



PRESS RELEASE

NetZero to launch the construction of Brazil's first biochar production plant

Paris & Belo Horizonte, 5 July 2022 - NetZero, the French start-up leader in long-term carbon removal in the tropics, announces it has begun today the construction of the first industrial biochar production plant in Latin America. After its first site in Cameroon, where the carbon contained in coffee husks is extracted and stored in the soil, the company has chosen Brazil, the world's leading coffee producer, to host its second plant. Located in Lajinha, in the state of Minas Gerais, the plant is scheduled to start operating by the end of 2022. Its annual production capacity will reach 4,000 tonnes of biochar, equivalent to more than 6,500 tonnes of CO₂ removed each year.

THE VERY FIRST BIOCHAR PRODUCTION PLANT IN BRAZIL

It is in Lajinha, 350 km East of Belo Horizonte, in the Brazilian coffee region of Matas de Minas, that NetZero has decided to set up the first industrial biochar production site of Latin America. This plant will benefit from a major source of coffee husks and will reach a production capacity of 4,000 tonnes per year – double the output of NetZero's plant in Cameroon. To do so, NetZero concluded a partnership with Coocafé, a cooperative which brings together 10,000 local coffee growers. The biochar will be used by the farmers as a soil amendment to improve coffee yields while durably storing carbon in the soil.

Similar to charcoal powder, biochar is produced by extracting the carbon contained in crop residues. The process, called pyrolysis, consists in the thermal decomposition of carbonaceous material, and allows to stabilise for hundreds of years the carbon initially captured by plants in the atmosphere. Biochar also has major agronomic properties when put in soil, as it allows to durably reduce the use of fertilisers while increasing agricultural productivity.

Fernando Cerqueira, Chairman of Coocafé, said: *"We are proud that Coocafe and its 10,000 planters are pioneers in the use of biochar in Brazil. We are going to recover residues that were previously unused and produce biochar to improve our soils. We are convinced that biochar is a major solution to make our coffee production more sustainable and of a better quality. And by doing so, each of our small planters contributes to fight climate change."*

Pedro Figueiredo, CEO of NetZero Brazil, said: *"The State of Minas Gerais provides ideal conditions to develop NetZero's model, given the large amount of biomass available and the momentum to transform agriculture to a more sustainable model. We have found here a strong support to our project, starting from local authorities of Lajinha's municipality, all the way to the State of Minas Gerais. This pioneering spirit resonates very well with NetZero's goals and aspirations."*

Axel Reinaud, Co-founder and CEO of NetZero, said: *"Since the creation of NetZero one and a half year ago, setting up operations in Brazil has always been a priority. Our R&D teams are already based there and the country had plenty of unused agricultural residues that can be valued. Beyond this first site, we intend to build a number of other biochar production plants in the country in the years to come. All the more that demand is very strong, given that our model allows to reduce agriculture's carbon footprint while improving crop yields."*

AN INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION, ONLY ONE YEAR AFTER ITS CREATION

Founded in 2021 and supported since the beginning by 24 business angels, NetZero aims at rapidly deploying biochar on a very large scale in the tropics. Biochar is a solution validated by IPCC to fight climate change, and is one of only a few solutions to perform long-term carbon removal from the atmosphere.

NetZero's uniqueness is to combine climate and social issues thanks to the co-benefits of biochar, which allows to simultaneously address three pressing challenges: fighting climate change, promoting a more sustainable agriculture, and improving access to energy. NetZero's business model is based on selling high-quality carbon removal credits on the booming market of long-term carbon removal.

In 2022, NetZero's innovative model was recognised by Elon Musk and the XPRIZE Foundation (NetZero received a \$1 million prize). The award recognised 15 solutions worldwide that can be scaled up rapidly to 1 billion tonnes of CO₂ removed per year. NetZero's model was also awarded the "Solar Impulse Efficient Solution" label, currently the only label to validate the economic profitability of existing environmental solutions.

By 2030, NetZero aims at removing over 2 million tonnes of atmospheric CO₂ annually, with over 700 biochar production plants installed worldwide.

ABOUT NETZERO

NetZero is a French start-up founded in 2021 by Axel Reinaud, Aimé Njiakin, Prof. Jean Jouzel and Olivier Reinaud, whose purpose is to deploy biochar at scale in the tropics. Biochar is one of only a few solutions that can perform long-term carbon removal from the atmosphere. An IPCC-validated solution, biochar's principle is to extract carbon from crop residues and stores it for hundreds of years in soil, therefore reducing the amount of carbon in the atmosphere. By leveraging biochar's co-benefits, NetZero simultaneously tackles three pressing challenges in developing countries: climate change, sustainable agriculture, and access to energy. NetZero's business model is based on selling high-quality carbon credits on the booming market of long-term carbon removal. Learn more at: www.netzero.green

Press contacts

Frédéric MOREL-BARBIER

+33 7 86 10 83 30

f.morel-barbier@tilder.com

NetZero press service: press@netzero.green