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Biodiversity for a Livable Climate

Restoring Ecosystems to Reverse Global Warming

May 20, 2015

May Climate Conference Recap

by Lacey Klingensmith

Our latest conference-"Urban and Suburban Carbon Farming to Reverse Global Warming"-was an inspired day of learning that empowered participants with practical knowledge and techniques for implementing local climate change solutions. The event, hosted at the Harvard University Science Center, featured more than twenty speakers with topics ranging from city-scale ecology to backyard food forests and the role of carbon flows and soil health in these systems.

Conference presenter Bruce Fulford, of City Soil & Greenhouse LLC.

Building on the metaphor of our environment as a "sick patient," academics and expert practitioners from a diverse scope of fields shared their prescriptions for healing and restoring ecosystems with biochar, cover crops, compost, and permaculture techniques. They advocate for a holistic perspective to recover our lost connection with nature. Attention was also given to the topics of invasive species, aquatic plants' potential for "blue carbon" sequestration, and to promoting urban agriculture and space for permeable surfaces.

Featured Event

Tufts Fall 2015 Climate Conference: Restoring Water Cycles to Reverse Global Warming

Urban soil speakers at a Q&A session

A thriving asphalt-turned-green space by Depave Somerville

A panel on "Local Eco-Restoration as Climate Activism" highlighted infrastructure improvements and success stories in stormwater management including the constructed wetland at Alewife Reservation. Between sessions, the lobby buzzed with excitement as attendees chatted with vendors from various environmental businesses and organizations who were eager to showcase their work. As a final call to action, Boston's renowned activist and political leader Mel King closed with a keynote address emphasizing the importance of listening to and understanding community needs, and nurturing future environmental stewards by engaging youth in hands-on gardening activities.

In this conference we will focus on water's role in regulating climate through its capacity to store, move and transfer more heat than any other natural compound.

Sponsored by the Tufts Institute of the Environment.

RSVP

When

Friday, October 16, 2015, 5:30 PM - Sunday, October 18, 2015 5:00 PM (EDT).

Where

Tufts University, Medford, MA.

Fees

$150 sliding scale

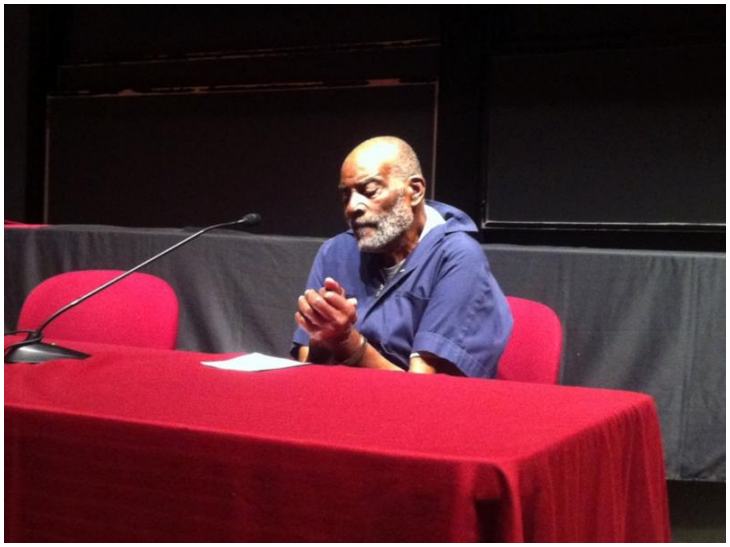
For more information visit here and Register now on Eventbrite!

Other Events

Microbes 'R' Us

Saturday, June 14, 2015 from 6-9:00 PM
Cambridge, MA

Come join us for a potluck/discussion with our restoration ecologist, Jim Laurie, about some of the revolutionary ideas developed by Lynn Margulis on the deep relationship among microbes, and all life including humans.



Keynote speaker and eminent political leader, Mel King

Thank you to all participants for making this spectacular event possible! "Urban and Suburban Carbon Farming to Reverse Global Warming" represents one more achievement in our quest to change the climate conversation.

The Living Building Challenge

By Jacqueline Sussman

The Omega Center. Photo by Gregory Edwards

As the reality of Earth's limited resources further encroaches on the consumerist approach to life, some businesses and individuals are pursuing an alternative model that looks to nature for guidance on living a sustainable, yet modern, existence.

Find out more on our Meetup Page.

For up-to-date info on our events

Visit our Website

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About BLC

Our mission at Biodiversity for a Livable Climate is to mobilize the biosphere to restore ecosystems and reverse climate change. Our primary project is to re-direct the mainstream climate conversation from an almost exclusive concern with atmospheric carbon to encompass the entire carbon and water cycles and the regenerative role of biology.

Learn more about our ongoing projects, upcoming events and find additional information and resources at bio4climate.org.

The Living Building Challenge is an international certification program that requires the most rigorous environmental performance standards for the human-built environment. Created in 2006 by the International Living Future Institute and run by the Cascadia Green Building Council, the LBC goads humans to live and work in tandem with the natural environment by providing a framework to design and construct buildings in ecologically responsible ways. The Challenge consists of seven performance areas, termed "petals": site, water, energy, health, materials, equity and beauty. The petals are subdivided into a total of twenty imperatives, with principles such as "limits to growth," "net zero energy," and "democracy and social justice." Projects are assigned imperatives that match the core purpose of the building and the community it is intended to serve.

The Tyson Living Learning Center

According to the Living Future Institute, the LBC is a "philosophy first, an advocacy tool second and a certification program third." The program applies eco-philosophical principles that will encourage people to more deeply consider humans' role in the larger environment. It promotes biophilic design, integrating natural features, such as green roofs and abundant natural light, to create a profound connection between humans and nature in the urban environment. The Challenge also draws from the approach of biomimicry-innovative methods that emulate symbiotic relationships in nature to establish more efficient and resilient ways of living.

The Hawaii Preparatory Academy Energy Lab

Once building projects are built and in operation, meeting their assigned imperatives and all seven petals for a minimum of 12 consecutive months, they are eligible for full program certification and designated as being in 'Living' status. Projects that meet three or more petal requirements can also earn Petal Recognition: this partial certification applauds the efforts of those who are not yet able to reach full Living status. At present, there are over 100 project teams that are pursuing the LBC, and some have already attained full certification and Living status, including the Omega Center for Sustainable Living in Rhinebeck, New York, the Tyson Living Learning Center at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, the Hawaii Preparatory Academy Energy Lab in Kampala, Hawaii, and the Bertschi School Living Science Classroom in Seattle, Washington. The Omega Center utilizes an "Eco Machine"-a natural water reclamation system that purifies water with microscopic algae, fungi, bacteria, plants and snails-treating water using zero chemicals. The Bertschi School Living Science Classroom features an 165 square foot vertical green wall that treats all grey water produced by the building. Water travels down the wall to plants that absorb atmospheric carbon dioxide. These projects provide inspirational evidence of the vast potential of ecologically-minded design and architecture.

Although it is impossible to exist in the modern world without creating an ecological footprint, humans can evolve with the help of programs like the LBC to significantly reduce environmental harm and to nurture symbiotic relationships between people and the greater natural community around them.