



A SUMMARY FROM
THE ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTMAKERS ASSOCIATION'S
TRACKING THE FIELD: VOLUME 6
ANALYZING TRENDS IN ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTMAKING



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INTRODUCTION

This is a summary of *Tracking the Field: Volume 6* which builds on the Environmental Grantmakers Association's (EGA) ongoing grant research from 2007 to 2015, deepening our understanding of trends and gaps in environmental philanthropy. The *Tracking the Field* report analyzes grant data from the supply side of funding, providing an avenue for EGA members to see where their grantmaking fits into the larger environmental movement and how they can optimize their grant dollars to be more strategic and effective.

Tracking the Field: Volume 6 analyzes 89,970 grants totaling more than \$9.7 billion between 2007 and 2015. Across six reports, with a consistent taxonomy, we are able to explore changes in issue areas of focus, transformations in the strategic paths for tackling these priorities, and altered geographic focuses of these projects.
















The summary findings are organized by:

1. Overall environmental giving from all U.S.-based grantmakers and, more specifically, an overview of overall environmental giving and the issue areas funded by EGA members.

2. Separate sections for each of the major groupings of issue areas funded by EGA members. These sections include looking at the strategies, trends, and geographies of focus for each issue group.
3. Where EGA members fund. The geographic distribution of EGA members' grants.
4. How EGA members fund. Funding strategies of EGA members.

The *Tracking the Field* data is a resource EGA members have access to beyond these reports published biennially. On its website, EGA created a searchable *Tracking the Field* database that allows members to explore the data down to the individual grant. In addition, EGA members can access an interactive heat map of members' grants. This tool allows members to sort by the EGA taxonomy across different time frames to see the trends most relevant to their work. EGA also continues to work with individual foundations and groups of funders to do customized special searches and analysis to help our members answer questions about trends in grantmaking and how their foundations' portfolios fit into the larger philanthropic puzzle.

SNAPSHOT OF EGA MEMBERS' 2015 ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTMAKING

THE POOL		WHERE	
12,895	In this report, we collected and analyzed 12,895 grants awarded by EGA members in 2015.		In 2015, 64% of EGA members' grantmaking was given to domestic regions; 36% was given to international regions.
5,606	Grants analyzed in this report were given to 5,606 grantees inside and outside of the United States.	 37%	A record high percentage (37%) of domestic funding went to Federal Level / multi-region programs. The most-funded individual domestic region was the Northeast (19%).
\$1.54B	The 2015 EGA members' environmental giving totaled \$1.54 billion, a 12.5% increase from 2014, and a 14% increase from 2013.	 44%	A record high percentage (44%) of international funding went to Global / multi-region programs. The most-funded individual international region was Asia (16%).
HOW		WHAT	
  	The most-funded strategies in 2015 were: Advocacy (35%), Stewardship (24%), and Research (14%).		Though Biodiversity remained the most-funded issue area (\$272 million), funding to this issue was the lowest it's been since 2012.
 	Funding to Advocacy increased consistently from 2013 to 2015 (28% compared to 35%).	 	Funding to Energy and Climate both reached record highs in 2015, totaling \$226 million and \$142 million, respectively.
 	Funding to Education as a strategy increased by 41% between 2013 and 2015.	 	Funding to Freshwater programs has been continually increasing. In 2015 it received \$167 million in funding, making it the third most-funded issue area.

OVERVIEW OF OVERALL GIVING AND ISSUE AREAS

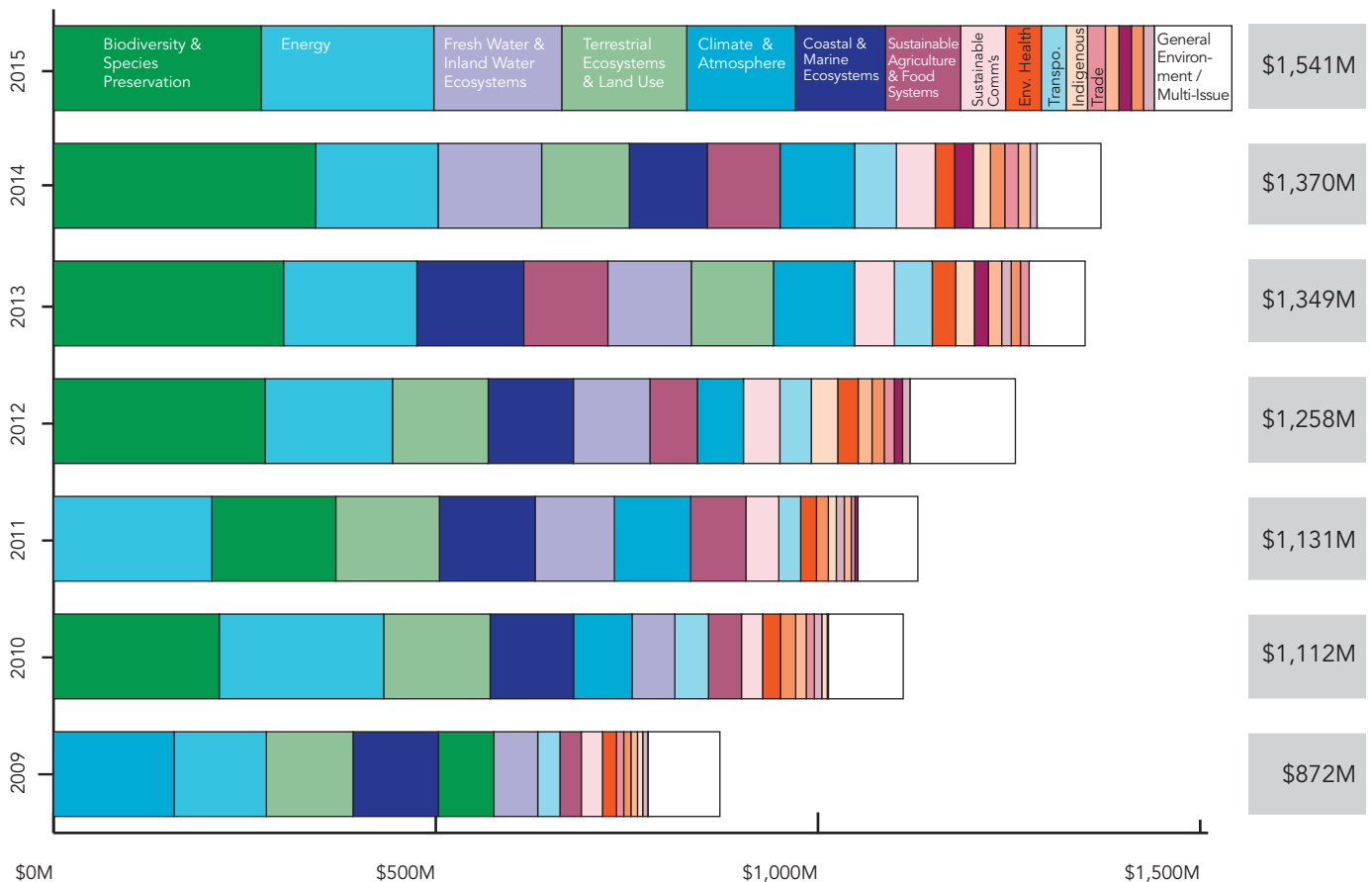
Key Findings:

- EGA members' environmental giving totaled \$1.54 billion in 2015, a 12.5% increase from 2014 and a 14% increase from 2013.
- The top three most-funded issue areas in 2015 were: "Biodiversity & Species Preservation," "Energy," and "Fresh Water & Inland Water Ecosystems."
- Funding to "Energy" and "Climate & Atmosphere" both reached record highs in 2015.
- From 2013 to 2015, "Coastal & Marine Ecosystems" dropped from being the third most-funded issue to the sixth; while funding to "Fresh Water & Inland Water Ecosystems" continued to increase over the years, reaching an all-time high in 2015.

Foundation Center estimates that in 2015, U.S. foundations awarded a total of \$5.7 billion to environmental issues. This estimate is higher than previous years due to the Foundation Center's new grant categorization methodology.¹ In 2015, EGA members' environmental giving reached a record high of \$1.54 billion. This number has risen each year since the financial crisis, totaling a 76% increase in funding between 2009 and 2015. From 2014 to 2015, total funding increased by 12%, the greatest jump since 2010.

As shown in Figure 1, the top-funded issue area in 2015 continued to be "Biodiversity & Species Preservation," consistent with four of the past five years, although funding to this issue area in 2015 was the lowest it has been since 2012. "Energy" and "Climate & Atmosphere" funding reached record highs in 2015, with "Energy" remaining the second most-funded issue and "Climate & Atmosphere" moving back into the top five for the first time since 2011. Funding to "Fresh Water & Inland Water Ecosystems" has been increasing continually over the years, reaching an all-time high in 2015.

FIGURE 1. EGA MEMBERS' GRANTMAKING BY PRIMARY ISSUE AREA, 2009–2015





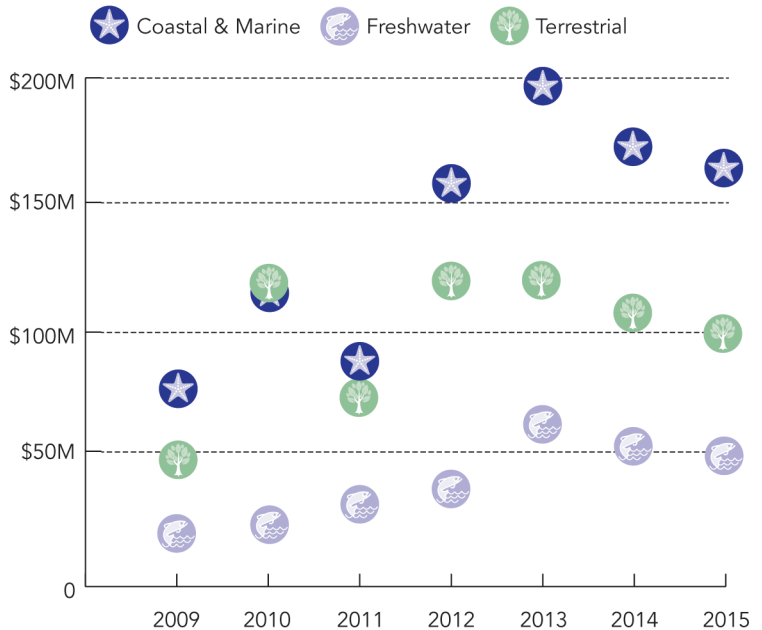
BIODIVERSITY & SPECIES PRESERVATION

Biodiversity & Species Preservation

Key Findings:

- 88% of EGA members' 2015 funding to "Biodiversity & Species Preservation" is also tagged with one of the following issue areas: "Coastal & Marine Ecosystems," "Terrestrial Ecosystems & Land Use," or "Fresh Water & Inland Water Ecosystems."
- "Stewardship / Acquisition / Preservation" was the most commonly used strategy among "Biodiversity & Species Preservation" grants (45%), followed by "Research: Scientific / Environmental" (21%).

Biodiversity Funding Over Time to Three Ecosystems, 2009–2015



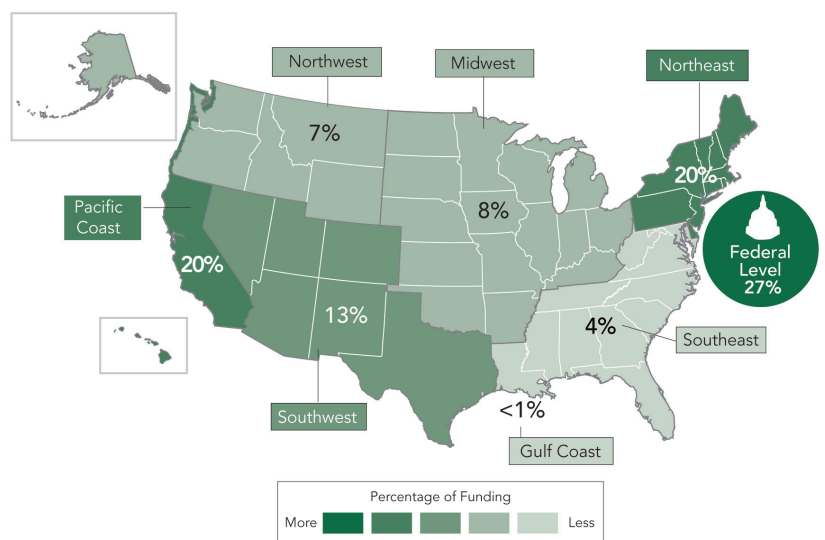
TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS & LAND USE

Terrestrial Ecosystems & Land Use

Key Findings:

- "Terrestrial Ecosystems & Land Use" received an all-time high of grant dollars in 2015.
- "Stewardship / Acquisition / Preservation" was the most-funded strategy, receiving 55% of funding, compared to 35% across all issue areas.
- 73% of "Terrestrial Ecosystems & Land Use" funding went to domestic regions. The Northeast and Pacific Coast were the most-funded domestic regions, each receiving 20% of the total funding.

Terrestrial Ecosystems & Land Use Funding by Domestic Region, 2015





WATER

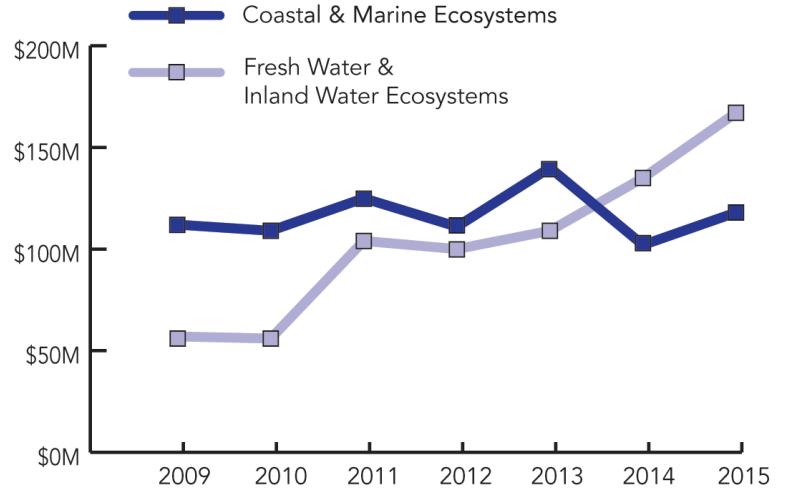
■ Coastal & Marine Ecosystems

■ Fresh Water & Inland Water Ecosystems

Key Findings:

- More than half of EGA members' 2015 "Coastal & Marine Ecosystems" funding was awarded internationally, compared with 13% for "Fresh Water & Inland Water Ecosystems."
- The most commonly used strategies were "Stewardship / Acquisition / Preservation" for "Coastal & Marine Ecosystems" grants (48%) and "Advocacy / Organizing / Movement Building" for "Fresh Water & Inland Water Ecosystems" grants (35%).

Water Funding Over Time, 2009-2015



ENERGY & CLIMATE

■ Climate & Atmosphere

■ Energy

■ Transportation

Key Findings:

- "Energy & Climate" received an all-time high of grant dollars in 2015.
- While primary giving to both "Climate & Atmosphere" and "Energy" increased from 2013 to 2015, funding to "Transportation" decreased by 34%.
- In 2015, 56% of funding to "Energy & Climate" used "Advocacy / Organizing / Movement Building" as the strategy, the highest among all issue groups.

Geographic Distribution of Energy & Climate Funding, 2015

DOMESTIC



66% of funding for "Energy & Climate" went to domestic regions.



52% of domestic "Energy & Climate" funding went to support Federal Level / multi-region programs.

INTERNATIONAL



34% of funding for "Energy & Climate" went to international regions.



48% of international "Energy & Climate" funding went to support Global / multi-region programs.



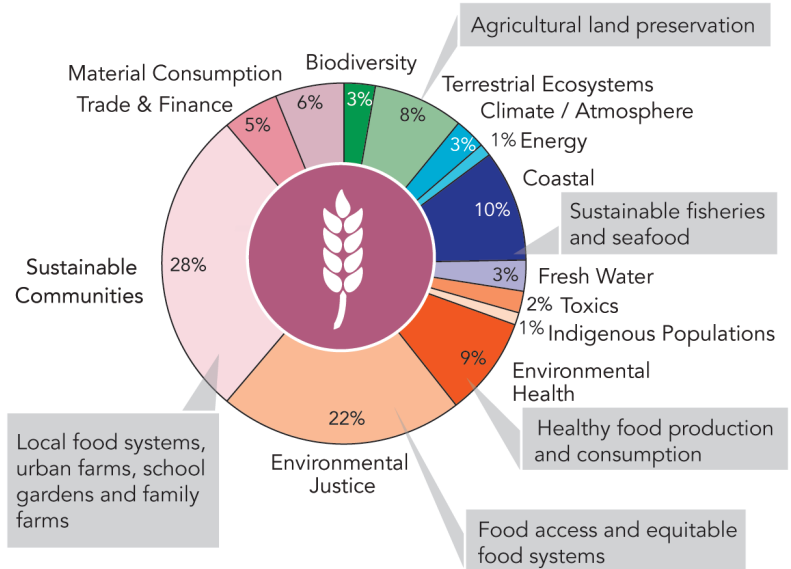
SYSTEMS

- Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems
- Sustainable Communities
- Trade & Finance
- Material Consumption & Waste Management
- Population

Key Findings:

- Total funding to the “Systems” issue group remained consistent between 2013 and 2015.
- “Sustainable Agriculture” was the most-funded in this issue group, followed by “Sustainable Communities”, and “Trade & Finance.”
- “Sustainable Communities” and “Environmental Justice” were the most-funded secondary issues of “Sustainable Agriculture” funding, representing grants given to support local food systems and food justice.

Secondary Issue Area Breakdown of Sustainable Agriculture Funding, 2015



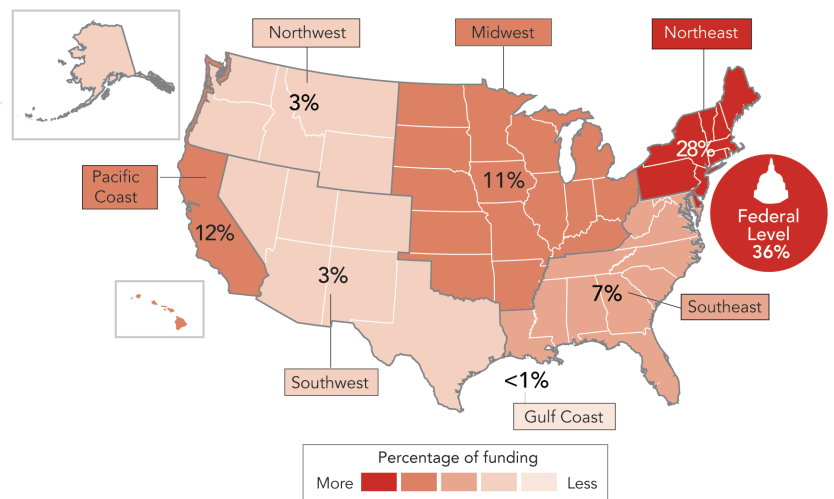
HEALTH & JUSTICE

- Environmental Health
- Toxics
- Environmental Justice
- Indigenous Populations

Key Findings:

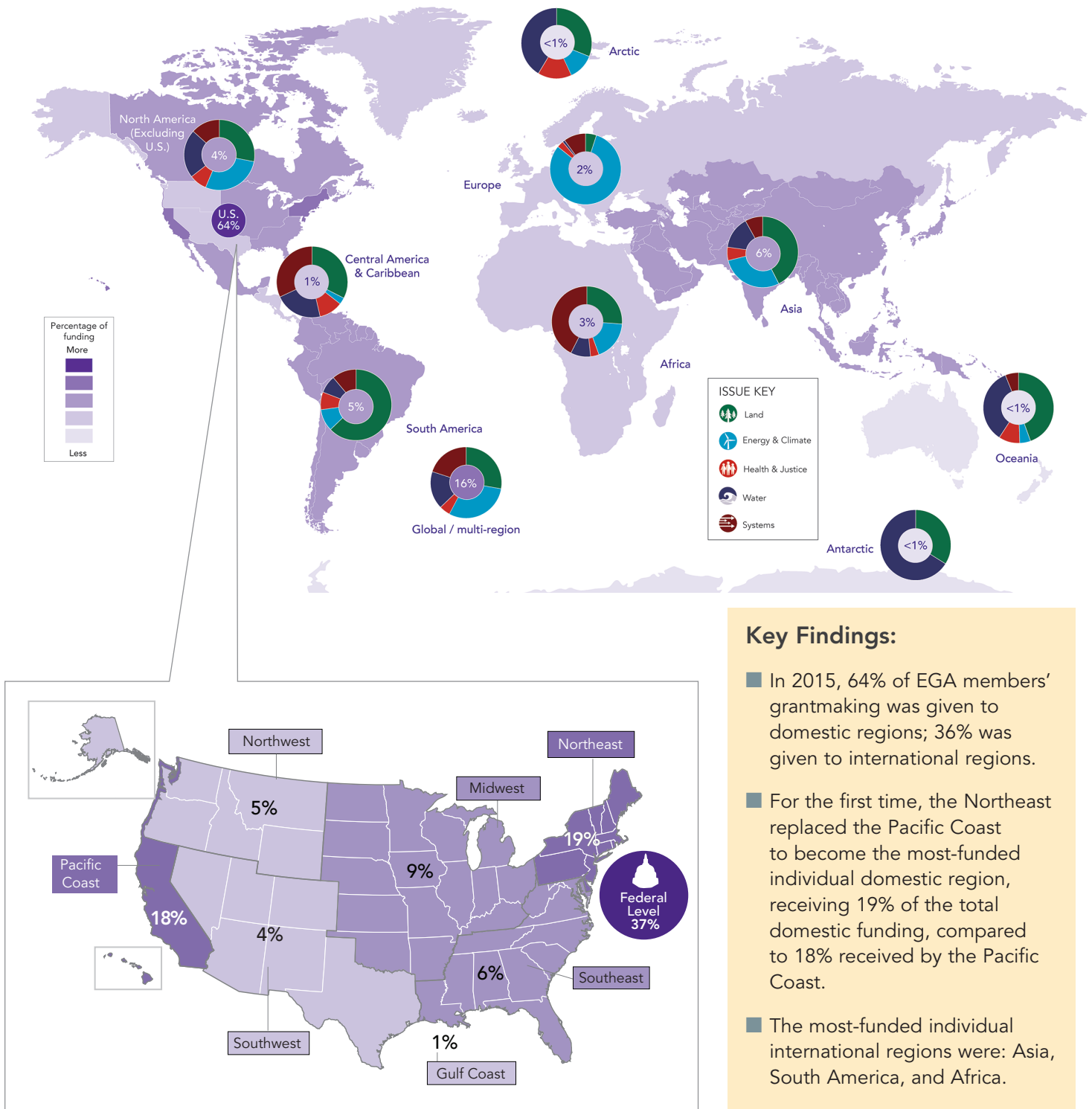
- In 2015, funding awarded to “Health & Justice” by EGA Members marked a 28% increase from 2013.
- More than three-quarters of primary and secondary “Health & Justice” funding was given to domestic regions.
- Compared to other issue areas, a slightly higher percentage of funding went to the Midwest (11%) and a slightly lower percentage went to the Pacific Coast.

Health & Justice Funding by Domestic Region, 2015



WHERE DO EGA MEMBERS FUND?

FIGURE 2. EGA MEMBERS' GRANTMAKING BY GEOGRAPHIC REGION AND PRIMARY ISSUE GROUP, 2015



HOW DO EGA MEMBERS FUND?

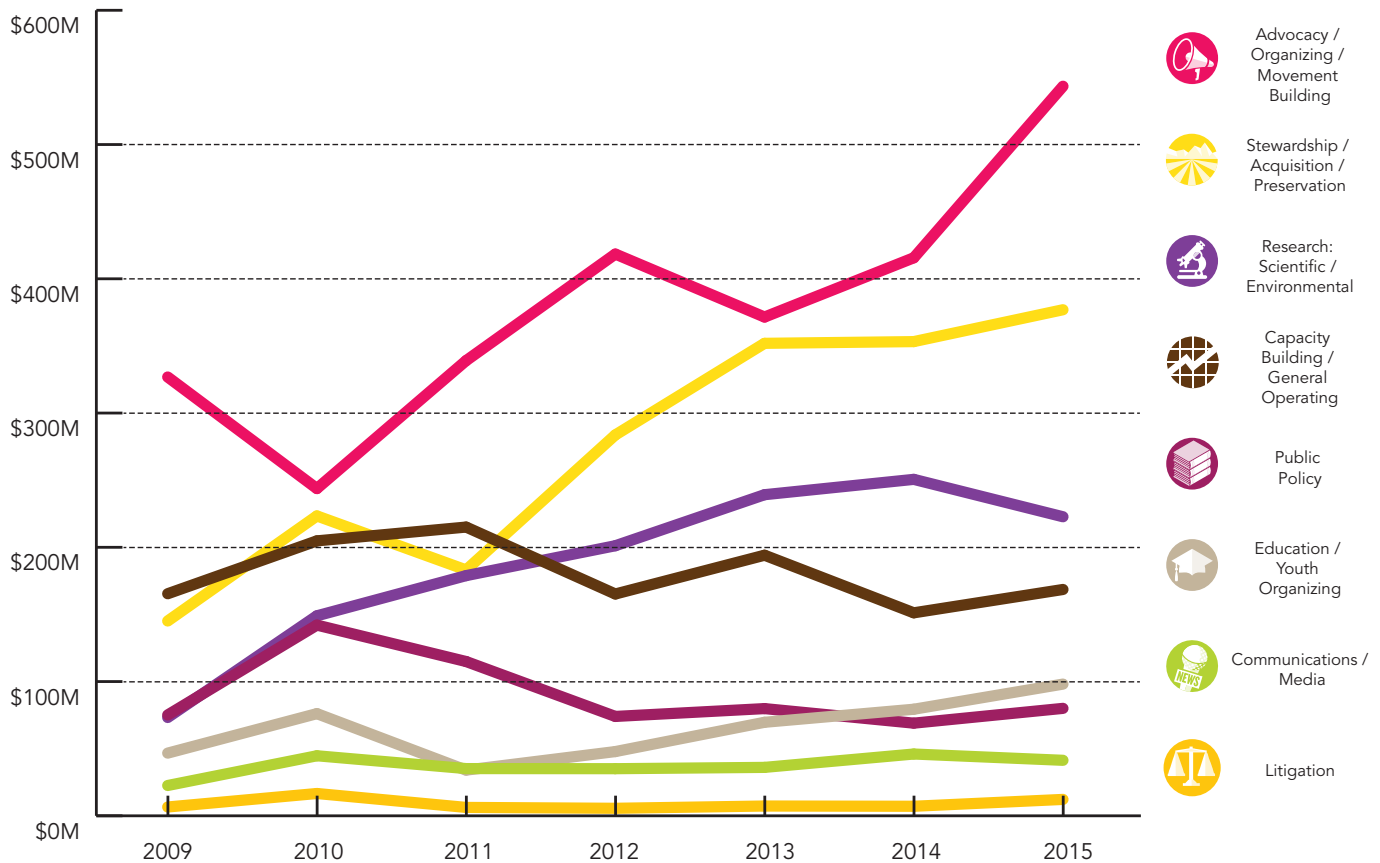
Key Findings:

- “Advocacy / Organizing / Movement Building” (35%), “Stewardship / Acquisition / Preservation” (24%), and “Research: Scientific / Environmental” (14%) were the most-funded strategies by EGA members in 2015.
- Funding to “Advocacy / Organizing / Movement Building” increased consistently from 2013 to 2015 (28% compared to 35%).
- Funding to the “Education / Youth Organizing” strategy increased by 41% between 2013 and 2015.

EGA members support a range of different strategies through their grantmaking. “Advocacy / Organizing / Movement Building” remains the top-used strategy, increasing in 2015 to 35% of the total EGA member funding, compared to 28% in 2013. The second and third most commonly used strategies also remained unchanged, with “Stewardship / Acquisition / Preservation” receiving 24% of the total giving and “Research: Scientific / Environmental” receiving 14% of the total giving. Though historically ranked as a less-funded strategy, EGA members’ funding to “Education / Youth Organizing” has been increasing since 2011. Funding to “Education / Youth Organizing” increased by 41% between 2013 and 2015, with the strategy receiving an all-time high of grant dollars in 2015.

As seen in Figure 3, the percentages of funding to other strategies did not change significantly from those reported in 2013. When considering how EGA members fund, the full *Tracking the Field: Volume 6* report also provides an analysis of EGA members’ grant sizes and trends in re-granting among members.

FIGURE 3. EGA MEMBERS’ GRANTMAKING BY STRATEGY, 2009–2015



WHAT'S NEXT FOR EGA & TRACKING THE FIELD?

Tracking the Field: Volume 6 provides an overview of the Environmental Grantmakers Association members' environmental grantmaking in 2015. In addition, it builds on consecutive years of grant data to highlight key trends in funding across issue areas, strategies and geographies between 2007 and 2015. Still, the analysis presented in this report only scratches the surface of the potential in-depth research possible with the more than 89,970 grants, totaling more than \$9.7 billion, recorded, as the *Tracking the Field* project is the most comprehensive record and analysis of environmental grantmaking for the past ten years. Each year it evolves and becomes more embedded in the field, both in members' increased knowledge of who is funding what and where and as a tool to find colleagues to collaborate with on priority and gap areas.

EGA is excited to work with individual foundations and foundation groups on custom research projects to expand learnings from the *Tracking the Field* data. With the goal of continuing to develop new opportunities to explore and analyze how grant dollars are spent within our community, these partnerships have included:

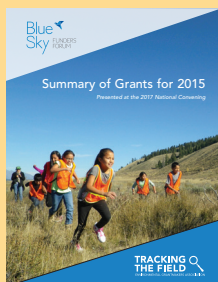
- Custom searchable *Tracking the Field* databases with enhanced taxonomy to allow for deeper searches into specific issues, geographies, and strategies.
- Customized *Tracking the Field* 12-page reports to provide an analysis of environmental grantmaking with enhanced focus specific issues, geographies, and strategies.
- Custom data runs that dive deeper into specific trends (or help identify other foundations that are funding in particular program areas).
- Reports and data runs for foundation boards, to assist with strategic planning sessions.

Through the *Tracking the Field* project we aim to increase knowledge of environmental philanthropy and promote new ways of using that knowledge to collaborate within our community. As we continue to build the *Tracking the Field* platform, we hope to develop further innovation to provide up-to-date, comprehensive information to help our members achieve EGA's ultimate goal of a world with healthy, equitable, and sustainable ecosystems, communities, and economies.

HAVE QUESTIONS YOU WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE THROUGH THE TRACKING THE FIELD DATA?

Please reach out to Franny Canfield (fcanfield@ega.org) to learn more about custom research projects.

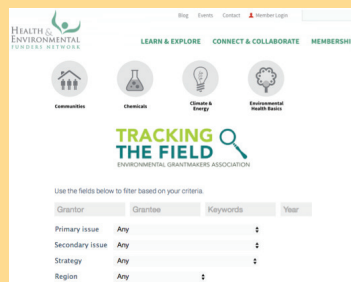
Looking to dive deeper on funding to environmental literacy, the Great Lakes region, or health and justice issues? EGA is partnering with the Blue Sky Funders Forum, Great Lakes Funder Collaboration, and Health & Environmental Funders Network on more in-depth *Tracking the Field* reports and databases, which were released in Fall 2017.



Blue Sky Funders Forum 2017 Summary of Grants Report and Grants Portal



Great Lakes Funder Collaboration 2017 Summary of Grants Report and Grants Portal



Health & Environmental Funders Network Grants Portal

METHODOLOGY

The environmental giving analyzed in the *Tracking the Field: Volume 6* report includes the environmental grants made by nearly 200 Environmental Grantmakers Association (EGA) member foundations from 2007 to 2015. EGA collected data from 89,970 grants totaling more than \$9.7 billion, using a customized CiviCRM database. The research team referred to member foundations' websites to obtain a list of grants or a copy of the IRS Form 990 to identify members' grants awarded in 2015. In cases where the researchers used the members' website, the website was directly compared to the 990 to verify that all grants were included and that the grants amounts matched what was shown on the 990. If a foundation's grants data was not available online, researchers contacted the foundation directly to obtain its 2015 grants list.

Consistent with the previous published reports, *Tracking the Field: Volumes 2–5*, this report uses the taxonomy that EGA

created in collaboration with similar organizations from around the globe. Each grant entered into the database is categorized based on the following information: the issuing foundation's name; the city and state in which the foundation is headquartered; the amount given (in U.S. dollars); the recipient's name, city, and state; the year the grant was made; and the primary and secondary environmental issue area, strategy, and geographic region the grant affected. To categorize each grant, data researchers first looked for information in the grant description and then searched the grantee's website for mission statements and program descriptions.

To put the EGA membership's giving into perspective, EGA partnered with the Foundation Center to gather data on overall environmental giving from all U.S.-based grantmakers.²

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge the essential support provided by EGA members that makes this report possible. By working together, we can continue to build on the advances made in this report and generate the kind of high-quality resources that enable us to examine our individual and collective grantmaking strategies in new ways.

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Endnotes:

1. In 2014, Foundation Center adopted a new strategy to look across multiple subject activities of a grant to capture giving for the environment, while previously only the primary activity of the grant was used. For example a grant awarded to an elementary school for a program to raise climate change awareness may be tagged with both an environment and education code. In previous years if this grant had been tagged as having a primary focus of education it would not have been included as an environment grant, however, with the new strategy this grant would be included.
2. The Foundation Center data focuses on patterns of giving based on grants of \$10,000 or more awarded by a sample of 1,000 large grantmaking private (independent, corporate, and grantmaking operating) foundations in 2015.



TRACKING THE FIELD



ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTMAKERS ASSOCIATION

The mission of EGA is to help member organizations become more effective environmental grantmakers through information sharing, collaboration and networking.

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Visitor Center

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BM X 6973

Water Tanks

Water Tank