



EBI NEWSLETTER

From the Earth and Biosphere Institute

February 2008

Editorial

One of the pleasures of having been involved in the EBI from its beginning has been to observe how we have changed the whole way in which we see and carry out environmental and related research in Leeds. Our major strength is being both interdisciplinary and talking to each other on a regular basis. At this time a whole series of initiatives are being developed which take this process further forward. Water@Leeds is one of the transformation bids which has been taken to the second and final stage. There is a new initiative to develop Climate Change research as a major outward facing area for the university. Finally the EBI is an important part of Environment@Leeds which is an umbrella grouping for all Environmental Science here at Leeds.

Mike Krom

Awards and Recognition

October 2007 brought recognition and publicity for the great work being done by various EBI members. Research Fellow and now Professor **Joe Holden** was awarded the prestigious Philip Levehulme Prize in "compelling recognition of his research achievements". Work by **Tim Benton** and colleagues from York drew the public eye when *The Times* ran a full page article on the findings from their research on palaeontological records of mass extinction entitled "History of mass extinction is a grim lesson on climate change."

November brought international recognition of the important work being done by the Amazon Forest Inventory Network (RAINFOR) group in Geography led by **Oliver Phillips** and **Jon Lloyd**. The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation awarded them £2.2 million to quantify the role of tropical forests in the Global Carbon Balance, while December brought more good news when EBI Research Fellow **Emanuel Gloor** was awarded a large £3.5 million consortium grant to solve the carbon budget in the Amazon rainforest.

New EBI Initiatives

The **EBI MSc PROGRAM** that we mentioned as an idea in our last newsletter has developed to being more than that in four months since that writing. With **Ian Lawson**, **Manuel Gloor**, **Steve Sait** and **Mette Termansen** at the helm, course curricula, timetables and financial structures are being finalized as of this writing, and it is planned that EBI and member departments will advertise this program for the coming fall.

The **EBI NETWORK SEMINAR SERIES (EBINS)**, initiated by our new students, **Claire Hutchins** and **Mark Goddard**, got off to a fine start in December 2007. **Mike Krom** opened our introductory event, which was themed 'Interdisciplinary Research' with a short talk on the EBI's role in this arena over the past three years. **Andy Dougill** followed with some reflections on inter-disciplinary research, its definitions, its practice, and the challenges and responsibilities of those engaging in it. **Bill Kunin** packed a punch with results from the RELU projects here in Leeds, too much to write about in our reporting space here (Sorry, Bill!). **Claire McDonald** concluded the evening with her research on insect herbivory in the fossil records of Antarctic forests, for which work she won an award at the recent meetings of the Royal Entomological Society (Congrats, Claire!). Attendees then enjoyed our revolutionary vegan and delicious (not an oxymoron, as even the sceptics who attended will confirm!!!) buffet from Hansa's, and we like to think some interesting conversations were generated in the very social evening that followed.

This was only the start though. The EBINS is, we hope, here to stay. Events will be organised every six-eight weeks, with speakers from different disciplines speaking on the same theme. We hope to generate some interesting and thought-provoking evenings. In **February**, we are having a casual student evening with EBI students giving synopses of their projects and seeking input from attendees. **March** will bring **Andy Challinor** (ICAS) and **Simon Lewis** (Geography) as speakers on '**Climate Change and the tropics**'. **April** will see **Koos Biesmeijer** (IICB) and **Mette Termansen** (SRI) bring their very different perspectives on '**Ecosystem Goods and Services**'.....And Hansa's may cater again!! For details see: www.see.leeds.ac.uk/ebi/newsletters.htm

Lastly, Preparations for an **EBI-LED SYMPOSIUM** entitled '**Global Biogeochemical Cycles- A 'Leed-ing' View**' in honour of our very own **Rob Raiswell**'s retirement are underway. With support from the WUN, and great enthusiasm from symposium speakers from across the globe, this event (August 26-29, 2008) promises to be a fantastic three day showcase & brainstorming of the latest research and ideas in this field (registration details to follow).

More new EBI members : We are joined by **Helen Miller**, now head of IICB, **Doug Parker** & **Andy Challinor** of Atmospheric Sciences, **Ted Feldpausch** of Geography, **Lesley Morrell** of Biology, **Nigel Mountney** and **James Lawrence** of Geological Sciences : **A warm welcome to the EBI community.**

