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25th European Biomass Conference and Exhibition, Stockholm, Sweden

The 25th European Biomass Conference and Exhibition (EUBCE), is Europe's largest international conference on biomass. Combining a highly respected international scientific conference with an industrial exhibition, it gathered 1,537 participants from research, industry, policy and business from 70 countries at Stockholm.

The four day long exhibition kicked off with showcasing applications of science in industry such as Stockholm's 100% renewable public transport system, Finland's wood biorefineries and need for aviation biofuels. The city of Stockholm acknowledged the importance of EUBCE by hosting the official Welcome Reception, in the beautiful City Hall, famous for the annual Nobel Prize banquet.

There were five main topic sessions - Biomass Resources; Biomass Conversion Technologies for Heating, Cooling & Electricity; Biomass Conversion Technologies for Fuels, Chemicals & Materials; Biomass, Policies, Market and Sustainability; and Bioenergy Integration in Energy Systems. I gave an oral presentation under Topic 3 on 'Black rice straw as a feedstock for the extraction of anthocyanin and sugars in a combined biorefinery'. This work was the result of the 3rd independent research projects that I lead through collaboration and support from different research groups alongside my PhD research at Nottingham. It was a perfect example of utilising the skills I gained in the UK to improve the local economy back home (*Imphal*, India) from where the black rice was imported.

The conference had excellent networking opportunities and I got to speak with senior researchers and industry representatives, and received important directions on taking the project forward including aspects I had not considered before. I am very grateful to the Royal Society of Biology for the Travel Grant at the final stage of my PhD and supporting my participation at this international platform.