Annual Report
July 2011 – June 2012
The International Biochar Initiative (IBI) is an international non-profit organization working to promote the development of sustainable biochar systems that follow cradle-to-cradle sustainability guidelines. Founded in 2006, IBI is the world’s foremost authority and source of credible, balanced information on biochar, and has amassed a global information platform and network of members and supporters for the exchange of information on biochar and is leading the industry by creating the first-ever biochar standards to enable commercialization and market development.

IBI currently has over 3,800 subscribers and a growing number of dues-paying members. We tracked nearly 158,000 unique visits to our website in the past year, up 29% from the previous 12-month period. Visits to our website came from 209 countries and territories. We now have 43 affiliated regional and national biochar groups around the world, including in China, India, Malaysia, Japan, Europe, and the US. In short, IBI is large and growing rapidly.

2011 – 2012 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
1. Johannes Lehmann, Chairman of the Board; Cornell University, United States
2. Stephen Joseph, Vice-Chairman of the Board; University of New South Wales, Australia
3. Ellen Baum, Board Treasurer; Clean Air Task Force, United States
4. Marta Camps, Massey University, New Zealand
5. Thomas Harttung, BlackCarbon A/S and GreenCarbon A/S, Denmark (board member through end of 2010)
6. Warwick Manfrinato, Plant Environmental Intelligence, Brazil
7. Guy Reinaud, Pro-Natura International, France
8. Sununtar Setboonsarng, Asian Development Bank, Thailand
9. Yoshiyuki Shinogi, Kyushu University, Japan
10. Saran Sohi, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom
11. David Wayne, Retired, Formally of Shell Research, United Kingdom

2011 – 2012 IBI STAFF
1. Debbie Reed, Executive Director
2. Shiva Scotti, Administrative Director
3. Thayer Tomlinson, Communications Director
4. Kelpie Wilson, Communications Editor
5. Lourdes Haro, Member Services Coordinator
6. Miguel Rodríguez Tejerina, Project Manager

Some highlights this year

IBI led the development of the first-ever Biochar Standards (i.e. The Standardized Product Definition and Product Testing Guidelines for Biochar That Is Used in Soil) and initiated planning the first-ever IBI Biochar Certification Program.

As part of IBI’s work with biochar projects, IBI assisted two projects (one in Costa Rica and one in Kenya) gain funding of over $140,000 from National Geographic through the National Geographic Great Energy Challenge.

IBI Executive Director, Debbie Reed, highlighted IBI programs and progress at the Asia Pacific Biochar Conference in Kyoto, Japan in September, 2011.
A Letter from IBI’s Executive Director, Debbie Reed

The past year has been very busy for all of us at IBI. We are very excited to have finalized *The Standardized Product Definition and Product Testing Guidelines for Biochar That Is Used in Soil*, referred to in shorthand as the *IBI Biochar Standards*. IBI began this process in May 2009 as a critical first step in removing the barriers to commercialization of sustainable biochar systems. Since our vision is to help attain the commercial viability of sustainable biochar production and utilization at all scales, it has become increasing clear to me in the 6 years that I have been with IBI that before the industry can succeed in these efforts, we must define and be able to succinctly communicate what biochar is, as well as what it is not. To do this, we established these *IBI Biochar Standards* to provide the tools needed to universally and consistently define what biochar for use in soil is, and to confirm that a product intended for sale or use as biochar possesses the necessary characteristics for safe use. The *IBI Biochar Standards* also provide common reporting requirements for biochar that will aid researchers in their ongoing efforts to link specific functions of biochar to its beneficial soil and crop impacts. We look forward to launching a full *IBI Biochar Certification* Program in the next year and to continue our work in developing global *IBI Biochar Sustainability Guidelines* and a Biochar Offsets Protocol for carbon markets.

One of the most relevant characteristics of biochar is its long-term stability in soil, making it a high-priority but under-recognized strategy for climate change mitigation. As part of the Biochar Offset Protocol development process, IBI is leading an effort to identify an appropriate test methodology to assess and quantify the stable carbon component of biochar when applied to soil. We have assembled an Expert Panel to develop this Biochar Carbon Stability Test, to develop a methodology to test the quantity of stable carbon in biochar, with at least 100-year residence time in soil (the definition of permanence in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol, and recognized by most carbon markets).

Our board and staff have been engaged in many other related efforts on behalf of the global biochar community, including presenting at regional and national biochar conferences, continuing to spread the word on biochar and IBI regionally, and increasing our communications and outreach materials through a frequently updated website and newsletter program. IBI also hired a Member Services Coordinator to help streamline our new database and membership categories—including business and organizational members. And of course, you, the members of this community, have aided us in all aspects of our work, and we owe our continued gratitude for your input, participation, and support of IBI.

Many individuals and groups deserve special thanks and recognition for all their work supporting our efforts, as well. We have strong and continued support from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Blue Moon Fund (BMF). We also received support from Putnam Foundation, The Climate Trust, and The Wellspring Foundation. In addition to our dedicated Board of Directors, we have an active 28-person volunteer Advisory Committee on whom we rely for advice, feedback, and contributions, and a terrific and hard working staff. The support of our members allows us to keep our programs moving forward and to identify and develop new initiatives important to the field and the industry. We look forward to another busy and productive year to bring biochar into the mainstream as a recognized climate mitigation and agricultural sustainability tool.

Sincerely,

Debbie Reed
Executive Director, the International Biochar Initiative
What We Have Accomplished

1. Development of **first-ever universal standards for Biochar**, *The IBI Standardized Product Definition and Product Testing Guidelines for Biochar That Is Used in Soil*, to aid in market and consumer certainty and regulatory assurances regarding the safe and effective use of biochar as a soil amendment and to help achieve greenhouse gas mitigation globally.

2. Planning of an **IBI Biochar Certification Process** for biochar producers, based on the *Biochar Standards*.

3. Complete transition to a new membership management system, including benefits like a searchable Member Directory, and a Community Bulletin Board feature that allows IBI to post job and funding opportunities for IBI paying members.

4. Recruitment of a Member Services Coordinator to **support members** with any issues or concerns and also to fully support the new and improved IBI website.

5. Creation of **Business and Organizational** IBI Member categories.

6. Management of a Latin American Biochar Program, in partnership with CATIE and with the support of BMF, to help **support the development of a strong and lasting biochar legacy in Costa Rica**.

7. Facilitation of targeted research and development (R&D) activities to **demonstrate the suitability of biochar materials** for mineland reclamation purposes.

8. Assistance to two **biochar projects in Costa Rica and Kenya in receiving funding** through the National Geographic Great Energy Challenge.

9. **Sponsorship of the Asia Pacific Biochar Conference** in Kyoto, Japan, in September, 2011.

10. Continued tracking and reporting on progress in all aspects of the biochar field, including **science and technology, policy, market and project development, and media coverage of biochar**.

11. Promotion of **regional biochar initiatives** development in all major countries of the world through outreach to projects and through regional groups.
Regional Biochar Groups

As of June 2012, IBI lists 43 regional biochar groups. Regional Biochar groups help support and organize local biochar communities, including research activities and projects applicable to that geographical area. These regional groups often hold conferences and meetings, provide updates on regional biochar projects to their members, undertake projects such as field tests and biochar production pilots and demonstrations, advocate for policy on the local and regional levels, write and publish reports, and develop and serve a network of people all working in a similar geographic area.

Global membership

IBI proudly includes members from all over the world, including a growing presence in the Asia-Pacific Region; paying members now constitute 10% of our subscribers. Our members are a critical part of our support network.
IBI’s Growing Communications Platform

A large part of IBI’s mission is to bring biochar into the mainstream through increased communications, including a dynamic and updated website, monthly newsletter, and other announcements. We’re proud to announce the following progress and developments over the past year:

1. **29% increase in website visitors**: IBI tracks all visitors to our website and saw a significant increase in visits compared to the prior year—from 122,000 to 158,000.
2. **Website visitors from 209 countries and territories**.
3. **IBI Network Database** upgraded from a relatively static provider to one with vastly increased capacity and ability to track different member groups.
4. **43 Global Biochar Group Affiliates**: IBI lists 43 regional and national biochar interest groups, many of which are quite active on a local/regional basis.
5. **Biochar Conferences Proliferate**: 2011–2012 saw a continued increase in major biochar conferences around the world: regional biochar research meetings were held in China, New Zealand, Korea, Japan, Uganda, the United States, and Germany. IBI is co-sponsoring the 4th International Biochar Conference in China.
6. **93 Dedicated Research Programs Globally**: IBI lists 93 dedicated biochar research programs at academic and research institutions worldwide.
7. **Increase in peer-reviewed published literature on biochar**: The IBI electronic bibliography contains 766 tracked citations on biochar. The volume of research continues to increase, with 60 papers published in 2008, 129 in 2009, 140 in 2010, 171 in 2011, and 120 in 2012 as of June 2012.
A Financial Summary

The International Biochar Initiative completed a comprehensive Financial Review in 2011, and no material modifications were necessary for its financial records to be in compliance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.