National Philanthropic Trust

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Addressing the Climate Crisis: How Donors Can Take Action



Introduction

The climate crisis is no longer an abstract threat. The heat waves, wildfires, floods and droughts experienced in recent years demonstrate the devastating impacts of climate change.[i] Air pollution is increasing respiratory diseases.[ii] Droughts are causing pervasive food shortages.[iii] Natural disasters are displacing communities.[iv] The increase in the overall temperature of the planet caused by greenhouse gases is accelerating faster than ever before, and climate scientists agree that daily human activity is the primary cause of rising emissions.[v]

Around the world, communities and habitats face an uncertain future. Unless immediate actions are taken by individuals, communities and governments to reduce and reverse carbon emissions, the crisis will continue to accelerate. For individual donors, discerning how to give to climate initiatives can seem overwhelming. Questions of where to give, and how to have an impact, are common. The good news is that potential solutions to curb climate change exist, and opportunities to make a difference abound.

Of course, philanthropy alone will not solve the climate crisis: Governments, businesses and individuals all have a role to play in prioritizing the health of the planet. That said, philanthropists can be catalysts for change. Philanthropic investments, along with donor activism, are already paving the way. Funders focused on climate launched one of the most successful philanthropic movements of the past decade—directly putting pressure on corporations, aligning with government and global goals and supporting advocacy groups that are calling governments and corporations to the task of reducing emissions.

Despite this momentum, there is a need for more engagement: Less than two percent of all philanthropic dollars are currently being spent to combat the immediate threat of climate change. In 2019, this was equal to $5-9 billion out of $730 billion in total, global philanthropic giving.[vi]

Countering climate change is no longer solely a consideration for large foundations or donors who are uniquely interested in environmental causes. Every donor can get involved—whether by funding climate initiatives directly or considering how this crisis will impact other issues.

This guide and accompanying worksheet are for donors who are ready to act. Combined, these resources provide an overview of the challenge and potential solutions, outline ways to think about your giving and help you prioritize actions.

Note: *While there are many avenues to explore within these resources, this is not an exhaustive list of ways to support climate action.*

"Across the field of philanthropy, whatever a funder may care about, the growing climate crisis will stop them—directly or indirectly—from achieving their goals. Addressing the climate crisis can no longer be the work of a few foundations or donors. We have arrived at a moment of urgency when we need an 'all-of-philanthropy' level of engagement, expertise and resources."

- FSG, Time to Act: How Philanthropy Must Address the Climate Crisis

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Part 1: Understanding the Causes of Climate Change and Exploring Evidence-based Solutions

Climate Change Basics

There is no shortage of research and data on the climate crisis. In the simplest terms, the crisis is caused by human activity—from travel to food production to energy use. These activities have increased the volume of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere. These gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, get trapped in the atmosphere and cause the planet to warm.

There are two leading approaches to how to tackle the crisis—**mitigation and adaptation**. While there are proponents for each, both approaches are needed. In fact, the work of traditional environmental organizations (e.g., Sierra Club, Conservation International, World Wildlife Fund) often encompasses both approaches.

As everyday human activities impact the planet, scientists, governments and others working to mitigate climate change primarily focus on the five core industries that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Given how expansive these industries are in terms of geographic reach and communities and habitats affected, there are an increasing number of targeted solutions to change industry practices to reduce emissions.

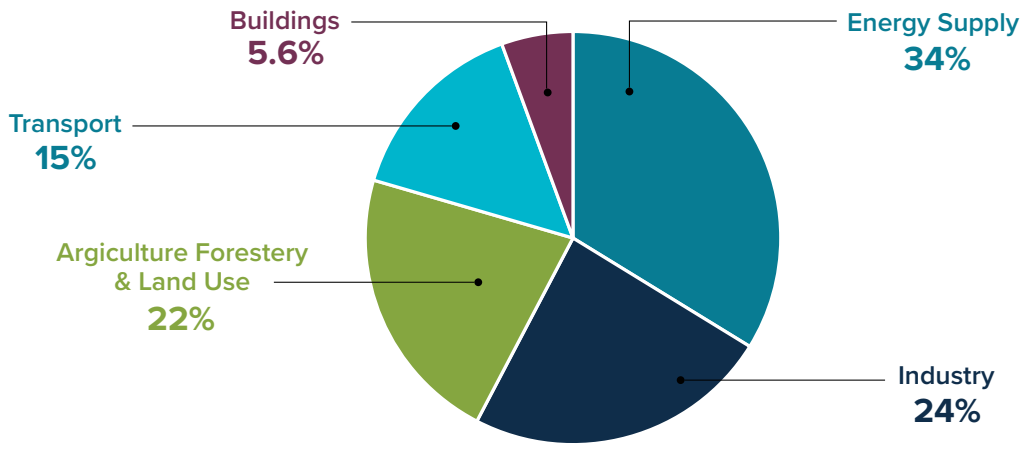
But there are opportunities to support and advance climate solutions in every sector—whether it be healthcare, education or disaster response.

The bottom line: Averting an accelerated climate catastrophe depends on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. To reduce emissions, change needs to happen at every level—in households and across entire countries and economies. Donors can be catalysts, champions and changemakers by supporting organizations that are working to face today's realities while striving for a better future.

Mitigation: Actions that are meant to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the goal of preventing further climate effects.

Adaptation: Actions that are meant to compensate for or adapt to changes already arising because of climate change.

GLOBAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY SECTOR



Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2019.



What Will It Take to Reduce Greenhouse Emissions?

- **Reduced reliance on fossil fuels and increased use of clean energy:** By 2050, as global living standards improve, energy demand is expected to increase 50 percent.[vii] Without any changes to the standards of living and consumption in industrialized countries, emissions will increase by 50 percent as well. To mitigate the worst effects of climate change, all countries—but particularly those with the highest emission rates—must move away from fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas. Innovations in energy sources and technologies along with policy changes that promote the use of clean energy will be essential.

- **Changes to food, agriculture and land use:** Humans need food, and in this pursuit, have transformed a sizeable portion of the planet's land and significantly disrupted ecosystems. Changes to rebalance the food system and mitigate against the destruction of land and water sources will require changes in consumer behavior, shifts in the ways and types of crops that are grown, protection of land and policies focused on the future of the global food system.

- **Shifts in industry supply and demand:** Emissions from the industrial sector—which produces a wide range of materials and goods such as cement, steel, chemicals, computers and clothing—compose one-quarter of overall global emissions, driven by rapid infrastructure development in emerging economies. New policies and market demand for emissions-free industrial materials can change production processes. Organizations researching new plant-based materials or advocating against extractive land usage for the materials used in cell phones or batteries are at the vanguard of this work.

Emerging Solutions to Mitigate and Adapt to the Climate Crisis

The following section outlines several solutions where additional philanthropic funding may have an impact on **reducing the amount of greenhouse gases being produced, removing existing greenhouse gases from the environment and strengthening adaptative approaches to address the climate crisis now.**



INCREASING THE USE OF CLEAN ENERGY

Reducing emissions from energy usage is critical to making progress toward a carbon-neutral—or even carbon-negative—future. The goal of those at the forefront of climate work is to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and shift to cleaner, more efficient energy sources. Clean energy, or renewable energy, relies on power generating sources that cannot be depleted (unlike fossil fuels which come from a finite source). There are multiple types of clean energy sources, including solar, wind, hydropower, bioenergy and geothermal.

Transitioning to renewable energy will largely be driven by government, corporations and individual consumers. Philanthropy can help build public demand for alternative energy sources by, for example, supporting organizations on the frontlines of fighting for reductions in fossil fuels usage. Likewise, research and advocacy funding can lead to government investment and public policy changes that drive adoption of these clean energy sources. For instance, bipartisan research and advocacy groups like Carbon 180 and the Clean Air Task Force work alongside academic experts and government leaders on policies in the United States, including the Farm Bill and the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, which will invest more than $360 billion in climate initiatives.



INVESTING IN NATURAL CARBON SINKS

The Earth itself holds holds solutions to the climate crisis in natural carbon sinks. A carbon sink is anything that absorbs more carbon from the atmosphere than it releases, such as oceans, forests and land. While new technologies are being developed to remove carbon and other greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, natural carbon sinks need protection to combat the destruction of these vital ecosystems.



1) Oceans

With the ability to hold about 50 times more carbon than the atmosphere, oceans play an essential role in the global carbon cycle and have contributed to regulating the climate for millions of years.[viii] While oceans naturally remove carbon from the atmosphere, emissions are too high for oceans to keep up at a rate that would avert climate change impacts. However, research shows that ocean-based climate interventions might provide up to one-fifth of the emissions reductions necessary to stabilize the climate by 2050.[ix]

In recent years, ocean-focused philanthropy has seen a steady increase in funding and the emergence of new donors. Philanthropists can invest in ocean carbon dioxide removal (e.g., seaweed farming), support healthy oceans (e.g., pollution reduction, increasing protected areas), and fund research into unexplored marine environments. Currently, ocean philanthropy is largely focused on North America, comprising nearly half of ocean-related grants—so supporting efforts in other geographies could potentially have an outsized impact.

2) Coastal Ecosystems

Coastal environments—mangroves, salt marshes and sea grass meadows—are commonly referred to as "blue carbon" ecosystems and can sequester more carbon per hectare per year than most ecosystems.[x] Like the oceans, they are an excellent defense mechanism against climate change. When destroyed, however, for uses like building development, the stored carbon is released into the atmosphere—contributing to the climate crisis.

In addition to removing carbon from the environment, coastal ecosystems are crucial to protecting the land and communities around them. A healthy coastal ecosystem can protect communities from the devastating effects of storms, such as flooding and erosion, and can even naturally filter polluted water. Wildlife also relies on these habitats at every stage of the life cycle.

Donors can play a role in protecting these spaces by supporting organizations and multi-stakeholder partnerships (i.e., the Blue Carbon Initiative) that are moving the needle on coastal ecosystem protection and regeneration.









What is Blue Carbon?

Blue carbon is the carbon dioxide that is captured in world's oceans and coastal ecosystems, including mangroves, tidal marshes, and sea grass meadows. Learn more at The Blue Carbon Initiative.

3) Forests

Half of the world's forests have been cut down in the last 75 years. In the last five years alone, around 10 million hectares of forest were cleared per year, which equates to losing an American football-field-sized area of forest every six seconds.[xi] Not only does deforestation cause emissions, but it also decreases the immense potential of forests to sequester carbon.

Philanthropists can support programs that protect forested areas, promote production and consumption methods that reduce the need to cut down trees, restore degraded forests or invest in the reforesting of lands that have been cleared. In addition, supporting efforts to reduce food waste and shift to plant-rich diets are two critical interventions to prevent deforestation by creating less demand for farmland, and therefore less need for forest clearing. An immediate and proven way to preserve forests is to invest in the protection of land and forest rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, who in turn promote sustainable stewardship of these lands.

4) Peatlands

Peatlands refer to peat soil and wetlands that grow above and around the soil—more familiarly known as swamps, fens and bogs.[xii] Located in all kinds of climates—from tropical to temperate—peatlands make up just three percent of land on Earth, but they store twice as much carbon as all the world's forests combined.[xiii] There is a delicate balance to peatlands because the extraction of peat (the soil many use in gardens and some use as a heat source) is incredibly destructive to the environment. The extraction process releases carbon dioxide stored in the soil, creating greenhouse gas emissions. If preserved and undisturbed, however, peatlands could be one of the greatest natural solutions to the climate crisis.

The preservation of peatlands is not on the radar of many philanthropists. There are newly forming global initiatives and particular interest in conservation in Europe, where peat has been used as a heating source in many countries. Where peatlands have been drained, donors can support restoration efforts. In some areas of the world, peatlands need protection from development; in others, sustainable land use practices are being encouraged and enacted by local communities to preserve these important ecosystems.

CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity is the term used to describe the variety of life on Earth, including plants, animals, insects and fungi. A 2019 United Nations report on biodiversity noted the alarming rate of decline of natural habitats and risks of extinction for more than 1 million species.

Biodiversity loss and climate change are interconnected. The loss of land and marine habitats to human activity not only depletes the biodiversity of those ecosystems, but also damages natural environments like forests and mangroves that are proven solutions to climate change. And the increasing temperatures caused by greenhouse gas emissions place further pressure on vital ecosystems.

Donors are often interested in wildlife conservation and efforts to protect rainforests or coral reefs. These are valuable investments in strengthening ecosystems and preserving the lives of all creatures on the planet. Conservation efforts can be particularly effective when coupled with advocacy initiatives that disrupt exploitation or illicit practices and when working in partnership with local and Indigenous communities on issues of sustainability.

Donors may have a special affinity for protecting precious wildlife like tigers in Asia or koalas in Australia. In order to support these species and help others thrive, donors may want to learn about "Keystone Species." Keystone species may not be the most recognizable species in a given habit but play an essential role in the health and sustainability of an entire ecosystem.



Part 2: Building Your Climate-Related Giving Portfolio

Building your own portfolio of climate-focused giving is personal and should align with your values, other areas of giving and funding goals. The following questions will help guide your exploration of approaches and solutions that may be of interest.



How will organizations I already support be impacted by climate change?

Start with organizations you know. There may be a challenge related to climate change that is impacting the operations or activities of organizations you already support—or could in the future. For example, a school garden program in a drought-prone region may need support finding different plants to grow or building an energy-efficient watering system. You may be able to find answers on an organization's website or in an annual report. Depending on your relationship with the organization, it may be worth having a conversation with a member of the leadership or fundraising team to understand how the organization is thinking about or planning for climate impacts.



When should I give?

Give now but make long-term plans. The crisis is unfolding now, and there are many ways to act. Making a giving plan that includes both immediate and long-term plans—including potential funding for emergencies or disasters—will provide a variety of ways to both give and learn over time. While many donors already support organizations for multiple years, the climate crisis will require planning and funding for the long-term. Also, new ideas and innovations may require donors to increase their risk tolerance as technologies fail or new challenges emerge over time.



Where should I give?

Choose a geography that matters to you. Emissions and pollution do not abide by geographic borders. The impacts of climate change will affect nearly every community, but in different and unique ways. Determining a geographic focus—whether by joining a global initiative or supporting a local neighborhood organization—can be a good starting point for narrowing funding decisions.

A regional or local focus allows for funding strategies to be aligned with shared and coordinated climate action that considers regional contexts and needs. For example, farmers in one region of Africa may be challenged by persistent drought while others are facing threats from high rainfall and flooding. The approaches to addressing climate change in those regions will vary.

Consider the scale of your reach. Another way to think about where to give is whether you'd like to support local initiatives through community-based organizations or a community foundation initiative. These organizations will have a direct impact on the local environment and the health of community members. At the other end of spectrum are international campaigns and programs led by large organizations that may be familiar to you (e.g., Greenpeace, 350.org, Rainforest Action Network). These organizations are often creating global campaigns to engage individuals to put pressure on governments or businesses to change policies or stop destructive practices. There is no right or wrong answer to the type of organization you support, but considering where you'd like to see the impact may help your decision-making.



How will I make an impact?

There are many ways to approach the challenges of climate change. Some donors may focus on one particular issue while others may do a "deep dive" in one geographic location.

Here are various approaches and tactics to consider:

- **Education:** Education is the starting place for behavior change, whether it is educating children about the environment to better help them appreciate nature or educating policy makers about the economic benefits of climate-friendly solutions.

- **Research and Innovation:** New research and pilot studies can lead to successful projects and programs Investing in new ideas and novel approaches can come with risks; however, if these innovations gain traction the results can have an outsized impact. Funding in this area may focus on supporting academic institutions and research centers.

- **Strategic Communications:** It is often difficult to cut through the noise in today's media environment. Funding organizations that can craft compelling stories and effectively communicate the science of climate is yet another way to tackle climate change. All forms of media including film, social media, magazines and newspapers are needed to reach different audiences.

- **Movement Building and Campaigns:** Grassroots organizers are at the forefront of change and channel their energy to galvanize action at all levels of society. Demonstrations, petitions and campaigns can be effective tools for drawing attention to specific issues or populations impacted by climate.

- **Public Engagement & Democracy Building:** A lack of civic engagement, power dynamics in democratic processes and systemic racism are all obstacles to climate progress. By funding organizations that are working to strengthen democratic participation and processes, donors can help ensure an open and equitable system where all voices are heard.



Whom should I support?

Think about populations most at risk. The devastating impacts of climate change disproportionately affect low-income communities and communities of color due to systemic inequalities and racism. Donors can make grants at the intersection of climate and racial equity by funding organizations that are led by historically marginalized groups.

- **Black, Indigenous and People of Color Communities:** Racial inequity and the impacts of climate change are deeply connected. Communities that are already economically vulnerable due to decades of racism, colonization and environmental destruction may experience increased threats to their access to healthcare, food, safe housing and economic opportunities. The impacts of climate change will likely exacerbate these systemic inequities.

  Indigenous communities around the world are deeply impacted by land seizures, disruptions to food and supply, and development by industries such as agriculture and manufacturing. Each community is unique, but it's common for decision making processes in public policy and other areas to exclude Indigenous voices. There are many organizations around the world that advance the rights and leadership of Indigenous peoples, particularly in relationship to land conservation and climate change.

- **Women and Girls:** According to the United Nations, "Women are increasingly being seen as more vulnerable than men to the impacts of climate change, mainly because they represent the majority of the world's poor and are proportionally more dependent on threatened natural resources."[xvi] While women are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, they are also part of the solution. Women worldwide are innovating to sustain and nourish themselves and their families. In low-income countries, women are at the center of household farm production, water harvesting and land revitalization projects—and will play an essential role in any community's ability to adapt to climate change.

Part 3: Ways to Engage and Give Collaboratively

Solving any aspect of the climate crisis will require collaboration. Regardless of the climate issue and approach that resonates with you most, you'll need to consider which organizations are working on the issue and whether there are other funders involved—or maybe how to bring in other funders.

Following is a brief, illustrative list of networks, collaboratives and campaigns involving other philanthropists.

Join a donor network to learn and share ideas

- Health and Environmental Funders Network: This network includes foundations and private donors who are interested in the intersections of health and our environment, including the protection of clean air and water. The network offers connections with other donors and access to a grants database to explore what others have funded.

- Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders: With a focus on how climate change impacts our food systems, this network offers donors policy guides, toolkits and impact investing opportunities.

- Funders for Regenerative Agriculture: Regenerative agriculture is an approach to land use that focuses on soil health, biodiversity of crops and sustainable watering methods. This network brings together donors with the vision of increasing the use of regenerative agriculture across North America in the next five years.

Support a campaign

- Drive Electric Campaign: Launched in 2020 and powered by more than 80 organizations in 65 countries, the Drive Electric campaign is focused on shifting the global transportation system to electric vehicles. By accelerating electrification, Drive Electric posits that it will help avoid over 160 billion tons of cumulative carbon pollution over the next 40 years, create new jobs and improve the economy.

- Beyond Coal Campaign: Led by the Sierra Club, the Beyond Coal Campaign is focused on closing coal plants across the United States and replacing them with clean energy technologies and jobs. There are 172 active plants that the campaign is tracking along with the health impacts of those plants on surrounding communities.



This is an all-hands-on-deck moment. If we fail—and we must not—millions of people will suffer unbearable hardship, loss, and even death from climate catastrophe."

- Mitchell Bernard, President, Natural Resources Defense Council



Co-fund projects alongside other donors

- Clean Air Fund: More than 7 million people die each year as a result of air pollution. Since 2019, this fund has raised more than $57 million to tackle air pollution in India and Eastern Europe. [xvii] The fund focuses on grantmaking to local organizations on the frontlines of advocacy and helping communities that are suffering from dirty air.

- CLIMA Fund: This fund supports grassroots organizations—particularly those led by women and Indigenous peoples—who are at the forefront of local organizing and movement building. Funding is directed through four organizations who select local initiatives to support.

- ClimateWorks Foundation: This fund has the goal of ending the climate crisis by amplifying the power of philanthropy. With a range of expertise, the foundation's team can assess the science, identify mitigation opportunities and strategize philanthropic initiatives on behalf of its donors. Since 2008, ClimateWorks has granted over $1 billion to more than 500 grantees in over 40 countries.

- Environmental Defenders Collaborative: Founded in 2019 as a project of the Global Greengrants Fund, this fund focuses on the protection of wildlife and habitat defenders who face violence and intimidation in their work to protect ecosystems from poachers, exploitation and illegal activity.



Explore impact investing

In recent years, impact investing has become a major catalyst for driving change to address many social issues. For donors interested in addressing climate change, this is an opportunity to leverage other assets to complement direct philanthropic giving. In one form, this might mean reviewing personal stock holdings and divesting from oil, coal and gas companies, or investing in companies that develop and deliver clean power technologies. Some types of investment vehicles, such as retirement accounts or donor-advised funds, offer pre-screened portfolios where holdings are invested in companies that produce sustainable energy, for example, or conserve natural resources.

For donors that wish to make a greater commitment, recoverable loans or grants can provide vital capital to small businesses that are focused on sustainable agriculture and food systems, for instance. Impact investing—in any form—can be a powerful tool to not only pressure private businesses to act on climate change but also drive innovation in sectors that are actively working to find and scale solutions in many of the issue areas mentioned above.



INVESTING IN CLIMATE AT NPT

NPT's unique impact investing platform was designed in partnership with CapShift, a leading provider of impact investing solutions. In addition to a thematic investment portfolio focused on environmental stewardship, CapShift also offers customized solutions to meet specific goals. A wide range of curated investment opportunities are available to NPT's donors as well, including a private infrastructure fund that invests in and manages infrastructure for renewable energy.

Donors can also explore the CapShift platform to explore additional opportunities and monitor both the financial and impact results of their investments.

NPT Is Here To Help

If you are unsure where to start or would like support with shaping your personalized climate-focused giving portfolio, NPT's Philanthropic Consulting team can help. We offer tailored consultative services that can include exploring your goals, researching organizations, or finding the right partnership or collaborative to meet your funding needs. For your convenience, if you have a donor-advised fund (DAF) with NPT, fees for Philanthropic Consulting services are payable directly from your DAF account.

For information, please email our Philanthropic Solutions Group: philanthropicsolutions@nptrust.org

Part 4: Taking Action to Address the Climate Crisis Worksheet

Define Your Purpose

Getting clear on why the climate crisis is important to your giving, how it aligns with your values and how it impacts you or the places, people and other creatures you care about is an important starting point. Defining your "why" can help when the problems seem too large to tackle.

- Why is giving to combat climate change important to me?

- How does giving to climate-related issues align with my values?

- How does giving to climate-related issues support my giving to other issues?

Find Your Focus

There are many ways to take action to combat climate change. Finding your focus could mean zeroing in on a few interventions in one geography or supporting a single solution that seems particularly exciting or promising to you. In this guide, we outlined a few possible solutions. Of the solutions listed, I'm most interested in

_____ because…

Sometimes ruling out what you are not interested in is helpful. Getting clear on what you are not interested in funding can help you communicate with others about your priorities. Use the space below to make a list of issues and strategies that are not interesting to you.

- I am not interested in funding:

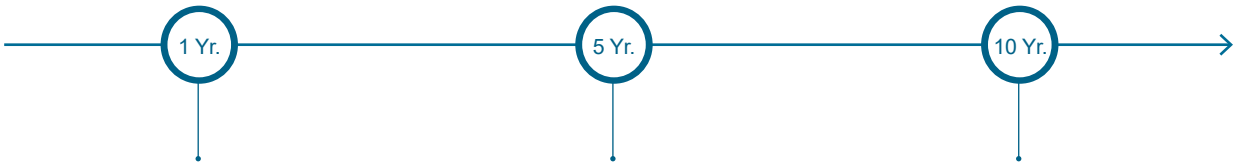
- Supporting specific places, communities or species can be a way to further narrow the scope of climate giving. The following people, places, habitats and/or wildlife are important to me (e.g., marine mammals in the Artic).

Build Your Giving Portfolio

Much like building a financial portfolio, your climate-related philanthropy portfolio might have a mix of long-term and short-term funding along with a combination of support to direct services, advocacy and impact investing. How you design your giving is up to you.

- I understand that taking immediate action is important. Here are the ways I'm going to take immediate action with my giving:

- I'm going to take immediate and long-term action in the following ways:



My Learning Journey

- I want to learn more about:

- If I could ask an expert anything about climate, my question(s) would be:

- Collaboration—whether participating in networks or collaboratives or simply understanding what other funders are doing—is important. I'd like to explore these collaboratives or networks:

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[iv] Global Citizen. Natural Disasters Displaced 3 Times as Many People as Conflict in 2020. https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/natural-disaster-internally-displaced-persons-2020/

[v] Mark Lynas *et al* 2021 *Environ. Res. Lett.* 16 114005. https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ac2966

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[xiii] The New York Times. Meet Peat, the Unsung Hero of Carbon Capture. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/02/21/headway/peat-carbon-climate-change.html

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[xv] World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/health-topics/air-pollution#tab=tab_1

[xvi] https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/womenin-shadow-climate-change

[xvii] https://www.who.int/health-topics/air-pollution#tab=tab_1

Appendix: Learning Resources

Supporting climate solutions is not only an investment in funding, but also an investment in learning as new challenges, solutions, technologies and policies are emerging every day. There are countless articles and perspectives on climate change. Here are just a few resources that can start your learning journey.



Quick Reads

- An Alliance article asks, "What can philanthropy do for the climate?" The authors offer ways in which private foundations and individuals can contribute to climate solutions.

- Cultivating Change Amidst Collapse in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review* makes the case for working collaboratively to tackle the challenges posed by climate change.



Long Reads

- Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability is the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which is co-authored by more than 270 scientists from around the world and published by the United Nations.

- The Center for Effective Philanthropy released a report entitled, Much Alarm, Less Action, calling on foundations and philanthropists to take action against climate change.



Listen

- The podcast How to Save a Planet offers listeners advice on climate activism and answers questions on everything from electric cars to how to compost. One episode featuring climate scientist Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson offers ways to find "your climate superpower." The episode comes with an accompanying Venn diagram exercise.

- A Matter of Degrees is a podcast hosted by Dr. Katharine Wilkinson and Dr. Leah Stokes that explores solutions to the climate crisis. Check out the episode that asks: How do we clean up the carbon mess?



Explore

- Inside Climate News is a Pulitzer Prize-winning, nonprofit, nonpartisan news organization that provides essential reporting and analysis on climate change, energy and the environment.

- Founded in 2014, Project Drawdown is a nonprofit organization that focuses on identifying solutions to the climate crisis and regularly publishes an updated list of evidence-based climate solutions.

- The MIT Climate Portal offers a series of "explainers" that provide science-based descriptions about various types of energy, ecosystems and the basics of climate science.

Climate-Focused Funders

One way to learn more about philanthropic initiatives and find potential grantee organizations is to leverage the work of leading climate-focused funders. These funders often have expert staff who are studying new research, visiting organizations on the ground and conducting due diligence on potential grantees. There are often searchable databases on their websites that describe the organizations and projects they support.

This is not an exhaustive list of funders in the climate sector. These funders are highlighted here due to their public-facing work on climate initiatives and to offer a variety of inroads for you to explore.

- Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies (MACP) focuses on the protection and restoration of grasslands in the Northern Great Plains, within their broader U.S. portfolio. **Grasslands** are among the most vital and yet most overlooked of Earth's terrestrial ecosystems. MACP also supports grassland-dependent communities by funding community-based conservation programs.

- Hewlett Foundation funding focuses on developed countries with the highest emissions rates and developing countries with fast-growing energy demand. Within these countries, grantmaking addresses the **highest-emitting industries and sectors,** including electricity and transportation, as well as industrial processes. Grantees are working to clean up power production, reduce oil use and use energy more efficiently.

- Kresge Foundation's Environment Program emphasizes **investment in cities** to both tackle climate change and advance racial and economic equity. The foundation believes that by factoring climate into infrastructure, land-use and other planning decisions, urban leaders can ensure their communities reduce and prepare for the impacts of climate change.

- The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation structures their climate grantmaking strategy around four pillars: 1) altering political discourse, 2) advancing and enforcing climate friendly energy policies and regulations, 3) mobilizing philanthropic capital from new and existing climate solutions funders, and 4) community power building among **BIPOC-led organizations and individuals that have been disproportionately affected by climate change.**

- The McKnight Foundation has a Midwest Climate & Energy Program that aims to dramatically cut **carbon pollution in the Midwest** by 2030 through supporting work that aids the transition to carbon-free energy, promotes clean transportation and buildings and sequesters carbon on working lands.

- The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation focuses its funding on achieving healthy and resilient **Arctic marine ecosystems** in the North American Arctic, chosen for the alarming rate at which it is being affected by global warming, and British Columbia, chosen because the province's once-pristine environment is now at risk.

- The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation supports communities in low-income countries responding to the effects of global climate change. The foundation's international grantmaking is focused on increasing the deployment of **renewable energy systems in rural areas of low-income countries**, where nearly 1 billion people lack access to electricity.

- Oak Foundation focuses their climate change-related funding on how to fuel and feed the world and how to live with nature. The foundation funds the protection of wild places in **Southern Africa and Southeast Asia**, with a particular interest in solutions that center on the people who live there.



CLIMATE PHILANTHROPY CHALLENGE GRANTEES

Lever for Change: Housed within the MacArthur Foundation, this initiative was founded in 2019 as a series of challenges to find and fund big ideas. Their 2030 Climate Challenge offers ideas for grantees from their list of finalists.

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