

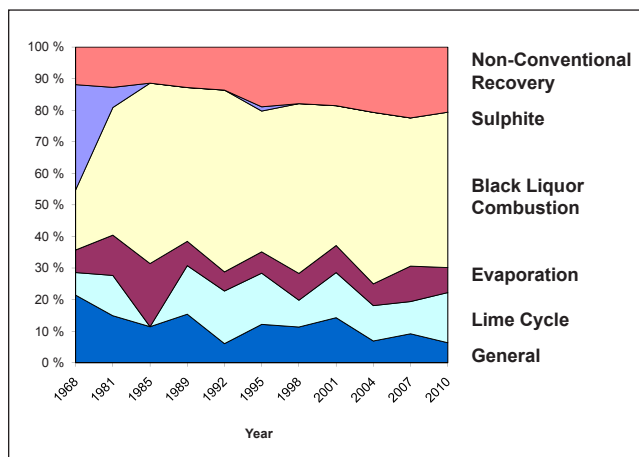


Monstrous marvels

For the past thirty years, the International Chemical Recovery Conference (ICRC) has presented some of the world's most important research on chemical recovery technology for the pulp and paper industry. The conference's origin was actually a 1968 Symposium of Recovery of Pulping Chemicals, held in Helsinki and led by Norman Westerberg, according to Mikko Hupa of Åbo Akademi, Finland, who served as ICRC Conference Chair in 2001 and is a member of its current Advisory Committee. At the 1968 conference, L.V. Forman of Scott Paper referred to recovery furnaces as "monstrous marvels" deserving of their share of future attention – something ICRC has provided since its formal beginning in 1981.

The first ICRC as most recognize it – organized by the ICRC Committee, jointly sponsored by TAPPI and PAPTAC, and held now every three years – was the 1981 Vancouver conference by that name. Conference Chair for the first event was George H. Tomlinson II. Tomlinson was a TAPPI Fellow, Honorary Life Member, former Director, and recipient of the TAPPI Gold Medal who passed away in March of this year. Other past Conference Chairs include Douglas Reeve, Tom Grace, Ivan Paldi, Jim Frederick, Esa Vakkilainen, Andy Jones, and Honghi Tran.

Led by Conference Chair Chris Verrill of International Paper, the 2010 ICRC was held in Williamsburg, VA, with over 200 attendees from around the world. This month, the first three papers in *TJ* were originally presented at the 2010 conference. Each received a "Best Paper Award," as designated by the ICRC Advisory Committee, which was comprised of past conference chairs, as well as Verrill and Technical Program Committee Chairs Allan Walsh of Jansen Combustion & Boiler Technologies and Keijo Salmenoja of Oy Metsä-Botnia Ab. These experts systematically categorized and ranked the papers, eventually selecting six in total for the awards.



ICRC paper topics through the years

Presented by Hupa at this year's conference, the chart here shows how ICRC topics have varied through the years. As can be seen, there has been an increase in non-conventional topics for these "monstrous marvels," such as the black liquor gasification and biomass co-firing papers in this issue.

Bioenergy for here and now

This month, MeadWestvaco announced a collaborative development to convert organic waste streams into biogas and other value-added products at a demonstration plant adjacent to its Evadale, TX, mill. Also this month, KapStone Paper and Packaging of Northbrook, IL, said it successfully registered as a producer of cellulosic biofuel from burned black liquor for the tax year 2009, creating an estimated net benefit of \$22 million.

For companies interested in near-term biomass opportunities like these, TAPPI's BioPro Expo & Marketplace, scheduled for March 14-16, 2011 in Atlanta, includes a new feature. A new "Marketplace" allows for a more extensive presentation of currently available biomass technologies and applications. For more information, visit www.bioproexp.org.

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