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May 24, 2016

Thank You!

We would like to thank all of the attendees, speakers, and volunteers at our latest conference, The Power and Promise of Biodiversity, held on April 30, 2016 at Harvard University.



Huge thanks to our fantastic audience at the Harvard 2016 conference

The Power and Promise of Biodiversity: Visions of Restoring Land, Sea and Climate was our sixth successful conference on the road to restoring ecosystems to reverse global warming. Here are some reflections on the day:

Events

*For up-to-date info
on our events*

"The speakers provided an informative and broad-ranging perspective on their exciting projects. I deeply appreciated connecting with old environmental friends and making contact with young activists on the cutting edge of the biodiversity movement."

-Steve Stodola, conference attendee

"One of the best aspects of your recent conference was the compelling interweaving of on-the-ground experience with broader metaphysical and scientific understandings. Not only was each speaker individually articulate, but the meaning of their presentations built throughout the day to a coherent experience that was both intellectually exciting and professionally inspirational. Thanks for the care that you took in organizing the conference and developing the program."

-Susan Jennings, conference attendee

"This was a wonderful event. Adam's opening remarks laid down the challenge and potential of realigning ourselves with the rest of the natural world and this was followed by high school biology students presenting Rachel Carson's *The Edge of the Sea*, a great start to the day. The question and answer periods were participatory and the book table was busy. It was excellent."

-Paula Phipps, Bio4Climate Education Associate

"Our thanks to the whole gathering of attendees and speakers, and as with previous events, this conference took us in a number of new directions. The emphasis in the morning's presentations on aquatic ecosystems is an opportunity to see the rich biodiversity of watershed, estuary and ocean systems, and to learn how we can support and protect it."

-Brian Cartwright, Bio4Climate Associate

Stay tuned for a conference recap, which will include videos of the day's talks!

Colleges are a Hub for Sustainable Agriculture

Given their notorious capacity to mass produce food-like substances, college cafeterias are rarely thought of as hubs for sustainability. Despite this fact, or perhaps partly in response to it, students are becoming increasingly involved with the food on their plate. Colleges and universities across the country are responding to the growing desire for sustainable food systems.

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About BLC

Through education, policy and outreach, our mission is to promote the power of the natural world to stabilize the climate and to restore biodiversity to ecosystems worldwide. Collaborating with organizations around the globe, we advocate for the restoration of soil, and of grassland, forest, wetland, coastal and ocean ecosystems-along with the associated carbon, water and nutrient cycles-to draw down excess atmospheric greenhouse gases, cool the biosphere, and reverse global warming, for the benefit of all people and all life on earth.

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



A student working on the farm at Cal State, Chico.

More and more American colleges are investing resources into substantial-sized farms, along with corresponding programs in sustainable agriculture. Many are thinking outside the garden box with such program offerings as outdoor classrooms, farm internships, CSA (community supported agriculture) and farmers market stands. Butte College, near Chico, California, created the [first organic dairy](#) west of the Mississippi. At Hampshire College, in Amherst, MA, students contribute on an experimental farm that produces 75,000 pounds of vegetables each year. Farm work [includes](#) maple trees tapped for syrup, over 200 laying hens that supply fresh eggs to the campus dining hall, and the keeping of over 65,000 honeybees. Deep Springs College, located in the California high desert, assigns its students a labor position, with such titles as [student cowboy and butcher](#), that rotates every seven weeks. Numerous college farms operate a CSA, supplying their crops to community members who invest in a seasonal share.



The working farm at Hampshire College

Bristol Community College, in Fall River, Massachusetts, is one of the few community colleges to offer a degree program in sustainable agriculture. There are currently 27 enrolled students, who have the option of pursuing an [associate's degree or a certificate](#) in Sustainable Agriculture. The program prepares graduates to "enter farming, gardening, community organizations, or agricultural businesses, or to continue their education in sustainable agriculture professions."

In the BCC program, beyond the basics of plant growing, students also learn how to heal and restore degraded soils. Dr. Nancy Lee Wood, professor of sociology and director of the Institute for Sustainability and Post-Carbon Education (ISPE), co-created the program 6 years ago, driven by her desire to see an agriculture program shaped to benefit the greater Fall River community.

In her course, "Food, Famine and Farming in the Global Village," Dr. Wood and her students look at how industrial agriculture has become the mainstay of global agriculture and how that trend affects different populations and the environment. She stresses the importance of sustainable agriculture programs in urban settings: "There are so many urban centers, and so few people doing work in agriculture. The vast majority of our students hadn't been on farms before, and never saw themselves as farmers. Given that we [no longer] have an agriculture-based society, it's absolutely critical that colleges do this work—particularly community colleges—because we need people who are locally-based and will stay in the community after they graduate."



"Every bioregion is different," she continues. "You have to think about different agricultural schemes. Large universities are less likely to think about that. Community colleges help to educate local people and get them out into the labor force at a much lower cost."



The dairy operation in motion at the University of New Hampshire

While it's terrific to have a high-producing farm that feeds the hungry mouths of college students, it's even better to have a farm that serves both the college and its surrounding community.

Jacqueline Sussman

Restoring a Greener New York City



A computer simulation contrasting a 1609 Manhattan vs current day. Photo by Arthus-Bertrand/Corbis

Conservationist ecologist Eric Sanderson simulates an ecologically-restored NYC 400 years into the future with the [Mannahatta 2409 project](#).

Shade-grown coffee benefits ecosystems



The Tacazze sunbird contributes to healthy Ethiopian ecosystems on shade-grown coffee farms. Photo credit: Evan R. Buechley

Farms producing shade-grown coffee are [preserving ecosystems](#) for a plentiful and diverse insect-eating bird community. They also benefit economically: Ethiopian farms with shade grown certification can earn up to 20% greater revenue than non-certified farms.

