



GrantTree's Environmental Impact Report Q1 FY19

This is a snapshot of our self-assessment of our environmental impact at the end of Q1 FY19. Our goal is to publish this quarterly and to be able to report on improvements each quarter.

SUMMARY OF UPDATES

There is not a lot to update in this quarter. Resources were assigned (3 people agreed to work on this), including a £1k/m budget. There was some discussion of working on assessing our current greenhouse gas impact, but no progress was made on this. An internal talk was given on the topic of plastics, which may have led to some personal decisions, but no company-wide policy changed as a result.

Points below have been updated to reflect the current situation, but in effect the honest summary is that there has been no progress on this in the last quarter, thus failing to meet our accountability to the Board Circle.

WHAT WE'RE DOING NOW

Kiva

Loans to small businesses in countries where business is very difficult help increase prosperity and lift people out of poverty. People who are less poor have more ability to think about the long term and care for the environment that they're in, which has an impact on our environment.

Out of an initial Christmas "gift" of \$1500 (marked as a charitable donation - we do not wish to take that money back out), GrantTree has in the past made 32 loans for a total of \$9,950. Currently we have \$1,330.80 actively loaned to businesses in Africa, in countries like Ghana, Liberia, DRC, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya, Mali, Sierra Leone and Mozambique.

There is currently a total of \$1350.56 in the Kiva account. Most (\$99) of what was lost from the original \$1500 was through currency fluctuations.

Grants

Our Grants business works with people who are trying to directly address the technological challenges of saving the environment. Recent cases mentioned include:

- [SteamaCo](#)'s smart technology enables utilities to sell energy anywhere on the planet. Forged in the harshest environments in off-grid Africa, SteamaCo is essential to reducing utility operating costs and serving unserved areas effectively.
- [Desolenator](#) believe in universal access to safe and sustainably-produced water. Their integrated patented system combines the thermal and electrical energy from a PV panel, with a process of heat exchange to produce pure water.
- [ReNEW ELP](#) is at the forefront of a new, cutting-edge technology that can convert end-of-life plastic waste into refined synthetic hydrocarbon products, including low carbon synthetic crude oil and valuable petrochemicals.
- [Floreon](#) are developing a specially formulated compound, which is added to standard bioplastic, polylactic acid (PLA) to create an innovative material with a sustainable origin and a range of end of life options.
- [Recycling Technologies](#)' chemical process is designed to integrate traditional mechanical recycling activities in order to tackle the hard-to-recycle plastic waste. The combination of mechanical and feedstock recycling systems can increase current recycling rates up to 90%.
- [Magway](#) is a revolutionary e-commerce delivery system that improves air quality and congestion by removing significant number of parcels and the delivery vans that carry them, from highways and urban areas.

Office Management

We use a trash management company who collects recyclable trash separately from non-recyclable trash.

Charity work days

We have an "Annual Charity Work Days" policy that enables people to take up to 3 days of additional paid leave each year to volunteer for their chosen charities. We do not currently track what those charities do so cannot report what impact they may have on the environment.

Travel

Perhaps more through luck than any deliberate choice, GrantTree's work does not tend to involve plane travel or regular car travel. Our remote working policies also mean that people can work flexibly from home whenever they want instead of imposing the social and economic cost of a daily commute at all times (but it does also mean that sometimes people choose to work from other countries, which may contribute to pollution through plane travel, if they were not originally intending to travel there).

Assigned resources to this work

We have assigned 3 people, soon 4, to this work, though other things have taken priority. We also assigned a £1k/m budget, which has not been used yet.

WHAT WE COULD DO IN THE COMING QUARTER

Assess our current greenhouse gas footprint

1. Identify tools and framework that would allow us to assess our Greenhouse Gas (GHG) footprint and set a benchmark against which improvements are measured. This is partially done, Zoi and Robin have suggested frameworks that would allow this to be quantified.
2. Create roles that allow for the collection of a year's worth of historical data to allow us to build and then disclose our current GHG footprint. These roles would need the cooperation of #Finance in order to build a report. Likely this baseline would be a range rather than a precise figure owing to presently available data
3. Identify and implement policies and changes that would impact our GHG footprint. These policies should have a measurable connection back to our GHG footprint
4. Report on the effect of these policies on whatever basis makes sense (Annually perhaps)
5. Remove or reverse policies that don't have significant impact

Snacks

Some snacks (e.g. red meat) are known to contribute massively to global warming via greenhouse gases. Others come in wasteful packaging. Others contain palm oil (which contributes heavily to rainforest destruction). We could examine our purchasing of snacks and reduce or eliminate orders of environmentally damaging snacks.

When the snacks come from a regular supplier (e.g. coffee or tea or milk) we could explore and implement options to make the packaging more reusable (reusable glass milk bottles?).

Where we choose to retain an environmentally damaging snack we could choose to offset the purchase of this food by making a commensurate donation to an organisation that is working to offset the damage we're causing.

Charity work

We could encourage more charity work, and particularly highlight opportunities to volunteer for charities that have a positive impact on the environment.

Further donations

We could put more money in our Kiva account, and also we could donate to charities that have an impact on the environment.

More intelligent recycling

We could do a better job of categorising items that we discard for recycling.