

# Philanthropy in a changing climate:

## challenges and perspectives for a just transition



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The authors extend their sincere gratitude to everyone they encountered in the course of this study for their valuable insights and input.

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## The Observatory is evolving, and so is its name

The Philanthropy Observatory of Fondation de France has been contributing to the development of knowledge about philanthropy and major social and societal issues, in France and internationally, since 1997. In 2022, the Observatory launched the "Philanthropy & Society" series, to promote better understanding and more active debate about the role, place and responsibilities of philanthropy in the face of societal challenges. From November 2024, the Philanthropy Observatory is changing its name to the "Philanthropy & Society Observatory" to accompany the development of the Observatory's strategy and activities, reflecting its determination to confront major social and societal issues for the good of all.



# Editorial

## Working towards a just transition

In France, as elsewhere, societies are increasingly having to cope with climate change and its consequences for people and the environment.

Today, the interconnection between climate crisis, environmental degradation and socio-economic inequality is emerging ever more clearly. In this context, and in view of its action in serving the general good, philanthropy has a crucial role to play in harnessing the resources needed to respond to the scale of the environmental challenges, so that we can strive for a sustainable planet and more inclusive societies.

This year, we therefore felt it was essential to address the subject of environmental transition in the philanthropy sector from a systemic perspective. This new issue of the collection “Studies of the Observatory”, formerly known as the “Philanthropy & Society” series, delves into the links between philanthropy and environmental issues—and issues of social justice more widely—in order to explore the notion of “just transition”.

The Philanthropy & Society Observatory team has worked on this issue for a year in collaboration with Anne Monier, a researcher at ESSEC’s Philanthropy Chair and an expert on how philanthropy ties in with environmental issues and with just transition. Partnering with Anne Monier has provided us with a valuable scientific perspective on the evolution of the just transition debate, and its relationship to the evolution of philanthropy itself. We hope that this study will contribute to the ongoing conversation in the sector and help consolidate collaborative efforts in favour of a common, just and sustainable future.

**Maja Spanu,** Head of the Knowledge and International Affairs Hub, Fondation de France

# Introduction

Last March, the European Environment Agency warned that “Europe is not prepared for rapidly growing climate risk”<sup>1</sup>. At a time when the effects of the climate crisis are being seen and felt in France and around the world, the consensus in the research community is that **urgent action is needed** to avoid yet more catastrophic impacts of climate change on people and the planet.

In its analysis of this crisis, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), created in 1988 to provide detailed assessments of the latest scientific, technical and socio-economic scientific knowledge on climate change, highlights three points that are central to understanding climate-related challenges:

- Climate change has, and will continue to have, devastating effects on the planet and its inhabitants;
- **The most vulnerable communities—those that have contributed the least to climate change—are and will be the worst affected;**
- Swift, far-reaching action could mitigate the loss and damage

affecting humans and ecosystems, with multiple co-benefits, particularly in terms of air quality and health<sup>2</sup>.

The IPCC also stresses the anthropogenic nature of climate change, in other words, the fact that **human activity lies at the root of the current environmental crisis**. Research shows that it is our societies, and the way they operate, that have generated this disruption and thus contributed to the damage caused. They must therefore evolve if we are to build a more sustainable and resilient world; which means thinking as much about the **well-being of the Earth** as about **human well-being**. Scientific reports and studies demonstrate **that climate change is affecting our societies at every level and in every area of life**. A study published in July 2024 by Oxfam France suggests that 62% of the French population is highly or very highly exposed to climate risks and that at least 26 of the 50 basic rights enshrined in the articles of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights could be threatened as a result of climate change.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> European Environment Agency, Press release, « Europe is not prepared for rapidly growing climate risk », 11 March 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, (2023), « Climate Change 2023, Synthesis Report - Summary for Policymakers », [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_SYR\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Oxfam France, (15 July 2024), « Changement climatique : nous ne sommes pas prêts ! », p.8 : [https://www.oxfamfrance.org/app/uploads/2024/07/Oxfam-France\\_rapport-adaptation\\_sous-embargo-15-juillet-00h01.pdf](https://www.oxfamfrance.org/app/uploads/2024/07/Oxfam-France_rapport-adaptation_sous-embargo-15-juillet-00h01.pdf)

Given the human-made nature of the climate crisis, it is essential to **take stock of its social, demographic, economic and political implications**, beyond the physical and climatic impacts. To tackle the climate crisis, we need to bring about a **systemic transformation of our societies**.

**What can philanthropy do to address the effects of climate change on the environment and societies?**

## **Philanthropy and the environment: key dates and concepts**

Philanthropy has been grappling with environmental issues for many years, as environmental philanthropy emerged at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly with the funding of nature conservation and preservation programmes by major American foundations<sup>4</sup>.

### **SOME KEY CONCEPTS**

- **Climate:** The IPCC defines climate as: “the average weather –or more rigorously, as the statistical description in terms of the mean and variability of relevant quantities– [...] such as temperature, precipitation and wind”<sup>5</sup>. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) calculates these changes over a 30-year period.
- **Environment:** The European Union (EU) defines the environment as “the combination of elements whose complex interrelationships make up the settings, the surroundings and the conditions of life of the individual and of society”. This broad definition enables European institutions to implement cross-cutting strategies (sustainable development, biodiversity, food systems, etc.) to protect the environment<sup>6</sup>. In France, a legal definition from 1976 adds a social dimension: the environment encompasses sites and landscapes as well as nature and natural resources<sup>7</sup>.
- **Transition:** This concept refers to a “process of transformation whereby a system moves from one state of equilibrium to another”<sup>8</sup>.
- **Ecological or environmental transition** is a society-wide shift towards more sustainable production and living systems<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Jenkins, J. C., Carmichael, J. T., Brulle, R. J., & Boughton, H. (2017). Foundation Funding of the Environmental Movement. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 61(13), 1640-1657; Morena Edouard (2016), *The Price of Climate Action: Philanthropic Foundations and the Global Climate Debate*, London, Palgrave

<sup>5</sup> IPCC Report: “Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, Vulnerability” p.2902, [https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6/wg2/IPCC\\_AR6\\_WGII\\_FullReport.pdf](https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6/wg2/IPCC_AR6_WGII_FullReport.pdf) “Climate change” is defined in the same glossary (p. 2902) by citing the terms of Article 1 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which “defines *climate change* as ‘a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.’ The UNFCCC thus makes a distinction between *climate change* attributable to human activities altering the atmospheric composition and *climate variability* attributable to natural causes.”

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/71/politique-environnementale-principes-generaux-et-cadre-de-base>, page consulted on 26/07/2024.

<sup>7</sup> Law of 10 July 1976 on the protection of nature, concerning installations classified for environmental protection: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/LEGITEXT000006068553/2021-01-22/>

<sup>8</sup> Bourg, D. & Papaux A. (eds.) (2015). *Dictionnaire de la pensée écologique*, Paris, PUF, series: “Quadrige”.

<sup>9</sup> Gonin A., 2021. « Transition écologique », *Géoconfluences*, Glossaire.

It was mainly in the 1970s and 1980s that the first major foundation-run environmental programmes emerged, which were to play a key role in shaping the global climate scene by contributing to the creation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Conference of the Parties (COP)<sup>10</sup>. In the 2000s, new foundations, created with the fortunes of the finance and tech industries, also took an interest in these issues, as did a number of European foundations that began to address them in the late 2000s. Beginning in the 2010s, a number of foundations joined forces in order to pool and focus their funds: this led to the creation of several “re-granters”<sup>11</sup> such as the Climate Works Foundation (2008), the European Climate Foundation (2008), and the African Climate Foundation (2020). At present, although environmental foundations have been set up both in Europe and in the countries of the Global South, environmental philanthropy is mainly concentrated in North America, where most of the reports and studies on the subject originate. It is worth

mentioning, however, that some reports have been published on environmental funding by foundations in Europe, a notable example being the report of the European Environmental Funders Group (EEFG), a thematic group created within the Philanthropy Europe Association (Philea), a network of 7,500 foundations and organisations working for the public good across 30 European countries<sup>12</sup>.

At the global scale, the 2020s represent a turning point in terms of foundations taking on the climate crisis, with the formation of several coalitions of foundations for climate action. Back in 2019, the creation of the Funder Commitment on Climate Change in the UK marked the start of a movement that led to the creation of other national coalitions, such as in France—with the Coalition française des fondations pour le Climat (French Coalition of Foundations for the Climate or “Cffc”<sup>13</sup>), created within the Centre français des fonds et fondations (French Center for Funds and Foundations, CFF) in November 2020—but also in Spain (2020), followed by

**TABLE 1**  
**Creation of philanthropic coalitions for the climate between 2019 and 2021<sup>14</sup>**

Date	Coalition	Entity	Country
November 2019	Funder Commitment for Climate Change	ACF	UK
November 2020	Coalition Française des Fondations pour le Climat	CFF	France
November 2020	Fundaciones por el clima	AEF	Spain
Spring 2021	European Philanthropy Coalition for Climate	Dafne	Europe
June 2021	International Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change	Wings	World
September 2021	Filantropia per il clima	Assifero	Italy
September 2021	Canadian Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change	4 entities	Canada

<sup>10</sup> Morena Edouard (2061), *The Price of Climate Action: Philanthropic Foundations and the global climate debate*, London, Palgrave.

<sup>11</sup> Re-granters are foundations set up by several foundations with the aim of creating a common structure for joint funding.

<sup>12</sup> For more on this group, see: <https://philea.eu/how-we-can-help/collaboration-and-networking/european-environmental-funders-group/>

For the report, see: <https://philea.issueelab.org/resource/environmental-funding-by-european-foundations-volume-6.html>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.centre-francais-fondations.org/manifeste-pour-le-climat/>

<sup>14</sup> Monier A. (2023). *The Mobilization of the Philanthropic Sector for the Climate: A New Engagement?* In Kassiola Joel J. & Luke Timothy W. *The Palgrave Handbook of Environmental Politics and Theory*, Palgrave Macmillan, p.372.

Italy in 2021. Since then, the movement has been developing across Europe through Philea. It is also expanding internationally, with a national coalition set up in Canada (2021), and above all with the launch of the International Commitment on Climate Change, spearheaded by Wings, a global network of philanthropy development and support organisations with over 190 member bodies in more than 50 countries (TABLE 1).

The movement continues to spread, as two other coalitions were created in 2023 in Poland and Brazil. As of July 2024, taking all coalitions into account, there is a total of 769 signatory organisations, of which 161 (20%) are based in France<sup>15</sup>.

The aim of this movement, called **#PhilanthropyForClimate**, is to **mobilise all foundations around environmental issues**, whatever their missions or the causes they defend (poverty, education, health, culture, etc.). As #PhilanthropyForClimate argues, **all the issues must be addressed through joined-up cross-cutting action to combat climate change**. These coalitions encourage foundations to take a **“holistic” approach to integrating environmental issues, and to transform their practices in every domain** (staff training, investments, operations, advocacy work, etc.). The coalitions are built around a commitment that the foundations sign up to join. The commitment sets out seven “pillars” as entry points for the transformation of foundations, of which the French Coalition of Foundations for the Climate<sup>16</sup> has adopted and adapted six, namely: “training and awareness-raising” (1), “internal functioning” (2), “project selection and monitoring” (3), “financial investments” (4), “collective actions” (5), and “transparency” (6).

## PHILANTHROPY, CLIMATE AND THE ENVIRONMENT: SOME DEFINITIONS

- **Climate philanthropy** refers to grant-making by foundations for organisations or projects aimed at combating climate change.
- **Environmental philanthropy** is based on the same logic, but goes beyond climate change to include broader issues such as biodiversity, air pollution, resource conservation, etc.

## Insufficient funding to meet identified needs

While the creation of coalitions of climate-focused foundations may reflect a growing awareness within the philanthropy sector of the urgency of the climate crisis, there is little data on foundations’ actual funding of environmental projects. Existing reports produced by foundations and foundation networks in the United States and Europe show that, **at the global level, this funding is estimated to account for about 2% of total foundation grants**, i.e. between 7.5 and 12.5 billion out of 810 billion in overall funding in 2021<sup>17</sup>; woefully inadequate given the scale and urgency of the global crisis.

<sup>15</sup> [https://philanthropyforclimate.org/signatories/?\\_sft\\_category=french-commitment](https://philanthropyforclimate.org/signatories/?_sft_category=french-commitment)

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> ClimateWorks Foundation (2022). “Funding trends 2022: Climate change mitigation philanthropy”, [https://www.climateworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/ClimateWorks\\_Funding\\_Trends\\_Report\\_2022.pdf](https://www.climateworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/ClimateWorks_Funding_Trends_Report_2022.pdf)

As for the efforts that need to be made, the IPCC highlights three areas of action to consider in order to respond to the challenges of the climate crisis:

- **Mitigation**, i.e. all measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- **Adaptation**, i.e. the process of adjusting to the current or expected climate and its consequences so as to mitigate harmful effects and harness beneficial ones, including through the preservation of resources and ecosystems;
- **Accounting for loss and damage**, i.e. assessing and funding the costs of rebuilding after damage caused by climate disruption, with particular reference to the question of liability and responsibility regarding compensation<sup>18</sup>.

At COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009, the parties agreed to mobilise 100 billion dollars a year in public and private funding for climate action from 2020 onwards, primarily for the countries of the Global South. In recent years, however, funding has focused mainly on mitigation, which garnered 60% of funding<sup>19</sup> in 2022. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) observed, in its *Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfinanced. Underprepared* that **the funding needs for adaptation of countries in the Global South are 10 to 18 times greater** than international public funding flows, leaving an adaptation funding gap estimated at 194-366 billion dollars a year<sup>20</sup>.

In France, the annual report of the High Council on Climate (HCC), published in June 2024, notes that: “Adaptation efforts are beginning to be institutionalised, but

remain out of step with vulnerabilities and needs”. According to Oxfam France, “in terms of annual needs, putting aside those that have yet to be quantified, **France needs to invest several tens of billions of euros a year, at the very least, to meet its adaptation needs**”.<sup>22</sup>

Better funding for adaptation and for loss and damage is essential if we are to respond to the urgency of the climate crisis in both the short term and the longer term. Better funding will allow for greater consideration to be given to social issues, most notably inequality. The latest IPCC report stresses that the current scientific knowledge allows us to assert with “high confidence”<sup>23</sup> that **a just transition, with social justice, climate justice and inclusion, are key elements in the fight against climate disruption.**

<sup>18</sup> “Prioritising equity, climate justice, social justice, inclusion and just transition processes can enable adaptation and ambitious mitigation actions and climate resilient development. Adaptation outcomes are enhanced by increased support to regions and people with the highest vulnerability to climatic hazards. Integrating climate adaptation into social protection programs improves resilience. Many options are available for reducing emission-intensive consumption, including through behavioural and lifestyle changes, with co-benefits for societal well-being. (high confidence)” - IPCC Report: “Climate Change 2023, Synthesis Report”, Summary for Policymakers, p.31.

<sup>19</sup> OECD Report: “Climate finance provided and mobilised by developed countries in 2013-2022”, p.9.

<sup>20</sup> UN Environnement Programme (November 2023). “Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfinanced. Underprepared – Inadequate investment and planning on climate adaptation leaves world exposed”, [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Finance\\_Gap\\_Update.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Finance_Gap_Update.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Haut Conseil pour le Climat (HCC), (June 2024). “Keep heading on decarbonization, protect people” Executive Summary, p.2, [https://www.hautconseilclimat.fr/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/HCC\\_Annualreport-2024-Executive\\_summary-1.pdf](https://www.hautconseilclimat.fr/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/HCC_Annualreport-2024-Executive_summary-1.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Oxfam France, op.cit., p.30f

<sup>23</sup> IPCC Report: “Climate Change 2023, Synthesis Report”, Summary for Policymakers, p.31.



## A just transition philanthropy?

The notion of “just transition” was first promoted in the early 1990s by the American union leader Tony Mazzocchi as a way to resolve “the conflict between jobs and the environment”<sup>24</sup>. It was notably used to protect workers from new environmental protection regulations<sup>25</sup>, but also to preserve jobs in the fossil fuel industry<sup>26</sup>. The concept of just transition was soon adopted by other actors, notably environmental activists and NGOs, who broadened its definition to include elements of social and racial justice, food security, preservation of cultures and traditions, and independence<sup>27</sup>. Thus expanded, just transition refers to the idea of bringing about a systemic transformation of our societies, making them more equitable and sustainable.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a global United Nations organisation working on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, argues that **just transition is important for combating climate change** “by engaging populations”, “by laying the social groundwork for a resilient net-zero economy”, “by driving local solutions” and “by reinforcing the urgency for concerted efforts to combat climate change”<sup>28</sup>.

Just transition is all the more necessary because it raises issues of social justice and inequality. The Oxfam report cited above points out that in **Europe, the richest 20% are better protected against climate change than the poorest 20%, thanks to their socio-economic resources**<sup>29</sup>. These inequalities are also reflected in emissions output: research has shown that 48% of the greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere are produced by the richest 10% of the world’s population<sup>30</sup>. As a result, **the most disadvantaged people—whether living under precarious conditions in the Global North or in low-income countries of the Global South—not only bear the least responsibility for this crisis but are also the first victims of climate disruption and the least able to combat its effects**<sup>31</sup>. Implementing a just transition would involve designing ambitious public policies at the local, national and international levels that take into account the social, political and democratic issues involved in combating climate change<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Laurent, Éloi. “Introduction. La transition juste. Un nouvel âge de l’économie et de l’environnement”, *Revue de l’OFCE*, vol. 165, no. 1, 2020, pp. 5-20.

<sup>25</sup> Felli Romain, et Dimitris Stevis. “La stratégie syndicale d’une « transition juste » vers une économie durable”, *Mouvements*, vol. 80, no. 4, 2014, pp. 111-118.

<sup>26</sup> Laurent, Éloi. *op.cit.* pp. 5-20.

<sup>27</sup> Stark Anthony, Fred Gale, and Hannah Murphy-Gregory. (2023). “Just Transitions’ Meanings: A Systematic Review”. *Society & Natural Resources* 36 (10): 1277–97.

<sup>28</sup> UNDP, (3 November 2022): “What is just transition? And why is it important?”, <https://climatepromise.undp.org/news-and-stories/what-just-transition-and-why-it-important>

<sup>29</sup> Oxfam France, *op.cit.*, p.12

<sup>30</sup> Chancel L. (2021) “Climate Change & the Global Inequality of Carbon Emissions (1990-2020)», *World Inequality Database Report*.

<sup>31</sup> Jafino B.A. Walsh, B. Rozenberg, J. & Hallegatte, S. (2020) “Revised Estimates of the Impact of Climate Change on Extreme Poverty by 2030”, *Policy Research Working Paper 9417*, World Bank.

<sup>32</sup> “Environmental degradation, in particular climate change, and rising economic inequalities are two key challenges for policymakers in the decades to come. Both challenges endanger democratic institutions and social contracts” - Chancel L. & Piketty T. (2015). “Carbon and Inequality, from Kyoto to Paris. Trends in the global inequality of carbon emissions (1998-2013) & prospects for an equitable adaptation fund”, *Paris School of Economics Paper*.

**According to the latest IPCC reports and the recommendations of the United Nations, a just transition is absolutely essential if we are to combat climate disruption.** Just transition emerges as a concept that philanthropy could seize upon in order to fulfil its public good mission by taking action at the environmental as well as the social level. And yet it seems thus far to have had little practical application in the sector, at least in France. This raises two main questions: **How is philanthropy in France currently tackling environmental issues? What changes are or could be envisaged to enable the sector to develop a just transition philanthropy?**

The first section of this study offers some pointers for outlining the current state of environmental philanthropy in France, based on the available data. This part also looks at the way in which foundations and endowment funds (EFs) are tackling environmental issues and environmental transition in general.

The second section presents some of the means of action that the foundations and EFs surveyed say they are implementing in support of the environmental transition. This analysis sheds light on how the surveyed organisations perceive the interconnection between environmental questions and societal challenges more widely. The third and final section looks at how the participating foundations and EFs approach the concept of just transition. It seeks to understand the commitments and positions taken by philanthropic organisations on notions of social justice as they relate to environmental issues. A particular focus is placed on the way certain practices derived from the systemic change approach and trust-based philanthropy can inspire philanthropic organisations to a just transition.

## METHODOLOGY

**This study is based on a mixed-methods analysis.**

### • Qualitative component

We interviewed 22 French foundations and EFs that describe themselves as acting on the environment as their primary or secondary sphere of action, to gain a clearer understanding of how they envisage the design and deployment of actions for the environment in the philanthropy sector. The participating foundations and endowment funds were selected to optimally reflect the diversity of the sector. We conducted:

- 13 individual semi-directive interviews: 4 public utility foundations (PUFs) including 1 international foundation, 2 endowment funds (EFs), 4 corporate foundations (CFs), 2 sheltered foundations (SFs), 1 university foundation (UF)
- 1 focus group: 5 PUFs (including 1 international foundation)
- 1 focus group: 3 CFs and 1 EF

### • Quantitative component

The quantitative data was extracted from the 2001-2023 national survey of foundations and endowment funds in France (6<sup>th</sup> edition, covering 3060 organisations) published in 2023 by Fondation de France's Philanthropy & Society Observatory<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> Fondation de France's Philanthropy Observatory (2023), Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023, [https://www.fondationdefrance.org/images/pdf/2023/Rapport\\_Fonds-fondations2023.pdf](https://www.fondationdefrance.org/images/pdf/2023/Rapport_Fonds-fondations2023.pdf)

# 1

## Environmental philanthropy: where do things stand in France?

The 1970s and 1980s marked a turning point in the world's awareness of environmental issues<sup>34</sup>, but it was above all at COP21 (2015)<sup>35</sup> and following the Covid-19 pandemic (2020-2021) that these issues came to prominence for the philanthropy sector in France, as evidenced by the creation of the French Coalition of Foundations for the Climate (CffC) in 2020. However, there is little data on environmental philanthropy at the national level due, among other things, to the lack of a clear definition of the concept. This both reflects and reinforces a lack of visibility and understanding of what environmental philanthropy actually is. This first section attempts to provide some indication of the main trends in the sector. What are the distinctive features of environmental philanthropy in France? Which philanthropic organisations provide environmental funding? How do foundations and EFs perceive the environmental crisis?

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<sup>34</sup> Chaloux Annie, Simard Philippe. La gouvernance environnementale mondiale : évolution et enjeux. In: *Revue Québécoise de droit international*, Special issue December 2021 – Organisations internationales. Droit et politique de la gouvernance mondiale. pp. 213-233; [https://www.persee.fr/doc/rqdi\\_0828-9999\\_2021\\_hos\\_2\\_1\\_2571](https://www.persee.fr/doc/rqdi_0828-9999_2021_hos_2_1_2571)

<sup>35</sup> Centre Français des Fonds et Fondations, (june 2016): <https://www.centre-francais-fondations.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Fondations-Climat.pdf>

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# 1.

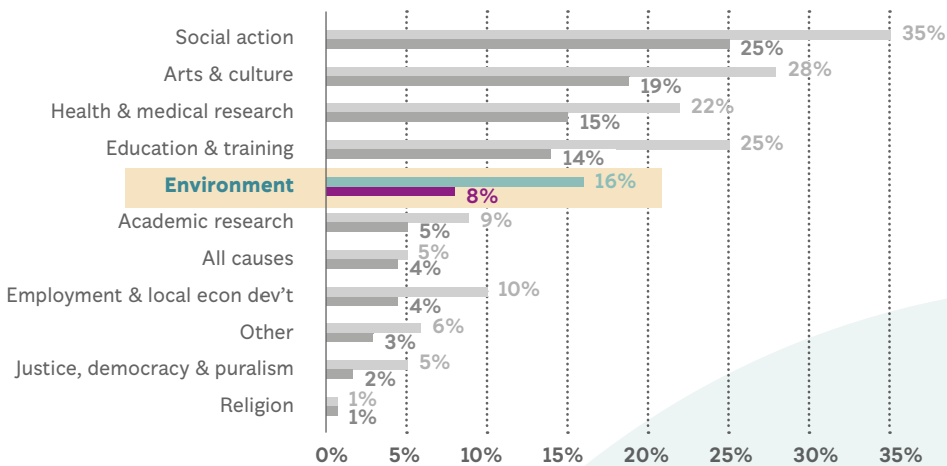
## The environment: a small but growing area of funding

There is little data on the philanthropic funding devoted to environmental issues in Europe. The latest report from the European philanthropy network Philea, “*Environmental Funding by European Foundations*”<sup>36</sup> states that **in 2021, European philanthropy allocated €1.6 billion to the environment**, compared to €745 million in 2018<sup>37</sup>. But **this rapid increase must be seen in the context** of the €54.5 billion spent overall by the European philanthropy sector every year<sup>38</sup>.

The situation in France is in line with the European trend: the data points to **low funding** relative to the sheer scale of the environmental challenges, although there are signs of an increase in recent years. Estimated expenditure on environmental causes by foundations and EFs in France amounts to €474 million, **3% of the sector’s total grantmaking budget**.

The analysis of the areas of action of foundations and EFs confirms the minority status of the environmental field in the French philanthropy sector. In 2022, **only 8% of foundations and EFs stated that the environment was their main area of action, and only 16% ranked the environment as one of their top four areas of action** (FIGURE 1).

**FIGURE 1**  
**Areas of action of French foundations and EFs in 2022**



In 2022, 16% of foundations and endowment funds declared that the environment was one of their top four areas of action, while 8% declared that it was their main area of action.

Source: *Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023.*

<sup>36</sup> Philea (22 May 2023). “Environmental Funding by European Foundations: Volume 6”, <https://philea.issueelab.org/resource/environmental-funding-by-european-foundations-volume-6.html>

<sup>37</sup> Philea points out that the rapid increase in estimated funding is due to the integration of 21 foundations into the study for the first time, including some very large funders and others that make numerous small grants. The remaining 105 foundations also increased their grant-making between 2018 and 2021.

<sup>38</sup> <https://philea.eu>, accessed 03/09/2024.

Some of the foundations and EFs interviewed for this study underlined the low level of funding targeted at environmental causes. As Isabelle Susini, Director of 1% for the Planet France, points out:

*“What we see more generally is that the environment is still the poor cousin of philanthropy. In France: less than 10% of the money donated goes to its causes. That seems counterintuitive, given that it’s a major topic in the media and one of the leading concerns of the public, especially among young people, and yet it continues to be underfunded”*

This situation is the result of multiple factors, not least the fact that **75% of the foundations and EFs that claim the environment as their main area of action have an annual budget of less than €250,000** (TABLE 2).

TABLE 2  
Expenditure brackets of foundations and EFs by main area of action

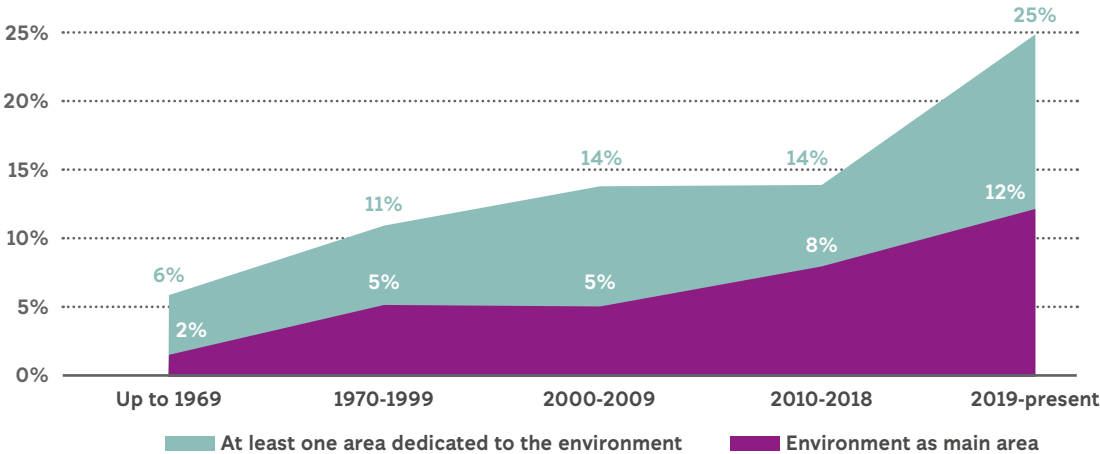
	Other main areas	Main area = Environment	Total
Less than €50k	39%	46%	39%
From €50k to less than €250k	26%	29%	26%
From €250k to less than €1 million	17%	12%	17%
From €1 million to less than €3 million	8%	6%	8%
More than €3 million	10%	7%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%

46% of foundations and EFs that claim the environment as their main area of action have an annual expenditure of below €50k.  
Source: Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023.

Although the amount of funding earmarked for the environment by foundations and EFs is still far from sufficient to meet the scale and urgency of the challenges, there is nonetheless a clear momentum in the take-up of environmental issues by the philanthropy sector. For example,

**25% of the foundations and EFs created since 2019 claim to devote at least part of their activity to the environment, compared to 14% of those created before 2009 (FIGURE 2).**

**FIGURE 2**  
**Main areas of action of foundations and EFs by period of creation**



25% of foundations and EFs created since 2019 state that they intervene at least in part on the environment.  
Source: *Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023.

**Additionally, 12% of the foundations and EFs created since 2019 declare that they have chosen the environment as their main area of action, whereas fewer than 5% of those created before 2009 claim to act primarily on environmental issues (FIGURE 2).** On this subject, Hortense Vourc'h, Managing Director of the Superbloom fund, created in 2021, explains that addressing the environment was a given, even before the fund was launched:

*"[The environmental question] was the basis for discussion when we were defining our social purpose. Our family is very sensitive to issues of environmental transition as well as the struggle against inequality".*

Foundations' funding for the environment remains very low, but the creation of new structures shows a growing interest in environmental issues in the sector. What do we know about the statuses of these philanthropic organisations that are keen to take action for the environment?

## 2.

# A wide range of profiles of foundations and endowment funds

The foundations and EFs that declare developing activities in the environmental field have various legal statuses, some more common than others. Most noticeable is the **high proportion of EFs (48%), followed by SFs (26%)**, reflecting their overall weight in numbers in the philanthropy sector (45% and 32% respectively). Interestingly, **only 6% of environmental philanthropy seems to consist of PUFs, although they represent 13% of the philanthropy sector**

**as a whole.** In contrast, **CFs** seem to play an important role in environmental philanthropy: while they only make up 8% of the sector, they represent 18% of the foundations claiming to be active in this field (TABLE 3).

TABLE 3  
Legal status and mission with an environmental focus

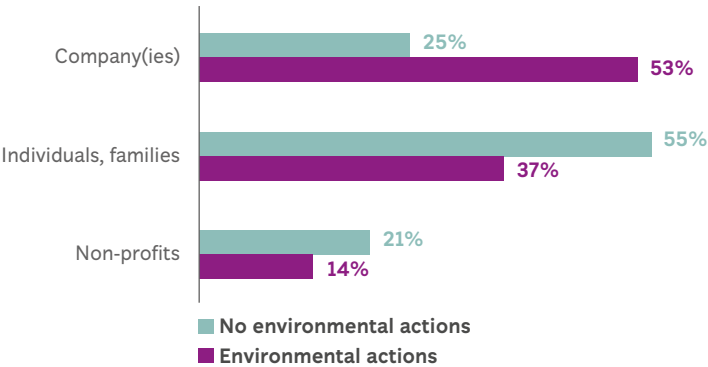
	Foundations or EFs WITHOUT environmental activity	Foundations or EFs WITH environmental activity	All foundations and EFs
PUF	14%	6%	13%
CF	7%	18%	8%
SF	33%	26%	32%
SCF, UF, PF, HF	2%	2%	2%
EFs	44%	48%	45%
Total	100% (n=2615)	100% (n=445)	100%

26% of the foundations and EFs that claim to be active for the environment are sheltered foundations and 18% are corporate foundations.

Source: Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023.

The strong presence of corporate actors seems to be reflected in the profiles of the founders. More than half (**53%**) of the **philanthropic organisations that claim to act for the environment originate from companies** (FIGURE 3). While more than half of philanthropic organisations are founded by individuals and families, they are at the origin of barely over a third (37%) of environment-oriented organisations.


FIGURE 3  
Profile of philanthropic organisations' founders by level of environmental engagement



53% of foundations and EFs that claim to be active for the environment count a company as one of their founders.

The sum of percentages is not equal to 100 due to some respondents selecting multiple answers.

Source: Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023.



To date, there has been no targeted study to account for the pre-eminence of CFs in the environmental segment of France's philanthropy sector. One hypothesis, however, might be **the introduction in 2001 of a legal framework on the environment for companies**<sup>39</sup>. France's New Economic Regulations Act ("Loi NRE") of 2001 stipulates that French companies listed on a regulated market (of which there were 646 when the law came into force) must produce extra-financial reports incorporating data on the social and environmental management of their activities<sup>40</sup>.

A parallel can be drawn between this legal framework and the legal obligation to implement gender parity in companies. According to the 2022 study "Gender Parity: Challenges, issues, and opportunities for foundations and endowment funds in France" by Fondation de France's Philanthropy & Society Observatory<sup>41</sup>, the laws on achieving and maintaining parity in the workplace have enabled corporate foundations and EFs to make faster progress in this area through, among other things, the application of quotas. The study does, however, qualify the impact of these measures on companies and their affiliated foundations by pointing out that while the legal framework has undeniably raised the profile of the issue, parity has still not been achieved either in companies or in CFs. A similar trend seems to emerge when it comes to the environment.

For the rest of the philanthropy sector—foundations and EFs that did not emerge from companies—**there is no legal framework to encourage foundations to take action on environmental issues**, much to the regret of the one of the organisations interviewed:

*"The transition is really being driven by changes in regulations, but there is no regulatory timeline on this subject in the sector. And yet it is regulation that's forcing the major actors to evolve. Some of them have truly woken up to the challenges, but for the majority, it's the French and European legislation that has finally made them budge".*

Even if there is no legal framework outside corporate EFs and foundations, philanthropic organisations seem to be taking an increasing interest in environmental issues, as Catherine Savey, Director of the Suez Foundation, observes:

*"Ten or so years ago, there were very few foundations addressing the question of ecological transition. What we see today is that there is at least a more widespread desire and determination to engage with the issue".*

The interviews with the surveyed organisations point to a number of possible explanations for this growing interest in environmental questions.

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<sup>39</sup> Specifically designated in France as "social and environmental responsibility" (*Responsabilité Sociale et Environnementale*, RSE).

<sup>40</sup> Inspection générale de l'environnement, Conseil général des mines, Inspection générale des affaires sociales, *Rapport de mission sur l'application de l'article 116 de la loi sur les nouvelles régulations économiques*, Août 2007, pp. 6-7.

<sup>41</sup> Fondation de France Philanthropy Observatory (2022): "Gender Parity: Challenges, issues, and opportunities for foundations and endowment funds in France".

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### 3.

## Growing visibility and awareness of the environmental crisis in some organisations

For the foundations and EFs in the survey, their engagement in environmental causes can be ascribed to a number of factors. **Most of the interviewees said that they had become acutely aware of the urgency of the current environmental crisis, especially with it becoming increasingly visible in everyday life.** Some of those interviewed spoke of the **effects of climate change being always more evident on the ground**, such as the former director of the Veolia Foundation, Thierry Vandeveldel:

*“We realised a long time ago that with a disrupted climate, things change, and we observe it practically every day. When we manage a sewage system or a water treatment plant, we see that disasters are happening more and more often and that sea levels are rising. This also has a direct impact on us”.*

These effects are visible around the world, but organisations **working in the Global South** are often those most affected by this emergency, due to **the amplitude of the effects and the lack of resources to respond to them**. For Sarah Tirmarche, Director of the EPIC Foundation, the consequences of climate change have been in evidence for many years through their impacts on the people the foundation works with in the Global South:

*“We worked on health and poverty issues and we noticed a sudden regression due to climate change and its impact on populations. For example, all the work we had done on improving nutrition, protecting farmers and fighting poverty was destroyed, either by drought, by heavy rain, or other factors. So we said to ourselves: either we keep on investing, looking for workarounds, and finding solutions, or we integrate the issue directly into our programmes and the charities we work with on the ground”.*

Concern for **future generations** was also voiced by several of the organisations we interviewed, particularly those working on education and youth, as Sarah Tirmarche goes on to say:

*“We came to the realisation that since we were taking a stance to protect future generations, children and young people, ignoring the climate threat would be nonsensical”.*

The realisation that climate disruption has a particular impact on vulnerable populations and on future generations has prompted several of the surveyed foundations and EFs to **rethink their long-term strategy**. As Sarah Alezrah, Managing Director of the Bouygues Telecom Foundation puts it:

*“As a foundation, we believe we need to basically go into resilience mode today on all these issues, because climate change is here to stay. We’re no longer trying to find solutions to avoid climate disruption; we are actually living it. If, tomorrow, awareness of all these issues were suddenly to become second nature for every citizen, we could stop thinking in the short term and take a medium to long-term view. That’s what is needed for future generations”.*

The specific challenges posed by the climate crisis have led foundations and EFs to stress **the complexity of grasping all these issues in the round**. In the words of Karine Gavand, France Programme Director at the European Climate Foundation:

*“There’s the sheer complexity of the subject, making it difficult to approach. It touches on aspects that, on the one hand, question us as citizens through our relationship to society and consumption. On the other hand, it is a subject that also raises questions for political and economic actors. Moreover, we observe that the [environmental] strategy has become more complex and diversified, so our work must really be more focused”.*

Integrating the plural and multidimensional nature of the issues at stake in the environmental crisis emerges as one of the main challenges for foundations working towards environmental transition. Faced with these obstacles, what are the different strategies, goals and challenges for foundations and EFs?

## 2

# Strategies, goals and challenges of the environmental transition for philanthropy

Though the environment is still an area of intervention that receives relatively little funding from foundations and EFs, some philanthropic organisations are beginning to take stock of the intersectionality of the various issues at stake in the environmental crisis, with a view to facilitate the transition. Different organisations integrate these issues in different ways: while they all share an acute awareness of the crisis, their visions of how to tackle the problem, and of the solutions they can propose, vary significantly. This dispersion—no doubt indicative of the complexity of the subject—makes it harder to draw up a general overview of the strategies and practices deployed by these organisations, but certain trends nonetheless emerge. How do foundations and EFs grapple with these complex questions? What issues and challenges does the environmental transition pose for the philanthropy sector?

# 1.

## Beyond silos: towards a cross-cutting understanding of social and environmental issues

One of the challenges of the environmental transition is the **complexity of the issues it encompasses** along with the **need to be mindful of the interdependence between the social and environmental issues** arising from the climate crisis.

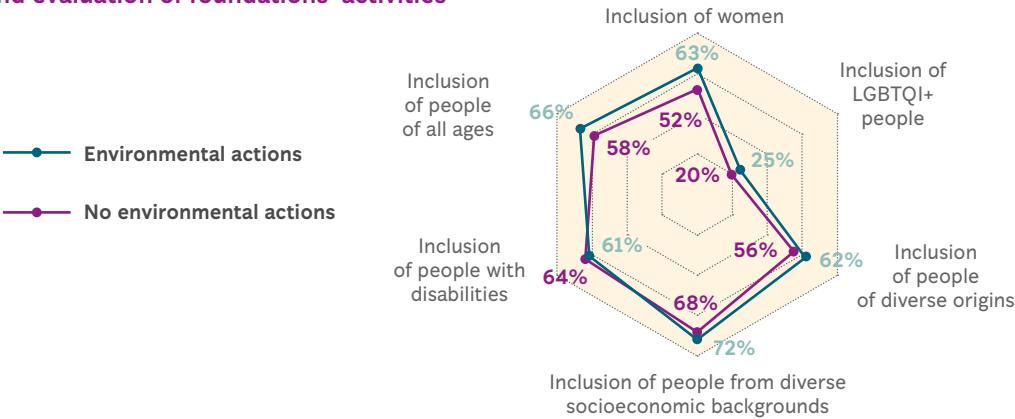
Echoing the scientific research that underlines the anthropogenic nature of climate change, the philanthropic actors surveyed say they are aware of the **human-made character of the environmental crisis** and the need to address social and environmental issues jointly. As Ségolène Ohl, Partnership and Sponsorship Officer at the Ekibio Foundation, reminds us, the climate crisis is above all a threat to humanity:

*“Environmental issues are very wide-ranging. We now realise that it’s not the planet that’s going to be destroyed; it’s human beings who are themselves threatened by human activities.*

*As a result, environmental issues completely mirror social issues, the challenges of coexistence, and societal issues in general”.*

This understanding of how social and environmental issues are interwoven has led some foundations to develop a **cross-cutting or “transversal” approach** to the causes they back. According to the results of the latest national survey of foundations and endowment funds carried out by the Philanthropy & Society Observatory<sup>42</sup>, **foundations and EFs that back at least one environmental cause are more likely to be developing a transversal approach to social and environmental issues**, whether in designing or in evaluating their actions. The most frequently-used criteria are the inclusion of women and diversity of origin, age or socio-economic background (FIGURE 4).

**FIGURE 4**  
**Cross-cutting topics built into the design and evaluation of foundations’ activities**



The inclusion of women in the actions of foundations is taken into account by 63% of foundations and EFs that claim to be environmentally focused.  
Source: Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023.

<sup>42</sup> Fondation de France Philanthropy Observatory, Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023, [https://www.fondationdefrance.org/images/pdf/2023/Rapport\\_Fonds-fondations2023.pdf](https://www.fondationdefrance.org/images/pdf/2023/Rapport_Fonds-fondations2023.pdf)

For foundations and EFs seeking to integrate environmental issues, questions quickly arise **as on how to best align them with their mission**. The organisations surveyed that have implemented a cross-cutting approach have done so in different ways. The Carrefour Foundation, for example, states that it has reinforced its general anti-precarity initiatives with added support for the fight against food insecurity. As its Managing Director Marie-Astrid Raoult explains:

*“For our new mandate, we have focused on supporting the fight against food insecurity. During the three years of crisis, we were constantly asked for help by those involved in food aid, so we intend to pursue our commitment”.*

The Suez Foundation, meanwhile, says it had created a new line of activity dedicated to social and environmental issues. The RATP Group Foundation has decided to discontinue a programme dedicated to environmental issues and instead build them into all of its programmes. And the 1% for the Planet Fund France has added social criteria to its existing environmental criteria for selecting the charities and projects it supports.

However, **implementing a cross-cutting approach to social and environmental issues is not always easy**. It can sometimes be difficult for foundations and EFs to find projects that combine social and environmental issues, as charities are not always geared up to tackling multiple issues at once. Some of the foundations interviewed said that they **work with charities** to try to address cross-cutting issues. The Veolia Foundation, for instance, said that it had assisted a charity in rethinking its ecological footprint:

*“We are also helping a charity to think about its ecological footprint. Up until now, it has been providing aid in the medical field, but it was relatively unconcerned about its ecological footprint. It saved people’s lives, but the environmental impact of its actions wasn’t a core concern, until about ten years ago.*

*There was a real moment of realisation for the charity, which resolved to be effective in its medical actions while at the same time minimising its impact on the environment. We are providing them with practical support for that, via financial sponsorship, and a great deal of skills sponsorship”.*

**The mission of foundations can also be a barrier to integrating cross-cutting issues if the foundation’s mission is too narrow.**

“Not being committed to a specific cause” can allow for a degree of flexibility in the actions that the foundation takes or supports, as Sarah Alezrah of the Bouygues Télécom Foundation explains:

*“The Bouygues Telecom Foundation is different in that it does not focus on a specific cause: we support commitment, voluntary work and civic engagement in the broadest sense. That means we can support a variety of causes as long as they come under the heading of civic engagement. That covers social as well as environmental causes”.*

Those interviewed also speak about the strategic questions involved in delimiting the mission of foundations and EFs; as time goes on, their scope of action may be narrowed down or, on the contrary, expanded, into strategies of “refocusing” or alternatively of “scattering”. What other resources are deployed to support environmental transition?

## 2.

# Cross-cutting actions in support of the environmental transition

The first section of this report profiles French foundations and EFs that declare their financial commitment to the environment, but there is little data on what exactly they are funding. At the international scale, ClimateWorks Foundation estimates that the sectors that received most funding from foundations worldwide between 2017 and 2021 were renewable energies (\$300 million, 11% of the total), forests (\$260 million, 9% of the total) and food & agriculture (\$240 million, 9% of the total)<sup>43</sup>. According to analyses by Philea<sup>44</sup>, the sectors receiving the most funding from European foundations in 2021 were the climate and the atmosphere (€393 million, 25% of the total), followed by the protection of animal species and biodiversity (€258 million) and energy (€231 million).

Despite these figures, it is no easy task to delimit where “the environment”—or, even more broadly, the “transition”—begins and ends, given that funding the environmental transition is tantamount to participating in wider societal change. European philanthropy, as the latest Philea report on the subject shows, devotes very little funding to climate justice<sup>45</sup>.

As far as French philanthropy is concerned, the interviews revealed a number of priority areas for support, such as food and agriculture, the circular economy, health, pesticide reduction, renewable energies, water, protecting biodiversity, etc. A number of cross-cutting actions were also mentioned, three of which are particularly worth exploring as they came up frequently: the production and dissemination of knowledge; the connection between different scales of action; and support for new models.

### Encouraging the production and dissemination of knowledge

Among the conversations within the sector on what philanthropy can fund to support the environmental transition, **access to—and production of—knowledge about environmental issues and related questions** are subjects that were often raised by the organisations interviewed. Several of them said that they were seeking to **encourage the production of knowledge**, whether by supporting research programmes or by organising scientific events. For example, Axel Nevers from the Palladio Foundation:

*“We also fund research grants for doctoral and post-doctoral students; some of their research deals specifically with the fight against global warming, or issues related to global warming, in the urban environment”.*

<sup>43</sup> ClimateWorks Foundation: “Funding trends 2023: Climate change mitigation philanthropy”, (Oct. 2022), p.8, <https://www.climateworks.org/report/funding-trends-2023/>

<sup>44</sup> Philea: “Environmental Funding by European Foundations Volume 6”, p.16, <https://philea.issuelab.org/resource/environmental-funding-by-european-foundations-volume-6.html>

<sup>45</sup> Ibid pp.26-31,

Several interviewees emphasised just how crucial it is to rely on academic researchers who specialise in these topics. There is a **great deal of misunderstanding and a lack of access to “accurate information”**, as Nicolas Giraudeau, President of the University of Montpellier Foundation, underlines:

*“There are a lot of preconceived ideas about the ecological transition, whether through lack of knowledge or through lack of access to the right information. Our position is basically that since we have scientists who are experts in very specific ecology-related fields, these experts must be empowered to get the information out there”.*

Stéphanie Clément-Grandcourt, Managing Director of the Fondation pour la Nature et l’Homme, stresses the fundamental importance of relying on the academic world to disseminate scientific knowledge:

*“having the most solid academic base possible enables us to bring [environmental issues] to the attention of stakeholders and citizens”.*

For many of the organisations in the survey, raising awareness in wider society emerges as a key objective of actions for environmental transition. There is a desire to “get as many people on board as possible”, to “raise citizen awareness of these issues”, and “get Joe Public to take ownership of these topics”, especially at a time when “Europe is moving backwards in terms of the acceptability of any social and ecological measures”. Foundations working on educational initiatives sometimes try to integrate the environmental transition into their actions, as Bruno Babinet, Head of Procurement, Ecological Transition and Event Logistics for the Apprentis d’Auteuil Foundation, explains:

*“We have now transformed a number of our training courses to incorporate ecological principles. It’s one of the pillars of our educational project, which is fully in line with integral ecology”.*

## **Taking action at different scales: the role of a local approach**

A second line of reflection emerges from our interviews with foundations and EFs: **the most relevant scale of action**. Some stress the importance of “finding the right scale” and “thinking in terms of scale”... from the European scale down through the national or municipal scale to the most local level. **As these different scales are not mutually exclusive, they may be intermeshed in the strategic thinking of foundations.**

**The local scale** (neighbourhood, town, département, etc.) is favoured by several foundations as a particularly impactful level of involvement for the environmental transition because it facilitates interaction with all stakeholders. As Raphaël René-Bazin of the RATP Group Foundation points out:

*“We know today that the ecological transition depends heavily on action at the local level, and that changes in behaviour will only happen if there are local initiatives. So, it seems to me that foundations need to get involved and take more local action with all the local stakeholders, because that’s where things happen, at the same time as at the macro level”.*

The role of a local approach would appear to be crucial here.

This seems all the more relevant given that foundations are “often embedded in the local communities” in order to “respond as effectively and as closely as possible to the needs” of the local community. Several different interviewees stressed the need to encourage “**ecological transition at the local level**” by developing a **more systemic approach**<sup>46</sup>. Hortense Vourc’h, Managing Director of the endowment fund Superbloom, for example, observes the effects of “acting local”:

*“We decided to take more action in our area; we reckoned we would have more impact if we acted specifically in Nantes. Using a systems approach, we want to get to the root of problems so as to understand where they come from”.*

This systems perspective can be seen in the actions of certain foundations and EFs when they work at the local scale and with different stakeholders, in particular the populations directly concerned and the local authorities, **as part of a multi-actor approach**.

## Supporting new models

Faced with the multiplicity of possible actions and the difficulty of positioning themselves, some of the organisations interviewed feel that it is important to fund **the creation of alternative social models and spaces**.

A few of them said that they did not wish, for example, to support direct funding to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but rather to “*support models that transform the way things are done*”. A point raised by Olivier Moret, General Secretary of the Petzl Foundation:

*“We support citizens’ groups and associations which, through their lifestyles, their way of operating or their actions, are offering a new narrative, a different way of living that might catch on... because these are lifestyles that are more sufficient, more economical, less resource-intensive. At some point, when resources become scarcer, when temperatures rise, we’re going to have to live differently. There are already people who have chosen to live differently, and who are perfectly happy doing so”.*

The support given to players from within society who are beginning to sketch out new models for the future, helps to **make the prospects of a fairer and more sustainable society tangible and visible to the sector**.

<sup>46</sup> The systems approach has branched out into multiple currents and theories in different disciplines. There are different ways of developing a systems approach, depending on the theoretical lineage and the empirical context in which it is applied. This study draws on the systems thinking inspired by Donella Meadows and her definition of a system, highlighting three key features: elements, an interconnection between these elements, and the function of the system: “A system is an interconnected set of elements that is coherently organized in a way that achieves something. If you look at that definition closely for a minute, you can see that a system must consist of three kinds of things: elements, interconnections, and a function or purpose”, Donella Meadows: Thinking in Systems, (2008), p.11.



### 3.

## Do internal practices also need transforming?

In addition to their external activities, the foundations and EFs surveyed are also seeking to integrate environmental issues into their internal practices, each in its own way. While for some organisations this integration “is no longer a matter of debate”, for others, overhauling their strategy remains a challenge. Such transformations take time, especially when the organisation’s main area of intervention does not involve environmental issues, or only to a very limited extent. As for how to integrate environmental issues into the work of foundations and EFs, beyond funding alone, three elements in particular emerged from the discussions: raising awareness among staff to strengthen their commitment; creating what many of those interviewed referred to as “a CSR policy”; and, to a lesser extent, the role of investment.

### Promoting employee awareness and engagement

Ensuring consistency between action in favour of the environmental transition and the internal workings of foundations is a **question of human resources**.

Many of the foundations interviewed emphasised a **lack of human resources to devote to the transition** (“we’re just a small team”). According to several of the people we met, it is hard to find time to integrate environmental issues into their HR policy, but some foundations and EFs manage to do so, by means of various practices. Several organisations mention having set up **awareness-raising and training initiatives for their teams and volunteers**, such as the Climate Fresk<sup>47</sup> or similar workshop activities (The Biodiversity Fresk, The Sustainable Real Estate Fresco, etc.), while others create internal working groups or appoint an “ecological transition” director from within the organisation to give clearer focus to their environmental strategy.

**Team motivation can sometimes act as a catalyst**, particularly with **the arrival of new generations**, as several organisations recalled. Alban de Loisy, Managing Director of the François Sommer Foundation, emphasises the role played by the younger generation in the progress made by the foundation:

*“In-house, there is a growing awareness, and a strong determination on the part of our teams, and we can see this in our new intakes: the new generations arriving today want to have this global coherence. So we’re making headway”.*

For the corporate foundations in the survey, the role of employees is also an essential component of their commitment to social and environmental issues. For some, this is a way of “*attracting talent*,” and foundations sometimes encourage their staff to get involved in these actions, thereby giving “*meaning*” to their work in the company. A few corporate foundations, however, report **difficulties in “mobilising the teams”**: “*people sometimes have differing motivations, and not all staff are equally convinced about the ecological issues*”. Nonetheless, the involvement of human resources is still seen as essential for getting as many people on board as possible to integrate environmental issues into their organisations.

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<sup>47</sup> <https://climatefresk.org/world/>

## The development of “CSR policies”

Integrating environmental issues into organisations’ internal practices also means transforming their operations, through what the sector commonly refers to as “**CSR policies**” such as recycling, reducing plastic waste, or carrying out carbon audits. Of the organisations surveyed, **few carry out carbon audits**, due mainly to the limited size of their teams. As mentioned in the first part of the study, philanthropic organisations are not legally bound by the CSR legal framework. But it is interesting to note that corporate foundations surveyed are more likely to be systematically integrated into the CSR initiatives of their founding companies, which are bound by the regulations. In the case of the Petzl Foundation, the founding company came directly to the foundation for help with its CSR policy. Different dynamics can be observed between companies and foundations, sometimes leading to progress in the integration of environmental issues. As Olivier Moret from the Petzl Fondation describes:

*“The company’s CSR concerns led it to come to us, saying: ‘You have a sharper eye for the outside world than we do. As a company, we are very customer and supplier-oriented. The thing is, you work with the community, with associations. So can you come and work with us to help us build something and also cast a critical eye over what we do?’ And so, we ended up taking charge of defining a CSR strategy for the company”.*

Some other, non-corporate, foundations are gearing up to conduct carbon audits, as Bruno Babinet of the Apprentis d’Auteuil Foundation observes, having put the practice in place several years ago:

*“With this strategic orientation, we carried out our first carbon audit last year for the financial year 2022. But even before that, we’ve been doing greenhouse gas emissions assessments since 2011. These are concepts that are fully integrated into the Foundation’s operations, including our catering contracts. For these contracts, we insist on local sourcing and now even on organic sourcing in most cases”.*

Some organisations stress the importance of **applying good practices to themselves to ensure that they are coherent in their dealings with their stakeholders** (“we can’t ask our beneficiaries to do this and not apply these things to ourselves”).

## The role of investments

The question of investing for environmental transition is gaining momentum in the philanthropy sector internationally, but came up only rarely in our interviews with foundations and EFs. For the few organisations that did mention the subject, **the issue of investment is seen as crucial, but complex**. The Carasso Foundation, for example, states that it has actively addressed this issue internally, but maintains that there is still a long way to go: “*Since COP21, we have been very active in impact investing. We’ve tried to do a lot in this area, but we also see how much more could be done*”. On the whole, those organisations that have taken up the subject of investment observe that trying to change investment practices is still a vast area of debate for French philanthropy. As one of the foundations interviewed recounts:

*“Our portfolios are handled by managers with managerial autonomy. You have to realise that today all the big investment funds, and others, are starting to keep a close eye on things. Nevertheless, there are some investments that might be questioned or questionable. It seems to me that there is a real issue here and that we have a lot of hard thinking to do”.*

Another organisation observes that while “*the situation is not catastrophic*”, “*there are obstacles and attitudes that have not yet changed*”. Among the obstacles identified by the participating foundations and EFs, is the difficulty of aligning the top management, the board of directors and the finance committee. To quote Stéphanie Clément-Grandcourt of the Fondation pour la Nature et l’Homme: “*In addition to aligned governance, we also need a body, a finance committee, that can help take a relatively sharp-edged approach to the subject, in synergy with the top management. This is not something that can be done lightly*”.

On the other hand, **some organisations fear that limiting themselves to “green” investments might reduce the impact of their actions.**

As one of the foundations interviewed puts it:

*“We’re having really in-depth debates on this question: do all our investments necessarily have to be ‘green’, even if it means depriving ourselves of certain resources? Because that’s what it’s all about: the risk of being less able to fund initiatives that have an impact. So the question is, where do we draw the line?”*

This “financial loss” argument has been challenged by the academic literature<sup>48</sup>, even though there is not yet enough hindsight.

It also appears that foundations and EFs are devoting less attention to the topic of investment because they need to focus on fundraising in order to carry out their missions. Once again, Stéphanie Clément-Grandcourt explains:

*“For some environmental foundations like mine, there is a real need to increase resources in order to take more widespread action. My strategic priorities today are more focused on boosting our resources, so that we can do more and do it faster, than on thinking about investment. I’m not saying that in two or three years’ time I won’t be having those thoughts, but right now my priorities are about deploying additional resources”.*

The question of investment is also crucial to the transition of foundations and of the sector as a whole. Research has shown that **most of the emissions of the richest 1% come from their investments**<sup>49</sup>. Internationally, a number of initiatives reflect foundations’ growing awareness of the criticality of this issue and their desire to **align their investments with their social missions**, as evidenced by the Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF) in the UK<sup>50</sup>, the work of Philea at the European level<sup>51</sup>, and the launch of a climate fund by the Asociación Española de Fundaciones (AEF) in Spain<sup>52</sup>.

<sup>48</sup> Auke Plantinga and Bert Scholtens: “The financial impact of fossil fuel divestment”, *Climate Policy* (2021), vol. 21, issue 1, 107-119, [https://econpapers.repec.org/article/taftcpx/v\\_3a21\\_3ay\\_3a2021\\_3ai\\_3a1\\_3ap\\_3a107-119.htm](https://econpapers.repec.org/article/taftcpx/v_3a21_3ay_3a2021_3ai_3a1_3ap_3a107-119.htm)

<sup>49</sup> Lucas Chancel: “Global carbon inequality over 1990–2019”, (September 2022), *Nat Sustain* 5, 931-938, <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41893-022-00955-z>

<sup>50</sup> ACF: “Investments: The Pillars of Stronger Foundations Practice” <https://acf.org.uk/common/Uploaded%20files/Research%20and%20resources/Stronger%20foundations/Stronger%20Foundations%20Investment%20July%202024.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> <https://philea.eu/new-initiative-to-support-philanthropic-organisations-with-impact-investing/>

<sup>52</sup> <https://fundacionesporelclima.org/lanzamos-el-fondo-por-el-clima-una-herramienta-de-inversion-sostenible-para-las-fundaciones/>

## INVESTMENTS, PHILANTHROPY AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL TRANSITION

In France, and elsewhere in Europe, the philanthropy sector has been slow to take on board the role of investment in the environmental transition. This contrasts with the advances made on the international scene, where the question of investments by foundations and EFs is central to the transition of the philanthropy sector. According to Philea, at the European level, foundations account for €647.5 billion in assets and €54.5 billion in annual redistributions<sup>53</sup>. The capital invested is therefore far greater than the funds distributed. And yet techniques do exist for bringing the social mission of foundations and EFs—and the way their investments are managed—into line with the environmental transition. These methods are beginning to gain ground in the Anglo-Saxon philanthropy sector.

Examples include:

- **DivestInvest**<sup>54</sup>
- **Spending down:**  
consuming capital until the foundation disappears<sup>55</sup>
- **Shareholder activism:**  
using shares to influence companies' behaviour<sup>56</sup>

In the French philanthropy sector, these methods are not yet widespread, but awareness of the crucial role that investments play in the environmental transition is growing. In May 2022, for example, the CFF published the guide *“Fonds & Fondations : Stratégie(s) d'investissement pour le climat”*<sup>57</sup>, which brings together practices and testimonials from around the sector, and aims to “align foundations' investments with their climate change response strategy”.

<sup>53</sup> <https://philea.eu/how-we-can-help/knowledge/data-on-the-sector/>

<sup>54</sup> Divesting is not yet common practice in the philanthropic sector, either in France or internationally, but it is on the rise. In 2021, DivestInvest, a diversified global network of individuals and businesses, issued a manifesto to strengthen its members' commitment to moving away from fossil fuels and instead investing in climate solutions in line with the conclusions of COP21. To date, only 6 French foundations have signed the manifesto: <https://divestinvest.org/fr/>

<sup>55</sup> Spending down means consuming the capital until the foundation vanishes. Several foundations in the USA and the UK have resolved to do this, on the grounds that the climate crisis is an emergency for all humanity.

For example, Lankelly Chase: “we have recognised the gravity of the interlocking social, climate and economic global crisis we are experiencing today (...). After over 60 years of operating as a charitable grant-making foundation, Lankelly Chase has decided to redistribute all its assets and close within a five-year timeframe.” In Europe, the Mava Foundation, which focused on the environment, spent down its assets before closing in 2022.

<sup>56</sup> The Nathan Cummings Foundation is a multi-generational family foundation based in the United States that uses shareholder activism. The foundation works for racial, economic and environmental justice through an endowment of nearly \$500 million. To align 100% of its investments with its funding objectives, it has defined four categories: investments that cause social or environmental harm, which it calls “no-go investments”; investments in companies that work to avoid harm to stakeholders; investments in companies that seek to benefit stakeholders; and investments that actively contribute to solving systemic challenges. As a first step, the foundation removed almost all its “no-go investments”. Then it broadened the approach to reallocate ever larger parts of its assets to investments that fit into the other categories: <https://www.activephilanthropy.org/climatefundingstrategies/capital/nathan-cummings-foundation>.

<sup>57</sup> Centre Français des Fonds et Fondations (May 2022). “Fonds & Fondations : Stratégie(s) d'investissement pour le climat” : <https://www.centre-francais-fondations.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Fonds-Fondations-Strategies-dinvestissement-pour-le-climat.pdf>

The foundations and EFs surveyed seem to be taking environmental issues into account at different levels. Firstly, **it is felt to be important to encourage the commitment of the staff; their buy-in is seen as a driving force for progress on these issues.** Secondly, the consolidation of what are commonly referred to as “CSR practices” is seen as necessary for the internal integration of environmental issues. Finally, **the question of investment, though it featured little in the interviews, is in fact a crucial issue that has been taken up by foundations internationally and could offer useful input for discussions within the sector in France.**

Building the various environmental transition issues into the activities of foundations and EFs calls for **consistency between an organisation’s external actions—in pursuit of its social missions—and its internal workings.** This question of consistency invites us to think more broadly about how philanthropy can respond to environmental challenges with a view to participating in just transition.

# 3

## Towards a just transition philanthropy

The question of consistency arises not only at the level of individual foundations; it is also of central relevance at the global level when it comes to thinking about how crises intersect. In this respect, research shows that we need to think about social and environmental issues as intermeshed if we are to tackle climate change. The latest IPCC reports stress the importance of just transition, a concept that prompts us to conceive of the environmental transition in terms of social justice. For the French philanthropy sector, with its statutory public-interest mission, taking up the question of just transition seems crucial, at a time when the structural transformations of society that the transition demands are the subject of debate within the sector. But what would a just transition philanthropy look like? How can it be implemented? What structural changes does it require for the sector?

This section begins by presenting the notion of “just transition philanthropy” and its specific features, which involve developing more horizontal relationships within the sector and with external stakeholders. It also examines the notion of “*neutrality*”, currently the prevailing stance adopted in the discourse of foundations and EFs, and questions the compatibility of this stance with just transition philanthropy, which presupposes structural transformations of society.

# 1.

## A just transition for philanthropy

For the philanthropy actors surveyed, the notion of “*just transition*” is more or less familiar, but seems to describe different realities. The way it is interpreted varies from one interviewee to another. The organisations familiar with the term echo the definition of just transition as presented in the introduction to this study: responding to environmental challenges by taking account of social justice. **Social justice means not only giving consideration to the most vulnerable populations but also not imposing ways of doing or thinking: it is about inequalities, but also about power relationships**<sup>58</sup>. The words “*justice*” and “*equity*” stand out in some of the interviews. As Thierry Vandeveld, former Managing Director of the Veolia Foundation, notes:

*“The notion of justice is essential. All of the stakeholders must get their fair share. [But] behind the notion of justice, we have to be careful that the countries of the North don’t impose their ways of doing things on the poorest populations [especially as] they bear the greatest responsibility [for climate disruption], to the detriment of the most deprived, the most fragile, the poorest”.*

For philanthropy, the notion of just transition implies **a transformation of the sector and its practices**, as the researcher Edouard Morena insists in the report “*Beyond 2%*”, in which he refers specifically to a just transition philanthropy<sup>59</sup> or “**climate justice philanthropy**” defined as follows:

- A philanthropy that acknowledges that there can be no low-carbon transition without justice
- A mindful and non-elitist philanthropy that does not confound organizational success with collective progress towards climate justice
- A learning philanthropy that critically reflects on what has been done, that learns from its mistakes, that is ready to take the lead from social movements, and that is prepared to shift its practices accordingly
- A committed philanthropy that aligns its actions to its discourse
- A systems-minded philanthropy that fosters an intersectional approach to its work and understands the interconnectedness between crises and the efforts to address them.

This definition highlights several elements, three of which merit particular attention because they directly echo the interviews conducted for this study.

**Firstly, to transform societies, just transition philanthropy is dependent on a “systems-minded philanthropy”** that promotes an “*intersectional approach*”<sup>60</sup> to its work and understands “*the interconnectedness between crises*”.

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<sup>58</sup> On this subject, see Philea’s contribution at the end of this study

<sup>59</sup> Edouard Morena: “Beyond 2%: from climate philanthropy to climate justice philanthropy”, Edge Funders Alliance, UNRISD, 2021.

<sup>60</sup> “The term was coined in 1989 by American legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw who defined intersectionality as ‘a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves (...) and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking.’ [...] Intersectionality has become an analytical tool to comprehend more or less visible power relations and to view with greater nuance the world around us, its past and current social dynamics. Class, gender, race, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and immigrant or civil status – intersectionality reveals how these categories overlap in people’s lived experiences and produce specific forms of exclusion or stratification. It thus gets to the roots of inequalities and discrimination”. Philea: “Futures Philanthropy: Anticipation for the Common Good” (May 2024), p.52, <https://philea.issuelab.org/resource/futures-philanthropy-anticipation-for-the-common-good.html>



To achieve this, a just transition philanthropy could develop a systems approach from four main angles:<sup>61</sup>

- A global systemic understanding of the issues, i.e. how different crises and different causes are linked
- The systemic integration of environmental issues into the foundation, by assimilating the idea that philanthropic organisations are themselves systems
- The development of a systemic mode of operation for the sector, through collaboration and coordination between foundations and with other players
- The realisation of philanthropy’s place in the global system, by understanding its role in society, and the way it can shake up the current system to transform society.

**Secondly, just transition philanthropy is “a mindful and non-elitist philanthropy”.** According to Morena, it is a *“learning philanthropy that critically reflects on what has been done”* and is ready to *“shift its practices accordingly”*. Moreover, just transition philanthropy *“does not confound organizational success with collective progress”*. It is about the sector transforming its ways of working to establish a more horizontal relationship with its beneficiaries, to listen, foster trust, and build collaborations within the sector and beyond.

This approach could potentially help to coordinate or even structure the sector in a way that promotes the implementation of just transition.

**Thirdly, just transition philanthropy is a philanthropy that recognises that there can be no “low-carbon transition without justice”.** It is a *“committed philanthropy that aligns its actions to its discourse”* and is *“ready to take the lead from social movements”*. In this sense, philanthropy could have a role to play in challenging the current system, notably by redefining power relations and the inequalities that flow from them. This approach would require strong engagement from the sector, involving a willingness to take risks in order to bring about in-depth change.

### The central role of the systems approach for just transition

*“Just transition philanthropy”* emphasises the need for a **systems approach to transition**. It is about **understanding the links that connect up crises—be they climate-related, political, democratic, social, economic, or geopolitical—and the system that sustains them**. The systems approach has become increasingly prevalent in the discourse of the philanthropy sector in

**TABLE 4**  
**Philanthropic structures by area of intervention and use of the systems approach**

	Foundations and EFs WITHOUT environmental actions	Foundations and EFs WITH environmental actions	All foundations and EFs
Not aware of the systems approach	10%	11%	10%
Do not use the systems approach	30%	9%	23%
Claim to use the systems approach	45%	65%	52%
Planned in coming months or years	15%	16%	16%
Total	100%	100%	100%

65% of foundations and EFs claiming to act on the environment state that they use the systems approach in their actions.  
Source: *Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023.

<sup>61</sup> According to the analysis currently being developed by Anne Monier in her work on environmental transition from a systems perspective.

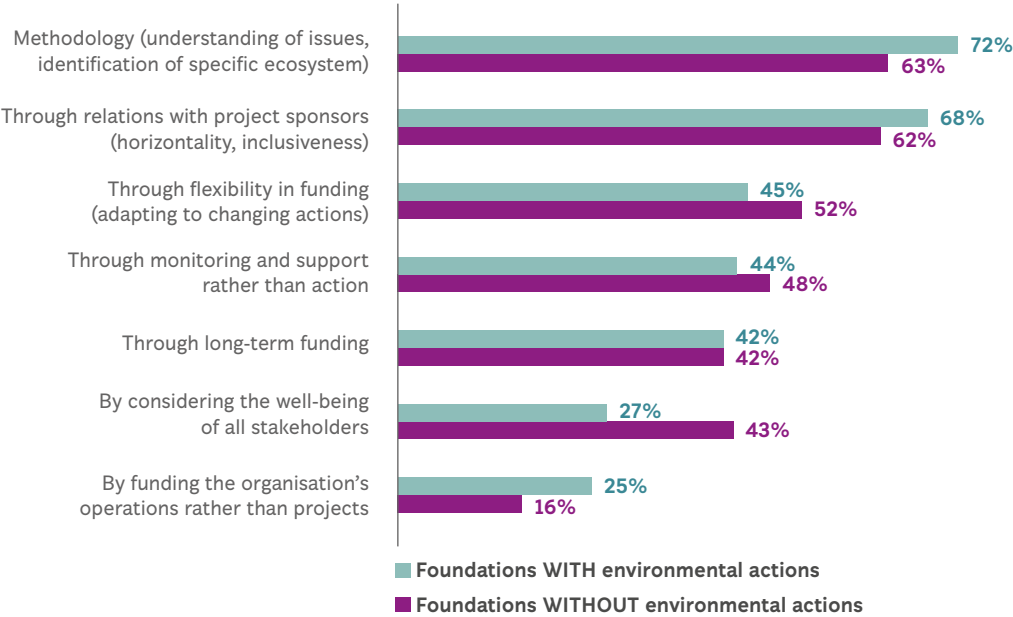


recent years, as evidenced, for example, by the Racines initiative launched in France in 2022 by an alliance of foundations, civil society actors and entrepreneurs<sup>62</sup>. The latest edition of the national survey of foundations and EFs reveals that **philanthropic organisations claiming to be active on the environment are more likely to implement a systems approach (65% v. 45% for other foundations and EFs (TABLE 4) ).**

However, **the way in which the systemic approach is implemented does not seem to differ, regardless of whether or not the foundation is active on environmental issues.** In either case, foundations and EFs claim to use the systems approach from a methodological perspective (to gain a better understanding of the issues, or to identify a specific ecosystem) and through a more horizontal and inclusive relationship with project sponsors (FIGURE 5).

The implementation of just transition philanthropy is based on the systems approach for a **better understanding of “the interconnectedness between crises”**. As well as giving due consideration to the most vulnerable populations with regards to funding, just transition philanthropy implies **adopting a systems approach to the transformation of the sector and its practices**. But which practices implemented by the organisations surveyed can be ascribed to a just transition approach?

**FIGURE 5**  
**How the systems approach is implemented in foundations**



72% foundations and EFs active on the environment and claiming to implement the systems approach apply it from a methodological perspective.

Source: Foundations and Endowment Funds in France, National Survey 2001-2022, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2023.

<sup>62</sup> The Racines collective is currently working with philanthropy and sponsorship players in France to help them understand and adopt systemic approaches to building a fairer, more resilient society: <https://www.agiralaracine.fr/>

## 2.

# New practices for just transition philanthropy: more trust, greater collaboration

Only a minority of the organisations surveyed can precisely define “just transition philanthropy” (or “climate justice philanthropy”), but some of them nevertheless have one or more practices that are entirely aligned with a just transition perspective. The practices that stand out most clearly from the survey are the development of more horizontal, trust-based, relationships and a move towards greater collaboration.

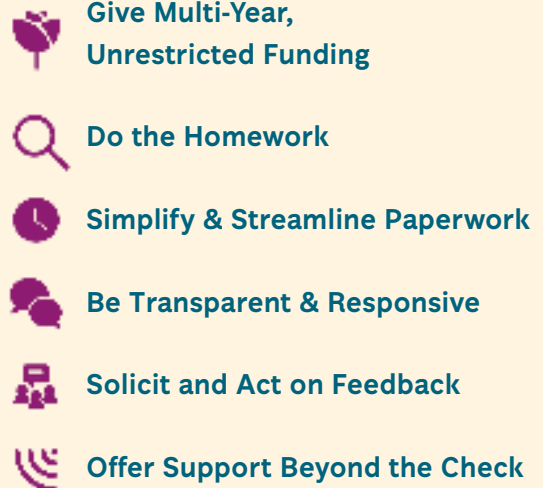
### More horizontal relationships based on trust

Just transition philanthropy, as defined by Edouard Morena, is a “learning philanthropy”, based on principles similar to what is known today as **trust-based philanthropy**<sup>63</sup>, an approach to giving that seeks to mitigate the power imbalance inherent in relations between funders, charities and communities<sup>64</sup>.

Trust-based philanthropy invites foundations to rethink their practices in favour of **long-term philanthropy, which fosters a more horizontal relationship with the organisations they support**. The Trust-based Philanthropy Project, which initiated the approach, has identified six principles for the implementation of trust-based philanthropy: give multi-year unrestricted funding; get to know the recipient organisations and the field concerned; simplify and streamline paperwork; be transparent and responsive; solicit feedback and adjust accordingly; offer support that goes beyond funding alone (summarised in **DIAGRAM 1**)<sup>65</sup>.

#### DIAGRAM 1

#### The six practices of trust-based philanthropy

- 
- Give Multi-Year, Unrestricted Funding
  - Do the Homework
  - Simplify & Streamline Paperwork
  - Be Transparent & Responsive
  - Solicit and Act on Feedback
  - Offer Support Beyond the Check

Source: Trust-Based Philanthropy Project: <https://www.trust-basedphilanthropy.org>. Diagram published with the permission of the initiative.

<sup>63</sup> Further research is required to understand and conceptualise these approaches. It is also important to look beyond the words employed, which quickly become hackneyed, and analyse the actual practices.

<sup>64</sup> Glossary of terms & phrases frequently used in trust-based philanthropy: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/607452f8ad01dc4dd54fc41f/t/6568d8c02ced430166d2c681/1701370048718/FINAL+TBP+Glossary\\_Terms%26Phrases\\_2023+.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/607452f8ad01dc4dd54fc41f/t/6568d8c02ced430166d2c681/1701370048718/FINAL+TBP+Glossary_Terms%26Phrases_2023+.pdf)

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.trustbasedphilanthropy.org/>

Several of the foundations and EFs interviewed emphasise the importance of **making it easier for fundraising organisations to apply for grants**. This is a crucial matter for them: philanthropic organisations acknowledge that responding to calls for projects takes up a lot of a charity's resources (human, financial and time) while keeping it in a state of uncertainty about obtaining the desired funding. As Foundation X explains:

*“What remains important is that the application process should be as simple as possible, with very simple and clear eligibility criteria, to avoid project promoters submitting funding applications that have little chance of success”.*

The introduction of **multi-year, unrestricted funding** for the structures supported is also regularly mentioned. Sustainable, non-earmarked funding gives charities the headroom to plan their actions over a longer timeframe, **so that they can also adapt to sometimes complex and changeable contexts**. Terre de Liens, which is mainly an operating foundation, has had direct experience of receiving a large unrestricted donation, enabling it to pursue its work over the long term, as its coordinator Hugo Arnaud recounts:

*“We received a very large donation from a private philanthropist who placed their entire trust in us to be able to take action. It enabled us to put in place, in three years, the strategy we had planned five years ago. That's a huge change. In a trust-based relationship, there's no need to earmark funding for specific projects, we're not asked to measure the impact, or produce any particular indicators. We have regular exchanges with the person, who simply says 'Yes, I think your strategy is the right one. I'm giving you funds to implement it generally, without it being earmarked.' Over the last two years, that is what has had the biggest impact for us, in terms of our ability to act, and to act more quickly”.*

**Just transition philanthropy also means building a relationship of trust with partners who receive support, it means listening to charities and developing more horizontal relationships**. Patrick Lescure, who created the foundation Un Monde Par Tous, explains how his organisation makes the most of the expertise of charities:

*“We read a lot, and we listen a lot to the charities. We meet with them very regularly, and we listen to their feedback, to what they have to say, because in the end, they are the experts”.*

According to Edouard Morena, the horizontalisation of relations can **enrich the strategies of the foundations themselves through the experience and expertise brought in by the charities they support**. The goal should be to move away from an elitist and hierarchical (“top-down”) conception of philanthropy. For Un Monde Par Tous, avoiding a «top-down» approach is especially important when it comes to ecology and the environment: *“Ecology must begin ‘from the bottom up’, taking everyone with it”*. Several of those interviewed, however, were aware of the difficulty of establishing a genuine relationship of trust, given the structurally asymmetrical nature of the relationship between foundations and the charities they support (*“it's harder to rap the fingers of the hand that feeds you”*).

The interviews also show that changing practices, and more horizontal relations, are leading philanthropic organisations to rethink the **question of impact and evaluation**. For some of the organisations interviewed, this issue can sometimes act **as a brake on adopting a systems approach to just transition**. And while for many *“the question of impact is central”*, others point to its limitations (*“much is said about the notion of impact, but it is very difficult to put in place”*). Several organisations stress the difficulty of funding just transition due to the impossibility of measuring its impact.

For instance, the Fondation Palladio:

*“[The transition] should enable us to drastically improve the living conditions of the greatest number of people. We can’t make this transition just for the benefit of the most advantaged. That makes no sense. So we’re very concerned, we’re well aware of the problem. [But] it’s harder to get to grips with from an operational point of view than with carbon, because carbon can be counted. We can get a tangible picture of whether an action has an impact and we can measure that impact; that’s harder to do when we’re talking about social or societal impact and justice in transitions”.*

This raises serious questions about the **limits of impact assessment**, and even the nature and relevance of the objects of such assessment (what are we assessing, and is it relevant?) when it comes to the foundations and EFs funding the just transition. Even when projects are identified, several of the interviewees mentioned the challenges involved in evaluating them. In view of the complexity of these issues, the organisations surveyed emphasise the need to find the right people to ensure that the project is actually part of a just transition approach (*“When you take on a subject as cutting-edge as just transition, it has to be evaluated by people who know what they are doing”*).

## Developing collaboration and coordination

The systemic approach needed to implement just transition philanthropy leads us to think of the philanthropy sector as an ecosystem. Given the scale of the challenges, a premium must be placed on collaboration and on the coordination of efforts between philanthropic organisations as well as between them and other stakeholders in society (public authorities, businesses and other private players, NGOs, etc.).

The question of collaboration is a recurrent feature of the interviews with foundations and EFs. Some feel that the sector’s propensity for working in silos, with each organisation tending to see things from its own perspective, makes collaboration difficult. As Jean-Pierre Paillot, Managing Director of the Avril Foundation, remarks:

*“There is a lack of mutual understanding between actors, which means that they are unable to work together. The main obstacle, as I see it, is the inability to work together on an environmental improvement or transition objective. And yet we can’t achieve it unless we work together”.*

Collaboration is nonetheless beginning to develop in various forms. Firstly, in the form of coalitions, such as the **French Coalition of Foundations for the Climate**, set up in November 2020, which counts several of the foundations and EFs interviewed among its members.

The organisations interviewed also mention the creation of *“informal groups”*, *“networks”*, and *“alliances of foundations”*, or collaborations between *“friendly foundations”*, or based on joint calls for projects or collective sponsorship. Catherine Savey of the Suez Foundation cites an example:

*“There are some collective sponsorship initiatives where groups of foundations get together to defend a common cause, especially around ecological transition. I’m thinking, for example, of the initiative taken by foundations based in Grenoble and Lyon, which for the past three years have been running a joint programme to support environmental protection projects in the French Alps. These types of initiative seem to be emerging at the local level”.*

The importance of collaborating with other stakeholders is also underlined: *“taken in isolation, no actor can do anything”* about environmental issues, especially as philanthropic funding is less substantial than funding from companies or governments. Foundation X, for example, highlights **the need for public-private partnerships**:

*“The challenges of environmental transition are so costly that public authorities are saying: ‘We can’t fund everything on our own. We need the private sector’. The private sector is saying: ‘We can’t finance everything on our own either’. That’s not the way out. Everyone needs to come up with more money, private sector and public sector alike. It is possible to do that through public-private partnerships”.*

## THE FRENCH COALITION OF FOUNDATIONS FOR THE CLIMATE

The French Coalition of Foundations for the Climate<sup>66</sup> (CffC) was created in November 2020 at the initiative of the French Centre of Funds and Foundations<sup>67</sup> (CFF) to “bring together the community of French foundations and endowments funds around the climate issue, whatever their field of activity, their size or their financial resources”. The Coalition, which currently numbers 161 members<sup>68</sup>, has also drawn up a Manifesto<sup>69</sup> comprising six pillars on which its members are called upon to base their fight against climate change:

- Training and awareness-raising about the climate emergency
- Integrating these issues into internal functioning
- Integrating these issues into programmes and operations
- Factoring these issues into investments and financial management
- Collective initiatives (advocacy, mobilising resources)
- Full transparency on progress

The Coalition also seeks to maintain a collaborative dynamic among foundations and endowment funds by organising training courses and setting up working groups.

Collaboration can also be organised with a wide variety of stakeholders, to achieve common objectives from a **multi-actor perspective**, as Karine Gavand, France Programme Director at the European Climate Foundation, explains:

*“[We are] keen to work with actors who are capable of working with voters, political groups, think-tanks and alliances like the Pacte du pouvoir de vivre which brings together trade unions, mutual health organisations and those involved in combating fuel poverty. There are also collaborations with healthcare actors and with alliances of local authorities, such as France’s association of rural mayors, which have very limited resources and are seeking to mobilise rural mayors around issues like the development of renewables”.*

Taking collaboration a step further, several of those interviewed speak of **coordinating efforts**, and even “aligning theories of change”. While some express a desire to “work together”, others go as far as to advocate “speaking out together”, or even “acting as the mouthpiece

for foundations”, even as they question the ability of such a diverse sector to speak with a single voice. Finally, most of the organisations questioned expressed a wish to see the development of “spaces for discussing these issues”, or even **forums for exchange** with a “committee of independent personalities” who could lend their weight to discussions.

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.centre-francais-fondations.org/manifeste-pour-le-climat/>

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.centre-francais-fondations.org/>

<sup>68</sup> [https://philanthropyforclimate.org/signatories/?\\_sft\\_category=french-commitment](https://philanthropyforclimate.org/signatories/?_sft_category=french-commitment)

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.centre-francais-fondations.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/MANIFESTE-texte-officiel.pdf>

### 3.

## A more engaged philanthropy?

French philanthropy generally lays claim to a degree of “neutrality” and an “apolitical” stance, which at first glance seems to be in tension with the forms of engagement needed to develop a philanthropy of just transition. However, the scale of the climate crisis and the growing awareness of the gravity of the situation are leading some foundations and EFs to contemplate what the development of a “*more engaged philanthropy*” might mean for them and for the sector. The organisations surveyed are also increasingly concerned about what they perceive as the “*polarisation*” of public debate, which is driving them to question the whole notion of neutrality associated with much of the philanthropy sector in France. Foundations and EFs oscillate between different perceptions of the role of philanthropy in supporting systemic change, and are asking themselves whether it should, or should not, engage with a more profound and structural approach to the transformation of society.

### What form of engagement for the philanthropy sector?

Just transition philanthropy is, in the definition put forward by Edouard Morena, a “*committed philanthropy*”. While the idea of commitment or engagement is shared by the French philanthropy actors, **the “political” dimension of this engagement is much debated within the sector, since they often claim to be “neutral” or “apolitical”**. Some of the organisations interviewed consider themselves “*apolitical*” and insist that foundations have no political role to play: “*Is it the role of foundations to speak out on political issues?*” “[*We need to*] *speak to citizens but remain apolitical*”. Others describe themselves as “*non-partisan*”, which they distinguish from “*apolitical*”. Still others, such as Mathilde Douillet from the Carasso Foundation, consider on the contrary that philanthropy is political:

*“Are we capable of acknowledging that everything we do is political, and that when we make a choice about funding or about who we give a voice to, it is political?”*

In some organisations, ideas around the political dimension of philanthropy are influenced by the multiple meanings of the French word “*politique*”<sup>70</sup>.

Several of the foundations and EFs surveyed interviewed emphasised the difficulty of committing to just transition internally, **due to the key role of the board of directors**, which can sometimes push back against addressing environmental and social issues together. Some speak of a **disconnect between the goals of the teams on the ground and the board of directors** (“*we see a gap between what society needs, where the teams want to get to, and the speed at which the board of directors is capable of evolving*”). This difficulty in “*getting the Board on board*” is also observed at the international level, as the Canadian Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change points out in its annual report: “*While there was exciting progress across all seven pillars, signatories also identified challenges, including difficulty in securing board support for climate action*”<sup>71</sup>.

Alongside these questions within the sector, many of the foundations and EFs surveyed are observing—and worrying about—the shrinking of **democratic space in France and other European countries**, and the potential consequences for climate policy. **The current context of rising inequality, growing social tension and dwindling civic space reflects a crisis of democracy, the effects of which are felt by several of the participating organisations**. For Agnès Golfier, Joint Operations Director at Fondation Danielle Mitterrand, these tensions confirm the need for philanthropy to engage more assertively:

<sup>70</sup> The French word *politique* is polysemous, covering several definitions. As an adjective, it corresponds to the English “political”. Used as a masculine noun, *le politique* refers to “the political sphere”, just as *le sacré* is the sacred, or *le social* is the social domain. The (far more common) feminine noun *la politique*, used in a general sense, corresponds to “politics”, but when used specifically it refers to “policy”; consequently, the distinction in French between “policy” and “politics” is clear only from the context.

<sup>71</sup> Canadian Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change, Year 1 Report, p.11.



*“We have reached a point where democratic spaces are closing up to environmental concerns. As a foundation, we may still have a certain freedom to say things and push issues. That’s really part of our thinking now: to participate in the renewal of democracy. The environmental crisis is going to get worse, so maybe we also have a role to play in sounding the alarm and even being a bit militant, given the urgency of the situation”.*

The comments above reflect an **awareness of growing tensions within society**. Some organisations also make the observation that **tensions seem particularly acute around environmental issues**: *“There is work being done on the public debate, with a polarisation on climate issues and environmental issues in general, which tends to skew the debate”, “The mood is uneasy and not very positive. Environmental charities are very worried, as are those that work in human rights”.* The foundation Un Monde Par Tous strives to support charities, environmental or otherwise, that challenge systemic inequalities, but notes that there are risks involved:

*“We’re going to try and do more to support charities that deal with racial discrimination, but we’re bound to run into difficulties in this area. I think that philanthropy really needs to ask itself questions about the way the democratic space is being squeezed”.*

Faced with the widespread realisation about the erosion of democratic space, several of the foundations and EFs interviewed are thinking about **how to steer philanthropy towards a more assertive political engagement**. This change of stance is gaining traction in the sector. As Hugo Arnaud of the Terre de Liens Foundation remarks:

*“I get the impression the foundation sector will very soon have to accept that it needs to become more political if it is to commit to—and provide more funding for—the emergence of increasingly militant actions, led by activists who have a very strong advocacy impact. Foundations, and the*

*world of philanthropy, are going to have to get a bit more political, or at least accept that they have political commitments. Some foundations do, but in a very discreet way; it’s not yet out in the open”.*

Returning to Edouard Morena’s definition, **just transition philanthropy must “take the lead from social movements” and “shift its practices accordingly”**. This means adapting the sector’s practices so that it is better able to support initiatives proposed by stakeholders. Just transition involves taking account of the interconnectedness of crises in order to bring about systemic transformation. Consequently, **just transition philanthropy implies taking a more engaged approach, especially in a context of growing social tensions, in order to defend a model of society that is fair, sustainable and democratic**. Some organisations are striving to preserve and strengthen the democracy on which just transition depends by countering the **rise of populism and the retreat of climate policies in the face of growing threats**.

As Karine Gavand of the European Climate Foundation mentions:

*“We are really quite concerned about the rise of populism in Europe, including on the far right. We are working with other philanthropic foundations to understand the phenomenon, and what role we could play in this, and how we could support our partners or work with other partners on these questions”.*

In this way, these foundations and EFs are highlighting the role that philanthropy can play in acting as an **intermediary and facilitating dialogue between stakeholders**<sup>72</sup>.

### Supporting system change: towards the transformation of societies

Foundations **adopt a variety of approaches in terms of their commitment to the structural transformation of society** depending on their history, their identity, and their position within the sector. Within this diversity of approaches, some organisations say that they specifically seek to help the least visible charities and movements to speak out in the public arena. For example, the Fondation Carasso has chosen to **make audible those who often remain unheard**:

*“Our approach has been to identify people who have a legitimate right to speak out, but whose voice is not heard enough in debates. It’s not for us to take the floor; it’s for these actors to be funded so that they have time to do so. It’s structural funding that we provide, to empower them to take an active part in debates and to have their say”.*

The Fondation pour La Nature et l’Homme says that it is moving in a similar direction, but focusing more on **advocacy and sharing information with all individuals, particularly those who are least involved in the public conversation**: *“The actors [who fund advocacy] are crucial in allowing us a certain freedom of action, and in enabling us to act on issues that are not necessarily part of the public debate in an obvious way. It’s very important to the Foundation that we don’t leave citizens out in the cold on issues that can get intensely technical. I believe we have a democratic duty to ensure that all issues are understood”.* Advocacy by foundations, or by the sector, or funding advocacy by other actors—in defence of the most disadvantaged populations and in support of the transformation of societies, to make them fairer and more sustainable—is a way of participating in just transition.

Other organisations that claim to be working towards just transition say that, **faced with the urgency of the situation and the scale of the crisis**, they are led to **advocate for a deeper structural transformation of society**. To cite Patrick Lescure and Nathalie Ramos from Un Monde Par Tous:

*“We need to change the system, not the climate. We are very worried about the years ahead, and we see the solutions as lying in a radical change that takes a global view of things. [...] Time is running out, so we need a radical and fair transformation”.*

<sup>72</sup> The report “Philanthropy and democracy: challenges and prospects for foundations in the 21st century” by Nicolas Duvoux and Sylvain A. Lefèvre, published by the Fondation de France, offers an indepth analysis of the role of philanthropy in dealing with issues around democracy (pp. 19-28): [https://www.fondationdefrance.org/images/2024/04/11/Philanthropie\\_et\\_DMOCRATIE\\_anglais.pdf](https://www.fondationdefrance.org/images/2024/04/11/Philanthropie_et_DMOCRATIE_anglais.pdf)



These transformations<sup>73</sup> further the prospect of **system change as one of the fundamental principles of just transition**.

### Just transition as system change

According to Cohen, Lemaître, Louis-Lucas and Sampère, just transition is “the design and implementation of development trajectories that preserve or restore the viability of the planet for humans and non-humans alike. It is based on a systems approach to transforming the way we produce, consume, work, travel, live, and share economic wealth within the limits imposed by the resilience of the Earth system, in order to limit the extent of climate change, slow down biodiversity loss, conserve resources, reduce pollution, and protect health. It involves questioning our values, applies at every scale of space and time, and mobilises all forms of creativity – ethical, social, scientific, technical, artistic and economic”<sup>74</sup>.

A number of those interviewed were aware that implementing just transition from a systems perspective calls for a **change of society, and therefore greater risk-taking and political engagement from the sector**. Actions aimed at “*changing the system*”—at transforming societies structurally—are gradually gaining ground in the philanthropy sector<sup>75</sup>. As Julie Broome, Director of Ariadne, the European funders’ network for social change and human rights, explained in an interview with Fondation de France in Spring 2024: “*We believe that this is a moment for philanthropy to be bold, brave, and courageous. It’s a moment to take risks [...] [and test] new ideas [that] may fail*”<sup>76</sup>.

Consequently, if the French philanthropy sector wishes to act in favour of the environment and contribute more widely to **building a fairer and more sustainable society in line with the principles of just transition**, it is important for it to adopt a self-reflexive learning approach, by taking risks, seeking nuance, being open to doubt and prepared to make mistakes, in order to ultimately transform in depth not only its own practices and ways of working, but entire societies.

<sup>73</sup> See the contribution made by Philea to this study at the end of the report.

<sup>74</sup> Marianne Cohen, Thalia Lemaître, Tanguy Louis-Lucas and Joaquim Sampère, “Transition environnementale, géographie et dispositifs de recherche interdisciplinaire”, *Bulletin de l’association de géographes français*, 97-4 | 2021, 569-583.

<sup>75</sup> Max von Abendorth: “A call to philanthropy to be bold. Now”. *Alliance Magazine*, 21 April 2021.

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.fondationdefrance.org/en/blog-developing-philanthropy/we-believe-that-this-is-a-moment-for-philanthropy-to-be-bold-brave-and-courageous-julie-broome>

# Key facts and figures

- Despite the urgency of the climate crisis and the scale of its consequences, **environmental philanthropy accounts for only a very small share of charitable funding: 2% of global funding, 3% of French funding and 5% of European funding**, according to the latest reports. Furthermore, almost half the foundations and EFs in France that claim the environment as their main area of action have an **annual expenditure of less than €50k**.
- Despite the low level of funding, **philanthropy in France is increasingly taking environmental issues into account**. The number of new philanthropic organisations claiming the environment as their main focus **more than doubled between 2009 and 2019, from 5% to 12%**.
- Some of the foundations and EFs heavily involved in the environment say that they adopt a **cross-cutting approach to issues of transition** in their programmes. Practices are emerging along these lines in the internal and external activities of philanthropic organisations. **Internally**, the study emphasises the need for commitment on the part of staff teams, the implementation of “CSR policies”, and new thinking about investments, a key component of transition. **Externally**, the report points to support for the production and dissemination of knowledge, reflection on the scale of action and the role of local authorities, and the development of collaboration with other foundations as well as with different stakeholders.
- For some organisations, this **cross-cutting vision of their activities is also reflected in the implementation of systemic approaches** to establish clearer linkages between environmental and social issues: **65% of organisations claiming to be active on the environment** say that they adopt a systems approach, compared with 45% of organisations that have no environmental programmes. The systems approach, which can be applied both to the understanding of the issues and to the practices of organisations and the sector at large, is a core principle of just transition.
- The notion of just transition, **which brings together social and environmental issues, reformulates the concept of environmental transition by integrating the dimension of social justice**. In France, **the foundations and EFs claiming to adopt a just transition approach remain relatively few**. However, the study identifies a clear desire among some organisations to develop practices that align with just transition, in particular by implementing a trust-based philanthropy that relies more on horizontal relations of engagement with project holders and with stakeholders in general (trust-based philanthropy).
- Just transition philanthropy is defined as a **mindful and non-elitist learning philanthropy which acknowledges that there can be no low-carbon transition without social justice**. It therefore calls for an in-depth structural transformation of societies to make them fairer and more sustainable. A number of organisations express a desire to give a place and a voice to the most disadvantaged groups and individuals, who are often the least heard in the public arena. This leads to a more global reflection on the role of philanthropy in preserving and strengthening democracy, a necessary condition for just transition and for the deep-rooted structural transformations it requires.

# Proposals to promote a just transition philanthropy

- **Nurture discussion**, within foundations and EFs as well as the wider sector, on how to think about and encourage profound and systemic changes to support just transition (cross-cutting approaches to issues, understanding links between crises, integrating environmental issues at every level of the foundations' activities).
- **Foster more horizontal** relations with charities, based on trust and listening. Just transition calls for greater democracy within organisations and throughout society.
- **In line with philanthropy's public interest vocation**, ensure that the knowledge and experience of those on the ground—and of the most vulnerable populations directly affected—are leveraged to establish an inclusive overview of the issues and implement the most appropriate solutions.
- **Support the development of knowledge and research** on just transition issues in the human and social sciences as well as in the natural sciences, to provide guidance for societal change and for transformations within the philanthropy sector.
- **Drive the development of coordination and collaboration** within the philanthropy sector, as well as the creation of spaces for multi-stakeholder exchange and action in order to develop collective solutions that will enable in-depth transformations.
- **Make the issue of investment** a major focus for sector transformation; this could contribute to a more equitable redistribution of resources, with a view to strengthening social cohesion and reducing inequalities.
- **Encourage the promotion of systemic** and trust-based funding practices for just transition, in particular multi-year, unrestricted funding, and long-term strategies.

# Philea's Outlook

## *European perspective on just transition*



*What if philanthropy could help catalyse a truly just transition? As we confront the twin challenges of the climate crisis and long-standing social injustice, there is a growing realisation that one cannot be solved without the other. This moment calls for philanthropy to embrace a role that is more ambitious, courageous and engaged. Could philanthropy become the catalyst that bridges ecological sustainability and social justice? The answer lies in its willingness to take risks, push boundaries and drive transformative change by working alongside communities, governments and movements at both local and global levels.*

*How can we go beyond “simply” supporting the green transition through technical solutions and encourage a transition that is just?*

*This requires both a recognition of the deep interconnections between climate action and social justice, and a willingness to help evolve systems that have caused harm to both people and the planet. This means, for instance, working in partnership with other sectors to bring marginalised and vulnerable groups into decision-making processes about land use and environmental policy. It means taking steps to fundamentally shift the priorities within the capitalist system, positioning sustainability as a primary and non-negotiable objective, rather than continuing the unrestrained exploitation of natural resources for profit. And as part of these efforts, it means fostering a balanced dialogue that acknowledges past injustices, including the dispossession of Indigenous lands, and seeks to respect both communities and the environment moving forward, in contrast to past practices. Yes, these are deep and daunting forces to contend with. But foundations, in collaboration and in honest dialogue with their peers and partners, do have the capacity to act. The alternative is to risk repeating the same mistakes and reinforcing the same inequities and injustices.*

*This is not an easy task and requires a shift in how many foundations think and operate. Recognising that their work is inherently political would be a game changer for foundations. Their choices about where and how to allocate resources can either reinforce existing inequalities or help to dismantle them. Given the existential urgencies and the growing public distrust in how established institutions are dealing with the social, economic and environmental crises, foundations would do well to go deeper and commit to supporting reparations, restitution and justice. This means working in partnership towards acknowledging and mitigating the damage done by historical exploitation; restoring rights and resources to communities long denied them; and ensuring that the benefits of a green transition are shared by all. This is about taking steps to reshape the very systems that have led to the climate crisis, which goes beyond funding single projects and organisations.*

*Foundations can effectively mitigate the reputational risks of addressing systemic injustices and tackling controversial issues by collaborating with others. This partnership approach brings additional benefits too, especially at the European level. Environmental challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution extend beyond national borders, requiring a cohesive European strategy. By working together and pooling resources, expertise and infrastructure, foundations can influence policies that individual national efforts might not achieve and transform fragmented approaches into a unified force for change. Such collective efforts reduce duplicated work, enable strategic investments, and open doors to additional funding from larger entities like the EU, thereby amplifying their impact.*

*Through European networks like Philea, foundations connect with peers for mutual support and learning, and gain access to a rich exchange of insights, strategies and best practices. They stay ahead of global trends and innovations, ensuring their initiatives are both effective and equitable. We invite all foundations to explore these challenging questions together with the networks we host to foster a just and sustainable future for all.*

## USEFUL RESOURCES

There is a substantial literature on the implementation of just transition philanthropy

### National and international coalitions

- French Coalition of Foundations for the Climate (CffC), France: <https://www.centre-francais-fondations.org/manifeste-pour-le-climat/>
- Funder Commitment on Climate Change, UK: <https://fundercommitmentclimatechange.org/>
- Asociación Española de Fundaciones (AEF), Spain: <https://fundacionesporelclima.org/>
- Coalizione Clima, Italy: <https://www.coalizioneclima.it/>
- The Canadian Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change: <https://philanthropyforclimate.ca/>
- European Philanthropy Coalition for Climate, Philea: <https://philea.eu/how-we-can-help/initiatives/european-philanthropy-coalition-for-climate/>
- Philanthropy for Climate, coalition internationale, Wings: <https://philanthropyforclimate.org/>
- Wings and Philea, practical guide: <https://philea.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Implementation-Guide.pdf>

### Resources on environmental philanthropy

- Climateworks Global Intelligence, « Funding trends 2022: Climate change mitigation philanthropy », 3<sup>rd</sup> annual report, 2022: [https://www.climateworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/ClimateWorks\\_Funding\\_Trends\\_Report\\_2022.pdf](https://www.climateworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/ClimateWorks_Funding_Trends_Report_2022.pdf)
- Environmental Funders Network, « Where the Green Grants Went », 8<sup>th</sup> edition, 2021: <https://www.greenfunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Where-the-Green-Grants-Went-8-November-2021.pdf>
- Environmental Grantmakers Association, « Tracking The Field », 2021: [https://ega.org/sites/default/files/pubs/summaries/EGA\\_TTF\\_V7\\_Summary.WEB4\\_.pdf](https://ega.org/sites/default/files/pubs/summaries/EGA_TTF_V7_Summary.WEB4_.pdf)

- Philea, « Environmental Funding by European Foundations » Volume 6, 2023: <https://philea.issuelab.org/resource/environmental-funding-by-european-foundations-volume-6.html>

### Resources on just transition

- Ariadne, « Practical wisdom for funders Centering equity and justice in climate philanthropy », 2022: <https://learningforfunders.candid.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/06/Climate-Justice-Funders-Guide.pdf>
- Canadian Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change « Year 1 Report », 2023: [https://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/CPCCC-Report-ENGLISH\\_corrected.pdf](https://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/CPCCC-Report-ENGLISH_corrected.pdf)
- Edge Funders Alliance, « Beyond 2%: from climate philanthropy to climate justice philanthropy », 2022: <https://www.edgefunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Beyond-2-full-report.pdf>
- Labo de l'économie sociale et solidaire (ESS) « Réussir une transition écologique juste – Pour faire de l'écologie un projet d'émancipation avec l'ESS », 2023: [https://www.llelabo-ess.org/system/files/2023-03/2023%20-%20Transition%20écologique%20juste%20WEB\\_site.pdf](https://www.llelabo-ess.org/system/files/2023-03/2023%20-%20Transition%20écologique%20juste%20WEB_site.pdf)
- Laudes Foundation, « Mapping and trends analysis on just transition initiatives », 2024: [https://www.laudesfoundation.org/media/hkhd4bis/mapping-and-trends-analysis-on-just-transition-initiatives\\_12-feb-24\\_full-report.pdf](https://www.laudesfoundation.org/media/hkhd4bis/mapping-and-trends-analysis-on-just-transition-initiatives_12-feb-24_full-report.pdf)

### Resources on transition-related investment

- Alliance Magazine, dossier sur la thématique des investissements, 2020-2021: <https://www.alliancemagazine.org/foundation-investments/>
- Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF), « Investments. The pillars of Stronger foundations practice », 5<sup>th</sup> report, 2024: <https://acf.org.uk/common/Uploaded%20files/Research%20and%20resources/Stronger%20foundations/Stronger%20Foundations%20Investment%20July%202024.pdf>
- Centre Français des Fonds et Fondations (CFF), guide « Fonds & Fondations : Stratégie(s) d'investissement pour le climat », 2022: <https://www.centre-francais-fondations.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Fonds-Fondations-Strategies-dinvestissement-pour-le-climat.pdf>
- Harvard Law School Forum on Corporate Governance, « Shareholder Activism: Who, What, When, and How? », 2015 : <https://corpgov.law.harvard.edu/2015/04/07/shareholder-activism-who-what-when-and-how/>
- Philea, « Paper on foundation practice, as well as regulatory and policy environment », 2024: <https://philea.issuelab.org/resource/philanthropic-organisations-using-the-entire-toolbox-for-more-impact-paper-on-foundation-practice-as-well-as-regulatory-and-policy-environment.html>
- ShareAction, useful ressources: <https://shareaction.org/unlocking-the-power/shareholder-resolutions>

## LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

22 organisations took part in the qualitative interviews

- **1% for the Planet**, endowment fund, Environment, Food: Isabelle Susini, Director France
- **Fondation Apprentis d'Auteuil**, public utility foundation – Young people, Education, Integration: Bruno Babinet, Director of Procurement, Ecological Transition and Event Logistics
- **Fondation Avril**, public utility foundation – Ecology, Sustainable agriculture, Sustainable food: Jean-Pierre Paillot, Managing Director
- **Fondation Bouygues Telecom**, corporate foundation – Solidarity, Environment: Sarah Alezrah, Managing Director
- **Fondation Carrefour**, corporate foundation – Food insecurity, Nutritional education: Marie-Astrid Raoult, Managing Director
- **Fondation Danielle Mitterrand**, public utility foundation – Democracy, Ecology: Agnès Golfier, Joint Operations Director
- **Fondation Ekibio**, corporate foundation – Sustainable food, Social integration, Educational actions: Ségolène Ohl, Partnership and Sponsorship Officer
- **European Climate Foundation (Fondation Européenne pour le Climat, France)** – Climate, Ecology, Democracy: Karine Gavand, France Programme Director
- **Fondation pour la Nature et l'Homme**, public utility foundation – Ecology, Food, Sustainable agriculture: Stéphanie Clément-Grandcourt, Managing Director
- **Fondation Daniel & Nina Carasso**, sheltered foundation (Fondation de France) – Sustainable food, Citizen art: Mathilde Douillet, Sustainable Food Programme Manager
- **Fondation Epic**, endowment fund – Young people, Environment: Sarah Timarche, Managing Director
- **Fondation Groupe RATP**, corporate foundation – Social Integration, Work integration: Raphaël René-Bazin, General Secretary
- **Fondation François Sommer**, public utility foundation – Environment, Culture: Alban de Loisy, Managing Director
- **Fondation Suez**, corporate foundation – Ecology, Anti-poverty, Social inclusion: Catherine Savey, Managing Director
- **Fondation Terre de Liens**, public utility foundation – Agriculture, Ecology: Hugo Arnaud, Co-director
- **Superbloom**, endowment fund – Education, Anti-poverty: Hortense Vourc'h, Managing Director
- **Fondation Petzl**, corporate foundation – Mountain sports, Anti-poverty, Ecology: Olivier Moret, General Secretary
- **Fondation Université Montpellier**, university and partner foundation – Ecology, Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Research: Nicolas Giraudeau, President
- **Fondation Veolia**, corporate foundation – Humanitarian emergency, Environment, Work integration: Thierry Vandeveld, former Executive Officer
- **Fondation Un Monde Par Tous**, sheltered foundation (Fondation de France) – Citizenship, Social Justice, Ecology: Patrick Lescure, President; Nathalie Ramos, General Manager
- **Fondation Palladio**, sheltered foundation (Fondation de France) – Sustainable cities, Sustainable real estate: Axel Nevers, Principal, Université de la Ville de Demain
- **Fondation X** (preferred to remain anonymous)



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