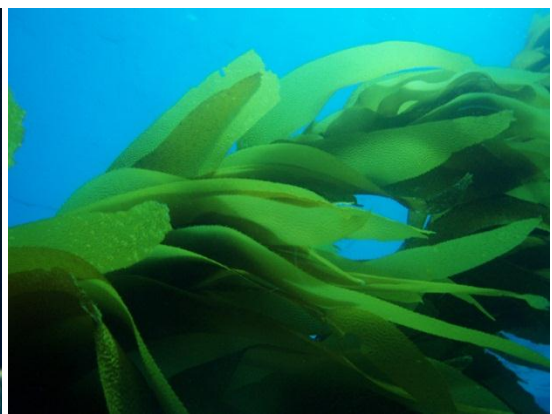


Ocean Conservation Strategic Funding Initiatives: A Study of Successes and Lessons Learned

A Report Prepared for
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation,
Conservation and Science Program

DECEMBER 30, 2010



Creating sustainable solutions

BLUE EARTH
CONSULTANTS

Photo Credits:

All photographs taken from the NOAA Photo Library

Left: **Reef scene**

Location: U.S. Virgin Islands, St. Croix

Photo Date: 2003 October

Credit: NOAA CCMA Biogeography Team

Center: **A netmaker puts the finishing touches on a shrimp net equipped with devices to reduce bycatch and exclude sea turtles**

Photographer: William B. Folsom, NOAA NMFS

Right: **Giant kelp (*Macrocystis pyrifera*)**

Location: California, Channel Islands NMS

Photographer: Claire Fackler, CINMS, NOAA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY1

I. INTRODUCTION AND STUDY PURPOSE10

II. STUDY METHODS14

III. OVERVIEW OF THE CASE STUDIES17

IV. WHY FUNDERS INVEST IN OCEAN CONSERVATION24

V. EXAMINING DONOR PRACTICE31

VI. THE CENTRAL ROLE OF FUNDING PARTNERSHIP51

VII. SCALES OF INVESTMENT62

VIII. HOW TO CREATE DURABLE OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS: GOALS AND INVESTMENT STRATEGIES76

IX. OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS100

X. CHALLENGES109

XI. ROLES FOR FOUNDATION AND GOVERNMENT OCEAN CONSERVATION FUNDERS119

APPENDICES125

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: OCEAN CONSERVATION STRATEGIC FUNDING INITIATIVES CASE STUDIES12

TABLE 2: CRITERIA, DEFINITIONS, AND FILTERS USED TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL CASE STUDY INITIATIVES.....15

TABLE 3: FOUNDATION OCEAN CONSERVATION INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

TABLE 4: GOVERNMENT OCEAN CONSERVATION INITIATIVE OVERVIEW23

TABLE 5: THREAT- AND STRATEGY-SPECIFIC CRITERIA29

TABLE 6: DEFINITIONS FOR STYLES OF GRANT-MAKING34

TABLE 7. PORTFOLIO APPROACH TERM DEFINITIONS35

TABLE 8. OVERVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP DEFINITIONS52

TABLE 9: DEFINITIONS OF SPATIAL SCALES65

TABLE 10. SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS ACROSS TOP FIVE ACHIEVEMENT AREAS104

TABLE 11: GOVERNMENT AND FOUNDATIONS CHARACTERISTICS122

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1. NUMBER OF SELECTED CASE STUDIES INVESTING BY REGION 18

FIGURE 2. MAP SHOWING NUMBER OF DONORS IN EACH GEOGRAPHIC REGION 19

FIGURE 3: CASE STUDY BIOLOGICAL SCALE AND BIOME INVESTMENT PROFILES 20

FIGURE 4: CASE STUDY LENGTHS AND RANGES OF INVESTMENT..... 21

FIGURE 5. GRAPH OF DONOR VS. GRANTEE DRIVEN FUNDING APPROACHES IN RELATION TO SUCCESS 33

FIGURE 6. GRAPH OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL VS. RELATIONSHIP GRANT-MAKING APPROACHES IN RELATION TO SUCCESS 34

FIGURE 7. GRAPH OF PORTFOLIO APPROACH IN RELATION TO SUCCESS 36

FIGURE 8. GRAPH OF PARTNERSHIP VS. PORTFOLIO APPROACH IN RELATION TO SUCCESS 58

FIGURE 9. CHART OF CASE STUDY SPATIAL SCALES OF ENGAGEMENT 65

FIGURE 10. CHART OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCALES OF ENGAGEMENT IN RELATION TO INITIATIVE SUCCESS..... 67

FIGURE 11. GRAPH OF INVESTMENT AMOUNT VS. LENGTH OF INVESTMENT IN RELATION TO SUCCESS 68

FIGURE 12: CASE STUDY LENGTHS OF INVESTMENT..... 69

FIGURE 13. HIERARCHY OF INITIATIVES GOALS AND SUB-GOALS/STRATEGIES 78

FIGURE 14. GRAPH OF PRIMARY INVESTMENT STRATEGIES..... 82

FIGURE 15. STRATEGIES MOST FREQUENTLY FUNDED BY VERY SUCCESSFUL AND SUCCESSFUL DONORS..... 83

FIGURE 16. MAP SHOWING GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS OF ACHIEVEMENTS..... 103

FIGURE 17. GRAPH SHOWING THE LEVEL OF INVESTMENT OF EACH DONOR THROUGHOUT PHASES FOR GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE USE 123

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFD	Le Groupe de l'Agence Française de Développement
CCMI	Packard Foundation – California Coast Marine Initiative
CGBD	Consultative Group on Biological Diversity
CRA	California Resources Agency
CRISP	French GEF – Coral Reefs Initiative for the Pacific
CRMP	USAID –Philippines Community Resource Management Project
CRTR	GEF/World Bank - Coral Reef Targeted Research Program
EBM	Ecosystem Based Management
FISH	Fisheries Improvement for Sustainable Harvest
GEF	Global Environment Facility
ICRAN-MAR	USAID – International Coral Reef Action Network-Mesoamerican Reef Alliance Project
LMMA	Locally Managed Marine Area Network
LOI	Letter of Intent
MBRS	World Bank – Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System Project
MLPA	Marine Life Protection Act
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFWF	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NOAA	National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration
Packard or the Foundation	David and Lucile Packard Foundation’s Conservation and Science Program
PEMSEA	GEF/World Bank – Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia
PROFISH	World Bank – Global Program on Fisheries
RFP	Request for Proposal
RLFF	Resources Legacy Fund Foundation
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

Executive Summary

Ocean conservation, which for the purpose of this report also includes coastal and ocean conservation, emerged in the 1970s as a distinct field of environmental policy making and advocacy. Environmental disasters, such as the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, and public concern for whales, dolphins, and other threatened species have kept ocean conservation in the public eye and policy-makers' agendas. During the past 10 years, new ocean policies and legislation, increased interest in sustainability and corporate social responsibility, and continued cultural shifts in environmental awareness have kept a spotlight on the marine environment and led to expanded ocean conservation and management efforts.

Donor interest in ocean and coastal sustainable resource management and conservation also increased. Growing from approximately eight key donors based in the United States in the mid 1990s, the Marine Funders Working Group, a group of private foundations, has grown to more than 30 members. The group's annual grant-making survey reported a growth in ocean conservation investments from an estimated \$60 million in 2004 to somewhere between \$167 and \$289 million in 2009.¹

Government donors, which include multi-lateral, bi-lateral, and federal and state funding programs, also have been steadily increasing their investments in marine conservation and sustainable management over the past two decades. International aid government donors generally link and frame programs to "sustainable development" concerns such as capacity-building, hazard management, and food security. National and state funding programs tend to focus on improving management and implementing regulation.

The results of these investments, individually and collectively, are regularly catalogued in reports and analyses by grantees, funders, and outside observers. Such evaluations may allude to the source and scope of funding. However, it appears there has never been a robust assessment, based on research through document review and interviews, to systematically compare and distill lessons learned about investing in ocean conservation.

Purpose of this Report

In January 2010, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation's Conservation and Science Program initiated an Ocean Visioning process to discuss and identify long-term goals for the Foundation in this program area. As a part of this effort, the Foundation's Science subprogram proposed Blue Earth Consultants, undertake the study documented in this report: *Ocean Conservation Strategic Funding Initiatives: A Study to Assess the Successes and Lessons Learned*. In this report, Blue Earth Consultants examines the ocean conservation donor investments of 20 organizations to distill successes and failures, investment gaps and opportunities, and lessons to help avoid common pitfalls in achieving sustainable ocean conservation and management. In carrying out this study, Blue Earth Consultants analyzed ten major private

¹ Marine Funding in 2009. Presented by The Ocean Foundation and The Consultative Group on Biological Diversity at in Laguna California.

foundations involved in ocean conservation and ten significant government-backed ocean conservation initiatives.

The goal of this document are four-fold: 1) to provide a robust examination of the principles and criteria funders use to guide strategies and portfolio level decision-making; 2) to assess which strategies have been the most and least effective in helping to achieve conservation and management goals; 3) to assess the role strategic planning and evaluation play in the evolution of a program; and, 4) to analyze how these tools are used to inform initiative entries, exits, or strategy modifications.

More specifically, this report seeks to identify and provide insights on:

- Principles and/or criteria funders outline to guide strategies and portfolio level decision-making on whether or not to invest in an initiative;
- How success is measured and whether initiatives are setting realistic goals and metrics of success;
- Preconditions and key elements needed during implementation to ensure success;
- Internal operations, capacity, and governance for successful grant-making;
- The role of funding partnerships;
- The appropriate scale of ocean conservation investment;
- Effective and ineffective strategies;
- Barriers, barrier removal strategies, and lessons learned; and
- What funders want to achieve.

Report Sections and Highlights

In addition to the introduction and purpose, this report has 10 main sections. Each section summarizes and distills key findings from our original research. Several sections of this report also include a summary of key findings, lessons learned, and methods for enhancing success and avoiding failure in order to provide specific insights for donors on how best to improve their ocean conservation results. Below we provide a brief overview of each section in the report.

I. Introduction and Study Purpose

This chapter provides a synopsis of the rise of ocean conservation and a donor community, the study purpose, and the 20 case studies.

II. Study Methods

This chapter includes a description of Blue Earth Consultants' activities under three main project phases: case study identification and selection, data collection via 43 semi-structured interviews and document reviews, and data analysis and observations.

III. Overview of the Case Studies

The Case Studies

Case study investment geographies are spread across eight regions: Asia, Europe, Gulf of California, Madagascar, Pacific, South America, U.S./Canada, and the Wider Caribbean. Donor funding in the case studies is concentrated most heavily in Asia, the Pacific, and the U.S./Canada. Geographic scales of engagement among initiatives are spread across multiple spatial levels, with three-quarters investing at regional (greater than a single country) levels, half engaged at the national and local scales, and one-quarter working at state levels of engagement. As a whole, initiatives are spread fairly evenly across lengths of investment, ranging between three years to more than three decades, with the majority of foundations investing in initiatives longer than 10 years and the majority of government investment at five years or less. The selection criterion for investment amount was more than US\$1 million per year; case study investment amounts ranged between US\$1 million to nearly US\$200 million.

The case study initiatives address a number of ocean conservation goals and support a variety of strategies to achieve these goals.

Chapter III is an examination of the 20 case studies' array of ocean conservation initiatives across a range of geographies, priorities and goals, strategies, scales of engagement, lengths and amounts of investment, and granting-making styles.

IV. Why Funders Invest in Ocean Conservation

This chapter is an analysis of funders' motivations for entering, shifting, and exiting the funding of ocean conservation, their overarching priorities for ocean conservation, and their specific criteria for guiding investments.

Key findings in this section include:

- Founder, board member, and staff interest propel foundations' entry into ocean conservation.

Government donors are obligated by legal mandates and policy agreements driven by public interest and priorities.

Funders Top Ocean Conservation Priorities

- Promoting sustainable use of marine resources.
- Improving ocean and coastal governance.
- Fostering relevant science.

- One-quarter of case study organizations reported shifts in initiatives driven by changes in geographic emphasis or revisions to strategies. Shifts typically were prompted by evaluation findings, restrictions in program budgets, a realization that the initiative could not effectively address threats using the strategies or scale originally selected, changes in board interest, or a combination of these factors.
- Funders identified three main priorities for ocean conservation initiatives to advance their vision of ocean conservation: promoting sustainable use of marine resources, improving ocean and coastal governance, and fostering relevant science.

V. Examining Donor Practice

Chapter V is an appraisal of donors' approaches to selecting their ocean conservation investments, their use of strategic planning and evaluation to improve conservation initiatives, and the extent to which these attributes correlate to perceptions of initiative success. This section also includes a more in-depth treatment of how donor practices may influence initiative success, supplementing the summary of key findings and lessons learned with a discussion of preconditions and key ingredients for enhancing success and methods for avoiding failure in donor practice.

Key findings in this section include:

Top Donor Practices

- Robust strategic planning sets clear priorities;
- Initiative formulation is driven by donors but informed by grantee perspectives; and
- Evaluations fuel change and improvement.

Ocean Conservation Preconditions

- Strategic planning and adaptive management;
- Matching scale of initiative to human and financial capacity;
- Securing political will and public buy-in;
- Engaging stakeholders early and effectively;
- Supportive governance framework;
- Building effective partnerships;
- Natural and social science integrated into decision-making; and
- Long-term commitment.

Key Ingredients for Sustaining Ocean Conservation Initiatives

- Ongoing capacity and constituency building;
- Investing in partnership and coordination;

- Employing mechanisms for continuous improvement; and
- Sustained support.

VI. The Central Role of Funding Partnership

This chapter includes a discussion of funder partnership types and structures, how effective and ineffective partnership can enhance or diminish conservation impacts, key findings, lessons learned, and methods for enhancing success, and avoiding failure in partnership.

Key findings for partnerships include:

- Case study donors engaged in both intrasectoral (i.e., just among foundations, or just among governments) and intersectoral (i.e., between foundations and governments) partnerships. Both types of partnership have unique benefits. Although there are challenges in building any relationship, intrasectoral partnerships can prove to be less cumbersome and require less investment in the time necessary to cultivate relationships. Successful intrasectoral partnerships among donors were often created in an organic way due to alignments in goals, geographies, and/or grantees.
- Our research shows that donors who engage in either collaborative or formal partnerships (those involving some degree of written commitment) can experience greater success than those involved in informal partnerships. All of the “very successful” and “successful” donors engaged in either collaborative or formal partnerships. Within these partnerships, parties clearly designate roles, thereby targeting effort and leveraging funds more effectively.
- Partnership is not necessarily a prerequisite to success. Donors can experience success without partnership if they thoughtfully and strategically select their focal issue and/or the scale at which they choose to work or if they have sufficient funds to focus on a given issue or within a specific geographic area.

Partnership Insights

- Partnership can effectively enhance initiatives' impact, geographic extent, and financial resources.
- Structured partnerships are more effective than informal ones.
- Successful partnerships require considerable time, financial, and human resource investment.

VII. Scales of Investment

Chapter VII reports on ecosystem-based considerations in funding initiatives, the financial, temporal, governance and biological scales at which the case studies operate. In addition, it provides a summary of key findings, lessons learned, and methods for enhancing success and avoiding failure related to questions of scale.

Key findings for scale include:

- One-half of all informants stated that regional (greater than a single nation) ocean conservation investments were correlated with greater success.

- Nearly one-half of respondents stated that available funding is the proper mechanism for helping to determine appropriate and effective spatial scales of work.
- Very successful and successful initiatives utilized regional approaches as their primary spatial scales of engagement, and local level approaches as their secondary scale.
- The most successful initiatives were also those with larger investment amounts (\$50M or more), regardless of the length of investment.
- The majority of groups described working with local levels of government, and noted how these interactions were helping to inform the policy, legislation, and partnership actions that need to be taken at the state and national levels.
- The majority of informants agree that initiatives with greater than five year timeframes encourage initiative sustainability more than shorter-term investments.

Scale is Key

- Spatial: target conservation at the regional level, but nest supportive implementing actions at the local level.
- Financial: available funding should determine initiative scale, larger investments lead to greater success.
- Temporal: longer timeframes (>5 years) promote initiative sustainability.
- Governance: local governments must be engaged as much as state and national governments.
- Biological: consider species composition, interactions, threats, and their political and socioeconomic contexts.

VIII. Goals and Investment Strategies

This chapter describes the donors’ main goals and investment strategies, how realistic they were, the main strategies and activities funded, and their perceived effectiveness. It also includes key findings, ingredients for success, and ways to avoid failure in setting goals and funding investment strategies.

Highlights from this section include:

- A strong majority of informants claimed their initiative set realistic, attainable goals; however, only a strong minority of respondents stated that their initiative had achieved its goals. Informants correlated success with setting an adequate timeline, establishing a robust management structure, building strong capacity, creating longer-term strategic plans, and focusing investment on achieving main goals.
- The most common goals identified in the 20 case studies were biodiversity conservation, effective governance and policy for ocean and coastal conservation and management, and sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources. Informants described biodiversity conservation as an overarching goal that is advanced by success in the other goal categories.
- Donors use clusters of strategies to advance the main goals of effective governance and policy for ocean and coastal conservation and management, and sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources. The strategies deployed most frequently in very successful and successful initiatives also align by type of funder sector: foundations most frequently supported education and outreach, science, and management tools (the cluster correlated with a majority of very successful initiatives); government donors most frequently supported partnership, capacity-building, and science (the strategies identified in the successful initiatives). These trends confirm

the hypothesis that a conservation outcome cannot be reached if only one strategy is funded in isolation.

- The main investment strategies funded by initiative donors were science (collection, translation, and dissemination of relevant science for decision-making), education and outreach, capacity-building, partnership, policy and management tool, and market-based solutions. Funders generally funded multiple strategies to achieve their main goals. The most effective strategies that donors identified were partnership, policy and management tools, and direct conservation. It is easier to measure achievements for strategies that yield tangible results, such as management tools and direct conservation.
- Donor informants claimed, paradoxically, that investments in science and partnership were the least effective strategies. This conclusion underscores the benefits of investing in effective partnerships, as well as the risks of poorly conceived and executed partnerships. Similarly, the extent to which science is integrated into decision-making determines whether science investments – universally seen as essential to ocean conservation – are worthwhile. Donors also reported that investments in market-based solutions were generally less effective.

IX. Outcomes and Achievements

Chapter IX examines how different donor organizations reported on success; it defines true achievements and overall trends for outcomes and achievement in five main areas (science, governance and policy, area-based management, increased awareness, and partnerships). These factors were assessed across sectors and scale and included an evaluation of how successful donors used strategic planning and evaluation within their programs. The section describes how clearly defining outcomes and achievements can enhance success and help avoid failure for donors in the future.

Key findings from this section include:

- A strong majority of successful initiatives are guided by a formal strategic plan that outlines the goals, objectives, strategies, and expected outcomes of an initiative. Over half of these successful initiatives established indicators to measure progress towards outcomes.
- Trends across sectors show that foundations were more successful in achieving outcomes in governance and policy, area-based management, and science. Government and foundation donors were equally successful in achievements related to partnership and increased awareness.
- Looking at achievement across scales, the most achievements occurred at the regional level, though many achievements also occurred at the national and local scales.
- The greatest number of achievements occurred in three regions—United States/Canada, Pacific, and Asia – which corresponds to the relative amounts invested in those regions.
- A strong minority of case study respondents stated that their initiative had achieved its goals, while a similar number of respondents felt that their initiatives had partially achieved their goals.

Over the course of the initiatives, the 20 case study donors collectively invested roughly \$1.7 billion in ocean conservation. The table below provides a summary of collective achievements resulting from case study donor funding.

Achievement Area	Overall Trends Across Achievements
<i>Governance and Policy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ +40 achievements in the area of governance and policy, including 21 new policies created in 6 global regions—U.S./Canada, Pacific, Gulf of California, Asia, Wider Caribbean, and Latin America
<i>Area-based management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ~ 580 newly created marine protected areas (MPAs) (+ 2,000,000 km²) ➤ +50 existing MPAs supported ➤ +6 networks of MPAs created ➤ 6 demonstration sites established for teaching MPA design and monitoring techniques
<i>Awareness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 15 donor initiatives experienced 35 achievements in the area of education and outreach ➤ +1.6 million members of the general public and 1,500 government representatives reached
<i>Partnership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 12 key partnership achievements as formal partnerships, with a total of 38 memoranda of understanding/agreements signed memorializing formal agreements ➤ 35% of all partnership achievements were public-private partnerships
<i>Science</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ +11 policies directly informed by case study science projects. ➤ 18 case studies supported science to fill knowledge gaps and support management and policy decision-making leading to 65 clear achievements ➤ +193 reports, ranging in from genetic mapping to coral stressors, written to inform decision-makers and managers ➤ +96 monitoring protocols developed ranging from coral reef health monitoring to land-based indicators of pollution

X. Challenges

This chapter reviews the most frequently identified challenges by case study respondents and internal documents, lessons learned for conquering obstacles, and key findings related to challenges in ocean conservation funding.

The top five most identified challenges are:

- Partnership and coordination;
- Governance, political will and buy-in;
- Capacity;
- Funding; and
- Stakeholder willingness and buy-in.

XI. Roles for Foundation and Government Ocean Conservation Funders

This final chapter is an analysis of methods to leverage the strength of different types of ocean conservation funders now and in the future, with a focus on the different roles of government and foundation funders, as well as the complementary roles the two types of donor can play.

Highlights of this section include:

- Government funders' competitive advantage is in supporting mainstream policy development and implementation, building core infrastructure and institutions, developing capacity and providing technical assistance at a large scale, enforcing regulations, making large-scale science investments, and institutionalizing programs.
- Foundation funders' edge is in building capacity and leadership, convening, educating, and influencing civil society across all sectors, leveraging funding from multiple sectors, and piloting new, riskier, cutting-edge policies and practices.
- Foundation and government funders' complementary roles are in pooling resources, bridging funding during lean times, convening stakeholders, connecting grantees to available funding, influencing decision-makers across sectors, educating political leaders, and responding to emerging issues.

Conclusion

To our knowledge, this study represents the first ever examination of how foundation and government donors determine and implement their ocean conservation grant-making. Ocean conservation is a relatively new area of resource management and conservation. While investment in this field may not yet be commensurate with the fact that 70% of the planet covered by ocean waters, it has grown rapidly the past two decades, and there is already a wealth of lessons that can enhance the effectiveness of those investments and promote success in ocean conservation. This applied research study attempts to capture the expertise of the individuals leading multiple initiatives trying to achieve similar goals. We hope the stories told by these case studies, and comparisons among them, will provoke discussion and encourage efforts to improve ocean conservation funding in the future.

I. Introduction and Study Purpose

Introduction

Over the past several decades, the environmental conservation movement has evolved from its roots in public lands protection to a robust political and social movement. It has grown from wildlife and fisheries management, water and soil conservation to ecosystem-based management, and the preservation of biodiversity, as well as environmental justice, and sustainable use and management of the environment. Ocean conservation, which for the purpose of this report also includes coastal and marine conservation, emerged in the 1970s in the wake of events such as the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill and that clashes that occurred between commercial whalers and environmental activists that launched the *Save the Whales* campaign. Other events that kept ocean conservation in the public eye and policy makers' agendas include the dolphin-safe tuna boycott in 1986, the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989, and, most recently, the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill. Key U.S. legislation through the years, such as the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Clean Water Act, as well as the United Nations international water resources treaties and the Convention for Biological Diversity's Marine and Coastal Biodiversity goals have supported increased on-the-ground work. During the past 10 years, new ocean policies and legislation, increased interest in sustainability and corporate social responsibility, and cultural shifts in environmental awareness have kept a spotlight on the marine environment and led to expanded ocean conservation and management efforts.

Donor interest in ocean and coastal sustainable resource management and conservation also increased. According to one private donor, "in the mid-1990s there were eight private foundation donors sitting around the table discussing marine conservation grant-making and one government bi-lateral donor, together spending a total of between \$5million -\$15 million annually. Now, 15 years later, this has developed into the Marine Funders Working Group organized [by the Consultative Group on Biological Diversity (CGBD) and] comprised mostly of private foundations, and a few public foundations and government donors with more than 30 funders sitting around the table." The Marine Funders Working Group annual grant-making survey estimated \$60 million dedicated to marine conservation in 2004, which increased to \$167-\$289 million for 2009.² Government donors, multi-lateral, bi-lateral, and federal and state funding programs have also been steadily increasing their investment in marine conservation and sustainable management over the past two decades. International aid government donors generally link and frame programs to "sustainable development" concerns such as capacity-building, hazard management, and food security. National and state funding programs tend to focus on improving natural resource management and implementing regulation.

While high profile disasters and imperiled charismatic animals hold the public's attention, the ongoing harm to oceans from polluted runoff, climate change, and overexploitation of resources poses a far greater threat than many higher visibility environmental challenges. Many coastal and ocean ecosystems are rapidly declining around the world and this increasing trend has transboundary

² Marine Funding in 2009. Presented by The Ocean Foundation and The Consultative Group on Biological Diversity at in Laguna, California.

implications that led governments, national and international organizations, and many private organizations to prioritize their human and financial resources to protect, conserve, and sustain these ecosystems. The results of these investments, individually and collectively, are regularly catalogued in reports and analyses by grantees, funders, and outside observers. Such evaluations may allude to the source and scope of funding. Ray and Ray (2004) in *Coastal– Marine Conservation: Science and Policy* discuss the role of development assistance in their examination of agents of change. The National Academies Press wrote a report in 2008 entitled *Increasing Capacity for Stewardship of Oceans and Coasts: A Priority for the 21st Century*, which discusses the development of policy, science, and infrastructure for sound decision-making and management. The report describes key government infrastructure investments, such as the United States National Sea Grant College Program, and discusses key donors and some of their achievements in the past two decades.

Nevertheless, it appears there has never been a robust assessment, based on research through document review and interviews, to systematically compare and distill lessons learned about investing in ocean conservation. This study seeks to do so by compiling and sharing lessons learned from a subset of prominent private and public ocean conservation donors working globally today.

Study Purpose

In January 2010, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation’s Conservation and Science Program (Packard or the Foundation) initiated an Ocean Visioning process to discuss and identify long-term goals for the Foundation in this program area. As part of this effort, in April 2010, the Foundation’s Science subprogram engaged Blue Earth Consultants, LLC, to undertake the study documented in this report: *Ocean Conservation Strategic Funding Initiatives: A Study to Assess the Successes and Lessons Learned*. In this report, Blue Earth Consultants examines the ocean conservation donor investments of 20 organizations to distill successes and failures, investment gaps and opportunities, and lessons to help avoid common pitfalls in achieving sustainable ocean conservation and management. In carrying out this study, Blue Earth Consultants analyzed ten major private foundations involved in ocean conservation, and ten significant ocean conservation initiatives supported by U.S. (1 federal, 1 California State initiatives), bi-lateral (3 initiatives), or multi-lateral organizations (5 initiatives), listed below in Table 1.

Table 1: Ocean Conservation Strategic Funding Initiatives Case Studies

Foundations	Government, Bi-lateral, Multi-lateral
MacArthur Foundation – Protecting Seascapes	California State Coastal Conservancy
Marisla Foundation – Environmental Program (Gulf of California)	Global Environment Facility (GEF) – Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project
Moore Foundation – Marine Conservation Initiative	GEF/World Bank – Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) – Coastal Keystone Sea Turtle Conservation	GEF/World Bank - Coral Reef Targeted Research Program (CRTR)
Oak Foundation – Marine Conservation Programme	Le Groupe de l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and French GEF – Coral Reefs Initiative for the Pacific (CRISP)
Packard Foundation – California Coast Marine Initiative (CCMI)	World Bank – Global Program on Fisheries (PROFISH)
Packard Foundation – Marine Science	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Coastal Program
Packard Foundation – Western Pacific	U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) – Philippines Community Resource Management Project (CRMP)
Surdna Foundation – Ocean Biodiversity and Fisheries	USAID – International Coral Reef Action Network-Mesoamerican Reef Alliance Project – (ICRAN-MAR)
Walton Family Foundation – Environment	World Bank – Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System Project (MBRS)

The goal of this document are four-fold: 1) to provide a robust examination of the principles and criteria funders use to guide strategies and portfolio level decision-making; 2) to assess which strategies have been the most and least effective in helping to achieve conservation and management goals; 3) to assess the role strategic planning and evaluation play in the evolution of a program; and, 4) to analyze how these tools are used to inform initiative entries, exits, or strategy modifications.

More specifically, this report aims to identify and provide insights on:

- Principles and/or criteria funders outline to guide strategies and portfolio level decision-making on whether or not to invest in an initiative;
- How success is measured and whether initiatives are setting realistic goals and metrics of success;
- Preconditions and key elements needed during implementation for success;
- Internal operations, capacity, and governance for successful grant-making;
- The role of funding partnerships;
- The appropriate scale of ocean conservation investment;
- Effective and ineffective strategies;
- Barriers, barrier removal strategies, and lessons learned; and
- What funders want to achieve.

This report has a total of eleven sections. After a description of the study methods conducted to inform this report, we present an overview of the 20 case studies, providing a snapshot of the donors' geographies, scales, lengths and amounts of investment. We then discuss funders' motivations for investing in ocean conservation initiatives, their reasons for exits or shifts away from an initiative, and the priorities and criteria they utilize to identify investments. We then present an examination of donor practice, including a review of portfolio approaches and a discussion of preconditions and key ingredients for promoting greater initiative success. Next, we offer an in-depth look at the central role funding partnership plays in ocean conservation, exploring the types of partnerships donors engage in, and offering insights into the benefits and challenges of partnership. Scales of investment is the focus of the following section, offering a discussion of informant thoughts on the paradigm shift of ocean conservation toward the larger-scale and a review of the trends within financial, temporal, governance and biological scales of engagement. The next section describes the goals identified and strategies employed by the case studies, presents strategy clustering that resulted in the greatest success, and offers guidelines for increasing strategy effectiveness. We then discuss outcomes and achievements categories and trends. Next, we provide a section on the challenges faced by donors and insights into overcoming obstacles. The report concludes with a discussion of the roles of foundation and government donors and offers suggestions for complementary roles between the sectors.

Finally, we close several sections of this report with a section entitled *Creating Success*. These sections provide a summary of key findings and lessons learned. The key findings offer a review of highlighted discoveries gained directly from informant and document data and data analyses performed by Blue Earth Consultants. In the lessons learned sections, Blue Earth Consultants offers observations on methods for enhancing success and avoiding failure aimed at providing guidance for donors on how best to improve their ocean conservation results. It is important to note that in some instances, the data generated during this process are not entirely conclusive and may not fully support some of the conclusions we have drawn. However, Blue Earth Consultants produced these lessons learned and recommended techniques by drawing upon information gained over the course of this project, and then utilized professional knowledge and expertise to identify essential components, even when only a very small number of case studies noted them.

II. Study Methods

To carry out this study, Blue Earth Consultants undertook a series of activities under three main project phases. Described in more detail below, these phases included case study identification and selection, document and data collection, and data analysis and observations.

Phase 1: Case Study Selection

During this phase, Blue Earth Consultants performed research to identify a list of potential donor initiative case studies. Blue Earth Consultants identified a preliminary list of 71 multi-year and multi-million dollar ocean conservation programs and initiatives from around the globe,³ reflecting a wide range of regions, issues, and strategies. Through an iterative process using a set of criteria developed in consultation with Packard Foundation staff, Blue Earth Consultants distilled the initial list to 20 recommended initiatives based on their comparable size, length, and level of strategic engagement to Packard’s ocean- and coastal-related subprograms and based on the organizations’ willingness to participate in the study and share information. The criteria used to select the case studies are presented in the table below.⁴ The 20 case studies consist of ten private foundations and ten government, bi- or multi-lateral initiatives.

³ At Packard’s request, programs and initiatives in the Africa region were not included in this research.

⁴ Two criteria exceptions were made in selection of the case studies. The Walton Family Foundation’s length of investment falls below the five-year minimum, as does the USAID ICRAN-MAR project. The Foundation’s Environment program was included despite the initiative’s recent launch because the level of investment has been substantial and represents a significant portion of support going to ocean conservation. In addition, the grantee criteria prioritized donors giving primarily to NGOs; however, some government case studies provide funding to other government entities. In these cases, the initiatives were selected based on their strong alignment with the other case study selection criteria and comparability of goals and implementation strategies to other initiatives supported through philanthropy.

Table 2: Criteria, Definitions and Filters Used to Identify Potential Case Study Initiatives

Criteria	Definition	Filter
Geography	America/Canada, Gulf of California, Wider Caribbean, Asia, Pacific, Europe	All geographies represented
Scale	Range: local to transboundary	All scales represented
Species or System	Range: focused to broad	Select a mix
Length of Investment	Number of years running	Filter: 5 years or longer
Investment Amount	Dollar amount	Filter: Minimum of \$1M annually
Grantee	Type of organization receiving funds	Filter: Grants made primarily to NGOs
Strategy	Supporting strategies used to achieve program goals	Select a mix across different strategies
Portfolio Approach	Overall method and style of grant-making	Select a mix: opportunistic or strategic; relationship grant-making or requests for proposals
Portfolio Lessons	Strengths/weaknesses/lessons learned	All cases offer lessons learned
Partnership	Formal/informal coordination with another entity	Select of mix: Public/private partnerships; funder partnerships
Available information/willingness to participate	Agreement to participate	Critical to have access to evaluation and strategy information; staff participation

Phase 2: Document and Data Collection

During this phase, Blue Earth Consultants collected data from written documents, published and gray literature, and interviews with informants including donor organization staff, project implementers, and other experts. To achieve its data collection, the firm performed three primary activities:

- **Activity 1 – Survey Tool:** A survey tool developed in consultation with Packard Foundation staff guided Blue Earth Consultants’ interviews with informants and experts. The template survey instrument is provided in **Appendix A**.
- **Activity 2 – Literature Research and Review:** Key documents on the strategic initiatives were identified and obtained via web-based research and directly from case study organizations. These included strategy and planning documents, internal and external evaluations, program reports, and other relevant information.
- **Activity 3 – Semi-Structured Interviews:** Blue Earth Consultants identified key informants for each case study, and performed semi-structured interviews with 43 experts (**Appendix B**) to gain a

deeper understanding of key findings, successes, challenges and lessons learned.⁵ Interviews were conducted in person with a number of case study organizations based in the San Francisco Bay Area and Washington, DC, and via telephone with the remainder.

Phase 3: Data Analysis and Observations

Using the information gathered through document review and informant interviews, Blue Earth Consultants performed an in-depth review and analysis of the data in order to: identify trends⁶ in grant-making criteria, goals, and strategies; explore donor practices and portfolio approaches; distill themes in successes and the achievement of goals; illuminate challenges; present lessons learned; identify methods for enhancing success and avoiding failures; and, offer potential areas of opportunity for philanthropic giving in ocean conservation.

For the purpose of analysis, Blue Earth Consultants used a three-pronged approach to rank initiative success for each case study. Blue Earth Consultants reviewed interview data to gauge informants' perceived success of their initiative's achievements and highlights. We also reviewed evaluation data to determine how external sources viewed success of the initiative. Finally, we incorporated Blue Earth Consultants knowledge of program success and perception of success within the wider ocean conservation community. Using this methodology, we placed the case studies into five categories of initiative success, "not successful", "somewhat successful", "moderately successful", "successful", or "very successful". Within these categories, five initiatives classify as very successful, ten are successful, and five are moderately successful. We did not identify any initiatives as somewhat successful or not successful. Throughout this report, we use these terms to describe case study trends, discuss successful and unsuccessful ocean conservation techniques, and make comparisons between helpful and hindering methodologies.

⁵ Blue Earth Consultants does not guarantee the accuracy of the data provided. This report is primarily based on information reported by key informants and project documents. The consultants used this information to ask questions, distill trends, and identify key points of interest.

⁶ Blue Earth Consultants used qualitative terms to refer to data trends: Minority – 1-20%; Strong Minority – 20-45%; One-half/Average – 45-55%; Majority – 56-75%; and, Strong majority – 76-100%, as well as Low – 0-33%; Medium – 34-66%; and, High – 67-100%.

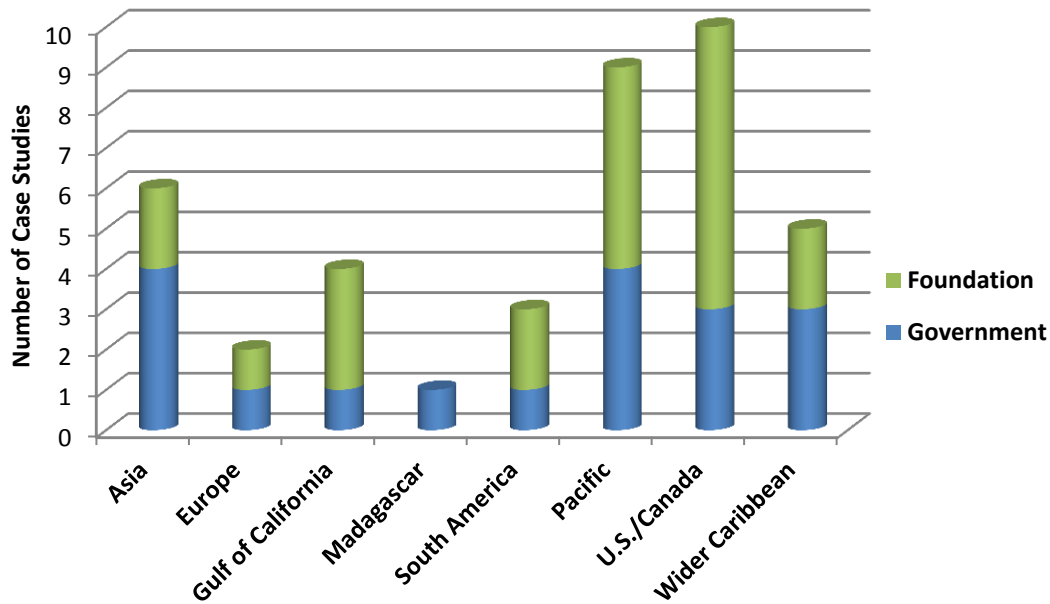
III. Overview of the Case Studies

The 20 case studies selected for this study provide an array of ocean conservation initiatives across a range of geographies, priorities and goals, strategies, scales of engagement, lengths and amounts of investment, and granting-making styles. This section provides an overview of case study trends within these themes. The tables at the end of this section offer a snapshot of the initiatives' purposes and goals, focal geographies, length of investments, and investment amounts.

Foundation and government funders serve an important function in advancing ocean conservation measures around the globe. While these groups do have some overlapping roles, they also differ in their strengths and motivations for providing support. The personal interests of founders and trustees typically drive foundation giving. Funding is derived from private sources; thus, foundations have greater flexibility in who they fund, how they give, and under what conditions. They serve as conveners and collaborators, encouraging grantees to “push the envelope”, and work to motivate and inspire innovative and new strategies and methods for solving threats faced by the ocean ecosystems. They often invest in identifying and supporting champions and conservation leaders or pilot testing “next or best” practices. Government funding sources, on the other hand, are typically created through legal mandates and policy agreements that require funds to be allocated toward ocean conservation and management. The public nature of the funds obligates government funders to adhere closely to legally authorized uses. They tend to invest in initiatives with social and sustainable economic development components, capacity-building, increasing public awareness, and policy reform strategies. A shared attribute between these groups is that the strong majority of selected case study initiatives focus primarily on providing grants to non-governmental organizations (NGOs); the exceptions are government donors who may give to other government entities.

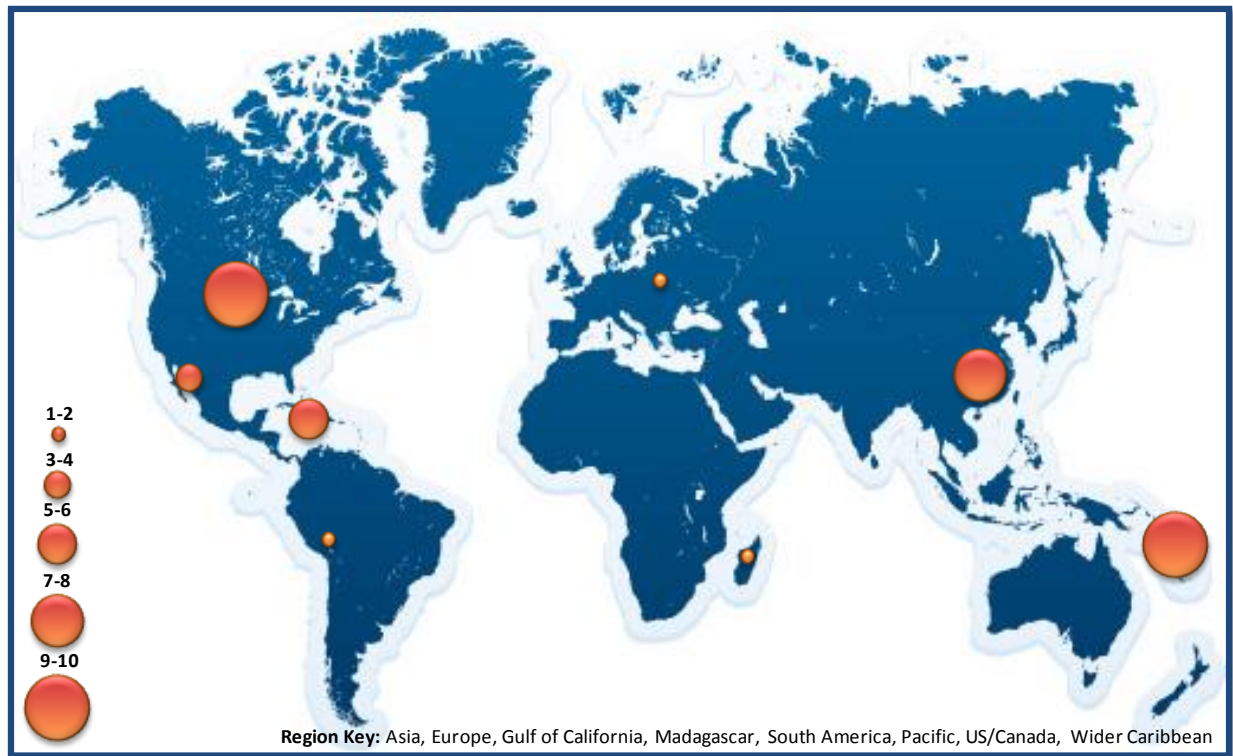
Case study investment geographies are spread across eight regions (Asia, Europe, Gulf of California, Madagascar, South America, Pacific, U.S./Canada, Wider Caribbean), with donors funding most heavily in Asia, the Pacific and the U.S./Canada. Figure 1 presents the number of selected case studies investing in each region.

Figure 1. Number of Selected Case Studies Investing by Region



Among the case studies, there is a greater foundation focus in the Gulf of California, the Pacific, and U.S./Canada, while governments provide the majority of their funding to Asia, the Pacific, U.S./Canada, and the Wider Caribbean. The icons on the map below correspond to the regions and countries the case studies identified as their geographic priorities for investments. The size of a circle indicates the number of donors who stated a specific region fell within their criteria (see key within Figure 2).

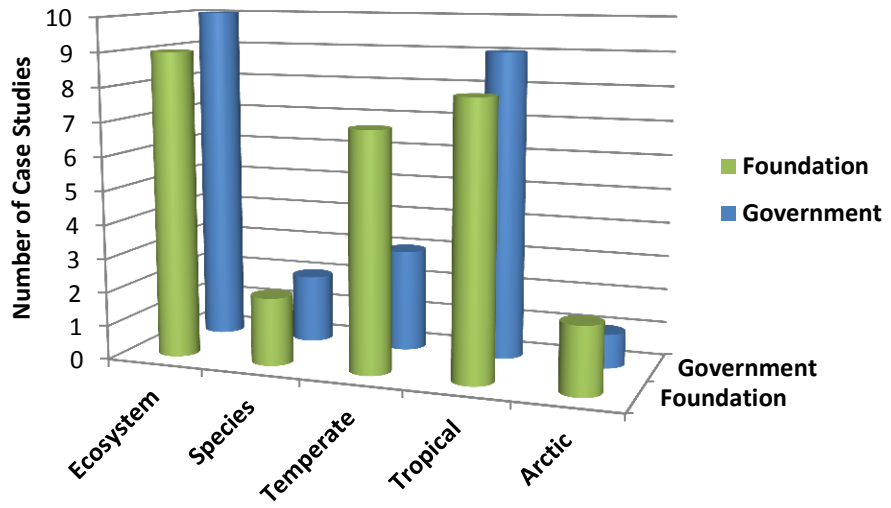
Figure 2. Map Showing Number of Donors in each Geographic Region



Base map source: DryIcons

Geographic scales of engagement among initiatives are spread across multiple spatial levels, with three-quarters investing at regional (greater than a single country) levels, half engaged at the national and local scales, and one-quarter working at state levels of engagement. Detailed information on case study scales of engagement is provided in *VII. Scales of Investment* (page 62). With respect to biological scales of investment, the case study selection criteria sought to obtain a balance between initiatives focusing on ecosystem conservation and management and those that focus on individual species protection. However, the case studies count nearly five times as many initiatives engaged in ecosystem strategies as those utilizing individual species preservation techniques. In regards to biomes emphasized, for the ecosystem-wide investments, tropical regions receive funding most frequently among the case studies as a whole; however, foundations are fairly balanced between tropical and temperate system investments. Government organizations funded tropical initiatives three times more frequently than temperate system initiatives. The figure below provides an overview of the case studies' biological scale and biome investment profiles.

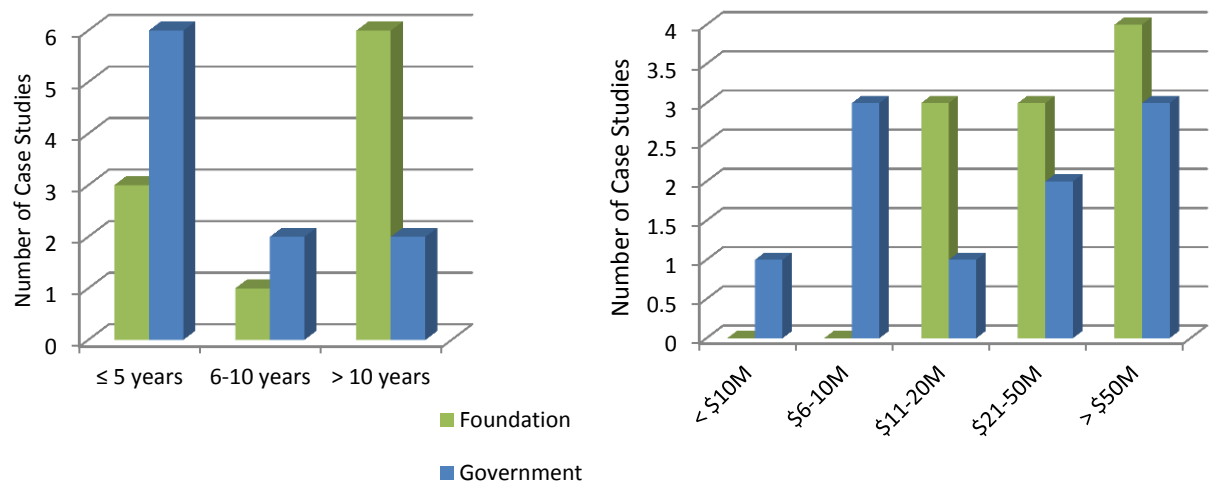
Figure 3: Case Study Biological Scale and Biome Investment Profiles



Case study selection criterion for length of investment was 5 years or longer.⁷ As a whole, initiatives are spread fairly evenly across lengths of investment, ranging between 3 years to more than 3 decades, with the majority of foundations investing in initiatives longer than 10 years and the majority of government investment at 5 years or less. The longest running foundation initiative is 24 years and the longest government initiative is 33 years. Figure 4 provides an overview of case study lengths of investment. The selection criterion for investment amount was more than US\$1 million per year; case study investment amounts ranged from US\$1 million to nearly US\$200 million, with a roughly even spread between the low, medium, and high ranges of investment for both foundation and government, bi-lateral, and multi-lateral case studies. Figure 4 also shows the number of initiatives within five ranges of investment amount.

⁷ Refer to footnote 2 (page 10) for information on case study selection criteria exceptions.

Figure 4: Case Study Lengths and Ranges of Investment



The case study initiatives address a number of ocean conservation goals and support a variety of strategies to achieve these goals. The report section entitled *VIII. Goals and Investment Strategies* (page 76) offers an in-depth look at identified goals and strategies utilized.

The tables that follow summarize the 20 case studies’ purposes and goals, focal geographies, length of investments, and approximate investment amounts.

Table 3: Foundation Ocean Conservation Initiative Overview

Foundation Cases	Ocean Conservation Initiative Overview, Purpose & Goals	Geography	Length of Investment	Investment Amount
<i>MacArthur Foundation</i>	The Conservation and Sustainable Development Protecting Seascapes initiative works to address weak marine and coastal management systems and unsustainable resource use. It focuses on the conservation of biodiversity in marine and coastal areas by responding to the threats to marine biodiversity caused by unsustainable resource use and fragile management structures at the community and national levels.	Asia; Pacific	13 years; in progress	\$11-20M
<i>Marisla Foundation</i>	The Gulf of California program supports conservation of marine biological diversity and advancement of sustainable ecosystem management. It focuses on marine resources conservation in the Gulf through marine protected areas, capacity-building, coastal land acquisition, species-specific protection, and science.	Gulf of California	24 years; in progress	> \$51M
<i>Moore Foundation</i>	The Marine Conservation program aims to support sustainably managed, resilient and productive marine ecosystems in North America, for the benefit of current and future generations. It supports marine spatial planning, fisheries management reform, scientifically sound total allowable catch limits, and development of conservation-minded resource extraction technologies.	U.S./Canada – CA Current	5 years; in progress	> \$51M
<i>National Fish and Wildlife Foundation</i>	The Marine and Coastal Keystone initiative works to build conservation partnerships to address challenges to the health of the marine and coastal environment by making a measureable impact on specific species and their habitats. The Sea Turtle Conservation initiative focuses on increasing populations of target sea turtle species through research and conservation activities to stabilize and increase populations; assessment and mitigation of gillnet; and, increasing compliance and implementation of bycatch reduction methods.	Pacific; U.S./Canada; Wider Caribbean	11 years; in progress	\$11-20M
<i>Oak Foundation</i>	The Marine Conservation Programme works to protect marine ecosystems and encourage the sustainable use of marine resources. The initiative engages in capacity-building, research, communications, policy, stakeholder engagement, advocacy and market-based activities aimed at improved marine reserve management, sustainable coastal and marine resource management, and sustainable financing.	Europe; U.S./Canada; Wider Caribbean	11 years; in progress	> \$51M
<i>Packard Foundation – California Coast Marine Initiative</i>	CCMI is dedicated to improving the coastal and marine health of California’s Central Coast by generating more effective statewide policies and programs to enhance the protection of coasts and oceans for future generations. Its goal is to achieve significant protections for coastal and marine resources, working in partnership with the State of California and stakeholders, including NGOs, business groups, philanthropies, research institutions, and other interests.	U.S./Canada	7 years; in progress	\$21-50M
<i>Packard Foundation – Marine Science</i>	The Science subprogram EBM initiative worked to improve linkages between science and decision making to support science-focused ecosystem-based management for coastal-marine systems and use-inspired marine research. It bolstered efforts to develop knowledge and tools needed for effective EBM, used pilot sites to test the application of EBM, and fostered the growth of the wider EBM community of practice.	Asia; Gulf of California; Pacific; U.S./Canada	5 years (EBM); Science 2010 start; in progress	\$21-50M
<i>Packard Foundation – Western Pacific</i>	The Western Pacific subprogram works to improve the knowledge, skills, and institutions needed to ensure that biologically diverse ecosystems are conserved and can continue to contribute to sustainable livelihoods and the health of those reliant upon them. It concentrates on three primary portfolios: Skills Exchange, Site-based Implementation, and Public Education and Media.	Asia; Pacific	10 years; in progress	\$21-50M
<i>Surdna Foundation</i>	Ocean Biodiversity and Fisheries worked to improve federal and state fisheries and ocean management policy for U.S. waters that promote the recovery of fisheries and ocean habitat, and supported regional management plans that restore and sustain fisheries. Efforts focused on market mechanisms, translating science into public policy, defending species preservation policies, and creating public awareness programs.	U.S./Canada	20 years; Completed	\$11-20M
<i>Walton Foundation</i>	The Environment program focuses on creating cleaner oceans; ensuring access to clean water and healthy seafood; and supporting the livelihoods of people dependent on fishing. The initiative consists of four focal areas: preventing overfishing, encouraging the creation of dedicated access privileges, creating marine managed areas, and using markets to encourage sustainable fishing.	Asia; Gulf of California; Pacific; U.S./Canada	3-5 years; in progress	> \$51M

Table 4: Government Ocean Conservation Initiative Overview

Government Cases	Ocean Conservation Initiative Overview, Purpose & Goals	Geography	Length of Investment	Investment Amount
<i>CA State Coastal Conservancy</i>	The Conservancy works to preserve, protect, and restore the resources of the California coast. It focuses on land acquisition for dedication to the coastal trail, identifying gaps in access to coastal areas, integrating climate change considerations in coastal planning, and providing funding to coastal conservation projects.	U.S./Canada – West Coast	33 years; in progress	> \$51M
<i>GEF – Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project</i>	This initiative supports the conservation and management of transboundary oceanic fishery resources in the Pacific Islands region. It provides assistance to the Pacific Island States through training, technical support, fisheries management, and legal and scientific advice to help improve sustainable development from improved management of transboundary oceanic fishery resources.	Pacific	5 years; in progress	\$11-20M
<i>GEF/World Bank – CRTR</i>	The CRTR Program is an international coral reef research initiative that provides a coordinated approach to credible, factual and scientifically-proven knowledge for improved coral reef management. It works to fill knowledge gaps in the understanding coral reef ecosystem vulnerability and resilience to a range of stressors, and to inform policies and management interventions on behalf of the coral reefs and the communities that depend on them.	Asia; Pacific; Wider Caribbean	5 years; Phase 1 complete, Phase 2 in progress	\$21-50M
<i>GEF/World Bank – PEMSEA</i>	The Fund's goal is to reduce local, national and trans-boundary degradation of East Asia's marine ecosystems due to land-based pollution. It leverages investments in pollution reduction through the removal of technical, institutional, and financial barriers to: reduce existing sources of pollution; prevent new pollution sources through regulatory control; and prevent migration of pollution across boundaries.	Asia	5 years; in progress	> \$51M
<i>AFD and French GEF – CRISP</i>	CRISP aims to conserve coral reef biodiversity, while developing the economic and environmental services that they provide both locally and globally. To achieve this, the initiative supports applied ecosystem management, enhancement of scientific knowledge, economic development of reef resources, monitoring of coral reef resources, raising decision-maker, stakeholder, and public awareness, and training.	Pacific	5 years; in progress	\$6-10M
<i>PROFISH</i>	The goal of PROFISH is to meet the fisheries and poverty reduction targets set by the WSSD and achieve sustainability in their marine fisheries. It aims to strengthen governance of the world's fisheries by improving the quality of public and private investments, governance reform through improved fisheries management tools, and aligning donor interventions.	Asia; Latin America; Madagascar	5 years; in progress	\$6-10M
<i>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i>	The Coastal Program supports conservation of healthy coastal habitats on public or private land for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and people. It provides incentives for voluntary protection of threatened, endangered and other species on private and public lands. It supports programs that strengthen partnerships, improve information sharing and communication, and enhance the nation's workforce.	Pacific; U.S./Canada	19 years; in progress	> \$51M
<i>USAID – CRMP</i>	This initiative aimed to increase effective management of coastal resources at the national and local levels. This goal was achieved through supporting efforts to increase stakeholder involvement, decentralize decision-making, build local capacity, and promote sustainable economic development.	Asia	9 years; completed	\$6-10
<i>USAID – ICRAN-MAR Project</i>	This collaborative effort aimed to confront declining coral reef ecosystems and improve the economic and environmental sustainability of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef through capacity-building activities, the development of better practices, and building of partnerships with the private sector. The initiative supported efforts to improve watershed and fisheries management practices, and development of alternative livelihoods, such as sustainable marine recreation and tourism.	Wider Caribbean	3 years; completed	< \$10M
<i>World Bank – MBRS Project</i>	The MBRS Project supported the development and implementation of shared, regional ecosystem management in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico to safeguard biodiversity values and functional integrity, and create a framework for its sustainable use. The initiative supported MPA designation, regional monitoring systems, sustainable fisheries management, and public awareness campaigns.	Wider Caribbean	6 years; completed	\$21-50M

IV. Why Funders Invest in Ocean Conservation

The following section provides insights into why the donors highlighted in this report chose to enter into the field of ocean conservation funding. We examine trends across all case studies and compare government and foundation funders to determine the motives for entering into an ocean conservation initiative, the reasons for exiting from or shifting the focus of an ocean conservation initiative, the funders' overarching priorities for ocean conservation, and funders' specific criteria for guiding investments.

Highlighted Key Findings for Why Funders Invest in Ocean Conservation

- Foundation and government case studies agree that threats to the ocean must be addressed, however they differ in their motivations for entering into an ocean conservation initiative. Founder, board member and staff interest propel foundations' entry into ocean conservation. Government donors are obligated by legal mandates and policy agreements driven by public interest and priorities.
- Case studies typically exited ocean conservation or shifted initiatives because of changes in the donor organization's focus or geographic emphasis, poor evaluation results, or reprioritization of funds or the amount of money invested and the formality of the criteria.
- Sustainable resource use, improved governance, and promoting relevant science were funders' primary priorities for ocean conservation.

Reasons for Entering into an Ocean Conservation Initiative

Our review of the 20 case studies found several key motivations for foundation and government donors to enter into an ocean and coastal funding initiative. Not surprisingly, a majority of foundation and government donors noted that their organization entered into a specific initiative because of the critical need to address anthropogenic threats facing ocean and coastal ecosystems. In particular, donors recognized a significant gap in funding for the protection of marine biodiversity. One informant stated that "comparatively little attention was given by donors, NGOs, and governments to what was happening in the coasts and in the oceans [compared to terrestrial environments]."

Although there are parallel reasons for entry by both government and foundation funders, the mechanisms for investment decision-making differ between the two sectors. In general, the majority of foundation donors were motivated to launch an ocean conservation initiative as a result of the personal interests of their founders, board members, and staff. In some cases, government donor initiatives were mobilized through political support for marine conservation. However, unlike foundation initiatives, many of the government donor initiatives examined were initiated formally through

legislative or other formal policy-making mechanisms consistent with public demand, at the state, national, and international level. In these cases, government statutes and intergovernmental agreements directed the focus of the initiative and outlined the specific priorities of the program, requiring that funds be allocated toward ocean and coastal conservation and management.

Reasons for Exiting or Shifting an Ocean Conservation Initiative

Four of the 20 case studies we reviewed exited from funding ocean conservation, citing one of two reasons: poor evaluation results or a change in the overall vision of the donor organization. For example, the Surdna Foundation report *Currents of Change: The Story of the Surdna Foundation's Investment in Oceans*⁸ stated that

the organization made a “strategic decision to refocus its energy and support its vision for establishing and securing sustainable communities. While communities were a strong focus of Surdna’s previous grant-making, as the Foundation sharpens its grant-making focus, ocean conservation, and in particular, fisheries management are not reflected in the program areas that will take it into next era of grant-making.” Similarly, the Coastal Resource Management Project (CRMP) made a geographic exit from a marine conservation initiative focused in the Philippines when their overall vision and priorities moved away from capacity-building strategies to increasing the level of governance for fisheries management. Although

The Importance of Addressing Underlying Drivers First

Three donor case study initiatives – two foundations and one bilateral funder – invested in ocean conservation efforts in the Philippines. All three entities shifted away from their initiative or exited the country completely. Sources acknowledged a failure to address the fundamental drivers of the environmental threats as the reason these initiatives refocused or relocated. Drivers such as poverty, population pressure, and limited enforcement capacity were considerable contributors to the threats of overfishing, destructive fishing methods, and damaging coastal development. Foundation donor strategies primarily focused on developing MPAs, rather than addressing the drivers first then focusing on creating MPAs. Foundation donors realized there was a mismatch in the scale and extent of the investment needed to address these drivers and subsequently decided to shift the geographic focus of their initiatives. The foundations were also persuaded that their departure would not lead to a significant funding gap, since government donors would continue to invest in the Philippines. USAID’s CRMP (the bilateral donor) remained as a funder in the Philippines; however, the donor exited the ocean and coastal policy initiative to refocus its efforts more on sustainable fisheries.

this initiative ended, the progress made over the course of the initiative laid the groundwork for the donor’s next funding initiative, Fisheries Improvement for Sustainable Harvest (FISH), within the same region. A special end-of-project report stated that the donor was able to “integrate lessons learned in improved local governance and coastal management into a new framework of environmental

⁸ The Surdna report is available at <http://www.surdna.org/what-we-fund/sustainable-environments/sustainable-environments-whats-new/192.html> or for direct download at http://www.surdna.org/images/stories/content_img/docs/pubs/currents_of_change.pdf.

governance that includes both coastal and watershed ecosystem planning and resource management.”⁹ It is important to note that this change in vision coincided with the pre-set end date for the initiative, which had already been extended by two years. The donors opted not to extend the initiative any longer.

Two of the case studies that exited their ocean conservation initiatives did so after conducting program evaluations that raised concerns about the overall effectiveness of the initiatives and that, combined with budget shortfalls, ultimately led to the exits. In one case, a government initiative aimed at building partnerships among NGOs, government, and industry experienced two primary problems associated with the design of the program: the complexity of the initiative’s governance structure and the challenges with moving funds from the donor organization to on-the-ground partners created barriers to developing effective partnerships. The donor applied a “sunset” clause to the initiative along with a final challenge grant to help grantees adjust to the loss of funding. Grantees were able to leverage more funds from other donors in a shorter amount of time due to this matching program, which helped the transition. In the case of a foundation-funded initiative, an evaluation revealed fundamental problems with the project strategy, including the need for an additional infusion of funds to catalyze impact at a local or state scale. These issues, in combination with cuts to the funder’s budget, precipitated the foundation’s decision to phase out the initiative.

Although the majority of donors have not exited their ocean conservation initiatives, one-quarter of the initiatives experienced shifts in their programs, primarily changes in geographic focus or revisions to strategies. Informants and internal donor documents suggest that the shifts in the initiatives were brought about by evaluation results, restrictions in program budgets, a realization that the threats they were facing were too significant to address using the strategies or scale of funding originally selected, changes in board interest, or a combination of these factors. Evaluation, which is discussed in more detail in *V. Examining Donor Practice* (page 31), is a key component in adaptively managing conservation initiatives that can lead to refocusing a strategic plan. In one case, a “review of the performance” revealed that efforts in a specific geography “[were] not as strong as other programs.” Budgetary restrictions also lead to shifts in initiatives. An informant shared that “limited resources brought about the shift; we had to cut because we cannot do everything.” In several cases, donors recognized a disconnect between their level of investment and an initiative’s goals, and opted to shift the focus to more realistic goals. Foundations represented the majority of the initiatives that experienced shifts. This fact suggests foundations may be more flexible and adaptive, a finding that was corroborated by many case study informants.

Funders’ Overarching Priorities for Ocean Conservation

While donors interviewed for this study shared a broad vision of biodiversity conservation as their overarching goal, the practical expressions of that vision fell into three priorities guiding their ocean and coastal conservation investments. The three main priorities identified by funders are:

- Promoting sustainable use of marine resources;

⁹ CRMP. 2004. Completion Report: The Coastal Resource Management Project- Philippines 1996-2004. Coastal Resource Management Project of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Cebu City, Philippines, 179 pp.

- Improving ocean and coastal governance; and
- Fostering relevant science.

Each of these priorities is discussed in greater detail below.

Promoting Sustainable Use of Coastal and Ocean Resources

Sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources was named as a priority by nearly half of the initiative case studies. As an element of this strategy, donors identified specific outcomes that their initiative prioritized for increasing sustainable use. These include:

- Building sustainable use initiatives to reduce overfishing and foster community-based stewardship;
- Developing social sustainability;
- Encouraging sustainable tourism;
- Removing obstacles to sustainable growth; and
- Developing programs to diversify economic activities.

The priority of sustainable use was most frequently cited by government sector initiatives. Several government informants spoke to the need to incorporate priorities related to social benefit and development into their program in order to maintain alignment with their parent agency's overall priorities. This fact is a critical component for government entities with a mandate to provide economic and social services in developing countries. For example, one government informant stated that "it is hard to sell marine resource management, so I have to try to find ways that it falls [in line] with the 'bread and butter' of the [parent donor]. I can find many angles—for fisheries we used food security, but it must be tied to the [donor's] interests. [I] finally was able to make the link between poverty, and coastal living and coastal economy."

Improving Ocean and Coastal Governance

A majority of case studies identified increasing the level and effectiveness of governance and policy to, in turn, increase conservation and sustainable management. Both government and foundation initiatives spoke generally of "high-level, broad scale changes," "improved governance," "implementation of sustainable management measures," and "effective public governance." Improving fisheries governance was a specific objective of both government and foundation case study informants and documents; over half of the case studies that mentioned governance as a priority spoke specifically of fisheries governance. Effective fisheries governance was connected to addressing problems of overfishing, bycatch, and overall health of fisheries. For example, one internal document source described its initiative's priorities as "dramatically improving fisheries management practices and preventing overfishing."

Fostering Relevant Science

Fostering relevant science refers to the collection, translation, synthesis, and dissemination of science to help inform management and decision-making. This study documented an underpinning of science

throughout many of the themes discussed. A majority of the case studies held the fostering of science as a priority, with the following specific emphases:

- Research and monitoring;
- Science targeting specific species or ecosystems;
- Providing science to inform management; and
- Filling scientific knowledge gaps.

Although science was discussed frequently in documents and by informants, it was never a sole priority, being seen instead as a necessary support to advance ocean conservation initiatives.

Other Priorities

Funders also prioritized the protection and conservation of specific species or ecosystems. Priority species include turtles, sharks, marine mammals, and corals. Priority ecosystems include mangroves, coral reefs, islands, and the land/sea interface. Other priorities discussed less frequently included: protecting marine biodiversity and health generally; building organizational capacity; promoting education and outreach; and, developing market-based solutions.

Funders' Specific Criteria for Guiding Investments

In addition to the overarching priorities guiding funders' ocean conservation investment decisions, all donors reviewed for this report set screening criteria to direct their ocean conservation initiative grant-making, though there was often overlap between priorities and criteria. Case studies utilized either formal or informal criteria focused on specific investment strategies, threats, species, ecosystems, geographic areas, or a combination of these.

Formal and Informal Criteria

Formal criteria guide a number of initiatives identified by informants as clearly outlined in guiding documents; these are specific, well-defined, and often directed by a legal mandate. All government initiatives reviewed for this study were guided by formal criteria, with nearly one-half backed by a legal mandate. For example, the California State Coastal Conservancy has six key criteria to direct its investments. These criteria, developed in alignment with enabling legislation, include:

- 1) Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes;
- 2) Consistency with purposes of the funding source;
- 3) Support from the public;
- 4) Location (must benefit coastal or ocean resources, or the San Francisco Bay region);
- 5) Need (the desired project or result will not occur without Conservancy participation); and
- 6) Greater-than-local interest.¹⁰

Among these case studies, a subset had formal criteria set by parent organizations whose missions encompass non-environmental goals. For example, programs under the World Bank guide their grant-

¹⁰ California Coastal Conservancy. www.scc.ca.gov. Accessed August 15, 2010.

making using criteria related to fighting poverty. Although the programs do have priorities specific to the initiative, informants regularly pointed to the higher-level organizational criteria as guiding investment decisions.

Foundation case studies employed informal criteria; no government funders used informal criteria, though some foundations used formal criteria. A majority of the foundation informants stated specific grant-making criteria; however, grant documents rarely made explicit reference to these criteria. A foundation sector informant stated that the foundation initiative is “guided by an overall strategy, but not by explicit criteria.” Another described his initiatives as having “no formal criteria, but confined by topic and geographies.” Although many of the foundation initiatives do have identified priorities and strategic plans, they appear to have looser criteria, which informants believe allows for more flexibility in their grant-making. One foundation informant shared that having broad criteria allowed the donor to fund outside of their typical criteria when “opportunities represent the chance to achieve a high-level objective that is strategically justifiable.”

We conducted an analysis comparing successful and very successful initiatives with the type of criteria they utilize. We found funders to be almost equally split between users of formal and informal criteria. This finding indicates that formal criteria are not a necessary precondition or determinant of program success.

Blue Earth Consultants also looked for a correlation between the level of investment and the sophistication of the criteria. While there are initiatives with investments of \$15-35 million annually that are guided by formal criteria, there are others in the same financial ranges that do not have formal criteria. Similarly, there are initiatives that invest \$1-5 million annually that have developed formal criteria to direct funding.

Threat- or Strategy-Specific Criteria

Criteria related to a specific threat or solution strategy guide a strong majority of case studies. Table 5 lists the criteria case study informants and documents noted in each category.

Table 5: Threat- and Strategy-Specific Criteria

Threat-Specific Criteria	Strategy-Specific Criteria
Water use conflicts	Building capacity
Coral bleaching	Establishing MPAs
Overfishing	Developing alternative livelihoods
Habitat alteration	Reforming fisheries management
Invasive species	Creating economic incentives
Climate change	Conducting restoration
Pollution	Facilitating education and outreach

Geographic Criteria

A majority of the case studies have criteria that require grant-making to be focused in a specific region, sub-region, or country. These criteria focus on the eight geographies described in *III. Overview of the Case Studies* and in Figure 2 (page 19)

Summary of Key Findings

Reasons for Entering Into an Ocean Conservation Initiative

- A majority of the case studies stated that there was a need to address coastal and ocean threats and a gap in funding solutions.
- A strong majority of foundations entered into funding coastal and ocean conservation because of strong interest by founders, board members, and staff. Government donors, on the other hand, have legal mandates and policy agreements driven by public interest and priorities.

Reasons for Exiting or Shifting an Ocean Conservation Initiative

- Of the small subset of case studies in which funders exited from ocean conservation, poor evaluation results or a change in a donor organization's focus were the most common reasons.
- One-quarter of case study organizations reported shifts in initiatives driven by changes in geographic emphasis or revisions to strategies. Shifts were typically prompted by evaluation findings, restrictions in program budgets, a realization that the initiative could not effectively address threats using the strategies or scale originally selected, shifts in board interest, or a combination of these.

Funders' Overarching Priorities for Ocean Conservation

- Funders identified three main priorities for ocean conservation initiatives to advance their vision of biodiversity conservation: promoting sustainable use of marine resources; improving ocean and coastal governance; and fostering relevant science.
- Science underpins many of the priorities of funders, but is never a sole priority. Science investments are viewed as necessary supports to achieve other priorities.

Funders' Specific Criteria for Guiding Investments

- Case studies reflected either formal or informal criteria focused on particular geographic areas, identified threats, specific conservation strategies, or a combination of these three.
- No correlation was identified between the formality of the criteria and the level of success of the initiative.
- There is no correlation between the amount of money invested and the formality of the criteria used by case study donors.

V. Examining Donor Practice

This section provides insights into donor practices, examining donors’ portfolio approaches and the role of strategic planning and evaluation in continuously improving conservation initiatives. Within each discussion, we share findings about how these attributes correlate to perceptions of initiative success. However, we conclude this section with a more in-depth treatment of how donor practices may influence initiative success, supplementing the summary of key findings and lessons learned with a discussion of preconditions and key ingredients for enhancing success and methods for avoiding failure in donor practice.

Highlighted Key Findings for Examining Donor Practice	➤ The most successful initiatives utilize strategies that are primarily donor driven, but are informed by grantee perspectives. A strong majority of case studies use a specified process for setting goals, outlining action plans, or developing strategic plans. Informants and documents consistently describe this process as increasing initiative success.
	➤ Three most common preconditions for ocean conservation are: matching scale of problem with capacity; proper planning through regular review and evaluation; and political will/buy in.
	➤ A majority of case study informants identified capacity/constituency building, and partnership and coordination as key ingredients for achieving ocean conservation goals and outcomes.

Donor Portfolio Approaches

Donors use a variety of approaches to identify and fund ocean conservation opportunities. In this section, we discuss three categories of portfolio approaches: donor versus grantee driven strategies for initiative design and implementation; focused versus relationship-based granting; and strategic versus opportunistic grant-making. We selected this group of case studies because of its broad range of approaches to ocean conservation funding. Although some inferences can be drawn about the relationship of donor practices to initiative success, there was a diversity of opinions among the case studies regarding the best approaches for achieving the greatest success.

Donor Driven vs. Grantee Driven

Donors who take a donor driven approach issue grants to organizations and/or initiatives whose goals, strategies, and objectives strongly align with the donors' stated goals, strategies, and objectives. Grant-making is done with strong consideration for the ways in which individual grantees fulfill an aspect of the donor's strategy. Strategies are primarily donor driven, and grantees who do not strongly align may not receive funding. At the other end of the spectrum, a grantee driven portfolio approach offers grants to organizations with projects that will help achieve the overall goals and agenda of the donor. Project strategies and specific goals are derived from the grantee, with the donor being flexible on actual implementation; their primary interest is funding opportunities that help forward the donor's general mission.

Among the case studies, government groups are fairly evenly divided in using: 1) donor driven strategies; 2) grantee driven strategies; or 3) a mix of strategies that are both donor and grantee driven. Conversely, a strong majority of foundations uses a mix of donor and grantee based strategies; only two stated that they are donor driven and none identified themselves as strictly grantee driven. As a whole, the majority of informants said that their initiatives are both donor and grantee driven. Donors often select initiative themes and priorities since, by nature, private foundations are accountable to their Boards of Directors and Trustees and, therefore, direct funds towards

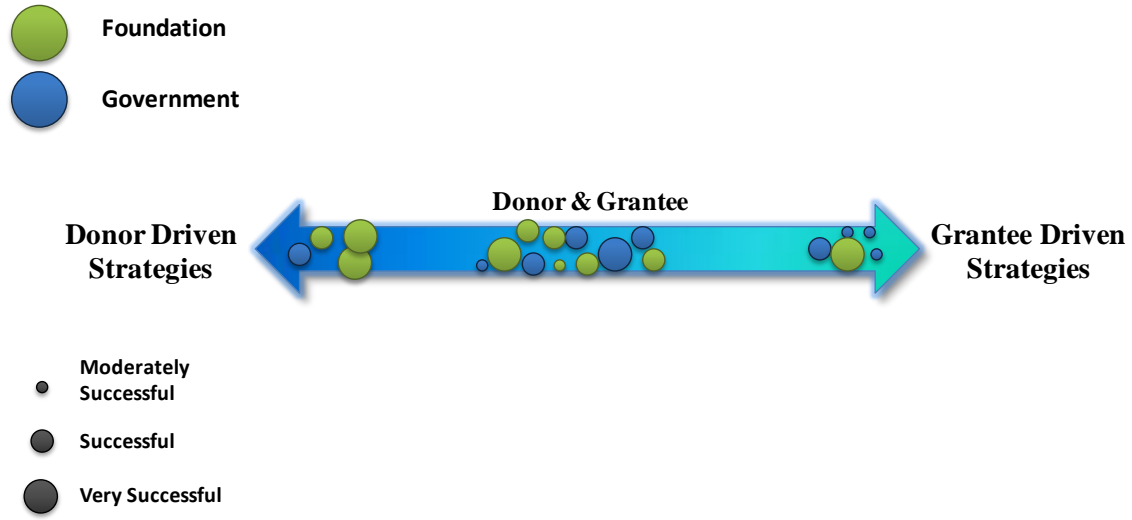
Pew Charitable Trust – From Donor Driven Funder to Implementer

The past decade has seen discussion and debate in the ocean conservation funding community regarding the role of donors in driving grantee strategies. This discussion became more heated in 2004 when the Pew Charitable Trusts changed its operating status from a private foundation to a charitable organization implementing its own projects and able to solicit donations. Prior to that change, as a funder, Pew's highly directive relationship with its grantees was a point of controversy among leaders in the ocean conservation community. Where some viewed Pew's practices as akin to treating grantees as "contractors," others simply saw a highly strategic approach to grant-making. Whatever the assessment, Pew had determined that its previous method was not effective for meeting its goals, prompting the shift to becoming an implementing organization. Today, Pew runs focused campaigns around specific threats, geographies, or strategies, funded partially from its former endowment, but also by raising significant funds from private donors. One such project is Pew's "Our Ocean" campaign focused on creating a network of marine reserves within Oregon's territorial sea. Through the efforts of Pew and its fellow coalition members, Oregon designated two marine reserves in 2009, with four additional sites under consideration.

projects that are aligned with their interests. Similarly, public funds and appropriations are guided by organizational priorities and legal mandates. Nevertheless, donors report frequently soliciting input from implementers and other donors in the field to help inform their strategies. This collaboration ensures a strategy that integrates donor priorities with on-the-ground needs and experience. One

informant stated that funding requires a “marriage of donor interests with [grantee] implementation potential.” A strong majority of the successful and very successful initiatives utilize donor driven and/or a combination of donor and grantee driven strategies, whereas a majority of the moderately successful initiatives use primarily grantee driven strategies. Figure 5 shows a graph of funding approach in relationship to initiative success.

Figure 5. Graph of Donor vs. Grantee Driven Funding Approaches in Relation to Success



Note: No case studies fell into the “Not Successful” or “Somewhat Successful” categories.

While informants who stated that their initiatives were donor driven believe this approach correlates with success, they did acknowledge a risk in being overly directive. One informant commented that it is “not easy to remain sensitive as a donor without being meddling. You want to give grantees flexibility but you [also] need accountability.”

Operating, public foundations deserve special consideration when examining donor driven versus grantee driven strategies since they typically have very directed strategies. Two of the case study organizations, NFWF and CCMI, classify as operating, public foundations meaning they raise funds from donors to then, “re-grant” and give them away. These organizations have highly directed strategies focusing on very specific outcomes. NFWF’s Sea Turtle Conservation Fund initiative has a clearly defined goal: a reduction of incidental capture and direct exploitation of adults, and reduction or elimination of direct exploitation of sea turtle eggs. NFWF focuses funding specifically on strategies that work towards these goals. Similarly, CCMI directs all investments to strategies to support and implement the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA). Operating foundations, such as these examples, fund within strict strategic parameters intended to address a targeted outcome.

Focused vs. Relationship-Based

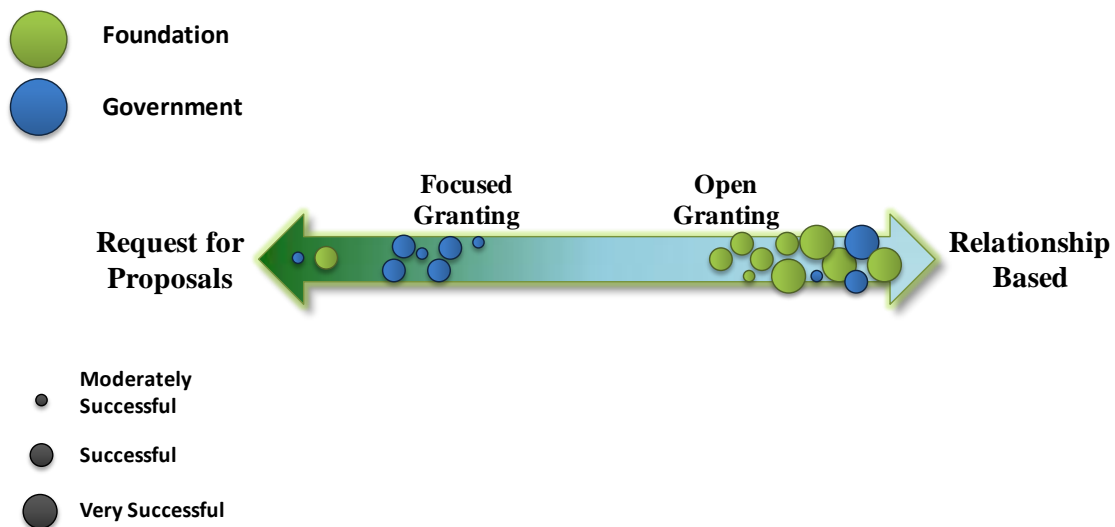
Donors identify funding opportunities using different grant-making styles along a spectrum ranging from a highly criteria-based approach of a competitive request for proposal (RFP) to a collaborative style of relationship-based approaches. Table 6 provides definitions of grant-making styles.

Table 6: Definitions for Styles of Grant-making

Grant-making Style	Definition
Relationship-based	Donor has relationship with grantee and both work together to determine project to fund
Open Granting	Donor provides looser criteria; accepts proposals within those criteria
Focused	Donor requests proposals with stricter criteria for approval
Request for Proposals	Donor outlines specific project(s) within a specific topic/issue/etc.; very strict criteria; open competition and review process

All but one of the foundations utilize relationship-based and open granting styles, whereas a strong majority of government groups have a focused granting style with only a few employing relationship-based strategies. Use of competitive RFPs is uncommon between both groups. All of the very successful initiatives and one-half of the successful initiatives employ open granting and/or relationship-based grant-making (see Figure 6 below).

Figure 6. Graph of Request for Proposal vs. Relationship Grant-Making Approaches in Relation to Success



Note: No case studies fell into the "Not Successful" or "Somewhat Successful" categories.

Strategic vs. Opportunistic

The donors reviewed for this study implemented varying grant-making portfolio approaches. These ranged from grant-making that is highly aligned with donor values and goals and does not deviate from a clear strategic plan or theory of change¹¹ to an approach that gives grants opportunistically towards set goals based on understanding and context. Table 7 below presents the definitions for each of the portfolio approaches described.

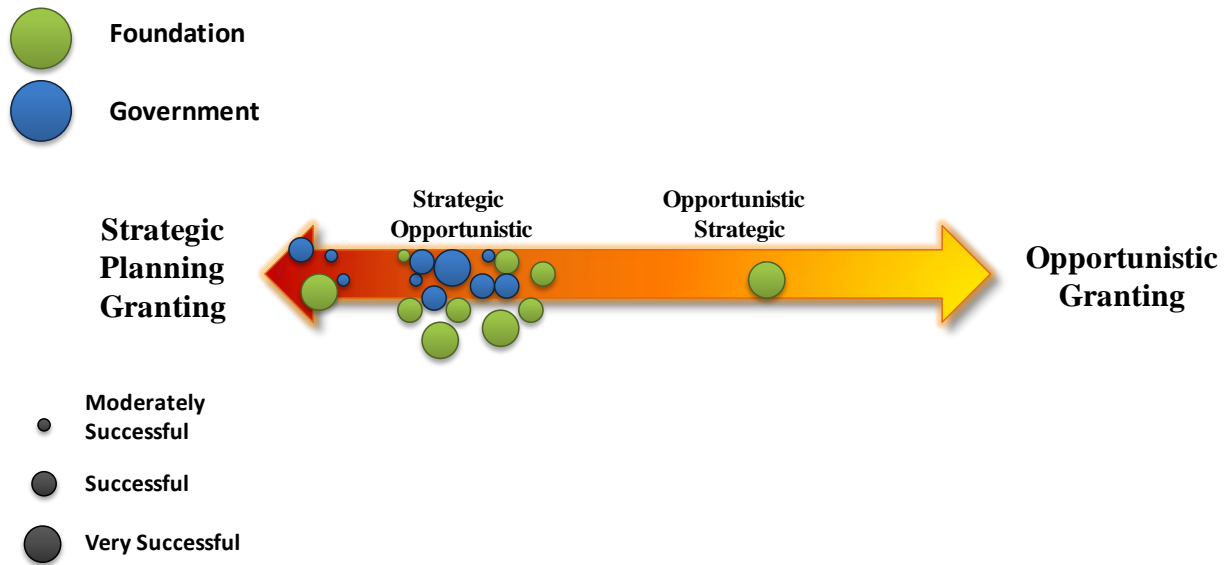
Table 7. Portfolio Approach Term Definitions

Term	Definition
Strategic Planning Grant-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have clear strategic plan and theory of change for the initiative • No room for deviation from strategic plan
Strategic Opportunistic Grant-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have strategic plan and/or theory of change in place for the initiative • Adaptive and maneuverable • Opportunistic at times
Opportunistic Strategic Grant-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal strategic plan or theory of change in place for the initiative • Guided by an informal strategy or partnerships • Opportunistic within context of informal strategy
Opportunistic Grant-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No strategic plan or theory of change for the initiative • Make opportunistic grants towards set goals based on understanding and context

A minority of donors used a strategic planning grant-making approach and zero implemented an opportunistic approach. A strong majority of case study funders use a mix of strategic and opportunistic portfolio approaches among foundation and government groups. This approach, called strategic-opportunistic grant-making is used by donors that have a strategic plan in place, but deviate from their strategy when opportunities present themselves. Informants expressed the conviction that having some room for opportunistic grant-making is important to advance goals and objectives of their programs. Only one donor took a more opportunistic strategic grant-making approach; the donor had no formal strategic plan, but made grants guided by an informal strategy or partnerships. Figure 7 offers a graph of portfolio approaches in relation to initiative success. Based on informant and document information, we estimate the degree to which each case study uses opportunistic versus strategic grant-making.

¹¹ "A theory of change is a comprehensive description of the theory that underlies all or part of an organization's work. As a goal implicitly describes the problem the organization seeks to address, a theory of change or causal model contains an implicit analysis of the causes of, or at least possible solutions to, the problem." Hewlett Foundation. 2003. Annual Report: *Update on the Hewlett Foundation's Approach to Philanthropy: The Importance of Strategy*. Hewlett Foundation.

Figure 7. Graph of Portfolio Approach in Relation to Success



Note: No case studies fell into the “Not Successful” or “Somewhat Successful” categories.

Role of Strategic Planning and Evaluation

Strategic Planning

A strong majority of case studies use a process for setting goals, outlining action plans, or developing strategic plans, with more than one-half of government donors and one-third of foundations stating that they sought to earmark funding specifically for a strategic planning process. During these processes, initiatives identify indicators for success, and in the case of a few government initiatives, align their evaluation criteria with the strategic planning document. Most organizations seek to ensure adherence to their strategic or action plans through formal or informal evaluation on an annual basis, at the program midpoint, or after phase completion. We provide additional details regarding evaluation in the section on evaluation below.

Both groups recognize the value of strategic planning and developing theories of change within the plan. A strong majority of case studies identified planning processes as a precondition for success and, for nearly one-half of cases, informants and/or documents described specific examples of how strategic or action planning processes led to successful initiative outcomes. One informant explained that it is easy to lose focus and be pulled in different directions, and noted that it is useful to have a document to reflect on to make certain day-to-day decisions are aligned with the initiative’s priorities and goals. Nevertheless, extensive planning processes do have trade-offs. One foundation has a lengthy planning process template that the respondent called both “empowering,” by bringing rigor and in-depth

understanding to the process, and “constraining” by hindering flexibility. Finding that right balance is important and the process of evaluation can play a role in identifying that balance.

The majority of case studies engaged external parties – key grantees, funding partners, government decision-makers, and experts in the field – during development of strategic plans for their ocean initiatives to ensure buy-in and increase the likelihood of initiative success. However, while a strong majority of government donors engaged external parties in their strategic planning, only a strong minority of foundations did so. Donors who did engage externally believed such outreach enhanced success. For instance, the GEF Pacific Island Oceanic Fisheries Management Project Midterm Evaluation stated that the success of the program was highly linked to the program’s “strong emphasis on planning and design and engagement of stakeholders” among other reasons.

Evaluation

All case studies use formal and/or informal evaluations over the course of their initiative. Evaluations provide funders with a helpful reminder of what the initiative is trying to accomplish, a tool for measuring the state of progress to completion, an opportunity to realign strategies and efforts with objectives and strategic goals, and a tool to improve initiative management.

“As much as two times per year we try to sit down with an independent consultant to evaluate external information and grant reports, to discuss our program outcomes, and [consider] our grant-making moving forward.”

- Informant addressing use of annual evaluations

During initiative planning, goal setting, and identification of implementation strategies, case studies set benchmarks and indicators to facilitate future evaluations of progress toward the achievement of goals, and initiative successes and failures. Indicators fall into two categories: quantitative (e.g., area conserved, number of MPAs created, number of policies adopted), or qualitative (e.g., increased capacity, improved quality of life, awareness raised). Case studies regularly identify both types of indicators as measures of performance, although informants also acknowledged that qualitative indicators are difficult to measure and often do not capture the full benefits of initiative activities.

The text that follows describes funders’ application of measures of performance, both quantitative and qualitative benchmarks and indicators to assess the achievement of and progress towards goals, the question of non-measurable outcomes, and the use of internal versus external evaluations.

Quantitative Indicators

A strong majority of case studies employed quantitative indicators as measures of success, with one-third more government funders using quantitative measures compared to the number of foundations. Measurable indicators, often quantifiable metrics, fell into three categories: process (e.g., laws enacted), threat reduction (e.g., fishing effort reduction), and environmental status (e.g., stock numbers). Although environmental status represents the most robust indicator of success, its use is rare. One respondent stated that process indicators were easy to measure while threat reduction and

environmental indicators were more difficult because of the timescales required to be able to identify and evaluate measurable change. The respondent did note, however, that measurement of threat reduction indicators could be relatively easy if project duration is at least 5 years. In many cases, these indicators inform annual, midterm, and terminal evaluations. Some respondents noted that intermediate result targets or benchmarks helped staff determine progress toward and completion of goals.

Qualitative Indicators

More than half of all case studies identified the use of qualitative indicators as a measure of success, with a roughly even split between foundation and government initiatives. Thus, while government donors use quantitative metrics nearly twice as frequently as qualitative indicators, foundations employ both types equally. Common trends included measures such as increased capacity, stakeholder buy-in and political support, awareness of resource value, effective use of conservation decision-making tools, and improved partnerships. Several respondents identified the value of qualitative indicators, observing that quantitative indicators often cannot capture these kinds of successes. For example, 2 respondents stated, “not all successes can be measured because the intent of the project was to build partnerships,” and, it is “hard to have exact measures for collaboration.” Another respondent noted that qualitative metrics are “frustratingly unscientific, but the kinds of changes these grants are trying to make are hard to quantify and whether our activities are making that particular impact is not easy” to define.

In addition, several informants stated that specified indicators (both quantitative and qualitative) did not always capture all of the important achievements, although they tried to convey these unspecified successes in other ways such as calling them out in reports or newsletters. One respondent stated that looking at cross-cutting issues, “issues more than ocean” such as “food security, health, environmental justice, etc.” were important for accounting for unanticipated or undefined successes.

Internal Evaluations

A minority of case studies use internal evaluations or “check-ins” to assess their management, process, and successes, often on an annual or semi-annual basis. Some initiatives use standardized progress reports or databases for this tracking of outcomes and accomplishments. One example is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Information Tracking System [HabITS], which captures habitat related accomplishments and has saved staff time and program money by reducing duplication of efforts in data entry.¹² Some case studies also use advisory committees to focus on measuring initiative success against indicators and measurements. Respondents who use these forms of internal evaluations view them as beneficial for initiative success.

External Evaluations

The majority of foundation case studies and a strong majority of governments utilize external evaluations to monitor initiatives. External evaluators are seen by case studies as being able to assess an initiative from a fresh and impartial perspective. One informant believed the initiative would not have been as successful without an external evaluation and subsequent adaptations to the approach

¹² <http://www.fws.gov/coastal/>. Accessed 8/18/2010.

based on evaluation findings. In some cases, funders commission the evaluation team to assess the future role of the program or initiative.

Evaluations as a Source of Insight into Donor Staff Capacity

Informants regularly discussed how evaluations help them to more clearly understand donor staffing capacity and how internal capacity helped or hindered the implementation of initiatives. In many cases, informants and documents noted that staff were competent, knowledgeable and committed, but also “stretched thin.” These shortfalls had varying affects on program implementation and achievements. Please refer to *X. Challenges* (page 109) for more detailed reflections on donor organization staffing capacity.

Evaluations as a Source for Sharing Lessons Learned and Adapting Implementation Strategies

A strong majority of the initiative case studies view evaluation processes as useful tools to share lessons learned, adapt implementation strategies, bring to light preconditions and key ingredients for maximizing program success, and help inform other programs or initiatives. One case study respondent mentioned that their midterm evaluation primarily served to convey lessons learned, and the majority of government evaluations specifically highlighted lessons learned. Many case studies identify evaluations as a valuable mechanism for adapting their implementation strategies. The majority of all case studies, and a strong majority of foundations, stated that these adaptations often led to more successful project outcomes by providing timely and detailed feedback, and ensuring that staff was kept abreast of initiative progress, successes, and challenges. In other cases, annual realignment of work plans to strategic plans served to improve program progress, “real-time.” One respondent stated that the organization takes a regional approach and revise its plan every 5 years, which ensures progress is regionally relevant and current. The findings and lessons learned from evaluations inform follow-up activities and, in some cases, help to create the framework for subsequent projects. One informant offered an example of a program with a small, geographically dispersed staff that improved its protocols to incorporate regular conversations between managers and implementers in order to overcome communication gaps identified in an evaluation. Other respondents mentioned evaluation results that prompted changes to their scales of investment to improve alignment with grantee capacity and increase initiative efficiency.

Shortfalls in Strategic Planning and Application of Lessons Learned

No trends were identified correlating the use of strategic planning and/or evaluations with degree of initiative success; although informants stated that it did benefit the success of the initiative. Initiatives classified as very successful had similar approaches to those categorized as successful and moderately successful. However, the level of initiative success appears to be attributed to the effectiveness of an initiatives’ planning process, the selection of appropriate indicators of performance, and the methods used for integrating insights and lessons learned from evaluations and then revising the strategy. Although strategic planning and evaluation are used extensively among case studies, a strong majority spoke to shortfalls in initiative outcomes due to flaws in the process design or integration of planning and evaluation activities. Two main themes emerged in this area as to which strategies fell short and

why. Many informants and evaluations spoke to the initial design of the initiative being flawed and/or the limited use of monitoring and evaluation hindering their ability to compile and apply lessons learned for initiative improvement. Each of these shortcomings is discussed in greater detail below.

Strategic Planning and Initiative Design

Informants and internal documents spoke to a number of flaws relating to strategic planning and initiative design. Many government case studies described both donors and grantees setting goals and outcomes that were unclear or unrealistic. For example, the PROFISH evaluation stated, "The program goal and objectives were clearly overly ambitious, given the funding, time horizon and human resources of the program." Many other government initiatives faced the same issue. Almost half of the foundation informants spoke to planning processes falling short simply because of the scale of the problem. One foundation donor said that the foundation's watershed and water quality strategies fell short because of the sheer geographic size of the region; in addition to underfunding the project, the donor lacked a clear understanding of how to effectively utilize grant money to solve the problem. Underfunding also characterized turtle reduction efforts. (See *VII. Scales of Investment*, page 62, for more information related to questions of scale). Informants also spoke about challenges they had encountered by not adequately assessing grantees' capacity for implementing strategies, and described how strategic planning efforts were hindered by grantees pursuing ideas that were not yet "ripe" to catalyze change.

Application of Lessons Learned for Improving Results

Donors also identified difficulties translating evaluation results into practical measures to change and improve initiative strategic design and implementation; such difficulties were noted primarily by government case studies. Informants reported that indicators to measure progress and success were not effectively linked to goals and outcomes, constraining the usefulness of evaluation results in guiding how to improve the initiative over time.

Distilling Donor Learning

The first part of *Examining Donor Practice* reported what donors do; this portion of the report distills informant responses to more open-ended questions that allowed them to share their learning and insights into what they believe are essential truths about achieving success in ocean conservation. Their reflections include, and go beyond the practices detailed above. The text that follows presents a set of preconditions for ocean conservation initiatives, followed by a compilation of key ingredients needed to achieve and sustain the successful momentum of those initiatives, and concludes with observations about steps to take to enhance success and avoid failures in ocean conservation initiatives.

Preconditions for Ocean Conservation Initiatives

We asked, "***What are the general preconditions for success in ocean conservation funding?***" In response, informants discussed many different preconditions for success. A majority of case studies stated the following three preconditions for "general" success for ocean conservation funding: *proper strategic planning and mechanisms for improving design approach, matching scale of problem and solution with human and financial capacity, and political will and public buy-in.*

Proper Strategic Planning and Mechanisms for Improving Design Approach

In spite of finding no correlation in this small data set between the use of strategic planning and/or evaluations with degree of initiative success, completing a comprehensive strategic plan that incorporates a robust mechanism for translating results into improved initiative design prior to grant-making increases return on investment, and the likelihood of achieving goals and outcomes. This insight is based on perceptions by informants, as well as trends and lessons identified by Blue Earth Consultants in several sections of this report (i.e., *The Central Role of Funding Partnership, Goals and Investment Strategies, Challenges*). Although a strong majority of initiatives engaged in some type of planning process, initiatives with more effectively designed planning processes derived greater value from their efforts than those that did not. Programs with clear goals and outcomes, complemented by a well thought out design and theory of change, can make a significant impact in the success of an initiative. In addition, developing robust indicators is important for measuring progress over the duration of the initiative. Monitoring progress during grant implementation is key to providing a means for identifying improvements and adapting strategies to increase potential for initiative success. Addressing opportunities and obstacles mid-course allows grantees to adjust goals and strategies to increase the likelihood of success. Implementing effective improvement strategies is not an exact science, but rather an art that requires skilled and knowledgeable staff. It is important to build in and allow for flexibility in the initiative design to take advantage of funding opportunities that arise and to move away from ineffective strategies. Mid-term evaluation provides a mechanism that can enable new perspectives to shed light on what is working and what can be improved. Building in mechanisms to increase donor and grantee accountability, with regular check points is also an important component.

One Perspective on Essential Key Ingredients in the Developing and Developed World for ABM:

"I would have doubled the amount of money for this initiative because all key ingredients for success were there. There are five:

1. High level decision-maker support to achieve policy objective. This includes either or both, public or private sector leaders, to achieve a policy or market-based objectives;
2. Cutting-edge, transparent public process;
3. Solid science, if do not have it, you do not know what to do;
4. Robust legal mandate; and
5. Sufficient funding.

This is largely the same in the international context - especially when you have a treaty organization, but it is more difficult to have all of the ingredients in place! Mustering that is much harder to do."

- Informant

Matching Scale of Problem and Solution with Human and Financial Capacity

Selection of appropriate scales to match the problem and solution with capacity was another element highlighted by donors, though more frequently among foundations than government organizations. Responses fell into three categories of scale – financial, temporal, and spatial. Financially, donors suggest making grants on a financial scale that grantees have the capacity to manage, but that are also big enough that the grantee has sufficient financial wherewithal to implement the grant. Temporally,

“Political support, policy opportunity, organizational capacity [are essential]. [It is] also important to do strategic assessment and follow-up with [updated] strategies that reflect [identified] obstacles and opportunities.”

- Informant speaking to essential preconditions for achieving ocean conservation initiative success

donors expressed the importance of taking a long-term systematic approach to initiative implementation. Spatially, donors stated that a combined top-down (regional to local) and bottom-up (local to national or regional) approach is the best method for supporting ocean conservation investments. Detailed information on scale is provided in VII. *Scales of Investment*, page 62.

Capacity can mean funder organizational capacity, financial capacity, and/or NGO capacity in the regions that they are investing. As one informant stated, to “make an impact, choosing the correct scale is important. [It is also] important to bite off a small enough problem that efforts are proportionate to size of problem and that you've thought through the impact you can have.” First and foremost, informants stated that knowledgeable donors with adequate funding are an essential precondition for success and that an initiative “needs donors who are knowledgeable in the cultural and political aspects of an area, and [program officers] with [direct] experience or at least access to someone who knows these things.”

At the same time, NGO organizational capacity and a committed staff is essential. All donors need an effective grantee base; however, lack of a sufficient base does not mean investment in an initiative should be avoided; private foundations stated that NGO capacity could be created over time if the donor is committed to the region or issue.

Political Will and Public Buy-In

A majority of case studies identified a need for political will and/or public buy-in as critical to influence key decision-makers and gain initiative support. Government case studies reiterated the importance of building the “willingness to implement by governments” as an essential precondition for program implementation. Depending on the scale of the project, regional and intergovernmental agreements may also be critical to have in place. Private donors focused on the importance of political support as well lasting political champions for establishing durable results. Building larger ocean conservation constituencies behind groups and “finding ways to marry conservation agendas with other things people care about” is a way to set up an initiative for success.

Other important preconditions mentioned by informants included: stakeholder engagement, legal framework, partnership, science, and long-term commitment.

Stakeholder Engagement

Engaging with stakeholders early on can have benefits down the road according to many funders. This factor is important at many scales and levels of projects from the transboundary to community-level work.

Legal Framework

Stable governments and policy frameworks can be essential components of ocean conservation success. Donors can help create these conditions over time.

Partnership

Coordination and cooperation among different partners, other donors, governments, and NGOs establish conditions for project success. Some projects require coordinating countries, NGOs, and other partners to have formal agreements outlined prior to the start of an initiative.

Science

Both natural and social science data are important for defining the problem, identifying causes, and setting priorities, and understanding solutions. Science can also assist with solving technical problems and assessing the success of programs. One informant reflected on feeling disappointed that science was not used during the planning stages of the initiative and pointed out that although science integration has significantly improved over the years, the ocean conservation movement would benefit tremendously from greater levels of science based decision-making for policy and management, noting “[Science] is not given its due appreciation.”

Long-term commitment

Many spoke of the need for making long-term commitments to an initiative and/or grantees, and for having staying power to see an issue to its completion.

Key Ingredients for Ocean Conservation Initiatives

We asked this group of funding experts ***“During this initiative what are (have been) the key ingredients, or essential elements to success, for achieving ocean conservation stated goals and outcomes?”***

Government informants and documents listed a wide range of key ingredients evenly across case studies with *capacity/constituency building* identified most frequently. Strong themes among foundations include *capacity/constituency building, partnership and coordination, adaptive management, and scale*. Both foundations and government funders noted the importance of *sustained government support*, though less frequently than the other themes. There was no regional clustering of themes. Trends among the most commonly identified key ingredients are discussed below:

Due Diligence

Robust due diligence on both the grantee performance and financial status are important for selecting the best organizations to move forward on achieving ocean conservation results.

Capacity/Constituency Building

Capacity and constituency building was the most commonly stated theme for both groups, with a majority of all case study informants identifying it as a key ingredient for ocean conservation success.

Informants mentioned the ways to build capacity and reach larger groups of constituents through new technologies, as well as more traditional, person-to-person exchanges, such as the fisherman exchanges that ICRAN-MAR funded in Mesoamerica on sustainable fishing practices and adoption. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service described the importance of providing technical assistance in more successfully developing capacity.

Other informants noted the importance of building the management and leadership skills of NGOs as a key ingredient for success. Packard's organizational effectiveness grant-making program is an example of a program helping to fill this need. Many informants expressed sentiments such as, "We need to target the management skills of the people who lead the NGOs themselves or that lead the primary programs in the NGOs. Many NGOs think that passion and enthusiasm are enough. It's not. People managing 15 people and \$2M is tough without the skills to manage." They also described the importance of a strong, informed and effective project management team. One informant stated that having local and well-known individuals in management positions not only helps build local capacity, but also helps to increase stakeholder trust and buy-in.

Frequent and clear communication between groups, and the creation and dissemination of relevant education and outreach documents was also considered important. External communication to the public and to grantees (via publications, newsletters, and reports) provides transparency that fosters trust and buy-in. Good communication between donors and grantees facilitates early alignment of indicators and management strategies, streamlining coordination and reducing project delays. The CRTR Communication Team found great value in continuing to work with established Working Groups and Centers of Excellence to produce tailored information for various target audiences. They created a suite of educational materials ranging from advisory briefs and guides, to reports, technical manuals and guidelines, and case-study analyses.

Partnership and Coordination

Sustaining partnerships is the second most commonly noted theme for both groups. A majority of foundation case study informants and almost one-half of the government informants stated that maintaining strong and successful partnerships led to ocean conservation achievements.

Informants not only discussed the importance of partners, partnership, and effective coordination but also emphasized that diverse types of partnerships and coordinating groups are required for ocean conservation (see also VI. *The Central Role of Funding Partnership*, page 51). Partnerships range from partnerships with NGOs and governments to intergovernmental organizations and other donors. They were not specific about which partners were most important, just that they are essential for success. They described the importance of willing partners who are ready to cooperate and to respect differences and boundaries of others. Many informants stated how much they value finding good

partners and working towards everyone's strengths. They also find great value in bringing unlikely allies to the table.

A number of case study evaluation documents actually spoke to partnerships and coordination as key reasons for success; for example, MBRS "Mid-Term Review and the Terminal Evaluation teams judged the participatory decision-making and coordination among the four countries to be one of the key factors in the project's success." The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program have heavily invested in partnerships since 1980. A guiding document of the organization states, "Over the next two decades [1980 to 2000], the program proved that a voluntary, incentive-based approach to habitat conservation works and [thus] has a significant future role in the Service's mission."

"Working with committed, kindred spirits who understand why it's important."

- Informant on the value of partnerships

"[You] have to have good partners identified. We've given lots of thought to that; who's there, what can they do, and more broadly, what are potential partners' specific strengths. [This is] why we respond to requests rather than go find someone doing work to give money to."

- Informant on the importance of NGO partnerships and coordination

Finally, donors described how pooling resources and capacity helps support successful initiatives. Donors working together are often better able to provide grantees with the capacity and resources they need to increase the likelihood of initiative success. Informants and documents also noted that identifying appropriate donor partners and building these relationships among donors requires a substantial effort, but agreed that the benefits are worth the time and energy.

Mechanisms for Continuous Improvement

A majority of informants consistently highlight the value of utilizing planning and evaluation in their programmatic implementation to inform initiative improvements, with more foundation informants stating this element as a key ingredient than government donors. Responses fell into two main categories: 1) the importance of flexibility and adaptability (mentioned most frequently); and, 2) the need for rigorous and inclusive planning processes to update strategic plans. Foundation informants reported encouraging grantees to be frank about challenges they encounter so that donors may be adaptive in their responses to grantees and changing initiative needs. Both groups recognized that foundations have more flexibility to update strategies and reallocate resources than government funders, though government funders nonetheless appreciated its importance in improving an initiative's likelihood for overall success.

Sustained Government Support

Less than a quarter of the foundations and government funders stated sustained government support as a key ingredient. It is surprising that this theme was not discussed as a key ingredient more frequently; when informants were asked, "***If there is government support and involvement could this change the level of impact? What if there is no government support?***" a majority said that government support and involvement increased the impact ocean conservation funding initiatives. Many spoke to the need

for government support in the durability of the ocean conservation outcome. They noted that if government support is not in place, it is likely that the project will not sustain itself, especially if a private donor exits the initiative. A related point mentioned was the importance of establishing long-term sustainable ocean conservation funding mechanisms.

One-half of case studies stated that the need for government support to increase impact depends on a multitude of factors, as there are many other variables and approaches to consider that are context dependent. Coastal land acquisition programs, for example, are not reliant on political will or government support, whereas implementing limited access rights would likely fail without the backing and support of the government. Thus, the need to gain government buy-in is very dependent on the issues and the strategies being implemented. Informants recognize that when there is a strong government partner, many actions that help to bolster success can happen that would otherwise not be possible. Others stated that, while valuable, government support could be challenging to acquire. Still others agreed that while government support is important, a strong private partnership could also provide a powerful means for advancing ocean conservation agendas.

Overall, informants believe that gaining government support is usually worthwhile and helps support the implementation of more long-term, sustainable options. Informants also shared that in some places obtaining government support simply is not a realistic expectation, and some places would “just be a rubber stamp.”

Creating Success in Donor Practice

Donor practices play an immeasurable role in establishing conditions for initiative success. The funders reviewed for this study use a variety of practices, with most initiatives using grantee selection strategies that are driven by a combination of donor and grantee priorities, and initiative formulation approaches that use a more flexible and collaborative “open” or “relationship-based” style. Across case studies, donors use strategic or action planning and also undertake evaluations to identify important gaps and shortfalls to address. Employing a robust strategic planning process that involves grantees, decision-makers and experts creates the space for clearly defining goals, identifying appropriate implementation strategies, and aligning donor expectations with realistic achievements. It can also help to instill greater confidence in an initiative’s potential for success and fast track the approval of funding. For example, the GEF Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project was able to work through the application submission and grant approval process two to three times more quickly than the standard approval timelines due to its strategic planning process.

Using evaluations, whether internal or external, provides donors and grantees a mechanism by which to accumulate lessons learned, gain insights into what has worked and what has not, and reflect upon ways in which to improve initiatives. Use of regular internal reviews allows donors to consistently reflect on initiative progress, while strategically timed external reviews offer a third party perspective and insights that may be less obvious to funders and grantees. These evaluations rely on quantitative indicators and qualitative indicators to help assess progress and inform evaluations. The use of metrics for measuring success provides an additional framework for gauging progress, and although qualitative indicators are

often difficult to measure, they are essential for capturing achievements that are not quantitatively measurable. Evaluations also act as useful tools to identify lessons learned, and conditions for maximizing program success, and provide a mechanism for encouraging improvement in initiative strategic design, implementation strategies, and management.

Summary of Key Findings

Below are the key findings for donor practice, and preconditions and key ingredients for success.

Donor Practice

A strong majority of foundations use a mix of donor and grantee driven strategies, with a strong majority of the very successful and successful initiatives primarily utilizing donor driven and/or a combination of donor and grantee driven strategies. Foundations almost exclusively utilize relationship-based and open granting styles; a strong majority of government groups use focused granting style with relatively few employing relationship-based strategies.

A strong majority of case studies use a specified process for setting goals, outlining action plans, or developing strategic plans. Informants and documents consistently point to increased success as a result of planning processes, and nearly one-half of informants described specific examples of how their planning process were directly correlated with more successful outcomes.

All case studies use formal and/or informal evaluations over the course of their initiative to guide and gauge progress toward goals, institute course corrections, and generally improve initiative management; a strong minority use internal evaluations and a strong majority commission external evaluators to offer feedback and insights. The majority of all case studies, and strong majority of foundations, stated that the adaptations made as a result of evaluation lessons learned often led to more successful project outcomes.

Preconditions for Successful Ocean Conservation Initiatives

Three most common preconditions for ocean conservation identified by informants are:

1. Matching scale of problem with capacity;
2. Proper planning through regular review and evaluation; and,
3. Political will/buy in.

Preconditions for foundation and government ocean conservation funding were slightly different. Foundations emphasized political will and buy-in, capacity, and strategic planning and adaptive management, while government donors emphasized political will and buy-in, stakeholder engagement, partnership and strategic planning, and adaptive management. There was no strong difference of preconditions by region or developing and non-developing world.

Key Ingredients for Sustaining Ocean Conservation Initiatives

A majority of case study informants identified capacity/constituency building, partnership and coordination as key ingredients for achieving ocean conservation goals and outcomes. Less than one-quarter of informants stated political will and government support as an essential means for increasing

success. Another one-half stated that their initiatives would be improved and more durable with government support.

Lessons Learned to Enhance Success and Avoid Failure in Donor Practice

Below we review some of the lessons learned on donor practice and examine how these insights can help donors in the future enhance success and avoid failure.

Enhancing Success

The sections above, *Preconditions for Ocean Conservation Initiatives* and *Key Ingredients for Ocean Conservation Initiatives*, outline conditions Blue Earth Consultants and informants identified for created greater success in ocean conservation initiatives. Refer to those sections for additional information.

Preconditions for increasing success include:

- Proper strategic planning and mechanisms for improving design approach;
- Matching scale of problem and solution with human and financial capacity;
- Political Will and Public Buy-In;
- Stakeholder engagement;
- Legal framework;
- Partnership;
- Science; and
- Long-term commitment.

Key ingredients for sustaining success include:

- Due diligence;
- Capacity/Constituency Building;
- Partnership and coordination;
- Mechanisms for Continuous Improvement; and
- Sustained government support.

Recipes for Success

- ✓ *Use open granting and relationship-based grant-making to improve potential for identifying more successful ocean conservations opportunities.*
- ✓ *Use strategic plans to help staff make day-to-day decisions that align with and support the initiative’s goals and outcomes.*
- ✓ *Use evaluation mechanisms for identifying lessons learned and continually improving implementation strategies.*
- ✓ *Provide evaluation feedback to grantees in a timely manner to remain agile and quickly adapt strategies based on findings.*
- ✓ *Solicit government involvement when seeking to incorporate the results of a specific project into law. Utilize private sector local hosts to help governments understand economics and what they could lose by not conserving.*

Avoiding Failures

Strategic planning processes need to build in strategies of checks and balances to ensure that flaws in the initiative design are discovered early in the process. Just having a planning process is not enough; it must be thoughtful and donors must have a good understanding of the region, issues, and scale of the problem to set realistic goals and expectations, and have a clear understanding of the impact their

funding amount can make. Soliciting grantee, decision-maker, and expert input can help fill knowledge gaps, opportunities for early buy-in, and illuminate potential challenges or areas of pushback.

Evaluation of initiative progress can be a waste of time and financial resources if indicators for success are inadequate or do not properly reflect achievement of goals and outcomes. They can also be wasted if systems are not in place to translate evaluation findings and lessons learned into initiative improvement processes.

In addition to the problems described in *Shortfalls in Strategic Planning, Application of Lessons Learned* (page 40) informants and documents identified other aspects of donor practices that hindered initiative success.

Ineffective or poor leadership

Effective leadership in key grantee partners is essential in promoting initiative success. Poor leadership within grantee partners can reduce likelihood of achieving goals and outcomes, create both internal and external challenges, reduce the credibility of an organization and reduce efficiency. One respondent noted the significant difficulties that arose from engagement with a grantee with an unsupportive and ineffective leader. The donor delayed communicating these concerns to the grantee's board for several years, and as a result, the initiative fell short of expectations and required additional time and resources to reconsider strategies and restore progress. In hindsight, the donor wished they had stepped in earlier to recommend the removal of poor leadership. Conducting robust and grantee and financial due diligence can help illuminate issues early on and help minimize the potential for challenges down the road.

Rigid funding structure

Substantial challenges can arise when funding structures prevent flexibility and adaptability of financial resources as initiatives grow and develop, a hindrance described most often by government donors. One government respondent described the marked difference between initiatives that track project scopes closely versus those that allow for more flexibility. They noted that rigid structures limited the ability to be innovative and adapt. As a result, opportunities for achieving greater success were lost. Due to these shortfalls, the organization is now specifically including adaptive management language into many of its contracts.

Cumbersome/complicated application and reporting requirements

Several informants, from both foundation and government, described frustration with the inefficiencies that have arisen from cumbersome, archaic, or confusing application procedures and reporting requirements. Internally, many informants noted outdated information management systems that prevented easy report generation and data analysis. They also regularly stated that responding to the demands of unwieldy reporting structures often came at the expense of grantee management, particularly with unsupportive information management systems and limited staff capacity. Other informants talked about the problem of language barriers. Many donor grant applications and reports must be submitted in English and/or via paper mail, reducing the funder's ability to make grants to local institutions; often the organizations least able to meet these requirements are those that need the most support. In addition, smaller organizations may have limited experience working with larger donor organizations or partnerships coordinated under an umbrella organization, and may not be skilled at effectively communicating with donors under these circumstances. As such, projects need clear reporting systems that everyone understands. Informants underscored the need to find ways to streamline these application and reporting processes, offer more transparency, and establish guidelines that are multilingual, online, and uncomplicated.

Avoiding Failures

- ✓ *Take the time to gain a clear understanding of the region, issues, and scale of challenge the initiative is working to address. Incorporate this knowledge into the strategic planning process, or include experts in the process to help define aspects of the initiative's geography or issues that are not well understood.*
- ✓ *Ensure that mechanisms are in place to translate lessons learned and evaluation insights into improved initiative practices.*
- ✓ *Conduct robust grantee and financial due diligence.*
- ✓ *Address ineffective or poor leadership of key grantees in a timely manner. Delaying changes wastes resources and can have a significant negative impact on an initiative.*
- ✓ *Be aware of the potential negative impact that personality conflicts and incompatible viewpoints among donor staff and between donor staff and grantees can have on initiative success.*
- ✓ *Do not assume that small organizations are skilled at communicating effectively with donors when donors are organized in partnerships under a larger umbrella organization.*
- ✓ *Avoid cumbersome donor application, reporting and evaluation procedures. Reporting requirements that are too frequent, lengthy or do not consider language differences can be overwhelming to grantees and lead to slow responses, noncompliance, or incomplete/inaccurate reports. Create grant applications and reporting processes that are clear, simple, and sensitive to language barriers. Online grant application and reporting is also very helpful.*

VI. The Central Role of Funding Partnership

Throughout this report, partnership is highlighted as a main theme. A majority of informants mention partnership as a primary goal, effective strategy, challenge, and strategy shortfall. This element is discussed further as a key ingredient and precondition for success in *V. Examining Donor Practices* (page 31). If implemented effectively, partnership can greatly improve results of ocean and coastal conservation funding achievements, and if not, it can greatly hinder success.

Since partnership is such an important theme in so many areas throughout this report, we are devoting an entire section to the topic. This section outlines the different types of partnerships that the case studies describe and differentiate, such as formal and informal partnership. We also cover the different roles that partners can play and the structures wherein collaboration takes place. Since sources often asserted the value of partnerships, we discuss how partnership can enhance conservation impact. This section also covers some of the challenges that donors face when engaging in funding and non-funding partnerships. Finally, we end with a summary of key findings, lessons learned, and methods for enhancing success and avoiding failure in partnership.

Highlighted Key Findings for The Central Role of Funding Partnership

- Same-sector (intrasectoral) partnerships can prove to be less cumbersome and require less investment in time to build relationships, whereas cross-sector (intersectoral) partnerships, such as public-private partnerships or partnerships with industry can take a considerable amount of time to build. In these types of partnerships, parties must clearly communicate intent, motivation, and desired outcome for partnership so that there are no conflicts of interest or surprises.
- All of the very successful and successful donors engaged in either collaborative or formal partnerships, though partnership is not necessarily a prerequisite for success.

Partnership Structure and Engagement

All donor case studies analyzed in this report participated in some form of partnership and in many cases, several types of partnerships. Collaboration can be either formal or informal. In some cases, donors participated in partnerships that are highly structured, but lack a written agreement that would classify them as formal. We define these partnerships as *collaborating partnerships*. In addition, our research shows that partnerships can be categorized by the parties engaging in partnership as well as the sectors they represent. We found that both same-sector (intrasectoral) and cross-sector (intersectoral) developed and coordinated partnerships. In order to understand the partnerships in which our case studies engaged, we provide brief definitions of the different relationships described by informants and by donor internal documents. Table 8 provides brief definitions of each of the partnership categories described in this section.

Table 8. Overview of Partnership Definitions

Partnership Structure	Definition
<i>Formal</i>	Link multiple parties through a structured cooperative agreement (e.g., Letter of Intent (LOI), memorandum of understanding (MOU), formal charter, contract) to formalize work toward common or complementary goals and strategies, and/or exchange of funds.
<i>Collaborating</i>	Multiple donors have a coordinated approach, but without formal agreements. Partnerships may have third party coordination. Typically formed when there are significant overlaps in goals, strategies, and/or geographies. Partners consult frequently to discuss grant-making strategies and identify how their efforts can work in conjunction.
<i>Informal</i>	Loose collaboration through non-strategic communications, sharing information on grantees, knowledge sharing, or networking. Often a precursor to initiating a formal or collaborating partnership.
Partnership Engagement	Definition
<i>Intrasectoral</i>	Formal or informal collaboration between two or more entities within the same sector.
<i>Intersectoral</i>	Cross-sector partnerships between two or more entities, representing two or more sectors. Can include a public-private partnership and non-traditional partnerships.

Partnership Structures

Formal Partnership

Formal partnerships are those engagements that link multiple parties through an exchange of funds and/or a legal cooperative agreement such as a letter of intent, memorandum of understanding, memorandum of agreement, formal charter, or contract. Formal partnerships often unite parties

Formal Partnerships to Enhance California's Marine Life Protection Act

In 2003, the Packard Foundation engaged Resources Legacy Fund Foundation (RLFF) in a formal partnership to develop and implement the California Coastal and Marine Initiative, a sub-program of Packard's Conservation and Science Program. RLFF and Packard have a formal grant agreement that outlines the goals, objectives, and expected outcomes of the initiative. RLFF staff effectively act as program officers, allocating grants to organizations working towards establishing a network of MPAs along California's coast, integrating ecosystem-based management in conservation activities, supporting the work to strengthen the capacity of the State of California's Ocean Protection Council, building public constituencies for ocean and coastal conservation, and developing public and private sources of funding to sustain ocean and coastal conservation efforts in the state. RLFF has also signed an MOU with the California Department of Fish and Game and its parent Resources Agency formalizing a partnership to implement the Marine Life Protection Act. The public-private partnership has been effective since RLFF is able to complement state authority to establish MPAs with timely and flexible support for implementation activities the state cannot address as quickly. For example, RLFF responded in "real time" to resolve technical support needs during the initiative's critical stakeholder engagement process.

towards common or complementary goals and strategies. A strong majority of government case studies entered into a formal partnership. Many government informants shared that whenever there was an exchange of funds, such as a co-funded project, they were required to create a formal agreement. One government informant stated that "if [a partner] is giving us money, we have a formal agreement on how the money will be used." Formal partnerships were established to develop compatible goals and strategies, to link multiple initiatives, and to legally outline which party was responsible for implementing or funding components of a

project. A strong minority of foundations have engaged in formal partnerships, some with NGOs and others with government entities. The Packard Foundation's California Coastal and Marine Initiative is a clear example of a formal partnership between the foundation and the implementing NGO Resources Legacy Fund Foundation. In the text box above, we describe the formal partnership in more detail.

Collaborating Partnership

A collaborating partnership defines when multiple donors have a structured, coordinated approach without a formal cooperative agreement. These partnerships are formed when there are significant overlaps in goals, strategies, geographies, or a combination of these. Partners work closely and

frequently consult with one another. They discuss grant-making strategies and identify how their efforts can work in conjunction with one another. In some cases, participants work together to develop complementary strategies, and at times third-party coordination is also a component of a collaborating partnership. Costs for third-party coordinators, such as the Consultative Group on Biological Diversity (CGBD), are usually covered by the donor partners themselves. One informant shared that they worked closely with a group of funders to “build a combined strategy, then sat down and figured how to divvy up the strategy to make sure it has funding coverage.”

The majority of foundation case studies have entered into collaborating partnerships. A foundation donor described their collaborating partnership as “a number of interrelated tracts of work.” Several of these partnerships came about because multiple funders were working with the same geography. For example, collaborating partnerships exist in the Gulf of California, Coral Triangle, broader

Western and South Pacific, and California. In the Gulf of California, funders entered into a close collaboration around the protection and recovery of the vaquita porpoise. The text box to the right elaborates on the purpose and structure of this partnership.

Collaborating to Save One of the World’s Rarest Marine Mammals

Multiple donors investing in the Gulf of California region have developed a collaborative partnership with third party coordination by the Consultative Group on Biological Diversity. A subset of these donors has come together to develop a funding strategy to protect and recover the vaquita porpoise population in the Upper Gulf of California. Three foundations—Packard, Marisla, and Walton— in collaboration with two funding NGOs—WWF and Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza—have come together to co-develop a multi-approach plan to reduce vaquita bycatch, increase opportunities for alternative livelihoods, increase enforcement, and increase collection of scientific and monitoring data. The funders communicate regularly to identify priority strategies and work with key grantee partners to implement these strategies, playing to their strengths and expertise. In addition, the foundations have begun to foster a relationship with Mexican donors and government, working to leverage local support.

Informal Partnership

Informal partnership describes loose collaboration through non-strategic communications, sharing information on grantees as part of due diligence for proposals, sharing other types of information, or networking. Although informal partnerships do not formally join parties, it is still possible to experience an impact from these interactions and it is a necessary precursor to initiating a formal or collaborating partnership. One respondent commented that their organization “found that informal [exchanges] and just talking as needed has been a good approach.” Another informant said informal partnerships “have been very effective in achieving our results.”

Partnership Engagement

Intrasectoral Partnership

This type of partnership is defined as formal or informal collaboration between two or more entities within the same sector. Examples of intrasectoral collaboration include foundation-to-foundation and government-donor-to-government-donor (state, federal, bilateral, or multilateral) partnerships.

Our analysis showed that donors most frequently entered into partnerships with others from their own sector. A strong majority of foundations partnered with other foundations and there are a wide variety of foundation sector donors who are collaborating within ocean and coastal conservation. Each of the foundation case studies described partnerships of varying formalities with multiple foundation donors. Foundations have built a strong network of marine funders that are, in some cases, facilitated by third parties such as CGBD's Marine Working Group. One of the overall goals of this working group is to "promote collaboration and cooperation within the marine conservation community"¹³ focusing primarily on philanthropic donors.

All government donors partnered with other government entities. Governments often develop explicit formal partnerships for particular processes across other government agencies. As mentioned above, governments most often participated in partnerships with other government donors to link programs in order to increase investment impact, collaborate in the implementation of an initiative, or share program cost. Some government partners act as a convener of multiple government donors to help increase regional-level coordination.

Intersectoral Partnership

Partnerships such as these occur across sectors and can include two or more entities, representing two or more sectors. Other terms to describe these forms of partnership include public-private partnership or non-traditional partnerships. Intersectoral partnerships can include, but are not limited to the following examples:

- Foundation sector donor/government (public-private);
- Funder/industry; and
- Funder/stakeholders.

Foundations, compared to government donors, showed the largest incidence of intersectoral partnership, forming relationships with other foundations outside of their ocean conservation focal area(s) (i.e., health care, economic development) and/or multiple sectors of government. Several foundation informants stated that they had entered into formal partnerships with government as part of a public-private partnership. These partnerships resulted in increased levels of ocean governance, the development of MPA networks, increased enforcement, and facilitation of science for decision-making.

¹³ Source: Consultative Group on Biological Diversity. cgbd.org/programs/marine-conservation. Accessed August 20, 2010.

It is important to point out that foundations must be aware of risks and concerns when engaging specifically in government partnerships. Funding partnerships between government agencies and foundations can lead to claims of lobbying for a specific government action and pushback from stakeholders and resource users. Foundations can mitigate these negative perceptions by being transparent and clearly communicating the intent, purpose, governance structure, and flows of fund for the partnership. Not taking the time to have thorough discussions, assessment of risks, and due diligence on the formation and implementation of partnerships can lead to failure. Many foundations use an intermediary organization to give some separation to the partnership. Several of the foundation/government partnerships identified in this report were created through an intermediary organization that was the official partner of each donor organization and managed the relationship between them. For example, CCMI (through the Resource Legacy Fund Foundation) developed a partnership with California Resources Agency (CRA) for the implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative, described in the text box on page 53. Similarly, CRA formed a partnership with the California Ocean Science Trust to partner and leverage funding with California’s Ocean Protection Council for the development of the MPA Monitoring Enterprise for monitoring the state’s network of marine protected areas. Although building partnerships through an intermediary organization is not required or common, we believe it can improve the success of the partnership. In addition, several U.S. states developed mechanisms for private donors to fund state-level conservation and science-based decision-making. For example, the state of Oregon created a legislatively mandated, foundation-funded task force to explore best practices of such mechanisms via a state university system. Other sectors that funders collaborated with include consultants, media, academia, and private landowners.

We determined that a high number of donors engage in both intrasectoral and intersectoral partnerships; only a quarter of all case studies (all government but one) entered into partnerships with only members of their own sector.

Donor-Grantee Partnership

Interestingly, many donors stated that they view their relationships with grantees as a form of intersectoral partnership. Donors communicated that the “effectiveness rests on the grantees’ effectiveness; we are a series of nested partnerships.” Another stated that “grantees are considered partners; we can’t do it without them.” This sentiment shows how donors view the interactions with grantees as being part of an overall collaboration. Through the course of this research and several other projects, we have seen many examples of the importance of good communication and working relationships between donors and grantees, as well as alignment among grantees. These can be critical components of effective implementation and initiative durability. While the use of “partnership” in these cases is true in the purest definition of the word, for the purposes of this analysis and the discussion presented in this section of the report, we limit partnerships to funding partnerships. Additional information on the crucial role of collaboration between donors and grantees in designing and rolling out successful ocean conservation efforts is provided in *V. Examining Donor Practice, Donor Portfolio Approaches* (page 31).

Impacts of Partnership on Success

A strong majority of case study informants stated that partnership was an important factor in the success of their initiative. Many informants used words like “critical,” “crucial,” and “essential.” Partnerships enabled donors to increase their effectiveness by increasing their ability to implement their strategy, expand the geographic scope of their impact, and leverage more funds for the same issue or region. Donors shared thoughts on the impact of partnership to their initiative using very positive language. Below are some examples of how donors spoke of this impact:

- “Couldn’t have otherwise done the project.”
- “We didn’t have the resources to do it alone.”
- “It’s smart business and it resonates with our board if we can talk about efficiency and leveraging our resources.”
- “Essential to success; no one gets anything done alone in this country.”

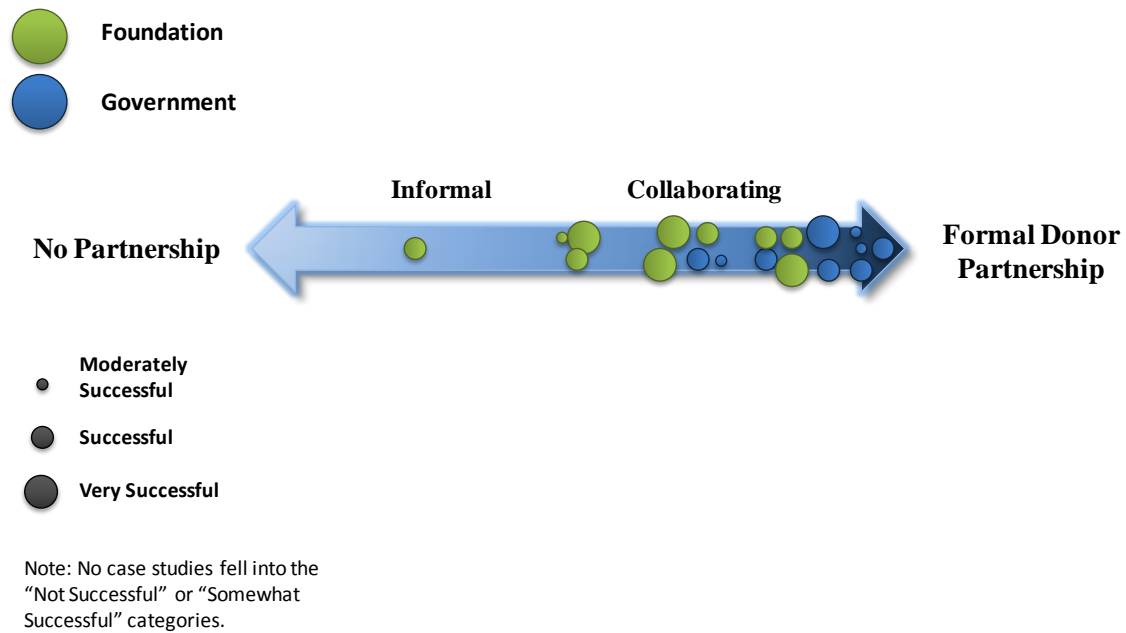
Among the case studies that we reviewed, there are several examples that support the conclusion that partnership was and is a critical component to the success of an initiative. Of these examples, PEMSEA shows us how integral partnership is in achieving coordinated regional governance on pollution issues in East Asia (refer to page 23 for an overview of PEMSEA). An overarching theme of the PEMSEA initiative is “to build and strengthen coastal and ocean governance in the seas of East Asia through intergovernmental, interagency and multi-stakeholder partnerships.” All of PEMSEA’s major achievements stemmed from strong partnerships including regional integrated coastal management (ICM) models and developing institutional arrangements to facilitate regional mechanisms for coordinating coastal and ocean governance. PEMSEA sources stated that partnership was essential in creating success and agreed internally to continue to implement this approach.

Other donors who provided insights on partnership shared that partnership had an impact; however, the language that they used to describe their partnerships was not as strong as mentioned above. Of this group, several informants stated that partnership helped to broaden the impact of their programs, but was not an essential component of success.

We performed a cross-comparison of the types of partnerships that case study donors were engaged in with their degree of initiative success. We determined that the majority of very successful donors engaged in collaborative partnerships, while those that were classified as successful most commonly engaged in formal partnerships. Figure 8 shows that success is clearly tied to engagement in collaborative or formal partnerships.

Although sources did suggest that partnership could be of enormous importance to achieving success, it was not a required component of success. Many of the informants expressed the view that an individual funder could make an impact depending on the scale of the problem and/or the issue; if a funder had sufficient funds, it could also make an impact within one region.

Figure 8. Graph of Partnership vs. Portfolio Approach in Relation to Success



Challenges in Partnership

As described above, a strong majority of case studies noted that partnership could be a key factor in initiative success. Interestingly, partnership and coordination challenges were also two of the most commonly identified source of setbacks. Overall, respondents described challenges arising from the complexities of forming strong partnerships and the fact that coordination takes more time, money and energy than might be expected.

Respondents stated that while many donor groups often have some level of communication and interaction among them (either formal or informal), they still lack the level of coordination and dialogue needed to increase effectiveness further. Some speculate that this fact is partly due to funding organizations’ feeling a sense of ownership over an issue or area or that their own internal initiative strategies are a priority over a collective strategy developed through partnership. This lack of coordination has, at times, led to inconsistencies, created confusion among grantee organizations or stakeholder groups, and reduced the ability to leverage or attract additional funding. One respondent also noted that poor communication and coordination among donor groups has led to NGOs “selling” the same program elements and budget to different funding organizations.

“It would be great for [all ocean funders] to agree on how to define the threats, what are strategies, where do we agree and disagree, and where are we making investments, are there gaps, sharing lessons learned, activities to implement. Not necessarily to try to get funding to the same place, just some alignment on why we’re doing what we’re doing.”

-Informant

Respondents also identified the coordination of donor initiatives and grantees as a challenge. Specific coordination challenges varied widely between issues and across target geographies. There were also

no trend differences between developing and developed countries. Respondents stated that coordination can require significant donor time and money to coordinate grantees, form grantee partnerships, and maintain consistent dialogue to ensure initiative progress is on track. Donors stated that often the engagement with grantees was overly burdensome and time consuming.

Creating Success in Partnership

We show that partnership is a key factor for increasing success in marine conservation donor initiatives. However, developing and engaging in partnerships can present challenges if not executed properly. This next section outlines key findings on how donors effectively engage in partnership and steps and considerations they undertook to create success in partnership. In addition, we share lessons learned and other Blue Earth Consultants insights that can help donors in the future avoid repeating similar past mistakes.

Review of Key Findings

The key findings for partnerships are discussed below.

Intrasectoral vs. Intersectoral

Case study donors engaged in both same-sector and cross-sector partnerships. Both types of partnership have unique benefits. Although there are challenges in building relationships, intrasectoral partnerships can prove to be less cumbersome and require less investment in time to build relationships. Successful intrasectoral partnerships among donors were often created in an organic way as a result of alignments in goals, geographies, and/or grantees.

Intersectoral partnerships, such as public-private partnerships or partnerships with industry can take a considerable amount of time to build. In these types of partnerships, parties must clearly communicate intent, motivation, and desired outcome for partnership so that there are no conflicts of interest or surprises.

Engage in Structured Partnerships

Our research showed that donors who engage in either collaborative or formal partnerships could experience greater success than those involved in informal partnerships. All of the very successful and successful donors engaged in either collaborative or formal partnerships. Within these partnerships, parties clearly designate roles, targeting effort and leveraging funds.

Going it Alone: When Partnership is not Needed

Partnership is not necessarily a prerequisite for success. Donors can experience success without partnership if they thoughtfully and strategically select their focal issue and/or the scale that they select to work within or if they have sufficient funds to focus on a given issue or within a specific geographic area.

Lessons Learned to Enhance Success and Avoid Failures in Partnership

Below we review some of the lessons learned that we identified during research on partnerships and examine how these lessons learned can help donors in the future enhance success and avoid failure.

Enhancing Success

Although partnership can be an important contributing factor to achieving success, there are steps that donors must follow to enhance and increase opportunities for successful partnerships. Conducting thorough due diligence on potential partners prior to entering into a partnership is critical to success. Understanding a potential partner's goals, internal capacity, and organizational structure can prevent unexpected issues and potential conflicts of interest. Some of the most successful partnerships identified within this study show that engaging partners with strong leadership capacity can increase the effectiveness of a partnership. Strong leadership has several benefits to partnership including increasing the durability of a partnership and bringing strategic, visionary thinkers to the table to collaboratively develop funding strategies.

Knowing your partner's limitations is also a key contributor of success for partnership. One initiative donor built a prospective partner into their overall implementation strategy, only to find that the partner was not eligible to receive funds from their parent

organization. As a result, the donor had to seek another eligible partner to play the role that had been set for the former partner. Having a strong contingency plan in place to address setbacks such as these can prevent loss of momentum and wasted operational costs.

As mentioned previously, creating and maintaining relationships require a considerable administrative and financial investment. Appointing a third party to coordinate partnerships can release donors from the administrative burden of performing due diligence and communicating with partners and grantees. Third parties assisted donors with identifying partnership opportunities, performing due diligence, coordinating meetings and communications, and more.

Recipes for Success

- ✓ Conduct a sufficient level of due diligence and risk analysis prior to engaging in partnerships.
- ✓ Engage in structured partnerships; either collaborative or formal.
- ✓ Clearly develop and implement a robust governance structure, clarify roles, develop and implement metrics to measure success, and define an appropriate communication strategy.
- ✓ Engage partners with strong leadership.
- ✓ Design partnerships around manageable focal areas: species, ecosystems, regions, and/or threats.
- ✓ When administrative capacity is not sufficient to manage partnerships, enlist a third party to coordinate.

The majority of successful case study partnerships focused on one species, ecosystem, region (or sub-region), and/or threat. Narrowing the focus of a partnership allowed donors to develop a clear and realistic strategy for conservation and management efforts.

Avoiding Failures

Our analysis of coastal and ocean initiatives provided some lessons learned on how to avoid failure in future efforts. We observed situations where donors had entered into partnerships but did not follow through on the financial and human investment required to make the partnership work effectively. Donors often enter into partnerships for different reasons (e.g., strategic grant-making, learning, or dialogue). While having different motives for partnership is acceptable, these motives should be clearly communicated to other members to avoid misunderstandings about how a donor will fit within a partnership strategy.

A review of partnership activities among the case study donors showed that there have been significant challenges and failures when attempting to partner with the private/business sector, with few examples of successful partnership. Although partnership with industry should not be discouraged, extra care must be taken to ensure that the private sector partner has genuine intentions for the partnership's success and that it is not attempting to improve the "green" image of the company.

Public/private partnerships between governments and foundations can be sensitive due to the risk or perception that foundations are seeking to influence government action, which can elicit stakeholder pushback. These issues can be avoided if the necessary time is taken to develop a robust partnership that is undertaken through discussion, risk assessment, and due diligence.

Finally, for all partnerships, there is a need to annually revisit and assess the effectiveness of a partnership and make changes if needed.

Avoiding Failures

- ✓ Avoid entering into partnerships where parties have not clearly communicated their intention and willingness to participate.
- ✓ For government partnerships in particular take time to assess risks and liabilities regarding lobbying and stakeholder pushback; establish design processes and governance structures that are transparent, accountable, and communicated effectively to the public.
- ✓ Be wary when engaging industry in partnerships for "green washing."
- ✓ Non-effective third party coordination or corruption must be addressed immediately.
- ✓ Regularly assess the effectiveness of partnerships and adaptively manage.

VII. Scales of Investment

The section that follows presents key findings and discussion on ocean conservation funding related to questions of scale, examining first the status and drivers of ecosystem-based considerations in funding initiatives. A subsequent overview then considers the varying dimensions at which the case studies operate, followed by a detailed discussion of each of the scales of investment identified by case studies – spatial financial, temporal, governance and biological. We conclude this section with a summary of key findings, lessons learned, and methods for enhancing success and avoiding failure in scale.

Highlighted Key Findings for Scales of Investment

- A strong majority of case studies stated that larger scale approaches to ocean and coastal conservation have gained in popularity and momentum among funders and grantees. One-half of all informants stated that regional (greater than a single nation) ocean conservation investments were correlated with greater success.
- Nearly one-half of respondents stated that available funding is the proper mechanism for helping to determining appropriate and effective spatial scales of work.
- *Spatial*: Very successful and successful initiatives utilize regional approaches as their primary spatial scales of engagement, and local level approaches as their secondary scale.
- *Financial*: The most successful initiatives were those with investment amounts of \$50M or more, regardless of the length of investment.
- *Governance*: The majority of case studies described working with local levels of government, and noted how these interactions were helping to inform the policy, legislation, and partnership actions that need to be taken at the state and national levels.
- *Temporal*: Almost all of the moderately successful initiatives were less than 6 years, while the strong majority of very successful case studies were investments longer than 7 years.

A Paradigm Shift: An Ambivalent Embrace of Ecosystem Scales

Two decades ago, when many ocean conservation initiatives were being launched, funders followed the path of successful terrestrial conservation strategies in having a local, site-based focus on direct conservation actions as well as individual species protection and conservation. Informants reported that in the intervening years, a deepening understanding of the importance of marine ecosystem services and the role of interconnected marine ecosystems (e.g. pelagic species being impacted by the availability of mangroves nurseries), as well as the desire to have greater impact in achieving coastal and ocean health helped propel their organizations to shift toward larger scale ocean conservation and management schemes. This trend has accelerated in the past 10 years; donor organizations have been

focusing not only on wider geographic ranges, including interconnected marine ecosystems, but also on integrated frameworks of environmental, governance and sustainable economies. In interviews, all but one respondent agreed that larger scale approaches gained in popularity and momentum among ocean conservation funders and grantees.

Informants identified several drivers of this shift; we present the key drivers below in order of frequency reported by informants:

- **Funder interest:** A strong majority of foundation and government case study informants identified shifts in scale as donor driven. As funders gained a more sophisticated understanding of ocean conservation, they used their knowledge to identify new opportunities to maximize the impact of their program investments. Shifts in conservation activities naturally follow changes in funding priorities.
- **Improved scientific understanding and technological advancement:** Nearly half of the informants noted this factor as the driver for shifts in scale; however, twice as many foundations identified this factor compared to government organizations. As scientific understanding of the complexities of ocean ecosystems has grown, conservation measures and initiative priorities have shifted to address concerns at a scale that aligns with those ecosystems.
- **Conservation community and NGO interest:** A minority of respondents indicated this driver as the motivation for shifting scales, with four times as many foundations noting it over government case studies. NGOs are often the groups performing on-the-ground implementation. As such, they have direct experience of specific needs, and strategies that have worked and those that have fallen short.
- **Economic factors and livelihood considerations:** A minority of case studies (all government organizations) stated economic concerns as the driver of this shift. One respondent described that in a global economy it is imperative to take into account global poverty, and that governing ocean and coastal resources and people through the lens of market and alternative livelihood impacts is crucial.

“Conservation practitioners are increasingly recognizing that the most effective scale for planning conservation activities is large—at the scale of entire ecosystems, “ecoregions,” or ecologically functioning landscapes or seascapes. An ecoregional, ecosystem-based, or landscape approach to biodiversity conservation aims to conserve the full range of species, natural habitats, and ecological processes of a large area, while taking into account relevant cultural, political, and economic considerations. Such an approach requires partnerships among diverse stakeholders, including communities, local and national governments, NGOs, academia, and the private sector.”

-USAID Biodiversity Conservation Guide

The majority of informants also agreed that this shift is needed and scientifically supported, as threats to ocean resources are part of a bigger picture that must be considered at the ecosystem scale for conservation measures to be effective. They noted that certain types of small-scale conservation, such as protection of a mangrove forest, can be effective, but that operating at a larger scale is required for more complex systems, such as high seas management, marine mammal protection, and climate change adaptation. Indeed, there was very strong agreement on the obligation to work at multiple scales.

Informants felt strongly that large-scale thinking does not replace the critical need for on-the-ground, locally-based action, and that the harmonization of “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches at any scale is essential for comprehensive and lasting ocean conservation. They agreed that scaling programs up, or using large-scale approaches to support more localized and regional efforts, are the most appropriate methodologies.

A strong majority of informants expressed skepticism about working only at very large-scales. Operating exclusively at an ecoregional level, for example, raised concerns about a lack of accountability to achieve tangible goals, the inability of governments, NGOs and other stakeholders to operate functionally at scales that are unnatural to them, the lack of matching governance frameworks, and apprehension that large-scale investing allows donors to become less engaged (and potentially less effective) by simply “plopping down funding” into a certain area.

“As much as I like to think of myself as a globalist, I think there is more impact and influence at the regional and local levels.”
- Informant

It is recognized that natural science supports ecosystem based approaches to many ocean conservation issues, while social and cultural imperatives demand working at smaller human scales. This reality has led to a lack of consensus about how successful the move toward larger scale

investment has been. Informants identified uncertainties that impede the resolution of this ongoing debate, including the absence of implementation templates for ecoregional scales, doubts about replicability if templates did exist, and lack of capacity to oversee and integrate the multiple levels of engagement required for large-scale approaches.

Overview of Case Study Scales of Engagement

Framework of Scales

Case study informants and documents consistently described five primary scales of engagement as providing the framework for guiding ocean conservation investments:

- **Spatial:** geographic range
- **Financial:** investment size
- **Temporal:** investment duration
- **Governance:** ocean policy, regulations, and management
- **Biological:** biodiversity interactions

The case studies also regularly described involvement across categories, noting their intrinsic interconnectedness, and the importance of considering the interplay among them for increasing program success. Case study trends and category interactions are described in greater detail in subsequent sections.

Spatial Scale

Almost all initiatives described having a primary spatial scale in which the initiatives are investing, but also referenced working across scales, such as a regionally focused initiative supported by local projects. Table 9 provides an overview of spatial scale definitions.

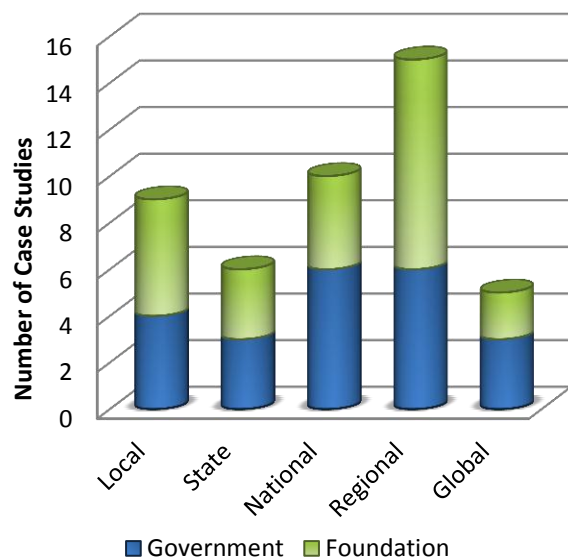
Table 9: Definitions of Spatial Scales

Spatial Scale	Definition
Local	Village, town, municipality, community, port
State	State, province, sub-national
National	National, territory, federal
Regional	Basin-wide, sub-regional, multinational, seascape, large marine ecosystem, ecoregional
Global	Donor invests in multiple regions at multiple scales

The majority of case studies are investing at the regional scale, with approximately one-half investing at each the national and local scales, a strong minority investing at the state scale, and a minority describing global scales of investment. There was not a substantial difference between foundation and government case studies and spatial scales of engagement. In the case studies we investigated, twice as many initiatives focus on developing countries over developed countries, and foundations (but not governments) work in both developed and developing countries under the same initiative.

Informants describe the selection of the scales at which they operate as driven by organizational priorities and philosophies, and/or where they believe they can generate the greatest level of impact. They also noted the importance of considering the initiative’s goals and objectives when determining an appropriate spatial scale, as it is the basis for identifying the levels of governance that must be engaged, funding requirements, and ideal length of investment. Funders opted for regional approaches most frequently because this scale often incorporates local, state and national components. Informants

Figure 9. Chart of Case Study Spatial Scales of Engagement



identified this more system-wide approach as necessary for sustainable and effective ocean conservation and management. One-half of all informants believed that regional ocean conservation investments correlated with greater success, with three-quarters of these coming from government case study respondents. A respondent noted that whether working from the “bottom-up” or “top down,” efforts must reach a regional scale to achieve longer-term success.

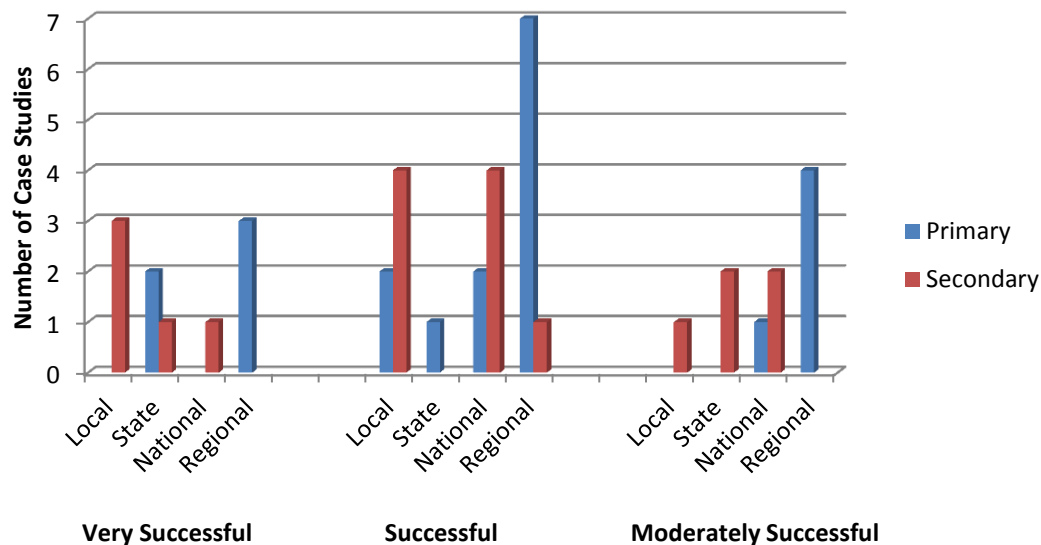
However, informants believe that working regionally does not reduce the importance of working at other scales. Informants described spatial scales as interdependent. In some cases, they noted that efforts at the local level were being supported by regional level plans. This allows for an understanding of bigger picture

“All protected area systems, whether terrestrial or marine, are more effective when embedded within a larger, integrated framework of environmental governance and sustainable economies.”
- Informant

challenges and needs, with the implementation of solutions focused on local areas. Both foundation and government case studies described how using large regional approaches has created the necessary linkages and synergies between more ecologically important scales (as supported by scientific understanding) with regional and more localized efforts. For example, one multi-lateral organization stated that “regional projects should add value to activities implemented under the array of national and local initiatives; these same national and local projects must also make accommodations for achieving greater impact on a regional scale.” These regional initiatives could also link activities across many states in a nation, as well as transboundary activities. Many case studies used scaling-up strategies to pilot initiatives and build capacity, and then used lessons learned to adapt programs for regional level implementation. Other case studies used the opposite approach and focused on developing and establishing region-wide plans that are adopted and implemented at more localized scales.

Regardless of level of success, all case study groups most frequently utilized regional scales of engagement as their primary scale. However, very successful initiatives were those that employed local scale activities as their secondary strategy as frequently as primary regional approaches. Successful initiatives used a local level focus as their secondary scale half as frequently as their primary regional focus, and moderately successful initiatives used the local scale one-quarter as often as regional approaches. These trends support the hypothesis that working equally at regional and local scales is essential for achieving greater success. Figure 10 offers an overview of primary and secondary scales of engagement for very successful, successful, and moderately successful case study initiatives.

Figure 10. Chart of Primary and Secondary Scales of Engagement in Relation to Initiative Success



At the same time, respondents believe there is such a thing as operating at too large a scale. As discussed above in *A Paradigm Shift*, informants describe ecoregional approaches as typically too large to be effective, primarily due to the degree of coordination, organization, buy-in, and oversight that is required for success. For example, informants regularly pointed to concerns about the Coral Triangle Initiative; they agreed that if coordinated properly, there is the potential for enormous benefits. They are apprehensive, however, that the amount of money being directed to the region will over-saturate the capacity of implementing organizations to use the funding effectively, and that process and implementation plans have not yet sufficiently addressed these potential challenges. Country capacities are limited, let alone capacity to build regional transboundary institutions. Some government donors have focused on trying to build transboundary regional institutions and said it is extremely challenging but worthwhile when it works, and can provide “a model for regional coordination, involving multinational technical and policy working groups, on which [projects] can build.”

Blue Earth Consultants, and case study informants and documents consistently agree that identifying proper scales during project planning, and creating mechanisms for accomplishing the necessary levels of engagement during implementation, plays a significant role in the achievement of goals.

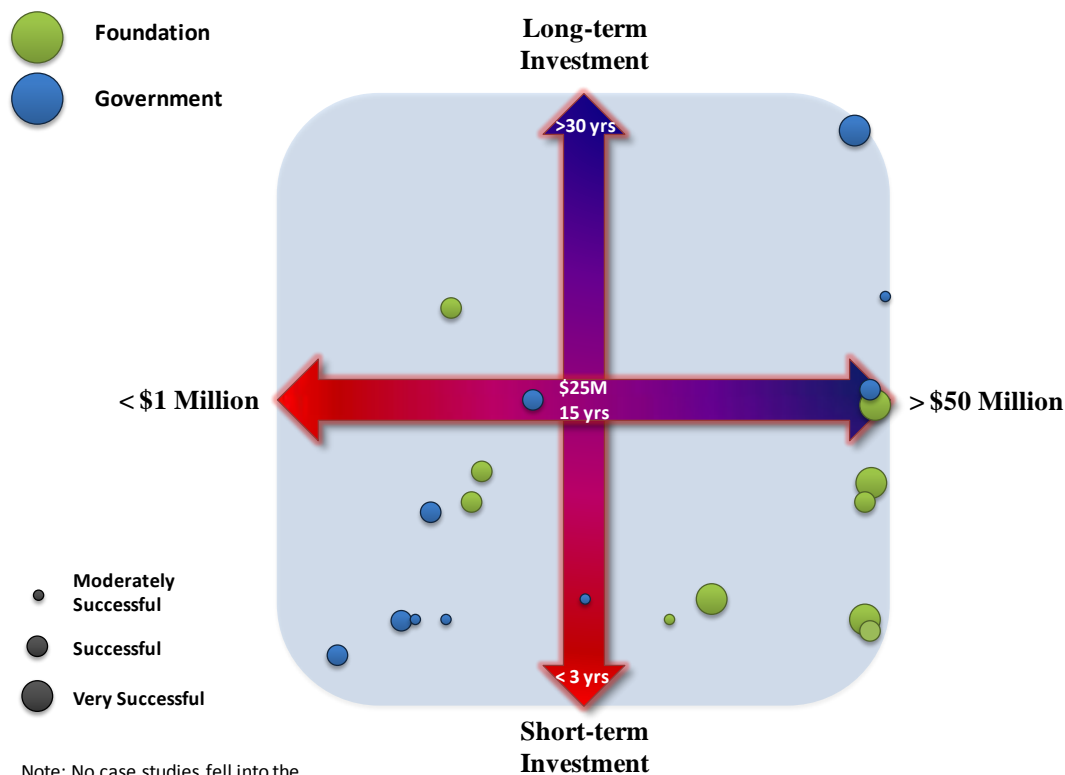
Financial Scale

The majority of respondents discussed financial scales when describing levels of engagement. Nearly one-half stated that using the level of available funding as the guideline for identifying appropriate and effective spatial scales of work is the proper mechanism, with foundations identifying this four times

more frequently than government case studies. Others noted that an effective strategy is to determine the levels at which the organization can work while still making a meaningful impact with available funding. Thus, there is interplay between the selection of an initiative’s spatial scale and the scale of funding. Respondents agreed that the key is to find the balance between identifying specific projects and actions that will achieve goals and outcomes, and determining which of these are likely to have the greatest success with the amount of funding available. In general, respondents felt that they were investing at the right scale and “maximizing funding and resources to the scale of the project.”

Among the case studies, the very successful initiatives were those with investment amounts of \$50M or more, regardless of the length of investment. Temporally, almost all of the moderately successful initiatives were short-term (less than 6 years), while the strong majority of very successful case studies were investments of longer than 7 years. (See the subsection that follows for a more detailed discussion of temporal considerations.) Figure 11 provides an overview of investment length versus investment amount in relation to success.

Figure 11. Graph of Investment Amount vs. Length of Investment in Relation to Success



Note: No case studies fell into the “Not Successful” or “Somewhat Successful” categories.

Underlying these pragmatic approaches is the respondents’ recognition of funding as the limiting factor in determining the best scale at which to work. They regularly noted that a larger impact could be made with more money, and that ocean conservation needs are significantly greater than available resources

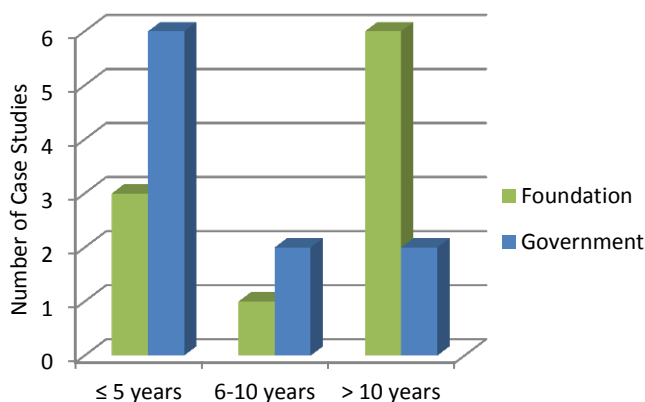
can support. A majority of case study initiatives endured multiple rounds of budget cuts, with the most recent round driven by the 2008/2009 stock market crash. As a result, informants underscored the importance of strategic alignment of investments with goals, leveraging funding, and maximizing the power of each dollar spent. One case study exited their ocean initiative because they realized they did not have the financial resources to implement strategies effectively; they also questioned whether the degree of impact justified the cost.

Because funding constraints are of wide concern, many informants discussed the importance of minimizing investment risk through capacity assessment and diversification. In the first case, donor organizations assess the capacity of grantee organizations to spend money effectively and efficiently. Diversification means spreading investments across a greater number of grantees. One respondent described the necessity of remaining flexible and being mindful of diminishing returns, stating that at some point money can no longer be used effectively by a given grantee and that a larger constituency must be mobilized to achieve long-term impact. While diversification is important for helping minimize risk, informants also stated that the proper balance must be struck between diversifying the grantee portfolio to a point that does not exceed the donor organization’s capacity to manage the demands of a portfolio with multiple grantees.

Temporal Scale

Although only a minority of respondents discussed temporal scales of investment, all of them made a strong point about the importance of longer-term commitments being required to reap the true benefits of conservation efforts; some case studies have actually shifted initial project timeframes from 3-5 years to 10-15 year plans. Interestingly, in spite of these reports, the majority of foundations are investing in initiatives that are greater than 10 years, whereas the majority of government case study investments are 5 years or less (Figure 12, below).

Figure 12: Case Study Lengths of Investment



Driving this shift toward prioritizing longer-term investments is the recognition that ocean conservation and sustainable management is a young field and that larger scale projects require more time for building institutions, connecting and coordinating multiple levels of governance, developing partnerships, and identifying increased funding sources with the goal of creating ocean conservation outcomes. Longer-term commitments are also driven by a better understanding of ecologically realistic timeframes, and the awareness that early stages of an initiative often require significant capacity-building efforts before conservation policy and practice can be adopted and implemented, and outcomes can be measured. In general, the majority of informants agree that thinking in terms of greater than 5 year timeframes is appropriate, and that significantly shorter-term investments do not encourage the sustainability of programs. Informants also commented on the value of providing longer periods of funding security to grantees, noting that it allows implementing organizations to be more creative, take more strategic risks, and craft longer-term conservation action plans. Informants agree that when considering longer temporal investments, however, it is imperative that funders have clear goals for the extended period before committing financial resources.

Partnerships and Scale

Partnerships play an important role in identifying appropriate scales of investment with the maximum potential for success. Larger-scale initiatives require high levels of coordination. Respondents identified partnerships among donors, governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders groups to create aligned coordination efforts as playing a crucial role in effectively working across scales. (A more detailed examination of partnerships is provided in VI. *The Central Role of Funding Partnerships*, page 51).

This is not to say that shorter-term investments (e.g., 2 to 3 years) cannot have positive impacts on ocean conservation. Donors providing short-term funding should remain mindful that while an influx of funds can help boost grantee efforts, the initiative must also be scaled to the appropriate size, and must have clear, specific and attainable goals that are aligned with the timeframe. Blue Earth Consultants suggests that donors with short-term funding who wish to make a greater impact can support portions of an initiative that link to a larger framework, or offer funds to an initiative that is leveraging funds through a partnership and/or has longer-term goals and the coordination and financing mechanisms in place to carry through the project.

Governance Scale

Selecting the proper scales of governance engagement is crucial for gaining proper buy-in and encouraging policy actions that support an initiative's goals and ability to be effective. The scale of governance engagement selected by the case studies further underscores the importance of on-the-ground actions working to support efforts at larger spatial scales. More than half of all respondents discussed the levels of governance at which they are investing to support conservation programs. Of these, the majority of groups described working with local levels of government, though they typically also talked about how these interactions are helping to inform the policy, legislation, and partnership actions that need to be taken at the state and national levels. One multi-lateral organization described

using local projects to support more overarching regional goals. This strategy had the combined effect of helping to build local confidence while simultaneously finding better alignment of goals across different scales. Even those organizations working at the global scale stated, “It is the local governance and implementation that makes the difference on-the-ground.” Informants described the same sentiments when asked to identify the most successful and effective scales of governance engagement; local, on-the-on-the-ground work being supported by larger scale state, national and regional efforts were noted as most important. On the other hand, a strong legal mandate can lead to statewide or national implementation of ocean conservation efforts. Some informants observed that the greatest challenge is coordination across multiple agencies with fragmented responsibilities to manage and protect ocean and coastal environments and resources, as most of the time governance does not match the ecosystem scale at which problems would be more effectively addressed.

Biological Scale

A minority of case studies also mentioned biological scale considerations in initiative planning and implementation. Respondents noted the importance of safeguarding biodiversity values and functional integrity, and made the point that “each ecosystem has distinct species compositions, species interactions, and threats, and exists in different political and socioeconomic contexts.” These considerations must be taken into account within the context of the initiative’s defined spatial scale, and are essential when evaluating effective ocean conservation strategies and plans.

Impacts of Larger Spatial Scale Shift on Other Scales of Engagement

The movement of ocean conservation initiatives toward larger spatial scales has created a ripple effect across donor engagement at the governance, temporal, and financial scales. At the governance level, there is now an increased need for working across various levels of governance, with successful initiatives requiring two-way support systems and greater coordination between these groups. At the temporal scale, there is a need for longer-term investments to achieve initiative goals. Investing in larger areas of focus also requires more time for connecting and coordinating multiple levels of governance and stakeholder groups, the development of partnerships, and initiatives must also be long enough to be more aligned with ecologically realistic timeframes. These trends have, in turn, led to larger funding requirements to ensure proper planning, guarantee funding for coordination, and provide adequate financial resources for initiative implementation and sustainability. Due to this confluence of factors, strategies deployed need to consider how to connect and be supported by key policy-makers and how to access institutionalized funding sources focused on ocean and coastal conservation and sustainable management.

Creating Success in Scales of Engagement

Although case study data correlations were inconclusive, a majority of case study informants linked identification and selection of appropriate scales of engagement play with increasing an initiative’s potential for success, minimizing challenges, and utilizing funding efficiently. The following subsection reviews key findings, presents some of the lessons learned that Blue Earth Consultants identified for scale, and offers insights on how donors can help enhance success and avoid failures.

Review of Key Findings: Is it a shift toward larger spatial scales of engagement?

A strong majority stated that larger scale approaches to ocean and coastal conservation have gained in popularity and momentum among funders and grantees. Informants noted donor interest as the primary driver for this shift, but also noted improved scientific understanding and technological advancement, conservation community and NGO interest, and economic factors and livelihood considerations as components pushing this trend forward. However, despite the agreed upon importance of working at larger scales, a strong majority of case study respondents are skeptical of the success of this shift due to the tremendous coordination required for larger scale approaches, the increased complexity of region contexts, higher funding requirements, and the length of time needed for visible results, among other. Nevertheless, informants stated that working across scales is essential. The majority of donor organizations accept the need to embrace larger, ecosystem-scale approaches to achieve improved ecological outcomes, and underscore the importance of initiatives working at local, state, national levels to achieve success and coordination across the regional, large-ecosystem scale.

Below is a summary of other scale key findings:

Spatial scale:

- One-half of all informants stated that regional ocean conservation investments were correlated with greater success.
- Very successful initiatives engaged in regional and local level scales equally as often; successful initiatives engaged in local scales half as frequently as regional approaches, and moderately successful initiatives utilized local actions one-quarter as often as regional-level engagement.

Financial scale:

- Nearly one-half of respondents stated that available funding is the proper mechanism for helping to determine appropriate and effective spatial scales of work.
- The most successful initiatives were those with investment amounts of \$50M or more, regardless of the length of investment.

Partnerships and Scale

Partnerships play an important role in identifying appropriate scales of investment with the maximum potential for success. Larger-scale initiatives require high levels of coordination. Respondents identified partnerships among donors, governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders groups to create aligned coordination efforts as playing a crucial role in effectively working across scales. (A more detailed examination of partnerships is provided in VI. *The Central Role of Funding Partnerships*, page 51).

Governance scale:

- The majority of groups described working with local levels of government, and noted how these interactions were helping to inform the policy, legislation, and partnership actions that need to be taken at the state and national levels.

Temporal scale:

- The majority of informants agree that initiatives with greater than 5 year timeframes encourage initiative sustainability more than shorter-term investments.
- Almost all of the moderately successful initiatives were short-term (less than 6 years), while the strong majority of very successful case studies were investments longer than 7 years.

Lessons Learned to Enhance Success and Avoid Failures in Scale

Below we review some of the lessons learned that we identified during research on scale and examine how these lessons learned can help donors in the future enhance success and avoid pitfalls.

Enhancing Success

Utilizing a combination of larger scale and local level approaches that are mutually supportive encourages success. All of the very successful case studies had a larger scale as their primary scale of focus (state or regional level), with the majority also having a secondary focus on local level engagement. Conversely, the moderately successful initiatives were also working at various primary spatial scales (state, national, regional); however, the strong majority of these lacked any local level focus. Governance frameworks that are aligned in their support of ocean conservation efforts also leads to greater success. For example, in California the Marine Life Protection Act and Initiative created the structure for

Recipes for Success

- ✓ *Identify and support initiatives with frameworks aimed at achieving state and regional levels impacts that also provide dedicated funding for local level activities that support larger scale goals.*
- ✓ *Work across spatial scales and scale categories in ways that strategically align efforts to maximize each dollar. This removes inconsistencies and creates space for moving forward in a more unified manner.*
- ✓ *Identify and implement initiatives that incorporate “top-down” and “bottom-up” ocean conservation approaches.*
- ✓ *Create partnerships among donors, governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders groups to align coordination efforts and leverage funding; this plays a crucial role in effectively working across scales.*
- ✓ *If only short-term funding is available, support portions of an initiative that link to a larger framework, or give to an initiative that is leveraging funds through a partnership and/or has longer-term goals, and has coordination and financing mechanisms in place.*

redesigning California's system of MPAs to increase consistency and coherence in the protection of the state's marine ecosystems. This regulatory framework set in motion actions at the sub-regional and local levels to engage stakeholders, form partnerships, and utilize science for improved ocean and coastal management in California. On the other hand, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is achieving substantial success with coastal projects funded at the local level, but is finding national and regional level alignment a challenge due to the degree of autonomy each state has for implementing coastal conservation and management measures.

The Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) network in the Pacific is a good example of effective interplay between scales. LMMA is driven by a bottom-up approach. The primary goal of the program is to create sustainable regional fisheries management through marine reserves. To achieve this, donors and grantees are working with local communities and governments to create small-scale reserves and plans to generate support and gain buy-in at the local level, and over time create a regional network of locally managed marine areas. These efforts are building a larger constituency and helping to push national and regional agendas toward larger scale sustainable marine resource use and protection. In this example, local level planning and implementation is guided by a larger vision that is helping to ensure alignment of policies and practices that promote the regional goal.

Regardless of the length of investment, initiatives with higher investment amounts (\$50M or more) were most successful. Initiatives with the funding resources needed to facilitate and promote achievement of goals are more effective than those with mismatched project scale and funding level. This imbalance can create wasted resources as initial progress is made, and then momentum is lost due to restrictive budgets. For larger scale projects with funding requirements beyond a funder's individual capacity, identifying donor partnerships and other opportunities to leverage funds is key. Initiatives with smaller budgets need to be smaller in scale and must have more targeted, specific goals that can either be achieved on a shorter timeframe or that can make forward progress at a slow and steady rate with a constant small influx of money.

Avoiding Failures

Larger-scale initiatives require high levels of coordination. The current lack of a successful template framework for regional policy, institutions, and managing complex coordination systems was one of the skepticisms of ecoregional initiatives raised by informants. Partnerships between and among donors, government, NGOs and other stakeholders groups to create aligned coordination efforts play a crucial role in effectively working across scales. They allow for the leveraging of resources, provide opportunities for lessons learned and knowledge sharing, ensure policy actions are supporting and in line with initiative goals, and can create a more unified conservation front. This type of coordination can also be achieved without forming massive programs in each country, however. One respondent offered that they have witnessed projects that are "too big and too unwieldy to be strategic [with donors] worried more about spending money than being strategic."

The strong majority of case studies that were least successful were short-term investments (~5 years or less). When possible, support initiatives aimed at the 10-15 year timeframe. When considering longer

temporal investments, however, it is imperative that funders have clear goals and milestones for the extended period before committing financial resources.

When selecting regions for investment that lack NGO and/or governance capacity, anticipate longer project timeframes and greater levels of funding required to achieve success. Forming strong donor partnerships and creating clear communication charters to merge financial resources will help alleviate the impact to a single donor and encourage economies of scale.

Although working across scales is imperative for maximizing initiative success, it is often a challenging endeavor to execute successfully. Setting aside funding for a comprehensive strategic planning process that engages stakeholders from all levels of engagement will help to minimize challenges during implementation. One respondent noted, however, “We do not need more people around the table just talking!” Thus, it is important that planning processes are followed up with effective action plans and implementation strategies.

One case study described having challenges reaching larger scales of engagement due to the organization’s primarily opportunistic portfolio approach. It has limited the donor’s ability to pursue opportunities designed to leverage one another in a given geographic or topical area. This fact underscores the importance of finding balance between strategic and opportunistic approaches to grant-making, and the value of being flexible and adaptable.

Avoiding Failures

- ✓ *To minimize financial risk, assess the capacity of grantees to effectively deploy funding, and diversify to a broader set of grantees as needed, though do not exceed the funder’s own capacity to manage multiple grantees.*
- ✓ *Avoid investing in initiatives unless specific projects and actions with the greatest likelihood of achieving goals and outcomes with the amount of funding available have been identified.*
- ✓ *Do not fund a single grant or single organization for large-scale or global initiatives and expect substantial achievements or impacts.*
- ✓ *Be cautious of moving forward with initiative implementation of larger scale projects, involving multiple stakeholder groups, unless sufficient resources for partner coordination at all scales of engagement have been allocated.*
- ✓ *Do not expect long-term project success with short-term investments; longer-term initiatives are often needed to increase grantee security and promote project sustainability.*

VIII. How to Create Durable Outcomes and Achievements: Goals and Investment Strategies

In this section, we review the main goals and investment strategies identified by donor sources. First, we discuss whether donors believed their goals and expectations for meeting goals were realistic and the factors that influenced why they were, or were not, realistic. Next, we discuss the primary goals and sub-goals shared by donors. Third, we cover the main strategies funded to achieve these goals and some of the activities within these strategies. Finally, using insights from this section, we share key findings, key ingredients for success, and recommendations on how to avoid failure in setting goals and funding investment strategies.

<p>Highlighted Key Findings for Goals and Investment Strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A strong majority of informants claimed their initiative set realistic, attainable goals. Informants correlated success with setting an adequate timeline, establishing a robust management structure, building strong capacity, creating longer-term strategic plans, and focusing investment on achieving main goals.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The goal of biodiversity conservation is seen as the primary overarching goal, which is advanced through success in two main goal categories: effective governance and policy for ocean and coastal conservation and management and sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources.
	<p>We identified clusters of strategies associated with each of the two main goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Main Goal 1 Cluster:</i> Education and outreach; science; sustainable finance; capacity-building; and, policy and management tools ➤ <i>Main Goal 2 Cluster:</i> Education and outreach; sustainable finance; market-based solutions; and, policy and management tools.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The main investment strategies funded by initiative donors were: science (collection, translation, and dissemination of relevant science for decision-making); education and outreach; capacity-building; partnership; policy and management tools; and market-based solutions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Funders always funded multiple strategies to achieve their main goals. The most effective strategies that donors identified were partnership, policy and management tools, and direct conservation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Donor informants claimed, paradoxically, that investments in science and partnership were the least effective strategies. Donors also reported that investments in market-based solutions were generally less effective.

Establishing Realistic Goals and Expectations

A strong majority of foundation and a majority of government case study respondents stated that initiative goals and expectations were realistic. Some contributing factors to accomplishing set goals and meeting expectations included:

- Setting an adequate timeline;
- Establishing a strong organizational structure;
- Fostering private sector involvement and partnerships;
- Mobilizing additional resources to establish a stronger base for ongoing conservation;
- Focusing funding investments on a set goal or desired outcome;
- Building strong capacity; and
- Creating longer-term strategic plans.

Sources also identified factors that hindered achievements and success. Some of these hindrances included:

- Lacking sufficient human and financial resources to work on a specific goal or scale;
- Failing to establish a sufficient organizational structure;
- Funding in regions or topics with limited capacity without building that capacity first;
- Allowing gaps between project phases;
- Having false assumptions, although reasonable at the start of the project; and
- Parent organization lacking understanding of how external forces act on the program activities (such as effects of changing political leadership and length of time needed to see ecological change).

Overall, while most respondents felt that goals and expectations were realistic; in several cases internal and external factors hindered the accomplishment of a goal. The few respondents who felt that goals and expectations were unrealistic cited being overly ambitious at the outset of the initiative and expecting conservation impacts to occur faster than was realistically possible.

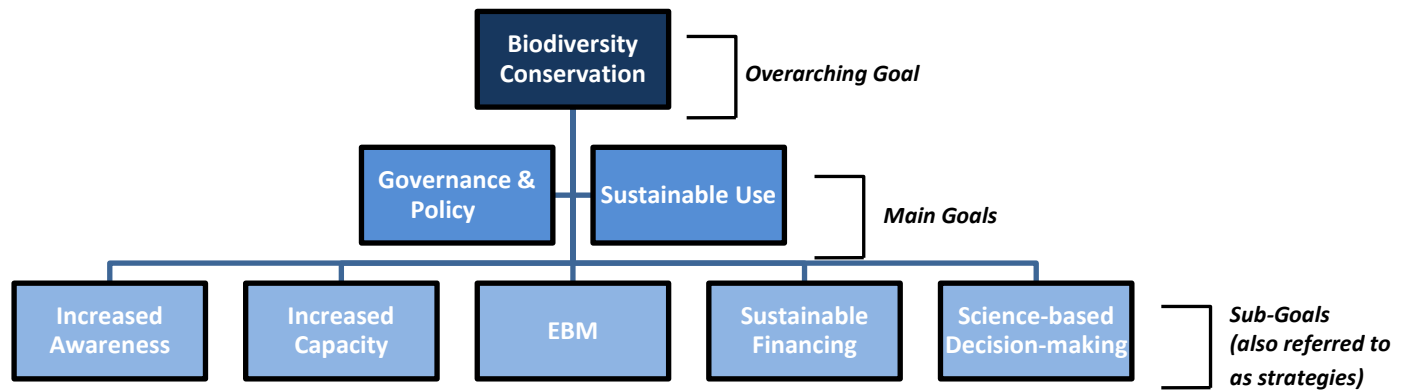
Primary Initiative Goals

Case study sources identified multiple goals for their initiatives. We grouped these into 1 “overarching” goal of conservation and restoration of biodiversity, and two more specific or “main” goals: effective ocean and coastal governance and policy and sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources. Our research found that informants frequently mixed goals with the strategies deployed to achieve the goals themselves. Strategies stated as goals included increased science-based decision-making, increased capacity, increased awareness, sustainable financing, and integration of ecosystem-based management. To avoid confusion between what is a goal and what is an investment strategy deployed to achieve the goal, these investment or deployment strategies are discussed as sub-goals. This section also examines common groupings or clusters of investment strategies used to work towards the main goals. Below we

list the cluster of strategies used to achieve each of the main goals, followed by an explanation of how these strategies were used.

Figure 13 shows the relation of the overarching and main goals to the sub-goals and how the sub-goals are necessary steps for achieving the higher-level goals.

Figure 13. Hierarchy of Initiatives Goals and Sub-Goals/Strategies



Overarching Goal: Conservation and Restoration of Biological Diversity

A strong majority of case study donors identified conservation and restoration of biodiversity as a goal of their initiative. However, this overarching goal is not stand-alone, but rather encompasses, and is advanced by achievements within the two main goals. Informants regularly described biodiversity conservation and restoration as a high-level goal achieved through the pursuit of other the goals discussed in this report. Specific aspects of this goal include conservation of watershed resources, improving water quality, protection of coastal and ocean ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangroves, and species-specific conservation of corals, seabirds, fish, marine mammals, and sea turtles. In addition to biodiversity conservation goals focused on specific species or ecosystems, donors also developed goals concentrated on specific geographies. Conservation projects often set regionally based biodiversity conservation goals at the large marine ecosystem level, biogeographical or ecoregional scale, or basin level. Work at these scales is covered in greater detail in VII. Scales of Investment (page 62). One informant stated the goal of a regionally based initiative was to “strengthen[ing] conditions for sustained conservation of biodiversity, protection of ecosystem processes, and preservation of evolutionary options.” Conserving larger regions is seen as a significant step towards improving “marine ecosystems beyond these geographies.”

Main Goal 1: Effective Ocean and Coastal Governance and Policy

A majority of case studies identified developing effective ocean and coastal governance and policy as a main goal. Some initiatives sought to develop new policy in areas that the local or national government

had not focused on or addressed, or to bolster and improve existing policy. When working at the regional scale, respondents spoke of the need to unify transboundary policies. In some cases, this meant creating new regional institutional arrangements and reforms to strengthen conservation and management. Other donors focused funds on providing technical expertise to support existing arrangements at the local, state, and national levels (including regional implementation of international conventions).

For many donors, the goal of effective ocean and coastal governance is cast as a goal to build effective area-based management mechanisms to protect and conserve ocean resources and ecosystems. Over one-half of the initiatives indicated the creation and effective implementation of area-based management as a goal of their initiative. Donors focused funds on gaining the support and political will required to establish new area-based management sites and on improving the management and effectiveness of existing sites. Area-based management tools include marine protected areas, marine managed areas, marine reserves, fisheries closures by area, and ocean zoning. Donors sought to achieve sufficient funding support for area management, designate a set percentage of area as protected, establish networks of MPAs, implement ocean zoning, or support community-managed marine areas as goals of effective governance and policy.

“The main goals of the [initiative] are to facilitate enhanced protection of vulnerable and unique marine and coastal ecosystems; safeguard its biodiversity values and functional integrity.”

- Informant

Through our research, we found five clustered strategies that donors use to advance the goal of effective ocean and coastal governance and policy.

The Cluster of Strategies to Build Effective Ocean and Coastal Governance and Policy are:

- **Education and outreach:** Outreach targeted at policy-makers and stakeholders was often used to build support and political will for behavior change, policy creation and implementation, and to build awareness for governance needs and benefits. Educating policy and decision-makers on science and management tool options often facilitated fact-based policies, as well as new governance mechanisms.
- **Science:** Data collection, translation, synthesis, and dissemination supported science-based decision-making for policy.
- **Sustainable finance:** Sustainable finance strategies built long-term funding mechanisms for supporting the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and management tools. Setting up these financing frameworks also fostered buy-in and support for new policies and governance structures.
- **Capacity-building:** Examples of capacity building efforts include technical assistance and training for NGOs and bolstering resource manager capacity on a wide range of areas such as communications, enforcement, and monitoring.

- **Policy and management tools:** Donors supported management tools such as MPAs, MSP, territorial use right, strategic planning for implementation, facilitation and implementation to build a governance framework and mechanisms for policies to be implemented. Donors also allocated funds to engage stakeholders effectively in the decision-making process for establishing new governance and policy, develop management plans, and participate in enforcement schemes.

Main Goal 2: Achieving Sustainable Use of Coastal and Ocean Resources

Case study donors acknowledge the reality of human dependence on coastal and ocean ecosystems. As a result, a majority stated sustainable resource use to meet human needs while protecting biodiversity and ecosystems as an initiative goal. The majority of donor sources spoke generally about sustainable development and use, and subsequently, any goal that referred to shifting the way in which resource users exploit ocean or coastal ecosystems was categorized under this main goal. Donors did point to facilitating a shift to sustainable use by funding technical assistance, developing alternative livelihoods, and building market opportunities. Donors commonly specified sustainable use of fisheries resources when discussing goals in this theme. Many case study respondents also noted that the goal was not to close fisheries, but to promote sustainable, long-term use and to reduce likelihood of fisheries collapse. Garnering support for many of these measures meant demonstrating to stakeholders that there are economic and social benefits to changing behaviors.

Through our research, we found that donors use four clustered strategies to advance the goal of sustainable use of coastal and ocean resources.

Cluster of Strategies for Achieving Sustainable Use of Coastal and Ocean Resources:

- **Education and outreach:** Education and outreach often laid the foundation for behavior changes and helped educate resource users on the negative impact of specific uses, non-destructive use methods, and alternative livelihood opportunities. Donors also supported outreach and education, “advocacy” on management tools and policy to key decision-makers and opinion leaders.
- **Sustainable finance:** Development of sustainable finance structures and mechanisms.
- **Market-based solutions:** Strategies included developing alternative livelihoods and building market opportunities for sustainably harvested resources. Alternative livelihood methods improved stakeholder buy-in and implementation of sustainable practices.
- **Policy and management tools:** Management tools such as gear changes, creating territorial use rights, or catch share programs were supported to encourage behavior change among resource users. Stakeholder engagement was another strategy used to ensure long-term buy-in for existing and, at times, creation of new sustainable techniques and practices.

Investment Strategies to Achieve Overarching and Main Goals

As mentioned above, donors say they are pursuing many goals that can be considered “sub-goals” in relation to the overarching and main goals identified above. We determined that these sub-goals are really a means to an end— in other words, strategies to achieve the donors’ overarching and main goals. There is also significant overlap between sub-goals and donor investment tactics. For the sake of clarity in this report, from this point forward, we refer to these sub-goals as strategies that donors use to advance the overarching goal of biodiversity conservation and the two focused goals of effective ocean and coastal governance policy and achieving sustainable use of coastal and ocean resources.

The following discusses strategies the case study initiatives supported through grants. First, we share overall trends for investment strategies supported by the case studies and across donor sectors. We then examine themes relating to select strategies. Finally, we share insights about which strategies case study sources identified as being effective and ineffective.

Trends Among Case Study Strategies

We analyzed case studies to identify the most common strategies used by donors, the number of strategies donors employed (both in general and in developing versus developed country contexts), their level of investment, correlations with success overall and by type of donor (foundation versus government), and whether there were correlations with initiatives that were less successful.

Conservation Campaign Strategies

Informants from several case studies pointed out that a component of their grant-making involved funding campaigns to conserve or protect ocean and coastal ecosystems. Strategic campaigns direct focused resources, both human and financial, toward specific issues such as stopping destructive coastal development, promoting the creation of MPAs, or increasing consumer demand for sustainable seafood. Campaigns are commonly designed and implemented by multiple NGOs and implemented over time. Successful campaigns typically employ targeted communications directed at key stakeholders and decision-makers. In the Gulf of California region, grants made by the Marisla Foundation to the Coalition to Save Laguna San Ignacio were pivotal in blocking construction of the large-scale industrial salt factory that would have had significant impact on a critical breeding ground of the California gray whale. International NGOs partnered with Mexican NGOs and local stakeholders to execute a multi-pronged campaign, including targeted communications, planned boycotts, outreach to policy-makers, celebrity spokespeople, community engagement, science, and legal advocacy. On the other hand, Marisla experienced failure when investing in a similar campaign to oppose a tourism development also in the Gulf of California region. Informants assert that this campaign was unsuccessful because there was limited NGO capacity to implement legal strategies to make inroads with government to oppose destructive coastal development; limited science to provide data on the impact that the development would make; and because the development industry was more successful in influencing key decision-makers in government than the NGOs and donors. Donors in the region have since addressed limited legal and science capacity issues in the region; however, strong industry influence with government officials is a persistent impediment.

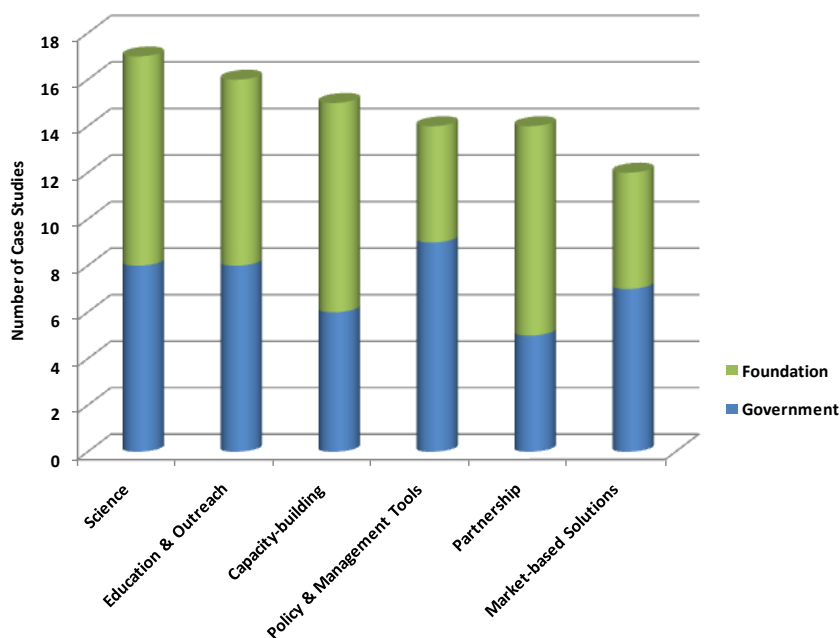
Most Common Strategies

There were six main strategies funded by the 20 initiatives for this report: collection, translation, and dissemination of relevant science for decision-making, education and outreach, capacity-building; partnership; policy and management tools, and market-based solutions. A strong majority or majority of the initiatives used each of these strategies. (See Figure 14 below).

Differences Between Sectors

Foundation donors most frequently employ policy and management tools, education and outreach, and science strategies to achieve their goals. Government donors most frequently employ science, capacity-building, and partnership strategies to achieve their goals.

Figure 14. Graph of Primary Investment Strategies



Number of Strategies

A comparison of the strategies implemented by the case study initiatives showed that each of the initiatives executed multiple strategies to achieve their goals. On average, six strategies were carried out during the course of each donor initiative, with some donors investing in as many as ten strategies. In general, foundation donors invested in more strategies than government donors did.

Developing Versus Developed Countries

We also reviewed the number of strategies implemented by donors working in developing versus developed nations. Those initiatives working mainly within developed countries supported fewer strategies than those with the majority of their investment in developing countries.

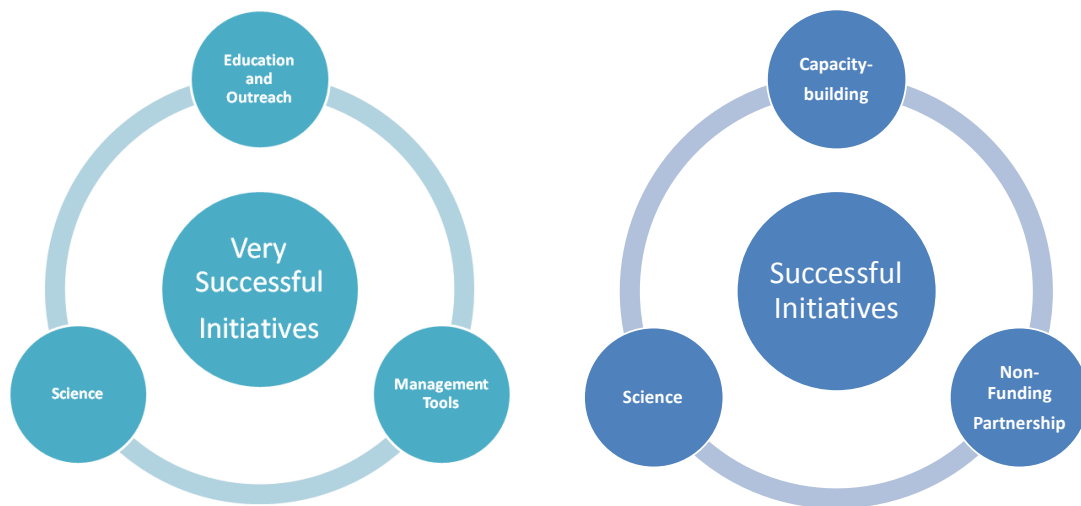
Investment Levels

A review of the total level of investment in comparison to the number of strategies showed no significant correlation between how much a donor invests and the number of strategies funded. For example, a case study with a \$10 million annual investment in ocean and coastal conservation carried out ten strategies while another case study with approximately \$80 million annual investment utilized only three.

Initiative Success

We compared the success of the initiatives to the number of investment strategies used by the donor and found no strong correlation between the two. However, a strong majority of very successful initiatives used education and outreach, science, and management tool strategies to attain success. In addition, a majority of successful initiatives used a combination of non-funding partnerships, capacity building, and science strategies (See Figure 15, below.) Interestingly, the strategies deployed most frequently in very successful and successful initiatives also align by type of funder sector¹⁴; foundations most frequently supported education and outreach, science, and management tools (the cluster correlated with a majority of very successful initiatives) while government donors most frequently support non-funding partnership, capacity-building, and science (the strategies identified in the successful initiatives). These trends support the hypothesis that a conservation impact cannot be attained if only one strategy is funded in isolation.

Figure 15. Strategies Most Frequently Funded by Very Successful and Successful Donors



¹⁴ Blue Earth Consultants used a three-pronged approach to rank initiative success for each case study (described on page 16). Using this methodology, we categorized five case studies as “very successful”, ten as “successful”, and five as “moderately successful”. None were “not successful” or “somewhat successful.” Of the very successful initiatives, four of the five most frequently support education and outreach, science, and management tools strategies. Of the ten successful initiatives, 7 of them most often support non-funding partnership, capacity-building, and science. Although these case studies represent a small sample size, the trends Blue Earth Consultants has identified still represent valuable findings for donor organizations to consider when identifying and developing ocean conservation strategies that can help enhance successful outcomes.

Lack of Initiative Success

Finally, there are few commonalities between the case studies as to which strategies contributed to an initiative falling short or not achieving stated goals and outcomes. Each initiative had a unique set of problems and proposed solutions.

Themes Among Case Study Strategies

Below we share our findings and some of the stronger themes surfacing from the case studies, focusing primarily on the six main strategies funded by the 20 case study donors, and offer insights for improving the effectiveness of each strategy:

- Science;
- Education and Outreach;
- Capacity Building;
- Policy and Management Tool Development;
- Partnership; and
- Market Based Strategies.

For each of these, we examine high-level strategy trends across initiatives, the clusters of strategies employed by donors to increase strategy effectiveness, and suggestions for enhancing success of a given strategy.

Science Strategy and Achieving Science-based Decision-making

A strong majority of case studies pursued science-based decision-making as a strategy of their initiative. While a strong majority of the initiatives funded science, funders commonly did so as a support to other strategies, using science to fill information gaps and otherwise inform the remaining strategies discussed in this section. Science-based decision-making is a key strategy used by funders to advance both main goals of effective governance and policy and sustainable use. As discussed in *IV. Why Funders Invest in Ocean Conservation* (page 24), science-based decision-making is an underpinning throughout many of the themes in this report. Our research found that three key strategies clustered together lead to improved science-based decision-making.

“Grantees successfully united conservation-minded fishermen with environmentalists, scientists and managers to create sound management policies that are place-based and account for the needs of the community that depends on marine resources.”

- Internal Document

Cluster of Strategies to Achieve Science-based Decision-making:

- **Science (monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management):** Activities that make up a science strategy include identifying priorities for decision-making, collecting biological, physical, or social data, synthesizing or translating science, developing processes and institutional arrangements to integrate science into science-making process, data management; and data and information dissemination.

- **Capacity building:** Training and technical assistance to ensure long-term use of new data collection and translation techniques.
- **Partnership:** Creating strong partnerships among institutions or NGOs to ensure long-term capacity and funding for science and science integration activities.

Science strategies are a critical component of ocean funders' coastal and ocean conservation initiatives. One informant stated that addressing knowledge gaps is "critical to successful implementation of ecosystem-based management." Several donors, primarily government sector, funded the development of shared databases to provide field researchers with a venue to share data with conservation and management professionals. Translation of science to inform decision-making was seen as key to grantees developing and reforming coastal and ocean policy, and for those working to establish an area-based management system. Donors tried to link science to policy to ensure that decisions are being made with the best-available science. In an example related to capacity building, donors funded training of local resource managers and biologists in biodiversity-monitoring protocols to ensure staff could carry out long-term monitoring activities.

Improving Science Strategy Effectiveness

Many donors supported scientific studies with the intent to support ocean conservation policy and management. Frequently, the science did not connect or was not translated to inform decision-making. Below are some guidelines to make science investments more effective:

"In general, grantees appear to be more successful when their projects involve scientific research and capacity- building."

- Informant

- **Invest in the integration of science, not just the production.** Donors experimented with funding "applied" research in regions of pilot sites and often the social institutions, context and issues were overlooked, restricting its application. For example, donors are not supporting the development of organizations and institutional structures that specifically focus on the best way to integrate science in a specific region and ensuring the most relevant science is robust and made available to decision-makers. It is clear that in certain contexts the traditional methods for moving science to decision-makers – scientific results and papers handed to decision-makers – does not work.
- **Create a two-way connection between users and producers.** Donors need to support processes and mechanisms to ensure the most relevant science is being conducted and made available for decision-makers. This means that scientists and decision-makers need to connect to ensure that the key policy and management questions are being identified and asked, and that scientists assist decision-makers in understanding what questions science could help to inform their decisions or support their case. For example, one case study focused on the use of science and specifically "knowledge, tools, and skills needed to manage coast-marine systems sustainably." However, according to the evaluation, "the strategies created considerable knowledge, tools, and capacity, but the design did not 'ensure the use' of them." The evaluation stated that the initiative design did not address the connection between the creation of the

science suite of outputs and their role in moving towards the goal. As a result, “grantees focused on peer-reviewed publications and tool products, without reference to how these would be used to improve practice or policy.”

- **Invest in social science.** For the past 20 years, the focus of conservation science has primarily been on natural science. However, robust and complete conservation science must equally focus on social science to adequately inform conservation and resource management questions. Many campaigns, public processes, and even up-take of market-based solutions would have greatly benefitted from social science data and analysis to help achieve results. Practitioners prioritized their work on natural and physical science at the expense of dealing with the very complex social issues involved with adapting deeply entrenched management practices and interests that needed to change. For example, if there had been social science research conducted in the Gulf of California on the shrimp fishery, grantees would have understood that the majority of fishermen in the region had been transplanted from the interior of Mexico as part of poverty relief efforts by the government. As such, success of a gear exchange program would require technical assistance to train them on new gear since they lacked previous fishing experience and knowledge of old gear types.
- **Support bridging and boundary organizations and mechanisms.** One donor said that inviting scientists to be part of policy and management working groups was critical in getting the correct science to inform science-based decision-making. Donors have an opportunity to help support the development of bridging and boundary organizations and mechanisms that can make science-based decision-making a reality. For a successful bridging and boundary organization or mechanism to work, staff must be integrated into the process and able to speak directly to policy and decision-makers as well as researchers. For example, in California the Ocean Science Trust staff work with the Ocean Protection Council, an interagency body and a science advisory team to connect science to management.
- **Encourage the formation of science advisory teams for public processes.** Donors have been instrumental in funding panels of respected scientists to support public policy making to advance ocean conservation. Such panels provide a neutral, transparent source of information for policy makers and the public. For example, in California Packard has supported a state entity, the Ocean Protection Council, and its development of a Science Advisory Team. Also in California, the role of the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative’s science advisory team was critical in ensuring robust criteria for the initiative’s proposed MPA network.

Education and Outreach to Increase Awareness

A majority of case studies examined in this study pursued strategies to increase awareness of needed changes in policy and practice. This strategy not only focuses on raising the awareness of the general public, but also on building decision-maker and stakeholder awareness in order to create effective governance and policy and develop opportunities for shifts to sustainable resource use. Donors believe that increased awareness leads to greater demand for improved coastal and ocean management and conservation.

Our research found that three strategies clustered together lead to increased awareness of the public, decision-makers, and/or other stakeholders:

- **Education and outreach:** Education and outreach techniques included media, workshops, and curricula development that focus on a particular problem facing local or regional marine ecosystems and the desired behavior change.
- **Science:** Dissemination of science information to inform education and outreach activities.
- **Partnership:** Grantees partnered with other NGOs or governments to reach wider audiences at the local and regional scales.

Efforts to increase awareness through education and outreach focused on educating decision-makers, managers, resource users, and the general public on the value of ocean and coastal ecosystems, the threats facing these systems, and solutions for addressing these threats. Donors' education and outreach investments supported a wide variety of grantee activities including dissemination of scientific information to stakeholders, education targeted at the general public, integration of conservation principals into school curriculum, social marketing, media outreach, seminars and workshops, community information exchanges, and more. Other outreach efforts targeted policy-makers and managers as well as outreach to resource users to increase the latter's awareness about opportunities and alternatives for sustainable resource use.

Like science, education and outreach are primarily implemented to support other strategies. Donors supported education and outreach to inform key decision-makers, stakeholders, and the general public on the importance of certain regions to global biodiversity, the impact of certain human uses on ocean and coastal ecosystems, best practices for tourism and sustainable fisheries, economic alternatives, and to instill an ethic of stewardship to catalyze the public to change behavior and become part of the solution. At times, strategic communications were used to build support and buy-in for governance and policy, area-based management, and sustainable use of natural resources.

Improving Education and Outreach Strategy Effectiveness

Many donors supported outreach and education efforts on a wide range of issues and goals. Foundation donors, cautious of not engaging directly in advocacy and lobbying, often support organizations to do just that. Below are some guidelines to make outreach and education more effective:

- **Strategic communications are essential.** Donors have an opportunity to support strategic communications that target key issues and audiences with specific goals and objectives in mind. Many regions around the world may need support to develop more sophisticated approaches for outreach and education.
- **Create lasting solutions.** Donors need to invest in outreach and education that develops compelling messages, which targeted key opinion leaders and decision-makers.
- **Relationships with power-brokers matter.** Donors need to invest in developing relationships with power-brokers in their own organizations and with supporting organizations. The ocean

conservation community has not fully leveraged key leaders and decision-makers to assist their cause.

- **Know your opponents and supporters.** Before designing a campaign strategy, donors need to know their opponents and supporters, understand what they care about and what motivates and incentivizes them, and speak to these issues to gain their support. It is also essential to know the strengths of your supporters and the depth and extent to which they are willing and able to embrace an issue, as well as the depth of the opposition.
- **Integrate and communicate to audiences in terms they care about.** Donors need to support the development and integration of socioeconomic data that supports the issues most important to those affected by ocean conservation actions.
- **Link ocean conservation to issues such as food security, health, community economic development and safety.** Donors have not successfully linked ocean conservation to other issues decision-makers and the public care about.
- **Develop political will through outreach.** Donors need to build support for coastal and ocean management through mass media, information campaigns, and educational programs. This will not only reach policy-makers, but will also increase awareness among their constituencies. Political will can also help address the challenges of developing management policies.

Strategies to Increase Capacity for Governance and Sustainable Use Opportunities

The majority of case studies employed strategies to build the capacity of multiple players in the conservation and management of coastal and ocean systems, and to strengthen institutions. Increased capacity is critical for developing and implementing ocean and coastal governance and policy and for building opportunities for sustainable use. Sufficient capacity of NGOs, government, and communities is necessary to build support for creating new policies and for enforcement. Many of the strategies used for developing sustainable resource use require training and capacity-building to foster the skills necessary for shifting behaviors.

Through our research, we identified three main strategies clustered together leading to increased capacity:

- **Capacity-building:** Activities intended to directly build capacity include technical assistance, trainings, workshops, infrastructure development, institution building, and knowledge exchanges. Training commonly focuses on growing the number of knowledgeable resource managers and science practitioners. Workshops and knowledge exchanges allow grantees and practitioners to share ideas and lessons such as successful and unsuccessful implementation techniques.
- **Partnership:** Multiple donors funded partnership as part of a strategy to support capacity-building. For example, NGOs in the Gulf of California collaborated to implement a program to build-capacity for sustainable management of fisheries. Grantees partnered with other NGOs to train and execute the project, and with government and industry.

- **Education and outreach:** Outreach was integral for increasing the awareness of capacity-building opportunities. In the previous example, NGO staff conducted outreach with fishing cooperatives to inform them of opportunities for technical assistance.

Donors' investments in capacity-building strategies vary. For example, while technical assistance was employed equally in both developing and developed nations, some forms of capacity-building, such as training to support monitoring and enforcement efforts, were almost exclusively focused on developing countries. Target groups for capacity-building include government (local, state, and federal), managers, industry, scientists, NGO staff, and communities. Capacity-building targeted at governments was aimed primarily at helping developing countries increase resource management capabilities, data management sophistication, and enforcement abilities. Initiatives built capacity for managers by enabling participation in learning exchanges and creating a managers' network. Government and manager capacity was also bolstered by donor investments in increasing capacity for NGOs. For example, grantees trained local fishermen to conduct biological and socioeconomic monitoring of MPAs in multiple regions.

Improving Capacity-building Strategy Effectiveness

Below are some guidelines to make capacity-building more effective:

- **Conduct Needs Assessment.** Donors should conduct a needs assessment as part of the strategic planning process. A needs assessment helps identify capacity for desired investment strategies and level of investment. If capacity is low, donors need to determine if local willingness and potential benefits are strong enough to invest. If not, donors can choose to refocus efforts elsewhere or engage in a phased approach starting with building-capacity for targeted strategies and then implementing and adapting strategies as capacity is strengthened.
- **Diversify funding for capacity-building.** Donors need to understand that capacity-building is a strategy that requires long-term funding from multiple sources, both private and public.
- **Build networks for increased communication and support.** Building networks between grantees or managers can increase long-term cross-pollination of ideas, lessons learned, and methods for achieving success.
- **Build alternative skill sets.** Building capacity of resource users for skill sets outside of resource extraction builds opportunities to transition to other industries. Donors can focus on funding alternative skill set capacity-building for individuals who are currently engaging in resource use or on younger generations who are likely to replace them.
- **Reduce the Impacts of "brain drain."** It is particularly important in developing countries to take steps to reduce the flight of human capital. Building professional and technical capacity, using extension services, and creating standards for professionals can help to ensure ocean conservation initiatives have consistent and sufficient staff support to achieve their goals.
- **Shared experiences.** Create opportunities for individuals or groups across regions, scales, and sectors to share lessons learned about successful approaches to resource management and challenges in overcoming barriers. In addition, peer-to-peer exchanges can help to encourage a culture of stewardship and build champions for conservation within the community.

Strategies to Encourage Policy and Management Tool Development

A majority of informants reported investing in management tool strategies to increase the level and effectiveness of coastal and ocean governance. Specific management tools underwritten by donors included MPAs, no-take zones, fleet reduction, seasonal closures, gear exchanges/reduction, concessions for coastal government lands, fisheries management plans, pilot projects, international conventions, law and policy development, among others. To execute these strategies, it was necessary to support development of legal instruments and enabling conditions for new policies, including building political will. Regional management mechanisms were also a considerable focus of donor initiatives. Several case study sources spoke of improving regional governance through implementation of international conventions, supporting regional fisheries management bodies, and consolidation of regional levels of governance.

The number of donors invested in management tools strategies was heavily focused in developing countries, where governance is often limited. However, a minority of donors worked to develop a legal framework for emerging strategies such as MSP in the United States. Foundation donors most frequently funded grantees to develop MPAs.

Establishing management tools to increase governance and policy development and reform was also a successful investment strategy. Working to develop ocean and coastal conservation and management tools such as MPAs, fisheries management plans, gear restrictions, fisheries closures, and no-take zones at the state and national levels proved to be highly effective. One foundation donor invested heavily in developing an ocean zoning framework at the state level. Another donor

targeted funds at reauthorizing the federal Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act. Successful strategies to attain area-based management tools focused on designation of MPAs,

Creating Regional Solutions for Large Marine Ecosystems

Because ocean and coastal ecosystems are primarily open systems, many of the threats facing these ecosystems have transnational or trans-jurisdictional implications. The transboundary impact of non-point source and point source pollution is a clear example of a threat that cannot be contained by political borders. In large marine ecosystems and regions where multiple countries are contributing to pollution, investment strategies must factor in ecosystem connectivity; tackling pollution in one country will not alleviate the problem, if other adjacent countries do not simultaneously work to reduce pollution. PEMSEA's integrated approach to improving regional governance for reducing marine pollution demonstrates an excellent example of a strategy that seeks to address all sources. PEMSEA was instrumental in developing a regional marine pollution governance framework and the adoption of multiple national and regional agreements. They did this through multiple methods including developing and demonstrating workable models on marine pollution reduction/prevention and risk management, assisting countries in creating legislation and capacity for implementing international conventions related to marine pollution, strengthening management capacity, developing regional monitoring programs, promoting public awareness, and promoting sustainable financing mechanisms.

strengthening of existing MPAs, science-based networks of MPAs, etc. In one case, a management tool strategy surpassed their expectations for success: “[The initiative] exceeded not only the target for 2002, but also the overall target of 3,000 hectares [of area protected] for [the] original 7-year term of [the] project.”

Improving Policy and Management Tools Strategy Effectiveness

Below are some guidelines to make policy and management tools more effective:

- **Transparent and robust stakeholder engagement:** A participatory approach at the local level helped to foster a sense of ownership within the community. Stakeholders who participate in the planning process of MPAs, ocean zoning, policy, or other conservation tools are likely to maintain a sense of control and participation that may increase their willingness to respect newly created policies, regulations, and use of new tools. Many donors stated that good policies needed to be developed through a process that includes stakeholder participation.
- **Sustainability plans:** Donors stated that it was important for MPAs to be guided by a management or business plan. An ideal plan is long-term and supported by multiple funding streams. While it is suitable for the plan to focus at the local scale, it must also incorporate considerations for larger scale network and connectivity effects.
- **Legal framework:** In some cases, having a legal framework in place prior to deploying certain management tools increased likelihood of the strategy’s success. Although some management tools do not need a framework (e.g., gear exchange), others such as no-take zones require government support, legislation, and enforcement mechanisms.
- **Support multiple tools:** Donors need to fund multiple management tools simultaneously to reduce opportunities for failure. Diversifying techniques can bolster initiative durability and reduce risk.
- **Support regional efforts and build capacity:** Donors can support efforts at the local scale, however, they must remain mindful of a regional level vision. Building capacity at the local level in multiple sites across a region can help a donor effectively scale up its impact.
- **Create horizontal and vertical linkages:** Identifying and employing mechanisms for creating horizontal (community to community) and vertical linkages (among local, state, federal, regional scales) promotes greater alignment of purpose and strengthens larger-scale ocean conservation efforts.
- **Developing alternatives in conjunction with new regulation:** In regards to fisheries management, alternatives must be introduced in tandem with restrictions on former resource use and closures on new entrants to the fishery to effectively reduce pressure on the resource.

Strategies to Support Partnership

A strong majority of case studies funded partnership building among grantees, between grantees and government, and between grantees and industry as a strategy for achieving their goals. In addition, donors themselves also built funding partnerships as part of this strategy. Activities conducted as part of a partnership strategy included setting up mechanisms for regional cooperation, information sharing, relationship building, co-development and implementation of conservation strategies, co-funding,

building interagency cooperation, and partnering with stakeholders. The value of partnership was a recurring theme in interviews and other research conducted for this report. As a result, we devoted an entire section to the subject of funding partnerships (*VI. The Central Role of Funding Partnership*, page 51).

Investing in partnership significantly promotes greater success because it brings together multiple parties to focus efforts for ocean and coastal conservation. Partnership strategies present opportunities to leverage funding, exchange knowledge and lessons learned, and increase grantee capacity, all of which contribute to increasing conservation impacts.

Increasing Partnership Strategy Effectiveness

Below are some guidelines to make partnerships more effective (see also *VI. The Central Role of Funding Partnership*, page 51):

- **Adequately allocate funding for partnership.** Coordinating partners takes human and financial resources. Allocate funds specifically for this purpose, and do not reallocate earmarked funds for other purposes.
- **Support the development of transparent, strong governance.** It is important, especially in the bi-lateral and multi-lateral context, to have a strong governance mechanism for decision-making, whether it is for policy-making or management. In addition, outlining roles and responsibilities is crucial; case studies frequently documented that organizations were unclear about public and private sector roles. Thus, clarifying these roles at the onset of a partnership can help to minimize confusion.
- **Partnerships may need external support.** Partnerships require dedicated work and communications; underestimating these requirements has led to failed partnerships. If donors are already pressed to their management and oversight capacity, they may want to consider engaging external coordination support. Partnerships may also need certain expertise to help them agree on future directions. For example, the Conservation Alliance, focused on the sustainable seafood sector, has brought in experts to assist with monitoring and evaluation, and strategic planning as well as neutral facilitation.
- **Evaluate regularly and improve partnerships.** Partnerships need regular internal review processes, and at times, external reviews to better understand challenges and identify opportunities to improve effectiveness.

Market-based Strategies

A sustainable use and development strategy typically encompasses many tools focused on developing market mechanisms and methods to promote sustainable coastal and ocean resource use. Donors funded multiple such strategies to provide economic alternatives to destructive practices and over-exploitation. Donor-supported strategies included developing alternative livelihoods, providing economic incentives for changing behavior, establishing dedicated access rights, valuation of ecosystem services, certification, and creating sustainable seafood markets. Cases focused on shifting fishing

pressure, using less destructive resource extraction techniques, and efforts to promote sustainable fisheries.

Market-based strategies were more commonly funded by foundations than government donors, with foundations investing in economic incentives, dedicated access rights, alternative livelihoods, and sustainable seafood market chains. Government donors primarily focused on funding alternative livelihood schemes and best practices standards for tourism. Support for alternative livelihoods was more concentrated in developing nations, where economic opportunities are often more limited. However, sustainable seafood market strategies, focusing on changing consumption patterns, were more often targeted in developed nations. Private foundation donors identified a growing need over the past decade to shift these efforts from consumers to retailers and buyers of seafood to address systemic impediments to market development.

“Extensive consultative process for tourism, really reaching out to the private sector, was a good strategy to take.”
- Informant

Bi-laterals, multilaterals, and a few foundations noted that their market-based solution strategy often fell short. In general, shifting people to alternative livelihoods and developing sustainable seafood market chains were least effective. As one informant stated, “Alternative livelihoods is always such a struggle. We did one or two really good things, but at the end of the day, either we weren't the right people to do it, or we didn't have the right techniques. I really don't know [which] it was.” Other case studies mentioned certification as an ineffective strategy. In Mesoamerica, it was challenging to develop markets for certified fisheries. In the Pacific, donors were challenged by certification of aquarium fish.

Informants were able to outline clear reasons for why these market-based strategies were ineffective. Sustainable seafood market strategy investments, and more specifically fisheries certification, had difficulty making the linkages between producers with markets and buyers, and with gaining traction on recognition of the label. One donor shared that “sustainable [seafood] was just starting to take off,” but not rapidly enough to create high enough demand and broad acceptance. The commitment by Walmart in 2008 to source seafood from MSC certified fisheries has helped to reduce this challenge by bringing certification schemes more into the mainstream, though there are still significant opportunities to improve market-based strategies. Certification of aquarium fish did not meet the expectations of donors when demand did not meet the level that was anticipated.

Alternative livelihoods also did not succeed as hoped. Donors had less insight into why these efforts had failed, however one government case study informant stated that it was because their initiative did not devote enough money to moving alternatives from theory to practice. In general, alternative livelihoods strategies failed because there are limited opportunities for communities to transition into, and from the influx of other resource users moving into the overexploited system into gaps left by individuals who transitioned.

Improving Sustainable Use and Development Strategy Effectiveness

Below are guidelines to make market-based strategies more effective:

- **Support organizations that have expertise in the solution.** If the solution strategy is to target business leaders, then donors need to support organizations that have this expertise and who can also cross-talk between the ocean conservation community and the private sector. This is the same case for developing alternative livelihood programs. Supporting an NGO that has expertise in ocean conservation may not offer the best path for community economic development and alternative livelihood efforts. Donors need to find the best fit and approach the organizations that can most effectively get the job done and determine the best ways to fill gaps in knowledge and expertise.
- **Properly assess the market demand and opportunity.** The market opportunity should be assessed thoroughly before strategies are deployed to determine if the approach is viable and feasible.
- **Build the business case for sustainability.** Donors need to support and build a clear business case for sustainability. Business leaders must know why they should change practices and understand the implications to their bottom line, particularly when they are considering a loan to finance the implementation of sustainable use strategies.
- **Provide incentives and technical assistance for implementation.** Donors need to provide adequate incentives and provide technical assistance to businesses if they want to change practices. Currently, there is often not enough of an incentive to motivate users to take the risk of moving to an unfamiliar practice. Incentives provide the extra push needed to make the switch. Often, once a new practice has become a habit and the benefits are proven, the incentive can be removed and the practice will remain intact.

A Natural Experiment in Donor Initiatives

A number of the donor initiatives in this study overlapped in geography, but differed in approach, providing a fortuitous opportunity to compare these initiatives and observe why particular donors were successful or not as successful within the same geographic context. Two donors, working within the same geography and towards similar goals, had two different outcomes. One donor's initiative, categorized as successful, established strong NGO and industry partnerships around resource use issues, developed an innovative approach to working with the private sector, and funded a regional approach to conservation, working through a network of local projects that collectively scaled up the initiative's impact. The second donor's approach was bureaucratic and top down, with limited alignment and capacity across the countries wherein they were operating. These characteristics, coupled with problems in initiative leadership, impeded this donor's key strategy of promoting regional coordination.

- **Link with economic development organizations and experts.** Reiterating the point above, donors can help connect government agencies, NGOs, and other donors to leverage skills and knowledge. The ocean conservation agenda can also be advanced by improved linkages between economic development organizations and ocean resource users.

Other Identified Strategies

We identified the strategies above as the main strategies funded by donors. Below we list other investment strategies and examples of associated activities.

Direct Conservation and Restoration: A small minority of donors engaged in direct conservation restoration. Our analysis showed direct conservation and restoration as extremely effective when

executed. Conservation strategies, like land acquisition and conservation easements, are highly targeted and can be quite successful for protecting coastal lands and wetlands. That being said, it is difficult to implement these strategies at a scale that has a considerable conservation impact. It is also particularly challenging in ocean ecosystems, where submerged lands are generally not in private ownership. Funders and grantees are exploring new approaches, examining ways that land conservation tools and lessons could be applied to the coastal and

Are Donors Selling Themselves Short?

The 20 case study donors collectively invested roughly \$1.7 billion in ocean conservation over the duration of these initiatives. However, because there is no tracking of how the dollars invested correlate to outcomes, it is not possible to calculate a return on this considerable investment. Failing to clearly communicate the benefit of these investments to the environment and society is a lost opportunity to leverage funds from other donors and support for conservation from the general public.

ocean context, such as through conservation concessions in which resource users or the government are paid for ecosystem conservation. Below are some of the ways in which this strategy is being deployed:

- Conservation concessions;
- Coastal conservation easements;
- Restoration of wetlands;
- Invasive species removal; and
- Acquisition of coastal lands.

Sustainable Financing: A minority of donors identified sustainable financing for ocean and coastal management and sustainable use mechanisms as a strategy of their initiative. Case studies pursuing this strategy focused on improving the quality of investments made by the public and private sectors, as well as improving long-term sustainable funding streams. While donors may wish that they started earlier on this, they are now specifically focusing on the following aspects of sustainable financing:

- Long-term financing of MPAs and MPA networks;

- Creating sound mechanisms that institutionalize long-term funding for ocean and coastal sustainable management through fees, taxes, etc.; and
- Endowments.

Integrating Ecosystem-based Management: A minority of case studies also sought to take an ecosystem-based approach, often stating it as a goal and occasionally as a strategy. Funders supported efforts to improve understanding and integration of ecosystem-based management tools within ocean and coastal management systems. Some initiatives also supported efforts focused on integrating ecosystem-based management by pilot testing comprehensive approaches and supporting training on ecosystem-based management principles and tools, as well as policy reform. Knowledge investments (increasing knowledge tools) were an important strategy for informing ecosystem-based management.

Foundations found this strategy challenging to implement because people were not sure of the best ways to put ecosystem-based management principles into practice, and full implementation of its outreach, education, science, and capacity-building components is expensive. Nevertheless, efforts to support the development or the reform of policy and management tools to include ecosystem-based management principles are now growing in importance and practice.

Creating Success in Goal Setting and Investment Strategies

Review of Key Findings

Our review of conservation initiative case studies yielded multiple insights into how donors can increase success when developing goals and investment strategies to meet those goals. We present these findings below and offer recommendations for improving success.

Setting Realistic Goals

A strong majority of informants claimed that their initiative had set realistic, attainable goals. Informants correlated this success with setting an adequate timeline, establishing a robust management structure, building strong capacity, creating longer-term strategic plans, and focusing investment on achieving main goals. Donors also shared reasons for circumstances in which their initiative goals were not realistic and how these factors hindered success. Lacking sufficient funds to work at a specific scale or on a specific goal, funding in regions or topics with limited capacity without building that capacity first, or having false assumptions were some of the factors that affected the ability of donors to achieve their goals.

Main Initiative Goals

Across the 20 case studies, the most common goals identified were biodiversity conservation, effective governance and policy for ocean and coastal conservation and management, and sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources. The goal of biodiversity conservation is seen as an overarching goal, which is achieved through success in the other goal categories.

Main Investment Strategies

The main investment strategies that were funded by initiative donors were science (collection, translation, and dissemination of relevant science for decision-making), education and outreach, capacity-building, partnership, policy and management tools, and market-based solutions. Funders always funded multiple strategies to achieve their main goals. Foundation donors supported a greater number of investment strategies than government donors, supporting the notion that they are typically more flexible in their approach to grant-making.

Blue Earth Consultants identified clusters of strategies that were most often used to achieve the two main goals supporting biodiversity conservation:

- *Strategy cluster for effective governance and policy for ocean and coastal conservation and management:* Education and outreach, science; sustainable finance, capacity-building and policy and management tools
- *Strategy cluster for sustainable use of ocean and coastal resources:* Education and outreach, sustainable finance, market-based solutions, and policy and management tools.

Recipes for Success

- ✓ Select realistic goals that consider adequate timelines, focus investments on achieving goals, foster partnerships, and builds or have capacity in place.
- ✓ Fund multiple strategies that collectively work towards goals.
- ✓ Clustering capacity-building, partnership, science, and education and outreach can be an effective means for achieving success.

Effective Strategies

The most effective strategies that donors identified were partnership, policy and management tools, and direct conservation. It is easier to identify achievements for strategies that yield tangible results, such as management tools and direct conservation.

Ineffective Strategies

Donor informants claimed that investments in partnership, market-based solutions, and science were the least effective strategies. Challenges with coordinating funding and developing a strong framework for partnership most commonly attributed to failure of this strategy. Within strategies for developing sustainable use opportunities, the market-based solutions strategy created the most difficulties. Specifically, developing sustainable seafood markets and alternative livelihoods were most challenging. Several donors who funded science confronted setbacks when science did not connect to and/or was not disseminated effectively to decision-makers.

Lessons Learned to Enhance Success and Avoid Failures in Goal Setting and Investment Strategies

Using the key findings identified in this section, we offer ingredients for enhancing success and considerations to avoid failures.

Enhancing Success

Setting realistic goals is a key component to achieving success. Setting attainable goals at the start of an initiative can help ensure that funds are spent effectively. Donors should select a goal that is targeted, but not so much so that it narrows the initiative's ability and flexibility in setting a strategy to achieve that goal.

This research showed that funding one strategy is not as an effective approach to attaining goals as utilizing a cluster of strategies. Selecting logical clusters of strategies that collectively and synergistically promote a specific goal is important. For example, supporting capacity-building, and education and outreach can create political will and stakeholder buy-in for governance and policy strategies. Supporting strategies that lead to more tangible outcomes, such as policy measures or designation of protected areas, can yield more direct conservation results.

Avoiding Failures

Lessons learned by funder initiative case studies can help donors avoid failure in the future. Donors have not documented and most are not willing to share failures. There is an opportunity for the donor community to begin to be more transparent about successes and failures in the future.

Avoiding Failures

- ✓ Be aware of selecting goals that can realistically be achieved with available investment amounts and lengths.
- ✓ Avoid employing strategies that have failed in the past without gaining a clear understanding for why they failed and determining actions to address strategy flaws.
- ✓ Do not waste resources by funding grants to build knowledge that have not incorporated direct connections for applied actions.
- ✓ When NGO capacity for a given strategy is lacking, invest in building that capacity, and assess success of these efforts before approving additional funding.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to exit or shift strategies when the political landscape changes.

Experiences by case study donors demonstrated that some strategies came up short. Further examination of how these strategies fail and how to mitigate this failure is needed to avoid similar difficulties in the future. More specifically, donors need to understand whether challenges are so deep-rooted that the strategy is entirely ineffective, or whether they could be adapted to increase efficacy. A number of donors supported market-based solutions that encountered challenges in linking certified fisheries to buyers. Markets failed within several of these initiatives, and informants speculated that better funding of efforts to increase awareness and outreach to buyers might have increased the demand for the certified product enough to achieve success.

In the past, donors faced challenges connecting certain strategies, specifically science, to an application that had a true conservation impact. Although investments that build up the knowledge of a specific issue or tool are important, that information needs to be applied and connected to decision-makers and implementers to achieve the goals of science-based decision-making.

Several donors observed that when they initiated funding in a region, there was insufficient capacity to carry out many of the strategies needed to achieve their goals. These donors invested the first few years of their initiative in building this capacity. After this initial support, grantees were able to execute the strategies outlined in the donor’s main strategy.

IX. Outcomes and Achievements

This section covers the outcomes and achievements that the donor initiative case studies reported. Achievements are trended to show the collective impact of these initiatives. First, we cover the various ways in which different donor organizations reported on success, and present the definitions for terms we use to describe achievements to clarify what constitutes a true achievement. Next, we cover overall trends for outcomes and achievement across sectors and scales, and discuss how successful donors used strategic planning and evaluation within their programs. This section also outlines trends for the five main achievement areas—science, governance and policy, area-based management, increased awareness, and partnerships—and describes other areas in which donors made achievements.

<p><i>Highlighted Key Findings for Outcomes and Achievements</i></p>	<p>➤ A strong majority of successful initiatives are guided by a formal strategic plan that outlines the goals, objectives, strategies, and expected outcomes of an initiative. Over half of these successful initiatives established indicators to measure progress towards outcomes.</p>
	<p>➤ Trends across sectors show that foundations were more successful in achieving outcomes in governance and policy, area-based management, and science. Government and foundation donors were equally successful in achievements related to partnership and increased awareness.</p>
	<p>➤ Looking at achievement across scales, the most achievements were experienced at the regional level; however, this was closely followed by the national and local scales.</p>
	<p>➤ The greatest number of achievements occurred in three regions—United States/Canada, Pacific, and Asia – which corresponds to the relative amounts invested in those regions.</p>
	<p>➤ A strong minority of case study respondents stated that their initiative had achieved its goals, while a similar number of respondents stated that their initiatives had partially achieved their goals.</p>

Reporting on Achievements

Success is a relative term and can mean different things to different organizations. Consequently, donors defined success and described achievements and outcomes in different terms and to varying degrees. Here we address these differences and how they affected our analysis of achievements.¹⁵

We observed that donors frequently lacked the ability to clearly and fully articulate conservation outcomes (changes in coastal and ocean ecosystem health or a policy or practice change) and achievements. Donors reported on achievements in very different ways. As mentioned in *V. Examining Donor Practices* (page 31) donors described achievements and outcome in both qualitative and quantitative terms. Some donors described very tangible outcomes such as acres of ocean placed under protection, number of conservation policies created, area closed to destructive fishing practices, number of fisheries certified, etc. Describing success is more straightforward when outlining achievements in governance and policy, area-based management, sustainable resource use, and direct conservation and restoration. However, it is more challenging to communicate success for awareness building, partnership, capacity-building, and science because the impact is difficult to measure and connect directly to conservation activities. For example, one donor funded education and outreach activities that reached over 100,000 children and adults annually. Although they are able to measure the number of individuals reached, it is highly unlikely that they would be able to determine how increased awareness translated into a conservation impact.

Donors also often labeled outputs as achievements. We define an output as a completed product or project that makes progress toward a greater achievement or outcome. In our experience, grantees report on achievements in a similar manner, often mixing outputs with outcomes. Therefore, grantee reporting may be influencing how donors communicate the achievements of their grantees. If donors financially support and coach grantees to developing a reporting framework that clearly distinguishes between outputs, outcomes, and achievements, we believe donor reporting will be similarly improved and lead to a greater ability to measure success.

Overall Trends for Outcomes and Achievements

The review of outcomes and achievements experienced by donor initiatives revealed commonalities across initiatives, sectors, scales, and geographies.

¹⁵ During our analysis we grouped achievements into three categories—completed, in-progress, and unanticipated. These three groups were then merged to provide an overall picture of achievements by theme. These three categories are defined as 1) *Completed Achievement*: Completed achievements are those achievements that fully satisfy the stated goals of the initiative; 2) *In-progress Achievement*: In-progress achievements are those achievements that are related to achievement of stated goals, however they are not fully completed; and 3) *Unanticipated Achievement*: Unanticipated achievements are those not originally identified as a stated goal or objective, but achieved nonetheless.

Across All Initiatives

We determined that a strong majority of successful initiatives are guided by a formal strategic plan that outlines the goals, objectives, strategies, and expected outcomes of an initiative. Similarly, a strong majority of successful initiatives established indicators to measure their progress towards outcomes.

A majority of all donors used evaluation (internal and/or external) to measure the progress of their initiatives, with the majority of donors using a mix of qualitative and quantitative indicators to describe these achievements. As mentioned previously, donors described success in different terms with most achievements most frequently being communicated using qualitative language.

Across Sectors

Trends across sectors show that foundations were more successful in achieving outcomes in governance and policy, area-based management, and science. Government and foundation donors were equally successful in achievements related to partnership and increased awareness.

Across Scales

Looking at achievement across scales, most achievements were experienced at the regional level, however, this was closely followed by the national and local scales (for scale definitions see *VII. Scales of Investment*, page 62). Donors did experience achievements at the state level; however, the majority of these achievements occurred in developed countries.

Across Geographies

The greatest number of achievements occurred in three regions—United States/Canada, Pacific, and Asia. These trends closely correspond to the relative number of donors investing in those regions (shown in Figure 2, page 19). It is likely that we see a higher number of achievements in these areas due to the higher number of investments being made by case study initiatives in these regions, as opposed to more challenges and/or greater difficulty working in regions with fewer achievements. Figure 16 below illustrates the number of achievement that occurred within each of the eight regions.

Figure 16. Map Showing Geographical Locations of Achievements



Base map source: DryIcons

Main Achievement Categories

Below we outline the main categories in which donors described achievements and outcomes. When possible, we merged quantitative achievements to show the overall achievements across multiple donors. However, information provided to us was not comprehensive, and as noted earlier, there is a lack of consistency in how donors articulate achievements; therefore, this overview should be viewed as illustrative and not as a complete picture of what was achieved by the 20 case study initiatives.

A strong minority of case study respondents stated that their initiative had achieved its goals, while a similar number of respondents felt that their initiatives had partially achieved their goals. These achievements tended to fall within 5 categories: governance and policy, area-based management, increased awareness, partnership, and science. Table 10 below summarizes the achievements donors reported in each of these categories.

Table 10. Summary of Achievements across Top Five Achievement Areas

Achievement Area	Overall Trends Across Achievements
Governance and Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ +40 achievements in the area of governance and policy, including 21 new policies created in six global regions—U.S./Canada, Pacific, Gulf of California, Asia, Wider Caribbean, and South America
Area-based management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ~ 580 newly created MPAs (+2,000,000 km²) ➤ +50 existing MPAs supported ➤ +6 networks of MPAs created ➤ 6 demonstration sites established for teaching MPA design and monitoring techniques
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 15 donor initiatives experienced 35 achievements in the area of education and outreach ➤ +1.6 million members of the general public and 1,500 government representatives reached
Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 12 key partnership achievements as formal partnerships, with a total of 38 memoranda of understanding/agreements signed memorializing formal agreements ➤ 35% of all partnership achievements were public-private partnerships
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ +11 policies directly informed by case study science projects ➤ 18 case studies supported science to fill knowledge gaps and supported management and policy decision-making leading to 65 clear achievements ➤ +193 reports written, ranging in focus from genetic mapping to coral stressors, to inform decision-makers and managers ➤ +96 monitoring protocols developed ranging from coral reef health monitoring to land-based indicators of pollution

Achievements in Governance and Policy

Initiative respondents realized significant achievements in the area of governance and policy. Donors were successful in developing new legislation or intergovernmental agreements for species bans, gear restrictions, ocean zoning, fisheries management plans, and pollution management. Donors also achieved increased levels of enforcement and funds allocated to implement policy. Initiative efforts also achieved common policy frameworks across regions.

Although stated as a strong achievement, many respondents also noted that this theme had many barriers to success. For example, one program changed its focus audience after an election cycle

removed from office a significant number of targeted officials. Barriers to achieving governance successes are discussed in further detail below in *X. Challenges* (page 109).

Highlights of Governance and Policy Achievements:

- Reauthorization of Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act;
- Commitment by Gulf of Thailand coastal states to an intergovernmental agreement on oil spill preparedness;
- Establishment of a joint policy framework for sustainable management of resources in the areas of fisheries, tourism, and MPAs among the three countries on the Gulf of Honduras;
- Bans on spearfishing and targeting parrotfish in Belize;
- Vote by European Union and Norway to implement gear selectivity in mixed groundfish fisheries, avoid areas with high juvenile occurrence, and ban high-grading.¹⁶

Achievements in Areas-based Management

A majority of initiatives experienced area-based management achievements. Achievements included designation of new MPAs and networks of MPAs, increased capacity for managing MPAs, and new community-based reserves. Areas-based management achievements often relied on strong partnerships and governance measures described previously.

Highlights of Area-based Management Achievements:

- Creation of Isla Espíritu Santo Reserve in the Gulf of California;
- Strengthened management capacity in 16 MPAs within the Pacific region;
- Closure of ~1,200,000 km² to bottom trawling off the U.S. West Coast;
- Designation of Bahía de los Angeles Biosphere Reserve in Gulf of California;
- Designation of networks of MPAs in two regions of California;
- Designation of 485 Locally Managed Marine Areas in Indonesia, Philippines, Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Fiji;
- Designation of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands;
- Creation of 6 MPA networks in the Birds Head Region of Indonesia; and
- Passage by the Panamanian Congress of a law creating a large new MPA around Las Perlas Archipelago in the Gulf of Panama.

Achievements in Increasing Awareness through Education and Outreach

A strong majority of informants reported achievements in building awareness about ocean conservation needs through education and outreach. These achievements targeted communities and policy-makers, and included training courses, conferences, and visual media. It is important to underscore that while donors reported increases in awareness, in most cases they were simply measuring the number of

¹⁶ High-grading is the practice of discarding low-value small fish in order to fill the quota allotted with higher-value big fish. See <http://www.fishsec.org/article.asp?CategoryID=1&ContextID=296>.

individuals reached; only one donor was able to articulate how education and outreach lead to public action.

Highlights of Increased Awareness Achievements:

- Improved awareness and understanding by policy makers, managers, and other stakeholders of impacts of coastal and marine resources and systems and the economic benefits and significance of those resources to local and national economies;
- Global conference on small-scale fisheries;
- Traveling exhibit on oceans threats and solutions that traveled to six destinations in Philippines reaching 1.3 million people;
- International Coastal Clean-up Day that brought 300,000 people to clean beaches in Philippines;
- 18,000 written comments, a public forum that drew more than 500 citizens, and the potential for a truly community-supported coastal management improvement plan in California; and
- Six specific and clear instances of media or public education efforts influencing coastal management decisions in the Pacific—one each in Papua New Guinea and Indonesia and two each in Palau and Fiji.

Achievements in Building and Coordinating Strong Partnerships

A strong majority of donor achievements were facilitated by developing strong partnerships. Initiatives catalyzed partnership and collaboration at the local, donor, and regional scales.

Highlights of Partnership Achievements:

- Signing of memoranda of agreement by 35 local government units committing financial resources to coastal resource management in the Philippines;
- Signing and implementation of three formal alliances among fishing cooperatives and governmental agencies in the Mesoamerican Reef;
- Formation of the Laguna San Ignacio Conservation Alliance partnership protecting the World Heritage Site in Gulf of California region;
- Partnership among NGOs that successfully opposed Escalera Nautica coastal development project in Gulf of California;
- Signing of a memorandum of understanding signed between the Coastal First Nations in British Columbia and the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans to undertake a marine spatial planning approach in the use and stewardship of the 88,000 km² Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area; and
- Public-private partnership developed between State of California and the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation for collaboration on the implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative establishing MPA networks in California.

Achievements in Science-based Decision-making

A strong majority of donor sources communicated achievements in the area of science-based decision-making. Achievements included knowledge gap assessments, completion of studies to fill knowledge

gaps, status reports, baseline reports, biodiversity inventories, demonstration sites as “laboratories” for regional training, monitoring protocols, and impact studies.

Highlights of Science Achievements:

- Study measuring impact of CO² on coral reef systems;
- First successful program for rearing coral from gamete to spawning adult;
- Multiple scientific studies to inform MSP initiatives in the U.S. and Canada; and
- Monitoring program for MPA adaptive management in California.

Other Achievement Areas

Advancing Market-based Solutions

Although donors faced challenges when funding market-based solutions, they did experience achievements in this category. These included implementation of catch-shares programs, a buyout of fishing fleets, and working with super market shoppers to change purchasing habits. The Pacific Fishery Management Council also voted to transform the Pacific groundfish trawl fishery to an individual transferable quota system.

Building Capacity

A majority of case study respondents from governments and foundations mentioned building knowledge and increasing capacity to use knowledge as an achievement of their programs. For some case studies, building capacity was prioritized during their first phase, while others sought to support capacity-building throughout the life of the initiative.

Leveraging Funding

A minority of programs attributed their involvement in their region of effort as leading to other funding for the region.

Implementing Ecosystem-based Management Tools

Implementation of EBM tools to help inform integration of EBM principals into resource management was mentioned by a quarter of case study respondents. Achievements included developing community tools for MSP, establishing web-based data systems supported by institutions, and creating tools for analyzing land-based threats.

Implementing Direct Conservation and Restoration Measures

Achievements noted by respondents included:

Species Conservation

Species conservation achievements comprised delisting of endangered species, reducing impacts of fisheries on sea turtles, and reducing harmful effects of coastal development on marine mammals.

Direct Conservation

Four program respondents mentioned purchasing lands and developing conservation easements as accomplishments of their programs. These purchases improved access to coastal areas, ensured conservation of important habitats, and secured important habitat corridors.

Restoration

Three informants mentioned restoration as important accomplishments of their programs. These projects improved coastal, fresh water, and marine habitats such as wetlands and kelp beds.

Summary of Key Findings

This section, Outcomes and Achievement, of the report is devoted to identifying results across case studies. Here we briefly review key findings on initiative outcomes and achievements.

The 5 main achievement areas include science, governance and policy, area-based management, increased awareness, and partnerships. Other achievement areas mentioned by informants and documents include advancing market-based solutions, capacity building, leveraging funding, implementing EBM tools, and implementing direct conservation and restoration measures. Governance and policy, area-based management, and science were outcomes most successfully achieved by foundations, whereas government and foundation donors were equally successful in achievements related to partnership and increased awareness.

Initiatives with formal strategic plans led to greater achievement of outcomes. Initiatives were also most successful at the regional, national and local levels, and in United States/Canada, Pacific, and Asia (these regions also had the highest amounts invested).

Nevertheless, only a strong minority of respondents stated that their initiative had achieved or partially achieved its goals.

X. Challenges

Throughout this report, we describe the challenges case study donors face in identifying, planning, implementing, and evaluating ocean conservation initiatives. In this section, we revisit the most frequently identified challenges by case study respondents and internal documents, and offer lessons learned for conquering obstacles.

Ocean conservation challenges come in many forms. In some cases, issues arise that prevent donors from investing in an initiative or aspect of an initiative, defined here as a barrier. At other times, donors experience difficulties during the course of an initiative that hinder their progress toward the achievement of goals; we define this as a setback. Often, respondents identified similar challenges as both barriers and setbacks. In this section, we use the term “challenge” to address these overlaps. We use “barrier” or “setback” for instances when case studies specifically described a hindrance as such.

Highlighted Findings for Challenges	<i>The top five challenges identified by case studies:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partnership and coordination ➤ Governance, political will and buy-in ➤ Capacity ➤ Funding ➤ Stakeholder willingness and buy-in
	<i>Other challenges identified:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knowledge gaps ➤ Temporal scale ➤ Other external forces
	<i>Strategies for overcoming obstacles:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improving coordination and alignment ➤ The importance of capacity ➤ Leverage funding ➤ Building allies ➤ Business case and incentives ➤ Improving knowledge ➤ Ecosystem services and values framework

The following section describes in greater detail the challenges identified by respondents across the themes listed above.

Top Five Challenges

Partnership and Coordination

The majority of case studies identified challenges in donor-grantee and grantee-grantee partnership and coordination. Overall, respondents described challenges arising from the complexities of forming strong partnerships and the fact that finding alignment among groups and coordinating groups takes more time, money and energy than they anticipated. Case studies identified 2 primary sources of difficulty: lack of willingness and lack of alignment.

Lack of willingness

The lack of willingness of groups to work together hindered the success of some initiatives. Whether due to lack of interest or limited capacity, government agencies at all scales from local departments, to regional government often are not inclined to collaborate, provide information, and work together toward a common goal. Similarly, many NGO organizations, in spite of working on parallel activities, do not align schedules and strategies, or work together to maximize the impact of scarce funding. Even in instances when invested parties (NGOs, governments, grantees, and other stakeholders) are at the table and willing to cooperate during program development and design, once activities start, partners sometimes realize conflicts of interest or want to work at different paces with different methodologies, and exit the partnership. These unanticipated changes in partnership structure can create delays and waste financial resources and capacity.

Power brokers – Forces for Success

Power brokers are individuals with connections and the ability to influence high-level decision-makers who can be important in driving success for ocean conservation initiatives. Our research showed that all of the very successful initiatives interacted closely with power brokers, or were power brokers themselves. Power brokers can be donors, NGO staff, political leaders, or resource users. They are responsible agents for such activities as building relationships, coordinating efforts, leveraging funds from targeted donors, or ensuring long-term staying power. At the state, national, or regional levels donors typically interact with power brokers to further policy, increase governances, and to ensure lasting solutions. At the local level, grantees interact with power brokers in the community such as community leaders and chiefs.

Lack of alignment

Countries and implementing organizations are often faced with a multitude of donors, technical agencies, and NGOs involved in the sector that frequently have different agendas, contradictory viewpoints, and widely varying abilities to provide assistance. This situation can be compounded by a lack of consistency among donors using complementary methodologies. Donor requirements for project application processes, financial management requests, and reporting vary widely. This lack of alignment can have a negative impact because it can confuse and tax the limited resources of governments, grantees, and other stakeholders.

Governance, Political Will, and Buy-in

The majority of case studies identified challenges related to governance and political engagements. Informants explained two specific issues as the sources of difficulty: ineffective government leadership and unwillingness to change, and corruption.

Ineffective leadership and unwillingness to change

Unsupportive decision-makers or changes in governmental leadership during an initiative created challenges for a number of case studies donors. Informants stated that they experienced setbacks to initiative progress in a few different forms. In some cases, the agencies in charge simply lacked the willingness to adapt an old style of functioning to include newer, more innovative methods of ocean conservation that would supersede or enhance the current management framework. One case study informant noted that the initiative was successful at identifying champions, and gained buy-in from elected officials at the municipal level, but constant shifts in leadership due to frequent election cycles required the initiative to adapt its strategy toward targeting senior municipal managers instead of their elected bosses. Another case study experienced setbacks because the initiative's capacity-building component created new management positions and other new leadership roles. It experienced unexpected delays from the unanticipated task of having to work with local government units to identify individuals willing to take on these new leadership responsibilities. Yet another respondent identified difficulties in attempts to cross political boundaries (to encourage greater cooperation) as a source of initiative setbacks and barriers.

Corruption

In addition to other challenges, many institutions and organizations are also faced with significant levels of corruption. Corruption happens at many levels – among governments, and even within grantee organizations, and is a particularly acute in developing countries where regulation and reporting requirements may be more lax. One informant stated, “I think [the country director] was a crook and there is a good possibility that he was skimming money off the project.” While informants recognized that some organizations have to work within these frameworks to achieve ocean conservation successes, they believe that in principle funders should take a zero tolerance stance against corruption. They noted that while this has limited some funding opportunities, an unwavering commitment to donor principles and values ultimately has greater impact on encouraging the ocean conservation community to have integrity and transparency.

Capacity

Donor staffing capacity

Another commonly mentioned challenge was inadequate staffing capacity, and consequent program discontinuity, among both donor organizations and grantees. A strong majority of foundations and majority of government case study respondents felt that they had sufficient staff capacity to meet goals and outcomes of their initiative. Nevertheless, many informants stated that they were “stretched thin” or relied on partnerships to support implementation of specific aspects of the initiative.

A strong minority of the government case studies mentioned that they were too under-staffed to meet the needs of their initiatives. Among the respondents who noted insufficient staff capacity, one informant stated that the ideology of the program supported and aimed for low overhead and minimal staffing. Another respondent reflected that the team was unable to capitalize on an opportunity to engage strong political will at the inception of the project because it lacked the staffing to connect with government and communities at the required scale.

Half of respondents discussed financial resources, including effects of the current economic situation, as influencing staffing and capacity. Some programs had scaled implementation to match funding and staff capacity, while in another case, a respondent was relieved the program had not hired a new position as it now lacked the funding to support an additional staff member. Another informant discussed staff turnover and forced time off affecting staff morale, and encouraging higher turnover.

A few initiatives spoke specifically about the capacity of partners and opportunities to build internal donor capacity. For example, one government respondent mentioned not being sure whether “we are doing everything we can to keep our people current.” Two other respondents, whose programs were the first of their kind, emphasized the vast learning opportunities the team underwent and the importance of using the capacity and network of their partners. A government respondent noted the need to overcome “many administrative hurdles to deliver excellent results.”

“I have nothing but admiration for my colleagues.”

- Informant commenting on staff competence despite insufficient staff numbers

Grantee Capacity

Donors also described challenges to grant-making from limited grantee capacity. Issues such as staff turnover, a limited talent pool to draw on, lack of business and/or technical skills, and limited cooperation among NGOs all delay progress towards conservation. Initiatives sometimes suffered from discontinuity due to staff turnover and shifting leadership roles within grantee organizations. Having key grantee individuals leave their positions during critical times created chaos and slowed the progress of an initiative toward its goals (if even just temporarily) and, in some cases, required donor organizations to step in and redeploy capacity-building activities elsewhere. Donors believe program sustainability and continued support by investors rests on the perceived ability of an organization to carry out project. When this is slowed or compromised due to shifting roles and

staffing issues, it can have negative impacts on a program's ability to achieve success and may also reduce likelihood of future funding. Thus, grantees must have the capacity, proven skill sets, and infrastructure to deliver the intended initiative tasks; or, at the very least, must have a compelling plan to acquire them.

Government Capacity

Capacity among governments varies widely between different countries and/or regions. Their ability to execute policy and legislative actions, make adjustments to overcome governance challenges, and maintain consistent enforcement plays a significant role in an initiative's ability to move forward. The effect of governance problems is often further exacerbated by the fact that programs related to ocean and coastal management and protection are not typically housed within the same government department; for example, ministries of the environment are responsible for conservation, while ministries of agriculture are in charge of fisheries management. This lack of alignment, coupled with government unwillingness to work interdepartmentally, amplifies inconsistencies. One bi-lateral informant established as a matching grant criteria the amount of funding governments were contributing to environmental management as a measure of capacity and willingness. For government agencies that had not allocated funding, but had the financial capacity to do so, the funder had mechanisms in place to help agencies identify appropriate funding levels and ocean conservation measures to support. An evaluation of this facet of the initiative found a direct link between these efforts and improved ocean health and management.

Funding & Economy

Funding issues created challenges for a strong majority of case studies. Respondents noted that grantee's project estimates, financial and temporal, are often underestimated, which can hurt timelines or diminish financial capacity in other aspects of an initiative. Donors' own budgets can be an equally significant problem. The stock market crashes in 2000 and 2008/2009, coupled with state budget cuts and other internal organizational fluctuations in funding have resulted in budget cuts across many foundations, governments, and bi- and multi-lateral organizations. Respondents noted that funding security affects the ability to plan long-term and that the lack of consistent budgets can create program limitations and setbacks in progress. Program sustainability can also be compromised; several organizations mentioned that initiatives closed, with exits made after funding was severely reduced or removed.

Stakeholder Willingness and Buy-in

The challenges brought about by lack of stakeholder willingness and buy-in ranged from mild resistance arising from what informants described as fear of change, to intense and organized stakeholder opposition. One respondent noted that communities are resistant to change because of fear of the unknown impacts of trying something new, even if it has proven elsewhere to be a more effective or successful methodology or management technique. Another case study informant expressed challenges arising from stakeholders not being interested in "looking outside" of their immediate viewpoints.

Other informants discussed the impacts strong stakeholder opposition can have on success. They stated that in initiatives, such as marine protected area designation, where there are significantly divergent points of view and multiple, strongly opinionated stakeholder groups, opposition can become a significant barrier to progress. Similarly, a failure to develop a broad-based constituency for marine conservation that drives appropriate policy changes at local, regional and national levels also creates challenges.

Informants did discuss taking steps to try to reduce, if not eliminate, these barriers. For example, initiatives focused on fisheries management used the development of alternative livelihoods as a primary strategy for increasing stakeholder buy-in. Respondents agreed that alternatives must be introduced in tandem with restrictions on former resource use and closures on new entrants to the fishery to effectively reduce pressure on the resource. Unfortunately, development of alternative livelihoods was also generally viewed to be very challenging and less successful than other conservation measures. The primary source of difficulty was that development of alternative livelihoods is not an area of specialization for many ocean conservation organizations, and they often lack the necessary knowledge and expertise to address the many complex social factors required for success in this arena. Thus, informants and the consultants agree that ocean conservation donors need to seek out partnerships with groups that have social and economic expertise in communities in transition, and ensure that long-term funding sources are available to support transition efforts. Education and policy must be used in conjunction with these strategies to help limit others from filling the gaps left by those who have successfully transitioned to alternative livelihoods.

There is “missing information – not just on bycatch actually, even in directed fishing communities. We still don't have information on how many turtles are being caught. With the knowledge of how many turtles are being killed, you could start to think outside the box.”

- Informant

Other Challenges

Lack of cultural alignment

Lack of cultural understanding in designing and implementing programs was identified by nearly one-half of all case studies, and government initiatives mentioned issues of cultural alignment three times more frequently than foundations. Informants from case studies noted that they faced substantial challenges when the initiative structure did not properly take into account differences in legal systems, languages, demographics, social characteristics, and economic development among participating countries. For example, one foundation noted the inappropriateness of merit-based recognition in the Indonesian culture. If donor and implementing organizations are not aware of cultural needs and sensitivities, they risk not only facing significant barriers to program implementation, but also alienating the communities in which they are trying to work.

Lack of scientific understanding

Again, nearly one-half of case studies specifically noted ocean conservation barriers that arose from gaps in scientific understanding. Interestingly, however, this theme was identified three times more

frequently by foundations than government initiatives. Informants and documents described a lack of both natural and social science, information on marine ecosystems, and public awareness of scientific concepts. One foundation informant stated that missing information and lack of a good understanding of things such as reef system health, bycatch levels, economic values, etc., limits the ability to think creatively about how to solve challenges.

Temporal Scale

A strong minority of case studies identified initiative timeframes as hindering the success of the program. In some cases, this fact was due to the setting of unrealistic timelines for the achievement of program goals and outcomes. In other cases, unforeseen challenges arose, requiring a shift in timelines. Some informants and documents also described challenges that arise from the length of grants. They noted that science, ecosystem responses, and social change often do not fit into granting cycle timelines. Additional information on scale can be found in *Section VII. Scales of Investment*, page 62.

Other External Forces

In addition to the other challenges described in this section, population growth, poverty and lack of economic opportunities, natural disasters, and political volatility were other factors that hindered initiative achievements. Particularly in the developing world, coastal communities are some of the poorest and most densely populated areas in many regions around the world; food insecurity and limited employment opportunities are the norm. These problems will only increase unless steps are taken to address issues of economic development and population pressure on these finite resources; if the problems are not addressed, they can fuel the fear and unwillingness to change noted earlier. In the developed world, coastal communities often have limited employment opportunities, and reducing the capacity of a fishery or restricting access amplifies difficulties within these communities and raises stakeholder opposition.

Case study informants rarely mentioned the impacts of natural or human-caused disasters. However, those who did stressed the enormity of their impact. Respondents described how hurricanes, earthquakes, coral bleaching events, and more recently, the Gulf of Mexico oil spill have, in some cases, destroyed years of work.

Political distress, such as war, is a challenge that some case studies have had to confront. When dangerous or volatile situations arise, programs appear to quickly recognize their limited ability to make conservation impacts and adapt their strategies to focus on other areas of less instability until the conflict has been alleviated.

“Overcoming these impediments will require uniting science, political momentum, and leadership with innovative management solutions. While there is no simple fix to problems that have been building for decades, marine ecosystems are dynamic and cannot be managed to a single stable state. Thus, the ecosystems should be managed to maintain their resilience.”
- Initiative planning document

Conquering Obstacles

In this subsection, we offer ideas and lessons learned about overcoming obstacles. In general, case studies shared that finding ways to better support project teams, improve communication, strengthen partnerships, build capacity, and fill knowledge gaps were of great value in both minimizing setbacks and reducing barriers. Additional insights on these approaches to minimizing challenges and others are presented below.

In spite of being confronted by significant challenges, case study informants and documents also identified some of their most significant achievements in their areas of greatest challenge. One could speculate that it is due to the enormity of these challenges that informants also identified them as substantial achievements. Perhaps it is because donors are directing investments to areas of ocean conservation that are in need of the greatest support. Regardless, the result is clear: more difficult goals, if achieved, also mean greater opportunity for significant impacts and achievements.

Improving Coordination and Alignment

Having an adequate budget and well-conceived and -executed plan for coordination among groups working toward a common ocean conservation goal is essential for ocean conservation success. The time, money, and energy required to support communication and coordination efforts can be substantial, though significantly less than the potential resources that can be wasted by not having a sophisticated and organized coordination process in place. Some informants noted that the use of a management team rather than a single leader helped to improve coordination in more complex, global-scale projects. Building better relationships with power brokers is another way to improve coordination. This method also offers the benefit of illuminating areas for greater alignment between groups and generating ideas for initiatives that address cross-cutting issues extending beyond ocean conservation measures, such as food security, community health, environmental justice, etc. This can help create partnership leverages, build a larger constituency, and increase buy-in from the wider community. Refer to *VIII. Goals and Investment Strategies* (page 76) for additional information on improving coordination and alignment.

The Importance of Capacity

Having the proper capacity to take action toward an initiative's ocean conservation goals increases the potential for success and helps to minimize wasted time and resources. Capacity at all levels – government, grantee and donor – works in conjunction to maximize funding efficiency. Informants agree that a government's willingness and capacity to fund ocean conservation and management measures creates a direct link to improved ocean health, and that government willingness to take part in capacity-building significantly helps to minimize initiative setbacks. In addition, grantees must have the capacity, proven work force, skill sets, and infrastructure to deliver the intended initiative tasks. Finally, donors must have the capacity to properly manage their portfolio demands.

Using a network of partners and pooling resources helps to reduce capacity demands. Funding the creation of high-functioning partnerships, including elected officials, grantees, and other donors,

requires greater levels of coordination, but also creates the opportunity for reducing other challenges and heightening initiative impacts and sustainability. Additional information on the importance of capacity is provided in *VI. The Central Role of Funding Partnership* (page 51).

Leverage Funding

Our findings highlight throughout this report the benefits of funding partnerships. Donors can capitalize on economies of scale by coordinating and communicating between funding agencies and donors and merging or aligning funds toward common goals when possible.

To reduce the impacts of budget cuts, respondents underscored the importance of having processes in place that help to identify the most cost efficient and successful program aspects, and then prioritizing support for those together. They also noted the value in co-funding, grant leveraging, and seeking matching funds. Donors can reach out to other funders interested in cross-cutting issues to further their reach, such as coastal hazards, food security, community economic development, and public health issues etc. *VI. The Central Role of Funding Partnerships* (page 51) offers additional insights into the value of leveraging funding.

Building Allies

Finding ways to improve interactions and create new relationships with groups affected by ocean conservation efforts is key to reducing push-back, gaining greater buy-in, and promoting long-term initiative sustainability. Engaging in public awareness and dialogue with governments and other stakeholders can create a strong constituency for the harmonization of policies and enforcement of legislation. This approach must be aligned, however, with adequate resources to absorb the incremental costs of conservation and economic tradeoffs in the interests of the public good.

In addition, donor transparency is essential to building stakeholder trust. This trust is essential in helping to bring about ocean conservation changes. This factor is particularly true for government donors who are legally obligated to be transparent. Being honest with stakeholders about the changes required to bring about ocean conservation, and then working to understand and address the concerns of those affected, helps to gain greater buy-in and enhance the durability of ocean conservation solutions.

Business Case and Incentives

The public, stakeholders, and the private sector need more incentives to make durable change in practices. Support to make a strong business case and incentives to be early adaptors can be powerful ways to create changes in practice. Incentives can come in many forms, such as access rights, training programs, updated gear or other technologies, among others. Refer to *VIII. Goals and Investment Strategies* (page 76) for more information on incentives.

Improving Knowledge

This study has consistently affirmed the importance of science in initiative strategies and achievements. It is the underpinning in support of many goals, (e.g., area based management decisions, informing policy, building technical capacity). Nevertheless, a lack of scientific knowledge creates challenges as

both barriers to entry and setbacks caused by a lack of adequate understanding of species and systems. Moreover, the significant amount of scientific information that has been produced often lacks clear pathways for dissemination. This reality has the additional negative consequence of wasting resources when research efforts are duplicated, and the information required to make the best conservation decisions is not reaching the right audiences. To alleviate this problem, donors need to fund targeted and in-depth research initiatives that have also identified robust avenues for moving information from its academic origins to conservation action plans.

Supporting similar efforts for increasing social science knowledge can help illuminate specific cultural needs and sensitivities, enhancing the ability to increase buy-in and reducing the potential for alienating the communities in which initiatives are trying to work. Refer to *VIII. Goals and Investment Strategies* (page 76) for more on the importance of scientific knowledge.

Ecosystem Services and Values Framework

Throughout this report, our findings show that key opinion leaders and decision-makers need to understand the services coastal and ocean ecosystems provide to society and place a true value on them. Identifying uniform definitions of these services, attaching economic values to them, and using terms these decision-makers understand will help garner greater support and buy-in for supporting and adopting sustainable practices and conservation. As noted in *VII. Scales of Investment*, while all participants in ocean conservation are struggling with full implementation of the concept of ecosystem based management, the importance of valuing ecosystem services has begun to move into the spotlight of policy and decision-making frameworks. This paradigm shift could catalyze change and greater support from public institutions and the private sector to reform our management of human activities affecting ocean and coastal resources and ecosystems. In taking the next step toward moving the concept from theory to practice, information gaps, needs, opportunities, and how to account for ecosystem services and effectively measure, manage, and communicate these services needs to be addressed, while simultaneously encouraging the integration of these concepts into decision-making frameworks.

XI. Roles for Foundation and Government Ocean Conservation Funders

This final section highlights some ways to leverage the strength of different types of ocean conservation funders now and in the future. We first discuss the different roles of government and foundation funders, then layout opportunities for complementary roles between the two donor sectors.

<p><i>Highlighted Key Findings for Roles for Ocean Conservation Funders</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Government funders’ competitive advantage in supporting mainstream policy development and implementation; building core infrastructure and institutions; developing capacity and providing technical assistance at a large scale; enforcing regulations; making large scale science investments; and institutionalizing programs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Foundation funders’ edge is in building capacity and leadership; convening, educating, and influencing civil society across all sectors; leveraging funding from multiple sectors; and piloting new, riskier, cutting edge policies and practices.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Foundation and government funders’ complementary roles in pooling resources; bridging funding during lean times; convening stakeholders; connecting grantees to available funding; influencing decision makers across sectors; educating political leaders; and responding to emerging issues.

Role of Government Funders

As briefly discussed in *Section III, Overview of the Case Studies* (page 17), government funders have key strengths and motivations for funding ocean conservation. The financial scale of government funding is much larger than the foundation donor community; however, they are subject to more restrictions. Government ocean conservation funds may have policy directives, legal mandates, or policy agreements that require funds to be allocated toward specific ocean conservation and management. Since these are public funds there may also be requirements or limits on how they are used. Foundation donors also have directives as outlined by the Board of Directors, and as non-charitable status organizations must abide by legal requirements related to mission and money flows. However, for government donors information on funding allocation is readily available or recorded through the public record, and government funders typically have more accountability to the public and civil society on the use and results of funds that can lead to scrutiny and heavy criticism.

For this study, we identified and selected two types of government donors: 1) international aid bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors, and 2) national or state government agency donors. International government funders, bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors, tend to invest in initiatives with social and sustainable economic development components, capacity-building, increasing public awareness, and policy reform strategies. State and federal agencies often focus on implementing and influencing policy

and regulatory frameworks, building capacity, and outreach and education. Below is a brief overview of the role that government funders can uniquely play:

- Support mainstream policy development and implementation.
- Build core infrastructure and institutions.
- Build capacity and provide technical assistance at a large scale.
- Enforce regulation.
- Make large scale science investments.
- Institutionalize programs.

Government donors are also positioned to use certain tools to incentivize behavior change and promote ocean conservation goals. For example, bi-laterals and multi-laterals can offer recipient countries incentives for governance reform through debt-for-nature swaps, contributions to conservation trust funds, or payment for ecosystem services. Bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors can work on transboundary regional solutions and support efforts to link funding to policy agendas. They may try to influence and integrate ideas into the policy and regulatory framework for a country. This ability is also the case for U.S. government donors, where federal agencies such as National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant programs may support state agencies and NGOs to implement projects for conservation or that provide economic incentives for sustainable development. Government donors may utilize federal and/or state established frameworks to offer tax incentives, loans, and/or implement the Polluter Pays Principle.

In general, government donors do not support policy reform and advocacy with financial resources, but utilize human capital, sending individuals of influence to discuss policy and push the conservation agenda.

Role of Foundation Funder

Although there are some overlaps between sectors, foundations play a distinct role in ocean conservation funding. They generally have a smaller scale of giving than government donors; however, they have greater flexibility in how and when they provide funding, and to whom. They are not required to be accountable to the public at large and thus, are able to direct funds in ways that may be more innovative, risky, or on the cutting edge of conservation. Foundations serve as conveners, catalyzers, and advocates for pushing forth conservation. They help develop civil society by creating public discourse on key issues, encouraging innovation and building awareness, and advocate to push forth conservation agendas. Knowledgeable, competent, and dedicated trustees and professional staff create the backbone of many foundations, making them positioned to play these roles.

The foundation donors selected for this study fall into two categories: 1) private foundations and 2) public foundations (or regrantors). Public foundations have many of the same characteristics as private foundations; however, they may be subject to even greater accountability to their donors and their Board than private philanthropy. Public foundations also need to remain mindful of the conflicts that can arise when competing for funding with the same organizations to which they are providing grants.

However, this donor structure also allows for specialization in targeted ocean conservation goals or regions, and can provide cost-effective mechanisms for making smaller grants.

Foundation donors differ in their desired level of public visibility. At one end of the spectrum, some donors are highly visible, frequently allowing grantees to publicly recognize their support. At the other end are donors who choose to remain more anonymous or allow grantees to recognize their support only in more discreet venues. The level of public visibility often affects the donors' approach to grant-making, with those that are more visible often being more conservative in the strategies that they fund. For example, a highly visible foundation donor is unlikely to fund organizations that take extreme approaches to conservation. However, a non-visible donor protected by anonymity can make grants with less concern about negative publicity.

Below is a brief overview of the role that foundation funders can uniquely play:

- Build capacity and leadership;
- Convene, educate, and influence civil society across all sectors;
- Leverage funding from multiple sectors;
- Catalyze innovation and pilot new approaches;
- Push standards for “next” and “best” practices and reform or develop new policy and practices;
- Make program related investments; and
- Partner and serve as a funding bridge for government.

Foundations serve as conveners and partners, encouraging grantees to push the envelope, and work to motivate and inspire innovative and new strategies across sectors. They can invest in leadership and build capacity in key domains. Private funders can experiment and promote innovative solutions and new approaches. They can support civil society to challenge and push key issues and solutions. Many foundations, especially in the developing world, may provide necessary support for conservation management that the countries themselves cannot provide. For example, in Belize, foundations support NGOs to oversee the management and enforcement of MPAs. In the United States, many foundations may provide bridge funding during economic downturns or compliment government efforts to ensure their robustness. Foundations can also make program related investments to provide incentives and solutions to create market-based solutions. The field of venture philanthropy and social entrepreneurship experienced growth in the past decade and there is an opportunity for it to continue grow and evolve into program and projects aligned with the ocean conservation sector.

Opportunities for Complementary Roles

The distinct differences between the roles of government and foundation donors provide opportunities in which they can play complementary roles. Playing to the strengths outlined above and summarized in the characteristics Table 11 and Figure 17 below, we present several opportunities for government and foundation funds to be complementary.

Table 11: Government and Foundations Characteristics

Characteristics	Government Funders	Foundation Funders
Financial Scale	High	Low
Flexibility	Low	High
Transparency	Required	Self-imposed
Accountability	Required	Self-imposed

Mutually leverage funding

There are opportunities for government and foundation donors to work together to leverage funds from diverse sources of funding. Foundation donors can seed funds that will later be matched with larger government support. A financial commitment by government donors, especially in developing nations, shows both financial and political support for conservation reassuring foundation donors that their investments will be lasting, which in turn can encourage increased private contributions.

Bridging funding

Foundation donors can work with government to bridge funding during times when government budgets are reduced or political support for conservation is diminished. This can maintain momentum of existing efforts and build new efforts. Public foundations with close ties to government, such as NFWF, can be especially important during these times and act as intermediaries between government and private foundations.

Convening

We observed that foundations have the power to convene multiple sectors to the table to discuss and implement ocean conservation. Working with government donors, both parties can encourage more opportunities for alignment and implementation of shared goals.

Connecting grantees to opportunities

Foundation donors can identify opportunities for grantees to apply for government funds. In some cases, grantees can connect resource users to government funding to increase funding to transition to more sustainable resource extraction methods.

Influencing action

Most of the foundations reviewed in this report have board members who are prominent in political, financial, scientific, or cultural circles; there is an opportunity for these influential leaders to engage decision-makers and advocate for increased government funding for ocean conservation.

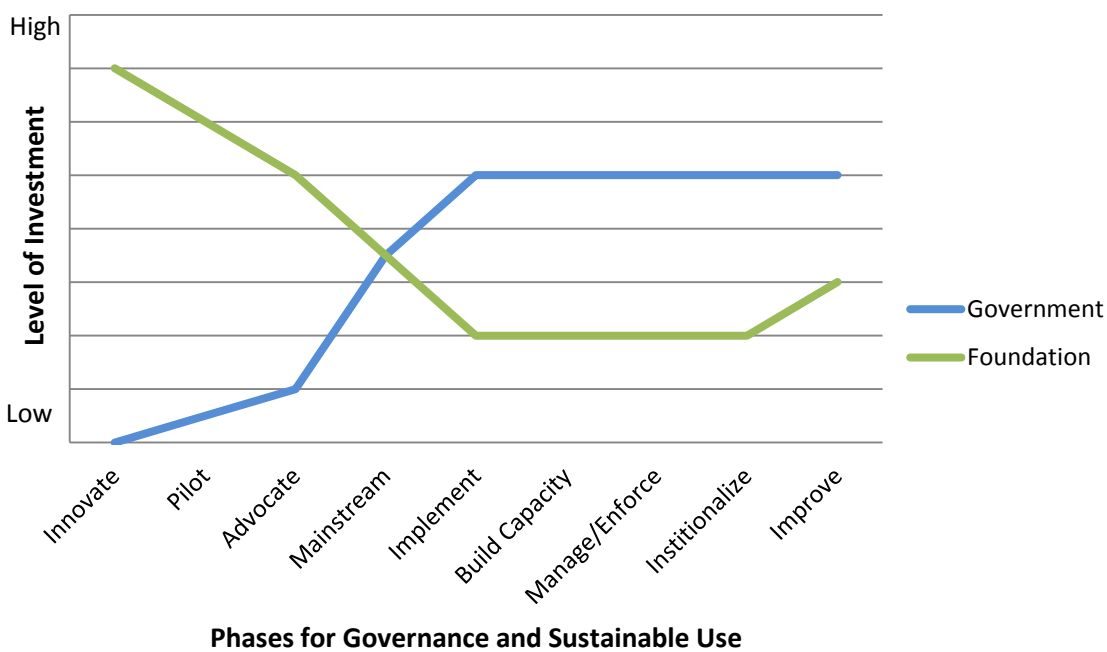
Educating leaders

There is an opportunity for foundation and government donors to educate political leaders. Government donors can get private foundations face time with elected officials and senior agency leadership to discuss threats, needs, and solutions with leaders.

Response capacity

Foundation donors can build governments’ capacity to address emerging issues. Foundation donors can fund innovation and pilot solutions, then advocate to government donors to implement these solutions. Together they can build capacity for government management and enforcement, subsequently institutionalizing and improving the solution. Based on our research and analysis, Blue Earth Consultants developed Figure 17 below. This figure illustrates this process and the level of funds each party would invest in each phase.

Figure 17. Graph showing the level of investment of each donor throughout phases for governance and sustainable use



Incentivizing market-based solutions

Foundation donors can support seed funding for market-based solutions and subsidize sustainable concepts. Once there is proof of concept, government donors can assist with mainstreaming and bringing concepts to scale through loans, tax credits, grants, and other incentives.

Accessing more capital

Both foundation and government donors can leverage their connections with the donor community to leverage ocean conservation funding with donors in the public health, hazard management, food security, and climate change sectors. In addition, donors can reach out to private investors.

Conclusion

To our knowledge, this study represents the first-ever examination of how foundation and government donors determine and implement their ocean conservation grant-making. Ocean conservation is a relatively new area of resource management and conservation. While investment in this field may not yet be commensurate with the 70% of the planet covered by ocean waters, it is growing rapidly, and a wealth of lessons already exists that can enhance the effectiveness of those investments and promote success in ocean conservation. This applied research study attempts to capture the expertise of the individuals leading multiple initiatives trying to achieve similar goals. We hope the stories told by these case studies, and comparisons among them, will provoke discussion and encourage efforts to improve ocean conservation funding in the future.

Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

SURVEY TOOL FOR OCEAN CONSERVATION FUNDING INITIATIVE CASE STUDIES

After reviewing case study documents, we will revise and tailor each interview to each organization, and informant. Below are questions to guide our interview.

Objectives of the Interview (for internal reference by " " - #):

- Identify and examine principles and/or criteria funders outline to guide strategies and portfolio level decision-making on whether or not to invest in an initiative.
- Identify what funders want to achieve and how they measure success and determine if initiatives are setting realistic goals and metrics of success.
- Identify successful and unsuccessful strategies.
- Identify preconditions and key elements during implementation for success
- Identify barriers (barrier removal strategies) and lessons learned.
- Determine the appropriate scale of ocean conservation investment and understand paradigm shift to larger scale in recent years.
- Understand what role funding partnerships plan in initiatives.
- Identify internal operations, capacity and governance for successful grant-making.

Background

Historically, both bilateral and foundation donors focused on marine conservation have tended to develop their strategies and approaches through forward looking examinations of issues and opportunities. We now have a much richer 'history' of past strategies and initiatives that might better inform today's strategic choices and design considerations. The purpose of the interviews we are conducting for this survey is to try to distill those lessons learned, key findings, successes and failures.

This interview is confidential, so any information you provide will not be affiliated with your name outside of this discussion and our data analysis.

Organizational Priorities and Reasoning for Entering and Exiting:

1. Does your organization have any criteria that guide investments?

1a) If so, what criteria does your organization use to guide strategies and portfolio level decision-making on whether or not to invest in an initiative?

2. Could you provide a brief overview of your organization's priorities in alignment with marine and coastal conservation?

2a) What led to a decision to invest, or enter into, in an ocean related initiative? (e.g., AFD *What led to a decision to expand an initiative?*)

2b) What led to a decision to exit out of an ocean conservation initiative? *In cases where a foundation or bi-lateral and/or multi-lateral has exited from ocean conservation grant-making (or from particular ocean conservation strategies), or decided after a strategic planning exercise not to start the initiative, what led to the decision (e.g. Surdna)?*

Goals/ Outcomes, Defining and Measuring Success:

3. What are the goals/outcomes of the ocean conservation initiative?

3a) Are these realistic goals/outcomes and did the organization have realistic expectations of what could be achieved?

4. How does this initiative define success?

5. How does it measure success?

6. What are (were) the key achievements/outcomes of this initiative?

Strategies:

7. What were the strategies utilized to achieve your goals?

7a) Were the strategies donor driven, or driven by the implementing organization?

7b) If donor driven, did this approach help/hurt the strategy's success/failure?

8. Which of these strategies were most effective and helped to achieve the goals?

9. Which strategies, fell short, or did not contribute to achieving your stated goals/outcomes, and why?

Success and Barriers:

10. In general, what do you think are the preconditions for success in ocean conservation funding? For this specific initiative?

11. During this initiative what are (have been) the key ingredients, or essential elements to success, achieving goals/outcomes?

11a) How and why are certain aspects of the initiative more effective than others? What could you as a funder have done differently if anything?

12. Did this initiative experience any setbacks?

13. What have been the major barriers to success?

13a) What approach (is/was) needed to overcome those barriers?

14. General Question: In your opinion, how and why did certain initiatives or elements of an initiative not work as anticipated? What can funders do differently if anything?

14a) From this initiative, what lessons learned can you share with us to ensure more effective investments in ocean conservation? Be specific.

Scale:

15. At what scale(s) is this initiative investing? Why was this scale(s) selected?

15a) In this initiative at what scale of investment resulted in success?

15b) In this initiative is there a scale of investment that was unsuccessful or may have hindered success or results?

General Questions:

16. In the past decade, some people have said there has been a paradigm shift toward larger scale. Is this perception true? e.g. ecoregional approaches for ocean conservation?

16a) If so, what led to this shift in approach and scale?

16b) Has it been successful?

17. In your opinion what scale of investment has worked the most effectively for donors – under what conditions?

18. In your opinion, what scale of investment is too big?

Partnership:

19. Are there multiple funders with similar goals as this initiative?

20. Is/Was there a role of funding partnerships in this initiative? If so please describe it.

20a) How was/is this partnership structured? Was this an effective structure? Any ways to have made it more effective?

20b) Has this partnership contributed to results of the initiative? If so how, why, please describe and explain your answer.

21. General Questions: Based on your experience and in your opinion, can one funder focusing on an issue or in a region have an impact?

21a) If there is government support and involvement could this change the level of impact? What if there is no government support? What if there a strong private funder partnership??

Grant-making and Approach:

22. Did your organization conduct any strategic planning and/ or evaluation exercises over the course of the initiative? If so, did you think they helped with the achievement of outcomes?

23. Did the organization and initiative have the right staff capacities and/or institutional structure to achieve its goals/outcomes? Please describe and explain response.

23a) Any operational or process aspects that you think were constraining or helping that are worth noting?

Other:

24. Is there anything else you would like to share with us today to help inform this study?

Appendix B: Informant List

Foundations	Informant
Marisla Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herbert “Beto” Bedolfe • Sara Lowell
MacArthur Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate Barnes • Christopher Holtz
Moore Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barry Gold • Meaghan Calcari • Rachel Strader • Emily Goodwin • Kate Wing
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony Chatwin
Oak Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Henshaw
David and Lucile Packard Foundation- California Coastal and Marine Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Weber • Robin Jenkins
David and Lucile Packard Foundation-- Western Pacific Subprogram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bernd Cordes • Pam Seeto
Marine Science - Formerly Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kai Lee
Walton Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Bryant • Scott Burns

Government	Informant
California Coastal Conservancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sam Schuchat • Neal Fishman
GEF Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barbara Hanchard
GEF/World Bank - Coral Reef Targeted Research Program (CRTR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andy Hooten • Melanie King
Le Groupe de l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and French GEF - CRISP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julien Calas • Eric Clua
PEMSEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adrian Stephen Ross
US AID - Philippines Community Resource Management Project (CRMP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barbara Hanchard • Kitty Courtney
US Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dallas Miner • Chris Eng • Chris Darnell
USAID - Meso-American Reef Alliance Program Mesoamerican Reef Alliance: ICRAN-MAR Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barbara Best • Liza Agudelo
World Bank Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marea Hatzios
OVERARCHING - CRMP, CRTR, PEMSEA, MacArthur, Packard-W. Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan White

Overarching	Informant
CRMP, CRTR, PEMSEA, MacArthur, David and Lucile Packard Foundation W. Pacific Subprogram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan White
David and Lucile Packard Foundation-Former Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Leape
David and Lucile Packard Foundation-Former Program Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sergio Knaebel • Mike Sutton
David and Lucile Packard Foundation-Program Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walter Reid
Blue Marine Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marina Vaughan

Appendix C: Reference Documents

- Agudelo, L. (2005). ICRAN MAR Project Update. Belize City, ICRAN-MAR.
- Agudelo, L. (2006). ICRAN MAR Mesoamerican Reef Alliance. I. MAR. Belize City.
- Agudelo, L. (2006). Informational Bulletin: Mesoamerican Reef Alliance (ICRAN-MAR). Belize City, ICRAN-MAR: 2.
- Agudelo, L. (2007). Mesoamerican Reef Alliance ICRAN-MAR Project Terminal Report. Belize City, ICRAN-MAR.
- Aguedelo, L. (2005). Mesoamerican Reef Alliance. ICRAN: 2.
- Aguedelo, L. (2006). Mesoamerican Reef Alliance ICRAN-MAR Project. Belize: 360.
- Calas, J. (2009). Mission Report: CRISP Programme Supervision, Coral Reef Initiative for the South Pacific: 21.
- California Coastal and Marine Initiative Subprogram (CCMI) Subprogram Strategy, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation CCMI Subprogram: 11.
- California Coastal and Marine Initiative Subprogram (2008). California Coastal and Marine Initiative Strategic Plan, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation CCMI Subprogram: 29.
- California Coastal Conservancy (2003). Completing the California Coastal Trail. R. Gustaitis and H. Hughes. Oakland, CA, California Coastal Conservancy: 60.
- California Coastal Conservancy Staff (2001). Watershed Planning Guide. Oakland, CA, California Coastal Conservancy: 17.
- California Coastal Conservancy Staff (2007). California State Coastal Conservancy Strategic Plan 2007. Oakland, California, California State Coastal Conservancy: 82.
- California Environmental Associates (2006). Mesoamerican Reef Programme, Oak Foundation 41.
- California Environmental Associates & The Evaluate Group (2003). Oak Foundation Marine Programme Evaluation Oak Foundation 66.
- Clark, L. and R. Research (2007). Final Report Annual Review 2007 Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (OFMP), Forum Fisheries Agency: 54.
- Clua, E., A. Chenet, et al. (2009). CRISP Consolidated Report 2008-2009, Coral Reef Initiative for the South Pacific 36.
- Colwell, S. (1998). Coastal-Marine Conservation Strategies for the Western Pacific, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation Western Pacific Subprogram 50.

Consulting, O.-B. (2008). Mid-Term Evaluation of the CRISP Programme, Coral Reef Initiatives for the South Pacific: 147.

Coral Reef Initiative for the Pacific (2010). "Coral Reef Initiative for the Pacific."
<http://www.crisonline.net> Accessed July 20, 2010.

Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity building dor Management Program (2008). International Waters Experience Notes: Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity building for Management: Improving Scientific Information and Management for Coral Reef Ecosystems around the World. Brisbane, Australia, Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity building for Management Program,: 6.

Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management Program (2007). 2007 annual Report (1 April 2007-30 September 2007). Brisbane, Australia, Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management Program,: 51.

Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management Program (2007). Compiling and Disseminating Reef Friendly Practices for Local Government.CRTR Program. Brisbane, Australia: 1.

Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management Program (2009). Bleaching and Related Ecological Factors CRTR Working Group Findings 2004-2009. Brisbane, Australia, Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management Program, Centre for Marine Studies,: 128.

Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management Program (2009). Coastal Ecosystems for Countless Benefits-Advisory Paper. Brisbane, Australia, Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management Program, Centre for Marine Studies,: 3.

Cordes, B. (2006). Revised Western Pacific Subprogram Strategy The David and Lucile Packard Western Pacific Subprogram: 18.

Cordes, B. (2010). Western Pacific Subprogram Highlights 2010, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation: 5.

Cordes, B., K. Ashfield, et al. (2010). Western Pacific Subprogram Dashboard-Annual Progress 2009, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation: 8.

Coral Reef Management Project (2000). CRMP in Mid-Stream: On Course to a Threshold of Sustainable Coastal management in the Philippines. Special Mid-term Report (1996-1999). Cebu City, Philippines, Coastal Resource Management Project: 99.

Coral Reef Management Project (2004). Completion Report: The Coastal Resource Managemetn Project- Philippines 1996-2004. Cebu City, Philipines, Coastal Resource Management Project of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources: 212.

- Department of the Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service (2002). National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program. Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior. 50 CFR Part 84 RIN 1018-AF51: 12.
- Duda, A. (2002). Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators for GEF International Waters Project. Washington DC, Global Environment Facility: 10.
- Dulin, P. (2000). GEF Regional Project conservatino and Sustainable Use of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System (MBRS) Environmental Assessment. T. W. Bank. Washington D.C. : 41.
- Foundations of Success (2005). Review of The David and Lucile Packard Foundation Western Pacific Program: Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations: 22.
- Ganapin, D., P. Burbrige, et al. (2003). Building Partnerships in Environmental Management for Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA): Mid-term Evaluation Report, PEMSEA.
- Global Environment Facility (1995). The Regional Programme for Marine Pollution Prevention and Management in the East Asian Seas (GEF Project RAS/92/G34) Bi-Annual Report 1994-1995. C. thia-Eng and S. Adrian Ross. Manila, Philippines, GEF/UNDP/IMORP-Prevention and management of Marine Pollution in the East Asian Seas: 28.
- Global Environment Facility (2004). Financing Plan: Project Executive Summary GEF Council Intersessional Work Program Submission. Honiara, Solomon Islands, GEF: 51.
- Global Environment Facility (2005). GEF and Small Island Developing States. Washington DC, GEF: 76.
- Global Environment Facility (2006). Supporting Samll Island Developing States. Washington D.C.: 2.
- Global Environment Facility (2006). Supporting Small Island Developing States. Washington DC, GEF: 2.
- Gold, B., S. Rehmus, et al. (2003). Proposed Science Strategy: Ecosystem-Based Management for Sustainable Coastal-Marine Systems, The David and Lucile Packard Science Subprogram (formerly EBM): 13.
- Hatzios (task team leader), M. E. (2009). Data sheet Template for Project Paper. Brisbane, Australia, University of Queensland, Centre for marine Studies: 9.
- Henshaw, A. (2008). North Pacific Marine Conservation Program: Strategic Plan 2008-2010, Oak Foundation: 32.
- International Coral Reef Action Network-Mesoamerican Reef, Coordinator (2007). ICRAN MAR Terminal Report- Executive Summary. Belize City: 17.
- John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (2000). Marine Conservation and Sustainable Fisheries in Asia and the Pacific E. C. Area: 33.
- John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (2000). Melanesia Geographic Priority Maps (PowerPoint).

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (2001). Draft- An Implementation Plan for Conservation Action in Melanesia: Moving Ahead with CSD Grantmaking in the Asia-Pacific Region: 19.

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (2003). Melanesia "Updated" Working Drawing. C. a. S. D. Area: 30.

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (2004). Madagascar Working Drawing: 81.

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (2007). Memorandum: Potential Future Grantmaking Opportunities in Cuba: 7.

Jorgensen, A., R. Zweig, et al. (2008). Independent Evaluation of the Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management (CRTR) Program Final Main Report, NORDECO: 73.

Kaufmann, D., A. Kraay, et al. (2005). Governance Matters IV: Governance Indicators for 1996-2004. Washington D.C., The World Bank, : 80.

Kullenberg, G., C. Habito, et al. (2006). Performance Evaluation: Building Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), Global Environmental Facility: 177.

Lankester, K. (2009). Oak European Marine Conservation Programme: Evaluation 2003-2008, Oak Foundation 31.

Lee, K. (2009). Science at the Packard Foundation, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation Science Subprogram: 4.

Lee, K. (2010). Documents for Packard Science Subprogram Website, The David and Lucile Packard Science Subprogram: 17.

Lee, K. and S. Hogan (2010). Science Subprogram Dashboard-Annual Progress 2009, The David and Lucile Packard Science Subprogram: 8.

Mantell, M. (2003). Memorandum: The California Coastal and Marine Initiative Strategy. J. Leape: 6.

Mangroves for the Future (2009). Opportunities for a Sustainable Regional Mechanism for Governmental/ Civil Society Collaboration on ICM in the Indian Ocean. MFF Workshop at the PEMSEA EAS Congress-Wednesday 25 November, 2009, Manila, Philippines.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2009). DRAFT- Bycatch Results Chain, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2009). DRAFT- Leatherback Logic Framework.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2010). Sea Turtle Initiative Update. NFWF: 16.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2007). 2007 International Sea Turtle Project Abstracts, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation: 8.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2008). International Sea Turtle Conservation Fund Overview: 2.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2008). National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Project Abstracts, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation: 6.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2009). 2009 Annual Report, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation: 29.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2009). Business Plan for Sea Turtle Conservation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation: 39.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2010). Sea Turtle Conservation Fund: Spring 2010 Request for Proposals.

National Marine Fisheries Service (2010). Marine Fisheries Initiative Program (MARFIN) Eighteenth Annual MARFIN Conference April 6-7, 2010. Eighteenth Annual MARFIN Conference, St. Petersburg, Florida.

Oak Foundation (2009). Draft- Environment Programme Strategic Framework: 9.

Oak Foundation (2010). Marine Program Monitoring Template.

Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (2008). Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Newsletter May 2008: 5.

Parker, K. and L. Harroun (2001). Belize Marine Reserve Programme: Five-Year Framework, Oak Foundation 30.

Partnership for Environmental Management Seas East Asia (2007). Proceedings of the First Executive Committee Meeting. PEMSEA, Quezon City, Philippines, PEMSEA.

Partnership for Environmental Management Seas East Asia (2008). Proceedings of the Fourth Executive Committee Meeting Report 4, Beijing, PR China.

Partnership for Environmental Management Seas East Asia (2009). Theme 1 Coastal and Ocean Governance-Workshop 6: Land and Sea use Zoning: Challenges and Opportunities. The East Asian Seas Congress 2009 "Partnerships at Work: Local Implementation and good Practices". Manila, Philippines: 14.

Philip Williams & Associates, Ltd. and P. M. Faber (2005). Design Guidelines for Tidal Wetland Restoration in San Francisco Bay. Oakland, California, The Bay Institute and California State Coastal Conservancy: 83.

Project Coordination Unit (2006). Project Pamphlet. P. I. F. F. Agency. Honiara, Solomon Islands: 2.

Rayanakorn, K. and P. Moore (2008). Rapid Assessment of the Opportunities for a Sustainable Regional Mechanism for Governmental and Civil Society Collaboration on Integrated Coastal

Management in the Indian Ocean Region, South Asian Seas, and South East Asian Seas. MFF Secretariat. Bangkok, Chiang Mai University, IUCN, Mangroves for the Future: 55.

Rebecca Pestano-Smith, C. A. C., Mona Y. Grieser, Asuncion E. Sia, Coastal Resource Management Project Cebu City Philippines (1999). Into the Mainstream: Promoting Coastal Resource Management on the Philippine National Agenda. Green COM International Symposium and North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Conference. Regal Hotel and Hyatt hotel, Cincinnati, Ohio 17.

Reid, W. (2007). Western Pacific Subprogram Strategy 2007-2011, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation: 9.

Resources Legacy Fund Foundation (2010). California Coastal and Marine Initiative Grant Program: Grant Reporting Guidelines: 5.

Resources Legacy Fund Foundation and Ecosystem Management Initiative (2007). California Coastal and Marine Initiative Program Strategy and Evaluation Plan: 26.

Rowe, A. and C. Hershner (2009). Getting Closer to EBM: Evaluation of the Packard Foundation Ecosystem-Based Management Initiative: 119.

Sadler, R. and E. Francisco Roche (2009). 2008 Annual Report: January 1 to December 31, 2008. St. Petersburg, Florida, State/Federal Liaison Branch National Marine Fisheries Service: 52.

Surdna Foundation (2006). 2006 Annual Report, Grant Guidelines and Application Procedures: 65.

Surdna Foundation (2007). 2007 Annual Report, Grant Guidelines and Application Procedures 72.

Surdna Foundation (2007). Draft- Success Measures Framework Template: 6.

Surdna Foundation (2008). 2008 Annual Report, Grant Guidelines, and Application Procedures: 37.

Surdna Foundation (2009). Currents of Change: The Story of the Surdna Foundation's Investment in Oceans, Surdna Foundation: 20.

Surna Foundation (2006). The Surdna Foundations's Environmental Program Review Day, New York, NY.

The Headwaters Group Philanthropic Services (2007). Evaluation of the California Coastal and Marine Initiative: 137.

The Headwaters Group Philanthropic Services (2008). Evaluation of the California Coastal and Marine Initiative Executive Summary: 12.

The University of Queensland (2010). Implementation Completion Report (TF053909) on a GEF Grant in the Amount of US \$11,000,000 to the University of Queensland for the Coral Reef Targeted Research & Capacity Building for Management Project. Queensland, Australia, University of Queensland: 17.

The World Bank (2000). Latin American Region-Mesoamerican Barrier Reef Project (GEF). The World Bank, Latin American And Caribbean Region. Washington D.C.: 10.

The World Bank (2001). Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Project for US\$15.2 Million, Including a Grant from the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund in the Amount of US\$11.0 Million Equivalent to the Central American Commission on Environment and Development for a Regional Project for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System (MBRS). Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development, Central American Department and Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office: 181.

The World Bank (2001). Project Appraisal document on a Proposed roject for US\$15.2 Million, Including a Grant from the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund in the Amount of US\$11.0 Million Equivalent to the Central American Commission on Environment and Development for a Regional Project for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System (MBRS). Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development-Central American Department: 181.

The World Bank (2006). PROFISH Fisheries Factsheet. The World Bank: 2.

The World Bank (2007). Annex 9: Global Program on Fisheries Financial Arrangements for FY07, The World Bank, : 2.

The World Bank (2007). Implementation Completion and Results Report (TF-027739) on a Global Environment Facility Trust Fund Grant in the Amount of US \$11.0 Million to the Central American Commission on Environment and Development for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System (MBRS) Project. Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development, Central American Department and Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office: 73.

The World Bank (2009). What is PROFISH? The World Bank's Global Program on Fisheries. The World Bank. Washington D.C.: 2.

Thia-Eng, C., S. A. Ross, et al. (1999). Sharing Lessons and Experiences in Marine Pollution Management. Quezon City, Philippines, GEF/UNDP/IMO Regional Programme for the Prevention and management of marine Pollution in the East Asian Sea: 88.

UNDP (2005). UDP Project Document Governments of Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Vanuatu; United Nations Development Programme; Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, Title: Pacific islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project, UNDP: 165.

United Nations Development Programme (2006). UNDP GEF Annual Project Report (APR)/ Project Implementation Report (PIR) 2006- (November 2006): 37.

United Nations Development Programme (2008). Mid-Term Evaluation: Pacific Island Oceanic Fisheries Management Project. Suva, Fiji, UNDP: 90.

University of Queensland (2004). Updated Project Information Document (PID). Brisbane, Australia, University of Queensland,: 9.

US Fish and Wildlife Service-Coastal Program (2009). U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Strategic Plan- Strategic Plan The Coastal Program National -Stewardship of Fish and Wildlife Through Voluntary Conservation October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2010, US Fish and Wildlife Service,: 19.

US Fish and Wildlife Service-Coastal Program (2009). U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Strategic Plan- The Coastal Program National Summary, US Fish and Wildlife Service: 9.

US Fish and Wildlife Service (2007). California/Nevada Operations Strategic Plan Partners for Fish and Wildlife & Coastal Programs 2007-2011, US Fish and Wildlife Service,: 35.

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Habitat and Resource Conservation, Branch of Habitat and Restoration (2009). The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program. US Fish and Wildlife Service: 2.

US Agency for International Development (2009). Biodiversity Conservation and Forestry Programs Annual Report. Washington, DC, USAID: 127.

US Agency for International Development Biodiversity Team and ARD, Inc, (2005). Biodiversity Conservation: a Guide for USAID Staff and Partners. USAID. Washington, DC, USAID: 206.

Valentine, M. and S. Colwell (1999). Memorandum: Proposed Western Pacific Subprogram Grants, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation Western Pacific Subprogram: 1.

Western Pacific Subprogram (1999). The Western Pacific Program's Strategy, The David and Lucile Packard Subprogram: 2.

Williams, M. J., J. Tenreiro de Almeida, et al. (2009). PROFISH Global Program on Fisheries: Reforming Fisheries and Aquaculture for Global Benefits Evaluation Report, The World Bank,: 80.

Wilson, E., K. Kehoe, et al. (1995). An Evaluation of the Surdna Foundation's Environmental Grantmaking Program: 122.