

# Hope biochar - Nature & Environment

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The production of biochar from penetrant bush is an ongoing trend in Namibia. Various research projects are currently being carried out with the so-called biochar on the Krumhuk farm, south of Windhoek. The project is led by various members of the Bush Control and Biomass Utilization Project (BCBU) of the Ministry of the Environment and GIZ, the NUST BUSH project and various industrial representatives from the Namibian Charcoal Association (NCA) and the Namibian Biomass Industry Group (N-BiG).

The difference between normal charcoal and biochar is that the biochar is quenched with water when it burns and the pores of the charcoal open up. These can then absorb water and nutrients like a sponge. The quenching also releases the oil in the coal. The leftover water can then be used as a natural pest killer.

However, a special oven is required for production, such as the Kon-Tiki oven with a water connection at the bottom of the oven. If such an oven is not available, a simple hole in the floor can be the solution.

When the charcoal has then been dried and chopped, nutrients should be added to it. At Krumhuk, for example, whey, compost and plant tea, fresh cow dung and the crushed coal are mixed together and worked into the soil. The almost non-biodegradable mixture only needs to be mixed well into the soil once, as it then remains in the soil for years. Photo: Claudia Reiter

