

Inside Philanthropy

Who's Funding What, and Why

A Luxury Jeweler's Unlikely but Impressive Support for Ocean Conservation

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Tiffany & Co. and its head of philanthropy, Anisa Kamadoli Costa, are two names that show up all over marine conservation efforts. We unpack this luxury retailer's surprising support for oceans and coral reefs.

Among foundations like Packard, Moore and Walton that were in the mix at the most recent Our Ocean Conference, in which billions of dollars worth of government and nonprofit commitments were announced, Tiffany is one

name that sticks out. But it really shouldn't at this point, as the corporation has been involved in ocean protection work now for 15 years.

The 179-year-old jewelry company, with market value at around [\\$9 billion](#), first set up a corporate foundation in 2000, [at a time](#) when the company's CEO was looking to invest more in CSR and philanthropy (for more info on its sustainability efforts, check out its own [latest report](#) and the nonprofit Ceres' 2014 [scorecard](#)).

The two sides of the company's goodwill efforts are closely connected, with Anisa Kamadoli Costa overseeing both the foundation and the corporate sustainability, and with some overlapping goals. Kamadoli Costa has played a big part in the company's rising commitment to sustainability and philanthropy, and has become a [leader](#) in corporate responsibility and giving, having served as chair of Environmental Grantmakers Association and on the boards of other collaboratives.

Tiffany's foundation awarded \$3.3 million in 2015, and nearly \$7 million in 2014, with Coral Conservation one of three priorities. That program awarded over \$1 million last year and nearly \$4 million in 2014. Both 2014 numbers are inflated by a \$3 million, four-year grant to Oceans 5.

While it may seem like a odd fit, the motivation for the marine program is connected to the corporation's sustainability efforts, as coral, a living marine invertebrate, is sometimes used in jewelry. Tiffany [stopped selling](#) coral in its jewelry in 2002, and its coral reef program has expanded since 2001 to back some extensive ocean conservation programs.

Initially, it was only funding the Wildlife Conservation Society, and while it still regularly gives six-figure grants to that organization, in 2005, the foundation stepped up giving to include some larger grants and more grantees.

One of its larger [recent grants](#) was announced at the Our Ocean Conference, a \$3.2 million commitment over three years in partnership with the Nature Conservancy, Oceans 5 and organizations in the Bahamas to protect 20 percent of the archipelago's marine environment.

Probably the most prominent funding initiative to which it's contributed to date is Pew Charitable Trusts' [Global Ocean Legacy](#), a funder collaborative also backed by Bloomberg, the Lyda Hill Foundation, the Oak Foundation and the Robertson Foundation, dedicated to establishing marine protected areas globally.

And the big \$3 million grant committed in 2014 went to [Oceans 5](#), another funder collaborative including representation from Marisla Foundation, the Waitt Foundation, Bloomberg, and Leonardo DiCaprio. Other conservation advocacy groups Tiffany has supported include regular grantees Oceana and the Coral Reef Alliance.

Tiffany grantees have also done interesting work in both research and public education. For example, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution recently landed a half-million for an endowed scholarship. And the foundation that owns TED, of the famed talks, has received a few grants for a coordinated public outreach [campaign](#) with ocean explorer Sylvia Earle's outfit Mission Blue.

Over the past 15 years, Tiffany has certainly surpassed the depth and commitment of a lot of corporate giving. And if the uptick in the size of grants in recent years is any indication, Kamadoli Costa and Tiffany are only going to have a bigger presence.