



24 November 2009

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## **IBI and the UNFCCC COP 15 Copenhagen Meetings, December 2009**

The UNFCCC COP 15 will be held December 7 - 18, 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The existing legally binding agreement (the Kyoto Protocol) which governs carbon emissions expires in 2012; the COP 15 in Copenhagen will work on a new agreement to clarify four key issues around climate change: ambitious emission reduction targets for developed countries; nationally appropriate mitigation actions of developing countries; scaling up financial and technological support for both adaptation and mitigation; and an effective institutional framework with governance structures that address the needs of developing countries.

After a long year of multiple preparatory meetings in advance of the UNFCCC COP 15, IBI and other biochar advocates are preparing to participate in the Copenhagen meetings. IBI Chairman of the Board Johannes Lehmann and Executive Director Debbie Reed attend the meetings and present on biochar. Three formal biochar side events will take place during the meetings:

**Monday, 7 December, 2009** from 1:00 pm-3:00 pm at the EU Pavilion "Biochar Application to Soils - Carbon Sequestration and Soil Improvement Potential" hosted by the European Commission, Joint Research Center.

**Wednesday, 9 December, 2009** from 4:45-5:45 pm at the Bellona Conference Room, Bella Center "Biochar - Delivering Fast Climate Benefits?" hosted by the Bellona Foundation.

**Saturday, 12 December, 2009** from 11:00 am - 12:30 pm, place TBD, "Climate Mitigation and Adaptation with Food and Energy Security Benefits" hosted by IBI.

Additionally, on Saturday December 12, 2009 from 8:00 am - 6:00 pm, North Sea Regional Biochar will host a biochar booth at the Agriculture and Rural Development Day (more information at: <http://www.agricultureday.org>).

As more details emerge on these and other biochar events at Copenhagen, IBI will send out Copenhagen Special Updates and post information on the IBI website at: <http://www.biochar-international.org/copenhagen>.

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## IBI Welcomes Our New Advisory Committee

IBI is pleased to announce a new slate of Advisory Committee members, to help us best represent and communicate the science, technology, policy, and current state of biochar around the world. The 39 members of the Advisory Committee, who will serve from November 2009 to May 2011, come from a range of institutions, interests, and experiences. There are five sub-committees that will focus on Policy, Production/Technology/Classification, Utilization in Soils, Commercialization, and Socio-Economic Evaluation. The Committee members represent 13 different countries and among them speak 11 languages. For a full list of the new members, please go to:

<http://www.biochar-international.org/board/advisorycommittee>

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## IBI is Launching a Membership Drive

Starting in December, IBI will invite biochar supporters to become official members of IBI. Charter Memberships that include a special gift will be available until January 30, 2010. Through memberships, IBI hopes to strengthen relationships with the community of biochar researchers, practitioners, and supporters. We also hope to raise money through membership dues to support important programs and services to the biochar community. Stay tuned for our announcement in December about the new IBI membership program.

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## Practitioner Profile: 3R Environmental Technologies, LTD: Pyrolysis Technology in Hungary

Swedish environmental engineer Edward Someus says he has been charring things his whole career. Ever since graduating from the University of Lund in 1978, he has been engaged in scientific research and development on carbonization processing and carbon application to soils. In 2009, after years of research, development and testing, he received a European Union (EU) Authority permit to offer his formulated agroc carbon for open field application on low input and organic farms in Europe.



Someus began developing his patented 3R Agroc carbon technology after moving into the historic Lang Machine Works in Hungary in 1989. Continuing a 140 year old tradition of manufacturing that began with steam engines and boilers, Someus developed the rotary kiln design that produces his agroc carbon product today.

To read the full story, go to: <http://www.biochar-international.org/profiles/3R>.

Photo: Nursery tests of the biochar, courtesy of Edward Someus

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## **IBI Technology Extension Director Jane Lynch Shares Initial Research Results from Australia**

During October 2009, Jane Lynch, IBI's Technology Extension Director worked with Paul Blackwell, Senior Soil Scientist at the Department of Agriculture and Food in Western Australia on an experiment to help find the effect of biochar and biochar mineral complex on fertiliser efficiency, leaching, and nitrous oxide emissions growing rocket (arugula) in sandy soils. This part of the study is on the early effects on soil, soon after biochar incorporation.



The project is a collaboration between Anthroterra Pty Ltd and the Department of Agriculture and Food of Western Australia (DAFWA). It is also contributing nitrous oxide data to a new national biochar research project by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) in collaboration with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the University of Western Australia and the NSW Department of Primary Industries.



Paul has just harvested the rocket and will soon have some preliminary results from the experiment which will provide indications of the effects of the biochar and BMC on the rocket... we will keep you posted!

Top Photo: The 32 lysimeters set up to grow the rocket and enable leachate and nitrous oxide data to be collected. Bottom Photo: Jane collecting leachate from the bottom of the lysimeters in order to measure nutrients which have leached from the soil.

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## **October 2009 Conference in China Brings Together Biochar Scientists from around the World**

A new biochar group in China, CAU-Biochar (China Agricultural University), recently hosted the Joint International Workshop between China and United Kingdom on the Influence of Biochar on Soil Processes and Fertility in Beijing on 18-21 October, 2009.

Bringing together eleven scientists from the United Kingdom, Denmark, Australia,

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Canada, Japan, and Mongolia, and more than 20 scientists from China, the conference highlighted biochar characterization, production, effects on soil physical and chemical properties, soil microbial functioning, plant nutrient cycling and crop growth responses, carbon sequestration, greenhouse gas emission and global climate change. Four keynote presentations from Dr. Saran Sohi (UK), Prof. Qimei Lin (China), Yoshiyuki Shinogi (Japan), and Prof. Minggang Xu (China), led the conference, with the addition of 16 volunteer presentations and 6 posters. One of the highlights of the event was the ability of the participants to visit field experiments of biochar effects on soil fertility as well as a village-scale biochar/biogas production unit in a nearby village.



The workshop was organized by the soil microbiology group of the Department of Soil and Water Science, College of Resources and Environment, CAU, and co-chaired by Dr. Guitong Li of CAU, China and Prof. Phil Brookes of the UK, and funded by CAU and CAAS. For more information on the conference or on CAU-Biochar, please go to:

<http://www.biochar-international.org/regional/china>.

Photo: Conference participants viewing pot trials, courtesy of Dr. Guitong Li

## Northeast (USA) Biochar Symposium A Success

By Francesca Rheannon

The [Northeast Biochar Symposium](#) that took place over the weekend of November 13-14 in western Massachusetts was a resounding success. Co-sponsored by the International Biochar Initiative, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst College of Natural Sciences, the Northeast Carbon-Negative Network, the New England Small Farm Institute, and the Pioneer Valley Biochar Initiative, it brought together some of the leading biochar researchers, developers, and advocates in the world, with over 200 participants.

On Friday, November 13, participants convened on the campus of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst to hear presentations by, among others, Cornell University soil scientist Johannes Lehmann, USDA agronomist David Laird, and IBI executive director Debbie Reed. Christoph Steiner, University of Georgia engineering research scientist, also shared his insights.

Symposium workshops included something for everyone: biochar basics for people just learning about it; practical applications for the small farmer, backyard enthusiast, or community biochar organizer; and impacts on soil biology, feedstock characteristics, and reports on current research projects for scientists (lay or otherwise).

On Saturday, the symposium moved the action to the New England Small Farm

Institute in the neighboring community of Belchertown, where a bevy of biochar demonstration projects from tabletop to small farm scale kept participants fascinated, in spite of the rain that dampened the proceedings.

To read the remainder of the story by Ms. Rheannon, go to:  
<http://www.biochar-international.org/nebiochar>

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## Iowa State University to Host 2010 USBI Conference

After a very successful North American Biochar conference held in Boulder, CO in August 2009, the next national biochar conference in the US will be held by the United States Biochar Initiative (USBI) at Iowa State University, in Ames, IA June 27 - June 30, 2010. Iowa State University boasts a world-renowned research team in biochar and a partnership with the USDA ARS. The University has a number of biochar research field trials (ongoing since 2007); bench and pilot-scale pyrolyzers for research in thermochemical processing of biomass; and also houses biochar characterization laboratories used for routine and state-of-the-art biochar characterization. A conference website with more information will be unveiled soon.

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## Presentations from North American Biochar 2009 Now Available

Papers, posters, and presentations (including some videos) from the North American Biochar Conference are now available on the conference website at: <http://cees.colorado.edu/northamericanbiochar.html>. The conference was held August 9 - 12, 2009 at the University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, USA and was a huge success. The Center for Energy and Environmental Security (CEES) at the Colorado Law School hosted the event. The conference had 325 participants, with 18 sessions that were run over 3.5 days with 80 speaking contributors and 40 posters.

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## Share Biochar Field Trial Results with IBI

Now that the growing season in the North is over, IBI encourages those of you who have been experimenting with biochar (and have results) to share your work with IBI. Julie Major, IBI's Agricultural Extension Director, is collecting project data so we have a better idea of what work is happening around the world. If you are interested, please take a look at the type of data needed on the IBI Extension page (<http://www.biochar-international.org/extension>). To go directly to the forms, please see Project Registry Form at: [http://www.biochar-international.org/sites/default/files/IBI\\_Field\\_Trial\\_Registry\\_Project.pdf](http://www.biochar-international.org/sites/default/files/IBI_Field_Trial_Registry_Project.pdf) and Soil Analysis Form at: [http://www.biochar-international.org/sites/default/files/IBI\\_Field\\_Trial\\_Registry\\_SOIL.pdf](http://www.biochar-international.org/sites/default/files/IBI_Field_Trial_Registry_SOIL.pdf). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Julie Major directly ([julie@biochar-international.org](mailto:julie@biochar-international.org)).

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## Regional Updates

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At this time, IBI is aware of 24 regional biochar initiatives operating around the world and highlights three more recent groups this month from India, China, and the North Sea Region (EU).

#### **The Biochar Society of India**

The Biochar Society of India had its first meeting November 1, 2009 in Pune, Maharashtra with eight founding members present in addition to eight other new members. The Society is working on a website (to be released soon) and its mission is to highlight and support biochar projects and organizations in India. For more on this group, please see:

<http://www.biochar-international.org/regional/india>.

#### **China Agricultural University (CAU)-Biochar**

A new group in China, CAU-Biochar recently hosted a Joint International Workshop between China and United Kingdom on the Influence of Biochar on Soil Processes and Fertility in Beijing on 18 -21 October, 2009. For more information on CAU-Biochar, or to contact the group, please see: <http://www.biochar-international.org/regional/china>.

#### **The North Sea Regional Biochar Group**

The EU INTERREG IVb North Sea Region Steering Group has decided to support biochar through the climate saving soils project initiative. This new regional group has thirteen partners from seven different countries around the North Sea all working together to support biochar. The project officially started on 1-10-2009 and continues until 30-9-2013. For more information see: <http://www.biochar-international.org/regional/northsea>.

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