

INTRODUCTION TO THE LINNEBORN AWARD AND LAUDATIO FOR THE AWARDEE 2011

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The Johannes Linneborn Prize was established in 1994 on behalf of the European Commission by Dr. Wolfgang Palz to honor a European individual for an exceptional life-time contribution to the field of sustainable energy from biomass. It is not a reward for scientific excellence only but also technical and managerial merit are appreciated. This prestigious award was connected to the name of Johannes Linneborn, a German biomass pioneer and businessman and the manufacturer of more than 500,000 Imbert small-scale wood gasifiers used to fuel cars, when fossil liquid fuels were scarce. His ideal was a world in which mankind lives in harmony with nature with optimal exploiting of biomass for energy and materials. On the picture you see Mr. Linneborn together with the young Dr. Palz.

From a long list of excellent candidates the Prize Committee selected as winner of the Linneborn Prize 2011:

*Professor Kai Sipilä
Vice President Strategic Energy Research
Technical Research Centre of Finland VTT*

The prize is awarded him for his leadership in development of biomass conversion technologies and for promoting biomass as a sustainable energy source within Finland, in many aspects a forerunner country in biomass, in the European Union and worldwide for more than 25 years. Trained as a chemical engineer at the Helsinki University of technology in Finland in his career he acquired impressive abilities for process development showing creative and practical solutions like in the combined combustion/pyrolysis process of VTT which drew a lot of attention. His interests and successful activities however, covered a wide range of biomass subfields like all kinds of thermo-chemical conversion technologies, waste to energy and material recycling systems, alternative motor fuel production, renewable energy systems, refining of biomass, energy and climate issues, to name a few.

Professor Sipilä working for VTT contributed to a extensive list of publications and reports and 10 patents. Apart from his technical papers, he delivered a long row of authoritative reviews and overviews on biomass energy, biofuels and material resources at conferences, workshops etc. which had a lot of influence on the R&D and implementation agendas in the biomass field.

His leadership in biomass is solidly based on personal scientific and engineering abilities and broad insight in and vision on the whole chain from basic research to industrial applications with a fine eye for socio-economic problems and the human factor.

Kai Sipilä is very talented in bringing people together centered around well chosen themes and often he takes the lead in a natural and pleasant way. Recent examples are the EERA Bioenergy Joint program which he coordinates, he was also the coordinator of the Network of Excellence in EU 6, the chairman of the national biofuel implementation team, IEA Bioenergy Agreement

Executive Committee Representative for Finland from 1993 and vice-chairman in 2003, and many more national and international committees, advisory committees, working parties etc where he played a leading or very active role. He really has done a lot for the field resulting in many successes.

Kai is much appreciated and praised for his leadership by his colleagues in the international networks he is active in. Always committed to the concept of biomass as a very valuable and flexible sustainable resource and coming up with well documented and considered arguments and opinions.

Kai Sipilä, the committee of the Linneborn Prize, and we are sure the whole biomass community is convinced that you really deserve this award. Keep up the excellent work in the future and our hearty congratulations!