

# FUND GOVERNING STRUCTURES

The WWF (Barry Spergel, WWF-US) has elaborated further the concept of environmental funds and sees three main possibilities for fund governing structures:

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## 1. Funds with a mixed government/NGO Governing Board

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### Advantages:

- Can serve to institutionalize co-operation between the public and private sectors
- Can combine most of the advantages offered by both of the other two types of funds, while avoiding many of their limitations
- Likely to result in projects that are sustainable in the long run, by combining local initiative with government support

### Disadvantages:

- Citizens of the country may be confused about whether or not to regard the fund as an official government organization
- Likelier to suffer from lack of focus than the other two types of funds, if purposes and project criteria are not clearly specified at the outset
- If the NGO side always has a clear majority, then the government may not take the fund as seriously or commit as many resources as it would to a government fund; if the government side always has a clear majority, the NGOs may be taken for granted and they may simply focus on getting near-term funding for their own projects

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## 2. Funds associated with a Government Agency

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### Advantages:

- Can be a tool for implementing national environmental strategies and effecting policy changes
- Can provide a way to organize and coordinate official development assistance for the environmental sector
- Can provide support for under-funded governmental responsibilities, such as park guard salaries, protected area infrastructure, and so on
- Can be a recipient for earmarked taxes, fines, and permit fees

Disadvantages:

- Personnel, programmes, and policies can be subject to sudden political changes
- Can be top-down in approach and insufficiently responsive to local needs
- NGO and local community suspicion of government
- Can be bureaucratic and restricted by civil service rules and government pay scales

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**3. Funds with a Governing Board composed entirely of NGOs**

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Advantages:

- Likely to be responsive to local needs, based on popular participation
- Promotes values of democratization and local participation
- Able to integrate grass-roots economic and social development with environmental programmes
- Well suited for institution strengthening of local NGOs and providing support to local grass-roots projects
- Independent of changes in government, thus offering institutional continuity
- Can serve as a vehicle for private donations (individual, corporate and foundation)

Disadvantages:

- With a diverse group of NGOs, it can be difficult to reach consensus on programmes, policies, and implementation
- Not being associated with government can mean that it is hard to influence national environmental strategies and policy reform
- Generally unable or uninterested in funding governmental responsibilities, such as park guard salaries, protected area infrastructure, and so on, which may be essential for biodiversity conservation