

Conservation and Science Program

Climate and Land Use Strategy Brief

Climate change is the defining issue of our day. It is a global problem that demands global action, while we still have time. If left unaddressed, climate change would uniquely undermine the priorities our family foundation set – improving the lives of children and families while protecting the earth’s natural systems for future generations.

The Challenge

Forests, prairies and wetlands, which absorb and store a significant amount of greenhouse gasses, are being converted into cropland at high rates to meet the growing demand for food and fuel worldwide. The twin forces of global deforestation and unsustainable agricultural practices are responsible for 25 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Changing land use practices around the world is a complex challenge, but key to mitigating the climate change threat.

Our Strategy

The Packard Foundation is part of the [Climate and Land Use Alliance](#) (CLUA) and our grantmaking is carried out as part of a coordinated strategy with the CLUA member foundations. As part of the overall CLUA strategy, the Packard Foundation’s goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with agricultural practices. Our three strategies are to:

1. Reduce the rate at which peatland and native forests are converted to new palm oil plantations in Indonesia while also building a pathway to a sustainable palm oil industry. The conversion of forest and peatland to palm oil plantations in Indonesia is currently the largest global source of land use greenhouse gas emissions, and it is urgent to find a sustainable path for this industry.
2. Reduce emissions from agriculture in the United States through policy reform, carbon markets, and supply chain approaches. The U.S. is the fourth largest source of agricultural emissions and there are opportunities to reduce those emissions in ways that benefit both farmers and the environment.
3. Ensure that expansion in bioenergy, such as biofuels made from corn, sugarcane, and palm oil, is environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable. We want to ensure that bioenergy production is low in greenhouse gas emissions and demonstrates other dimensions of sustainability such as limiting impacts on food security and water resources.

Our Approach

We support organizations to lead activities such as:

- Designing and implementing advocacy and media campaigns to raise awareness about the unsustainable environmental impacts of palm oil production.
- Creating an agricultural emissions-offset market in California, strengthening U.S. farm conservation policies, and working with companies to help them reduce emissions associated with the agricultural products that they purchase.
- Working to build public, political and market pressure to limit the production of unsustainable biofuels.

Where We Work

The Climate and Land Use subprogram's palm oil strategy is focused on Indonesia, the world's largest producer of palm oil. Our efforts to reduce agricultural emissions in the U.S. are nation-wide, but focus on the major agricultural regions and major crops and livestock. Our bioenergy investments focus on the United States and Europe, but include work on other regions to promote policies for the sustainable production and use of bioenergy.

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Additional Climate Mitigation Investments

With a challenge as big as climate change, it is essential to test diverse strategies and align around common goals. Climate change is such a large and complex issue that increasing and aligning philanthropic resources is essential to have the best chance of stabilizing the climate.

In addition to the Climate and Land Use subprogram, we support the [ClimateWorks Foundation](#) to catalyze a coordinated worldwide philanthropic response to mitigate climate change. The majority of our climate funding supports mitigation strategies developed in partnership with other donors. We are committed to aligning our funds in the areas of greatest potential and need, in the following five key global areas:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the use of coal and shift to clean power alternatives
- Reduce emissions associated with the use of oil
- Increase energy efficiency

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with land use
- Reduce emissions of potent greenhouse gases other than carbon dioxide, such as black carbon, methane, and hydrofluorocarbons

Progress

We know that mitigation efforts over the next 20 to 30 years can play a significant role in stabilizing our climate and protecting the earth's capacity to support life. Measurable progress is already being made, giving us hope that it is not too late to avoid dangerous human-caused climate change.

During the past year, one of the largest palm oil trading companies committed to policies aimed at ensuring that their plantations and suppliers protect forests, stop development on peatlands, and end exploitation of workers and local communities. And, the European Parliament has agreed to a policy that places a cap on crop-based biofuels in order to reduce emissions and avoid impacts on food security.

What We Don't Fund

While we coordinate and work closely with public sector stakeholders, we generally do not fund governmental institutions.

To Learn More

For more information about the Packard Foundation's Climate and Land Use Subprogram and grantmaking, visit www.packard.org/climate-and-land-use or contact our team:

- Belinda Morris, program officer
bmorris@packard.org
- Juli Chamberlin, program associate
jchamberlin@packard.org