the "stuff" in our lives, beginning with the extraction of the resources to make it, through its production, sale, use and disposal, affects communities at home and abroad, yet most of these effects are hidden from view. "The Story of Stuff" is a fast-paced, 20-minute, fact-filled look at the underside of our production and consumption patterns, with a special focus on the United States. "The Story of Stuff" exposes the connections between diverse environmental and social issues and calls for everyone to unite to create a more sustainable and just world. It'll teach you something. It'll make you laugh. And it just may change the way you look at all the stuff in your life forever.

Launched on December 4, 2007, in the first week alone the film received more than 250,000 online viewings and was shown at public screenings around the world. If you would like a copy of the DVD or would like to discuss the film or the work of the two collaborating producers, please contact Annie Leonard, Sustainability Funders Workgroup coordinator, at aleonard@ega.org.

Tri-State Funder Collaborative Leads to Real-Time Policy Change

BY NICOLE E. CHEVALIER, EMILY HALL TREMAINE FOUNDATION; AND YOLANDA CALDERA-DURANT, FAIRFIELD COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

While foundations often urge grantees to collaborate, it is relatively rare for them to collaborate with their peers on funding agendas and initiatives. Many obstacles stand in the way of collaborations for both funders and grantees. However, when all funders are equally engaged it can result in a successful action that benefits both the funders themselves and the community they are striving to serve.

In 2004, an informal collective of funders from Connecticut, New Jersey, and the New York metropolitan area (New York City, Westchester, and Long Island) was convened by the Funders Network for Smart Growth and the New York Community Trust to discuss strategies for supporting transportation reform at the regional, state, and local levels. This group, called the One Region Funders' Group (One Region), recognized that transportation links the three states through mutual infrastructural needs, economic opportunities, environmental protection concerns, and social equity issues. The group also noted that transportation offers high-leverage opportunities to affect decisions impacting many of the areas on which these foundations focus, including quality of life, economic competitiveness, and opportunity in the region.

The members of One Region include the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation and Fairfield County Community Foundation (Connecticut); the Surdna Foundation, Rauch Foundation, New York Community Foundation, Long Island Community Foundation, and Westchester Community Foundation (New York); and the Community Foundation of New Jersey and Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation (New Jersey). The funders of One Region have diverse priorities, from climate change (viewed through the lens of transportation investment as a means to reduce car emissions and vehicle miles traveled) to economic development (viewed through the lens of providing access to jobs for low- and mid-income workers through expanded bus routes and services).

Over the two years following the initial meeting, One Region (along with the regional grantmakers associations within each state), co-hosted a series of briefings and conversations to educate other funders around the region about the ways that transportation issues intersect with their funding priorities. During the last briefing in 2006, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, the conversation focused on the connections between job mobility, economic development, workforce development, and transportation investments—particularly in bus transit.

During the discussion, some of the resource speakers, invited guests, and other individuals—representing the business sector, local transportation authority, workforce development organizations, and environmental groups—commented that in order to address the obstacles Connecticut's workforce faces in terms of transportation, a statewide analysis of the current state of the bus transit system would be needed, followed by the development of a plan for improved bus service and increased capital investments in Connecticut. After that conversation, One Region staff and funders held a series of discussions with stakeholders to help shape a specific education and outreach strategy. Soon after, the One Region Fund—a collaborative fund with support from foundations in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut housed at the New York Community Trust—awarded a grant of $67,000 to the Connecticut Fund for the Environment to organize the completion of the bus study and the creation of an advocacy coalition, Transit for Connecticut, to promote the report's recommendations and advocate for public engagement in this issue.

Our report's findings made the case for increasing funds statewide for bus transit. By the end of the legislative session, Connecticut legislators had approved an increase in operating funds of $10 million over two fiscal years plus $20 million in the capital bond package.

The study was completed by a transportation consultant, Urbitran Associates, in three months. Transit for Connecticut used the information therein to educate state legislators and Governor M. Jodi Rell's office about the state's transit needs and the amount of investment required to achieve an optimal level of bus service. The report's findings underscored the significance of public transportation in their constituents' lives and made the case for increasing funds statewide for bus transit. By the end of the legislative session, Connecticut legislators had approved an increase in bus transit operating funds of $10 million over two fiscal years plus $20 million in the capital bond package. This was a coup, not just because additional funds were allotted to improve bus transit but also because they were approved despite the sense of resignation felt by advocates and legislators at the beginning of the session that funding for bus transit would likely be decreased for the next two years.

Last fall, Governor Rell publicly recognized the importance of bus transit to the state's workforce and residents at a press conference. Since taking office, she has made "smart growth" a focus of her administration, committing a multibillion-dollar investment to rail transit and signing a bill that established a Responsible Growth Task Force. The task force is charged with submitting guidelines for investment of the state's public funds that ensure the efforts of state agencies are coordinated in the areas of transportation, housing, public health, and workforce development.

If not for the formation of the One Region Funders' Group and the creation of the One Region Fund, this important victory for transportation reform in Connecticut would likely not have occurred. Clearly, the proactive role of One Region and its combined financial resources fostered conversations that produced ideas that could be leveraged with small grants to institute state-level change quickly.

As One Region continues to evolve, our members will work to find and utilize leverage points to help our three states to work in concert for transportation reform. We encourage EGA member foundations to try this approach to address regional issues of mutual interest in a satisfyingly short time frame. ■

Resources

One Region Funders Network
http://www.fundersnetwork.org/usr_doc/One_Region_Overview_10-31-06.pdf

Investment in public transit such as buses promotes economic opportunity and social justice as well as environmental protection.

Food Sovereignty: A Healthy Approach to the Climate Crisis

BY NIKHIL AZIZ, GRASSROOTS INTERNATIONAL

Unfortunately, the 2007 UN Climate Conference in Bali, Indonesia, was not a repeat performance of Bali 2002. Then, representatives of peoples' movements from around the world developed the Bali Principles of Climate Justice—a de-carbonization blueprint for the world grounded in fairness, equity, and human rights.

Taking the 1991 Principles of Environmental Justice as their inspiration, these principles identified climate change as a major threat to food sovereignty—the right of people and countries to democratically shape their food and agricultural systems, policies, markets, and use of natural resources—and to the livelihood security of local economies that are natural-resource based. They called for policies that support both sustainable agriculture and food sovereignty.

Now, as Friends of the Earth International reported from the talks in Nusa Dua, the almost 200 governments present "reached agreement on a way forward, but with little to guide them along the way." Many fear, however, that the compromise—a watered-down consensus agreeing to two more years of negotiations—was achieved at the cost of environmental and social justice.

Even as the governments in Bali were busy compromising within air-conditioned halls, outside at the parallel Solidarity Village for a Cool Planet, civil society groups including social movements—such as Via Campesina and its allies—reiterated their call for responsible, realistic, and just solutions to climate change which, they argued, can be realized only by significant pressure from the grassroots level to hold governments accountable rather than simply relying on them to do the right thing.

Photo: Daniel Moss, Grassroots International

A farmer from El Salvador using agro-ecological techniques.

Food Sovereignty: A Growing Movement

Peoples' movements as well as scientists have convincingly reasoned that just solutions to global warming are not pie-in-the-sky remedies but can and, indeed, must form the basis of any enduring outcomes. Via Campesina, a global coalition emphasizing the rights and participation of small farmers, landless workers, indigenous peoples, and other peasant communities in resolving the climate crisis, focuses on food sovereignty as a vital ingredient in cooling down the earth.

It first articulated this concept at the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome. Then, in February 2007, peasants and other small producers, indigenous peoples, women, consumers, and environmentalists issued the Nyéléni Declaration of the World Forum on Food Sovereignty, which calls for "a world where we are able to conserve and rehabilitate rural environments, fish populations, landscapes and food traditions based on ecologically sustainable management of land, soils, water, seas, seeds, livestock and all other biodiversity."

For environmentalists, including environmental funders, the deep-rooted connections between food sovereignty and a healthy environment are important to understand and strengthen in the context of climate change. Both are grounded in the value of environmental stewardship as embodied in the sustainable use and management of natural resources, the promotion of eco-friendly technologies, and the building of an eco-economy.

In contrast, the global industrialized food system, which emphasizes large-scale, chemical-intensive agriculture, adversely affects our fresh water, soils, air, health, biodiversity, and climate. According to the UK-based Institute of Science in Society, conventional agriculture contributes 25 percent of the world's carbon dioxide, 60 percent of its methane, and 80 percent of its nitrous oxide emissions—collectively, 25 percent of greenhouse-gas emissions. Worse, in spite of overproduction, it fails to feed the world's hungry, 80 percent of whom are farmers, farm workers, and other small food producers.

Agro-ecology: A Just Alternative

Alternatives exist. Food sovereignty advocates have pioneered an environmentally sustainable agro-ecology, a climate-friendly system of agriculture that works with nature, not against it. For example, in agro-ecology, "Green Oasis" intercropping, including reforestation, replaces "Green Desert" monocropping. The negative effects of monocropping have intensified in recent years with the demand for "clean," crop-based fuels such as ethanol, which is reducing both biodiversity and the availability of land for food production. Such trends in countries such as Brazil, where ethanol production has soared, have spurred the small farmers of the Landless Workers Movement to implement agro-ecology as a sustainable alternative.

Besides intercropping, another eco-friendly principle is democratic access to and control and preservation of seed varieties. Food-sovereignty advocates are especially concerned that genetically engineered seeds and seed patenting by corporations are destroying biodiversity and compromising the right of farmers to do what they have done since the dawn of agriculture—saving and sharing seeds. "Seed sovereignty," a building block of food sovereignty, is vital to agro-biodiversity. Indigenous farmers in Mexico, including members of the Union of Organizations of the Sierra Juarez of Oaxaca, are working to sustain this diversity.

A key tenet of the more typical eco-economy model, advocated by many environmentalists, is paying for services that improve the environment, such as "carbon sinks." But small farmers and other food producers who are most at risk from climate change reason that their agro-ecological model benefits the

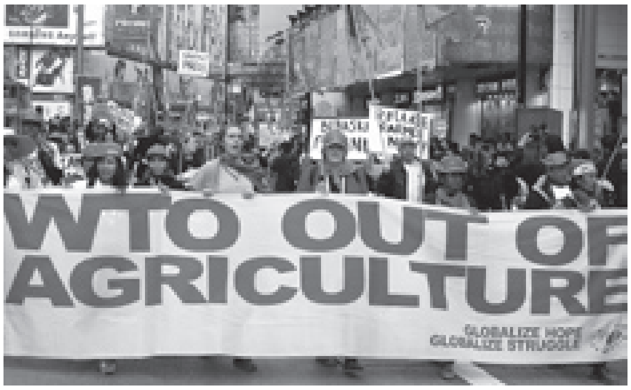


Photo: Carlos Marentes, Border Agricultural Workers Project

An anti-World Trade Organization protest march organized by the Via Campesina in Hong Kong (at the 6th WTO Ministerial meeting, December 13-18, 2005)

environment more than carbon sinks that do not, in and of themselves, challenge the industrial agriculture model. Many in the Global South caution that carbon trading and other market-based solutions have serious problems—such as favoring wealthier polluters –and require adequate safeguards to prevent their abuse by corporations and industrialized countries.

Funding Opportunities

For grantmakers, supporting small farmers as eco-economy actors means valuing their dual roles as food producers and environmental stewards. Beyond making conservation payments, that means funding programs and organizations that help guarantee fair prices; adequate rights and access to land, water, seeds, and local markets; and technical assistance and credit. Community-supported agriculture programs in the United States provide a good model of an eco-economy. CSAs strengthen "local living economies" which, while supporting local family farmers and farm workers, also benefit consumers and the environment.

The US environmental community and the global food sovereignty movement have a mutual interest, and an important role to play, in advocating for food sovereignty and climate justice—here in the United States and abroad. Foundations can support both by funding projects and organizations closely connected to the people's movements practicing truly sustainable agriculture. ■

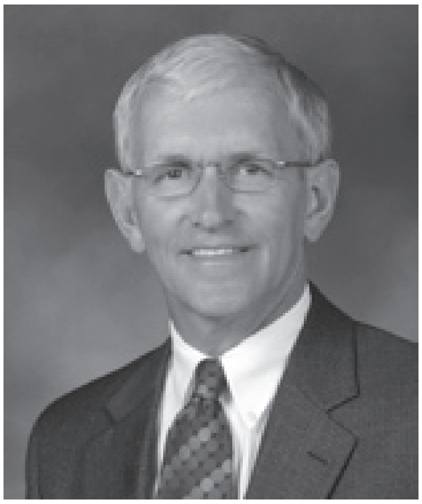
Resources

Food sovereignty and global warming
http://mediatani.wordpress.com/2007/11/06/a-via-campesina-background-paper-on-global-warming

Nyéléni Declaration
www.nyeleni2007.org

Critique of carbon trading schemes
www.carbontradewatch.org/durban/durbandec.html

Climate Change and the Push for Global Philanthropic Leadership



Steve Gunderson, executive director of the Council on Foundations

Gerry Salole, chief executive of the European Foundation Centre

Environmental grantmakers have sensed an overall shift in recognition by the broader field of philanthropy that environmental issues—particularly climate change—are important. This trend is reflected in the 2007 agendas of the Council on Foundations (CoF) and the European Foundation Centre (EFC), both of which made climate change a major focus of their annual conferences. Last December, Chet Tchozewski (executive director and founder of the Boulder, Colorado-based Global Greengrants Fund) and EGA Executive Director Dana Lanza spoke via conference call with Steve Gunderson (executive director of CoF) and Gerry Salole (chief executive of EFC) to learn more about their respective organizations' increasing attention to climate change and the environment.

Chet: Why have issues related to climate change and the environment had a higher profile than in years past?

Steve: All of us recognize that as governments become more paralyzed in addressing issues related to the environment and climate change, there is an expectation and responsibility for philanthropy to step into a more engaged leadership role. You can't look at these issues without recognizing a programmatic and moral obligation to provide both sector-wide leadership and sector-specific tools for how foundations of all sizes and types can become engaged.

Gerry: To build upon what Steve said, there is no question that last year we felt that there was an appetite to hear about what foundations could be doing to address climate change. I have information that there are funds being produced and even institutions being created around this. Something has happened —something has turned. Somebody was saying to me the other day—"it's in the ether." I think that is actually right.

Chet: What kind of response have you received regarding this focus at your conferences?

Steve: The feedback was fantastic, to put it mildly. There was an almost uniform affirmation that this was the best conference we'd ever had, because it began a bold attempt to address real issues from the perspective of how philanthropy would respond in a leadership role. Certainly, the fact that EFC followed with the same theme in the same month and the same year sent a powerful message to the entire field globally.

Gerry: Looking back I can say that it surpassed my expectations in terms of how much openness there was. As we go forward there is no question that the appetite for foundations getting involved in this arena is augmented.

Chet: Are you hearing an interest in other issues related to climate change, and how is philanthropy responding?

Gerry: It seems that the climate issue has sparked a broader interest in other things related to environmental justice. For example, foundations are funding

In a global community with a global economy, there must be global philanthropy... We don't need to create a new organization—we just need to have enhanced partnerships between those of us who currently exist.

research that crosses over into the food versus fuel debate regarding biofuels and biodiversity. There is also a recognition that climate change is going to impact on the poor in a disproportionate way than it will the richer part of society. I think that this issue needs to be explored more.

Steve: Also the environment in general is one of the bigger motivations for a significant increase in American philanthropy. We are also seeing corporate giving programs focus on innovation in ways we did not see in the past. And third, there is significant growth in the United States in socially responsible investment.

Chet: Do you think that philanthropy is looking at climate change as a lesson to learn from—that it failed to address when science first came to a consensus on this about 10 years ago, and that it would have been easier to solve with less money?

Steve: I think this represents one of the constant struggles we are going to have in this field. I have found that traditional foundations are very hesitant about changing their mission statement. New philanthropy is much more willing to embrace a leadership role, take risks, and focus on the environment than many of the traditional philanthropic partners.

Gerry: I agree with your point about the fact that foundations ought to be playing a more risk-taking role in underlining or accepting scientific conclusions on something like this. However, I'm not sure that this isn't just becoming a mantra and not something that you see in practice. I think that the test in the coming years will be to see whether people take this as a mandate and if they will put enough resources behind it.

Chet: How do you plan to incorporate this new and growing interest in climate and the environment into the 2008 conferences and beyond?

Gerry: There is going to be a session on this at our next conference. However, I want to run away from the idea that we only do this by going from one conference to the next. I think it's about what happens in between. Whether grantmaking interest groups really take root and begin convincing each other—even foundations that don't want to change their mission statements—that it is imperative to act quickly and provide fairly significant resources and build a coalition to do something about climate change.

Chet: Beyond an increase in collaboration between EFC and COF, what do you see in terms of a global approach to philanthropy?

Gerry: One issue is that the big resources at present are still basically in Europe and the United States. However, Steve and I are both very cognizant of the fact that there is new philanthropy in those places, as well as in the developing world, that needs to be brought to the party.

Steve: I agree and my hope is that Gerry, I, and our colleagues in other parts of the world begin figuring out how to work together to recognize and collaborate more on issues that affect the global community so we can help provide the venue for a global response. My long-term goal is that we would create a global compact for philanthropic giving that would be no different than an international trade agreement. In a global community with a global economy, there must be global philanthropy. And what we need to do is create the environment and the venues and the tools that empower that capacity in the broadest, most progressive way possible. What the EFC and the council and others like us can provide is philanthropic leadership. We don't need to create a new organization—we just need to have enhanced partnerships between those of us who currently exist. ■

Resources

Council on Foundations: www.cof.org

European Foundation Centre: www.efc.be

Nuclear Power: No Solution to Global Warming

BY SCOTT DENMAN, WALLACE GLOBAL FUND

Nuclear power is a fool's-gold answer to the question of how to reverse climate change. Consequently, it is imperative that we in the philanthropic community probe and challenge the woefully unscrutinized claims of nuclear power's enthusiasts and beneficiaries. Such due diligence can be tough with all the well-paid nuclear industry shills spreading the fiction that this historically flawed technology is a quick, cheap, and "clean" energy source. It's time for a reality check.

Bloated Costs vs. Affordable Alternatives

First, the bottom line for proposed new reactors is already engorged and growing fatter. For example, Florida Power & Light's (FP&L) latest estimate for constructing two new 1150-megawatt (MW) plants is $12 billion to $18 billion. This real-world price tag is roughly four times higher than the current official government estimates for new reactors. The FP&L estimate will mean rate shock for customers. At about 15 cents to 20 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh), that doesn't even include the $5 billion that at least one utility now says it will cost to decommission their reactors. In fact, the only nuclear plant currently under construction in the West, the French national firm Areva's Olkiluoto reactor in Finland, is now two years behind schedule. Areva currently projects more than $2 billion in losses on its fixed-price contract.

Proposed reactors are hitting fiscal reality skids before ground is even broken. In late January, a subsidiary of Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway, MidAmerican Energy Holdings Company, abruptly scrapped plans for a new reactor in Idaho, stating, "… we are disappointed that the present economics of building the next generation of nuclear power plants are not in our customers' best interests."

US utilities and banks have flatly said that the only way they will build and finance new nuclear power plants is with tens of billions in taxpayer-backed loan guarantees. In December Congress rolled over once again, ratcheting up federal loan guarantees for up to 80 percent of reactor construction costs to $18.5 billion over the next two years—despite the US Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration's 2005 assessment that "new [nuclear] plants are not expected to be economical."

On Wall Street, Standard & Poor's Ratings Services has determined that "an electric utility with a nuclear exposure has weaker credit than one without and can expect to pay more on the margin for credit" and has said it would be likely to revisit its rating on a utility should it embark on a nuclear plant project.

On the other hand, wind power costs about 7 to 10 cents/kWh, even with rising materials costs, and thus is still far cheaper than nukes without the same safety and security concerns.

Nanosolar, a photovoltaic company backed by Google and Swiss Re, is shipping solar electric cells at between 10 and 20 cents/kWh (depending upon installation costs, financing, and location), already beating nuclear costs in most areas of the United States and world. Prices could drop further as industry giants like Applied Materials gear up manufacturing of these units.

Moreover, the very growth in global energy consumption—exploited, in part, to justify a revival of nuclear—could be reduced by more than two-thirds over the next 15 years through energy-efficiency gains, according to McKinsey & Company, a leading global consulting firm. At zero to 5 cents/kWh, energy-efficiency improvement costs make conservation the single most attractive strategy to counter greenhouse gases.

Unrealistic Calamities-in-Waiting

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates a three-fold increase in worldwide carbon emissions between 1997 and 2100, even with an eight-fold increase in nuclear generation. If nuclear power were to replace all coal in that scenario, the world would have to build at least 85 large (1,000 MW) nuclear reactors every year for the next century. The infrastructure capacity alone—from steel mills for ultra-large forgings to uranium mines and enrichment plants—for that many reactors that quickly simply does not exist. (Reactors coming on line since 1980 took an average of eight to 10 years to build.) Even if such an enterprise were possible, according to the IPCC, emissions would still climb 2.5 times.

Despite claims to the contrary, nuclear reactors are always just a few pipe breaks or operator errors away from disaster. Isn't it time we stop listening to those who brought us Three Mile Island and Chernobyl and tens of thousands of tons of highly radioactive waste with no proven, permanent method of isolation, and heed the early warnings about further investments in nuclear power? Consider too the grave potential proliferation threat stemming not just from Iran, North Korea, and Pakistan but from potentially dozens of rogue nations and terrorist groups should the world pursue even modest expansion of nuclear power.

Preventing a Relapse

More than five out of every 10 federal energy research and development dollars have been pumped into the nuclear power behemoth since World War II, according to the Congressional Research Service. For that investment, reactors today provide only about 20 percent of our electricity (6 percent of our overall energy). Compare those figures with energy conservation, which received less than two of every 10 dollars but now eliminates about 25 percent of our energy needs each year.

Unfortunately, the tracks have been greased for the industry's relapse by repeated renewal of the Price-Anderson Act (which provides dramatically limited liability for this touted "safe" technology); one-step licensing (virtual elimination of citizen and state oversight); federal acceptance of liability for nuclear waste (Nevada's Yucca Mountain is a technically flawed site, as has been well documented); and many types of financial favoritism.

To arrest global warming, viable technologies must be comparatively quickly and easily installed, and not dependent upon massive, centralized infrastructures and public underwriting of unacceptable risks. Consequently, as a climate-change solution, nuclear power is neither affordable, nor safe, nor realistic. Before an energy economy built on radioactive pyrite gets its third or fourth chance, the government, businesses, and the philanthropic community should give a first, real priority to an Apollo Mission to exploit our vast potential in efficiency technologies and programs, and finally commit to a hybrid of distributed, renewable energy sources (wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, and others). It's an energy future we can afford and our children (and the planet) can live with. Don't get re-sold on nuclear power—the price is simply too high. ■

To reply to this Perspectives or submit one of your own, write to editor@ega.org.

The classic cooling towers of a nuclear plant.

2008 Board Members Named

This year, EGA is proud to have five new members joining our Board of Directors. They were announced as a slate on December 21, 2007 and elected by a vote of the membership. All board members serve for three years and may run for a second consecutive term. Please join us in congratulating them on their new, important leadership roles within EGA.

Tracy L. Austin is the director of corporate communications for Mitsubishi International Corporation, the Japanese trading and investment company, as well as executive director of the Mitsubishi Corporation Foundation for the Americas, a position she has held since 2001. The foundation supports environmental education, biodiversity conservation, environmental justice, and sustainable development projects throughout the Americas. Tracy joined Mitsubishi in 1987 as the company's in-house counsel; as a lawyer, her pro-bono activities included representing political asylum applicants from Ethiopia and Haiti. She holds a B.A. in French Literature from the University of Pennsylvania, a master of professional studies degree in Afro-American and African Literature from Cornell University, and a J.D. from Columbia Law School.

Tracy recently served on EGA's 2007 Retreat Program Committee.

Heidi L. Binko is the executive director of the WestWind Foundation, a family foundation based in Charlottesville, Virginia. In this role, she directs the foundation's environmental and climate-change grantmaking and oversees its reproductive health and rights program. She also serves as a steering-committee member of the Climate and Energy Funders Group, an affinity group of the Consultative Group on Biological Diversity. Prior to joining WestWind, Heidi worked with ranchers and private landowners throughout the Rocky Mountain West on land-conservation deals. She also worked in the public-policy department of the Land Trust Alliance. She holds a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame and a master's degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, where she was a Doris Duke Charitable Foundation fellow.

Heidi has been instrumental in establishing the Small Foundations Project at EGA, as well as serving as chair of the State and Regional Briefing and as a member of the 2005 Retreat Program Committee.

Jon Cracknell has managed the environmental grantmaking and other philanthropy of the family of the late Sir James Goldsmith since 1998. He is currently the director of the JMG Foundation, which funds campaign work on issues including industrial agriculture, trade policy, and climate change.

In 2003, he helped establish and now coordinates the Environmental Funders Network (www.greenfunders.org), which brings together nearly 70 UK trusts that fund on conservation and environmental issues. Jon is co-author of the *Where The Green Grants Went* report series analysing environmental grantmaking patterns and sources of income for environmental groups in the United Kingdom. A political sciences graduate of the University of Cambridge, he holds a master's degree in Mass Communications from the University of Leicester.

Jon has served on numerous EGA committees including the 2001 Retreat Program Committee, Tracking the Field Committee (currently), and Funders Network on Trade and Globalization (FNTG).

Danielle Deane is a program officer with the Environment Program at the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, where she manages the New Constituencies for the Environment (NCE) initiative. The NCE initiative funds NGOs working to address the environmental impacts on communities in California whose concerns have often been under-represented.

Danielle holds a B.A. in Political Economy with an Environmental Studies concentration from Williams College and a M.Sc. in Environment and Development from the London School of Economics. Previously, she worked as a financial risk analyst/broker at Guy Carpenter & Company. Her experience also includes working with the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies and a Sierra Club/Fund for Public Interest Research campaign. She is currently an Association of Black Foundation Executives Connecting Leaders fellow for 2007-2008.

Danielle has served on the 2006 Retreat Program Committee and the 2007 Tracking the Field Committee.

Larry Shapiro is associate director for program development at the Rockefeller Family Fund (RFF), which he joined in 2000. He has designed programs to protect endangered wilderness areas, limit pollution, and recruit new constituencies into the effort to prevent global warming.

Since 2004, he has worked with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) to require insurance companies to examine the impact of climate change on their operations and on insurance consumers, leading to the establishment of NAIC's Executive Task Force on Climate Change. Larry co-founded and serves on the board of the Environmental Integrity Project, which encourages enforcement and implementation of environmental laws. He holds a B.S. in Conservation of Natural Resources from the University of California at Berkeley and a J.D. from Hastings College of Law.

Larry has been instrumental in overseeing EGA's operations as a fiscally sponsored project of the Rockefeller Family Fund and in helping the association establish its independent status. ■

Retreat Planning Co-Chairs Chosen

Chet Tchozewski and Lee-Hoon Benson have been appointed co-chairs of EGA's Retreat Program Committee (PC). As committee heads for the 2008 retreat, to be held at the Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz, NY, they will lead the planning process, guide the PC in developing sessions, and ensure that the retreat agenda is well structured and reflects a range of interests.

Chet Tchozewski

Chet Tchozewski is the founder and executive director of the Global Greengrants Fund—an international environmental foundation that makes small grants to grassroots environmental groups in developing nations. Through the foundation, Chet has helped to pioneer international re-granting as a simple and effective means for private US foundations, companies, and individual donors to support the growth of community-based civil society organizations in developing economies and emerging democracies.

Prior to founding the fund in 1993, he served as the executive director of Greenpeace USA's Pacific Southwest regional office in San Francisco. In 2004, he was awarded the Council on Foundations' Robert W. Scrivner Award for Creative Philanthropy.

Chet has also served on the EGA Retreat Program Committee.

Lee-Hoon Benson

Lee-Hoon Benson has been a member of the program staff at the Bush Foundation since 1998. She is a generalist whose responsibilities include program development and grant review in the areas of ecological health, education, and human services. A native of Malaysia, Lee-Hoon holds degrees from the University of Science of Malaysia (in Geography) and the University of Minnesota (in Public Affairs). Previously, Lee-Hoon's career path included teaching high school in both Malaysia and Minnesota and directing a student-support program for first-generation college students of Asian descent at Augsburg College of Minneapolis.

Lee-Hoon has also served on the Program Committee. ■

Small Foundations Get a Boost

BY HEIDI BINKO, WESTWIND FOUNDATION

Small foundations are one of the fastest-growing sectors of environmental philanthropy today. Currently, 60,000 small foundations—defined by the Association of Small Foundations as those with few or no staff—provide more than half of all US foundation grant dollars. By combating global warming or promoting environmental health and justice, these organizations collectively are important catalysts for environmental and social change. Nimble, innovative, and flexible, small foundations can respond quickly to emerging threats and opportunities and are playing an increasingly important role in the environmental movement.

Recognizing the potential of these organizations, as well as the challenges they face, the EGA Board of Directors recently launched a program designed to meet the needs of small foundations, which now comprise roughly 25 percent of EGA's membership. These organizations often face difficulties that their larger counterparts can more easily address. Without the benefit of a large staff, juggling program and grantee evaluation, developing strategy, and managing grants can be onerous, and being a newcomer to environmental philanthropy only compounds the challenge. Thus, in the year ahead, EGA plans to better connect small foundations, provide a forum for collaboration, and generally help them enhance their grantmaking by playing to their strengths.

Work to Date

In order to better understand the needs of this diverse group, in early 2007 EGA conducted a survey of its small foundation members. While respondents highlighted a variety of needs, priorities included: a peer-to-peer resource guide identifying experts from within EGA's ranks for assistance on specific issues; opportunities to explore partnerships with other small foundations that have similar funding priorities; better access to information and resources within specific program areas to better assist grantees; and educational conference calls and training to hone grantmaking skills and maximize impact.

In response to members' feedback, EGA has offered programs for small foundations at the past two retreats. At Asilomar in 2006, a small foundations institute was standing room only. And in Albuquerque last fall, EGA offered a workshop, "Finding Your Focus," that highlighted the domestic grantmaking strategies of the CS Fund and the international program of the Sachuruna Foundation. Executive Directors Roxanne Turnage (CS Fund) and Lori Udall (Sacharuna) provided attendees with pragmatic advice to help them identify a grantmaking focus so their foundations can achieve maximum impact both domestically and internationally.

More to Come

In the upcoming year, EGA will continue to offer assistance tailored to its small foundation members. Currently, it is discussing the possibility of creating a peer-to-peer resource guide, offering training and networking opportunities for small foundation trustees, and sponsoring an institute on collaboration at the 2008 Annual Retreat.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in this growing network or have a comment or suggestion to share with EGA, please contact Heidi Binko at binko@westwindfoundation.org or Jason Babbie at jkbe@ega.org. ■

EGA Silent Auction & Fundraiser

Calling all EGA artists, authors, and vacation home owners!

EGA will host a silent art auction, showcasing the talents of our admirable members, at this year's Annual Retreat. All proceeds will benefit the summer internship program.

Painting, photographs, jewelry, sculpture, books, and any other types of craft are all welcomed! In addition, a weekend or weeklong stay in your vacation home may be put up on the block.

If you have a piece of your own (or a family member's) artistic work—or a weekend share of your vacation home—that you are willing to offer at auction, please contact: Rachel Goldstein, development manager, at rgoldstein@ega.org.

Busy Behind the Scenes: EGA Graduates Second Class of Interns

During summer 2007, EGA welcomed its second class of interns, college students with an interest in environmental issues who wish to explore the world of philanthropy by working in our New York offices. Following are their reminiscences of the experience.

Loretta Cheung (left) and Tracy Zhu (right)

***Loretta Cheung**, 20, a native New Yorker, is now a junior at Smith College. Majoring in government with a minor in environmental science and policy, she looks forward to earning a master's degree in environmental management and pursuing a job that "requires as much field work and traveling as possible."*

As a college student who is trying to discover which direction I should point my future career, I found my EGA internship to be an important and worthwhile step that provided a chance to explore the many areas of environmental protection. This internship was my first experience working in an environmental organization, where I was given the opportunity to talk to people who have worked in the field for many years and to hear about the most pressing issues in areas such as environmental health and the evolution of environmental movements.

I began this internship with the intention of working on projects focused on specific areas, such as environmental education and waste reduction. Instead, I took part in researching and compiling EGA's "Tracking the Field" guide, a project spanning the broad field of environmental philanthropy, about which I knew little at the time. Researching the report allowed me to see which issue areas receive the most funding, and thus where people's values and priorities lie. It was astonishing to see the wide disparity between the amount of money donated to the most popular areas and that given to the least popular.

EGA provided a very welcoming and accommodating atmosphere. Though my internship lasted only a little over a month, I felt involved and very much part of the organization, always given the chance to voice my opinions. This experience opened my eyes and showed me just how much can be achieved, has been achieved, and most of all, still needs to be achieved to save our beloved environment from irresponsible and irreversibly harmful human activities.

***Tracy Zhu**, 21, from San Francisco, is a senior at Mt. Holyoke College. She is completing a degree in environmental studies with a concentration in environmental justice, and plans to pursue a career in urban planning or public health.*

As I enter my last year of college, graduation seems like walking off the edge of a precipice. Where will I land? The EGA summer internship and Fall Retreat introduced me to the different transitions I could make. When I met Ayisha Neogy, one of EGA's first interns, at the Fall Retreat, she described the internship just as I have experienced it: "like being in a hot air balloon, rising above everything to get the big picture." It was an amazing opportunity for me to see more clearly than ever before the connections in the environmental movement—the links between environmental causes and philanthropy, academic ideology and the work of progressive nonprofits and funders, goal-oriented projects and idealized visions. I now have a better sense of my place in the environmental field and how it fits in with the other pieces.

My main responsibilities as an intern were divided between organizing the retreat and working on independent projects such as writing two articles for the *EGA Journal* and researching the "Tracking the Field" report. When I arrived in Albuquerque for the 2007 retreat, I saw that all of my preparations had paid off. And because I had interviewed funders during the summer for the articles, I was able to delve into deeper, more meaningful conversations with them there.

The knowledge and resources I gained from my EGA internship feed both my academic passion and potential career. I am so very thankful to Dana Lanza, the EGA staff, and all of EGA for investing in me and my future as I prepare to step off the precipice into an ever more uncertain world. ■

Counting Carbon: EGA Buys Offsets for Office and Events

BY ERIC WATERS, EGA OPERATIONS MANAGER

In 2007, EGA further implemented green practices into our office protocol by calculating and purchasing carbon offsets for both our office and for travel by attendees of our events.

Calculating the Footprint

First, we determined the total number of carbon tons we emitted with the assistance of thegreenoffice.com (the EGA Co-op provider) and its online calculation tool. In auditing our office carbon use, we answered a series of questions about energy, water, waste, commuting, and travel practices in order to determine our overall carbon footprint. Because EGA has a small staff, all of whom all ride public transportation to work, and our office is located in Tide's Thoreau Center, a LEED-certified building that practices resource-saving measures, the footprint from our everyday office practices is small. However, the travel-related impacts of air flights and hotel-room rentals were the most significant portion of EGA's carbon use, comprising nearly 90 percent of our footprint. The total footprint of our office in 2007 was 28.8 tons of carbon used and 324 global acres impacted.

To determine the total carbon emissions for the travel by all attendees to the 2007 Fall Retreat, we gathered statistics on the participants from the 2006 Retreat, using the number of people and distances and methods of travel to calculate the number of carbon tons and total cost. That cost was then divided by the number of expected participants for the 2007 event.

The footprint from our everyday office practices is small. However, the travel-related impacts of our flights and hotel-room rentals where the most significant portion of EGA's carbon use.

All attendees paid a small part of their registration fee ($30) directly toward a carbon-offset purchase. The total footprint of travel for the 2007 retreat was 653.33 tons of carbon used and 7,342.73 global acres impacted.

Our Solutions

After we completed our calculations, we then purchased a portfolio of offsets representing a range of emission-reduction and renewable-energy credits sourced from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation and Myclimate Foundation, respectively (www.thegreenoffice.com/carbon/our_projects.php).

EGA remains committed to monitoring and reducing its organizational carbon use. Recognizing the unavoidable impact of travel by both our staff and event attendees, we will continue to purchase offsets while also implementing alternate methods of networking, such as videoconferencing, local meetings, and web-based information-sharing technologies.

If you have any questions about calculating or purchasing carbon offsets for your foundation, please contact Eric Waters at the EGA office for more information: 646-747-2655.

EGA purchased credits for renewable energy, such as wind power.

Resources

The Green Office
www.thegreenoffice.com/carbon

Say Hello to New Staff

Jason Babbie and Luis Davila both joined EGA in February of 2008. We welcome them as new members of the EGA team.

Jason K. Babbie is EGA's new membership services director. From 2000 to early 2008, Jason served as senior environmental policy analyst for the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), where he directed the organization's state-level legislative and regulatory campaigns on clean air, energy, and global warming and all activities regarding federal environmental policy. During his tenure Jason was instrumental in several successful initiatives, including securing New York State's proposed carbon dioxide and final mercury emissions limits on power plants. He is currently chair of the Board of Trustees for Kids Against Pollution. Jason holds a B.S. in Environmental Studies, Policy and Management from the State University of New York and an M.A. in Environmental Policy from Brown University.

Luis Davila is our new enhancing the field director. Previously, Luis was the Hispanic initiative director at Junior Achievement of New York, where he led the planning and implementation of the first effort to infuse diversity into the organization's business model by creating an advisory council composed of high-profile Latino leaders. Prior to that, he served as associate director at the Global Youth Action Network, where he promoted the full participation of youth in all aspects of decision-making on environmental policy and other issues by creating partnerships with a variety of international development agencies. Luis holds a B.S. in Diplomacy and International Relations from Seton Hall University and has done graduate coursework at several international universities. ■

Southeast Regional Briefing Eyes Climate Change

More than 45 funders gathered in Charlottesville, VA on November 12–13, 2007 to discuss and strategize on creating climate-change agendas in the US Southeast. This EGA-sponsored regional meeting provided an opportunity for funders to: gain a greater understanding of both what is happening and what is needed for success on climate-related initiatives at the local, state, and regional levels; identify immediate funding needs and opportunities, with special attention paid to Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida; share information regarding ongoing foundation efforts; and identify current and future priorities and needs.

Former Virginia Governor Gerald Baliles provided the keynote address to attendees and briefed them on the region's pressing environmental problems, which include threatened coastlines, climate change, and energy issues. The meeting then began with an overview of state action plans; subsequent sessions delved deeper into state and city issues. Throughout the day, funders had an opportunity to network with one another and to prioritize collaboration opportunities. The meeting ended with a discussion of regional opportunities and obstacles moving forward. Heidi Binko of the WestWind Foundation, the primary organizer of the meeting, will distribute a list of collaboration opportunities and hold a follow-up call in early 2008. Stay tuned.

For further information, please contact Heidi Binko at the WestWind Foundation at binko@westwindfoundation.org, or Membership Services Director Jason Babbie at jkbe@ega.org. ■

Opening Doors to Climate Action: Merck Family Fund Creates New Opportunities

On November 26, 2007, Anita Nager, director of programs at the Beldon Fund, interviewed Jenny Russell, executive director of the Merck Family Fund, a private family foundation, on Merck's climate-change initiatives. A member of the EGA Climate and Energy Funders working group, Merck last fall convened the "Endowment for Climate Solutions," a national conference on mission-related investing for financial managers from the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors. Excerpts from Anita and Jenny's conversation follow.

Anita: What is the Merck Family Fund's overall vision for addressing climate change?

Jenny: The vision thing is so hard to describe because it is so big, and we are a relatively small foundation. So I would say instead of a vision we think opportunity. Is there a way that we can turn this a little bit and look for not only solutions or abatements to climate change, but the thousands of ripples that can lead to improvement? We really see it as a door that opens to opportunity in all different kinds of ways.

Anita: When did you enter "the door"?

Jenny: After EGA's Fall Retreat in 2005, when Al Gore came to speak. A couple of trustees kept bringing climate change back up again at our subsequent board meetings, so we conducted a review of our existing grantmaking. We found that 80 percent of our grants were related to climate change in one way or another.

Anita: It didn't really represent a huge diversion, then, from some of the things you were already doing.

Jenny: No. But what did change for us is to make grants with intentionality.

Anita: How, practically, did you change what you were doing or announce to your grantees this was your intention?

Jenny: The first thing the trustees did was to allocate an additional $200,000 for specific climate-change-related activity that didn't necessarily fit into our existing program, above and beyond our grant budget. This has subsequently changed to one million dollars.

Anita: And your regular grant program is how much?

Jenny: It's just under $3 million.

Anita: So with this investment, your total portfolio is over $4 million now. Was that a deliberate decision by the trustees to increase payout?

Jenny: Right. But we went from $200,000 to a million, which is significant: 25 percent of our grant funding into climate change. And we began to change some of the ways we made grants and some of the things we did in house.

Anita: Can you talk a little bit about that?

Jenny: We added a section to our website about climate change that provides links to resources and funders. And we added a section in our grant application guidelines that says, "Tell us how you're thinking about climate change and how it is affecting your operations." And what resources on top of those for which you're applying would be helpful to address the climate-change angle? We got some interesting things back like, "We hadn't really thought about it and we are beginning to buy more recycled paper." Or " We are now taking a look at our energy use."

We decided to go climate neutral as an office. We even bought a device called a Kill-a-Watt that you can put into your plugs and it will tell you how many kilowatts that appliance is using….so we can adjust what we're doing to reduce our energy.

And then we started talking about investments. The trustees decided to make "alternative investments" in companies that have renewable-energy portfolios. Now there's a commitment that 5 percent of our portfolio will be dedicated to these renewable solutions. We also for the first time co-signed two shareholder resolutions that were specifically related to requesting sustainability reports. [*Editor's note: see page 7 for information on shareholder proxy resolutions.*]

Anita: Back to your grantmaking and this question that you pose to applicants—what was the next step?

Jenny: In 2007 we granted all of our awardees an additional energy efficiency grant of $1,000 if they told us how they would spend it.

Anita: What was your favorite?

Jenny: A bike rack. Some wanted instruments that measured drafts that came through windows. Some people wanted energy audits. Some provided public transportation passes.

Anita: Has this continued as a strategy?

Jenny: Yes. And I think we're going to do it henceforth for new grantees.

Anita: Do you ask them to report back on how those small changes have affected their organization?

Jenny: Yes. Simply. It's kind of a little extra push to those organizations that are not thinking about it that much.

Anita: Could you talk a little bit more about what you mean by intentionality in your grantmaking other than providing grantees with the $1,000 extra operational support?

Jenny: One of the questions that came into it was, where can grants of our size make a difference? And where can we feel like we have at least some knowledge or familiarity with the issues so we don't feel like we're shooting darts in the dark? So we came up with two areas in which we made grants in 2007: green building and policy making in the Northeast.

We did a number of different grants and they tended to be larger than usual. Our typical grants are $30,000 to $50,000 and these grants were more like $100,000 to $150,000. And we made them to, for example, Architecture 2030, a nonprofit working on climate-neutral green buildings—which we probably wouldn't have funded in the past. We also made three large grants to groups that are working on an economy-wide regional cap-and-trade initiative in the Northeast.

Anita: I take it that in both the policy and solutions arenas the work has been either municipal, state, or regional rather than national?

Jenny: Yes, except that the green building is more national. That relates to our sustainability interests.

Anita: How many proposals are you getting?

Jenny: It's by invitation. The idea is to have fewer, larger grants and not be subject to our normal process. A board subcommittee reviews proposals between meetings. So it's on a rolling basis with a very quick turnover.

Anita: How has the board reacted to these changes in the program?

Jenny: They're all for it. They don't necessarily want to spend down the assets. But they do want to spend more.

Anita: What percentage are you spending now with this new initiative?

Jenny: Around 6 or 7 percent.

Anita: What would be your advice to other funders who would like either to put a toe or both feet into the water on climate-change funding?

Jenny: I guess the advice would be to start with a toe. We started with $200,000 and talked to a bunch of our colleagues to see what they were doing. And now 25 percent of our program is dedicated to climate change. But it took us over two years to get there.

Anita: But for the smaller foundation—like yours—where is the best place for that foundation to go for help?

Jenny: Definitely contact the Climate and Energy Funders Group. And come to the next meeting. The other thing for small funders to know is that their grantmaking doesn't have to be called "climate change" work. In our case we were funding an urban parks program, and all of a sudden we were thinking, "Okay, we need to think about parks in terms of carbon." That's one reason we need more trees.

Anita: Can you cite a couple more examples of grantees in your normal portfolio whom the layman wouldn't necessarily think of as a climate program, but could be cast in the ways that you suggest?

Jenny: Some of our support of paper reduction programs certainly gets involved with climate change in terms of emissions savings. Catalogchoice.org, for instance, is helping to cut over five million catalogs. Environmental Defense, with its paper calculator, can determine the environmental benefits and carbon savings of such a reduction.

Anita: Did you feel that you've been able to do this without feeling overwhelmed or depressed?

Jenny: I try not to feel overwhelmed. But I don't feel depressed because I see so much opportunity. I track cool stuff related to climate. So, for instance, Ed Mazria, who runs Architecture 2030, brought up the concept that buildings really should be, and can be, net producers of energy. And if we think about that our whole construct and our whole idea of building changes. So then it's like, well, okay, this is a great opportunity—what do we have to do to make it happen? ■

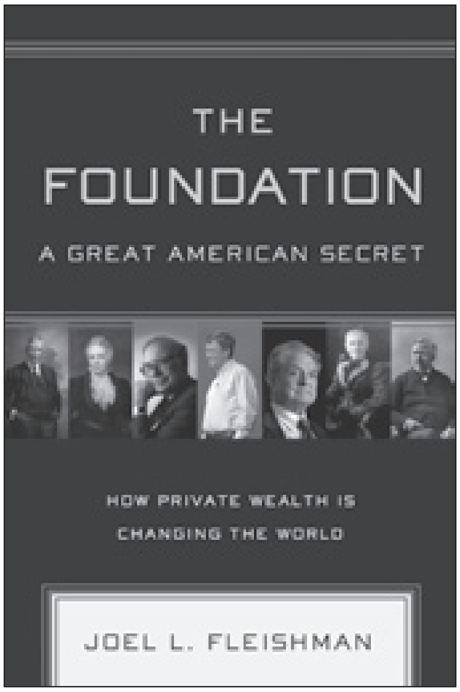
Philanthropy on Steroids

BY STEPHEN VIEDERMAN, JESSIE SMITH NOYES FOUNDATION (RETIRED)

The Foundation: A Great American Secret; How Private Wealth Is Changing the World

By Joel L. Fleishman

Public Affairs, 2007. 357 pages



In *The Foundation*, Joel L. Fleishman writes that he intends to "distill … some major lessons about how high-impact philanthropic initiatives may be conceived and brought to fruition." Through original interviews and case studies, he looks at why the wealthy establish foundations, foundations' roles in society, and their strengths and weaknesses. He asserts that the greater public should better know foundations' works.

Fleishman, now a professor of Law and Public Policy at Duke University, confines his survey to one limited section of the foundation world and world view: THE FOUNDATION writ very large—philanthropy on steroids.

He favors a scientific philanthropy whose programs are very well designed by consultants and experts, following the lead of the foundation's board, seemingly without much interaction with the objects of the programs to be developed. He speaks of "philanthropic risk," but other than loss of the grant dollars and the principle of "do no harm," he doesn't make a convincing case that such risk really exists. Perhaps greater risk-taking toward serious transformation of society's ills would increase the potential for a positive impact of giving? And he calls for lifting the cloak of philanthropic secrecy in return for philanthropy's freedom to operate.

To his credit, Fleishman writes about programmatic and grant failures as well as successes, although I found the scope spotty and rather idiosyncratic. For example, he sees the Green Revolution as a great success, illustrating the importance (to him) of careful planning, a long-term commitment, and a focus on solving a single problem (the need for food in the less-developed countries). He does not address how more careful planning might have reduced "*an unfortunate by-product* in soil erosion and species loss" (emphasis added), and social disruption in rural areas. Such "by-products" demonstrate the pitfalls of focusing on a single problem without considering the unintended consequences of one's actions.

As is true of most of the literature of philanthropy, Fleishman's book does not identify and address some of the key issues that should be on foundations' agenda: the purposes of philanthropy, its relationship to the commonweal, and the increasingly important issue of "government by philanthropy," i.e., the growing tendency of many larger foundations to fund services in a democratic society that should be and have been the domain of government.

Fleishman also does not address how through shareowner activity, focused investing, and community development foundations' $600 billion in endowments could add value to their philanthropic mission. Nor does he confront issues of class, power, and diversity within foundations and in relationships with grantees.

Change has many faces. Unfortunately, *The Foundation* does not distinguish between the very different tasks of amelioration and reform of the current system and the transformation required to create new systems that might bring about just, equitable, and environmentally sound societies.

By singing the praises of the large foundations without examining the rest of the philanthropic ecosystem, including smaller foundations, Fleishman distorts the image "the public" will take away from his work. ■

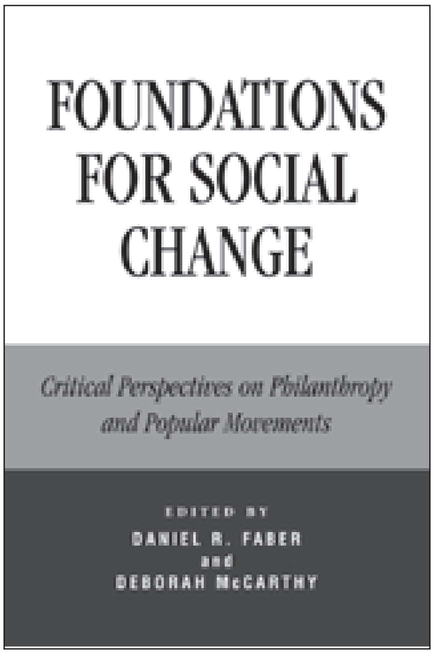
The Funders' Dilemma

BY DAVE BECKWITH, THE NEEDMOR FUND

Foundations for Social Change: Critical Perspectives on Philanthropy and Popular Movements

Edited by Daniel R. Faber and Deborah McCarthy

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005
322 pages



This book is a powerful collection of cautions and commentaries, case studies and guidelines, exhortations and explanations on the topic of the interrelationship between good causes and the money that funds them, edited by two academics who are also deeply involved in real-world work for social change. It's an important contribution to the pursuit of a more just society, including the fight for environmental justice and a sustainable economic system. If you're in grantmaking because you share these goals and values, *Foundations for Social Change* is a significant resource.

A more apt subtitle would be "The Funders' Dilemma," as the book includes both encouragement for the good that philanthropy can do (when done right) and condemnation of the harm that can be done by the professionalization of social movements and moderation of methods that seem to go with it. The contributing writers warn against, for example, a myopic focus on one solution over another and the tendency to think short term when our main tool is the one-year grant.

At the core of this volume, of course, is a set of progressive values. It urges us to study our practices and their consequences to ensure that we do not misdirect the field because we have the money (and not necessarily all the answers) and that we reflect in our own organizations the diverse voices and careful attention to vision and process that we expect of our grantees.

These critiques are important, as are the calls for philanthropy to research what works and why, and to engage in self-critical, honest, and transparent debate. We should ensure that the grassroots organizations and voices of those who are most harmed by inequality and injustice predominate—and that the experts, staff, and foundation officers with whom we associate aren't all fraternity or sorority siblings from the same ivy-covered halls. Ultimately, the question isn't whom we should fund and for how long and for what, but how do we change the world for the better?

At the same time, the voices in this volume to whom I was most drawn to were those that encourage us to widen the definition of Us. We need to see everyone as players—grantee organizations, funders, scientists, public-policy analysts, and young, eager radical campaigners—and take responsibility for our own politics and our own actions. Each of us has a role, and if we respect and listen to each other, we're all stronger.

The foundation for which I work, the Needmor Fund, provides patient (multi-year) general- purpose operating grants to grassroots organizations that allow the poorest and least powerful to speak for themselves. In the environmental arena, there is little enough of this, and the studies cited in this volume support that criticism. When we provide a voice, and a seat at the table, for everyone, we're more likely to move toward social justice together. ■

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:
Hugh Hogan's essay, "Whose Next Green Revolution?" provides sound principles and useful advice for any grantmaker wishing to contribute toward food security and poverty reduction in Africa. We would like to reassure him and your readers that the operations and funding programs of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) are based on many of these same principles.

AGRA is led and staffed predominantly by African professionals who have spent decades in the fields and villages of Africa. Their life experiences, combined with excellent training, provide them with a thorough understanding of the agro-ecological conditions, farming practices, and cultural beliefs of African farmers. Most have been pioneers in using and refining farmer participatory methods, which enable them to draw on the knowledge of farmers as well as experts and to combine both in assessing problems and developing solutions well adapted to local conditions.

AGRA pays special attention to women farmers to help assure that they have access to land, technologies, markets, and credit. AGRA listens to what farmers say about their problems and needs—whether regarding seeds, soil fertility, water, or markets. When farmers say they need fertilizer, AGRA grantees work with them to increase the productivity of their farms using locally adapted, integrated soil-fertility management practices that employ inorganic fertilizer judiciously, build soil organic matter, enhance soil biodiversity, and improve the water-holding capacity of the land.

With regard to seeds, AGRA supports African plant breeders who draw on farmer knowledge and combine the genetic diversity in farmer's seeds with that in advanced breeding lines to produce many locally well adapted, improved varieties of more than a dozen of Africa's most important food crops. These new varieties, produced through conventional breeding techniques, have increased yield potential and greater resistance to pests, diseases, and stresses, thereby reducing losses. To multiply the new seeds and disseminate them to farmers, AGRA is helping to build the capacity of local, African-run seed companies, farmers' associations, and village-level retail shops. And as farmers generate surpluses, AGRA is helping them to market their crops competitively at all levels, including globally.

AGRA is an alliance of many partners and multiple donors. Our objective is to increase the productivity, profitability, and sustainability of small-scale farms in Africa. We welcome the intellectual and financial contributions of EGA members wishing to contribute toward this goal. ■

Gary Toenniessen, The Rockefeller Foundation

Roy Steiner, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Namanga Ngongi, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa

For more information on AGRA, please visit www.agra-alliance.org/work/knowledge.html.

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We welcome your contributions and feedback on articles. (Deadline for the Spring 2008 issue to be announced.) Send your materials by e-mail to: editor@ega.org

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For more information or to volunteer, contact Dana Lanza at dlanza@ega.org (for committee work) or editor@ega.org (for reviews and written submissions).

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