WHERE THE GREEN GRANTS WENT

U.K. Trust Funding for Environmental and Conservation Work



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for the Environmental Funders Network

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This report analyses the funding provided for environmental and conservation work by the grant-making trusts that belong to the recently formed Environmental Funders Network (EFN) plus other U.K. trusts that actively support work of this kind. Our aim is to provide a 'snapshot' of the state of trust funding in the 2002-03 financial year, so as to provide some benchmark figures for the EFN. However we hope our findings will also be of interest to environmental and conservation organisations and a broader range of foundations and trusts.

The EFN was set up in July 2003 to provide a networking mechanism for the staff and trustees of U.K. and other European environmental grant-making organisations. The Network seeks to promote discussion between grant-makers working in this field and to provide opportunities for collaborative action. The Network does not have any capacity for collectively assessing or handling applications for grants – PLEASE DO NOT SEND US APPLICATIONS.

Funders interested in joining the EFN or finding out more about its work should contact Jon Cracknell: jon@jmgfoundation.org

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THE SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

The grants data analysed in this report relates to the 2002-03 financial year, the most recent for which figures are available. For a few trusts data was only available for the 2002 calendar year (a close match), or for periods which varied from the standard 2002-03 financial year by one or two months. We included this information in our analysis with a view to getting the most comprehensive coverage possible, but we excluded trusts who could only provide information for the 2001-02 financial year.

The report looks at the grants made by 30 of the most active trusts funding environmental and conservation work in the U.K. We don't claim to have achieved comprehensive coverage of the whole sector, but we are confident that we have most of the 'big players', and that the 30 trusts which we have looked at provide a representative group. We are considering producing a second edition of this report later in the year, with expanded coverage in terms of smaller trusts and a few bigger ones for which we have been unable to obtain data so far. Whether we do this or not depends in part on whether readers find this report useful, so please let us have your feedback.

The breakdowns of trust activity by organisational type and by issue also require some explanatory words. Categorising the grants by 'issue' and the 'approach' of each organisation is difficult, given that much of the work being funded is of a multi-dimensional nature. A single beneficiary organisation

may be, for example, simultaneously carrying out education work, campaigning to change policy, conducting research, and also running some kind of service such as a certification scheme. Equally many organisations work on more than one environmental issue at any point in time. The process is further complicated by the fact that most of the trusts covered in our study only provide brief details about the grants that they have made. If this had been a PhD thesis then we could have investigated every single grant very thoroughly by discussing it with both the trust and the beneficiary organisation. Since we thought it more useful to get some figures 'out in the open' for discussion we opted for a less detailed methodological approach, but one which we nonetheless believe gives useful and reliable figures. What we can say with certainty is that we have been consistent in our treatment of the data we collected. Whether we have taken the right approach is open to you to judge, and we would welcome advice as to ways in which our analysis could be improved and made more useful.

Finally, you will see that there is no list of the 30 trusts whose data we analysed, nor of the beneficiary organisations. This is partly because some of the trusts involved were only prepared to provide grants data on a confidential basis, but also because we didn't think that creating rankings on either the grant-making or beneficiary side of the funding relationship would be particularly useful. What we were more interested in is the overall pattern of practice within the environmental and conservation funding community in the U.K.

1 THE FUNDING LANDSCAPE

We analysed the grants figures from 30 leading trusts funding environmental and conservation work. In total these 30 trusts made 673 grants worth a little more than £18.3 million in 2002-03. There are six other trusts that we identified and would have liked to include in the analysis but who were unable or unwilling to provide the data that we needed. We estimate their combined giving in 2002-03 would have been around £1.1 million, giving a total for the sector of c. £19.4 million, or just 33 pence for each man, woman, and child in the U.K.

The £18.3 million that we considered is by no means evenly distributed between the 30 trusts. Rather there are a number of large trusts that dominate the field, with the largest five funders between them contributing 61.8% of the £18.3 million. As one might expect, these large funders are able to give bigger grants than smaller trusts in the sector, and, in general, they do so.

As Table 1 shows, average grant sizes vary significantly from one trust to the next. Average grants varied in size from £98,000 (for the trust with the largest average grants) to under £4,000 at the other end of the scale, a huge difference. A 'typical' trust in our survey would be giving between £200,000 and £350,000 per year in total, with an average grant size of around £20,000. The largest single grant that we considered was for more than £606,000 and the smallest for just £20!

We were surprised to find that the 673 grants were distributed amongst a total of 482 different organisations and/or individuals. We did not expect to find such a diversity of recipient organisations.

Of these 482 grantees, a total of 369 received just one grant, suggesting that the distribution of grants is very broad and shallow in relation to the diverse range of groups working on environment and conservation issues. The organisation which received grants from the largest number of trusts had secured funding from 11 different trusts amongst the 30 we studied.

Table 1: Distribution of grants between trusts of different sizes

Trusts ranked in order of giving	Total given (£)	Per cent of total	Number of grants	Average grant size (£)
Trusts 1 to 5 in order of amount given	11,321,597	61.8	185	61,198
Trusts 6 to 10 in order of amount given	2,855,721	15.6	146	19,560
Trusts 11 to 15 in order of amount given	1,579,469	8.6	80	19,743
Trusts 16 to 20 in order of amount given	1,139,065	6.2	129	8,830
Trusts 21 to 25 in order of amount given	915,307	5.0	78	11,735
Trusts 26 to 30 in order of amount given	502,000	2.7	55	9,127
TOTAL	18,313,159	100	673	27,211

2 BENEFICIARY ORGANISATIONS

In the same way that the provision of grants is dominated (in financial terms) by a small number of large trusts so receipt of money was dominated by a relatively small number of organisations. A total of 46 organisations secured more than £100,000 in funding from the 30 trusts over the 2002-03 year. Together these 46 groups accounted for more than £9.7 million of the funds that were disbursed, 52% in total. Within this group were the organisations that raised more than £200,000 each over the course of the year. There were just 14 of these, and together they accounted for nearly 29% of the total money given out, with a combined income of more than £5.2 million. The most successful single organisation secured a striking £1,037,450 through 9 grants, more than 5.6% of the total money given away.

By contrast, there were a total of 300 grants made that were for less than £10,000 and another 144 that came in at between £10,000 and £20,000. Together these 444 grants only accounted for 16% of the total money given away. This long 'tail' of relatively small grants follows on from a much smaller number of large grants that account for the bulk of the money given away.

Table 2: Grants broken down by size

Grant size (£)	Value (£)	Number of grants
200,000 and above	3,353,018	11
190,000 - 199,999	0	0
180,000 - 189,999	360,000	2
170,000 - 179,999	175,000	1
160,000 - 169,999	0	0
150,000 - 159,999	753,800	5
140,000 - 149,999	288,240	2
130,000 - 139,999	403,060	3
120,000 - 129,999	485,458	4
110,000 - 119,999	336,000	3
100,000 - 109,999	1,304,986	13
90,000 - 99,999	828,399	9
80,000 - 89,999	590,459	7
70,000 - 79,999	1,038,851	14
60,000 - 69,999	867,233	14
50,000 - 59,999	1,139,409	22
40,000 - 49,999	806,093	19
30,000 - 39,999	1,091,912	33
20,000 - 29,999	1,553,007	67
10,000 - 19,999	1,828,059	144
0 - 9,999	1,110,175	300
TOTAL	18,313,159	673

3 GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

We were interested in where the grants from the 30 trusts went in geographical terms. Of the £18.3 million granted just under 69% was given to support work carried out in the U.K. We were surprised that this figure was not higher, and consider it to be a good thing that more than 30% of the money given went to support work outside the U.K. American environmental foundations spend a much higher proportion of their grant money (around 95%) within the U.S., for example, and a major study of U.K. trust activity on a wide range of different issues lists international giving as just 2% of overall trust expenditure. In some cases the grants for overseas projects were made to U.K. groups, but for international work rather than domestic projects. Conservation work represents a key activity supported by this international grant-making. The second largest tranche of funding went into what we have termed 'general international' work. This was work carried out by organisations that operate in many parts of the world, and where it was impossible for us to determine in which country the funds would actually be deployed, but where it was clear they were going outside the U.K.

Grants were made to support work in 45 identifiable countries around the world. We were surprised by the amount of money being granted to organisations in North America, given the size of the private foundation community in the U.S. in particular. We

Table 3: *Geographical distribution of grants*

Region	Grants made (£)	Per cent of total
United Kingdom	12,600,359	68.8
General international	2,795,917	15.3
Africa	834,107	4.6
North America	829,514	4.5
Asia	652,204	3.6
Other Europe	392,348	2.1
Central & Latin America	146,007	0.8
Australasia	62,703	0.3
TOTALS	18,313,159	100

also found it striking that, given the importance of the European Union in determining U.K. environmental policy, less than 0.2% of the grants made went to organisations based in Brussels or other parts of Belgium. Even if one allows for a proportion of the 'general international' grants being spent on work in the home of the EU institutions it seems very unlikely that more than 2% of the overall sum granted is given over to work of this kind.

In addition to the breakdown presented in the table above we calculated figures for two other regions. Nearly £230,000 was granted to support work in India, while nearly £183,000 went to support groups working in Central and Eastern Europe and countries of the Former Soviet Union, whose environments are amongst the most degraded in Europe.

4 WHICH ISSUES RECEIVE THE MOST SUPPORT?

The grants that we analysed spanned a very wide range of activity, from campaigns against intensive pig farming to community recycling projects, from rhino protection initiatives to environmental magazines, from lawsuits on climate change to tree planting programmes in the U.K. and beyond.

In order to try and get an understanding of which kinds of issues get most support we assigned all of the 673 grants in our survey to one of 18 categories. These categories are described in Appendix A. The figures that we came up with cannot be regarded as definitive, or completely comprehensive, because there may well be money coming into a particular issue from trusts that are outside those we looked at. Nonetheless we think our findings give a useful starting point for discussion.

As is clear from Table 4 the issues that received the most funding were, in order: work promoting 'biodiversity and species preservation'; the 'preservation of the countryside'; work geared towards more sustainable forms of 'agriculture'; and work promoting 'sustainable development' in general. Together these four broad categories of activity accounted for more than 55% of the funds disbursed.

Given the threat posed to all of these activities by climate change we found it surprising (and somewhat worrying!) that so little of the money we looked at is being directed towards addressing this problem. While one can legitimately argue that reforming agricultural practice, planting trees, encouraging more sustainable lifestyles etc. are all valid responses to climate change, it is striking how little money is focused directly on the issue, just 2.5% of the total. If one adds in the funds being spent on energy related work (3.6%), plus those

Table 4: Distribution of grants by issue

Issue	Grants made (£)	Per cent of total	Number of grants	Number of trusts
Biodiversity and species preservation	4,061,811	22.2	103	23
Countryside preservation	2,359,278	12.9	103	21
Agriculture	2,017,839	11.0	89	24
Sustainable development	1,675,010	9.1	39	19
Multi-issue	1,399,487	7.6	57	19
Oceans and coasts	834,659	4.6	18	10
Toxics and pollution	790,110	4.3	19	10
Forests and woodland	788,323	4.3	35	17
Waste	666,887	3.6	24	9
Energy	665,743	3.6	38	14
Transport	486,800	2.7	13	8
Climate and atmosphere	456,226	2.5	26	8
Built environment	451,279	2.5	25	12
Human rights and environmental justice	397,090	2.2	14	7
Trade and development	396,637	2.2	28	7
Rivers and lakes	353,981	1.9	9	7
Environmental law	297,054	1.6	4	4
Biotech and nanotech	214,946	1.2	29	4
TOTALS	18,313,159	100	673	_

directed towards transport issues (just 2.7%), then the combined figure rises to 8.8% of the total grants made. This still seems low to us, given the scale of the challenge posed by climate change and its potential to affect all the other activity being funded through the grants analysed here. The recent scientific research published in *Nature*, which estimated that up to 37% of all species could be driven into extinction by climate change by 2050, gives some sense of the potential impact on biodiversity, for example.

In addition to breaking the grants down by fairly broad issue categories we also focused in on some more specific areas of activity, such as work geared at reducing the use of pesticides, or increasing recycling, or protecting fisheries. The amounts given to each of these activities are set out in Table 5. We were surprised to find that more than £830,000 was given to public garden projects of one kind or another.

Table 5: Funds given to selected activities

Activity	Grants made (£)	Number of trusts
Wildlife habitats	1,073,388	16
Gardens	830,356	7
Birds	703,770	14
Organic farming	663,456	12
Fisheries	630,159	7
Recycling	469,726	6
Cycling	419,500	6
Renewable energy	416,384	8
Climate change	371,281	6
Pesticides	358,970	7
Tropical forests	337,145	12
Oil industry	239,635	6
Tree planting	233,123	12
GM crops	185,480	4
Globalization	181,803	4
Economic re-localization	128,399	5

5 WHAT KINDS OF APPROACH RECEIVE THE MOST BACKING?

In addition to analysing the grants made by 'issue' we thought it might be useful to attempt a breakdown of the data on the basis of the main type of activity, or 'approach', of each grantee organisation. As mentioned in the introductory section above, this is a difficult and somewhat imprecise process, because many organisations operate in a range of different ways. What we have tried to do is to categorise each group on the basis of what their core activity is. The figures are presented in Table 6 below, with an explanation of each category provided in Appendix B.

As one might expect given the large amounts of money directed towards biodiversity and protection of the countryside, the type of activity that received the greatest share of funds was 'practical conservation work', with nearly £4.4 million, or 24%. Work of an advocacy or campaigning nature comes in second, with just under 20% of the funds being disbursed. We found it interesting that more than £2.4 million, or 13% of the total funds, was being used to support research, either of an academic type (overwhelmingly scientific research) or in relation to policy development.

Table 6: Distribution of grants by 'approach' taken by grantee organisations

Approach	Grants made (£)	Per cent of total	Number of grants	Number of trusts
Practical conservation work	4,397,854	24.0	138	25
Advocacy and campaigning	3,614,955	19.7	150	21
Community	2,737,875	15.0	84	20
Research	2,423,095	13.2	76	24
Educational	1,826,763	10.0	113	27
Grant-making bodies	1,055,459	5.8	13	10
Service delivery	1,024,418	5.6	29	15
Representative	725,097	4.0	28	14
Media	259,364	1.4	25	8
Historic preservation	248,279	1.4	17	11
TOTALS	18,313,159	100	673	_

6 HOW 'FOCUSED' IS TRUST ACTIVITY?

Having looked at the proportion of overall funding given to different issues and different approaches we thought it might be interesting to look at the extent to which individual trusts are focused on particular issues and approaches, and the extent to which funding from individual trusts does, or does not, dominate these.

To do this we looked at the way in which each trust's grants were distributed amongst the 18 different issue categories that we had identified. We worked out the percentage of the trust's overall activity accounted for by each issue on which they were active. We then added up the two most important categories for each trust,

followed by the three most important. Our goal was to try and get an understanding of how concentrated, or 'focused', the funding is from the trusts within our survey. On average across the 30 trusts as a whole we found that the 'top two' categories of activity accounted for nearly 64% of grants, while the 'top three' categories accounted for more than 78%. This seemed surprisingly high, particularly given the wide distribution of grants to different beneficiary organisations that we describe in section 1. There were just four trusts for whom the top three categories of activity accounted for less than 65% of their overall giving, whereas for 17 trusts the figure was over 75%. There does not appear to be any clear correlation between the overall amount given by a trust and the degree to which its grants are focused on a small number of issue areas.

CONCLUSION

Compared to other social issues, the funding available for environmental and conservation work is very limited: some 33 pence per person per year, as mentioned earlier. The most wide-ranging study to date by the Charities Aid Foundation estimated that, even when combined with animal welfare grantmaking, the total share of environmental/animal issues was only 3% of overall charitable trust giving (some £30 million), with the bulk of U.K. trust money going to social care (25%), health (19%), education (17%) and arts/culture/recreation (10%) issues. We believe strongly that there is a need to increase the overall availability of funding for work in the environmental and conservation fields, and our hope is that this report may spark some discussion about how this might be achieved.

In closing we would like to point out that foundations and trusts have a unique power that is often overlooked in public policy debates. The power of foundations lies in their ability to make use of replenishable funds that can be quickly deployed to address emerging issues. Being independent, grant-making trusts have the distinctive opportunity - unlike government and industry - to determine their own agenda. As the authors of a 2002 report on the future of philanthropy argue, "Foundations should provide a space for alternative thinking, voices and practices. Only foundations – not driven by customer, public fundraising and constituency demands - have the freedom to fulfil this role." We hope that in months to come the trusts within the Environmental Funders Network will continue to embrace this challenge, and that other funders may be persuaded to join us in this endeavour.

After a certain amount of experimentation we settled on 18 different 'issue' categories, set out in the list below. We would welcome feedback from readers as to the extent to which these seem appropriate and useful.

- **1 Agriculture** this is a particularly broad category, including support for organic farming, educational projects on agriculture (such as city farms), projects that promote community based agriculture and marketing schemes, training for farmers in developing countries, campaigning against the control of the food chain by agribusiness companies, organisations backing small farmers, factory farming, and an element of support for organisations working on rural economy issues.
- **2 Biodiversity and species preservation** again a broad category, with the focus being on work that protects particular species, be they plant or animal, vertebrate or invertebrate. Included within this is support for botanic gardens and academic research on botany and zoology, protection of birds and their habitats, funding for marine wildlife such as whales, dolphins and sharks, projects that aim to protect endangered species such as rhinos and elephants, and defence of globally important biodiversity hotspots.
- **3 Biotech and nanotech** a much narrower category, with the focus on grants being made around the issues of agricultural biotechnology (GM crops), nanotechnology, and the threats posed to the environment by the coming together of these kinds of emerging technologies.
- **4 Built environment** this category covers grants to support the preservation of historic buildings such as churches, National Trust properties, and other heritage or museum trusts. It is particularly important to note that our figures for the amount of money given to 'built environment' work are not intended to be comprehensive, since there are many trusts that we did not look at who support this kind of work.

- **5 Climate and atmosphere** the bulk of the money in this category is targeted towards work on climate change, with a small amount going towards the issue of ozone depletion. Projects include national and international climate change campaigning, work targeting the carbon footprints of major corporations, and issues around the Kyoto Protocol and the need for equity in global agreements on climate change.
- **6 Countryside preservation and open spaces** as with 'agriculture' and 'biodiversity' above, this is a broad category. It encompasses support for public gardens and open spaces, backing for wildlife trusts, conservation trusts, and nature reserves (and the protection of wildlife habitats), and funding for visitor centres seeking to educate the public about the countryside. Often this work is carried out by community based or county-wide organisations.
- **7 Energy** key pieces of work here include support for renewable energy (both in the U.K. and overseas) in terms of research and implementation of projects on the ground, campaigning against the oil and other fossil fuel industries around the world, and campaigning on nuclear industry issues.
- **8 Environmental law** this is a category receiving relatively limited funds in the overall analysis, but one that we thought it important to include because the 'professional' support provided by environmental law organisations can be very important for the other work described here. Most of the funds provided under this heading went either to organisations that provide legal support to community based organisations in the U.K., or to international work relating to issues such as trade policy and climate change.
- **9 Forests and woodland** the main types of activity supported via this strand of funding are, on the one hand, educational and campaigning work around tropical forests, and on the other the development and protection of domestic woodland in the U.K., via tree planting schemes or forest protection programmes.

- 10 Human rights and environmental justice in this category we put grants to organisations that are particularly focused on human rights abuses and the justice dimensions of environmental campaigning, elements that are too often overlooked. Nearly all of the grants in this category were international in nature, going to countries such as Nigeria, Burma, those of the Amazon basin, Tibet, and the Caspian region.
- 11 Multi-issue work while we did everything that we could to allocate each grant to a specific issue category, there were a block of grants where this was impossible, typically because they took the form of core funding to campaigning organisations that work on a range of different campaigns, or are conducting research on a range of different environmental issues. Also included in this category are grants that support media titles which report on a wide range of environmental issues, such as magazines and news services. The final, and significant, strand of activity included in this category are funds provided to regranting organisations or awards schemes, since for these we were unable to determine the final destination of the funds provided in the initial grant.
- **12 Oceans and coasts** grants in the oceans and coasts category included support for marine conservation projects of various kinds, scientific and policy research on marine issues, support for certification schemes, and work on fisheries management issues.
- **13 Rivers and lakes** as with the preceding category, work funded on rivers and lakes included academic research into hydrological issues, conservation projects (particularly in relation to the Thames), campaigning, and also educational work.

- **14 Sustainable development** the fourth largest of our issue categories and, as with 'agriculture' and 'biodiversity', fairly broad in nature. The projects supported in this category were generally of an educational nature, were community based, or were geared towards policy research. We also included one grant that specifically related to socially responsible investment.
- **15 Toxics and pollution** this category is quite diverse in terms of the grants that it includes, spanning from support for work on air pollution, campaigns against gold mining, and funding for work aimed at reducing the use of pesticides and other toxic chemicals.
- **16 Trade and development** the trade and development category is also fairly broad, incorporating work on corporate-led globalization and international trade policy (as promoted by the World Trade Organisation, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund), to campaigning on private sector finance flows, to 'solutions-oriented' work focused on the re-localization of economic activity.
- **17 Transport** under transport we included grants relating to roads and aviation policy, but also more hands-on and solutions-oriented projects that aim to increase the number of people cycling, or to promote walking. We decided to include both leisure-related transport activities and commercial ones within this one category.
- **18 Waste** recycling and composting schemes (often run at the community level) were key beneficiaries of grants in this final category, along with campaigns against the incineration of waste.

As with the 'issues' categories described in Appendix A we spent some time deliberating on how best to categorise the 'approach' taken by different organisations. In some cases we found it difficult to separate the approach from the issues on which an organisation was working. We settled on the following ten categories, and again would welcome feedback from readers:

- **1 Advocacy and campaigning** by this we mean organisations that are primarily interested in effecting social or political change. Included in this section are i) campaigning organisations; ii) networks of campaign groups; iii) organisations providing professional advice to campaigners (e.g. legal support); and iv) watchdog organisations, that track particular issue areas. Our definition of campaigning was quite a 'tight' one, and it may be that this category underestimates the amount of campaigning work being supported, for reasons set out below.
- **2 Community** organisations that are first and foremost working to improve the welfare of their local community, including: i) community groups; ii) networks of community organisations; iii) amenity organisations (e.g. those concerned with a local park or gardens that are open to the public).
- **3 Educational** while much work on conservation and environmental issues has an educational component organisations in this category are those which we felt have a primarily educational mission, either on specific environmental issues or on the environment in general. In addition to organisations that would define their focus as 'environmental education' this category also includes museums, groups setting up conferences, organising training programmes, and running environmental arts projects.
- **4 Grant-making bodies** as mentioned previously, some of the grants analysed in this report were given to other grant-making bodies, either for re-granting purposes, or for the support of awards schemes. The work that is ultimately funded with this money will clearly fit into one of the other categories identified here, but we were unable to follow the 'top-level' grants through to their final destinations for reasons of time.

- **5 Historic preservation** in general our analysis doesn't cover grants towards the preservation of churches and other historically important buildings. However, when trusts amongst the 30 that we studied made grants of this kind we included them in the survey for the purpose of completeness.
- **6 Media** by this we mean grants given specifically to support the costs of writing books, for environmental magazines, for documentary films, and for news services on the environment.
- **7 Practical conservation work** this was comfortably the largest of our 'approach' categories in terms of financial support. This category covers organisations that have conservation at the core of their mission, including i) conservation trusts; ii) wildlife trusts and reserves; iii) national parks; and iv) visitor centres. Practical work on species conservation was also included in this category. It is worth noting that some of the groups active in this area may be involved in advocacy and campaigning work in order to try and effect changes in conservation related policies, and that some of their work is undoubtedly of an educational nature.
- **8 Representative** some of the organisations we assessed can best be thought of as 'representative' bodies in that they first and foremost represent the interests of a particular sector of society, such as organic farmers, family farmers, cyclists, ramblers etc. Again, there may be an element of advocacy and campaigning work or educational work carried out by these groups, but those that we included in this category define their main mission as providing a 'voice' for a particular sector or issue.
- **9 Research** in this category we included i) academic research of a scientific or other nature carried out by universities or research councils; and ii) policy research carried out by organisations that are primarily 'think-tanks'.
- **10 Service delivery** our final 'approach' category refers to organisations whose main mission is the provision of a practical 'on-the-ground' service to the public, for example, cycle taxis, or recycling projects, or advice services on alternative technologies.