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Biochar*Plus*

Energy, health, agricultural and environmental benefits from biochar use: building capacities in ACP countries

Praia (Cape Verde)
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For immediate release

Africa Biochar Partnership Launched on the 1st March 2016, Nairobi - Kenya

The Africa Biochar Partnership (ABP) which is an open continental platform for advancing the cause of Biochar Systems in Africa was launched on March 1st, 2016 in Nairobi - Kenya at the International Workshop on Biochar Systems for Africa, organized by the "Biochar Plus" project in collaboration with "Biochar for Sustainable Soils" project.

Biochar systems relate to the Biochar technology, pyrolysis/gasification of biomass, feedstock, and agricultural use as well as to the complexity of relations which are necessary to make the overall process sustainable. The systemic approach considers the multiple benefits of the biochar technology as it relates to socioeconomic, health, energy, agriculture and the environment.

ABP will focus on research, applications, technology transfer and market uptake, advocacy, policy advancement, end users engagement, strategic development, networking and dissemination. It will serve as a hub for peer-to-peer exchange, learning, training, coordination and technical assistance in order to accelerate biochar development in Africa.

The overall objective of the Africa Biochar Partnership is to harmonize the coordination, communication and capacities building of biochar systems as opportunities for optimized biomass and bio-waste use towards improved resource management in the sectors of agriculture, environment, energy, health and socioeconomic development of the African people.

The ABP will also facilitate the production and dissemination of very efficient burners (pyrolytic/gasifier stoves) for improved and efficient cooking and also for power generation from bio-waste. This will thereby help ameliorate the persistent problem of overreliance on woody biomass to meet domestic energy demand mainly in the sub-Saharan African region. The ABP will promote the use of waste biomass resources in its energy agenda to promote sustainable energy access hence contributing to the sustainable energy for all (SE4ALL) agenda.

The ABP will also intensify research on the Biochar produced in the utilization of the pyrolytic/gasifier burners for its safe and meaningful application in agricultural fields to increase food production in African countries. Biochar has the potential to ameliorate soil conditions. The benefits of biochar for soil amelioration depend

on soil properties. It is most beneficial on highly leached sandy and acidic soils such as those predominantly found in most sub-Saharan African countries. This represents an important opportunity in sub-Saharan Africa to guarantee sustainable food production.

The ABP is composed of all the relevant partners and stakeholders already working on biochar systems in Africa, including regional and international institutions inside and outside Africa. The ABP will, in the interim, be housed at the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) until the partners agree on its headquarters.

The international workshop, which resulted in the launch of the ABP was attended by representatives from regional and international organizations including the African Union Commission, Biochar Plus Project and its project partners, Biochar for Sustainable Soils, International Biochar Initiative, SIANI, ECREEE, NEPAD National Bureau in Kenya, Senior Kenya Government officials, private sector and civil society.

More details on ABP can be on the official "Biochar Plus project" website (https://sites.google.com/site/biocharplusproject/the-african-biochar-partnership) and the ECREEE websites (www.ecreee.org). Contact info.africabiochar@gmail.com for additional information.

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