



Climate Initiative

Impact Report





To preserve our environment, health, and economy—and ensure a promising future for our children—we must continue to work collaboratively to implement long-term equitable solutions that build a resilient region and economy for all San Diegans.

Contributing to Climate Progress.

San Diego Foundation has a 45-year grantmaking history and track record as a responsive, impactful, place-based philanthropic organization.

Our deep roots and strong partnerships with community-serving nonprofits uniquely position us to holistically respond to climate change on a local level. We address community needs by leveraging a broad network of relationships with funders and cultivating trusted connections with partners in business, government, philanthropy, academia and the nonprofit community to facilitate meaningful and lasting change that allows us to:

Catalyze

Encourage national, state and local funding for research, education and community engagement that informs public policy and leads to investments that protect and enhance our region's quality of life

Convene

Gather diverse stakeholders to identify shared goals and opportunities to work together in addressing critical regional issues; and

Collaborate

Work with community partners and local decision makers to address systemic inequities and promote equitable, and inclusive solutions to community needs.

Climate Initiative Grant Program:

106

Programs funded

60

Individual organizations assisted

\$4.8M

Invested in climate resiliency and solutions

Our Climate Initiative

Through our Climate Initiative, San Diego Foundation provides leadership and philanthropic investment to create a more sustainable path to economic growth and a higher quality of life. The Initiative aims to advance science-based, collaborative development of local policies and programs that reduce our region's polluting emissions and minimize local risks from climate change.

Learn more at SDFoundation.org/Climate

Catalyzing Collective Change.

San Diego Foundation's early investments in research, community engagement and public-private partnerships have been instrumental in driving comprehensive local action on climate change for more than a decade.

To generate the greatest impact in advancing local climate action work, San Diego Foundation took a "big tent" approach in convening stakeholders across political parties, sectors, cities and public agencies to develop plans in addressing regional climate change impacts.

By investing in the following priorities, San Diego Foundation created a national model for the role of community foundations.

Our Strategic Grantmaking Includes Regional Funding for:



Research

Groundbreaking research on the local impacts of climate change in the region that informs local leaders and policymakers, raises community awareness and galvanizes regional climate action.



Technical Assistance

Convening, collaboration and technical expertise to support local government planning, policy and projects to address climate change.



Community Engagement

Community education and engagement to deepen public understanding of the causes and consequences of climate change and promote collaborative, regional solutions.

Regional Successes

San Diego Foundation supports the efforts of local leaders, policymakers and communities to create a more resilient region. Together, we have already made great strides that will benefit all San Diegans now, and into the future.

✓ Taking Action

17 Regional Cities and County of San Diego have committed to Climate Action Plans

✓ 100% Clean Energy

The region's 8 largest cities have committed to 100% clean energy

✓ Cut Pollution

The City of San Diego reached its 2020 Climate Action Plan goal of cutting climate pollution two years early in 2018

✓ Created Climate Equity Index

The City of San Diego completed a first-in-the-nation Climate Equity Index to ensure equitable implementation of its Climate Action Plan



Investing in Research.

Supporting local research is a pillar of the San Diego Foundation Climate Initiative.

Since 2006, San Diego Foundation has funded 27 climate change research grants totaling \$1.3 million, including the sweeping study, *San Diego, 2050 is Calling*, California's first regional assessment of climate change impacts. Findings from these extensive scientific studies provided a road map for local governments and public agencies to proactively address looming threats and develop sustainable climate preparedness plans.



Regional Impacts Identified



Water

- Sea level will rise another 12-18 inches, causing serious flooding in low-lying areas, property damage and permanent coastal erosion.
- Extended and more frequent droughts will diminish local water supplies



Energy

- In the San Diego region, we will use at least 60% more electricity by 2050
- Higher energy demand will come from hotter inland areas where population will grow most



Fires

- Large-scale fires will increase by as much as 20%
- More wildfires, drought and insect attacks will cause widespread loss of trees and forests



People

- More frequent episodes of extreme heat will increase health risks in youth and the elderly
- Dangerously poor air quality will increase respiratory and cardiac health problems

Collaborating with Technical Experts.

As a regional convener, San Diego Foundation recognizes the need to provide additional expertise and gather cross-sector agencies to create comprehensive plans to address regional climate change.

With pollution crossing boundaries and city borders, collaborative planning is essential.

San Diego Foundation invested more than \$1.4 million in technical expertise to convene and collaborate with diverse teams of stakeholders and experts. These joint efforts resulted in cross-agency sharing of best practices, pain points and research.



Partnerships and Programs



Forging Strategic Partnerships

Partnership with ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability and the Energy Policy Initiatives Center at the University of San Diego to develop one of the nation's first comprehensive greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventories, identifying transportation as the primary source of pollution contributing to climate change for all local governments. This critical information revealed where our pollution is coming from and allows us to develop effective strategies to respond.



Co-Founding The Climate Collaborative

A regional network of public agencies to advance climate change solutions with a unified approach, the Climate Collaborative intersects academia with nonprofits, business and community leaders to share expertise, leverage resources, and raise the profile of regional climate leadership. In 2014, the Collaborative received the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Climate Leadership Award for Innovative Partnerships, which recognized the collaboration as a replicable model for other regions.



Supporting Groundbreaking Sea Level Rise Efforts

Led by the Port of San Diego and its five member cities, with facilitation from ICLEI and engagement of major public and private stakeholders around San Diego Bay, this research helped to jointly plan for shoreline impacts from climate change.

Engaging the Community.

Since 2006, San Diego Foundation strategically distributed more than \$2.1 million in grants to 45 individual community organizations focused on educating and engaging the public in regional planning processes to build regional climate resilience.



Education and Communication



Public Education

Led development of Climate Education Partners, a collaboration of six organizations managed by the University of San Diego and funded by the National Science Foundation, to implement a multi-year education and communications effort to increase climate science literacy at policymaker and community levels.



Water and our Oceans

Invested heavily in finding solutions for water and ensuring community engagement in our regional efforts, including nearly \$2 million to understand impacts, develop pilot projects and support community engagement for clean water.



Transportation

Invested over \$300,000 in sustainable, affordable and low-carbon mobility efforts to support regional transit solutions ensuring our communities are more bikeable and walkable.

Communities of Color and our Most Vulnerable:

While climate change affects everyone, people of color and historically marginalized communities, including lower-income neighborhoods, are disproportionately impacted. To confront this disparity, over the past decade San Diego Foundation has invested in community partners that work directly with vulnerable populations in the San Diego region.

In partnership with the San Diego Grantmakers Social Equity Collaborative Fund, San Diego Foundation launched and funded a climate justice grantmaking initiative that connects and amplifies a community-driven approach to local climate solutions.



The San Diego Urban Sustainability Coalition (SDUSC)

"Communities of concern are on the front-lines of climate change, bearing the brunt of environmental degradation and air pollution. Despite these immediate dangers, these communities are also often the last to receive access to important renewable energy education, technology and job training opportunities. These funds will strengthen the alignment and coordination between jobs, social equity and climate."

- Maria A. Muhammad, co-leader of SDUSC

Youth Education

To nurture the next generation of environmental guardians, San Diego Foundation invests in education efforts that prepare students for climate change and build leadership skills to engage in solutions.



Climate Science Alliance

Through its Climate Kids-San Diego program, Climate Science Alliance has educated more than 100,000 children in the San Diego region. Through partnerships with scientists and educators, students learn the impacts of climate change on the unique biodiversity and species of San Diego county.

\$2.1M

in grants to 45 individual community organizations

Safeguarding our Region's Future.

Through our Climate Initiative, San Diego Foundation focuses on stopping pollution at its source, facilitates natural approaches to removing pollution through healthy habitats and healthy oceans, and prepares our community for the impacts already set in motion like increased wildfires.

As we look toward the future, San Diego Foundation will prioritize:

Public Health

From the effects of extreme weather and heat waves on our outdoor workforce, to the increase in pollution that causes long-term heart and respiratory issues among communities closest to the pollution, we know that our changing climate is a public health emergency. We will facilitate projects that transition polluting industries to cleaner more sustainable practices.

Community-Based Solutions

Climate change doesn't discriminate; it touches us all regardless of age, income-level, or neighborhood. However, due to long-standing systemic inequities, communities of color and low-income neighborhoods are disproportionately affected by climate change impacts. Protecting our natural resources for future generations must also include protecting all people and communities. We will support organizations that empower San Diegans to engage in the development of solutions in their own communities.

Aligning the Economy and the Environment

Much of our \$200+ billion regional economy depends on outdated polluting technologies. Our industries, which include construction, agriculture, transportation and manufacturing, can be transitioned into new clean technologies though. We will facilitate projects that address climate change and create economic growth by investing in the transition to a clean energy economy.

Clean Investing

San Diego Foundation now offers donors Fossil Free Investment options in two sustainability portfolios for endowments and non-endowments, allowing donors to invest philanthropic dollars in businesses that uphold the transition to a clean energy economy.

Leadership & Commitment.

In the not-so-distant future, we envision a region that grasps the uncertainties of climate change and is determined to jointly create a thriving, equitable future for current and future generations.

Tackling climate change will require an unprecedented level of cooperation and commitment from every member of our community, from public and private agencies to philanthropic organizations to research institutions.

We have made tremendous progress on regional climate action plan development. We are setting and meeting timelines, garnering widespread community support, and leading significant change as one of the earliest adopters of climate efforts. However, there is much more work ahead and decreasing pollution will be harder.

Working hand-in-hand with all communities and leaders, San Diego Foundation will continue to ensure the San Diego region remains a leader in climate action. Together, we can grow a more equitable, prosperous and resilient region.

Learn more at SDFoundation.org/Climate



The success of the San Diego Foundation Climate Initiative relies on partnerships with the following organizations through the support of generous funders including the Kresge Foundation, Qualcomm Charitable Foundation, Bank of American Foundation, Wildspaces, LLC, Marisla Foundation, as well as the following donor-advised funds at San Diego Foundation – the Hervey Family Fund and the The Blasker-Rose-Miah Fund

Climate Partners

American Lung Association of California	Public Policy Institute of California	Solidarity Farm
Bayside Community Center	Red Cross of San Diego County	Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Association
Breakthrough Communities	Resilient Cities Catalyst	Stay COOL for Grandkids
CALPIRG Education Fund	Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County	Surfrider Foundation - San Diego Chapter
Center for Sustainable Energy	Rise San Diego	The Borrego Valley Endowment Fund
Center on Policy Initiatives	San Diego Bicycle Coalition	The City Project
Ceres, Inc.	San Diego Coastkeeper	The Greenlining Institute
Circulate San Diego	San Diego County Regional Airport Authority	TransForm
Cleantech San Diego	San Diego County Water Authority	Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve
Climate Action Campaign	San Diego Food System Alliance	University of California San Diego - Jacobs School of Engineering
Climate Education Partners	San Diego Grantmakers	University of San Diego - Energy Policy Initiative Center
Climate Science Alliance	San Diego Green Building Council	University of San Diego – The Nonprofit Institute
Coalition for Clean Air	San Diego Housing Federation	University of Southern California - Equity Research Institute
Conservation Biology Institute	San Diego Natural History Museum	Walk San Diego
Endangered Habitats League	San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative	Water Reliability Coalition - Regional Chamber of Commerce
Environmental Center of San Diego	San Diego State University - Department of Biology	WILD Coast
Environmental Health Coalition	San Diego State University - School of Public Health	
GRID Alternatives	San Diego Urban Sustainability Coalition	
Groundwork San Diego - Chollas Creek	Scripps Institution of Oceanography	
ICLEI USA - Local Governments for Sustainability		
Justice Overcoming Boundaries		
Local Government Commission		
Mid-City CAN		
Move San Diego		
Project New Village		

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