

A Profile of Environmental Grantmaking In Canada 2002 National Overview



By Kathryn Townshend, Coordinator, CEGN

How much money is granted each year in support of the Canadian environment? Where do these dollars go geographically? What environmental issues and activities do the grants support? Are we funding what is most needed?

This profile provides an overview of key national findings from the Canadian Environmental Grants Database, providing a unique picture of the size and characteristics of the environmental grantmaking sector in Canada in 2002. This current release of the database represents a major update and expansion of the previously available dataset and includes a greater range of types and number of grantmakers. These findings are based on the environmental grants made in Canada in 2002 by 90 grantmakers.

The Canadian Environmental Grantmakers' Network (CEGN) initiated this research to address the absence of Canadian data on the issues, needs and priorities for environmental funding. The resulting Canadian Environmental Grants Database provides a profile of the environmental grantmaking sector in Canada. This research is important because without any sense of the big picture, we can have no understanding of the cumulative impact of environmental grantmaking in Canada, no sense of the context in which we each work – nor can we fully develop sector-level collaboration to address shared concerns. Ultimately, CEGN's goal in undertaking this research is to encourage discussion, debate and action on the needs and gaps in funding in the Canadian environmental sector.

The Big Picture

A total of \$132 million was given in support of the Canadian environment in 2002 through 2,726 grants made by the 90 grantmakers in the database.

Individual grant amounts vary greatly, ranging from \$35 to over \$13.7 million. In general, the sector is characterized by a few large grants and many smaller grants – with a median grant amount of \$11,700.

Overall 1,564 different recipients received grants. The majority (58%) of these recipients were organizations whose main focus is the environment. Interestingly, many (41%) of the recipients receiving grants for environmental work were other types of organizations, including schools, sports/recreation/tourism, municipal government, First Nations, community/citizens' groups, agriculture, and social service organizations. A small proportion of the recipients (1%) were individuals.

While, as noted, 58 percent of total number of recipients were organizations whose main focus is the environment, these organizations received almost three-quarters (72%) of the total grant dollars.

2002 National Overview

HIGHLIGHTS

- \$132 million in environment grants
- 2,726 environment grants
- 1, 564 recipients
- 90 grantmakers
- \$11,700 median grant

Grants by Region

The geographic distribution of environmental grant dollars by the location of the recipient shows much variation across Canada, with most of the dollars going to Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec. Specifically, half (51%) of the grant dollars went to recipients located in Ontario, 17 percent went to recipients located in British Columbia, and 16 percent to Quebec recipients.

These figures do not, however, take into account the fact that the location of the activity that a grant supports is sometimes different from the location of the recipient. For example, many national organizations are based in Ontario, but their work takes place across Canada. When the location of the funded activity is taken into account, Ontario's share of the grant dollars drops to 27 percent. Activities that are national in scope (or take place in more than one province) account for 25 percent of the total grant dollars. International activities (including those taking place outside of Canada, either fully or in part – such as cross-border initiatives) received 4 percent of the grant dollars.

Please Note! Profile of Grantmakers

It is important to keep in mind the composition of the 90 grantmakers included in this 2002 release of the database when interpreting the findings.

Grantmakers by Region

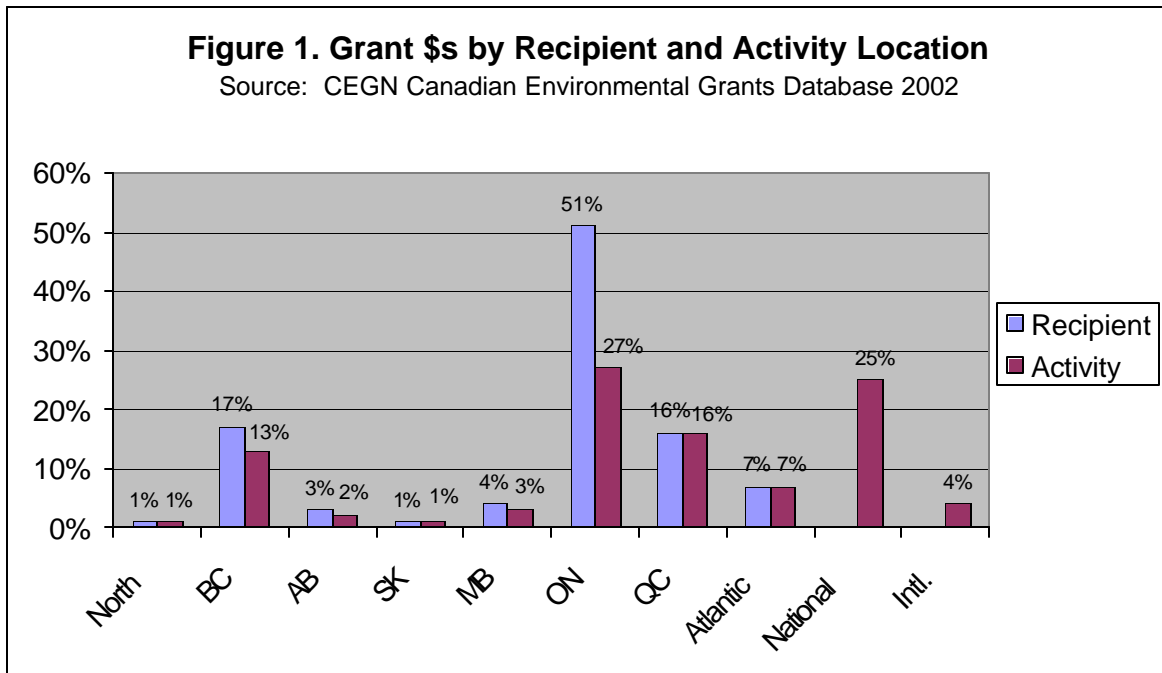
About one third (36%) of the grantmakers currently in the database are located in Ontario. Sixteen percent are located in the U.S.A. Quebec has the second largest number of grantmakers among the provinces at 14 percent, followed closely by British Columbia at 13 percent. Percentages of grantmakers located in the other provinces are as follows: Alberta (9%); Manitoba (8%); Atlantic region (3%); and Saskatchewan (1%).

Grantmakers by Type

Private/family foundations make up forty-four percent of the number of grantmakers included in the 2002 data set. Other types include: community foundations (19%); government foundations or grant programs (16%); corporate foundations or grant programs (10%); and other types of grantmaking organizations (11%).

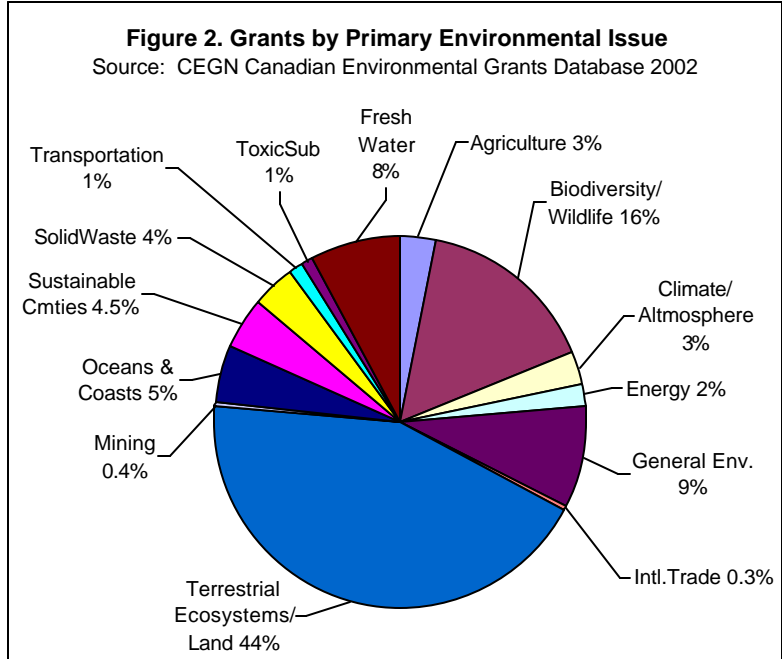
Figure 1. Grant \$s by Recipient and Activity Location

Source: CEGN Canadian Environmental Grants Database 2002



Grants by Issue

The grants were analyzed in terms of 14 broad environmental issue categories. Terrestrial ecosystem and land issues received by far the greatest level of support with 44 percent of the dollars going to grants focused on this issue. Closely linked in theme were grants relating primarily to biodiversity and wildlife issues, which received an additional 16 percent of the dollars. Other issues receiving higher levels of support were general environment – including grants dealing with multiple issues or with general areas like environmental law or environmental health (9%), and terrestrial freshwater (8%).



Grants by Keyword

Grants within the database are also described in terms of keywords to provide additional detail on the various aspects of issues being funded.¹

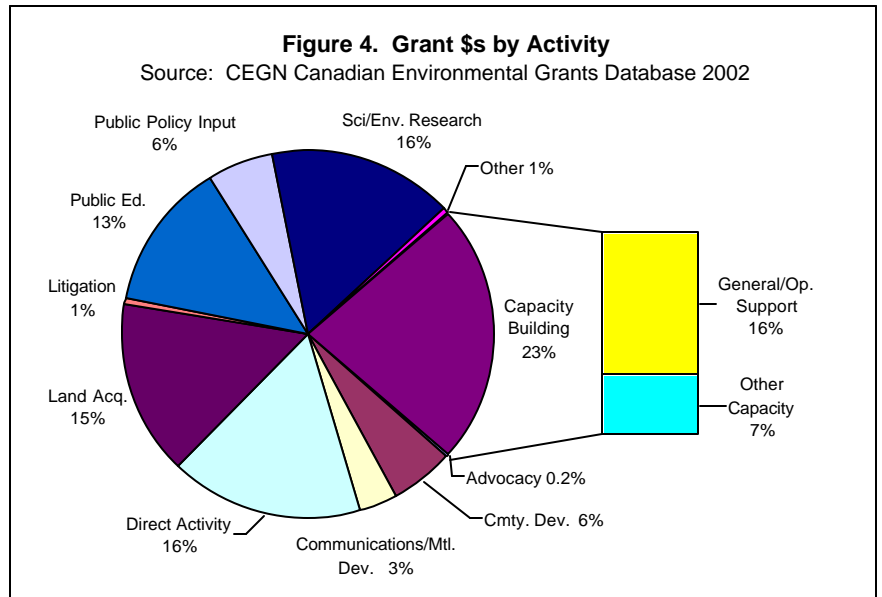
Most of the keywords are sub-issues of the 14 environmental issue categories identified above. For example, based on those grants where it was possible to identify keywords, 19 percent of these dollars went to grants addressing “forests” issues. Grants related to land trusts received 15 percent of the dollars. Grants that addressed “endangered species” received 8 percent of the grants dollars. Three percent of the dollars went to grants addressing “climate change”. A selection of other keyword examples is shown in Figure 3.

In addition, some of the keywords are general codes that cut across all environmental issues. For example, grants that involved or related to “children & youth” accounted for 11 percent of the total grant dollars. Similarly 6 percent of the grant dollars went to grants involving or relating to “First Nations” issues. Grants relating to “Northern” issues accounted for 3 percent of the total grant dollars.



Grants by Activity

The type of activity directly supported by grants was also analysed. The largest segment of grant dollars (23%) was in support of activities to help build the recipient organization’s capacity. Direct “hands-on” activities such as community clean-ups received the second largest amount of support at 17 percent of total grant dollars. Grants for scientific or environmental research received 16 percent of the dollars. Acquisition of land received the fourth largest amount of support at 15 percent of total grant dollars. (When considering the number of grants rather than total dollars granted, land acquisition’s share dropped significantly – constituting only 2 percent of the total number of grants.)



The category “capacity building” includes grants providing general or operating support, as well as project support for capacity building activities such as strategic planning, fundraising development, staff development and equipment. General/operating support grants accounted for 16 percent of total grant dollars, while the other capacity building grants received 7 percent of total grant dollars. While the number of general/operating support grants was not large (234 grants – or 9% of the total number of environment grants), the average (mean) size of these grants was relatively high – about \$88,200 compared to the average (mean) of \$48,300 for all grants.

Please note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

¹In most cases, grants were coded by one or more keywords in an attempt to provide some additional detail of the grant’s issue focus. Identification of keywords was based on the description of the grant as provided by the grantmaker. Where the described focus of the grant was general in nature (e.g. “conservation” or “general support”), it was not feasible to identify or note all of the potential keywords or sub-issues that may be addressed by the grant. A wide range of individual words and phrases were used as keywords. For example, there are over 200 standard keywords or phrases included in the database. These keyword categories are not mutually exclusive – there is often overlap among them in recognition of the interconnections among so many environmental issues. As a result each grant is usually associated with several keywords. For these reasons, the figures for keywords are estimates and should be considered as approximate indications of relative levels only.

Further detail on CEGN’s Canadian Environmental Grants Database, including an explanation of terms used in the database and information on how the data were compiled, is available on CEGN’s website at www.cegn.org under “About Environmental Grantmaking”.

Also available on CEGN’s website is an interactive feature of the grants database that allows specific searches (e.g. by environmental issue and province).

© CEGN 2004 All rights reserved.

Canadian Environmental Grantmakers’ Network
615 Yonge Street, Suite 502
Toronto ON M4Y 1Z5
T: 416-961-1273
F: 416-323-9301
ktownshend@cegn.org
www.cegn.org