

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

Expedition/Project/Conference Title: Biogomon 2009: 6th international symposium on ecosystem behaviour

Travel Dates: 29th June 2009 – 4th July 2009

Location: Helsinki, Finland

Group Member(s): Catherine Hardacre

Aims: To attend 'Biogomon 2009' and present findings from my PhD research project.

OUTCOME:

I would like to thank the James Rennie Bequest for contributing the travelling costs for my attendance at Biogomon 2009. The symposium was held in Helsinki where we were lucky to have a week of sunshine and warm weather in Finland's small and vibrant capital.

..... The focus of all Biogomon symposiums is on monitoring biological and geological systems and processes, and the talks and posters in the 2009 event were arranged around 14 themes, of which 'integrated monitoring and modelling' – where I presented a poster summary of results from my PhD on the methyl halide fluxes from temperate and high latitude wetland ecosystems - and 'biogeochemistry of peat lands' were of particular interest to me.

Biogomon was well attended by leading researchers and the standard of the speakers I saw was very good. It was very useful to see the wide range of research that is being done to further our understanding in areas that are predicted to be strongly affected by climate change; for example, hydrological cycles and carbon and nitrogen dynamics in ecosystems, particularly for boreal forests and peat-lands.

Through the poster sessions and informal discussions I made several useful contacts that have been helpful for my PhD studies. The first of these was a group in Braunschweig/Germany who were generous enough to do some specialised X-ray fluorescence measurements on samples from myself and a colleague at a reduced cost. A second group I talked with had done very interesting studies that investigated different chamber enclosure techniques. I have used chamber enclosures extensively in my field work and the results presented by this group high-lighted the advantages of my chambers, providing an important discussion point for my thesis. Finally I spoke to several groups studying peat-lands in the UK who were able to help me find estimates for total peat-land areas in the UK. This data will be important for up-scaling my methyl halide flux measurements to estimate fluxes for the whole of the UK in my thesis.

..... I found Biogomon 2009 an enjoyable and useful experience where I was able to put my research in to context and to high-light active and interesting areas of research for my future career. Furthermore listening and speaking to so many enthusiastic scientists has motivated me in the writing of my thesis!

Kind regards,

Catherine Hardacre