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for Indigenous Peoples

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BEYOND COMMITMENTS: REDISTRIBUTING CLIMATE FINANCE TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Analysis of Candid Foundation Maps Data Climate-Related Grants 2020–2024



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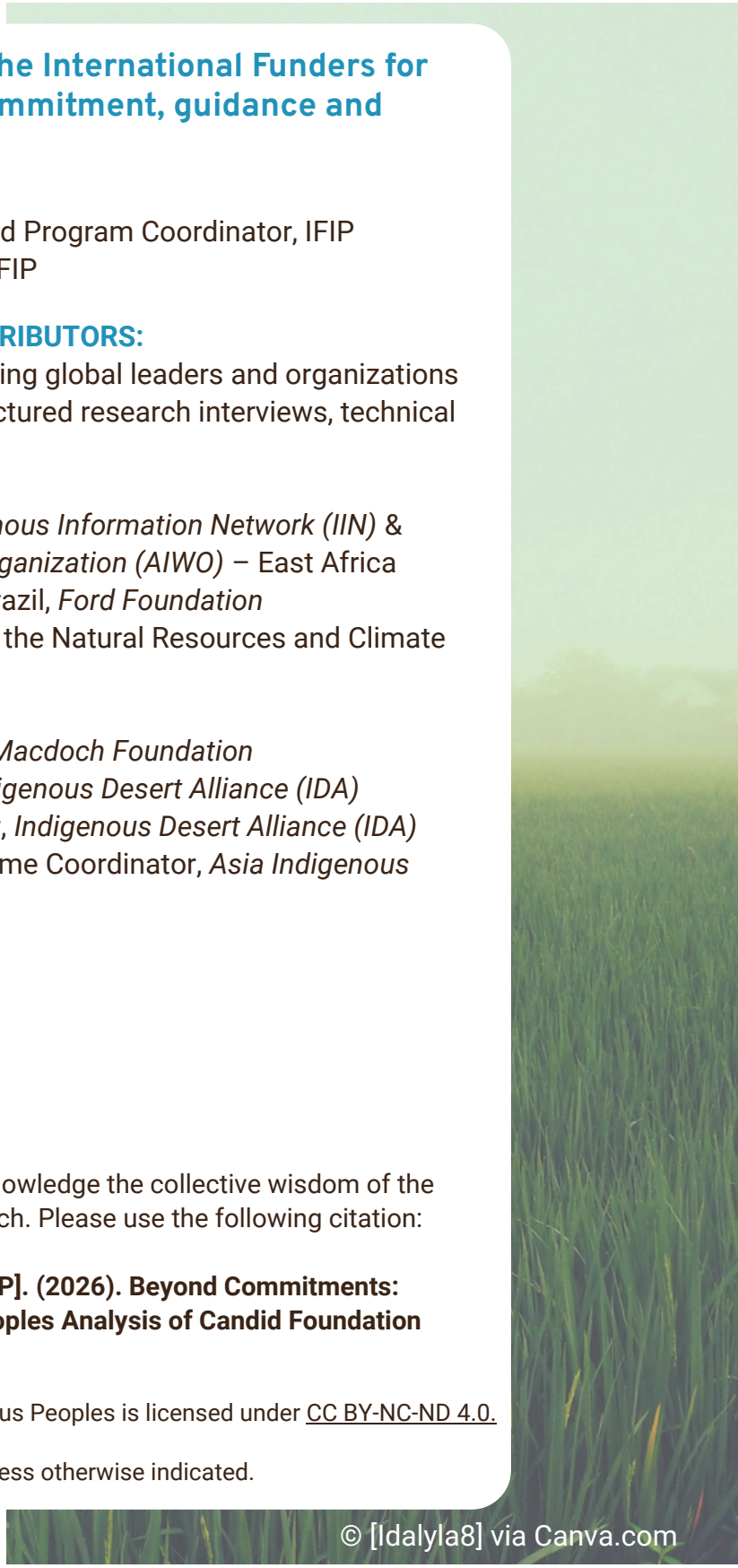
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ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

AIPP	Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact
AIWO	African Indigenous Women's Organization
APIB	Indigenous Peoples Articulation of Brazil
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FCAM	Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres
FIMI	Foro Internacional de Mujeres Indígenas
GAGGA	Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action
IDA	Indigenous Desert Alliance
IFIP	International Funders for Indigenous Peoples
IG/AR	Indigenous Governments and Autonomous Regions
ILFs	Indigenous-Led Funds
IIN	Indigenous Information Network
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IPAS	Indigenous Peoples of Asia Solidarity Fund
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and local communities
IPOs	Indigenous Peoples Organizations
NCQG	New Collective Quantified Goal
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance

UN	United Nations
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (or Questioning)
CASA	Fundo Socioambiental CASA
COIAB	Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira
ELAS	ELAS Fundo de Investimento Social
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IFIP commissioned this study building on previous reports that aim to provide a concrete tool to shift funding practices, mobilize resources, and deepen partnerships within the global philanthropic ecosystem. As a global community of funders, our work is led by, carried out with, and accountable to Indigenous Peoples. This study goes beyond analysing and tracking data; it is a strategic effort to promote thought leadership and advance a new paradigm of giving based on the 5Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy: Respect, Relationships, Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Redistribution. Using the 5Rs as an analytical lens, we examine how much climate funding reaches Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs) directly and who holds decision-making power over it, to provide a clear path toward direct and equitable funding that fully supports Indigenous Peoples' rights, sovereignty, and self-determination.

Indigenous Peoples' lands contain more than a third of the world's remaining intact forest landscapes and hold a substantial share of land-based carbon. Deforestation rates on Indigenous lands are often lower than in surrounding areas. Yet standard philanthropic reporting does not distinguish between funding designated for Indigenous Peoples and funding that reaches IPOs directly. This report establishes that distinction, using Candid Foundation Maps data to set a baseline for Indigenous advocates in climate finance negotiations, including the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG).

The analysis examines 22,143 climate-related cash grants of at least $10,000 issued between 2020 and 2024. From this total, 1,720 grants (7.8%) are tagged for Indigenous Peoples: grants identified as benefiting or potentially benefiting Indigenous Peoples, which we refer to as Indigenous-tagged climate funding throughout this report. Each recipient within this subset is classified against the International Funders for Indigenous



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Peoples (IFIP)'s Indigenous Peoples Organization (IPO) framework to distinguish between funding directed at Indigenous Peoples and funding that reaches IPOs (Annex A). These quantitative findings are complemented by semi-structured interviews with the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, the African Indigenous Women's Organization, the Indigenous Desert Alliance, the Ford Foundation, and the Macdoch Foundation.

Three features of the data shape how the figures should be read. Candid's coverage is concentrated in USA and Canada-based philanthropy, so funding from elsewhere is under-represented. Recipient status is recorded at the point of the named grant, so onward regranting to IPOs is captured only where the intermediary reports it. **And the analysis covers only those grants Candid itself identified as benefiting Indigenous Peoples, so the 0.68% omits any funding that reached an IPO through a grant Candid did not identify.** All three limitations are set out in full in the methodology.



Sources for all data and evidence cited in this summary are given in the body of the report.

Key findings: The gap between funding tagged for Indigenous Peoples and funding reaching IPOs directly

The analysis identifies a structural gap between funding tagged as relevant to Indigenous Peoples and funding that names an IPO as recipient:

The direct access deficit: Of $8.72 billion in tracked climate philanthropy, **4.44% ($387.1M) was Indigenous-tagged**, meaning Candid labelled Indigenous Peoples as a relevant population or theme. This measures relevance and says nothing about who received the money. Only 0.68% ($59.5M across 339 grants) named an IPO as recipient. Within the Indigenous-tagged subset, 15.4% of dollars named an IPO as recipient, **83.5% went to non-Indigenous organizations** such as environmental NGOs, international regrantors and other intermediaries, and 1.1% went to recipients whose status could not be determined. These proportions compound: climate receives around 2% of global philanthropic giving, Indigenous-tagged grants are 4.44% of tracked climate philanthropy, and 0.68% reaches IPOs directly.

Volatility, not growth: The Indigenous-tagged share rose from 1.92% in 2020 to 8.86% in 2021, fell to 2.49% in 2022, and partially recovered to 4.41% in 2023. The 2021 peak came from two large pledge-driven disbursements that together accounted for 80.4% of Indigenous-tagged funding that year, neither of which continued. Grant counts moved far less than dollars. The pattern reflects a small number of large grants rather than a sustained shift in funder priorities.

Geographic concentration: Grantmakers based in the USA and Canada account for 95.1% of Indigenous-tagged grant dollars and 96.1% of all tracked climate grant dollars, and most funding remained concentrated in those two countries. Africa received $17.4M in Indigenous-tagged climate funding, of which roughly $6.5M reached African-domiciled organizations. Asia-Pacific received $34.4M. Both figures are small relative to each region's climate exposure. Country-level gaps are pronounced. India, the third-largest recipient country outside the US at $4.8M, directed no confirmed funding to IPOs directly. Four Pacific island nations among the most exposed to sea-level rise, Fiji, Samoa, Kiribati and the Solomon Islands, received a combined $371K in Indigenous-tagged funding across 12 grants. Of that, only $20,000 reached an IPO directly: a single grant to one organization in the Solomon Islands. Palau's larger $2.9M total is excluded here because all of it went to a US-based non-Indigenous recipient for work in Palau.

Indigenous Women's leadership: Indigenous Women lead some of the most effective funding mechanisms in this dataset. The International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI) directed 86.1% of its Indigenous-tagged climate funding to IPOs. Yet of **$46.8M tagged for both Indigenous Peoples and gender, only $5.4M (11.6%) reached IPOs directly**, which is below the 15.4% rate across all Indigenous-tagged funding. Indigenous and disability-tagged grants totaled $2.03M, of which only $42K reached IPOs and dryland ecosystems are barely visible

The architecture of intermediation: Large-scale climate philanthropy relies heavily on non-Indigenous intermediary organizations, which lowers the share of Indigenous-tagged funding reaching IPOs directly. Among the twenty-five largest US grantmakers, direct-to-IPO rates span the full range from 0% to 100%: six record no direct grants to an IPO, ten fall below 5%, and the highest rates include funders granting several million dollars. These figures reflect initial disbursements only and do not capture downstream sub-grants or longer-term investments intermediaries may make. Access also differs from control: across 16 funds created to deliver nature finance to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, their representatives held on average 11% of board seats, without control over resource flows.

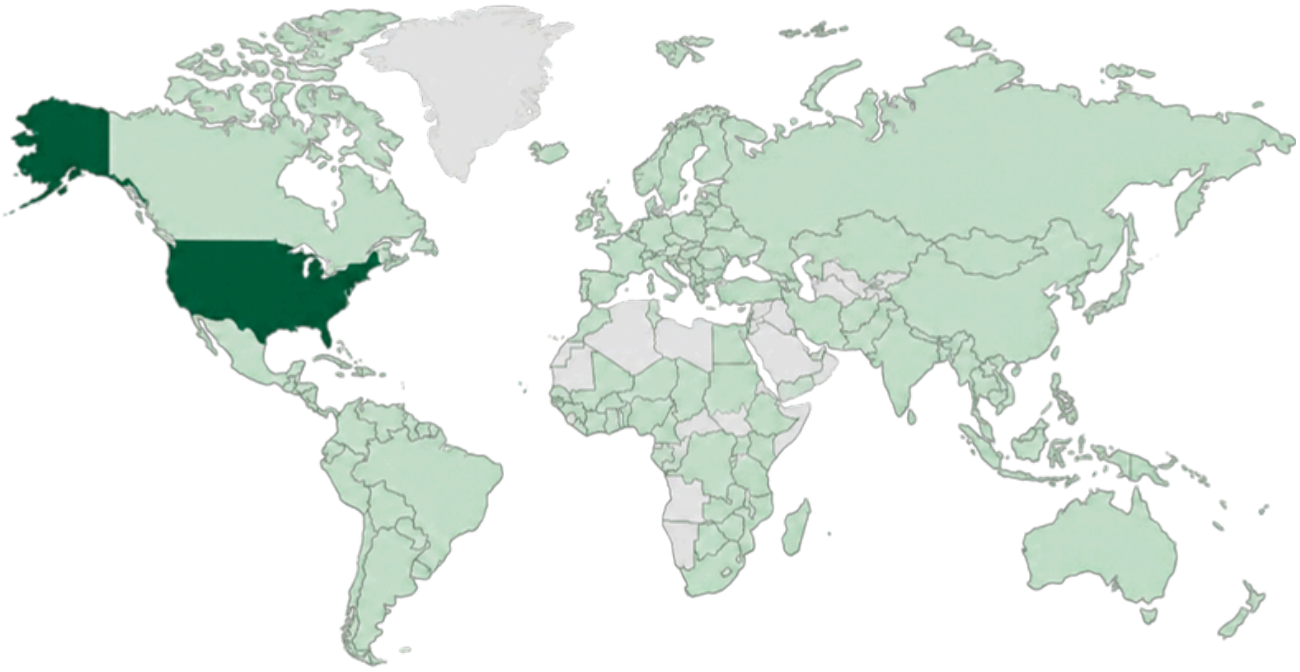
Institutional design shapes outcomes: Low direct-funding rates to IPOs are not inevitable. They vary with institutional design. Several of the highest direct-to-IPO rates belong to funders with explicit feminist mandates or programmatic commitments to Indigenous leadership. Some of these figures rest on a small number of grants and should be read as illustrative rather than representative of a funder's broader pattern.

Closing the Gap: Indigenous Climate Finance Tracker

Candid philanthropic climate grants data * 2020 to 2024 * Cash grants ≥ 10K USD

Total Climate Grants	Indigeous-Focused Grants	Direct to IPOs	Grant Makers in USA & Canada
$8.72B	4.44%	0.68%	95.11%
22,143 grantes from 2020 to 2024	$387M across 1,720 grants	$60M across 339 grants	USA and Canada grant makers

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF CLIMATE GRANT RECIPITIENTS



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What stands in the way, and what works

Interviewees identified consistent structural barriers across very different organizational and geographic contexts. Short-term, project-based funding is the most universally cited: Indigenous climate work is rooted in long-term movement building and territorial governance, while most available funding is tied to narrowly defined projects. Administrative requirements compound this. Invitation-only funding calls, complex applications, rigid reporting frameworks, and English-language documentation function as exclusion mechanisms before an application can be made. Funders identified the same tension from their own side, noting that due diligence and governance frameworks designed to manage institutional risk apply the same standards to grassroots IPOs as to large international NGOs, and that many partnerships still emerge through referrals rather than systematic outreach.

The funders achieving higher direct rates share identifiable design choices: long-term, trust-based relationships sustained over years rather than grant cycles; investment in Indigenous-led funds that place decision-making authority within Indigenous institutions; direct support to IPOs written into grantmaking strategy as a formal criterion rather than a preference; and untied core funding alongside project support. Consortium arrangements, where Indigenous organizations partner with larger NGOs to reach funding otherwise out of range, preserve agency within current constraints without resolving the underlying intermediation problem.

A Critical Accountability Moment

At COP30 in Belém, the Forest Tenure Funders Group announced a renewed pledge of $1.8 billion for 2026 to 2030, committing to increase the share of direct, long-term, and flexible financing for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and Afro-descendant communities across an expanded range of ecosystems. Governments separately endorsed the Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment, setting a collective target to recognize 160 million hectares of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' lands by 2030. Several funders documented in this report are among the pledge endorsers. Over its first four years, the preceding COP26 Pledge disbursed $1.86 billion, yet only around 6% of that reached Indigenous Peoples and local communities directly. Neither pledge created a pooled fund or central allocation mechanism; each donor funds independently. The 0.68% baseline established here gives advocates a concrete measure of whether the renewed commitment produces structural change or reproduces the same patterns.



Strategic implications

As global climate finance targets move toward $1.3 trillion annually by 2035, this 0.68% baseline indicates the scale of the structural reform needed. Three areas of change stand out.

INSTITUTIONALIZE DIRECT ACCESS:

The NCQG could move beyond funding designated for Indigenous Peoples toward dedicated funding channels that IPOs can access directly, with simplified accreditation requirements at multilateral climate funds.

LEARN FROM PURPOSE-BUILT MECHANISMS:

Some funding mechanisms designed specifically for direct access reports substantially higher direct-to-IPO rates than the dataset-wide average. These self-reported rates have not been independently verified against this dataset, but the pattern is consistent enough to merit closer study as NCQG design proceeds.

GLOBALIZE EQUITY:

Finance should shift from its current USA and Canada-based concentration toward direct grants for IPOs in the Global South, particularly across Africa and Asia-Pacific, with intentional attention to closing funding gaps for Indigenous Women, people with disabilities, and dryland and marine-based communities.



Recommendations

The following table summarizes the path forward, aligning technical targets with IFIP's core values (The 5R Framework):



The 5R Pillar	Strategic Objective	Key Target / Benchmark	Primary Actor
Respect	Sovereignty & authority	Indigenous Peoples, including Indigenous Women, set priorities and hold decision-making authority over funding affecting their territories, including in the NCQG and multilateral funds	Policy makers
Relationships	Trust-based partnership	Minimum three to five year unrestricted core funding cycles	Philanthropic funders
Responsibility	Transparency & Accountability	Public reporting of direct-to-IPO share; due diligence proportionate to grant size, with funders carrying more risk; downstream disclosure by intermediaries	Funders & philanthropic community
Reciprocity	Mutual learning	Co-designing M&E frameworks and recognizing Indigenous land tenure as a valid climate investment	Policy & funders
Redistribution	Shift power, risk, resources and infrastructure	Majority of Indigenous-tagged climate funding allocated directly to IPOs, publicly reported; funding Indigenous-led financial infrastructure	All stakeholders

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and context

IFIP commissioned this study as a tool to shift funding practices and deepen partnerships with Indigenous Peoples. It uses the 5Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy as its analytical lens. Each R asks a question of the funding architecture: who sets priorities (Respect), whose networks funding follows (Relationships), to whom funders and intermediaries are accountable (Responsibility), whose knowledge counts (Reciprocity), and what shifts to Indigenous institutions (Redistribution). Redistribution covers resources, decision-making and agenda-setting power, risk, institutional infrastructure, and knowledge. The report also distinguishes access, meaning whether funding reaches IPOs, from control, meaning whether Indigenous Peoples decide how resources affecting their territories, rights and futures are prioritized, allocated and governed. The Candid data measures access. The interviews and secondary sources speak to control.

6% Indigenous Peoples comprise approximately 6% of the global population.

More than a third of the world's remaining Intact Forest Landscapes are on Indigenous Peoples' lands, and Intact Forest Landscapes on those lands have been estimated to provide more than 30% of the mitigation action needed by 2050 to limit warming to 2°C (Fa et al., 2020). Their lands intersect with 43% of Key Biodiversity Areas (Reytar et al., 2024).

Research documents measurable conservation outcomes on Indigenous-managed lands. In Brazil's Amazon, deforestation rates in Indigenous territories are less than one-tenth those of surrounding areas. In Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve, community-managed logging zones experience deforestation at one-twentieth the rate of the reserve's strictly protected national parks (Oxfam et al., 2016). Across the tropics, strictly protected areas have lost forest cover at roughly six times the rate of community-managed forests (Porter-Bolland et al., 2011). Studies from Australia, Brazil, and Canada show that vertebrate biodiversity on Indigenous-managed lands equals or exceeds levels in government-protected areas (Reytar et al., 2024). These outcomes reflect active, long-term stewardship systems. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Indigenous hunter-gatherer communities maintain this stewardship while facing extractive mining, deforestation, territorial conflict, and climate impacts simultaneously. Their situation illustrates that Indigenous land management operates not in isolation but against active and ongoing dispossession.[1]

[1] *Interview with African Indigenous Women's Organization (AIWO) 5, February 2026.*

This sits within a small pool to begin with. Around 2% of global philanthropic giving is directed to climate mitigation, and less again to adaptation (WINGS and Philea, 2026). The figures in this report describe how a fraction of that fraction reaches Indigenous Peoples Organizations, and the distribution matters precisely because the total is modest.

Despite this documented effectiveness, funding patterns do not reflect it. IFIP's analysis of 2016-2020 philanthropy found that only 0.6% of global giving supported Indigenous Peoples across all sectors (International Funders for Indigenous Peoples, 2024). Within climate-relevant forest and land tenure funding, only 17% of the approximately $270 million invested annually goes to activities that name an Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) organization as the recipient (Degawan, Waithira, & Holland, 2022). Preliminary analysis of 16 funds established to deliver more than $2 billion in nature and biodiversity finance to IPLCs found that IPLC representatives held on average 11% of seats on those funds' core governance boards, with most boards holding one such seat or none (Degawan et al., 2022). Accreditation requirements for direct access are structured in ways that favor established non-Indigenous organizations.

Tracking of the $1.7 billion COP26 Forest Tenure Pledge (2021–2025) illustrates the persistence of these patterns even when explicit commitments are made. The pledge exceeded its financial target one year early. Yet across four years of implementation, only 6% of funds reached IPLC organizations directly. This figure ranged from 2.1% in 2022 to 10.6% in 2023, with the remainder received by non-Indigenous organizations including international NGOs, UN agencies, and government institutions (Rainforest Foundation Norway & Rights and Resources Initiative, 2025).

This underfunding extends to Official Development Assistance (ODA). Analysis of IATI data from 2011–2020 found that IPLC tenure rights and forest management received an average of $270 million per year in ODA. This is equivalent to less than 1% of total ODA for climate mitigation and adaptation over the same period. The Paris Agreement's signing in 2015 produced no discernible increase in this figure (Rainforest Foundation Norway, 2021). This analysis of philanthropic funding through Candid sits alongside that broader ODA picture. Philanthropy is a small but structurally distinct channel: direct philanthropic grants have reached IPOs at comparatively higher rates than multilateral mechanisms



1.2 Research rationale and research questions

Climate finance negotiations under the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) target at least $1.3 trillion per year by 2035 from all public and private sources (UNFCCC, 2024). Implementation will be shaped over successive negotiating cycles, beginning at COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, from 9 to 20 November 2026, where Türkiye holds the Presidency and Australia serves as President of Negotiations, with Pre-COP hosted in Fiji and Tuvalu. Indigenous Peoples and their advocates need baseline evidence to demonstrate current funding patterns and make the case for equitable resource allocation across that period.

Existing tracking systems do not disaggregate by recipient type in a way that allows direct-to-IPO rates to be calculated. Rainforest Foundation Norway's Falling Short report (2021) and Degawan, Waithira, and Holland (2022) both found (using different data sources and time periods) that only 17% of climate-relevant forest and land tenure funding names an IPLC organization as recipient. This convergence across two independent analyses suggests that the concentration of funds in non-Indigenous organizations is a structural feature of climate finance for Indigenous Peoples. ClimateWorks Foundation documents total philanthropic climate funding at $9.3–15.8 billion in 2023, with forests among the top three funded sectors, but does not disaggregate Indigenous-specific allocations (ClimateWorks Foundation, 2024). The Rights and Resources Initiative's Path to Scale dashboard tracks $6.6 billion in disbursements for IPLC tenure rights from 2011–2024 across public and philanthropic sources, but does not allow direct-to-IPO rates to be calculated.

This analysis addresses that gap using Candid Foundation Maps grant-level data to establish the philanthropic baseline. **It does so by examining four research questions:**

01 What proportion of philanthropic climate funding is tagged as serving Indigenous Peoples, and what share of that reaches Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs) directly?

02 How has Indigenous-tagged climate funding changed between 2020 and 2024?

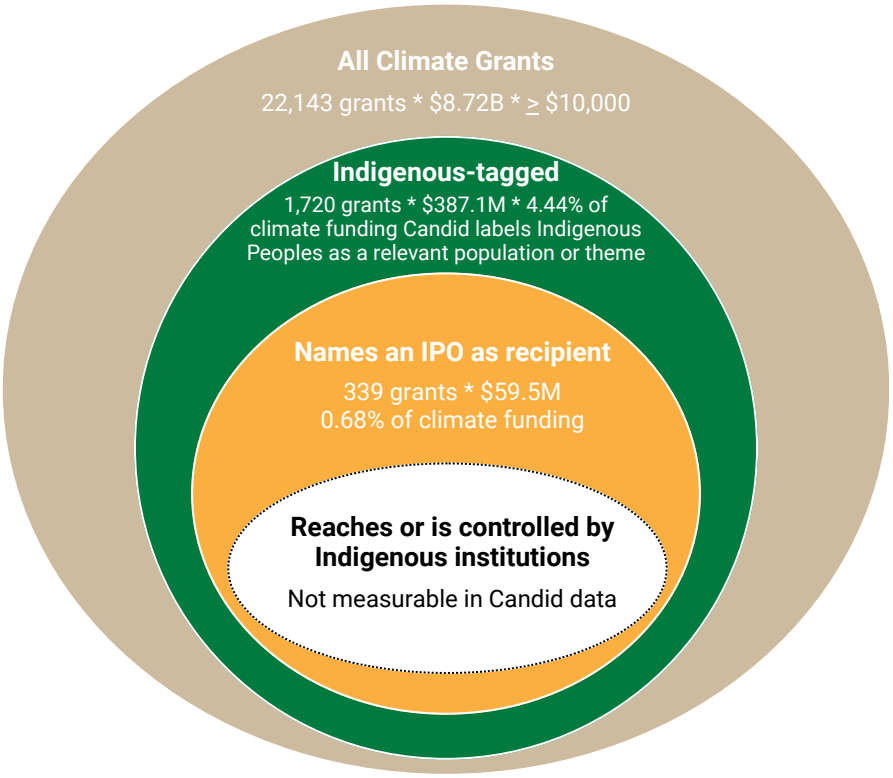
03 What geographic and thematic patterns exist in the distribution of Indigenous-tagged climate grants?

04 What types of organizations receive Indigenous-tagged climate grants, and which grantmakers direct the largest shares to IPOs directly?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Quantitative data: Candid Foundation Maps

This research uses the Candid Foundation Maps database, which aggregates grant-level data from IRS tax filings, direct funder disclosures, and public sources, with particularly strong coverage of U.S.-based foundations. Each record contains information on the grantmaker, recipient, funding amount, and thematic classifications. The dataset includes 22,143 climate-related cash grants of at least $10,000 across 2020–2024. From this total, 1,720 grants (7.8%) are tagged for Indigenous Peoples. These are grants identified as benefiting or potentially benefiting Indigenous Peoples; we refer to them as Indigenous-tagged climate funding throughout this report.



It helps to picture the data as four nested layers. The full set of 22,143 climate grants is the denominator for all percentages in this report. It is not a count of Indigenous grants. Within it sit the 1,720 Indigenous-tagged grants. Within those sits a smaller subset that reached an Indigenous Peoples Organization (IPO) as the recipient—the layer examined in Sections 3 and 45. A grant being Indigenous-tagged does not mean it was led by, or reached, an Indigenous organization, a distinction that drives much of the analysis that follows. The fourth layer, funding that ultimately reaches or is controlled by Indigenous institutions, cannot be measured from grant records.

Primary trend analysis focuses on 2020–2023, because a one-to-two-year reporting lag affects the completeness of 2024 data.

2.2 Qualitative data: Semi-structured interviews

The quantitative Candid data is complemented by semi-structured interviews with five organizations across Asia, Africa, Australia, and North America, selected to ground quantitative patterns in regional funding realities. Three are Indigenous Peoples Organizations or regional Indigenous networks—Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), African Indigenous Women's Organization (AIWO) and Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA)—and two are philanthropic funders–Ford Foundation and Macdoch Foundation. Interviews explored organizational funding landscapes, structural barriers to accessing climate finance, and funding approaches associated with stronger direct allocation to IPOs. These two data sources are treated as complementary throughout.

2.3 Indigenous Peoples Organization (IPO) categorization

Recipient organizations were classified using four categories:

01 Indigenous Governments and Autonomous Regions (IG/AR) (sovereign tribal, First Nations, or Aboriginal governing bodies, and organizations created by them);

02 Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs) (recipient organizations meeting IFIP's criteria for Indigenous leadership, governance, and mission, encompassing both Indigenous-led nonprofits and Indigenous-Led Funds);

03 Non-Indigenous organizations (Non-IPOs) (organizations receiving Indigenous-tagged grants that do not meet IPO criteria, including environmental NGOs, foundations, and regrantors); and

04 Insufficient information (recipients where the available information did not allow IPO status to be determined).

IG/AR and IPOs share Indigenous decision-making authority over the resources they receive, and the headline figures in this report combine them, consistent with IFIP's 2024 analysis. The dataset does not carry a recoverable flag distinguishing Indigenous Governments and Autonomous Regions from other IPOs, so this report cannot show how the combined total divides between Indigenous Governments, which are concentrated in the United States and Canada, and IPOs elsewhere. Section 3.3 should be read with that limitation in mind. (see Annex A for full classification criteria)

2.4 Data limitations

Candid's data reflects almost exclusively USA and Canada-based philanthropy: 96.12% of tracked climate grants originate from grantmakers in these two countries, meaning philanthropic actors across the Global South are underrepresented. A 1–2 year reporting lag means 2024 data is incomplete.

Candid records grants as they are reported, which affects how regranting chains appear. When a foundation funds an intermediary and that intermediary later grants the money onward, both grants can show up, the foundation's and the intermediary's, if both are reported. This has two implications. The same money can be counted twice where a chain is fully reported; and a regrantor's onward grants to IPOs are visible only when that regrantor reports them, so such grants are captured in part rather than missing entirely. Where both legs appear, the report counts both rather than treating them as the same money, so all percentages are based on grants as recorded.

The scale of possible double-counting is modest and concentrated. The dataset contains roughly 3,400 grantmakers and 4,700 recipients. Of these, about 350 organizations appear on both lists and are likely acting as intermediaries. What matters is the money they grant onward, since only that second step can re-count dollars already recorded: these organizations granted out about $1.49B, and a tighter estimate puts the overlap at around $794M, or just over 9% of recorded volume. Both are upper limits; the real figure is lower, because some of what they grant comes from sources outside this dataset. Most of this sits with a few large climate intermediaries, not within the Indigenous-tagged climate grants the report focuses on. The data does not allow a systematic breakdown by climate focus area, such as mitigation, adaptation, or conservation.

A further limitation concerns how grants are tagged in Candid. A grant carrying both the climate and Indigenous Peoples tags means that Indigenous Peoples are identified as a relevant population or theme, rather than that the full grant amount reaches an IPO. A grant to a large environmental NGO may carry the Indigenous Peoples tag because Indigenous land rights are one component of a broader program. This tag is applied the same way across all recipient types, so it applies equally to every recipient in the analysis.

The tag also sets the boundary of the analysis. Every figure in this report is drawn from the 1,720 tagged grants. Each recipient within that subset was reviewed individually and classified by hand against IFIP's categorization framework for IPOs and Indigenous-Led Funds (Annex A), using organizational information beyond what the grant record itself contains. Applying the same manual review to the roughly 4,700 recipients in the wider climate dataset was beyond the scope of this study, so those recipients carry no IPO classification. The 0.68% figure therefore omits any funding that reached IPOs through grants Candid did not tag.

Finally, whether a funder's money reaches an Indigenous Peoples Organization is measured by the immediate recipient named on each grant, not by where the money ultimately lands. Some intermediaries direct much of their funding onward to Indigenous-led projects but appear here as non-Indigenous recipients because their organizational structure and governance do not meet IPO criteria. Their onward grants are recorded only if they choose to report them. The Tenure Facility is one such case (Section 4.4). Direct-to-IPO rates at the funder level should therefore be read as partial: they show the share of giving that names an IPO as the direct recipient, not the full share that eventually reaches the ground.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Overview

Within philanthropic climate grants tracked by Candid, 4.44% of total grant dollars (approximately $387.1M of $8.72B across 2020 to 2024) was Indigenous-tagged. Disaggregating that subset by recipient type sharpens the picture: 0.68% of total grant dollars ($59.5M across 339 grants) reached confirmed IPOs directly, 3.71% ($323.3M across 1,261 grants) went to non-IPO recipients such as environmental NGOs, foundations and international regrantors, and 0.05% ($4.3M across 120 grants) went to recipients whose IPO status could not be determined.

These shares can be read against two denominators, and the report uses both.

01	Against the full climate portfolio of $8.72B, Indigenous-tagged funding is 4.44% and funding reaching IPOs directly is 0.68%.
02	Against the Indigenous-tagged subset of $387.1M, 15.4% reached IPOs directly, 83.5% went to non-IPO recipients and 1.1% went to recipients whose status could not be determined.

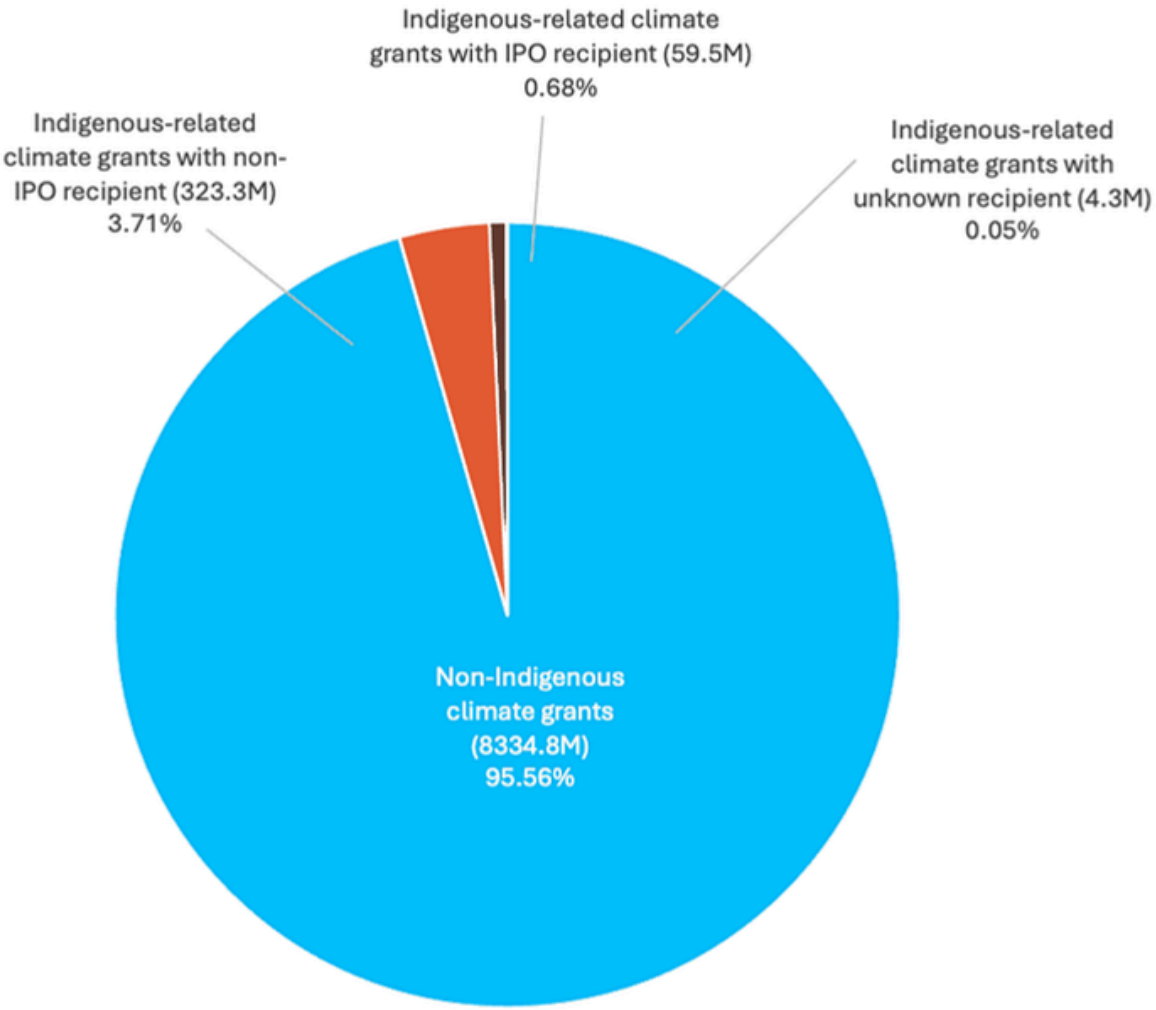
The 0.68% figure states how much of all climate philanthropy reaches IPOs; the 15.4% figure is the direct-to-IPO rate, and it is the comparator used throughout this report when direct rates for individual themes, regions or grantmakers are assessed against the portfolio as a whole.



By grant count, Indigenous-tagged grants represent 7.8% of all climate grants.

Figure 1 sets out the full breakdown. The gap between the 4.44% headline and the 0.68% direct-to-IPO share, and what it reveals about funding architecture, is examined in Section 4.1.

Figure: Recipient organization categorization by IPO status (2020–2024)



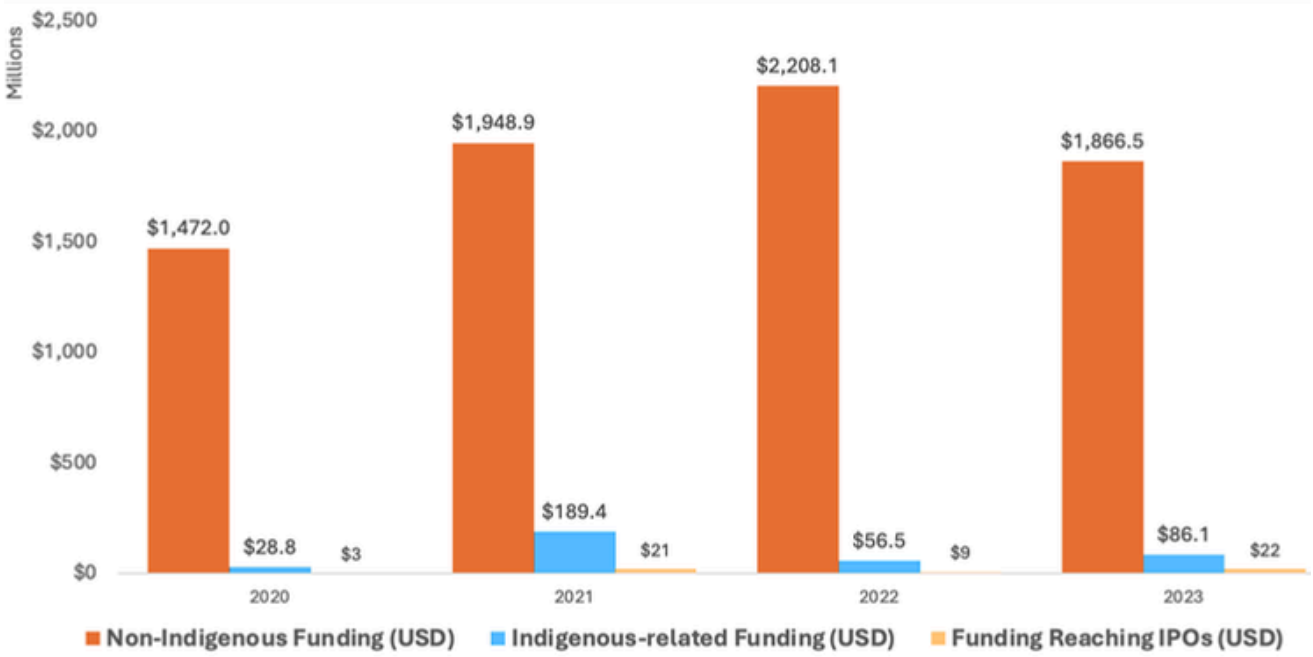
3.2 Year-over-year patterns (2020-2023)

This section covers 2020–2023. 2024 is excluded from the trend analysis because of reporting lag (Section 2.1); for reference, recorded 2024 Indigenous funding was $26.4M across 153 grants.

Total climate philanthropy grew from $1.50B in 2020 to a peak of $2.26B in 2022, then declined to $1.95B in 2023. Indigenous-tagged funding stayed small relative to non-Indigenous funding throughout. From 1.92% ($28.8M) in 2020, the Indigenous share rose to 8.86% ($189.4M) in 2021. It then fell to 2.49% ($56.5M) in 2022 and partially recovered to 4.41% ($86.1M) in 2023.

8The dollar swings did not track grant counts. Indigenous-tagged grant counts moved far less than the dollars and rose in 2022 even as funding fell: 381 grants in 2021, 482 in 2022, 435 in 2023. Average grant size tells the same story, about $497,000 per Indigenous-tagged grant in 2021 against roughly $107,000 in 2020 and $117,000 in 2022. This pattern indicates that the 2021 spike reflects a small number of large grants rather than a sustained shift in funder priorities.

Figure 2: Year-on-year chart, Indigenous-tagged vs. other climate funding (2020–2023)



The 2021 spike was driven by two large philanthropic signatories of the COP26 Forest Tenure Pledge, a joint public-private commitment of $1.7 billion to advance IPLC land tenure rights from 2021 to 2025, whose combined Indigenous-tagged disbursements that year ($152.3M) accounted for 80.4% of total Indigenous-tagged climate funding recorded in 2021. The larger of the two was the Bezos Earth Fund. Both recorded no or minimal Indigenous-tagged grants in subsequent years.

The Bezos Earth Fund records no further Indigenous-focused grants after 2021 and operates without an open grant program, consistent with a one-time pledge-driven disbursement rather than an ongoing funding commitment. The subsequent decline to $56.5M in 2022 reinforces this reading. Tracking of the pledge confirms that large philanthropic commitments to Indigenous climate goals do not automatically translate into resources reaching IPOs directly (Rainforest Foundation Norway & Rights and Resources Initiative, 2025).

3.3 Geographic distribution

The Candid dataset is concentrated in North America. USA and Canada-based grantmakers account for $8.38B of the total tracked climate grant volume and $368.2M (95.11%) of all Indigenous-tagged climate grants. European grantmakers contribute $315.7M in total tracked climate grants but only $13.2M (3.41%) to Indigenous-tagged climate grants. Representation from Global South grantmakers in this dataset is minimal: Latin America and Caribbean-based grantmakers account for $15.2M in total climate grants and $4.7M (1.20%) in Indigenous-tagged climate grants. Grantmakers based in Asia and the Pacific and in Africa together account for less than $8M in total climate grant volume, with Indigenous-tagged climate grant allocations of $1.0M (0.27%) and $40,925 (0.01%) respectively.

Table 2 - Geographic regions of grantmaker organizations, 2020–2024

Grantmaker Region	Climate grant funding (USD)	Climate grants (#)	Indigenous-tagged climate funding (USD)	Indigenous-tagged grants (#)	Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (USD)	Grants reaching IPOs directly (#)
USA and Canada	$8,383,800,947	21,499	$368,223,438	1,623	$58,298,945	303
Latin America and Caribbean	$15,240,178	119	$4,664,040	69	$650,284	29
Europe	$315,728,615	444	$13,187,682	20	$516,540	5
Asia and the Pacific	$6,089,447	51	$1,027,989	7	$42,917	2
Africa	$1,050,555	30	$40,925	1	$0	0
Total	**$8,721,909,742**	**22,143**	**$387,144,074**	**1,720**	**$59,508,686**	**339**

On the recipient side, organizations in the USA and Canada received $309.1M (79.84%) of all tracked Indigenous-tagged climate funding, and recipients in Asia and the Pacific received $34.4M (8.89%). Africa's regional total of $17.4M overstates funding reaching African organizations: roughly $11M of it went to US-based intermediaries running Africa-focused programs, chiefly a single $10M grant to the Rights and Resources Institute. Funding to African-domiciled recipients was approximately $6.5M.

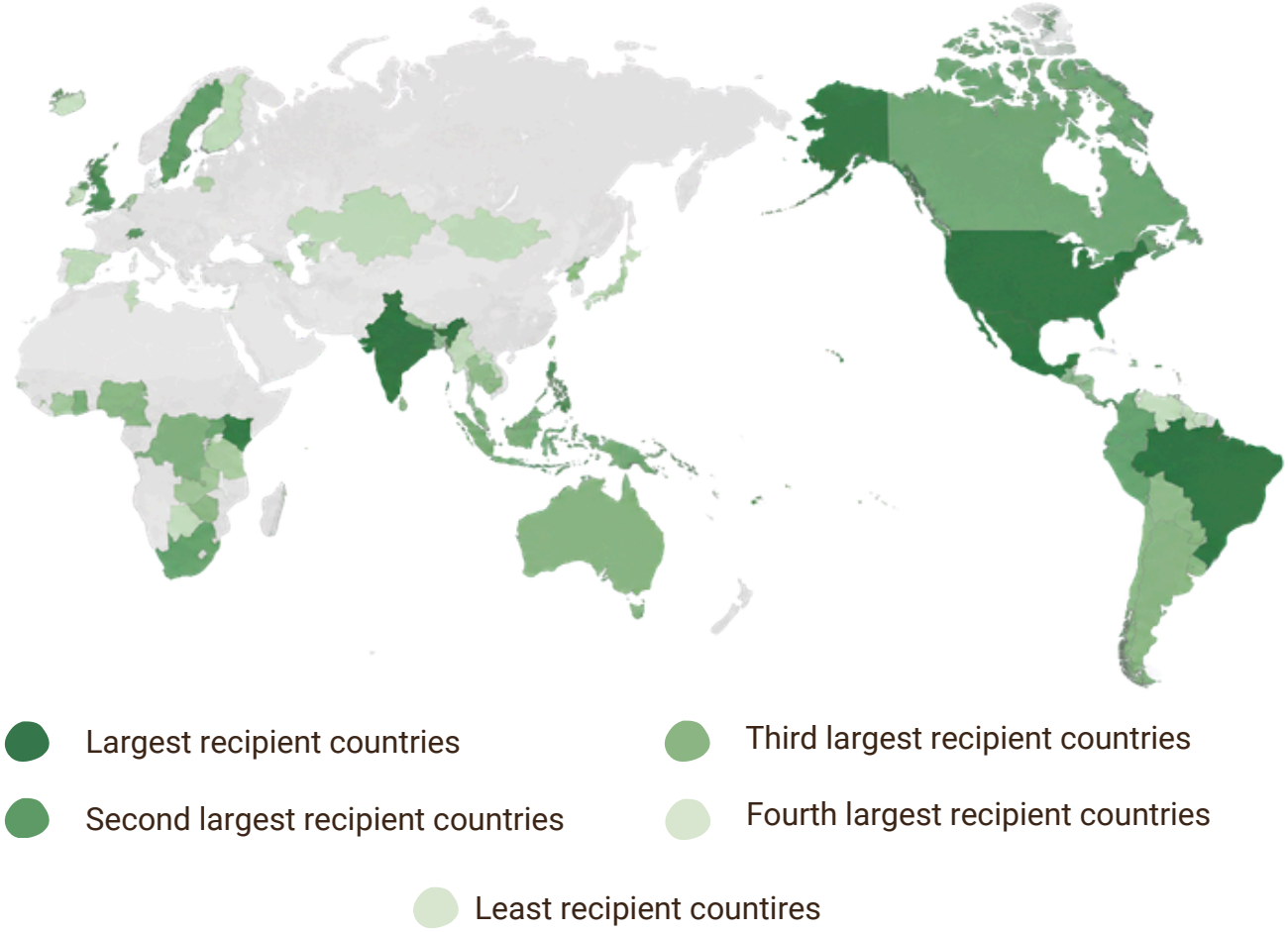
Table 3 - Geographic regions of recipient organizations, 2020–2024

Recipient Region	Climate grant funding (USD)	Climate grants (#)	Indigenous-tagged climate funding (USD)	Indigenous-tagged grants (#)	Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (USD)	Grants reaching IPOs directly (#)
USA and Canada	$6,511,486,440	18,608	$309,101,378	1,243	$51,791,390	237
Latin America and Caribbean	$152,208,971	627	$13,189,351	200	$3,997,817	57
Africa	$531,784,632	975	$17,438,890	114	$2,052,098	28
Asia and the Pacific	$667,631,281	1,090	$34,404,793	137	$1,467,381	16
Europe	$725,341,741	826	$12,889,662	25	$200,000	1
Undetermined Region	$133,456,677	17	$120,000	1	$0	0
Total	**$8,721,909,742**	**22,143**	**$387,144,074**	**1,720**	$59,508,686	**339**



Note: "Undetermined Region" includes entries named "Anonymous Recipient – Location Unspecified," "Multiple Recipients," or with a designated geographic area of "Earth." Regions reflect the program geography recorded for each grant, which can differ from the recipient organization's country of domicile. In particular, the Africa total includes about $11.0M paid to US-based organizations for Africa-focused work (chiefly a $10M grant to the Rights and Resources Institute); funding to African-domiciled recipients was approximately $6.5M.

Figure 3 - Indigenous-tagged climate funding by recipient country, 2020–2024 (USD). Reflects all 1,720 Indigenous-tagged grants ($387M); not limited to funding reaching IPOs directly.



After the United States, the largest recipient countries of Indigenous-tagged climate grants are Brazil ($25.7M), Sweden ($11.05M), India ($4.8M), Peru ($3.0M), and Palau ($2.9M). Sweden's total is driven entirely by a single recipient: the Tenure Facility (Internationella Insamlingsstiftelsen för Mark och Skogsrättigheter). While this purpose-built direct-access mechanism focuses on channeling funds to IPLC-led projects (Section 4.4), its organizational structure and governance do not meet IPO criteria under this report's classification framework. Excluding this single entity, European recipient totals fall substantially. Palau's figure similarly reflects grants to a single non-Indigenous stewardship organization (Section 3.2).

Among grantmakers outside the United States, Oak Foundation (Switzerland, $12.35M) is the largest funder, followed by Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres (Nicaragua, $3.1M) and Fundo Socioambiental CASA (Brazil, $1.2M). The FCAM figure reflects activity through the Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action (GAGGA)—a consortium led by FCAM, Mama Cash, and Both ENDS that integrates feminist and environmental justice funding with a focus on Indigenous and grassroots women's groups.

The presence of feminist funds among non-US grantmakers points to an intersection between feminist philanthropy and climate funding for Indigenous Women. The African Indigenous Women's Organization (AIWO) describes this directly: feminist funds provide more flexible, direct support to grassroots groups than conventional climate philanthropies. The direct-to-IPO pattern in the data is mixed. Several feminist funds route a large share of their Indigenous-tagged climate funding straight to IPOs, with Mama Cash among the highest, while the largest such funders (FCAM and Women's Fund Asia) channel most of theirs through intermediaries. Where high direct rates do occur, they appear to reflect deliberate institutional design rather than coincidence (Section 4.4).

Funding classified as directly reaching IPOs totals just $2.1M in Africa and $1.5M in Asia and the Pacific—small figures relative to each region's Indigenous population and climate exposure. This partly reflects Candid's limited coverage of non-US foundations (Section 2.4), but qualitative evidence from AIWO, AIPP, and IDA indicates a geographic funding deficit.

3.4 Thematic subject groupings

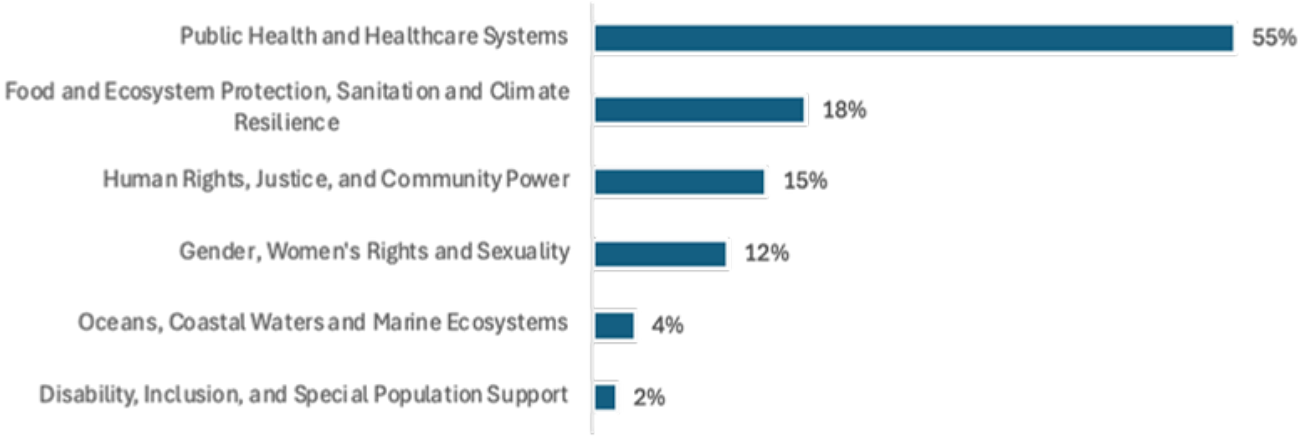
Across all tracked climate grants, funding concentrates in environmental and ecosystem categories. Food and Ecosystem Protection, Sanitation and Climate Resilience accounts for 73.8% of total grant dollars ($6.43B), and Human Rights, Justice, and Community Power for 17.2% ($1.50B). The remaining groupings are smaller: Public Health and Healthcare Systems at 4.0% ($348.0M), Gender, Women's Rights and Sexuality at 3.3% ($287.6M), Oceans, Coastal Waters and Marine Ecosystems at 1.4% ($120.9M), and Disability, Inclusion, and Special Population Support at 0.3% ($28.8M). Figure 4 shows percentage funding reaching IPOs for each grouping.

Disaggregating by recipient type shifts where the money sits within the thematic categories. Although ecosystem grants dominate the overall pool, most Indigenous-tagged climate funding sits elsewhere. Human Rights, Justice, and Community Power holds $240.1M, about 62% of all Indigenous-tagged climate funding. It also accounts for $35.7M of the $59.5M that reached IPOs directly—60% of all IPO-direct funding. Food and Ecosystem Protection accounts for 73.8% of all climate grant dollars but holds only 20.8% of Indigenous-tagged funding ($80.7M), equivalent to 1.3% of its own volume. The largest thematic category by total dollars therefore has one of the smallest Indigenous-tagged shares.

Direct-to-IPO rates also vary by theme, measured as IPO-reaching dollars over Indigenous-tagged climate funding within each grouping. Public Health is highest at 55%, though off a small base ($3.2M of $5.7M), followed by Food and Ecosystem at 18%, Human Rights at 15%, and Gender at 12%. Oceans (3.7%) and Disability (2.1%) sit well below.

Direct-to-IPO rates also vary by theme, measured as IPO-reaching dollars over Indigenous-tagged climate funding within each grouping. Public Health is highest at 55%, though off a small base ($3.2M of $5.7M), followed by Food and Ecosystem at 18%, Human Rights at 15%, and Gender at 12%. Oceans (3.7%) and Disability (2.1%) sit well below.

Figure 4 - Percentage of Indigenous-tagged climate funding directly reaching IPOs, by subject grouping



INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND GENDER-TAGGED FUNDING

Indigenous Women's institutions appear on both sides of the grant: the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI) directed 86.1% of its Indigenous-tagged climate funding to IPOs, and is among the leading IPO recipients in Latin America. Between 2020 and 2024, 356 grants totaling $46.8M carried both an Indigenous Peoples tag and a gender-related population tag (women, girls, or LGBTQ people). The stream grew unevenly over the period: from $6.7M (39 grants) in 2020 to $19.6M (87 grants) in 2023. The 2023 rise came from a small number of large grants rather than broader participation. Grant counts actually peaked in 2022 (133 grants) at a lower dollar total ($8.6M), so the final-year jump reflects larger average grant size.

The largest recipients are predominantly non-Indigenous regrantors and fiscal sponsors — organizations that provide legal and administrative infrastructure for projects without independent nonprofit status—together accounting for over $27M of this subset. This is consistent with the report's broader finding (Section 2.4) that Candid records the named recipient rather than any subsequent re-granting, so a fiscal sponsor's presence in the data does not by itself indicate whether funds reached Indigenous-led groups downstream.

Each grant is counted in only one category. Disability and Gender are assigned by population tag and take priority over subject-based categories, meaning a grant whose main subject is ecosystem protection but whose population tag identifies women or girls is counted under Gender, not Food and Ecosystem Protection. The percentage shares for these two categories therefore reflect who a grant targets, not only what it funds.

One case illustrates how far the recorded recipient can sit from a frontline group: a $4.5M pair of grants earmarked for a regranting fund that, by its own description, supports organizations led by Black women, Indigenous Women, and women of color in the United States. The path runs from foundation to fiscal sponsor to hosted regranting fund to frontline grantee, but Candid records only the first step, so whether any of this $4.5M reaches an IPO is not visible in this dataset.

On the grantmaker side, the most active funders include Oak Foundation ($10.0M), the MacArthur Foundation ($4.5M), the Ford Foundation ($3.8M), the Hopper-Dean Foundation ($3.5M), and Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres ($3.1M). Together these five account for $24.9M of gender-tagged Indigenous-tagged climate funding, of which under 7% went to IPOs; the rest went to non-IPO intermediaries such as fiscal sponsors and regranting funds. Across the full gender-tagged subset, $5.4M (11.6%) reached confirmed IPOs directly. That is below the 15.4% direct rate across all Indigenous-tagged funding, so gender-tagged grants reach IPOs at a lower rate than Indigenous-tagged climate funding overall, despite representing 12% of it. While this metric does not capture onward downstream sub-grants made through intermediaries, it indicates that high volume in gender-tagged grants does not translate to direct, immediate access for IPOs.

Women's Fund Asia uses a different funding model than the non-Indigenous intermediaries that receive most funding in this subset. While Women’s Fund Asia reports its grants anonymously, making them unclassifiable by IPO status in the Candid dataset, its grant descriptions target grassroots Indigenous Women’s organizations in Southeast Asia and Africa. This reflects a more targeted approach to regional and thematic grantmaking than the broader conservation mandates of larger intermediaries.



DISABILITY AND INTERSECTING VULNERABILITIES

Disability, Inclusion, and Special Population Support accounts for $28.8M (0.3% of total grant dollars), of which $2.03M across 35 grants is Indigenous-tagged climate funding. Because these counts capture only grants where disability was explicitly tagged, they likely understate the true intersection of Indigenous identity, disability, and climate vulnerability. Within this small pool, distribution skews toward small-grant funders. Global Greengrants Fund accounts for 13 of the 35 Indigenous-tagged climate grants, at a combined $144K, reflecting a grassroots small-grant strategy rather than sustained institutional investment. Possibility Labs ($1.0M) and Women's Fund Asia ($459K) provided the two largest individual grants. A small number of funders appear in both subsets. The largest grant at the intersection of Indigenous Women and disability is a $459K grant whose population tags include both women and girls and people with disabilities, reflecting the overlapping vulnerabilities these categories represent. Across the funders tracked here, the intersection of Indigenous Women and disability, among the most structurally marginalized groups in climate vulnerability, receives limited attention.

OCEANS, COASTAL WATERS AND MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

The 1.4% overall share for ocean and marine themes is low relative to the climate exposure of Pacific and coastal Indigenous communities, whose territories, food systems, and governance are threatened by sea-level rise and ocean acidification. Within the grouping, $11.7M of ocean and marine funding is Indigenous-tagged, and $429,668 of that reached confirmed IPOs, a direct rate of 3.7%. That is roughly a quarter of the 15.4% direct rate across all Indigenous-tagged funding, and the absolute amount is small for a region facing severe climate risk. The $2.9M recorded flowing to Palau-based recipients across 28 grants goes entirely to a single US-headquartered international NGO which is a non-Indigenous organization. The dataset files these grants under Palau by program location, but the recipient is US-based, so even the largest Pacific country line in this dataset does not represent direct funding to a Pacific Indigenous group.

DESERT ECOSYSTEMS AND THE INVISIBILITY OF DRYLAND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

If ocean themes are underfunded relative to climate needs, desert and dryland ecosystems barely register. Across the 1,720 Indigenous-tagged climate funding, only one is verifiably tied to a desert region: a $13,000 grant for work on the Navajo Reservation. "Deserts" appears as a subject tag on just one other grant, to the same

recipient, applied at the organization level rather than to the grant itself. Australia illustrates the gap. Indigenous Protected Areas, declared and managed by Traditional Owner groups, together make up more than half of Australia's National Reserve System (DCCEEW, 2026). The Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA), the peak body supporting Indigenous ranger groups and land-management organizations across Australia's desert regions, does not appear as a recipient anywhere in the Candid dataset. As IDA has noted, funders nationally and globally lack awareness of where Australia's desert regions are and how severely climate change impacts them, despite scientific evidence that deserts are among the world's most climate-affected ecosystems.

3.5 Direct-funding rates by grantmaker

The share of Indigenous-tagged climate funding that reaches an IPO directly varies across the full possible range, from zero at six of the twenty-five largest US grantmakers to 100% at several others. The rate measures one narrow thing: within a grantmaker's grants tagged as both climate-related and Indigenous-tagged, the share that names a confirmed IPO as the immediate recipient. It is not a measure of a funder's overall support for Indigenous Peoples, which extends beyond climate-tagged grants and beyond the 2020 to 2024 window. Because it is calculated the same way for every grantmaker, the variation is a feature of how each funder distributes rather than an artifact of the method.

Mandate and giving structure shape this variation more than size does. Across the top twenty-five US grantmakers the median rate is 12.2% and the weighted average is 14.6%, close to the portfolio-wide figure of about 15%. Ten of the twenty-five fall below 5%, and six record no direct grants to an IPO at all. The highest rates belong to funders with explicit commitments to Indigenous leadership or to trust-based, unrestricted giving; some of these are small funders where a single grant moves the rate, but not all, and a $5M portfolio appears at 100%. Large generalist climate funders and donor-advised-fund sponsors cluster at the low end, though a few large foundations are exceptions. Where rates are lowest, Indigenous-tagged giving runs mainly through non-Indigenous intermediaries rather than to IPOs directly (Table 4).

Table 4: Top 25 US grantmakers - share of Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (Candid 2020 to 2024)

#	Grantmaker	Indigenous-tagged climate funding (USD)	Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (USD)	% of Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly	% of all climate funding reaching IPOs
1	Bezos Earth Fund	$131,000,000	$16,000,000	12.20%	1.90%
2	Ford Foundation	$31,062,500	$1,600,000	5.20%	2.30%
3	Silicon Valley Community Foundation	$12,260,000	$20,000	0.20%	0.00%
4	William & Flora Hewlett Foundation	$10,917,000	$2,065,000	18.90%	0.40%
5	MacArthur Foundation	$9,647,500	$0	0%	0.00%
6	Doris Duke Charitable Foundation	$7,937,000	$5,301,000	66.80%	13.30%
7	Fidelity Charitable	$7,537,992	$0	0%	0.00%
8	Waverley Street Foundation	$6,800,000	$2,800,000	41.20%	1.30%
9	David and Lucile Packard Foundation	$5,965,000	$950,000	15.90%	0.40%
10	Global Greengrants Fund	$5,250,535	$1,384,479	26.40%	11.90%
11	MacKenzie Scott	$5,000,000	$5,000,000	100%	3.20%

#	Grantmaker	Indigenous-tagged climate funding (USD)	Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (USD)	% of Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly	% of all climate funding reaching IPOs
12	Resources Legacy Fund	$4,431,815	$891,090	20.10%	2.50%
13	Omidyar Network Fund	$4,013,485	$0	0%	0.00%
14	DAFgiving360	$3,787,981	$51,100	1.30%	0.10%
15	Hopper-Dean Foundation	$3,500,664	$0	0%	0.00%
16	National Philanthropic Trust	$3,384,650	$65,000	1.90%	0.00%
17	Libra Foundation	$3,375,000	$850,000	25.20%	4.30%
18	Skoll Foundation	$3,150,000	$0	0%	0.00%
19	Meyer Memorial Trust	$3,021,407	$405,727	13.40%	6.00%
20	James Irvine Foundation	$2,900,000	$0	0%	0.00%
21	Amalgamated Charitable Foundation	$2,762,500	$580,000	21.00%	4.50%
22	Christensen Fund	$2,625,000	$1,200,000	45.70%	42.80%
23	Foundation to Promote Open Society	$2,575,000	$300,000	11.70%	0.50%
24	Climate Justice Resilience Fund	$2,560,000	$1,060,000	41.40%	10.20%
25	Vanguard Charitable	$2,276,271	$57,000	2.50%	0.10%

Three caveats matter when reading these rates.

VISIBILITY

Visibility: A near-zero rate does not mean IPOs received nothing. Where money moves through an intermediary, Candid records the onward grant only if the intermediary reports it (Section 2.4). One purpose-built direct-access mechanism illustrates this: it appears here as a non-Indigenous recipient because of its organizational form, but reports passing the majority of its funding onward to IPLC-led projects (Section 4.4), so the rates of the funders behind it may understate what ultimately reaches the ground.

TIME

Time: The rates capture only grants recorded in 2020–2024, not longer-term investment in Indigenous-led infrastructure that takes years to surface as direct grants (Section 4.4).

SMALL SAMPLES

Small samples: Where a funder's Indigenous-tagged set is small, one decision drives the rate: a single grant to an IPO reads as 100%, a few grants to intermediaries as 0%.

Read together, these caveats mean the rates are best used comparatively rather than as absolute performance measures. The top twenty-five funders account for 71.7% of all Indigenous-tagged dollars and 68.2% of all dollars reaching IPOs directly, so the pattern in this table drives most of the dataset-wide result.

The same patterns hold outside the United States (Table 5). The highest rates again belong to mission-driven funders, particularly feminist and women's funds, several of which direct all of their Indigenous-tagged climate funding to IPOs, while the largest non-US funder by volume directs almost none. The 100% rates sit on small amounts, so they reflect intent more than scale. As before, a few funders report every grant anonymously; their rates cannot be determined and should not be read as zero.

Table 5: All grantmakers outside the USA - share of Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (Candid 2020 to 2024)

#	Grantmaker	Location	Indigenous-tagged climate funding (USD)	Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (USD)	% of Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (USD)	% of all climate funding reaching IPOs
1	Oak Foundation	Switzerland	$12,350,000	$0	0.80%	0.00%
2	Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres	Nicaragua	$3,132,168	$191,715	6.10%	1.90%
3	Fundo Socioambiental CASA	Brazil	$1,158,942	$117,514	10.10%	2.60%
4	Women's Fund Asia	Sri Lanka	$971,461	$0	n/a*	0.00%
5	Mama Cash	Netherlands	$554,550	$516,540	93.10%	20.20%
6	International Indigenous Women's Forum	Peru	$229,375	$197,500	86.10%	86.10%
7	Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation	United Kingdom	$109,216	$0	0%	0.00%
8	Solberga Foundation	United Kingdom	$90,136	$0	0%	0.00%
9	Voice	Netherlands	$83,780	$0	0%	0.00%
10	Fondo Semillas	Mexico	$82,351	$82,351	100%	78.10%

#	Grantmaker	Location	Indigenous-tagged climate funding (USD)	Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (USD)	% of Indigenous-tagged climate funding reaching IPOs directly (USD)	% of all climate funding reaching IPOs
11	Equality Fund	Canada	$70,866	$35,433	50%	25.30%
12	ELAS Fundo de Investimento Social	Brazil	$41,204	$41,204	100%	57.10%
13	Global Fund for Community Foundations	South Africa	$40,925	$0	0%	0.00%
14	NAB Foundation	Australia	$25,904	$25,904	100%	54.00%
15	Urgent Action Fund for Latin America and the Caribbean	Colombia	$20,000	$20,000	100%	66.70%
16	Ian Potter Foundation	Australia	$17,013	$17,013	100%	0.90%
17	Frida: The Young Feminist Fund	Canada	$15,000	$0	n/a*	0.00%
18	Equity Trustees	Australia	$13,611	$0	0%	0.00%



Recipients reported anonymously; IPO status cannot be determined and should not be read as 0%.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The 4.44% headline and the 0.68% direct rate

The gap documented in Section 3.1 matters less for its size than for what it indicates about how climate funding is structured. Philanthropic funders are directing resources toward Indigenous programs: across 2020–2024, Indigenous-tagged grants account for 4.44% of climate funding in the dataset ($387.1 million of $8.72 billion). That figure measures stated relevance. But only 15.4% of those Indigenous-tagged dollars name an IPO as the recipient, and 83.5% is received and managed by non-Indigenous organizations. By value, the share of climate funding that reaches an IPO directly is 0.68% ($59.5 million). The headline figure is therefore roughly six and a half times the share that names an IPO as recipient.

This gap is best read as a measure of funding architecture, meaning where resources land institutionally, rather than as an accounting of funds intended for, but diverted away from, Indigenous Peoples. As Section 2.4 notes, Indigenous tagging in Candid indicates relevance rather than exclusive purpose. The 4.44% is an upper bound, since tagged grants count in full; the 0.68% may understate IPO funding, since it omits untagged grants and unreported onward grants. What the ratio between them indicates is that most philanthropic climate funding associated with Indigenous Peoples is received and managed by non-Indigenous organizations rather than by IPOs themselves.

One response is that intermediaries pass a meaningful share of these funds on to IPOs downstream, which the recipient coding used here would not capture. The dataset cannot settle that question, since it records the named recipient and not any subsequent regranting. But the COP26 Forest Tenure Pledge, explicitly designed to support Indigenous land tenure and channeled in significant part through international NGOs and UN agencies, tests the assumption directly: over its first four years it disbursed $1.86 billion, of which around 6% reached IPLC organizations directly. The finding this report supports is narrower but defensible: at the point of the recorded grant, the majority of Indigenous-tagged climate funding does not name an IPO as recipient. This is consistent with intermediation through NGOs, conventional foundations and multilateral bodies, though the dataset alone cannot establish how much that intermediation dilutes onward flows.

The organizations interviewed for this report make that gap concrete. AIPP represents Indigenous member organizations across Asia and has been active in regional climate advocacy at the UNFCCC and CBD for close to two decades, yet it lacks the flexible funding to support staff and members attending the global climate events where Indigenous rights are negotiated. AIWO works with grassroots Indigenous Women across Africa and relies mostly on philanthropic small-grants programs, with government bilateral and multilateral sources largely out of reach. IDA, the Indigenous Desert Alliance, is a peak body supporting Indigenous ranger groups and land-management organizations across Australia's desert regions, whose members care for roughly two dozen dedicated Indigenous Protected Areas, yet it draws limited philanthropic or international support beyond government ranger-program funding.



> "Funding Indigenous movement goes beyond being a sectoral choice, it is the most powerful investment across self-determination, climate, biodiversity and human rights. When Indigenous movements are strong, policymakers listen and that is how lasting policies for Indigenous Peoples are made."
> **-Lakpa Nuri Sherpa, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)**

The 0.68% figure should be read against the ecological significance of the lands involved. At least 36% of the world's intact forest landscapes are found within Indigenous Peoples' lands (Fa et al., 2020); deforestation rates inside Brazil's Amazon Indigenous territories have run at a fraction of those in surrounding areas (Silva-Junior et al., 2023); and in Australia, Indigenous Protected Areas make up more than half of the National Reserve System (DCCEEW 2026). As negotiations advance toward the NCQG's $1.3 trillion annual target by 2035, this 0.68% figure establishes the baseline from which structural reform must proceed (UNFCCC 2024).

4.2 Geographic concentration and its consequences

The finding that 95.1% of Indigenous-tagged grant dollars, and 96.1% of all tracked climate grant dollars, originate from USA and Canada-based foundations reflects the composition of Candid's database, but it also reflects the geography of established philanthropic relationships.

Asia-Pacific recipients received $34.4M and African recipients $17.4M in Indigenous-tagged climate grants. While not negligible, these figures are strikingly low relative to the scale of Indigenous-managed ecosystems and climate vulnerability in both regions. In Africa, the Indigenous Information Network (Kenya, $561K) and Mainyoito Pastoralists Integrated Development Organization ($260K) are among the few confirmed IPO recipients in the dataset. AIWO, working with nomadic pastoralists across Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger and with hunter-gatherer communities in the DRC, reports structural exclusion from most philanthropic funding channels: invitation-only application practices, the absence of established relationships with large donors, and some funders' explicit avoidance of regions with security risks—precisely where the need is most acute.

The aggregate regional figures obscure sharper country-level patterns. Sweden's position as the second-largest non-US recipient at $11.05M is driven almost entirely by a single organization, the Tenure Facility (Internationella Insamlingsstiftelsen för Mark och

Skogsrättigheter). Excluding this outlier, European recipient totals fall substantially, reinforcing the picture of minimal direct funding outside the Americas. In Latin America, Brazil and Peru dominate at $25.7M and $3M respectively, with Conselho Indígena de Roraima ($1.6M) and Foro Internacional de Mujeres Indígenas ($456K) among the leading confirmed IPO recipients, though the majority of both countries' totals still flows through non-Indigenous organizations.

Country-level gaps elsewhere are pronounced. India, the third-largest recipient country outside the US at $4.8M, directs no confirmed grant dollars to IPOs directly—a significant omission given India's estimated 104 million Adivasi people. In Southeast Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines together receive $1.4M, with under a third reaching IPOs, despite hosting some of Asia's largest Indigenous populations. Central and West Africa are functionally absent: the DRC receives 14 grants but only $10K goes directly to IPOs, while Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger do not appear as recipient countries at all. Across the four Pacific island nations most exposed to sea-level rise—Fiji, Samoa, Kiribati, and the Solomon Islands—combined Indigenous-tagged climate funding totaled just $371K across 12 grants, of which only $20,000 reached an IPO directly: a single grant to one organization in the Solomon Islands.

In Australia, IDA's experience illustrates a related but distinct dynamic: not just regional exclusion, but ecosystem exclusion. Climate funding concentrates on coastal ecosystems and the Great Barrier Reef, leaving desert regions underserved despite their outsized conservation role (Section 3.4) and their frontline exposure to wildfire, invasive species, and temperature extremes. The communities managing more than half of Australia's protected area network remain largely invisible to both national and international funders.

> "Funders both at national and global level lack awareness of where Australia's desert regions are or how severely climate change impacts them despite scientific evidence that deserts are among the most affected ecosystems. Yet more than 40% of Australia's Indigenous Protected Areas contributing to the CBD's 30x30 Framework are located in desert regions."
> **-Sam Murray, CEO, Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA)**

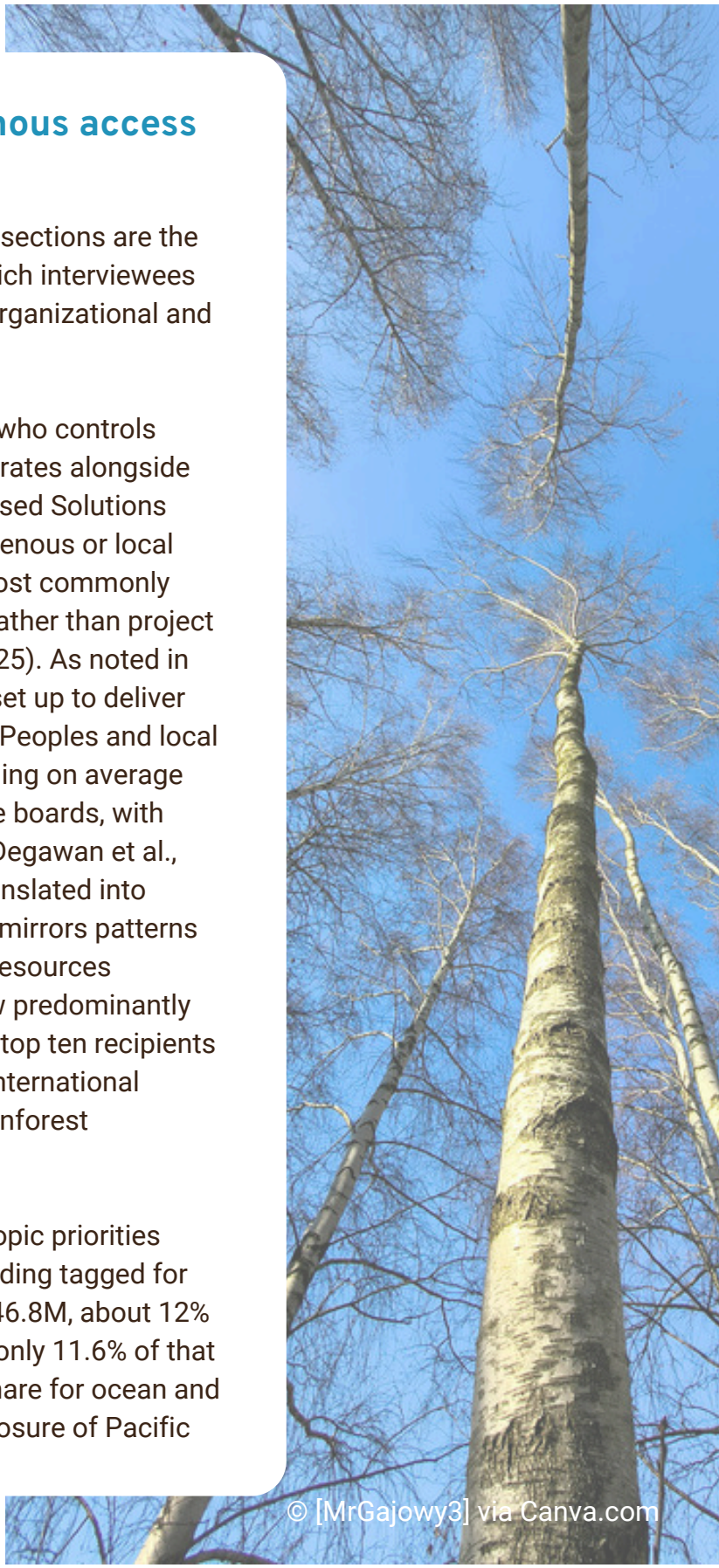
This concentration pattern mirrors findings from ClimateWorks Foundation (2024), which found that from 2019–2023, the United States and Europe received 60% of tracked climate funding directed to specific countries or regions, while Africa, Asia-Oceania, and Latin America received an estimated 20%. The philanthropic channel examined here reproduces a similar geographic imbalance at a smaller scale.

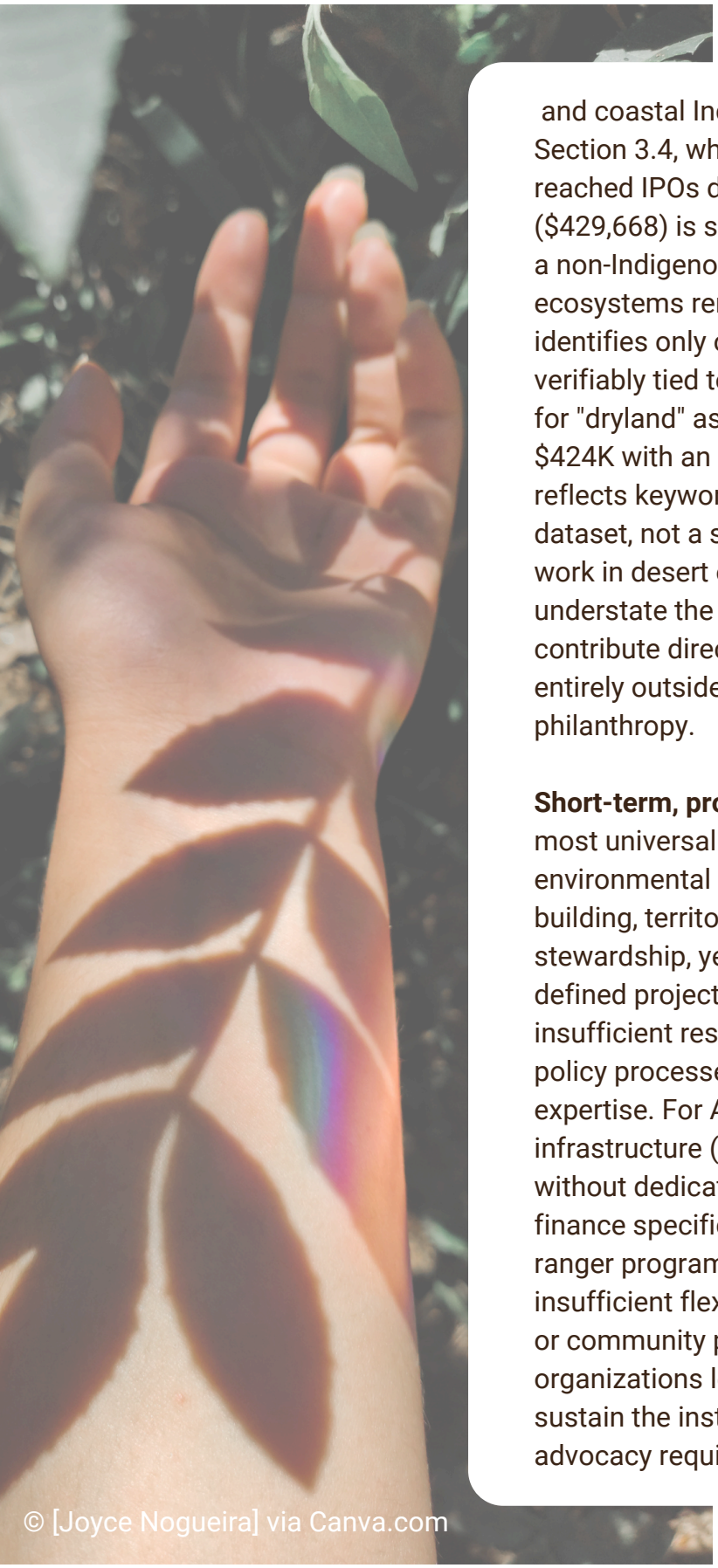
4.3 Structural barriers to Indigenous access and control

The quantitative patterns detailed in previous sections are the direct result of specific structural barriers, which interviewees identified consistently across highly diverse organizational and geographic contexts.

Governance exclusion (Respect) determines who controls resources, beyond who can access them. operates alongside these access barriers. Research on Nature-based Solutions initiatives found that while 74% reported Indigenous or local community participation, that participation most commonly extended to implementation and monitoring rather than project design or decision-making (Forest Trends, 2025). As noted in Section 1.1, preliminary analysis of 16 funds set up to deliver nature and biodiversity finance to Indigenous Peoples and local communities found IPLC representatives holding on average 11% of seats on those funds' core governance boards, with most boards holding one such seat or none (Degawan et al., 2022). Representation at that level has not translated into control over resource flows. The Candid data mirrors patterns documented in ODA flows: in both channels, resources nominally directed at Indigenous Peoples flow predominantly through conventional intermediaries, with the top ten recipients for the largest bilateral donors consisting of international NGOs, UN agencies, and consulting firms (Rainforest Foundation Norway, 2021).

Thematic gaps (Respect) in current philanthropic priorities leave specific communities underfunded. Funding tagged for both Indigenous Peoples and gender totals $46.8M, about 12% of all Indigenous-tagged climate funding, but only 11.6% of that reaches an IPO directly. Similarly, the 1.4% share for ocean and marine themes fails to reflect the climate exposure of Pacific


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and coastal Indigenous communities. As established in Section 3.4, while 3.7% of the ocean and marine subset reached IPOs directly, the absolute dollar amount ($429,668) is small, and the entire Palau allocation flowed to a non-Indigenous organization. Desert and dryland ecosystems remain even less visible: while Section 3.4 identifies only one Indigenous-tagged climate grant verifiably tied to a desert region, a broader keyword search for "dryland" as a subject tag returns nine grants totaling $424K with an Indigenous population tag. This wider count reflects keyword-based subject tagging in the underlying dataset, not a systematic review of which organizations work in desert or dryland regions, so both figures likely understate the true picture. This leaves communities that contribute directly to the CBD's 30x30 targets almost entirely outside the reach of international climate philanthropy.

Short-term, project-based funding (Relationships) is the most universally cited constraint. Indigenous climate and environmental work are rooted in long-term movement building, territorial governance, and collective ecosystem stewardship, yet most available funding is tied to narrowly defined projects with limited timelines. For AIPP, this means insufficient resources to sustain participation in the global policy processes where it has spent decades building expertise. For AIWO, it means core institutional infrastructure (staff, administration, office space) remains without dedicated support because funders prefer to finance specific project activities. For IDA, government ranger program funding, while essential, provides insufficient flexibility to respond to emerging climate threats or community priorities. The practical consequence is that organizations leading climate work on the ground cannot sustain the institutional capacity that effective, long-term advocacy requires.

Administrative and structural barriers (Responsibility) compound this issue. Complex application procedures, rigid reporting frameworks, invitation-only funding calls, and English-language documentation requirements restrict access for grassroots organizations with limited administrative capacity. For remote desert communities in Australia's Northern Territory, Western Australia, and South Australia, where English is often a second or third language, extensive written grant proposals operate as a structural disadvantage rather than a neutral administrative requirement. For AIWO's member organizations in Central and West Africa, invitation-only practices function as an exclusion mechanism before any application can even be made: without established relationships with large donors, organizations cannot enter the process regardless of their track record.

These barriers do not only operate on the applicant's side. Even funders with an explicit commitment to direct IPO funding, such as the Macdoch Foundation, which has made support for Indigenous-led organizations a formal criterion of its grantmaking strategy, must navigate internal governance and board requirements that shape where and how funding can be allocated. Balancing responsible due diligence with trust-based partnerships is a recognized tension: funding processes designed to manage institutional risk can be experienced as deeply burdensome by the emerging IPOs they are meant to support. In Redistribution terms, this is a question of who carries risk: current practice protects the funder's institution and passes the cost to IPOs. This requires deliberate reform of the due diligence and governance frameworks that currently apply the same administrative standards to grassroots IPOs as they do to massive, international NGOs.

Visibility gaps (Relationships, Reciprocity) on the funder side reinforce all of these structural barriers. The Macdoch Foundation notes that identifying Indigenous-led organizations working at the intersection of land stewardship, food systems, and climate adaptation is itself a challenge: many partnerships emerge only through referrals from existing partners rather than through systematic outreach. Organizations outside established philanthropic networks, particularly those in remote geographies or working in under-supported sectors, remain effectively invisible to funders regardless of the quality or scale of their work.

> "Many Indigenous organizations are overlooked due to a lack of direct relationships with funders. Funders having deeper engagement, on-the-ground presence, and well-trained staff with an understanding of Indigenous values are essential to prevent the dismissal of applications from diverse cultural and geographic contexts."
> **- Lucy Mulenkei, President, African Indigenous Women's Organization (AIWO)**

4.4 Funding approaches that shift power and resources

The variation documented in Section 3.5, ranging from 0% to 100% across both US and non-US grantmakers, suggests that alternative, high-direct-allocation funding architectures are viable. Some of these figures rest on a small number of grants and should be read as illustrative rather than representative of an organization's broader funding pattern (Section 3.5). Qualitative evidence from the interviews identifies the design logic behind high-direct-allocation funding approaches in practice.

Long-term trust-based partnerships form the common foundation. For example, the Ford Foundation's Brazil office has maintained continuous engagement with Indigenous movements over decades, creating spaces for dialogue between Indigenous movements, international regrantors, and funders. Building the Podaäli Fund, an Indigenous-led territorial fund connected to COIAB (Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira) that redistributes resources directly to Indigenous communities, required nearly ten years of sustained institutional investment to develop the required organizational and operational capacity. This timeline illustrates the caveat established in Section 3.5: genuine movement-building often requires long-term structural investments that do not immediately register as direct-to-IPO disbursements in a short-term dataset. The parallel investment in APIB as a national coordination body reflects the same logic: strengthening the organizational infrastructure that elevates Indigenous movements as critical democratic actors, rather than merely funding isolated projects.

> "We are living in a moment of transition where we are moving towards supporting Indigenous Peoples Organizations more directly while also learning alongside long-standing partners and larger NGOs who support Indigenous Peoples Organizations to ensure more Indigenous leadership, transparency, and shared opportunities for funding."
> **- Erika Yamada, Senior Program Officer, Ford Foundation Brazil**

Indigenous-led funds as structural solutions address the intermediation bottleneck by placing decision-making authority explicitly within Indigenous institutions. IPAS, the Indigenous Peoples of Asia Solidarity Fund, was established in 2023 as an independent regional Indigenous-led fund. AIPP helped convene it and was represented on its initial board. With Ford Foundation's support, IPAS made 21 grants across six countries totaling $125,000 as of 2024, a small but structurally significant demonstration of what Indigenous-led regranting can deliver with appropriate seed funding. Indigenous-led funds such as IPAS

redistribute decision-making and grantmaking infrastructure as well as money. On a much larger scale, the Tenure Facility reports directing 75% of its funding to IPLC-led projects. That figure is self-reported and has not been independently verified against this dataset (Section 2.4), but if it holds it indicates what purpose-built intermediaries can achieve.

Direct funding as an explicit criterion is the clearest funder-side articulation of the design choices underlying the high-rate outliers. The Macdoch Foundation has made direct support for IPOs a formal requirement of its grantmaking strategy, rather than funding non-IPOs to deliver Indigenous programs. Combined with untied core funding and catalytic investment capital directed toward Indigenous-led funds and emerging Indigenous businesses, this approach reflects a recognition that economic participation and grant funding together support long-term institutional development in ways that short-term, project-based support cannot.

> "We have increasingly come to understand that transformational change will come through wealth creation, economic empowerment, and economic development. Charitable giving and grants are important, but lasting change will also depend on economic participation. That has now become much more central to our First Nations funding strategy ".
>
> **- Michelle Gortan, CEO, Macdoch Foundation**

Consortium-based grantmaking occupies a middle ground worth noting for funders designing transition strategies. AIPP's climate and policy research programs have operated on a consortium basis, enabling access to longer-term funding cycles while maintaining Indigenous leadership over program content. This model, where Indigenous organizations partner with larger, conventional NGOs to access funding they could not reach independently, does not entirely resolve the structural intermediation problem. However, it preserves agency within current funding constraints and represents a viable interim approach while true, purpose-built direct-access mechanisms are developed.

4.5 Opportunities in the next climate finance cycle

The NCQG will shape the climate finance architecture for decades, and the next negotiating cycle is the point at which its direct-access provisions are set. At COP30 in Belém, the Forest Tenure Funders Group announced a renewed five-year Forest and Land Tenure Pledge of $1.8 billion for 2026 to 2030, explicitly committing to increase the share of direct, long-term and flexible financing for Indigenous Peoples, local communities and Afro-descendant communities across an expanded range of ecosystems. Governments separately endorsed the Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment, which sets a collective target to recognize

160 million hectares of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' lands by 2030. Several funders whose direct-to-IPO rates are documented in this report, including the Ford Foundation, Oak Foundation, the Bezos Earth Fund and Re:wild, are among the pledge endorsers. Neither pledge created a pooled fund or a central allocation mechanism; each donor funds independently against its own mandate, which is part of why direct-access outcomes vary so widely.

The COP26 Pledge disbursed $1.86 billion over its first four years, of which around 6% reached IPLC organizations directly. The 0.68% baseline established in this report gives advocates a parallel measure for the philanthropic channel, and a way to test whether the renewed pledge produces structural change or reproduces the same intermediation patterns.

Three specific opportunities follow from this analysis:

01

Globalize geographic equity: The dataset's heavy concentration in the Americas identifies clear geographic priorities for strategic investment. Indigenous communities in Africa and the Asia-Pacific face acute climate vulnerability yet access minimal support through the channels tracked in this database. Whether this gap reflects a genuine absence of philanthropic support or is an artifact of Candid's limited coverage of non-US foundations requires further investigation. Either scenario has implications for equity in climate finance that funders and advocates should address ahead of COP31.

02

Establish collective direct-funding standards: The variation in direct-to-IPO rates among top grantmakers creates an opening for sector-wide benchmarks. The evidence that some funders achieve 100% allocation while others direct 0% of their visible initial disbursements to IPOs, several of these figures reflecting a single grant rather than a sustained pattern, contrasted against the Tenure Facility's 75% benchmark (Section 4.4), suggests that high rates are achievable when funders design specifically for direct access. Climate philanthropists, including COP30 Pledge endorsers, should use this moment to establish shared commitments around direct-funding targets, transparent tracking, and Indigenous-led governance of climate funds.

03

Close intersectional gaps: The thematic concentration in broad ecosystem categories leaves some intersections underfunded. Indigenous Women-led and feminist funds show some of the highest direct rates in the dataset, yet gender-tagged funding reaches IPOs at 11.6% and ocean/marine funding at 3.7%. Closing these gaps means funding Indigenous Women's organizations and funds directly and including them in the governance of climate funds.

5. CONCLUSION

This analysis of philanthropic climate funding to Indigenous Peoples between 2020 and 2024 documents both the scale of investment and the distance between that investment and actual resource access. An estimated $387M, or 4.44% of tracked climate philanthropy, was tagged as Indigenous. Only 0.68% of total climate grant dollars, $59.5M across 339 grants, reached confirmed IPOs directly. The remainder went to non-IPO recipients, mainly environmental NGOs, foundations and international regrantors, with 1.1% going to recipients whose IPO status could not be determined. The gap between what climate philanthropy reports as Indigenous-tagged and what IPOs actually receive is the central finding this report asks advocates, funders, and policymakers to act upon.

The structural patterns driving this gap are clear. Geographic concentration leaves Indigenous communities in Africa and the Asia-Pacific managing critical ecosystems while accessing minimal philanthropic support. The routing of resources through conventional intermediaries dilutes funding before it ever reaches the communities it is meant to serve. Thematic gaps compound both. Gender-tagged Indigenous-tagged funding totalled $46.8M, of which $5.4M reached IPOs directly; in ocean and marine funding, the direct-to-IPO rate is 3.7%. In each case the organizations closest to climate-stressed ecosystems are the least resourced. These are architectural outcomes rather than the sum of individual funding decisions.



Against these patterns, qualitative evidence from AIPP, AIWO, IDA, Ford Foundation Brazil, and the Macdoch Foundation identifies what genuine reform requires: long-term, trust-based partnerships that extend beyond project cycles; investment in the ecosystem of Indigenous organizations and Indigenous-led financial mechanisms that place decision-making authority explicitly within Indigenous institutions; unrestricted core funding that sustains decades-long advocacy; and the deliberate design of purpose-built, direct-access funding structures.

Purpose-built direct-access mechanisms report direct allocation rates far above the philanthropic average, and Indigenous-Led Funds and feminist funds in this dataset show consistently high direct-to-IPO rates. Together these indicate that high direct allocation follows from deliberate design rather than from scale or intent. The COP26 Pledge, which delivered around 6% of its disbursements directly to IPLC organizations over four years, shows equally clearly that direct access does not happen by default.

The 0.68% figure is not a verdict on the intentions of climate philanthropy. It is a baseline, and a more useful one for advocacy than the 4.44% headline alone, because it shows where the funding actually lands. As negotiations advance toward COP31 and the NCQG's $1.3 trillion annual target by 2035, it establishes what the current philanthropic architecture delivers to Indigenous communities, and provides the basis to demand a funding system redesigned for direct access, Indigenous leadership, and long-term movement building.

Read through the 5Rs, the findings align. Indigenous Peoples rarely set the priorities of funding affecting their territories (Respect). Funding follows existing networks, with 95.1% of Indigenous-tagged dollars coming from the USA and Canada (Relationships). Intermediaries' onward grants are largely invisible (Responsibility). Indigenous knowledge underpins the ecological case for investment yet carries little weight in how funding is designed (Reciprocity). And 0.68% of tracked climate funding names an IPO as recipient, with far less known about shifts in power, risk and infrastructure (Redistribution). The funders with the highest direct rates show each of these can change by design.



6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table summarizes the path forward, aligning technical targets with IFIP's core values (The 5R Framework):

The 5R Pillar	Strategic Objective	Key Target / Benchmark	Primary Actor
Respect	Sovereignty & authority	Indigenous Peoples, including Indigenous Women, set priorities and hold decision-making authority over funding affecting their territories, including in the NCQG and multilateral funds	Policy makers
Relationships	Trust-based partnership	Minimum three to five year unrestricted core funding cycles	Philanthropic funders
Responsibility	Transparency & Accountability	Public reporting of direct-to-IPO share; due diligence proportionate to grant size, with funders carrying more risk; downstream disclosure by intermediaries	Funders & philanthropic community
Reciprocity	Mutual learning	Co-designing M&E frameworks and recognizing Indigenous land tenure as a valid climate investment	Policy & funders
Redistribution	Shift power, risk, resources and infrastructure	Majority of Indigenous-tagged climate funding allocated directly to IPOs, publicly reported; funding Indigenous-led financial infrastructure	All stakeholders

6.1 For philanthropic funders

The structural barriers identified in Section 4.3, namely short-term funding cycles, administrative gatekeeping, governance exclusion, and thematic omissions, each have a direct funding practice counterpart. The following recommendations address those barriers, drawing on the funding approaches associated with higher direct-to-IPO rates documented in Section 4.4. Together they aim to shift who sets priorities, controls resources, bears risk, makes decisions and owns financial infrastructure.

- **Shift from project-based to movement-building support (Relationships):** Multi-year, unrestricted core funding, for a minimum of three to five years, is the baseline requirement for IPOs to sustain advocacy, build institutional capacity, and respond to emerging needs. This includes support for governance and movement-building in organizations not yet "grant-ready". Simplifying application and reporting

requirements, and involving IPOs in designing M&E frameworks, are practical first steps toward reducing the administrative burden that currently functions as a structural exclusion mechanism.

- **Address overlooked geographies and ecosystems (Relationships):** With 95.1% of Indigenous-tagged grant dollars originating from foundations in the USA and Canada, funders must actively build relationships beyond the networks they already fund through. Partnerships tend to emerge through introductions from existing grantees, which leaves IPOs outside those networks unrecognized regardless of the quality or scale of their work. This includes regions where security risks keep philanthropic presence low but climate need is highest. Funders must also invest in mapping IPOs in under-supported sectors, including food systems, land-based enterprises, and dryland ecosystem management, where invisibility constrains funding before any application process begins.

- **Set targets for funding that reaches IPOs, not only for funding designated for Indigenous Peoples (Responsibility):** The gap between 4.44% and 0.68% shows that reporting on Indigenous giving measures how much funding is designated for Indigenous Peoples, not how much reaches IPOs. Both are worth tracking, but only the second shows whether decision-making authority over resources is shifting. Funders should set an explicit target for the share of their climate funding for Indigenous Peoples that reaches IPOs directly or through Indigenous-led funds, give Indigenous Peoples decision rights over the priorities that funding serves, and report both publicly alongside overall Indigenous funding.

- **Improve tracking and transparency (Responsibility):** When reporting to databases like Candid, funders should explicitly identify whether recipients are confirmed IPOs. Because direct-to-IPO rates are measured by the immediate recipient named on each grant rather than by where funding ultimately lands, funders distributing through international intermediaries must track and publicly disclose what proportion reaches IPOs downstream. Creating dedicated funding windows for Indigenous organizations would also reduce direct competition with large international NGOs, which currently absorb the majority of Indigenous-tagged climate funding.

- **Shift who bears risk (Responsibility, Redistribution):** Match due diligence to grant size and relationship. Accept assessments made by Indigenous-led funds and peer funders. Accept applications and reports in the language's IPOs use and fund the financial management capacity funders require.

- **Invest in Indigenous-led financial infrastructure (Redistribution):** Funders must support the development and capitalization of the ecosystem of Indigenous organizations including Indigenous-led Funds, Indigenous Peoples Networks, Indigenous infrastructure organizations and Indigenous regional regranting mechanisms, and philanthropic vehicles selected by and directly accountable to Indigenous communities. Building organizational capacity, establishing legitimacy, and responding to community needs require sustained commitment over a decade rather than a grant cycle. This extended timeline reflects what genuine infrastructure-building demands, not institutional inefficiency.

- **Resource Indigenous Women's leadership (Respect, Redistribution):** Fund Indigenous Women's organizations and Indigenous Women-led funds directly and include Indigenous Women in the governance of climate funds and funder strategies. Gender-tagged funding reaches IPOs at 11.6%, below the 15.4% portfolio rate. Funders should set the portfolio direct rate as the minimum for gender-tagged grantmaking, integrate gender analysis into Indigenous climate grantmaking, and ensure feminist funds are included in climate philanthropic networks. The consistently high direct-to-IPO rates of feminist funders indicate that an explicit mandate can translate into funding practice, though this is based on a small number of funders and grants.

6.2 For Indigenous advocates and organizations

- **Use both figures strategically in COP31 advocacy:** The 4.44% and 0.68% figures together constitute a stronger advocacy case than either alone. The 4.44% establishes that climate funders do direct funds toward Indigenous-tagged programs; the 0.68% indicates that 83.5% of those funds are received by non-Indigenous organizations, with a further 1.1% going to recipients whose status cannot be determined. Both are concrete reference points for NCQG negotiations. The priority ask should be explicit Indigenous windows in the NCQG with direct-access mechanisms for IPOs.

- **Build coalitions across underfunded regions:** The geographic data shows shared funding deficits across Africa, the Asia-Pacific, and parts of Latin America. Building coalitions that connect these movements, such as sharing evidence, naming shared structural barriers, and presenting unified demands in global climate negotiations, strengthens the advocacy case beyond what any single region can make alone.

- **Strengthen Indigenous-led financial infrastructure:** Advocate for simplified accreditation processes at multilateral climate funds to enable direct access, using the purpose-built direct-access mechanisms documented in Section 4.4 as evidence that such structures deliver results. Where consortium arrangements with larger NGOs are necessary to access funding, explicitly negotiate for Indigenous decision-making authority over program content and resource allocation.

- **Frame advocacy around demonstrated ecological effectiveness:** The evidence base for Indigenous-led land stewardship set out in Section 1.1 should be central to COP31 advocacy. The 0.68% direct-to-IPO figure, set against that evidence, makes the case for direct investment more concretely than a normative argument alone.

6.3 For policy and global climate finance architecture

- **Integrate Indigenous-specific direct-access targets in the NCQG:** Ensure the $1.3 trillion annual target includes dedicated, accessible Indigenous resources with clear direct-allocation mechanisms. Simplify accreditation requirements for multilateral climate funds so that IPOs can access funding directly rather than through conventional intermediaries. Purpose-built direct-access mechanisms already report direct allocation rates far above the philanthropic average, which makes their design a relevant reference point for NCQG architecture. Allow Indigenous-led funds to serve as direct-access channels, with fiduciary standards proportionate to grant size.

- **Mandate Indigenous participation with actual decision-making authority:** Require Indigenous representation in the decision-making bodies of multilateral climate funds and national climate finance mechanisms. Preliminary analysis of 16 funds established to deliver nature and biodiversity finance to Indigenous Peoples and local communities found IPLC representatives holding on average 11% of board seats, with most boards holding one such seat or none (Degawan et al., 2022), and that level of representation has not translated into authority over resource flows.

- **Recognize Indigenous land tenure as a climate investment:** Count support for Indigenous land rights and territorial protection as legitimate, trackable climate finance. Integrate this recognition into NCQG accounting frameworks so that investments in Indigenous tenure, territorial governance, and land-based stewardship are visible in climate finance tracking systems alongside traditional mitigation and adaptation spending.

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Annex A: IFIP Categorization Framework for Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs) and Indigenous-Led Funds (ILFs)

This annex sets out the criteria used by the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) to distinguish Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs) and Indigenous-Led Funds (ILFs) from non-Indigenous-led organizations. This framework informed the recipient categorization applied throughout this analysis.

Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPOs)
An IPO is an organization for which Indigenous identity is central, and whose leadership is distinct from organizations of mainstream society or culture. At all levels including governance, executive, and staff including senior positions, a majority of Indigenous Peoples must be present. IPO status is assessed against IFIP's 5Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy:

- **Respect:** The organization's values are rooted in Indigenous history and are reflective of Indigenous rights and self-determination, in alignment with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
- **Relationships:** The organization's mission and work is centered on the aspirations and goals of the Indigenous Peoples it serves, grounded in an understanding of their relationships with land, culture, traditions, and spirituality.
- **Responsibility:** The organization respects the collective social and cultural practices of the communities it serves, including ancestral knowledge, and is accountable to Indigenous Peoples.
- **Reciprocity:** The organization's work is informed by reciprocity, mutual responsibility, and respect, reflecting Indigenous ways of giving, sharing, and caring.
- **Redistribution:** The organization's mission, programs, and resources explicitly benefit Indigenous communities, and it works to shift resources toward Indigenous-led solutions.

Indigenous-Led Funds (ILFs)
An Indigenous-Led Fund is an organization, instrument, agency, or other body made up of a majority of Indigenous individuals, whose primary or prominent role is to fund Indigenous organizations or community projects, and whose mission is for the benefit of Indigenous Peoples. ILFs are guided by Indigenous worldviews and accountable to Indigenous communities. They are recognized in four forms:

- **Non-profit or charitable ILFs:** Organizations seeded by and primarily funded through philanthropy, including those initially created by non-Indigenous people but now led by Indigenous Peoples.
- **Tribal, First Nations, or Aboriginal government funds:** Organizations created by sovereign First Nations governments or councils, including funding programs created by regional federations of Indigenous Peoples.
- **Donor agency funds guided by Indigenous Peoples:** International bodies or funding instruments created by multilateral or UN agencies whose administration and decision-making are in the hands of Indigenous Peoples.
- **Government funds with Indigenous decision-making bodies:** National or regional institutions set up by governments but managed and administered by Indigenous Peoples.

For this analysis, both IPOs and ILFs were classified as IPO recipients when they appeared as grant recipients in the Candid dataset, provided they met the majority Indigenous leadership and mission criteria above. Organizations whose programs serve or benefit Indigenous Peoples, but which do not meet the leadership, governance and mission criteria above, were classified as non-Indigenous organizations. The classification reflects who holds decision-making authority over the organization, not the content or quality of its work.

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