

Biogas Sector Market Position Paper

The idea of generating waste is starting to and ultimately must fall away and be replaced with the notion that a by-product, formerly known as waste, from one process is the input into the next process which will produce a product of value. This is a true circular economy.

Agricultural residues which have always been treated as waste, and simply discarded, are in fact highly valuable nutrients which must be applied to land in so doing will displace chemical fertilisers, most of which, originate from fossil fuels. Replacing chemical fertilisers with organic carbon nutrients not only makes financial sense, but it is also the environmentally responsible thing to do. In South Africa where the soils are some of the oldest on earth, the carbon content of the soils has been depleted over the eons and this coupled with unsustainable farming practises has accelerated the depletion of carbon in the soil making the soils, and thus farming, dependant on chemical fertilisers which continue to denude the soils of carbon. To break this accelerating downward spiral, carbon must be added to the soils through the recycling of nutrients, using the tried and trusted practises of anaerobic digestion and composting, and through newer innovations such as pyrolysis char. These simple, yet effective solutions not only reintroduce carbon to the soils thus stimulating the microbiome that we are all dependant on, but they also sequester carbon for hundreds if not thousands of years.¹

Given the climate warming trajectory, initiatives such as these should not simply be seen as alternative solutions, these should be recognised as essential to our own survival and the reversal of the last two hundred years of carbon dumping in the atmosphere in the name of technology advancement.

When one understands that energy production from a system such as anaerobic digestion is only one of the products of the process, the true value of the technology can be harnessed. The appropriate financial framework and market support all that are required to enable this truly circular economy.

A simple shift in perspective is all that is required to make these changes for the better.

This simple shift creates tens of thousands of meaningful permanent jobs for men and women, addresses real climate change issues, saves water, and invests in our own economy for the prosperity of all.

Join and stand with SABIA to make this a reality.

Put nature and the environment first, the business will flow later.

¹ FAO, Soil Organic Carbon - the hidden potential, <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ed16dbf7-b777-4d07-8790-798604fd490a/>