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Standardized Product Definition and Product Testing Guidelines for Biochar
That Is Used in Soil

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1 No portion of this document is intended for use as a sustainability or production process
2 guideline. Further documentation and guidance is necessary to identify appropriate
3 sustainability practices and/or safe and effective production processes.

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6 warranties regarding the potential benefits of any given biochar material in any particular
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9 body of knowledge surrounding biochar continues to evolve, and, if necessary, to provide
10 technical or other corrections or changes to the *IBI Biochar Standards* and/or this
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12 website of the International Biochar Initiative:
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29 arising from or allegedly arising from your use or misuse of this document.

30

1 **Foreword**

2 The *IBI Biochar Standards* provide a standardized definition of biochar and biochar characteristics
3 related to the use of biochar as a soil amendment. They have been developed by the International
4 Biochar Initiative (IBI) in collaboration with a wide variety of industry and academic experts and
5 through public input on an international level. The *IBI Biochar Standards* were created to
6 encourage further development of the biochar industry by providing standardized information
7 regarding the characterization of biochar materials to assist in achieving more consistent levels
8 of product quality. In addition to providing product definition and qualitative specification
9 standards, this document has been developed to assist biochar manufacturers in providing
10 consumers with consistent access to credible information regarding qualitative and
11 physicochemical properties of biochar.

12 The *IBI Biochar Standards* are designed to support the *IBI Biochar Certification Program*.
13 Separately, the *IBI Biochar Standards* are also intended for use by various national and regional
14 product standards bodies, and national and regional biochar groups for their own local adaptation
15 and use, and as a reference in regulatory situations, as may be appropriate.

16 The *IBI Biochar Standards* were developed as a means of providing information and market
17 certainty about the attributes of biochars for use in soil applications. Ultimately, the use and
18 promotion of these *IBI Biochar Standards* will build consumer and regulatory confidence about
19 biochar, through the provision of consistent and reliable information regarding biochar properties.
20 Biochar can be made from a variety of feedstocks, using a variety of different production
21 processes, and can possess many different attributes. The consistent reporting of biochar
22 properties will ensure that pertinent information about biochars for use in soil applications is
23 systematically communicated, regardless of feedstock type, production process, or final
24 properties.

25 IBI developed the *IBI Biochar Standards* in a transparent process open to public participation,
26 review, and input. Throughout the development process IBI relied upon the drafting, review, and
27 guidance of experts in the field, ensuring an efficient path from concept to final product, and
28 addressing the needs of a broad range of commercial biochar manufacturers and end users. As
29 the document was developed, public input from the larger international biochar community was
30 continuously sought to provide a wider perspective on the use and functionality of this tool.

31 The design of the *IBI Biochar Standards* follows current best practices and available science. As
32 biochar science continues to improve, the *IBI Biochar Standards* will be updated in an iterative
33 process in order to remain current. Therefore these *IBI Biochar Standards* and this document will
34 be periodically revised through further consultation with the international biochar community.

35 The *IBI Biochar Standards* document development process is based on the following guiding
36 principles:

- 1 • Maintain congruence with best practice guidance for standards development such as
 - 2 International Standards Organization (ISO), ASTM International (ASTM), and Institute of
 - 3 Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE);
 - 4 • Strictly adhere to process, ensuring efficient and effective collaboration;
 - 5 • Engage the knowledgeable and diverse stakeholder groups active in the biochar industry;
 - 6 • Organize independent working groups with broad stakeholder representation, and,
 - 7 • Rely on IBI infrastructure and capacity for leadership and administration of the initiative.
- 8 The complete record of process documentation, including the list of working group members,
9 can be found on the IBI website at:
10 <http://www.biochar-international.org/characterizationstandard>.

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1 **1 Scope**

2 Issued by the International Biochar Initiative (IBI) and based on international consultation, this
3 *IBI Biochar Standards* document is intended to establish a common definition for biochar, and
4 standardized testing and measurement methods for selected physicochemical properties of
5 biochar materials.

6 Biochar is a solid material obtained from the thermochemical conversion of biomass in an oxygen-
7 limited environment. Biochar can be used as a product itself or as an ingredient within a blended
8 product, with a range of applications as an agent for soil improvement, improved resource use
9 efficiency, remediation and/or protection against particular environmental pollution, and as an
10 avenue for greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation.

11 These *IBI Biochar Standards* provide a standardized definition of biochar and biochar
12 characteristics related to the use of biochar as a soil amendment. They serve as the basis for the
13 *IBI Biochar Certification Program*, and are intended for use and adaptation to local conditions and
14 regulations by any nation or region. These *IBI Biochar Standards* support not only baseline safety
15 considerations but also the evolving understanding of the positive functions of biochar in soil.
16 This document does not prescribe appropriate uses for biochar materials, nor provide guidance
17 on what biochar can or should be used for.

18 These *IBI Biochar Standards* relate to the physicochemical properties of biochar only, and do not
19 prescribe production methods or specific feedstocks, nor do they provide limits or terms for
20 defining the sustainability and/or GHG mitigation potential of a biochar material, for the *IBI*
21 *Biochar Certification Program* or otherwise.

22 Different feedstock types, and hence differentiated testing requirements of biochar, are defined
23 in this guidance document as means for the identification and classification of a range of biochar
24 materials. The testing categories are based upon increasing levels of physicochemical property
25 reporting and not necessarily on increasing levels of biochar performance or quality. The intended
26 audiences for these *IBI Biochar Standards* include commercial biochar manufacturers, users,
27 regulators, researchers and marketers, as well as the many national and regional biochar affiliates
28 of the IBI. However, the commercial biochar manufacturer is the entity most likely to apply the
29 *IBI Biochar Standards*, as a label (of differentiation) on its biochar material or product.

30

2 Terms and Definitions

A complete list of terms and definitions is found, along with a list of acronyms, in Appendix 8 *Glossary*. A clear understanding of the defined terms is essential to the proper use of these *IBI Biochar Standards*. Defined terms are indicated with a double underline in the text on the first instance of the use of that term in the following sections.

3 Biomass Feedstock Material and Biochar Production

3.1 General Feedstock Material Requirements

The materials used as feedstocks for biochar production have direct impacts on the nature and quality of the resulting biochar. Although the focus of this document is on the biochar material, some restrictions have been applied to feedstock contents and quality. To qualify as biochar feedstock under these standards, the feedstock may be a combination of biomass and diluents, but may not contain more than 2% by dry weight of contaminants (following Brinton 2000). Any diluents that constitute 10% or more by dry weight of the feedstock material must be reported as a feedstock component.

Feedstocks are differentiated into two types: unprocessed feedstocks and processed feedstocks, with different requirements for sampling and analysis of potential toxic substances. Suitable feedstocks include but are not limited to biomass residues, which may contain a minimal quantity of contaminants (see above) as part of the feedstock.

Feedstock that may have been grown on contaminated soils is considered to be a processed feedstock and must meet the toxicant assessment testing frequency requirements for processed feedstocks given in Section 5.5 *Category B Testing Frequency*.

Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) containing hazardous materials or wastes may not be included as eligible feedstock under these standards. It is the manufacturer's responsibility to ensure that biochar feedstock materials are free of hazardous materials.

NB: Issues of feedstock sustainability are not addressed in this document.

3.2 Best Management Practices for Biochar Production, Material Handling and Storage

The *IBI Biochar Standards* do not prescribe production and handling parameters for biochar, but do include recommended best management practices (BMPs) for safe production and handling. It is the responsibility of the biochar manufacturer to create biochar in a safe manner. IBI recommends that current industry BMPs be followed throughout the production and handling process.

Local requirements and regulations for the operation of biochar production facilities should be followed. Where applicable, biochar production must comply with local and international regulatory requirements and treaties that govern thermal processes, the production of volatile

1 and particulate emissions, and the transport of goods. Relevant to local and international
2 regulatory compliance, biochar manufacturers should adhere to the following recommended
3 BMPs:

4 1) A biochar manufacturer should provide a relevant material safety data sheet (MSDS) for the
5 final output of its biochar production process. Brief outlines of MSDS document creation are
6 available from numerous online sources, including [MSDS Search](#), the [Canadian Center for
7 Occupational Health and Safety](#), and the [US Department of Labor Occupational Safety and
8 Health Administration](#) (OSHA).

9 2) Biochar should be tested to address the potential for self-heating and flammability during
10 storage and transport. Documentation of the results of this testing should be appended to the
11 MSDS.

12 3) To minimize the effects of weathering which can significantly alter the material properties of
13 biochar after it has been tested (see Section 5.6), biochar should be stored indoors in a
14 protected location. If stored outdoors, biochar should be covered with a tarpaulin or other
15 material to protect it from precipitation events.

16 While the IBI does not require these practices as part of its definition and certification of biochar
17 (under the *IBI Biochar Certification Program*) since they do not relate directly to product quality,
18 they are important considerations in good business practices and responsible industrial
19 production. The majority of industrialized nations provide detailed standards, expectations, and
20 regulations governing the manufacturing sector and will have relevant information available to
21 industrial operators.

22 **4 Biochar Material Test Categories and Characteristics**

23 As described in this section, biochar characteristics shall be assessed according to a defined set
24 of test categories intended to provide increasing levels of physicochemical property reporting.
25 Two sets of required test categories to measure basic biochar characteristics that impact soil
26 functions are supplemented with an optional test category for advanced analysis and soil
27 enhancement properties. Toxicant assessment testing is required for all biochars. Increasing
28 levels of physicochemical property testing and reporting do not correspond to increasing levels of
29 biochar performance or quality; rather, the categorization structure is designed to:

- 30 • provide a uniform presentation format by which a biochar user would be able to fairly
31 compare and assess the reported properties of different biochar materials;
- 32 • provide a set of required tests for basic biochar utility and an optional set of additional
33 tests for measuring advanced analysis and soil enhancement properties; and
- 34 • require toxicant reporting appropriate to the potential risks associated with both
35 unprocessed and processed feedstocks. Increased testing frequency is required to attain

1 quality assurance for processed feedstocks, which carry a higher potential risk of
2 contamination.

3 Each test category was developed according to an assessment of the relevant parameters for
4 biochar properties and safety, balanced against cost and accessibility.

5 These *IBI Biochar Standards* identify three categories of tests for biochar materials:

6 Test Category A – Basic Utility Properties: **Required for all biochars.** This set of tests
7 measures the most basic properties required to assess the utility of a biochar material for
8 use in soil.

9 Test Category B – Toxicant Assessment: **Required for all biochars.** Biochars made from
10 processed feedstocks must be tested more frequently than biochars made from
11 unprocessed feedstocks, as defined in Section 5 *General Protocols and Restrictions*.

12 Test Category C – Advanced Analysis and Soil Enhancement Properties: Optional for all
13 biochars. Biochar may be tested for advanced analysis and enhancement properties in
14 addition to meeting test requirements for Test Categories A and B. All tests in Test
15 Category C are optional. Manufacturers may report on none, one, some or all of the
16 properties.

17 Further details on each of the test categories are provided in Sections 4.1 through 4.3.

18 **4.1 Test Category A: Basic Utility Properties**

19 All biochars must be tested for basic utility properties and meet the criteria specified under Test
20 Category A, as shown in Table 1 below. Basic biochar characteristics include the physical
21 properties of particle size and moisture, as well as the chemical properties of elemental
22 proportions [Hydrogen (H), Carbon (C), and Nitrogen (N)], ash proportion, Electrical Conductivity
23 (EC) and pH/liming ability. Organic carbon (C_{org}) content is used to assign the biochar material to
24 one of three classes depending on the percentage of C_{org} in the material and representing the
25 range of C_{org} contents typical of biochar materials. Carbon stability is indicated by the molar ratio
26 of hydrogen to organic carbon. Lower values of this ratio are correlated with greater carbon
27 stability. See Appendix 7 *The Use of H: C_{org} to Indicate C Stability* for more information on this
28 analysis.

29

1 **Table 1. Test Category A Parameters, Criteria, and Test Methods.**

Test Category A: Basic Utility Properties (Required for All Biochars)			
Parameter	Criteria¹	Unit	Test Method²
Moisture	Declaration	% of total mass, dry basis	ASTM D1762-84 Standard Test Method for Chemical Analysis of Wood Charcoal (specify measurement date with respect to time from production)
Organic Carbon (C _{org})	10% Minimum <i>Class 1:</i> ≥60% <i>Class 2:</i> ≥30% and <60% <i>Class 3:</i> ≥10% and <30%	% of total mass, dry basis	Total C and H analysis by dry combustion-IR detection. Inorganic C analysis by determination of CO ₂ -C content with 1N HCl, as outlined in ASTM D4373 Standard Test Method for Rapid Determination of Carbonate Content of Soils. Organic C calculated as Total C – Inorganic C. See Appendix 7 for H:C _{org} discussion.
H:C _{org}	0.7 Maximum	Molar ratio	
Total Ash	Declaration	% of total mass, dry basis	ASTM D1762-84 Standard Test Method for Chemical Analysis of Wood Charcoal
Total Nitrogen	Declaration	% of total mass, dry basis	Dry combustion-IR detection following the same procedure for total C and H above.
pH	Declaration	pH	pH analysis procedures as outlined in section 04.11 of TMECC (2001) using modified dilution of 1:20 biochar:deionized H ₂ O (w:v) and equilibration at 90 minutes on the shaker, according to Rajkovich et al. (2011). See Appendix 5 for further information.
Electrical Conductivity	Declaration	dS/m	EC analysis procedures as outlined in section 04.10 of TMECC (2001) using modified dilution of 1:20 biochar:deionized H ₂ O (w:v) and equilibration at 90 minutes on the shaker, according to Rajkovich et al. (2011). See Appendix 5 for further information.
Liming (if pH is above 7)	Declaration	% CaCO ₃	AOAC 955.01 potentiometric titration on “as received” (i.e., wet) samples. Use dry weight to calculate % CaCO ₃ and report “per dry sample weight”.
Particle size distribution	Declaration	% <0.5 mm; % 0.5-1 mm; % 1-2 mm; % 2-4 mm; % 4-8 mm; % 8-16 mm; % 16-25 mm; % 25-50 mm; % >50 mm	Progressive dry sieving with 50 mm, 25 mm, 16 mm, 8mm, 4mm, 2 mm, 1 mm, and 0.5 mm sieves.

2

¹ All values will be reported to one decimal place significant digit (0.1), unless otherwise indicated within the criteria for any reporting requirement (e.g., if the analysis is 0.73, it can be reported as 0.7).

² See Section 8 – References for complete citations

1 **4.2 Test Category B: Toxicant Assessment**

2 In addition to Test Category A thresholds and declarations, all biochar materials must meet the
3 soil toxicity assessment thresholds as outlined in Table 2 below. Toxicants may be divided into
4 two categories: those that may be present in the feedstocks used (metals and polychlorinated
5 biphenyls), and those that may be produced by the thermochemical conversion process used to
6 make biochar (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and dioxins/furans).

7 Biochar made from processed feedstocks may carry additional risks from the potential presence
8 of toxicants in the feedstock and must meet the toxicant assessment testing frequency
9 requirements of Section 5.3.

10 Biochar toxicity assessment reporting follows commonly identified soil toxicity and chemical
11 content reporting requirements for soil amendments, composts and fertilizers. The threshold
12 values in Table 2 are given as a range of values based on standards for soil amendments or
13 fertilizers from a number of jurisdictions.³ The Maximum Allowed Thresholds (MAT) indicate
14 toxicant levels above which the material would not be considered acceptable. In order to meet
15 the requirements of these *IBI Biochar Standards*, reported toxicant levels must be below the MAT
16 that has been established in the area of jurisdiction where biochar is produced and/or intended
17 for use. If the area of jurisdiction where the biochar will be used has no threshold for a particular
18 toxicant, the biochar must be below the highest maximum value established by a different
19 jurisdiction for that toxicant. See Appendix 1 *Expanded Information on Test Methods in Category*
20 *B Toxicants Assessment*, Appendix 2 *PAH, PCDD/F and PCB Compounds to be Tested*, and
21 Appendix 3 *Toxicant Assessment and Determination of Thresholds* for more information.

22 **Table 2. Test Category B Parameters, Maximum Allowed Thresholds and Test Methods.**

Test Category B: Toxicant Assessment (Required for All Biochars)		
Parameter	Range of Maximum Allowed Thresholds	Test Method^{4, 5, 6}
Germination Inhibition Assay	Pass/Fail	OECD methodology (1984) using three test species, as described by Van Zwieten et al. (2010). See Appendix 5 for further information.

23

³ The following jurisdictions were used to construct the range of values: Australia, Canada, EU, UK, and the USA. These entities were chosen as reference countries because they all have a long history of regulations addressing these toxicants in soils and other substrates.

⁴ See Section 7 *References* for complete citations.

⁵ For parameters using US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) test methods, it is required to use the most recent EPA revision of the test method.

⁶ For parameters using test methods described in the TMECC, please review Appendix 1 for descriptions of the test methods.

Table 2 (continued). Test Category B Parameters, Maximum Allowed Thresholds and Test Methods.

Parameter	Range of Maximum Allowed Thresholds		Test Method
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), total (sum of 16 US EPA PAHs) ⁷	6 – 300	mg/kg ⁸ dry wt	US EPA 8270 (2007) using Soxhlet extraction (US EPA 3540) and 100% toluene as the extracting solvent
Dioxins/Furans (PCDD/Fs) ⁹	17	ng/kg WHO-TEQ ¹⁰ dry wt	US EPA 8290 (2007)
Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) ¹¹	0.2 – 1	mg/kg dry wt	US EPA 8082 (2007) or US EPA 8275 (1996)
Arsenic	13 – 100	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Cadmium	1.4 – 39	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Chromium	93 – 1200	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Cobalt	34 – 100	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Copper	143 – 6000	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Lead	121 – 300	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Mercury	1 – 17	mg/kg dry wt	US EPA 7471 (2007)
Molybdenum	5 – 75	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Nickel	47 – 420	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Selenium	2 – 200	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Zinc	416 – 7400	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Boron	Declaration	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Chlorine	Declaration	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)
Sodium	Declaration	mg/kg dry wt	TMECC (2001)

⁷ For a list of the required PAH compounds to be tested see Appendix 2.

⁸ PAHs must also be reported on a B(a)P toxic equivalency basis with a maximum level of 3 mg/kg B(a)P-TEQ dry weight. See Appendix 3 for further information on TEF values for PAHs.

⁹ For a list of the required PCDD/F compounds to be tested see Appendix 2.

¹⁰ See Appendix 3 for further information on the WHO 2005 TEF values for PCDD/Fs.

¹¹ For a list of the required PCB compounds to be tested see Appendix 2.

1

2 **4.3 Test Category C: Advanced Analysis and Soil Enhancement** 3 **Properties**

4 Test Category C is optional for all biochar materials. Manufacturers may report on none, one,
5 some, or all of the properties contained in the Test Category C set of advanced analysis and soil
6 enhancement properties, using the prescribed test methods. Biochar advanced analysis
7 characteristics include the volatile matter content and surface area of biochars. Biochar soil
8 enhancement properties identify plant nutrients contained in the biochar.

9 Biochars tested under Test Category C may report on any or all of the properties presented in
10 Table 3 below:

11 **Table 3: Test Category C Parameters, Criteria, and Test Methods.**

Test Category C: Advanced Analysis and Soil Enhancement Properties (Optional for All Biochars)			
Parameter	Criteria	Unit	Test Method¹²
Mineral N (ammonium and nitrate)	Declaration	mg/kg	2M KCl extraction followed by spectrophotometry (Rayment and Higginson 1992)
Total Phosphorus & Potassium (P&K)*	Declaration	% of total mass, dry basis	Modified dry ashing followed by ICP (Enders and Lehmann 2012)
Available P	Declaration	mg/kg	2% formic acid followed by spectrophotometry (Wang et al. 2012)
Volatile Matter	Declaration	% of total mass, dry basis	ASTM D1762-84 Standard Test Method for Chemical Analysis of Wood Charcoal
Total Surface Area	Declaration	m ² /g	ASTM D6556 Standard Test Method for Carbon Black – Total and External Surface Area by Nitrogen Adsorption. See Appendix 5 for further information.
External Surface Area	Declaration	m ² /g	
* Total K is sufficiently equivalent to available K for the purpose of this characterization			

12

13 **5 General Protocols and Restrictions**

14 Biochar manufacturers must follow the protocols described in this section that address biochar
15 sampling procedures; the selection of testing laboratories; timing and frequency of testing; special
16 testing requirements related to material changes in feedstocks or thermochemical production

¹² See Section 7 *References* for complete citations.

1 parameters, or to biochar processing after thermochemical conversion; and restrictions on biochar
2 that has undergone weathering.

3 **5.1 Biochar Sampling Procedures**

4 Strict adherence to standardized biochar sampling procedures is critical to ensure reliable,
5 representative, and replicable test results. Manufacturers should adhere to the sampling
6 procedures outlined in Appendix 4 *Biochar Sampling Procedures*, drawn from established compost
7 sampling procedures, but adapted specifically for biochar. Adherence to these biochar sampling
8 procedures will ensure that the sample collected is representative of the entire biochar material
9 being analyzed.

10 **5.2 Laboratory Standards**

11 Laboratory analysis of biochar shall be conducted by trained and accredited laboratory
12 professionals following the appropriate procedures outlined for each test. [Please refer to
13 Appendix 5 *Recommended General Sample Analysis Procedures and Protocols for Specific Tests*
14 for further guidance on sample handling and processing prior to analysis.] Testing shall follow
15 strict quality assurance and control (QA/QC) requirements according to standardized laboratory
16 procedures. Laboratory professionals are expected to be trained in the relevant field of analytical
17 chemistry and operate in professional laboratories that have received general laboratory
18 accreditation. Such accreditation should be provided by a relevant governing body or an
19 international standards body like the ISO. Examples of accreditation bodies and programs in the
20 U.S. include: the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP;
21 <http://www.nelac-institute.org/newnelap.php>) and the American Association for Laboratory
22 Accreditation (A2LA; <http://www.a2la.org/>). Internationally, accreditation bodies include:
23 ISO/IEC 17025:2005 "General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration
24 Laboratories" (http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail.htm?csnumber=39883). While
25 accreditation by these bodies (and others not listed above) does not directly assert biochar testing
26 competency, adherence to protocols overseen by accreditation bodies and set forth in each
27 individual laboratory's internal QA/QC programs do provide assurances that contributing
28 laboratories will provide reliable and replicable results and that an appropriate standard of quality
29 is met. Laboratories are expected to provide information describing their internal QA/QC programs
30 as well as their participation in laboratory accreditation programs.

31 **5.3 Timing and Frequency of Testing**

32 Testing of biochar materials should occur after thermochemical processing is complete and before
33 application to soils. Biochar testing and reporting of all Category A, B, and C tests according to
34 the *IBI Biochar Standards* shall be performed:

- 35 - annually; or
- 36 - after a material change in feedstock; or,
- 37 - after a material change in thermochemical production parameters; or
- 38 - whichever is more frequent.

1 **5.4 Material Changes in Feedstock and Thermochemical Production**
2 **Parameters**

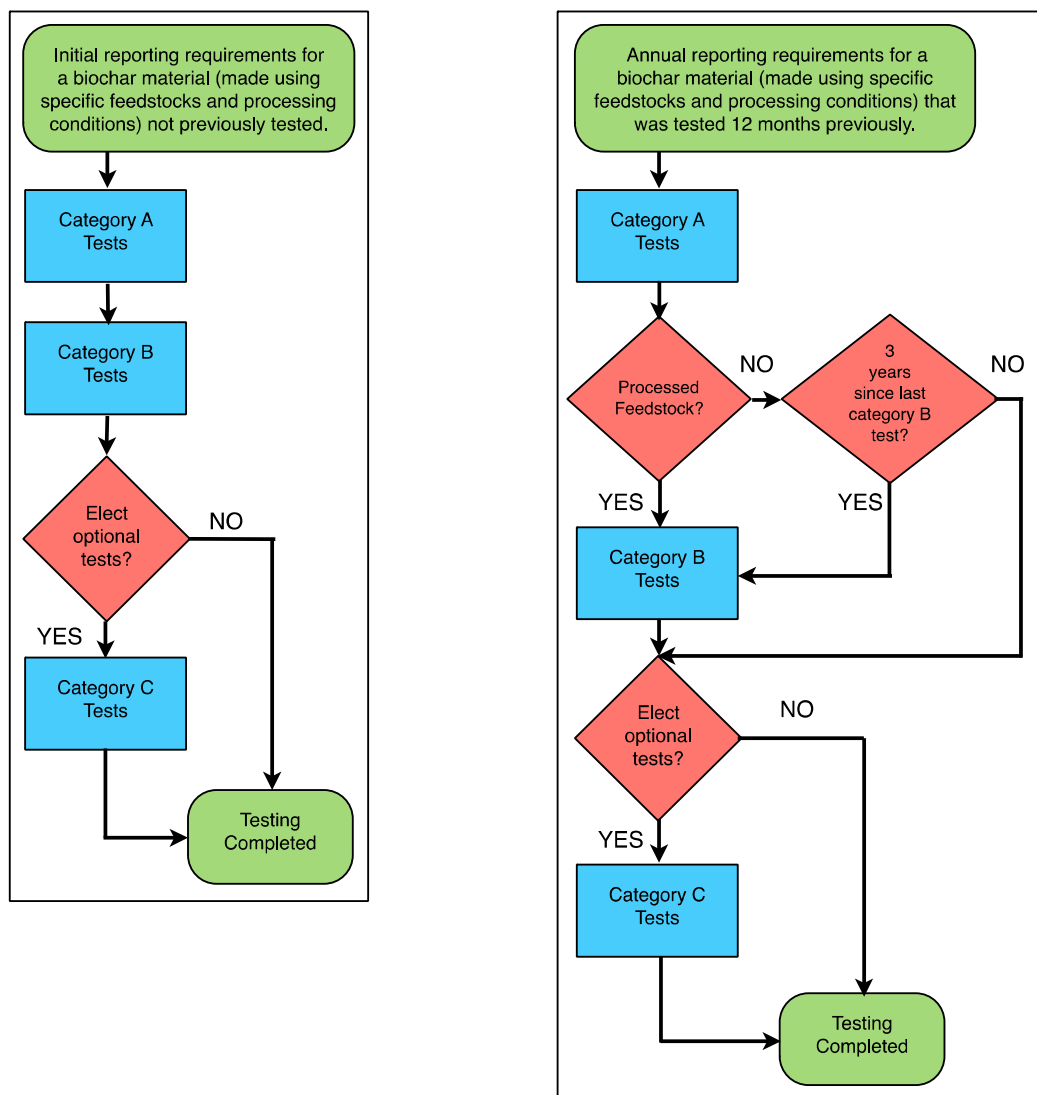
3 Significant changes in feedstock composition may lead to materially different biochar products.
4 For this reason, a 10% or greater change in total feedstock composition shall constitute a material
5 change in feedstock, pursuant to these *IBI Biochar Standards*. See Appendix 6 *Determining a*
6 *"Material Change" in Feedstock* for detailed information on how to determine a material change
7 in feedstock composition.

8 Material changes in thermochemical production parameters reflect increases or decreases in
9 process temperature or residence time. A material change in thermochemical production
10 parameters has occurred if process temperature (also known as heat treatment temperature)
11 changes by +/- 50°C, or if the thermochemical processing time (residence time) changes by more
12 than 10%.

13 **5.5 Category B Testing Frequency**

14 Category B Toxicant Assessment tests shall follow the test frequency and reporting requirements
15 outlined above, with *the following exception for unprocessed feedstocks*:

- 16 - Category B tests may be repeated every three years rather than annually, as long as there
17 is no material change in the thermochemical production parameters or the feedstock
18 composition. Figure 1 below depicts a set of two process flow charts that compare the
19 initial testing requirements for all feedstock materials with the annual testing
20 requirements, showing how the exception for unprocessed feedstocks is incorporated.



1
2 **Figure 1. Process flow charts showing testing protocols for initial testing and annual retesting**
3 **of biochar materials.**

4 **5.6 Testing Requirements for Weathered Biochar**

5 Biochar weathering may occur when biochar is exposed to precipitation, ice, freeze-thaw cycles,
6 fluctuations in temperature, deposition of atmospheric chemicals, and/or exposure to ambient
7 air. All of these factors may alter the biochar and its physicochemical properties by changing its
8 physical structure and/or its chemical properties through oxidation, hydration, leaching, or other
9 processes. In many instances biochar weathering can be a beneficial process that enhances the
10 material properties of the biochar.

11 Biochar that is stored uncovered outdoors is subject to the most extreme physical and chemical
12 weathering. Furthermore, weathering affects biochar differentially depending on the type and
13 extent of exposure, the properties of specific biochars, and biochar storage conditions. For

1 example, if a large pile of biochar has been stored outside and rained on extensively, material at
2 or near the surface may experience differential weathering than material at the center of the pile.

3 Because of the non-uniform and unpredictable changes caused by weathering, the *IBI Biochar*
4 *Standards* provide specific testing requirements for biochar material that has been exposed to
5 "significant weathering" which, for the purposes of the *IBI Biochar Standards*, is deemed to
6 occur when *biochar has been stored outdoors uncovered and has experienced any precipitation*
7 *events*.

8 The testing requirements for biochar that has experienced significant weathering depend on
9 whether the material has already been sampled and tested as follows:

- 10 - In cases where significant weathering occurs *before* biochar has been sampled and
11 submitted for testing, the entire batch of weathered biochar must be thoroughly mixed
12 to achieve material uniformity prior to sampling; and
- 13 - In cases where significant weathering occurs *after* biochar has been sampled and
14 tested, *the entire batch of weathered biochar must be re-sampled and re-tested* for all
15 of the required tests. Prior to re-sampling the entire batch of weathered biochar must be
16 thoroughly mixed to achieve material uniformity.

17 Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the biochar producer to re-sample and re-test a biochar if
18 any other weathering events besides precipitation are believed to substantially change the
19 physicochemical properties of the biochar that has already been sampled and tested.

20 **5.7 Timing of Testing for Post-Processed Biochar**

21 After thermochemical conversion of feedstock(s) to biochar, additional steps may be taken by the
22 biochar manufacturer to enhance, transform, or otherwise alter the physical, chemical or
23 biological properties of the biochar material. For the purposes of these *IBI Biochar Standards*,
24 such actions are called post-processing. In order for test results to accurately reflect biochar
25 material properties, the timing of testing with respect to different types of post-processing
26 treatments is critical. Therefore, biochar manufacturers who utilize post-processing must adhere
27 to the following guidelines for timing of testing:

- 28 1) Biochar testing shall occur *before* the following types of post-processing, which constitute
29 the addition of non-biochar materials to the biochar:
 - 30 a) *biological activation* including, but not limited to, treatment with microorganisms,
31 organic compounds, and/or nutrients in a biologically active environment; or
 - 32 b) *mixing, blending, or adding* any non-biochar material including, but not limited to,
33 compost, fungal mycorrhizae, ash, minerals, chemical fertilizers, animal manure,
34 microbes, and seaweed.
- 35 2) Biochar testing shall occur *after* the following types of post-processing:
 - 36 a) *steam activation*; or

- 1 b) *chemical activation* including treatment with acid or alkaline substances or oxygen (O₂);
- 2 or
- 3 c) *UV or concentrated solar light treatment*; or
- 4 d) *microwave or ultrasonic treatment*; or
- 5 e) *crushing, grinding, milling, pelletizing, selective segregation* or any other form of
- 6 processing intended to alter or limit biochar particle size; or
- 7 f) *weathering* of biochar—whether intentional or unintentional—that has been stored
- 8 outdoors uncovered and experienced precipitation events.

9 Further, for those types of post-processing where testing is required to occur after post-
10 processing treatments (listed in (2) above), *the biochar material must be re-tested if post-*
11 *processing parameters are altered such that the physicochemical properties of the post-processed*
12 *biochar material are rendered substantively different from the previously tested material.*

13 **5.8 Provisions for High Carbon Biomass Ash**

14 Biomass-fueled power generating stations produce biomass ash as a byproduct of energy
15 generation. Biomass ash—or fractions thereof, including bottom ash and flyash—may display
16 physicochemical properties that are similar to biochar materials, including high organic carbon
17 content. Such materials may pass the required tests in Test Categories A and B of the *IBI*
18 *Biochar Standards*. However, concern exists around 1) the potential formation and accumulation
19 of toxicants in biomass ash including PAHs, PCDD/Fs, and heavy metals (Van Loo and Koppejan
20 2007; Vassilev et al 2013), and 2) the ability of the operator of the biomass boiler or furnace
21 (i.e., the biochar manufacturer) to meet and document “material change” requirements outlined
22 in Section 5.4.

23 Because of concerns outlined above, IBI requires the following provisions for consideration of
24 high carbon biomass ash under the *IBI Biochar Standards*:

- 25 1) Only biomass ash produced from clean cellulosic biomass may be utilized. A statement
26 signed by the producer of the biomass ash (see 2) below) stating that the facility only
27 utilizes clean cellulosic biomass must be provided.
- 28 2) The producer of the biomass ash (i.e., the operator of the biomass boiler or furnace) is
29 deemed to be the biochar manufacturer. Note that this means that an intermediary (i.e., an
30 entity that acquires and distributes and/or markets the biomass ash) does not qualify as the
31 manufacturer of the biochar pursuant to the *IBI Biochar Standards*.
- 32 3) In cases in which some fraction of the high carbon ash is segregated from the total ash
33 product, the following applies:
 - 34 a) Material flow through the bioenergy production facility including the segregation process
35 whereby the high carbon ash fraction is segregated from other ash fractions must be
36 documented and clearly describe the ability to produce a consistent and uniform
37 product.

1 particularly users of the *IBI Biochar Standards*. Revisions occur in two forms—policy revisions and
2 technical program revisions—and are effective the date of publication on IBI’s website.

3 **6.1 Policy revisions**

4 Policy revisions occur when there is a substantive change to the policies, rules, and/or scope of
5 the *IBI Biochar Standards* that may change the eligibility or acceptability of a biochar material. A
6 policy revision creates a new version of the *IBI Biochar Standards* (e.g., Version 1.0 undergoes a
7 policy revision to become Version 2.0). Examples of policy revisions include: changes to feedstock
8 parameters such as the threshold for contaminants; the addition of new toxicants under Test
9 Category B; changes in testing timing and frequency for biochars derived from processed
10 feedstocks; or changes to the “material change” threshold for mixed feedstocks.

11 When policy revisions are warranted, IBI may convene an expert panel or reach out to experts
12 involved in the development of the *IBI Biochar Standards*. The experts may be asked to provide
13 insight and guidance on the identified policy issues prior to a revised draft of the *IBI Biochar*
14 *Standards* being circulated for a 30-day public comment period. IBI will incorporate feedback
15 gathered during the public comment period before publishing the final revised version.

16 **6.2 Technical program revisions**

17 Technical program revisions occur when technical or editorial changes are deemed necessary.
18 Technical program revisions create a new sub-version of the *IBI Biochar Standards* (e.g., Version
19 1.0 undergoes a technical program revision to become Version 1.1). Examples of technical
20 program revisions include: changes to recommended test methods in Test Categories A, B or C;
21 changes to sampling procedures for biochar analysis; or changes to the Maximum Allowed
22 Thresholds for Test Category B toxicants based on revised guidance from regulatory bodies.

23 In the event of the need for a time-sensitive technical program revision, IBI may issue a technical
24 note to describe the technical program revision, prior to the publication of a new sub-version of
25 the *IBI Biochar Standards*. The issuance of the technical note will signal the implementation of
26 the technical program revision to users of the *IBI Biochar Standards* and will be effective the date
27 of publication on IBI’s website.

28 As with policy revisions, IBI may seek guidance from experts when considering technical program
29 revisions. However, a public comment period is not required and IBI will publish the revised sub-
30 version of the *IBI Biochar Standards* once the identified issues have been resolved.

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Appendix 1 – Expanded Information on Test Methods for Category B Toxicants Assessment

All of the elements (except mercury) in Test Category B Toxicants Assessment require the use of test methods outlined in the *Test Methods for the Examination of Composting and Compost* (TMECC; US Composting Council and US Department of Agriculture, 2001). These test methods involve a digestion step followed by a determination step. In some cases there are multiple digestion and/or determination methods allowable. Table A1.1 below provides clarification on the allowable digestion and determination methods for each parameter. Testing labs can choose the appropriate digestion and/or determination method when more than one method is listed for a given parameter. Table A1.2 provides a description of each test method that is abbreviated in Table A1.1.

Table A1.1. Allowable digestion and determination test methods for parameters in Category B that require the use of TMECC methods. For a description of each test method see table A1.2.

Parameter	Source (TMECC Chapter)	Test Method						
		Digestion Method					Determination Method	
		Digestion1	Digestion2	Digestion3	Digestion4	Digestion5	Determin1	Determin2
Arsenic	4.06	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	-	-	-	US EPA 7000	-
Cadmium	4.06	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	TMECC 04.12-E	-	-	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010
Chromium	4.06	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	TMECC 04.12-E	-	-	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010
Cobalt	4.05	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	TMECC 04.12-E	TMECC 04.12-D	TMECC 04.12-C	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010
Copper	4.06	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	TMECC 04.12-E	-	-	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010
Lead	4.06	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	TMECC 04.12-E	-	-	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010
Molybdenum	4.06	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	TMECC 04.12-E	-	-	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010
Nickel	4.06	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	TMECC 04.12-E	-	-	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010
Selenium	4.06	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	-	-	-	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010
Zinc	4.06	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	-	-	-	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010
Boron	4.05	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	TMECC 04.12-D	-	-	US EPA 6010	-
Chlorine	4.05	TMECC 04.12-D	-	-	-	-	ion chromatography	ion-selective electrode
Sodium	4.05	TMECC 04.12-A	TMECC 04.12-B	TMECC 04.12-E	TMECC 04.12-D	TMECC 04.12-C	US EPA 7000	US EPA 6010

1 **Table A1.2. Description of TMECC and US EPA test methods in Table A1.1.**

TMECC Test Methods		
Method Number	Name	Adapted from
TMECC 04.12-A	microwave assisted nitric acid digestion for compost	US EPA 3051 (2007) microwave assisted acid digestion of sediments, sludges, soils and oils
TMECC 04.12-B	nitric acid digestion of compost and soils	US EPA 3050 (1996) acid digestion of sediments, sludges, and soils
TMECC 04.12-C	dry ash sample digestion for plant nutrients	AOAC method 985.01
TMECC 04.12-D	water soluble elements	n/a
TMECC 04.12-E	aqua regia procedure	n/a
US EPA 7000 (2007)	flame atomic absorption spectrophotometry	n/a
US EPA 6010 (2007)	inductively coupled plasma - atomic emission spectroscopy	n/a

2

3

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15

Appendix 2 – PAH, PCDD/F and PCB Compounds to be Tested

PAHs, PCDD/Fs, and PCBs are each suites of related chemical compounds (congeners), sometimes numbering in the hundreds. The US EPA maintains a list of 126 Priority Pollutants as part of the Clean Water Act that have been determined to have detrimental human and environmental health impacts; these compounds must be reported under requirements of the Clean Water Act. Contained therein are the primary PAHs and PCBs of concern. For PCDD/Fs, the World Health Organization (WHO) maintains a list of the primary PCDD/Fs of concern as well as the toxic equivalency factor (TEF) of each PCDD/F (Van den Berg et al, 2005).

For the purposes of biochar testing for PAHs, PCDD/Fs, and PCBs, testing labs shall test for the following priority compounds as determined by the US EPA and WHO.

The 16 PAH priority compounds to be tested are:

	PAH	CAS number
1	Acenaphthene	83-32-9
2	Acenaphthylene	208-96-8
3	Anthracene	120-12-7
4	Benz(a)anthracene	56-55-3
5	Benzo(a)pyrene	50-32-8
6	Benzo(b)fluoranthene	205-99-2
7	Benzo(k)fluoranthene	207-08-9
8	Benzo(ghi)perylene	191-24-2
9	Chrysene	218-01-9
10	Dibenz(a,h)anthracene	53-70-3
11	Fluoranthene	206-44-0
12	Fluorene	86-73-7
13	Indeno(1,2,3-cd)pyrene	193-39-5
14	Naphthalene	91-20-3
15	Phenanthrene	85-01-8
16	Pyrene	129-00-0

The 7 PCB priority compounds to be tested are:

	PCB	CAS number
1	Aroclor 1016	12674-11-2
2	Aroclor 1221	11104-28-2
3	Aroclor 1232	11141-16-5
4	Aroclor 1242	53469-21-9
5	Aroclor 1248	12672-29-6
6	Aroclor 1254	11097-69-1
7	Aroclor 1260	11096-82-5

The 17 PCDD/PCDF congeners to be tested are:

	PCDD/F	Acronym
1	2,3,7,8-Tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	TCDD
2	1,2,3,7,8-Pentachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	PeCDD
3	1,2,3,4,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	HxCDD
4	1,2,3,6,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	HxCDD
5	1,2,3,7,8,9-Hexachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	HxCDD
6	1,2,3,4,6,7,8-Heptachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	HpCDD
7	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8-Octachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin	OCDD
8	2,3,7,8-Tetrachlorodibenzofuran	TCDF
9	1,2,3,7,8-Pentachlorodibenzofuran	PeCDF
10	2,3,4,7,8-Pentachlorodibenzofuran	PeCDF
11	1,2,3,4,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzofuran	HxCDF
12	1,2,3,6,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzofuran	HxCDF
13	1,2,3,7,8,9-Hexachlorodibenzofuran	HxCDF
14	2,3,4,6,7,8-Hexachlorodibenzofuran	HxCDF
15	1,2,3,4,6,7,8-Heptachlorodibenzofuran	HpCDF
16	1,2,3,4,7,8,9-Heptachlorodibenzofuran	HpCDF
17	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8-Octachlorodibenzofuran	OCDF

1
2

3 **References**

- 4 US Environmental Protection Agency (2013) Clean Water Act Priority Pollutants
5 <http://water.epa.gov/scitech/methods/cwa/pollutants.cfm> (accessed November 2013).
6 Van den Berg, Martin, et al. "The 2005 World Health Organization reevaluation of human and
7 mammalian toxic equivalency factors for dioxins and dioxin-like
8 compounds." *Toxicological sciences* 93.2 (2006): 223-241.

9
10

1 **Appendix 3 – Toxicant Assessment and Determination of**
 2 **Thresholds**

3

4 The following table indicates the maximum allowed toxicant thresholds for some jurisdictions,
 5 including the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, Canada, and the United
 6 States (US), that were used to help develop reporting levels for the *IBI Biochar Standards*. These
 7 entities were chosen as resources for toxicant standards due to their history of regulations
 8 addressing these toxicants in soils and other substrates, and their development of similar soil
 9 quality standards (e.g. land-application of biosolids, wood ash, and/or compost). Toxicant ranges
 10 for reporting to the IBI are *not* indicated within this appendix, and are instead indicated within
 11 Table 2 as part of Test Category B. Table A3.1 below is intended to provide a better understanding
 12 of how IBI developed the Maximum Allowed Threshold (MAT) ranges listed in Table 2 through a
 13 survey of international regulations.

14 **Table A3.1. International toxicant regulations and thresholds used for determining range of**
 15 **Maximum Allowed Thresholds for biochar materials.**

Toxicant	International Regulatory Maximum Allowed Thresholds (MATs)	
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), total (sum of 16 US EPA PAHs ¹³)	6(A), 300(B)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), B(a)P Toxic Equivalency (TEQ) basis ¹⁴	3(B)	mg/kg B(a)P-TEQ (dry wt)
Dioxin/Furan (PCDD/Fs), WHO-Toxic Equivalency (TEQ) basis ¹⁵	17 (F)	ng/kg WHO-TEQ (dry wt)
Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), total (sum of 7 US EPA PCBs ¹⁶)	0.2(A), 1(B), 0.5(C)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Arsenic	100(B), 41(D), 13(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)

16

¹³ See Appendix 2.

¹⁴ B(a)P Toxic Equivalency (TEQ) is calculated by multiplying the concentration of each carcinogenic PAH by its Toxic Equivalency Factor (TEF) and summing the products. TEFs of the 8 carcinogenic PAHs are derived from the Australia National Environment Protection Measure 1999 (2013) Table 1A(1) *Health investigation levels for soil contaminants* and are listed in Table A3.2 below.

¹⁵ Toxic Equivalency (TEQ) is calculated by multiplying the concentration of each PCDD/F by its World Health Organization (WHO) Toxic Equivalency Factor (TEF) and summing the products. TEFs of PCDD/Fs are derived from Van den Berg, Martin, et al. "The 2005 World Health Organization reevaluation of human and mammalian toxic equivalency factors for dioxins and dioxin-like compounds." *Toxicological sciences* 93.2 (2006): 223-241 and are listed in Table A3.3 below.

¹⁶ See Appendix 2.

Table A3.1 (continued). International toxicant regulations and thresholds used for determining range of Maximum Allowed Thresholds for biochar materials.

Toxicant	International Regulatory Maximum Allowed Thresholds (MATs)	
Cadmium	1.4(A), 20(B), 39(D), 3(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Chromium	93(A), 100(B), 1200 (D), 210(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Cobalt	100(B), 34(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Copper	143(A), 6000(B), 1500(D), 400(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Lead	121(A), 300(B), 300(D), 150(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Mercury	1(A), Methyl mercury 10(B), Inorganic mercury 40(B), 17(D), 0.8(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Molybdenum	5(C), 75(D) ¹⁷ , 5(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Nickel	47(A), 400(B), 420(D), 62(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Selenium	200(B), 36(D), 2(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)
Zinc	416(A), 7400 (B), 2800(D), 700(E)	mg/kg (dry wt)

1
2 **Table A3.2. Toxic Equivalency Factors (TEFs) for the 8 carcinogenic PAHs (see Table 1A(1)**
3 **Health investigation levels for soil contaminants in Reference (B)).**

PAH compound	TEF	PAH compound	TEF
benzo[a]anthracene	0.1	benzo[a]pyrene	1
chrysene	0.01	indeno[1,2,3-cd]pyrene	0.1
benzo[b]fluoranthene	0.1	dibenz[a,h]anthracene	1
benzo[k]fluoranthene	0.1	benzo[ghi]perylene	0.01

4
5 **Table A3.3. Toxic Equivalency Factors (TEFs) for PCDD/Fs (see Table 1 Summary of WHO 1998**
6 **and WHO 2005 TEF Values in Reference (G)).**

PCDD compound	TEF	PCDF compound	TEF
2,3,7,8-TCDD	1	2,3,7,8-TCDF	0.1
1,2,3,7,8-PeCDD	1	1,2,3,7,8-PeCDF	0.03
1,2,3,4,7,8-HxCDD	0.1	2,3,4,7,8-PeCDF	0.3
1,2,3,6,7,8-HxCDD	0.1	1,2,3,4,7,8-HxCDF	0.1
1,2,3,7,8,9-HxCDD	0.1	1,2,3,6,7,8-HxCDF	0.1

¹⁷ For molybdenum, EPA only provides a concentration limit for "All Biosolids". All other EPA limits listed in Table A3.1 are derived from "Environmental Quality and Pollutant Concentration Biosolids".

Table A3.3 (continued). Toxic Equivalency Factors (TEFs) for PCDD/Fs (see Table 1 Summary of WHO 1998 and WHO 2005 TEF Values in Reference (G)).

PCDD compound	TEF	PCDF compound	TEF
1,2,3,4,6,7,8-HpCDD	0.01	1,2,3,7,8,9-HxCDF	0.1
OCDD	0.0003	2,3,4,6,7,8-HxCDF	0.1
		1,2,3,4,6,7,8-HpCDF	0.01
		1,2,3,4,7,8,9-HpCDF	0.01
		OCDF	0.0003

References

- (A) Amlinger F., Favoino E. and Pollack M., (2004) Heavy metals and organic compounds from wastes used as organic fertilisers. Final Report July 2004. REF. Nr. TEND/AML/2001/07/20 ENV.A.2./ETU/2001/0024 <http://www.bvsde.paho.org/bvsacd/cd43/used.pdf> See Table S1 *Averaged limit values of EU countries* (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Spain, France, Finland, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, and United Kingdom) for specific toxicant information. *NB:* Individual nations within the EU will have different regulatory expectations than the average values reported herein; appropriate regulatory values should be followed, rather than regional averages. (accessed March 2013)
- (B) Australia National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure 1999. (2013) Schedule B(1) Guideline on Investigation Levels for Soil and Groundwater. <http://www.scew.gov.au/nepms/assessment-site-contamination> See Table 1A(1) *Health investigation levels for soil contaminants* for specific toxicant information. (accessed August 2014)
- (C) Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) 2001; 2006 Soil Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Environmental and Human Health (first published 1999, updated 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 & 2007). <http://st-ts.ccme.ca> See *Agricultural concentration limits* for soil PCB limit. (accessed March 2013)
- (D) United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) 1994. A Plain English Guide to the EPA Part 503 Biosolids Rule, Office of Wastewater Management, Washington DC. EPA/832/R-93/003. http://water.epa.gov/scitech/wastetech/biosolids/503pe_index.cfm See Table 2-1 *Pollutant Concentration Limits for EQ and PC Biosolids* for specific toxicant information. (accessed March 2013)
- (E) Bureau de Normalisation du Quebec 2005. National Standard of Canada. Organic Soil Conditioners – Composts http://www-es.criq.qc.ca/pls/owa_es/bnqw_norme.detail_norme?p_lang=en&p_id_norm=8184&p_code_menu=NORME See *Maximum Acceptable Trace Element Content in Compost* for Type AA Compost. (accessed April 2013)
- (F) Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs Quebec 2008. Guidelines for the Beneficial Use of Fertilising Residuals. Reference Criteria and Regulatory Standards. http://www.mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca/matieres/mat_res-en/fertilisantes/critere/guide-mrf.pdf. See Table 8.2 Maximum limits for chemical contaminants (C categories). (accessed October 2014)
- (G) Van den Berg, Martin, et al. "The 2005 World Health Organization reevaluation of human and mammalian toxic equivalency factors for dioxins and dioxin-like compounds." *Toxicological sciences* 93.2 (2006): 223-241.

Appendix 4 – Biochar Sampling Procedures

Equipment required for sampling

All equipment should be clean and residue-free.

- Spade or shovel
- Plastic container for mixing: a 5-gallon bucket is ideal
- If necessary, a clean plastic tarpaulin for mixing
- Permanent marking pen
- Sample submission form (provided by testing laboratory)
- Sample containers (described in detail below)

Sample containers

Gallon- or quart-sized zip-loc plastic bags (or glass jars) are adequate containers for most of the parameters to be tested in the *IBI Biochar Standards*. However, because organic pollutants including PAHs, PCDD/Fs, and PCBs are prone to volatilization, samples to be tested for those compounds and for the germination inhibition assay must be packaged in special glass containers with Teflon lids, or exclusively Teflon containers. Manufactures should check with the testing laboratory to confirm sample amounts to be collected as well as container types. In most cases, labs will provide the Teflon containers for the PAHs, PCDD/Fs, and PCBs tests. Table A4.1 below lists the container types allowed as well as the maximum recommended holding time by each testing parameter.

Table A4.1. Sample containers and holding times by test category parameters.

Parameter	Container type ¹			Max holding time ²
	P	G	GwT or T	
Category A - all parameters	x	x		14 days
Category B - germination inhibition assay			x	7 days
Category B - PAHs, PCDD/Fs, and PCBs			x	7 days until extraction
Category B - metals	x	x		28 days
Category C - all parameters	x	x		14 days

¹ P = Plastic; G = Glass; GwT or T = Glass with Teflon lid or exclusively Teflon

² Max holding time = Maximum holding time recommended at lab (Woods End, 2014)

1 **Composite sampling**

2 Because of spatial variability of biochar stored in a pile, bin or other storage method, it is
3 necessary to take a composite sample consisting of material collected from several locations
4 within the entire biochar material being sampled. A representative biochar sample must be
5 collected through random selection of subsamples throughout the entire material being sampled.
6 The sampling technique will depend on the type of storage of the material and consist of no less
7 than 15 subsamples (USDA and USCC, 2001).

8 **Composite sampling procedure by storage method**

9 *Pile or other uncontained storage method:*

- 10 1. Remove any covers and thoroughly mix the pile, if possible.
- 11 2. Proceed to the first randomly selected sampling location and collect approximately 1 pint
12 of material from near the surface, another pint midway through the pile, and another pint
13 near the bottom of the pile. Place the subsamples in the 5-gallon bucket.
- 14 3. Repeat this process at least 5 times at random locations in the biochar pile.
- 15 4. When all subsamples have been collected, thoroughly mix the material in the bucket being
16 careful to avoid stratification of the biochar based on particle size. If necessary, mixing
17 may be facilitated by dumping the material in the bucket onto a clean plastic tarpaulin,
18 and mixing thoroughly.
- 19 5. Collect the composite sample from the mixed material. Fill the material to overflowing in
20 double wrapped zip-loc bags. Clearly mark the bag contents with permanent marker
21 including name of the biochar, and sampling date and time.

22

23 *Enclosed containers or bagged product:*

- 24 1. Open the container/bag and thoroughly mix the material inside, if possible.
- 25 2. Proceed to the first randomly selected container/bag and take 3 subsamples consisting of
26 approximately 1 pint of material each from several different depths inside the
27 container/bag. Place the subsamples in the 5-gallon bucket.
- 28 3. Repeat this process at least 5 times from randomly selected containers/bags.
- 29 4. When all subsamples have been collected, thoroughly mix the material in the bucket being
30 careful to avoid stratification of the biochar based on particle size. If necessary, mixing
31 may be facilitated by dumping the material in the bucket onto a clean plastic tarpaulin,
32 and mixing thoroughly.
- 33 5. Collect the composite sample from the mixed material. Fill the material to overflowing in
34 double wrapped zip-loc bags. Clearly mark the bag contents with permanent marker
35 including name of the biochar, and sampling date and time.

36

37 **Number of samples to collect**

1 To ensure statistical accuracy of the composite sample it is necessary to adjust the subsample
2 size based on the overall amount of the biochar material being sampled. Biochar manufacturers
3 should adhere to the following subsampling thresholds:

- 4 - For amounts up to 10 metric tons of biochar material the manufacturer shall take a
5 minimum of 15 random subsamples, as outlined above.
- 6 - For each increase in 10 metric tons of biochar material, at least 15 additional
7 subsamples shall be taken. For example, if 60 metric tons of biochar are being sampled
8 for testing, a minimum of 90 random subsamples should be taken throughout the entire
9 biochar material.

10

11 **Shipping biochar samples**

12 Once a composite sample has been taken, the sample must be properly packaged for shipping to
13 the testing laboratory. Standard practice involves securely packaging the double-wrapped biochar
14 samples in sturdy boxes or other containers. The biochar should be clearly marked with the name
15 of the sample and the time and date of sampling. *It is the responsibility of the biochar*
16 *manufacturer to confirm any special procedures for packaging and labeling, quantities needed,*
17 *as well as pricing with the laboratory being used to conduct the testing.* In some cases,
18 laboratories may provide proprietary containers for shipping. Furthermore, because of the
19 possibility of volatilization of organic pollutants at ambient temperatures, it is recommended that
20 samples to be tested for PAHs, PCDD/Fs, and PCBs be chilled on dry ice directly after sampling
21 and during shipping (TMECC).

22

23 **References**

24 US Composting Council and US Department of Agriculture (2001) *Test methods for the*
25 *examination of composting and compost.* (TMECC) Thompson W.H. (ed.)
26 <http://compostingcouncil.org/tmecc/>. (Accessed January 2012).

27 Woods End Laboratories, Inc. (2014) *Principles and Practice: Compost Sampling for Lab*
28 *Analysis.* <http://woodsend.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/sampli1.pdf> (Accessed
29 August 2014)

30

Appendix 5 – Recommended General Sample Analysis Procedures and Protocols for Specific Tests

Sample handling and processing

Since sample handling and processing is analysis methodology-dependent, appropriate procedures should be selected based upon the chemical tests that will be conducted. Sample processing can vary depending upon the physicochemical analyses to be conducted; sample preparation methods followed should be specifically intended for the selected physicochemical tests to be conducted. For example, sample preparation methods can include grinding and sieving or oven-drying for analysis, to provide the dry weight measure indicated in Table 3 of the biochar test categories. General sample preparation procedures can be found in TMECC Section 02.02 Laboratory Sample Preparation (TMECC, 2001). Caution should be exercised, however, since the methodologies recommended therein are designed for compost, and not for biochar. Comments within the TMECC document indicate that sample heating can occur while grinding, which can result in a change in sample qualities and characteristics. To avoid this, it is recommended that samples be ground in a mortar and pestle and sieved to a smaller size range (e.g. 2mm) , to reduce the risk of heating, sparking, or ignition (following sample grinding methods for pH and EC assessment noted in Rajkovich et al, 2011).

Combined approach to analyzing pH and EC

Generic pH and EC analysis procedures have been drawn from the TMECC methodologies (US Composting Council and US Department of Agriculture (2001)). These procedures for the use of control and reference pH samples and electrode probes have been adapted for use with biochar, as follows: where the TMECC methodology recommends a 1:5 (v:v or w:w)¹⁸ solution of compost:deionized water, a 1:20 (w:v)¹⁹ solution of biochar:deionized water should be used for biochar pH and EC analysis, following Rajkovich et al (2011). Similarly, additional time should be allotted for solution equilibration after the combination of deionized water and biochar. Following Rajkovich et al (2011), 1.5 hours should be provided for the shaking and equilibration of biochar-deionized-water solutions prior to pH and EC analysis. Upon completion of the shaking and

¹⁸ v:v – volume:volume denotes a ratio based on equivalent units of volume measurement in a dilution or blend (e.g. a 1:5 v:v biochar:water blend indicates the need to blend 1 ml of biochar with 5 ml of water)
w:w – weight:weight denotes a ratio based on equivalent units of weight measurement in a dilution or blend (e.g. a 1:5 w:w biochar:soil blend indicates the need to blend 1 g of biochar with 5 g of soil)

¹⁹ w:v – weight:volume denotes a blend or dilution ratio expressed as grams of solid per milliliter of liquid. (e.g. a 1:20 w:v biochar:water blend indicates the need to blend 1 mg of biochar with 20 ml of water)

1 equilibration phase, pH and EC analysis may be conducted on the same samples, rather than
2 making separate replicates for pH and EC. To complete the pH and EC analysis follow
3 methodologies 04.10 and 04.11 of the TMECC methodology (US Composting Council and US
4 Department of Agriculture (2001)).

5

6 **Germination Inhibition Assay**

7 The purpose of the analysis is to determine whether adding biochar to soil has an effect on seed
8 germination. It is assumed that a negative effect indicates the presence of undesirable
9 compounds in the biochar material. The Germination Inhibition Assay analysis follows procedures
10 outlined by Van Zwieten et al (2010). The recommended approach for biochar analysis is to follow
11 Van Zwieten et al's method, as it is drawn from the initial 1984 OECD methodology, and to report
12 seedling germination as it relates to the potential failure to germinate in biochar-soil. Lettuce
13 (*Lactuca sativa L.*) is the most widely recommended species to use in germination assessments,
14 due to its sensitivity. Other species that can be used are found within the OECD (1984)
15 methodology. Results should be reported as a "fail" to reflect a failure of seedling germination
16 and growth in biochar-blended soils, thus rejecting the null-hypothesis that there is no difference
17 between biochar-soil blends and unamended soils within the test. Results can be reported as a
18 "pass" where there is no difference of germination and seedling growth success between biochar-
19 soil blends and (control or unamended) soil, or where biochar-soil blends are preferred; both
20 conditions are considered to pass these tests.

21

22 **Analysis of Surface Area**

23 The analysis of surface area will follow the methodologies presented in ASTM D6556-10 Standard
24 Test Method for Carbon Black – Total and External Surface Area by Nitrogen Adsorption. Although
25 carbon blacks can be made at much higher temperatures than biochar, the following Brunauer,
26 Emmett, and Teller (BET) procedure will be effective for analyzing biochar surface area, with the
27 following additional steps:

- 28 1. The relevant measure is the B.E.T. nitrogen surface area ("BET NSA").
- 29 2. The Vacuum Degassing method should be used (section 8.5) in preference to the Flow
30 Degassing (8.4).
- 31 3. Section 8.5.3 Degassing temperature should not exceed 250°C to avoid further
32 thermochemical alteration of the sample, as some biochars are made at temperatures as
33 low as 300°C. The times necessary to degas may greatly exceed the ½ hour mentioned
34 in this section of the analysis; up to 48 hours can be used to conduct the analysis,
35 however this time must be reported along with the results. The actual time needed will
36 depend on the instrument tolerance level, which is dictated by the manufacturer.
- 37 4. As indicated in section 9.6, a minimum of five evenly-spaced data points can be
38 presented between 0.05 and 0.5 p/p0. Two additional data points, at 0.05 and 0.075
39 p/p0 should also be presented in the results.
- 40 5. The mass of sample on which the measurement is based should be determined after the
41 surface area measurement has been completed.

1 6. The instrument should be calibrated periodically with a reference standard supplied by
2 the manufacturer to make sure it is in good working order according the manufacturer's
3 specifications.

4 Final units for surface area analysis should be reported in square meters per gram (m²/g).

5

6 **References**

7 ASTM International (2009) *ASTM D6556-10 Standard Test Method for Carbon Black—Total and*
8 *External Surface Area by Nitrogen Adsorption*
9 <http://www.astm.org/Standards/D6556.htm> (accessed January 2012).

10 OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1984) *Terrestrial Plants,*
11 *Growth Test no. 208. In Guideline for Testing of Chemicals.*
12 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/0/1948285.pdf>. (Accessed January 2012).

13 Rajkovich, S., Enders, A., Hanley, K., Hyland, C., Zimmerman, A.R., and Lehmann, J. (2011)
14 Corn growth and nitrogen nutrition after additions of biochars with varying properties to
15 a temperate soil. *Biol Fertil Soils* 48(3):271-284.

16 US Composting Council and US Department of Agriculture (2001) *Test methods for the*
17 *examination of composting and compost. (TMECC)* Thompson W.H. (ed.)
18 <http://compostingcouncil.org/tmecc/>. (Accessed January 2012).

19 Van Zwieten, L., Kimber, S., Morris, S., Chan, K.Y., Downie, A., Rust, J., Joseph, S., and Cowie,
20 A. (2010) Effects of biochar from slow pyrolysis of papermill waste on agronomic
21 performance and soil fertility. *Plant Soil* 327:235-246. DOI 10.1007/s11104-009-0050-x.

22

24

Appendix 6 – Determining a “Material Change” in Feedstock

This appendix addresses the process for determining a “material change” in feedstock composition. It is necessary to monitor material changes in feedstock in order to meet the requirement that biochar physicochemical properties are tested and reported after every material change in feedstock as stated in Section 5.3.

Classification of Unprocessed and Processed Feedstocks

Feedstocks are classified by type in order to determine material changes in feedstock composition. Table A6.1 is a list of unprocessed²³ feedstock types based on biomass composition. Unprocessed feedstocks not listed in this table may be used to make biochar if they meet 1) the definition of unprocessed feedstock in the glossary and 2) the other feedstock requirements outlined in Section 3.1.

Table A6.1. Unprocessed feedstock types for determining a material change in feedstock composition.

Unprocessed Feedstock Types
Rice hulls & straw
Maize cobs & stover
Non-maize cereal straws
Sugar cane bagasse & trash
Switch grass, Miscanthus & bamboo
Oil crop residues e.g., sugar beet, rapeseed
Leguminous crop residues e.g., soy, clover
Hemp residues
Softwoods (coniferous)
Hardwoods (broadleaf)

Table A6.2 is a list of processed feedstock types based on biomass composition. Processed feedstocks not listed in this table may be used to make biochar if they meet 1) the definition of processed feedstock in the glossary and 2) the other feedstock requirements outlined in Section 3.1.

²³ See Appendix 9 – Glossary for definitions of processed and unprocessed feedstocks.

1 **Table A6.2. Processed feedstock types for determining a material change in feedstock**
 2 **composition.**

Processed Feedstock Types
Cattle manure
Pig manure
Poultry litter
Sheep manure
Horse manure
Paper mill sludge
Sewage sludge
Distillers grain
Anaerobic digester sludge
Biomass fraction of MSW – woody material
Biomass fraction of MSW – yard trimmings
Biomass fraction of MSW – food waste
Food industry waste

3

4 **Determining a Material Change in Feedstock**

5 As described in Section 5.3, a change of 10% or greater between any feedstock type listed in
 6 Tables A6.1 or A6.2 will constitute a material change in feedstock and require a new round of
 7 testing. If an unprocessed feedstock is not listed in Table A6.1, then a material change in
 8 feedstock shall be based on the species of plant material used for the feedstock, so that a change
 9 of 10% or greater in species composition constitutes a material change in feedstock.

10 For processed feedstocks, any significant change in processing parameters (e.g., a change in
 11 process chemistry for paper sludge, or a change from dairy cow manure to dairy cow manure
 12 digestate from an anaerobic digester), or processing facility (e.g., a change from paper mill sludge
 13 provided by Facility A to that provided by Facility B) shall result in the processed feedstock being
 14 classified as a new type.

15 The following are illustrative examples for determining material changes in unprocessed and
 16 processed feedstocks:

- 17 1. a change from 100% softwoods to 100% hardwoods;
- 18 2. a change from 100% cow manure to 100% pig manure;
- 19 3. a change from 100% maize stover to 100% poultry litter;
- 20 4. a change from 100% sewage sludge from Facility A to 100% sewage sludge from Facility
 21 B; or

1 5. a change from 100% Switch grass to 90% Switch grass plus 10% sugar cane bagasse.

2

3 **Mixed Feedstocks**

4 When a mix of feedstocks is used—whether unprocessed, processed or a combination—a change
5 of 10% or more in the total feedstock composition shall constitute a material change in feedstock.
6 The magnitude of the change in the feedstock shall be calculated by adding up the decreases in
7 percentages for each individual feedstock type composing the mixed feedstock. The following is
8 an illustrative example:

9 Rosie’s biochar is originally made of the following mix of unprocessed and processed feedstock
10 types:

- 11 • 35% spruce wood chips,
- 12 • 25% poultry litter,
- 13 • 15% wheat straw,
- 14 • 15% assorted leaves, and
- 15 • 10% corn stover.

16 This past year, due to a change in spruce availability, her feedstocks changed to:

- 17 • 25% spruce wood chips,
- 18 • 35% poultry litter,
- 19 • 15% wheat straw,
- 20 • 15% assorted leaves, and
- 21 • 10% corn stover.

22 Because a 10% total change in feedstock has occurred, Rosie must re-test her biochar.

23 If Rosie’s biochar had instead changed from her original blend in the following way, she would
24 still need to re-test her biochar because there has been greater than 10% change in feedstocks:

- 25 • 38% spruce wood chips,
- 26 • 20% poultry litter,
- 27 • 20% wheat straw,
- 28 • 17% assorted leaves, and
- 29 • 5% corn stover.

30

32

33

1 **Appendix 7 – The Use of H:C_{org} to Indicate C Stability**

2

3 The molar H:C_{org} ratio is recommended to distinguish biochar from other thermochemically altered
4 organic matter for several reasons:

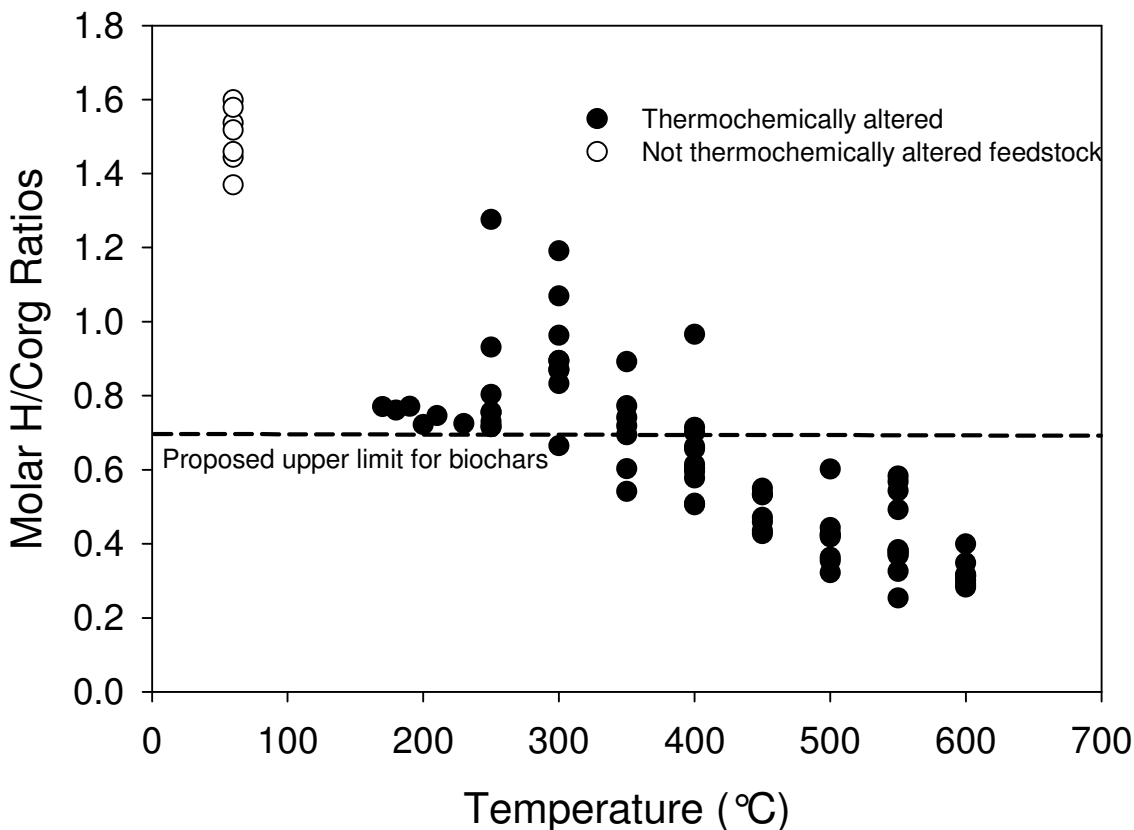
- 5 1. H:C ratios change substantially with thermochemical treatment (Keiluweit et al., 2010);
- 6 2. O:C ratios have been shown to correlate well with stability of biochars (Spokas, 2010);
- 7 3. H:C and O:C ratios are closely related (for low-ash biochars <50% ash and <80% volatiles
8 (ash-free basis));
- 9 4. H is determined directly in most laboratories, whereas O is calculated by subtraction.

10 The modification of using the organic C values rather than total C for this ratio is motivated by
11 the presence of inorganic carbonates in some high-ash biochars. These inorganic carbonates do
12 not form aromatic groups distinctive of biochar materials.

13 The molar H:C_{org} ratio is a material property that is correlated with the degree of thermochemical
14 alteration that produces fused aromatic ring structures in the material. The presence of these
15 structures is an intrinsic measure of the stability of the material.

16 The upper H:C_{org} limit of 0.7 is used to distinguish biochar from biomass that has not been
17 thermochemically altered and from other materials that have been only partially thermochemically
18 altered. We use the term “thermochemically converted” to refer to thermochemically altered
19 materials that have an H:C_{org} below 0.7. These materials have a greater proportion of fused
20 aromatic ring structures. Other thermochemically processed materials that have an H:C_{org} value
21 greater than 0.7 may be thermochemically “altered” but they are not considered to be
22 thermochemically “converted”.

23 Figure A7.1 below shows relationships between processing temperature and H:C_{org} molar ratio
24 for a number of thermochemically altered materials, as compared to unprocessed biomass.



1

2 **Figure A7.1. Relationship between molar H:C_{org} ratios and temperature of thermochemically**
 3 **altered organic matter in comparison to untreated biomass. The dashed line is the upper**
 4 **limit of 0.7. Data points below the 0.7 line are thermochemically altered materials that are**
 5 **considered to be thermochemically “converted” (data from Sevilla and Fuertes, 2009ab;**
 6 **Calvelo Pereira et al, 2011; Enders et al., 2012).**

7

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1 **Appendix 8 – Glossary**

2

3 **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

4 AOAC – Association of Analytical Communities

5 ASTM – ASTM International (formerly known as the American Society for Testing and Materials)

6 BNQ – Bureau de Normalisation du Quebec (a member of the National Standards System of
7 Canada involved in developing product and process standards for Canadians)

8 C – Carbon

9 CaCO₃ – Calcium Carbonate

10 C_{org} – Organic Carbon

11 CCME – Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment

12 CSIRO – Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia

13 dS – decisiemens

14 dS/m – decisiemens per meter

15 dry wt – dry weight

16 EC – Electrical Conductivity

17 EPA – Environmental Protection Agency, United States

18 EU – European Union

19 F – Polychlorinated Dibenzofuran (Furan)

20 g – gram

21 GHG – greenhouse gas

22 H – Hydrogen

23 HCl – hydrochloric acid

24 HMIS – Hazardous Materials Identification System

25 IBI – International Biochar Initiative

26 ICP – Inductively Coupled Plasma

- 1 IEEE – Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
- 2 ISO – International Organization for Standardization
- 3 I-TEQ – International Toxicity Equivalent
- 4 K – Potassium
- 5 KCl – potassium chloride
- 6 kg – kilogram
- 7 m – meter
- 8 mg – milligram
- 9 M – molar
- 10 MAT – Maximum Allowed Threshold
- 11 MSDS – Material Safety Data Sheet
- 12 MSW – Municipal Solid Waste
- 13 N – Nitrogen
- 14 NEPC – National Environment Protection Council, Australia
- 15 ng – nanogram
- 16 OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- 17 OMS – Office of Mobile Sources, division of US EPA
- 18 P – Phosphorus
- 19 PAH – Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon
- 20 PCB – Polychlorinated Biphenyl
- 21 PCDD – Polychlorinated Dibenzodioxin (Dioxin)
- 22 PCDD/F – Dioxins/Furans
- 23 POPs – Persistent Organic Pollutants
- 24 S – Siemens
- 25 S/m – Siemens per meter
- 26 SA – Surface Area

1 TMECC – Test Methods for the Examining of Composting and Compost (from US Composting
2 Council and USDA)

3 USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

4 USGS – United States Geological Service

5 µg – microgram

6

7 **Definition of Terms**

8 *Note: Terms and definitions have been adapted from the references given. Terms and*
9 *definitions created specifically for this document are referenced as "IBI".*

10 Ash: The inorganic matter, or mineral residue of total solids, that remains when a sample is
11 combusted in the presence of excess air. (Adapted from US Composting Council and US
12 Department of Agriculture, 2001)

13 Batch: 75 m³ or 20 metric tonnes of biomass ash i.e., the quantity of biomass ash approximately
14 equivalent to a tractor trailer load of material. (IBI, 2014)

15 Biochar: A solid material obtained from thermochemical conversion of biomass in an oxygen-
16 limited environment. (IBI, 2012)

17 Biochar Characteristics: For the purposes of these standards, biochar characteristics are those
18 physical or chemical properties of biochar that affect the following uses for biochar: 1) biochar
19 that is added to soils with the intention to improve soil functions; and 2) biochar that is produced
20 in order to reduce emissions from biomass that would otherwise naturally degrade to GHG, by
21 converting a portion of that biomass into a stable carbon fraction that has carbon sequestration
22 value. (IBI, 2012)

23 Biological Material: Material derived from, or produced by, living or recently living organisms. This
24 material can be "unprocessed" or "processed". Unprocessed biological material is living material,
25 or recently living material from the plant kingdom (or other non-animal taxa such as fungi) that
26 may have been mechanically resized (such as wood chips), but has not been processed in an
27 animal's body or gone through an anthropogenic chemical modification. Processed biological
28 material is recently living material that has been chemically modified by anthropogenic or
29 biological processes (e.g., paper sludge, manure). All animal products, including bones, offal,
30 food-waste containing animal products, and animal manures are considered to be processed
31 biological material. (IBI, 2012)

32 Biomass: The biodegradable fraction of products, waste and residues of biological origin from
33 agriculture (including vegetal and animal substances), forestry, and related industries including
34 fisheries and aquaculture, as well as the biodegradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste

1 (including municipal solid waste). (Adapted from European Commission Agriculture and Rural
2 Development, 2010)

3 Biomass Ash: Ash generated as a byproduct of energy generation in biomass-fueled furnaces or
4 boilers. Biomass ash is subdivided into bottom ash and flyash. (IBI, 2014)

5 Bottom Ash: The component of biomass ash that falls to the bottom of the burner unit of a
6 biomass-fueled furnace or boiler and that has a consistency of ash or a semi-solid slag material.
7 (Oregon DEQ, 2011)

8 Clean Cellulosic Biomass: Those residuals that are akin to traditional cellulosic biomass such as
9 forest-derived biomass (e.g., green wood, forest thinnings, clean and unadulterated bark,
10 sawdust, trim, and tree harvesting residuals from logging and sawmill materials), corn stover and
11 other biomass crops used specifically for energy production (e.g., energy cane, other fast growing
12 grasses), bagasse and other crop residues (e.g., nut shells), wood collected from forest fire
13 clearance activities, trees and clean wood found in disaster debris, clean biomass from land
14 clearing operations, and clean construction and demolition wood. These fuels are not secondary
15 materials or solid wastes unless discarded. Clean biomass is biomass that does not contain
16 contaminants at concentrations not normally associated with virgin biomass materials. (US CFR,
17 2014)

18 Composite Sample: Grab samples from one source of biomass ash that are thoroughly mixed to
19 produce a consistent sample. (IBI, 2014)

20 Contaminant: An undesirable material in a biochar material or biochar feedstock that compromises
21 the quality or usefulness of the biochar or through its presence or concentration causes an
22 adverse effect on the natural environment or impairs human use of the environment (adapted
23 from Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, 2005). Contaminants include fossil fuels
24 and fossil fuel-derived chemical compounds, glass, and metal objects. (IBI, 2012)

25 Diluent/Dilutant: Inorganic material that is deliberately mixed or inadvertently comingled with
26 biomass feedstock prior to processing. These materials will not carbonize in an equivalent fashion
27 to the biomass. These materials include soils and common constituents of natural soils, such as
28 clays and gravel that may be gathered with biomass or intermixed through prior use of the
29 feedstock biomass. Diluents/dilutants may be found in a diverse range of feedstocks, such as
30 agricultural residues, manures, and municipal solid wastes. (IBI, 2012)

31 Dioxin: The term "dioxin" is commonly used to refer to a family of chemicals that share chemical
32 structures and characteristics. These compounds include polychlorinated dibenzo dioxins (PCDDs)
33 and polychlorinated dibenzo furans (PCDFs), which are unwanted by-products of industrial and
34 natural processes, usually involving combustion. Dioxins are listed as Persistent Organic Pollutants
35 by the Stockholm Convention. (IBI, 2012)

36 Feedstock: The material undergoing the thermochemical process to create biochar. Feedstock
37 material for biochar consists of biological material, but may also contain diluents. (IBI, 2012)

- 1 Flyash: The lightest-weight component of biomass ash in a biomass-fueled furnace or boiler that
2 rises with the flue gases and is captured by a boiler or incinerator's air contaminant control
3 equipment. (Oregon DEQ, 2011)
- 4 Fossil Fuel-Derived Chemical Compounds: This category of contaminant includes any compound
5 of a synthetic nature, created from hydrocarbons, including, but not limited to plastics, solvents,
6 paints, resins, and tars. Because of the blending of wastes and use of synthetic materials to bind
7 and label other materials (e.g. plastic flagging tape in forestry residues), fossil fuel-derived
8 chemical compounds have become commonplace in multiple waste streams, and are often difficult
9 to separate from feedstocks prior to processing. These contaminants can contain highly toxic
10 chemicals like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) that may act as bioaccumulators and affect the
11 resulting quality of biochar. (IBI, 2012)
- 12 Grab Sample: An individual sample collected at a selected time. (IBI, 2014)
- 13 Hazardous Materials or Wastes: Potential environmental pollutants that, when concentrated, can
14 be a source of regulatory concern for any use or application that may influence human or
15 environmental health and wellbeing. (Adapted from US Composting Council and US Department
16 of Agriculture, 2001)
- 17 IBI Biochar Certification Program: A voluntary, self-certifying, biochar certification program
18 administered by the International Biochar Initiative that offers biochar manufacturers the
19 opportunity to certify their biochar(s) as having met the minimum criteria established in the *IBI*
20 *Biochar Standards*. For further information please visit [http://www.biochar-](http://www.biochar-international.org/certification)
21 [international.org/certification](http://www.biochar-international.org/certification). (IBI, 2013)
- 22 Heat Treatment Temperature: The temperature at which a feedstock material is processed during
23 thermochemical conversion in a given thermochemical process. (IBI, 2013)
- 24 Manufacturer: The party or parties who process(es) feedstock materials into biochar, and
25 submit(s) the biochar for testing according to these *IBI Biochar Standards*. (IBI, 2012)
- 26 Material Change: Changes in feedstock type (listed in Tables A6.1 and A6.2) or residence time of
27 greater than 10%, or changes in heat treatment temperature of +/- 50°C. (IBI, 2013)
- 28 Municipal Waste/Municipal Solid Waste (MSW): solid non-hazardous refuse that originates from
29 residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, demolition, land clearing, or construction sources
30 (adapted from Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment 2005). Municipal solid waste
31 includes durable goods, non-durable goods, containers and packaging, food wastes and yard
32 trimmings, and miscellaneous inorganic wastes. (Adapted from US Environmental Protection
33 Agency, 1995)
- 34 Organic Carbon: Biologically degradable carbon-containing compounds found in the organic
35 fraction of biochar feedstocks. Biochar feedstocks can contain such compounds as sugars,
36 starches, proteins, fats, cellulose, and lignocellulose, which are thermochemically degradable.

1 Other organic carbon forms can include petroleum and petroleum by-products such as plastics
2 and contaminated oils, which are, for the purposes of these standards, included within the
3 definition of contaminants, but may also be thermochemically degraded. The organic carbon
4 fraction does not include inorganic carbonate concretions such as calcium and magnesium
5 carbonates. (Adapted from US Composting Council and US Department of Agriculture, 2001)

6 Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): POPs are organic chemical substances, that is, they are
7 carbon-based. They possess a particular combination of physical and chemical properties such
8 that, once released into the environment, remain intact for exceptionally long periods of time
9 (many years); become widely distributed throughout the environment as a result of natural
10 processes involving soil, water and, most notably, air; accumulate in the fatty tissue of living
11 organisms including humans, and are found at higher concentrations at higher levels in the food
12 chain; and are toxic to both humans and wildlife. (Adapted from Stockholm Convention, 2012)

13 Policy revision: A revision to the *IBI Biochar Standards* that occurs when there is a substantive
14 change to the policies, rules, and/or scope of that may change the eligibility or acceptability of a
15 biochar material, and that results in the publication of a new version of the *IBI Biochar Standards*.

16 Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs): PCBs are a group of organic compounds used in the
17 manufacture of plastics, as lubricants, and dielectric fluids in transformers, in protective coating
18 for wood, metal and concrete, and in adhesives and wire coating. PCBs have been banned in
19 most countries and are no longer manufactured, but sources remain in the environment in the
20 form of products and waste. The Stockholm Convention lists PCBs as POPs. (IBI, 2012)

21 Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs): PAHs refer to a family of compounds built from two or
22 more benzene rings. Sources of PAHs include fossil fuels and incomplete combustion of organic
23 matter, in auto engines, incinerators, forest fires, charcoal grilling, or other biomass burning.
24 PAHs are usually found as a mixture containing two or more of these compounds, such as soot.
25 Out of hundreds of different PAH compounds, only a few are considered to be highly toxic and of
26 regulatory concern. (Adapted from USGS, 2012)

27 Post-processing: Any action undertaken by the biochar manufacturer to enhance, transform or
28 otherwise alter the physicochemical properties of the biochar material after completion of the
29 thermochemical conversion process. (IBI, 2014)

30 Processed Feedstock: Biomass that has gone through chemical processing (for example, paper
31 pulp sludge) or biological processing (for example, digestion, such as manures and sludge from
32 waste effluent treatment) beyond simple mechanical processing to modify physical properties.
33 Because animals may bioaccumulate toxicants in their tissues, all animal parts and products are
34 considered to be processed feedstocks for purposes of these guidelines. Any biomass material
35 that may have been grown on soils contaminated with heavy metals or other toxicants will also
36 be considered a processed feedstock for purposes of these guidelines. (IBI, 2012)

1 Residence Time: The time a feedstock is held within a consistent temperature range in a given
2 thermochemical process. (IBI, 2012)

3 Residues: Secondary products derived from agricultural, forestry, food or industrial production
4 and processing chains. (RSB, 2013)

5 Soil Functions: Soil functions include: "(i) biomass production, including in agriculture and
6 forestry; (ii) storing, filtering and transforming nutrients, substances and water; (iii) hosting the
7 biodiversity pool, such as habitats, species and genes; (iv) acting as a platform for human
8 activities; (v) source of raw materials; (vi) acting as carbon pool; and (vii) storing geological and
9 archeological heritage." (Adapted from European Commission COM, 2006)

10 Technical Note: A note issued by IBI to describe a time-sensitive technical program revision prior
11 to the publication of a new sub-version of the *IBI Biochar Standards*.

12 Technical Program Revision: A revision to the *IBI Biochar Standards* that occurs when technical
13 or editorial changes are deemed necessary, and resulting in the publication of a new sub-version
14 of the *IBI Biochar Standards*.

15 Toxicants: Chemical or physical agents that, depending on dose, can produce adverse effects in
16 biological organisms (adapted from Trush 2008). These chemicals may be essential for some
17 plants and animals at low levels, or in a specific oxidation state, but can be toxic at higher
18 concentrations or in a different oxidation state. Toxicants may be naturally present in soils or
19 artificially produced by human activity. (Adapted from US EPA, 1999)

20 Unprocessed Feedstock: Biomass from the plant kingdom (or other non-animal taxa such as
21 fungi), grown in a clean, uncontaminated environment, that may have gone through mechanical
22 processing to change its physical properties (e.g., particle size), but has not gone through
23 chemical processing or treatment, or biological processing (e.g., digestion). (IBI, 2012)

24 Volatile Matter: Those products, exclusive of moisture, given off by a material as a gas or vapor,
25 determined by definite prescribed methods that may vary according to the nature of the material.
26 (Adapted from Milne et al, 1990)

27 Weathering: Changes in biochar physicochemical properties due to precipitation, freeze-thaw
28 cycles, fluctuations in temperature, deposition of atmospheric chemicals, and/or exposure to
29 ambient air. (IBI, 2014)

30

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5

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2
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