

Responding to the Rooftops

Climate change and social justice: what can UK foundations do?

The scientists are virtually screaming from the rooftops now. The debate is over! There's no longer any debate in the scientific community about this. But the political systems around the world have held this at arm's length because it's an inconvenient truth, because they don't want to accept that it's a moral imperative.

Al Gore

A report for the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust by
Steven Burkeman

August 2008

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Foreword

I am neither a scientist nor an expert on climate change. There are plenty of excellent reports about the subject, written by people who are both. This one takes as a given the seriousness, scale and urgency of the climate change crisis. It takes as read that it is happening, is substantially the result of human activity, that there is a strictly limited period before its consequences will be inevitable, that these will be serious and in many ways catastrophic, and that they will impact most heavily on poor people (i.e. the consensus position of the vast majority of the informed international scientific community).

My focus is very much on the implications for social justice of climate change, and, even more specifically, the potential role of UK foundations in this area, working either on their own or with others.

I found some trusts (I use the words 'trusts' and 'foundations' interchangeably throughout the report) whose thinking is, it seemed to me, rather advanced, and others which really do not want to know about the issue – and, of course, some 'in between' these extremes. But regardless of where they sit on this continuum, almost all have been responsive and helpful. While all the interviews were stimulating, those with informed observers from outside the mainstream foundation world were especially so.

I am grateful to the trustees of the [Carnegie UK Trust](#) (henceforth CUKT) for commissioning the work, and for the supportive interest they have demonstrated while it was being carried out. Similarly, CUKT staff have been very helpful.

I apologise for any errors which have crept in to the report and hope that despite them, it will be useful in helping people to think how to respond to '*a defining global social justice issue for our generation*'.¹

SB

¹ Douglas Alexander, Secretary of State for International Development.

Key Findings

(numbers in brackets refer to the relevant paragraph in the main report)

What foundations are already doing

1 Some trusts had thought deeply about these issues, and some had been making relevant grants, or developing other initiatives for some time. Often the impetus for involvement by a foundation had come from trustees. It was common to find that foundations were largely unaware of what other foundations were doing in this area (4.1- 4.35)

What more could foundations do

2 There was a consensus around the idea that “*the main issue now is the politics, not the science or technology*”. (5.2)

3 There is a strong sense that the kinds of NGOs with which WPC-type foundations have good links are not, in general, heard on the subject of climate change in places where their voices would be significantly influential, whereas explicitly environmental NGOs do make their voices heard on these issues, but what they say is generally predictable and can therefore be discounted. (5.3 & 5.4)

4 There is a perceived need to influence the intellectual climate on these issues. (5.5)

5 There is an inherent tension in democracies between the need to do what is right, and the risk of punishment at the ballot box, especially – as in this case – when what is right may involve calling on people to pay more, or use less, or make other lifestyle changes which are initially at least unpopular. One role for civil society is to create the space for government to act. (5.6-5.8)

6 Foundations need to be clear about the various levels at which influence can be brought to bear, in order to change behaviour and/or policy, and it is also important to reflect carefully on the communications methods and techniques to be used in working on these issues. (5.11-5.13)

7 Foundations need to go on making grants via grants programmes which are not too ‘closed off’ and enable them to support those who are

already active in the field and who will not survive without the kind of ‘no strings’ funding which foundations alone can offer. (5.14)

8 Foundation access and networks are as important as their money; funders are uniquely well-placed to get dialogues going. (5.15)

9 Foundation grants and initiative would be relevant in areas such as housing, transport, fuel poverty, and migration. NGOs working in these and other areas may need help to understand the relevance of their experience in this context, and funding to ensure that their core operation is secure over the critical period. (5.16 & 5.17)

10 It is important to build resilient communities which will be strong enough to avert the catastrophic consequences of climate change in areas such as public health, public transport and car-sharing, local power generation, road and bridge operations & maintenance, water supply and wastewater treatment. (5.18)

11 Foundations could work together to ensure that the approx. 95% of foundation resources which is invested is directed in ways which at least do no harm; and to use their collective investor ‘muscle’ to secure significant change in behaviour on the part of business. (5.19)

12 Charter 88 & Make Poverty History are models on which a climate change/social justice initiative might be based - a broad and unlikely coalition, which would develop, promote and stick with a specific set of proposals. (5.20 & 5.21)

13 Foundations could use their convening power and networks to bring together a group of highly respected individuals to work across party political boundaries to build a consensus around urgent carbon reduction measures. This would need to be accompanied by a public education campaign aimed at creating the kind of awareness which would give politicians the ‘space’ to move. (5.22)

Working Together

14 Foundations already collaborate in various ways such as bi-lateral arrangements; a ‘common pot’; information exchange; and through the use of ‘fast traffic’ funding deals. There is value - perhaps especially in this area

- of cross-sector collaboration involving NGOs, government, business and other arms of civil society such as trades unions. (6.4-6.6)

15 The preconditions for successful collaboration seem to be a commonality of values; agreed objectives; a clear lead partner; and good personal chemistry. Collaboration has disadvantages - core messages/goals/big ideas can get diluted; it can slow things down; if grant-making is the key activity, then there is a risk of undermining the very pluralism which is the basis of the foundation sector. (6.7-6.9)

16 There is a need for leadership and a strong wish for better information sharing. (6.11-6.13)

Note: generally first mentions of organisations, reports etc have been hyperlinked in the text which follows so that readers can easily access publications, organisational websites etc. It may therefore be helpful to skim the report online for this material, or at least to keep it open online while reading a printed version. The full report follows overleaf.

1 Background

1.1 Carnegie UK Trustees have expressed concerns about climate change and especially its impact on poorer people. This concern grew following Jonathon Porritt's presentation to the first colloquium of the [Woburn Place Collaborative](#) (WPC) held in Surrey in December 2007, after which the [Forum for the Future](#), co-founded by Jonathon, was commissioned to prepare a private report for the trustees of CUKT, called '*Tackling Climate Change – the role of the Carnegie UK Trust*'. The current report builds on Jonathan Porritt's paper for CUKT and specifically focuses on exploring the connections foundations are making between social justice and climate change and the potential role for collaboration.

1.2 In parallel with the present study, CUKT's [Inquiry into the Future of Civil Society in the UK and Ireland](#) has also highlighted concerns about growing pressure on global resources and climate change, and the implications this will have on civil society². It commissioned work to look at how the response to climate change could strengthen civil society³. It has two further connected projects - the *first* involves the development of a practical guide for non-environmental civil society associations so that they can better understand and engage with growing pressure on global resources. The [Eden Trust](#) is working on this. The *second* involves an exploration of how the social justice and climate change agendas may be practically bridged and the distinctive role of civil society associations in doing so⁴.

Remit

1.3 I was asked to identify whether consultees:

- Regard climate change and related issues as a matter of increasingly urgent concern, which will have social justice impact implications upon less advantaged communities and groups in society;

² The Inquiry is using the following (summarised) definition of civil society: *civil society is a goal to aim for (a 'good' society), a means to achieve it (associational life), and a framework for engaging with each other about ends and means (arenas for deliberation)*.

³ Available to download from

<http://democracy.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/files/Civil%20society%20and%20climate%20change.pdf>

⁴ The Baring Foundation has launched a very similar initiative, and is at time of writing commissioning work '*with a small group of non-environmental voluntary organisations to help them explore how the impact of climate change affects their primary charitable purpose*'. See:

<http://www.baringfoundation.org.uk/TenderClimateChange.pdf>

- Could make a distinctive contribution to addressing these issues;
- Having regard to the scale and urgency be willing to work collaboratively to define and deliver appropriate responses.

Methodology

1.4 It was agreed with CUKT that in-depth interviews would be conducted with approximately 20 potential key players (at a 'very senior level'), to be chosen substantially by CUKT. Most if not all the interviewees were closely associated with the Woburn Place Collaborative and/or the [Environmental Funders' Network](#). As many as possible of the interviews were to be conducted on a face-to-face basis, and wherever possible sufficient time was to be set aside to allow a conversation to develop. All interviewees received a brief (2pp) paper in advance (see [Appendix 2](#), where for some reason it extends to 3 pages). This was intended to explain, with vivid examples, exactly why climate change is a social justice issue, and to set out some of the issues to be explored in interviews. The paper was approved by CUKT before being sent to prospective interviewees.

1.5 Inevitably the list of interviewees (see [Appendix 1](#)) grew somewhat as CUKT added names, and interviewees suggested other people whose input they saw as absolutely essential. In the end, I interviewed 31 people from 25 different organisations (or as unattached individuals). I met 21 of these and interviewed the others by phone (and, in one case, by email). Only one person approached declined (politely) to be interviewed, on the entirely reasonable grounds that *"This really isn't us, I'm afraid, and realistically, there is no prospect of [us] working with others on this"*, while another pulled out shortly before the arranged appointment.

1.6 While interviews were conducted on a 'Chatham House' basis, I reserved the right to use attributed quotation, subject to advance approval by the interviewee to be quoted. The interviews were conducted as conversations, though this was easier when meeting people face-to-face than when speaking on the phone. With such a big subject, it was sometimes difficult to keep focused on the core themes – the social justice dimension of global climate change, as distinct from climate change generally; and the role of foundations. Because many of the foundations interviewed choose, or are obliged, to focus their funding on the UK, the interviews, and this

report, emphasise that dimension, as distinct from the global one.

1.7 In addition, at my suggestion, a group ‘conversation’ was organised at the ACF Conference in Nottingham on 26 June to enable some of the interviewees and others to speak together about the issues. This was billed thus: *Climate change and social justice – the implications of climate change upon more vulnerable groups and communities - what can foundations practically do?* This was a useful and well-attended occasion (there was standing room only) and the reflections and ideas which emerged have influenced this report.

1.8 I also did a great deal of desk research, reading a range of reports, some of which are referenced in Appendix 3.

Outputs

1.9 It was agreed that a written report would be prepared and submitted by 22nd August 2008, for distribution to WPC members in time for a verbal presentation and discussion at a WPC meeting to be held in Dunfermline on 23rd September 2008.

2 Climate Change: key debates and terminology

2.1 While I cannot emphasise too strongly that this report is *not* about the substance of the issue of climate change, some who will read it may be unfamiliar with the key debates and terminology swirling around in this field. Therefore, it may be helpful to describe them briefly, as I, as someone new to the field, have come to understand them. This is a very partial elucidation; those seeking detailed and authoritative information should look elsewhere.

2.2 First, the scale and urgency of the problem. The UN has described the rising risks of what it has called '*ecological catastrophe*' and called for a drop in carbon emissions in developed countries by almost a third by 2020, and by at least 80% by 2050. It has specifically criticised the UK, whose carbon emissions have been rising since 2000, owing to rising use of coal in power generation. If everyone in the developed world followed the UK's path the planet would be on target for possible global temperature increases of between 4 and 5C. (There is more about the consequences of this in the following section [3]).

2.3 Two key terms are *mitigation* and *adaptation*. I cannot improve on [Wikipedia's explanation](#) of the distinction: *Mitigation of global warming involves taking actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to enhance sinks aimed at reducing the extent of global warming. This is in distinction to adaptation to global warming which involves taking action to minimize the effects of global warming.*

2.4 There is a timing question in relation to the approaches adopted. There will come a time when it is too late for mitigation; when the planet has gone beyond the point at which it is possible to mitigate. This is the significance of, for example, the recent [100 months](#) report and website published by the [New Economics Foundation](#) (nef). It is worth noting that the [Stern Review](#), commissioned by the UK government but widely noted internationally, argued (when it was published in 2006), that there was still time to avoid the worst impacts of climate change if immediate action is taken, and that the costs of doing so were significantly less than the costs of not doing so.

2.5 In December 2009, a new, international climate change agreement for the post-2012 period will, hopefully, be negotiated at the [UN Conference on](#)

[Climate Change](#) to be held in Copenhagen. This, in the immediate future, is a key pressure point for those seeking to influence their government's, or international, policies on climate change – a potential area for foundation support.

2.6 It is difficult sometimes to draw a hard and fast distinction between mitigation and adaptation; actions to mitigate may also be actions to adapt. The concepts are not, and many think must not, be mutually exclusive; at the same time as seeking to reduce emissions, there is a broad consensus that we need also to cope with the consequences of the global warming which is already happening or inevitably will happen. This is another area in which there may be many opportunities for foundation support.

2.7 Within the areas of mitigation/adaptation, there are a number of serious controversies. One of the most obvious is between those who see *nuclear power* as the best way forward, and those who do not. Those who object do so on a number of grounds, including safety; the disposal of waste; timing (they argue that it would be many years before nuclear power would have a significant effect on emissions); and questions of sustainability. Objectors tend to promote renewable alternatives such as wind, solar, wave energy, and – even more importantly – they advocate ways in which we can be less energy-dependent in the way in which we live on the planet, by consuming less (see para 2.12 below).

2.8 Supporters of nuclear power, who now include a few notable people who formerly have been seen as environmentalists, argue principally that -

- anything is better than coal;
- the safety issues highlighted by [Three Mile Island](#) and [Chernobyl](#) have been overcome in the latest generation of nuclear power plants;
- the state of the technologies in relation to the alternative sources is such that they cannot meet the humankind's energy needs in time; and that –
- the world's stock of uranium is sufficient to meet needs for many decades to come.

2.9 There is a second area of contention, between those who believe that

there may be (non-nuclear) ‘*technical fixes*’ to help us to cope with the crisis – both to reduce its impact and to adapt to it – and those who believe that we have to *radically change the way we live*. These are perhaps best represented by two key reports which those interested in delving further may wish to read.

2.10 The first, [*Design to Win*](#) (subtitled ‘*Philanthropy's role in the Fight against global warming*’) was published last year in the USA, and was backed by a number of prominent foundations. Its emphasis is on ways in which we can continue to generate the power we need to go on living as we are. It urges philanthropists to get behind a list of interventions aimed at reducing emissions from existing coal plants; basing new plants on ‘*capturing and sequestering carbon emissions, promoting alternatives, industrial carbon caps, better designed buildings and appliances, and improved transport, and carbon offsets in relation to tropical forests*’.

2.11 The largest section in the second report, [*Zero Carbon Britain*](#) published by the Centre for Alternative Technology, focuses on the idea of ‘*powering down*’ – of ways in which we can use less power.

2.12 Other voices in the debate concentrate on the problem of consumption of finite resources. At a meeting held by the Baring Foundation last year, Andrew Simm of nef pointed out that in 1961, we would have needed one planet if everyone consumed in the way that British people do; today we need 3.1 planets. It is this issue which has led nef – and several others – to think profoundly about consumption, happiness and well-being, facing the challenge of persuading people that consuming less may not mean that they will be less happy. In fact, research suggests that the contrary may be the case. NEF has published a collection of essays called [*Do Good Lives have to Cost the Earth?*](#) This is in essence based on the idea that our sense of well-being need not be based on leading lives which draw heavily on the finite resources available on our planet; a more visionary approach than even the one demonstrated on the CAT report.

3 Social Justice and Climate Change

3.1 The links between social justice and climate change are relatively easy to understand in the context of the developing world. As the Stern Review explains, *'The poorest developing countries will be hit earliest and hardest by climate change, even though they have contributed little to causing the problem'*. In a nutshell, poor communities are the lowest emitters *because* they are so poor, and climate change affects them most *because* they are poor – they have poor resistance and they are highly dependent on the land and the sea.

3.2 Another [report](#)⁵ describes the situation exceptionally clearly –

The worst effects of climate change are likely to be felt by those individuals and groups whose rights protections are already precarious. This is partly coincidence. As it happens, the most dramatic impacts of climate change are expected to occur (and are already being experienced) in the world's poorest countries, where rights protections too are often weak. But the effect is also causal and mutually reinforcing. Populations whose rights are poorly protected are likely to be less well-equipped to understand or prepare for climate change effects; less able to lobby effectively for government or international action; and more likely to lack the resources needed to adapt to expected alterations of their environmental and economic situation. A vicious circle links precarious access to natural resources, poor physical infrastructure, weak rights protections, and vulnerability to climate change-related harms.

At another level, the close relation between climate change and human rights vulnerability has a common economic root. Rights protections are inevitably weakest in resource-poor contexts. But resource shortages also limit the capacity (of governments as well as individuals) to respond and adapt to climate change. Worse, where governments are poorly resourced, climate change harms will tend to impact populations unevenly and unequally, in ways that are de facto discriminatory because the private capacity of individuals to resist and adapt differs greatly.

⁵ [Climate Change and Human Rights: A Rough Guide](#) 2008 International Council on Human Rights Policy, Versoix, Switzerland.

3.3 Specifically, developing countries are already warmer on average than other regions; their rainfall is very variable; they tend to depend heavily on agriculture and fishing, which are very climate-sensitive; and their poverty makes it hard for them to take the steps necessary to adapt to climate change. Some countries are especially vulnerable to rising sea levels – Stern suggests that more than a fifth of Bangladesh could be under water with a 1-metre rise in sea levels. We have perhaps already seen an indirect consequence of the world’s reaction to climate change as the rush to grow bio-fuels, in response both to the price of oil and to the need to meet emission reduction targets, has contributed to rises in the prices of staple foods, and consequent food riots in a number of developing countries.

3.4 The social justice dimension of climate change is a rather different matter in the context of the UK. In one sense, climate change could have a positive effect on inequality in the UK. Many of the measures which are likely to be needed to help us to combat and adapt to climate change, such as improved public transport and better insulated homes, are measures which are of particular value to poor people who are more likely than others to die from cold-related causes because of fuel poverty, and less likely than others to own a car. It is likely that a post-climate change society will perform to be a more equal society.

3.5 The financial effects of climate change in the developed world were neatly summarised in [a recent US article](#). Quoting a Danish geologist, the author comments that –

Most people will actually feel climate change delivered to them by the postman...It will come in the form of higher water bills, because of increased droughts in some areas; higher energy bills, because the use of fossil fuels becomes prohibitive; and higher insurance and mortgage rates, because of much more violently unpredictable weather.

3.6 There is very little research on the effects of climate change impacts in the UK on the basis of social and economic class. In recognition of this, nef and Oxfam GB have recently brought various groups together to focus on the issue.

3.7 But it is already clear that low-income households are more likely to live in non-decent *housing*. Over 20% of the carbon emitted in the UK comes from energy consumption in homes. Because of increasing

population and falling household size, by 2050 there could be 23% more households, and – if all else is constant – a proportionate rise in the consumption of energy. The Government has plans to respond to housing shortages but 89% of its proposed schemes are in flood-prone areas. Those most likely to need those houses will of course be those without housing at the moment – people in low income households. The related issue of *fuel poverty* affects around 4 million people in the UK – a figure which has doubled since 2002 (fuel poverty being defined as spending more than 10% of income on fuel)

3.8 *Insurance* against flood damage will become increasingly important, and the poorest will be least able to afford it (this was well-demonstrated during the July 2007 floods in the UK where many people in poorer areas, such as Doncaster, did not have insurance). In a sense, insurance demonstrates another principle in this area: the poorest people will have to adapt, while the better-off just pay more.

3.9 *Health* impacts from climate change will affect poor people more than others– such as heat-related deaths. While – offset by the effects of fuel poverty - a fall-off in cold-related deaths is predicted, more humid winters are likely to increase the growth of mould in housing, and consequent respiratory problems. Food poisoning is likely to increase, as will insect-related problems. Skin cancer will increase. Serious flooding itself tends to lead to increased anxiety and depression, and other health hazards from pollution – all these things will impact more on poorer people for obvious reasons. People in poorer areas are likely to experience poor air quality.

3.10 Some 4 million people in the UK are currently estimated to be in '*food poverty*'. It is not clear how the present food supply chain will cope with a post-carbon society, but it is safe to predict that those already struggling to eat healthily are most likely to suffer from the consequences of rising food prices – which are in themselves a consequence of bio-fuel growth (see above), the diversion of grain to feed livestock in nations with growing middle-income populations, and the increased price of fertilisers and pesticides arising from increasing fuel costs.

3.11 But there are issues about the social justice dimension of the problem at a more profound level. One exceptionally thoughtful and well-informed interviewee challenged the whole basis of this assignment. Taking as his point of reference the idea of '*the tragedy of the commons*', s/he suggested

that the individualistic notion of social justice is in inherent conflict with the idea of a finite planet. The author of the definitive paper on the subject⁶ has criticised the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) for conferring on families the sole right to determine family size; the interviewee went further, suggesting that the Declaration should be re-written as it “*confirms limitless rights on every human being on the planet to draw on humankind's common property*”.

3.12 The idea, therefore, that we should be concerned about the social justice implications of climate change is directly challenged; we need to do something about climate change before we start worrying about social justice. As s/he put it, “*People insist on retaining their existing mental/philosophical setup, insisting on peeling off the bits they don't want to deal with – ‘we are only interested in people -- we don't want to think about the physical stuff, ecology, biodiversity, pollution -- we only want to think of the effects on human rights/equality’. That is tackling the symptoms rather than the cause*”.

⁶ Hardin, G. [The Tragedy of the Commons](#) Science, 162(1968):1243-1248 see <http://dieoff.org/page95.htm>

4 The Foundations

Strengths

4.1 Foundations have obvious strengths in common and these are as relevant to this issue as others – typically money; links with NGOs; convening power⁷; independence; potential staying power; and the ability to work across fields of concern. On this last strength, several interviewees made the point that foundations with a flexible approach to funding may have a particular advantage in this area, which may straddle a number of grant-making ‘boxes’. Also they will be less likely to view something as ‘environmental’ and outside their remit and perhaps more likely to see its wider implications.

4.2 In addition, particular foundations may have -

- special abilities in terms of communication, and very good access to, and potential to influence, government;
- a focus on a single locality or region, or a group thereof, which gives them especial credibility, authority and access in that context;
- a strong track record in commissioning and promoting the outcomes of research;
- an operating element which lends authority to other activity – funding, advocacy – in the field concerned;
- the power to fund overseas;
- for those involved with WPC, the [Association of Charitable Foundations](#) (ACF), and the [European Foundation Centre](#) (EFC), the potential to link with each other through existing mechanisms;
- specially close ongoing links with particular trusts working in similar areas or with an approach which is similar in some way (see also

⁷ Though, as one interviewee pointed out, it may be that *not* being a grant maker is a strength when it comes to playing a convening role, given the risk that wealthy bodies such as trusts may only hear what those in pursuit of funding want them to hear.

section 6 below on collaboration).

4.3 But, in addition, as one interviewee pointed out, all WPC foundations have the advantage of being located in the UK, and in the European Union. This is significant in this field in particular; what happens in the city of London is very influential elsewhere in the world, just as standards agreed in Brussels have much wider resonance extending beyond the boundaries of the EU. This relates especially to such matters as accounting standards, investment principles, and regulatory frameworks for such things as vehicle emissions.

Attitudes to Climate Change

4.4 The 20 or so foundations of whom I interviewed the director or another key representative were at various stages in relation to the issues. It is important to note that most of those to whom I spoke would not label themselves as ‘environmental’ funders; only six of them are members of the Environmental Funders Network.

4.5 Some trusts had thought deeply about these issues, and some had been making relevant grants, or developing other initiatives for some time. Two things struck me – *first*, it was quite often the case that the impetus for involvement by a foundation had come not from staff but from trustees. *Second*, remarkably, it was common to find that foundations were largely unaware of what other foundations were doing in this area.

4.6 With respect to the first issue, I suspect that this is unusual, and that more often than not the first moves for significant changes in policy come from senior staff.

4.7 In this case, the reverse also applied; in several cases, the resistance to becoming involved in these issues had come from trustees. Reasons given included –

- outright climate change denial;
- a sense that this is a ‘woolly jumper’ issue;
- the feeling that it was a bandwagon onto which the trusts concerned should not jump;

- a feeling that the issue is too large in relation to trusts as a whole or, more likely, any particular trust; and that
- there is no demand from potential grantees (this applies particularly where grant-making is restricted to a locality or region).

4.8 One interviewee, with more of a global perspective, commented that *“already, in the case of Darfur, climate change has, conveniently for the Sudanese government, diverted attention from the politics of the question, with at least some success...many repressive regimes will want to talk [the issue of climate change] up, in order to divert attention from their policies.... many forms of toxic pollution are currently ignored in the overwhelming focus on CO2... small funding agencies like ours should not shift resources away from problems which have a clear and direct impact on poor communities, and which are also connected with issues of corporate accountability. There are many industries and groups in the world that have a vested interest in focusing the environmental movement on CO2 and climate change because it removes the spotlight from other forms of environmental destruction.”*

What some foundations are doing in this area

4.9 The following brief profiles describe the work which some of the foundations interviewed are already *doing* or planning to do. Generally, their *views* on the field and the future are incorporated elsewhere in the report and are anonymised. I have included only those foundations which seemed to me to have been working on, or thinking about, these issues for some time. The following profiles have been approved and in some cases amended by the foundations concerned.

Baring Foundation

4.10 Baring (with additional funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation) offered free energy audits to 16 of the organisations which it funds or has funded. The organisations' ability to implement the audit recommendations is currently being assessed. In the meantime, it was felt that a useful next step was to broaden the scope of the work to explore the wider impacts of climate change on voluntary organisations and their beneficiaries and to use the results of this work to put greater and more

effective pressure on government and business for bolder and more urgent action. An invitation to tender for a consultancy to deliver this work was issued in July 2008. Baring held two round table discussions in April 2008 – one reflecting on the environmental audits, and (as mentioned above) a second looking at how non-environmental voluntary organisations can be helped to explore the impact climate change will have on their primary charitable purposes. While Baring does not use the language of social justice in this context, it does talk in terms of *'tackling discrimination and disadvantage'*, which amounts to the same thing.

4.11 In addition, Baring's funding on development overseas focuses on the problems arising from the long term forced migration and displacement of people and several grants have addressed migration related to environmental issues. For example, it has funded the [Intermediate Technology Development Group](#) (now called 'Practical Action) to build the capacity of NGOs and CBOs to implement decentralised infrastructure interventions to improve the lives of flood-displaced communities in Mozambique; and also the [Rainforest Foundation](#) to increase the capacity of Central African organisations to address the problems of displaced forest people through policy and advocacy work. Baring's grant to the Rainforest Foundation resulted in the prevention of logging in a large part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo which would have released at least 3 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere had it gone ahead.

4.12 In 2007 Baring trustees took the decision to invest £3 million in a low carbon technology fund in line with their concern over climate change.

[Carnegie UK Trust](#)

4.13 Carnegie's [Commission for Rural Community Development](#), which completed its work last year, took a 'futures perspective' and thus acknowledged the looming challenges of climate change and resource depletion. It took the view that in the context of climate change, rural communities will be stewards of resources such as water, energy, food production, for the nation as a whole. However, now that the evidence of climate change is unequivocal and that issues such as biofuels - which seemed something of a panacea to some Commission members - appear so much more complex, Carnegie's (ongoing) Rural Programme sees these issues as central to its work. With its partners, CUKT takes the view that it should concentrate on social change responses, promoting hopeful solutions

that communities can take action on themselves. This is demonstrated by development work in the areas of eco-villages, low carbon transport solutions etc.

4.14 [Carnegie's Inquiry into the Future of Civil Society in UK and Ireland](#) has focused on key drivers of change that are likely to affect civil society, and sees growing pressure on global resources/climate change as one of those drivers. Carnegie has recently commissioned a piece of work for the Inquiry to explore how practically the social justice and climate change agendas can be 'bridged', and specifically to explore the distinctive role of civil society associations in the UK and Ireland in doing so.

4.15 As mentioned in section 1 above, a second piece of work has been commissioned from the Eden Foundation which has been asked to develop a practical guide for civil society associations that do not have the environment or climate change at the heart of what they do but wish to -

- better understand how the driving forces of growing pressure on global resources/climate change affects their constituencies and desired outcomes, now and in the future (for example their work with the more vulnerable in society);
- think through how they might engage their organisation and their constituents in these issues in a meaningful way, without causing mission drift; and
- explore how non-environmental civil society associations (especially those who have social justice at their core) can best engage with decision-making processes and relevant policy decisions.

[City Bridge Trust](#)

4.16 City Bridge (CB) has three programmes which relate to climate change - London's environment; its initiative around the London Sustainability Exchange; and its work on Greening the Third Sector. While CB does not use the language of social justice in this context, policies which at time of writing were imminently being made public include reference to environmental education, which includes social justice. The trust referred to 'environmental justice' in its programmes for 2002-2007.

4.17 *The 'Greening' programme* involved CB working proactively with 12 non-environmental organisations - either umbrella generalist organisations, or large membership specialist organisations (e.g. RNID) to encourage them to 'mainstream' environmental issues. To this end, CB offered to pay for an eco-audit – described as *a review of their organisation's current position on waste, energy use, water, transport, raw materials and carbon emissions*. The process involves practical help and professional advice from environmental consultant Donnachadh McCarthy on ways in which they can become more environmentally intelligent. The audits complement DEFRA's [*Every Action Counts*](#) initiative, which encourages voluntary and community groups to take simple, everyday action to protect the environment. The Trust sees this as far more than a 'tick box' exercise, but as a means through which the organisations affected might substantially 're-tool'.

4.18 *London Sustainability Exchange* brings people together from different sectors to approach the challenges of making London sustainable. It provides essential learning and practical support for networks of individuals and organisations in diverse fields and seeks to enable London to play a major role in sustainable development worldwide. Its reports point out, for example, that UK Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities are more likely to be living in fuel poverty than other sections of society, and that there are eight times more people in the most deprived 10% of the population living in tidal floodplains than the least deprived 10%.

[*Comic Relief*](#)

4.19 Two years ago Comic Relief (CR) commissioned a piece of research into climate change and its potential impact on Comic Relief's ability to achieve its vision of a just world free from poverty. The report concluded that climate change presented a major threat, particularly in poor communities around the world, and could undo many of the development gains of previous decades.

4.20 Until this time CR had funded a few projects which addressed climate change 'indirectly'. Examples include its long standing support for the [*Green Belt Movement*](#) in Kenya, founded by Nobel Prize winner, Wangari Maathai, and its support to pastoralists and hunter gatherer communities whose lives and livelihoods were being increasingly threatened by the impact of climate change.

4.21 CR has now developed an organisational response to climate change that takes in its organisational ‘carbon footprint’, its communications work and its grant-making. The organisation has completed a ‘carbon audit’ and taken a number of steps to reduce its carbon footprint. This work is driven forward by a cross-departmental team. CR communications response is still in its development stage. The grant-making work has piloted a participatory grant-making approach. This involved working with a small cadre of potential grantees, collaborating with them to develop grant-making criteria, facilitating peer reviewing of grant applications, and developing an online environment to promote shared learning.

4.22 The focus for CR’s international funding has two complementary strands: adaptation and mitigation. ‘Adaptation grants’ will support groups vulnerable to climate change, such as nomadic pastoralists in Kenya or peanut farmers in Malawi, to think and plan for how they can adjust to their changing world. ‘Mitigation grants’ will support an emergent civil society network of climate change organisations, so they can make sure the voices of affected communities get heard in decisions affecting their future.

4.23 In the UK, CR’s current grants review is looking at what response to climate change it might make, looking, for example, at issues of food and fuel poverty, particularly among older people.

European Climate Foundation

4.24 The European Climate Foundation (ECF) is different from all the other foundations described here; it was set up specifically to focus on the subject, aiming to achieve quick (ECF thinks that it may take ten years) large-scale policy change. Its donors have diverse philanthropic interests, but because of the urgency of the problem, they decided to collaborate to set up ECF, recognising that if the job is not done in time, the impact will be severe for everyone. Further, it is difficult for each foundation to put together a programme of its own in any reasonable time. ECF’s principal aim is to stop carbon emissions in Europe – that is, mitigation. While social justice is not upfront, it is implicit in what the Foundation does.

4.25 ECF runs a very highly managed and focused grants programme. The Foundation will spend between \$15 and \$20 million in its first year. It will eventually have 15 program officers, and consultants as well. Most of the money goes to NGOs. It has some unrestricted funding with which it

is able to hire professional lobbyists and others.

4.26 ECF works both at the EU and individual member state level, and carefully coordinates its Brussels and local work. For example, it is funding [work on the eco-design directive](#) in the EU, balancing industry input. The directive will have to be ratified in all 27 states and ECF will be prepared to fund work in individual states as necessary to ensure that this happens. It has funded a campaign manager, a professional lobbyist and research studies looking at alternatives to coal in the UK

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

4.27 About a year ago, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (EFF) decided to open up its grant-making, rather than operating with several, more or less discrete, programme areas. One of these areas focused on the environment, and under that heading the Foundation funded work on moving towards a low carbon economy. However, the ‘opening up’ has made it possible for EFF to fund work which more directly touches on the social justice dimension of climate change. It is also clear that the Foundation is very thoughtful about these issues and how it might make an effective contribution.

4.28 EFF funding has already addressed the issues at various levels. The Foundation has funded a [Green Fiscal Commission](#), led by Paul Ekins. This is itself a follow-up to [work funded at the Institute for Fiscal Studies](#) on the UK tax system and the Environment. EFF is also supporting work which focuses on the effect of food choices in relation to poverty, diet, relationships and behaviour, and in future may focus some of its funding on local work in the area of sustainability and social justice.

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

4.29 The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) is engaged with the issue in two ways. *First*, it is looking at the effects of climate change in each of its existing funding areas. This has led to a number of relevant grants, not under a new ‘climate change’ heading but within existing grant programmes. For example, JRCT has funded the [Public Interest Research Centre](#) on promoting a creative transition to a zero-carbon society; [Friends of the Earth Scotland](#) on carbon accountability; and the Poverty and Environment Trust on empowering citizens and communities to deal with

energy needs, climate change and fuel poverty.

4.30 The *second* area of JRCT involvement is in relation to its investments. The Trust is generally moving to a position in which its grants and investments are aligned, and thus climate change is an issue for it here as well. The Trust reviews high impact companies for their policies and practices in relation to climate change issues; is a member of the [Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change](#); and is a signatory investor of the [Carbon Disclosure Project](#).

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

4.31 JRF is unusual in that it does not see itself as a traditional grant maker; rather it purposively commissions work, including research and demonstration projects. Further, it has a uniquely strong reputation for the manner in which it disseminates the outcomes of work it supports, and the efforts it makes to use its work to influence policy. But in addition to this, it also builds and manages significant numbers of homes, in some cases as demonstration projects. The Foundation recognises that this combination of research and demonstration, hopefully leading to influence, gives it a unique opportunity in the area of climate change and social justice.

4.32 JRF has recently developed six low carbon homes in New Earswick and is investing in evaluating how these work in practice. The Foundation will shortly be on site developing a new 540-home estate in York. 135 of these will be for rent and others will be available on a part-ownership basis (alongside others for sale in the usual way). Of these homes, the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT - the housing 'arm' of JRF) comments that it *'is striving for environmental excellence in every one of Derwentthorpe's homes. One of the objectives is to demonstrate to residents, house-builders and suppliers that there is both a ready market for, and benefit to, sustainable (greener) homes. The aspiration is to achieve environmental excellence – Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 – in early phases, with the potential to work towards even higher standards in later phases'*. In this new development, JRHT will reduce the dependence on car ownership through regular bus services, a car club and a cycle path linked to wider cycle networks. In addition, JRF is considering how to adapt its older housing stock to meet environmental standards.

4.33 In 2004, the Foundation published work on the effects of green taxes

on low-income households. It has commissioned a great deal of work on communities, and issues relating to community resilience. As far back as 2001, it published work looking at the need for viable local shopping centres, accessible by sustainable transport, in order to reduce the huge growth in car-based shopping, which contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. In 2009, one of JRF's major themes will be social justice and climate change.

Tudor Trust

4.34 Tudor has actively chosen not to have a specific programme on climate change. Instead, it believes that environmental issues, and effective responses to these challenges, should influence all that it does. Issues of social justice and the environment are integral to the full spectrum of its work as a foundation, from its grant-making work with marginalised people, through its activities as a business, to its socially responsible investment programme.

4.35 In its grant-making, by working with applicants' own priorities, it aims to encourage organisations to consider and develop their communities' own resilience to the increasing pressures of peak oil and climate change. Its focus is on building stronger communities by overcoming isolation and fragmentation, and encouraging inclusion, connection and integration. It has chosen not to single out what it sees as the fashionable 'environment' tick-boxes of energy audits, green stationery and wildlife gardens, acknowledging that communities and organisations vary in their capacity to carry change. Tudor prefers to support organisations in preparing for what it describes as '*a more holistic future sustainability*' of their communities. The Trust has funded projects such as local food networks and energy efficient buildings, but issues of social and environmental justice are intrinsically linked, and Tudor's emphasis remains on the resilience of the whole community.

5 What more could foundations do?

Strategic Issues

5.1 There is a wide range of opinion about how best UK foundations could use their various resources to bring benign influence to bear on the social justice dimension of climate change. One interviewee suggested that the most useful interventions might not, in fact, be ones which could immediately be seen as ‘social justice’ interventions (the ‘commons’ argument – see para 3.11 above). In the USA, where – as one would expect, given the much larger scale of the foundation sector there – these issues have been much debated, there is a clear strategic split between those who have taken an engineering approach to climate change, exemplified by the work on ‘Design to Win’ (see [section 2](#) above), funded by the [Hewlett Foundation](#), and those who have been much more concerned with the politics of the situation. One interviewee cited the USA right-wing foundations (such as the [Heritage Foundation](#)) which built institutional capacity, planned for the long-term, and for eventualities. Hence, as the interviewee pointed out, the [Patriot Act](#) was ready to go on the statute book immediately following 9/11; this is a familiar argument to members of WPC, as its formation was rooted in the same analysis.

5.2 While interviewees offered a range of views on the strategic imperatives at this point, there was something approaching a consensus around the idea that, as one put it, “*the main issue now is the politics, not the science or technology*”. But the more contentious issue is where and how – if at all – foundations can make helpful strategic interventions. These were the key points emerging in interviews -

5.3 There is a strong sense that the kinds of NGOs with which WPC-type foundations have good links are not, in general, heard on the subject of climate change in places where their voices would be significantly influential. Foundations could have a role in making that happen. There are several reasons why these voices need to be heard.

5.4 *First*, explicitly environmental NGOs do make their voices heard on these issues, but what they say is generally predictable and can therefore be discounted; whereas it is unexpected voices which may be more influential. This provides an opportunity for the kinds of NGOs with which WPC foundations do business to be heard – for organisations working with, for

example, older people, migrants, young people, poor people, to speak about the effects of climate change on their client groups. Foundations could reflect on which are the key NGOs - which are the social change NGOs that need to be heard in the climate change debates? How can this be enabled to happen? How far will it first be necessary to help NGOs see the climate change dimension to their social justice concerns? (In this context, the handbook commissioned by the CUKT Future of Civil Society Inquiry, and the work commissioned by Baring, is very apposite).

5.5 *Second*, there is a perceived need to influence the intellectual climate on these issues. An interviewee pointed out that there is no obvious single [IPPR](#)-equivalent think-tank in this area of public policy⁸. Of course, there are plenty with an interest in the area – such as [IIED](#) and nef – but they also do other things. The strength of this comment is perhaps illustrated by the fact that when public policy shifted towards biofuels in the late 90s, there was no critique which pointed out the predictable consequences in terms of land use and effects on food prices for the poor etc. Again, this very much supports a conclusion of the CUKT Future of Civil Society Inquiry which has emphasised the need for ‘*deliberative space*’.

5.6 *Third*, there is an inherent tension in democracies between the need to do what is right, and the risk of punishment at the ballot box, especially – as in this case – when what is right may involve calling on people to pay more, or use less, or make other lifestyle changes which are initially at least unpopular. As one interviewee pointed out, “*This is a campaign for less freedom rather than more -- for less abundance rather than more; a campaign against ourselves.*” An obvious example of this is the public and media reaction to fortnightly bin collections and the requirement to sort waste for recycling.

5.7 Some interviewees argued that one role for civil society is to create the space for government to act – by educating the public, and/or by campaigning so as to engage public interest in aspects of the problem which may not previously have been the stuff of influential newspaper headlines. In understanding how to make progress here, there were a number of references back to the situation which apparently existed during World War Two, when people were persuaded to accept a command economy, and

⁸ However, IPPR itself is planning a project which will ‘*take a rigorous look at UK climate change policies through the lens of social justice*’, and at time of writing more than one interviewee foundation had expressed informal interest in funding it.

considerable personal self-sacrifice, in the name of a higher good. Are there lessons to be learned from that period? As one interviewee speculated, *“Do we have to go to a war footing? How did that happen during World War II? How was government able to take control of lives in that way? Are we now too atomised and individualised to allow that to happen again?”*

5.8 Specifically, it was suggested that there is potential for work with NGOs at various levels. As one interviewee pointed out: *“We are making a pathetic lack of input into Europe -- there are 15,000 lobbyists in Brussels but all the green organisations have a total of a hundred staff”*. The implication of this might not be to increase the presence of ‘green’ NGOs in Brussels, but to enable NGOs working on social justice issues to speak up and be heard in Brussels on climate change as it affects their ‘constituents’.

5.9 Some foundations have helped their grantees to conduct eco audits. However, there is some feeling that these must be a means to an end – to help the NGOs to focus on and learn about the issues, and to be seen to have put their own houses in order – rather than an end in themselves, in which case they are judged to be somewhat marginal and perhaps to feed complacency.

5.10 It is important to emphasise that there is a potential role for foundations to work on this even if they do not wear the ‘social justice’ label very prominently. It is important to build ‘unlikely coalitions’; for example, in the US some effort has been expended to bringing on board the ‘hook and bullet’ constituency – the 40 million Americans who hunt and fish.

5.11 Foundations need to be clear about the various levels at which influence can be brought to bear, in order to change behaviour and/or policy. This ranges from the individual/collective, through the local, regional, national, international and global. Another dimension of change would focus on the various aspects of civic society; on business; and on government. There is controversy about individual change – about the extent to which persuading individuals to change to low energy light bulbs, switch off standby, drive less, use smart meters etc is in itself significant, or has power as symbolism, or is just enabling people to feel that they have ‘done their bit’. As one interviewee put it: *“The focus on personal behaviours is convenient for government. Collective and joint action is far more significant than individual action. We are challenged to reinvent everything. For example there are proposals for an ecotown in [PLACE]”*

and pressure to make it as car-free as possible. This can be dealt with by public transport within the town, but you need cars to go anywhere else. This may require new things like carpooling. It is fundamental stuff around the cult of the individual". As another interviewee asked – "what does community transport look like in the wake of climate change?"

5.12 Similarly, some interviewees were sceptical about any role for the locality – the community, village or town – in making any impact on these issues. But others pointed to [the Modbury plastic bag initiative](#), and to the work on towns in transition, as examples of the old slogan ‘think global, act local’. As an interviewee put it, translated this means: “*what can we do here that might have a wider knock-on effect?*” Looked at in this way, the UK is in a powerful position to exercise leadership, especially given the role of the city in influencing standards of behaviour and accountability of business, and the role of Brussels in setting global standards.

5.13 It is important to reflect carefully on the communications methods and techniques to be used in working on these issues. There may be much to be learned from the work of Comic Relief, and especially its relationship with the BBC; from experts in social marketing; from successful viral marketing campaigns. Interviewees emphasised the need for clarity of language; the need to reach out to younger people; and the challenge involved in reaching poorer communities. One of the few UK studies looking at the issue from the perspective of poorer people emphasised the unfamiliarity of people with the ‘*language of environmentalism*’ and the fact that it is ‘*often suffused with jargon that excludes those who are unfamiliar with it*’.⁹

5.14 In my interviews two points emerged above all others. *First*, foundations need to go on making grants; they should be as open as possible to a variety of approaches with grants programmes which are not too ‘closed off’. Whatever else they might do by way of initiating work, they should remain open to supporting those who are already active in the field and who will not survive without the kind of ‘no strings’ funding which foundations alone can offer. In this context, it is interesting to note that two foundations interviewed (Tudor and Esmée Fairbairn) have recently shifted to more open funding programmes.

⁹ Burningham K, & Thrush D. ‘[Rainforests are a long way from here](#)’: the environmental concerns of disadvantaged groups. <http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1842631462.pdf> JRF, York, 2001

5.15 *Second*, foundation access and networks are as important as their money; again and again, interviewees – especially those with a knowledgeable outside view of the sector and an understanding of the climate change/social justice issues – emphasised how funders are uniquely well-placed to get dialogues going. One such interviewee said: “*A group of funders might be able to find a way of opening up a set of conversations or dialogues which grapple with some of the really difficult trade-offs in dealing with climate change.... many decisions made in the UK about flood management etc involve choices and important ethical questions and the third sector is not present at all in discussing them. There are trade-offs - issues of mobility, equity, environmental taxation. Could a cluster of funders assemble a stellar line-up of speakers -- not the usual suspects - to help to provide space for politicians to talk about these kinds of questions and to lead without being beaten up by the Daily Mail? WPC members have the contacts - they could open the conversation and repeatedly ask the questions. We need leadership and not a followership*”

Specific Issues & Initiatives

5.16 There are many areas in which foundation grants and initiative would be relevant. These include housing, transport, fuel poverty, and migration. If NGOs working in these and other areas are to have a seat at tables that count in respect of social justice and climate change, then they will need to understand the relevance of their experience in this context. Some may need to be helped towards this understanding – as initiatives by both Baring and Carnegie UK have recognised (see above).

5.17 They will also need to be funded to ensure that their core operation is secure over the critical period. This is unglamorous, and lacks the aspect of novelty which so often appeals to foundations. But it may be one of the most important things that they can do.

5.18 Climate change will have many effects on communities – in areas such as public health, public transport and car-sharing, local power generation, road and bridge operations & maintenance, water supply and wastewater treatment. Interviewees highlighted the need to build resilient communities – communities which will be strong enough to avert the catastrophic consequences of climate change in these and other areas. A principal vehicle of change in this area is the transition towns initiative, already supported by the Tudor Trust and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

But other work also addresses the issue – for example, the support of things like city farms and horticultural therapy, credit unions and financial literacy.

5.19 As [David Carrington's work](#) has emphasised, around 95% of foundation resources is invested. There is considerable potential for foundations to work together to ensure that this is directed in ways which at least do no harm; and maybe even to use their collective investor 'muscle' to secure significant change in behaviour on the part of business – both in its activities, and the ways in which it accounts for those activities. One interviewee foundation has £900 million in investments with only one ethical screen (for tobacco). The nef report, [Mission Possible](#), provides a useful indication of the opportunities which exist.

5.20 Several interviewees mentioned [Charter 88](#) as a model upon which a climate change/social justice initiative might be based; those with short, or younger, memories may need reminding that Charter 88 was a coalition of many organisations and individuals formed in 1988 to press for widespread constitutional reform in the UK. While some of its key goals – such as electoral reform for Westminster elections, full Lords reform and a written constitution – have yet to be achieved, several were fulfilled through legislation enacted by the Labour Government following its 1997 landslide victory, including devolution to Scotland and Wales, and a bill of rights.

5.21 Another analogous initiative mentioned was [Make Poverty History](#). The key point about such an initiative in this field is that this would be a broad and unlikely coalition, which would develop, promote and stick with a specific set of proposals; we are not here talking about an alliance of 'usual suspects' – of environmental NGOs. There has already been a similar development in USA, in the shape of [1-SKY](#).

5.22 A further suggestion, which incorporates elements of some of the above, is that foundations should use their convening power and networks to bring together a group of highly respected individuals to work across party political boundaries to build a political consensus around urgent carbon reduction measures. Such an initiative would need to be accompanied by a public education campaign aimed at creating the kind of public awareness which would give politicians the 'space' to move – to commit themselves to measures which might otherwise be regarded as unpopular and for which they would therefore be 'punished' by the electorate at a future election.

6 Working Together¹⁰

6.1 I was asked to explore the extent to which foundations would be willing to work together on these issues, given the scale and urgency of them. I have interpreted this aspect of my remit rather broadly in order to try and identify the most effective and feasible ways in which progress might be made, and made rapidly. Reading between the lines, this perhaps arises from an acceptance that smaller foundations especially may feel that they cannot expect to achieve much on their own, but that the issue is too important to ignore – and thus that working with others might be the best way forward.

6.2 But the issue of how foundations work together is vexed (and, of course, not limited to the current topic). Foundations may find it more difficult than other organisations to collaborate, for a number of reasons. Larger endowed trusts do not need partners for financial purposes. Further, foundations have a problem with claiming the credit for work which they fund; they are already at one remove, and to collaborate may mean sharing the credit with, or even ceding it to, others.

6.3 There is clearly a need for someone to look more broadly at collaboration as it affects foundations (i.e. not linked specifically to climate change etc). Happily, Dr Diana Leat is in discussions with the Intelligent Funder Forum about a piece of work along these lines.

Models of collaboration

6.4 I encountered a range of ways in which foundations already collaborate, on this and other issues. These are listed here –

- Bi-lateral arrangements; that is, two foundations choosing to work together as, for example, Esmée Fairbairn and [Henry Smith](#) do on building civil society in Northern Ireland, and Tudor and [LankellyChase](#) do on penal matters in the south west.
- The ‘common pot’ model, whereby a number of foundations

¹⁰ There is an interesting short paper on this issue emerging from an EFC conference session held last year in Madrid, which is listed in [Appendix 3](#) and which, for those reading on-screen, can also be downloaded [here](#).

contribute funding to a common ‘grant-making pot’ around a particular issue – for example, in this field, the European Climate Foundation (see above). The Environmental Partnership for Central and Eastern Europe (EPCEE) – now the [Environmental Partnership for Sustainable Development](#) - was set up in the early 1990s, and brought together resources from a number of foundations to make small grants, quickly, to environmental groups in the then new democracies of eastern and central Europe. Similarly, Charity Know How was set up in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the break up of the Soviet Union to support civil society in the new democracies of Eastern Europe. In another field, the [European Programme on Integration and Migration](#) (EPIM) run by the Network of European Foundations funds ‘what it says on the tin’. The [Local Action on Global Issues Fund](#) run by the Community Foundation serving Tyne and Wear, groups funds from 5 donors over a three year period, and is an example of the ‘common pot’ approach at local level.

- Collaboration for the purposes of information exchange – in this area, the Environmental Funders Network is the most obvious example. Internationally, the [Climate Change Philanthropy Action Network](#) (CCPAN) exists to ‘*create a platform for bringing together committed philanthropists and foundations from around the world to promote strategic philanthropic initiatives in the critical area of climate change mitigation*’. One or more UK foundations is in membership of CCPAN.
- ‘Fast traffic’ funding deals between trusts; this approach raises many issues, but one interviewee suggested that the current situation of great urgency is the moment to “*break some rules*”

6.5 As well as taking different forms, collaboration can happen with different degrees of formality and structure, and with various instigators – including funders and grant seekers. In a couple of instances, trusts have set up joint trustee committees.

6.6 Several interviewees emphasised the value – perhaps especially in this area - of collaboration which goes beyond foundations, and is cross-sector, involving NGOs, government, business and other arms of civil society such as trades unions.

Conditions for effective collaboration

6.7 Interviewees identified a range of preconditions for successful collaboration –

- Commonality of values
- Agreed objectives
- A clear lead partner
- Personal chemistry

6.8 In respect of the final bullet above, I observe that those collaborations which seem to work best are often founded on strong personal relationships – for example, the trust directors involved know and like each other – and/or they develop organically rather than being constructed artificially.

Dangers/risks of collaboration

6.9 While collaboration is often regarded as an unquestionable 'good thing', there are also some disadvantages –

- Core messages/goals/big ideas can get diluted, if a group has to work towards a lowest common denominator in order to stay together.
- Collaboration can slow things down as time has to be found for meetings etc.
- If grant-making is the key activity, then there is a risk of undermining the very pluralism which is the basis of the foundation sector.

6.10 In view of the disadvantages, there has to be, in any particular situation, a clear gain – real added value which more than balances the costs.

Ways forward?

6.11 I found no great appetite for a new organisation built around climate change and social justice. However, there were generally positive attitudes to working with others provided the conditions are right. *First*, there is a need for leadership, and it is likely that informed, tactful and sensitive approaches by well-informed foundations with a track record in this area, to

others with less experience but a great interest, will bring forth a positive response.

6.12 *Second*, there is a strong wish for better information sharing. The Environmental Funders' Network plays a significant and very useful role in this regard already, but few of those with whom I spoke would regard themselves as 'environmental' funders. Further, some are frightened of engagement with this group because of the jargon that they perceive attaching to funding in this field.

6.13 The question therefore arises: *how best can information in this area be shared between trusts – especially those who do not, and are not likely to, attend EFN meetings?* Careful consideration should be given to the use of the web, and other means of sharing information. One way forward would be for interested trusts to allocate some responsibility in this area to a staff member – a 'climate change & social justice' champion, as it were – and for those thus appointed to form a network, employing whatever technologies (web, face-to-face travel, print on paper etc) as they think will best meet their needs. These champions would have a variety of responsibilities, including sharing their own trust's learning/knowledge/project outcomes with others, and making sure that the same process also operated in reverse. If this idea finds favour, then a first step might be to draw up a model role description.

7 In Conclusion

7.1 I believe that the main value of this report for many people will be the information it contains about what others are doing or thinking. I have not felt it appropriate to make specific recommendations as to the way forward. It will be for each trust to determine in its own way whether/how to respond to climate change, and the social justice consequences attaching to it. Some may decide to do absolutely nothing – and even to take that decision by default.

7.2 Others may feel persuaded by what they have learned here and elsewhere that the subject at least deserves some serious consideration. There are many opportunities for progress described here. Above all, foundations have the money, networks and access to help to make things happen which could really be very influential. Some may fear that this is just another bandwagon on which they prefer not to clamber; but others will be clear that, on the contrary, we are at an historic moment of crisis and that we will not be forgiven if we fail to do what we can. And foundations have quite a bit of ‘can’ about them.

**Steven Burkeman
York,
August 2008**

Appendix 1

Interviewees/Consultees

(Names marked 'X' were not interviewed individually but took part in a special workshop at the ACF Conference in Nottingham, alongside others who were interviewed)

Dawn Austwick	Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Monica Barlow	Tudor Trust
Andrew Barnett	Gulbenkian Foundation
Astrid Bonfield	Diana Memorial Fund
Laura Bowman	Tudor Trust
Kate Braithwaite	Carnegie UK Trust
David Bramley X	Grantscape
Bernard Mercer	Consultant
David Carrington	Consultant
Jon Cracknell	JMG Foundation
David Cutler	Baring Foundation
Matt Dunwell	Tudor Trust
Sian Ede	Gulbenkian Foundation
Fiona Ellis	Northern Rock Foundation
Eryl Foulkes X	Tudor Trust
Christopher Graves	Tudor Trust
Gilly Green X	Comic Relief
Bryn Higgs X	Polden-Puckham Foundation
Victoria Johnson	New Economics Foundation
Tony Kendle	Eden Foundation
John Ledlie X	Peter Harrison Foundation
Charlie McConnell X	Carnegie UK Trust
Judith McNeill	Comic Relief
Bharat Mehta	City Parochial Foundation
John Merivale X	City Bridge Trust
Gerald Oppenheim	Big Lottery Fund
Tony Pender	Formerly Carnegie UK Trust
Steve Pittam	Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
George Polk	European Climate Foundation
Sigrid Rausing	Sigrid Rausing Trust
Sarah Ridley X	Tubney Charitable Trust
Danyal Sattar X	Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Beatrice Schell	Oak Foundation
Lenka Setkova	Carnegie UK Trust
Matthew Smerdon	Baring Foundation
Lizabeth Sklaroff	New Philanthropy Capital
Sukhvinder Stubbs	Barrow Cadbury Trust
Clare Thomas	City Bridge Trust
Julia Unwin	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Stewart Wallis	New Economics Foundation
Peter Wheeler	New Philanthropy Capital
Anthony Wilson	AW.60 Charitable Trust
Tzeggai Yohannes Deres	City Parochial Foundation

Appendix 2

Paper emailed to Interviewees

Social Justice and Climate Change

We are sailing (figuratively) into a perfect storm.

Literally, the climate is changing, with horrendous potential consequences. We are reaching peak oil - defined by Wikipedia as '*the point in time when the maximum rate of global petroleum production is reached, after which the rate of production enters its terminal decline*'. The environment has been seriously degraded, with the widespread destruction of the rain forests. And by the year 2040, we will need to feed half as many people again. One estimate has it that we will need 15 planets to accommodate the growth needed just to raise the income of the poorest people in the world to £500 a year.

We are sailing into a perfect storm; but some of us have stronger boats than others.

There is deep and tragic irony in this, for it is arguable that the perfect storm has been created by those with the stronger boats - industrialised countries account for roughly 80% of the carbon dioxide build-up in the atmosphere to date - and yet it will be the poor who suffer the consequences; **climate change is a social justice issue.**

Oil prices have more than doubled since January 2007. This, and the urgent need to cut carbon emissions has led to a vast increase in acreage devoted to growing crops for biofuels, to keep the vehicles of the developed world on the road. You can't use the same piece of land for two purposes at the same time; land formerly used to grow food is no longer used for that purpose. Primary crops in particular, such as rice, maize and sorghum – the crops that poor people across the world rely on – become scarce, and the price rises beyond the levels which poor people can afford; **climate change is a social justice issue.**

And in the developed world, the consequences of climate change are felt most acutely by those least able to afford them, who are also likely to be those least responsible for creating the situation in the first place. As carbon emitters are taxed, utility bills will rise; those with money will find this relatively easy to absorb. The poor will not. In the UK, it is estimated

that utility bills will rise by 30-40% by next winter. Again, **climate change is a social justice issue.**

There are other consequences, too. James Lovelock has predicted that the UK may become home to tens of millions of environmental refugees by the middle of this century. As Tony Kendle of the Eden Project has pointed out, whatever focus we have as part of civil society – he instances prison reform, homelessness, children, health, and poverty – climate change is a relevant issue.

Surely progressive foundations can't simply bury their collective heads in the sand and pretend that nothing is happening. Nor can they leave this to the 'environmental' foundations, many of whom are in any case principally concerned with flora and fauna, and not with the social consequences of what is happening.

At the same time, it would be *folie de grandeur* to pretend that all the foundation grants in the world could reverse what's happening. But might there not be smart targeted interventions focusing specifically on the social justice dimension of climate change to which foundations, working together could make a significant contribution? That's the question which the Woburn Place Collaborative (WPC - now part of the Association of Charitable Foundations) has been examining and which this research, with funding from The Carnegie UK Trust, wants to explore.

Carnegie has asked Steven Burkeman (an experienced consultant who for many years was Trust Secretary at the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, and who co-wrote *Stepping Up the Stairs*, (the report which led to the setting up of WPC), to work on this. He will undertake a series of interviews with the directors of some UK trusts and foundations together with a number of key individuals involved in philanthropy, identified as already having some interest and engagement with this issue. The purpose is to explore the degree of urgency which foundations attach to this; to identify the kinds of interventions to which interviewees think their foundations might be willing to contribute; and particularly, having regard to the scale and urgency of the crisis, the degree to which they might be willing to work together with others.

Steven has started work and is due to deliver his report during the 2nd half of August. He will present it at a special meeting of WPC to be held in

Dunfermline on September 22nd/23rd. As far as possible, and subject to the inevitable constraints of geography and busy diaries, these interviews will be conducted as face-to-face conversations, which might explore such questions as -

Are you already working on these issues? If so, where do you see the opportunities for others to join you? What would it take for your board to see this as a priority? How far would you have to skew your current focus to take in this issue?

Which issues arising from the social justice consequences of global climate change come closest to your present concerns as a grant maker?

Does your foundation have something to contribute to this beyond funding? Is there relevant expertise to be found on your board or amongst your staff? Do you have strong networks which could be helpful? Do you have good contacts with government or international bodies which might be relevant?

What models of cooperation would work for you? A common fund to which you would be a contributor – perhaps along the lines of the recently launched European Climate Foundation, the European Programme on Integration and Migration or the old Charity Know How?

This is a critical time. Jonathon Porritt, speaking to WPC at its first Colloquium in December last year, suggested that there is perhaps a 10-year 'window' in which to reverse the consequences of global warming and at least ameliorate its worst consequences, which will impact mainly on poor people and more vulnerable communities internationally, and here in the UK.

Your contribution to this short study will help us to see where UK foundations can best play their part.

Appendix 3

Some Useful References

Publications

Civil Society and Climate Change prepared by the New Economics Foundation for the Carnegie UK Trust, available from http://democracy.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/civil_society/publications/civil_society_and_climate_change#attachments

Climate Change and Human Rights – A Rough Guide pub. International Council on Human Rights 2008 available from <http://www.ichrp.org/en/projects/136>

Climate change, vulnerability, and social justice, Roger E and Jeanette X Casperson, pub. by the Stockholm Environment Institute 2001. Download at <http://www.sei.se/dload/2001/sei-risk.pdf>

Design to Win: Philanthropy's Role in the fight against Global Warming pub. by California Environmental Associates August 2007. Download at http://ef.org/documents/Design_to_Win_Final_Report_8_31_07.pdf

Environmental Justice in London: linking the Equalities & Environment Policy Agendas Pub. by the London Sustainability Exchange. Available from http://www.lsx.org.uk/whatwedo/communities_page2604.aspx

Environmental responsibility: what role should charities play? Report of a Charity Commission seminar held Oct 2007. Available from <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/enhancingcharities/enviroseminar.asp>

Funders Challenge Climate Change EGA Journal Spring 2008: Special issue. Download at http://www.ega.org/news/docs/EGA_Journal_Spring_08.pdf

Green Philanthropy: Funding charitable solutions to environment problems, Bernard Mercer pub. by New Philanthropy Capital Oct.2007. Available from http://www.philanthropycapital.org/research/research_reports/environment/environment2.aspx

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 4th Assessment Report pub. 2007. Available from <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

Memo on environmental grant-making pub. NYRAG, April 2008. Available from http://www.nyrag.org/s_nyrag/sec_tsr.asp?CID=5485&DID=11885&mored=true

Partnering for the environment – lessons for a collaborative future Report of a 2007 session at the June 2007 conference of the European Foundation Centre. Download at <http://www.efc.be/ftp/public/aga/2007/postscripts/Partnering4Environment.pdf>

“Rainforests are a long way from here”: *The environmental concerns of disadvantaged groups* Kate Burningham & Diana Thrush. Pub. by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available from <http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/details.asp?pubID=382>

The Stern Review, Sir Nicholas Stern, pub HM Treasury, 2006. Available from <http://tinyurl.com/vgzxv>

Taking action on climate change William and Flora Hewlett Foundation 2007. Download at <http://tinyurl.com/5qh9kp>

The Tragedy of the Commons, Garrett Hardin, *Science*, 162(1968):1243-1248. Available at <http://dieoff.org/page95.htm>

Weathercocks and Signposts: the environmental movement at a crossroads. WWF, 2008. Available from http://www.wwf.org.uk/core/ge_0000004945.asp

Where the Green Grants Went 3, Jon Cracknell & Heather Godwin pub. By Environmental Funders Network, May 2007. Available from <http://www.greenfunders.org/resources>

Zero Carbon Britain: an alternative energy strategy pub. by the Centre for Alternative Technology 2007. Available at <http://www.zerocarbonbritain.com/>

Websites (other than those referred to above)

The Climate Institute: *‘Catalyzing innovative and practical policy solutions to protect the balance between climate and life on Earth’*
<http://www.climate.org>

The Daily Climate: news from around the world related to climate change.
<http://www.dailyclimate.org>

Every Action Counts: provides advice and support to voluntary and community organisations which are looking to reduce their impact on the

environment, tackle climate change and improve their local area.

<http://www.everyactioncounts.org.uk/>

Forum for the Future: action for a sustainable world. Co-founded by Jonathon Porritt <http://www.forumforthefuture.org.uk/>

The Nand & Jeet Khemka Foundation: a foundation which is *‘committed to addressing the environmental issues facing us today, both within India and globally. Much of our work is focused on taking action to combat the urgent challenge of stemming the impact of climate change’*.

<http://www.khemkafoundation.org/environment.php>

New Economics Foundation: an independent 'think and do' tank. ‘We believe in economics as if people and the planet mattered’.

<http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/>

Transition Towns: A Transition Initiative is a community working together to look Peak Oil and Climate Change squarely in the eye and address this BIG question: *"for all those aspects of life that this community needs in order to sustain itself and thrive, how do we significantly increase resilience (to mitigate the effects of Peak Oil) and drastically reduce carbon emissions (to mitigate the effects of Climate Change)?"*

<http://www.transitiontowns.org/>

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC): the international body responsible for the Kyoto protocol and future climate treaties. Provides information about international climate policies and projects for reducing emissions. <http://www.unfccc.int>