

10th International Congress of Plant Pathology (ICPP 2013)

Bio-security, Food Safety and Plant Pathology:

The Role of Plant Pathology in a Globalized Economy

August 25-30 2013, Beijing, CHINA

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The International Congress of Plant Pathology is held every five years. In 2013 it took place in Beijing, China from 25-30 August, at the Beijing International Convention Centre which is located close to the 2008 Olympic stadium, otherwise known as 'The Nest'. The atmosphere during the course of the conference was incredible. The 'FABI family' attending the conference included Mike Wingfield, Brenda Wingfield, Teresa Coutinho, Jolanda Roux, Emma Steenkamp, Lucy Moleleki, Theresa Aveling, Magriet van der Nest, Albé van der Merwe, Luke Jimu, Fahimeh Jami, Edward Onkendi and myself. Extended members of the FABI family were also present and included Lori Echardt, XuDong Zhou, Pedro Crous and Shuaifei Chen. The first official day of the conference commenced with the opening of the 10th International Congress of Plant Pathology and a speech in Chinese from the president of the ICPP, Prof Maria Gullino, made one well aware that you were in China.

The programme for the ICPP 2013 conference was one filled with diverse topics from food security to genomics and proteomics. The morning sessions were presented by keynote speakers and included topics such as the role of plant pathology in a globalised economy and recent developments in disease management. These morning sessions were then followed by concurrent afternoon sessions that focused on specific Plant Pathology related topics such as airborne plant disease and their control, chemical control of plant diseases, global seed health concerns and solutions, management of forest diseases and tropical plant pathology - to name just a few. One comment often made by delegates was that they wished they could be in two places at once. The topics covered were not only interesting but, in some cases, popular as well. One such popular topic was genome sequencing and the genome-related studies. It was clear from the numbers of people who would squeeze into the conference hall during a lecture, that this was a topic of considerable interest to the plant pathology community. Two large halls were filled with over a thousand posters, and during sessions devoted to their discussion, many people shared ideas and hypotheses.

For some people, the 2013 ICPP adventure did not end with the Friday session. An ICPP Forest Pathology Field tour took place from 31 August to 2 September. Field trips were

organised to some of the natural forests in Beijing to look at diseases found in these areas. The field tour also included visits to some of China's beautiful tourist sites. On the first day of the tour, participants were taken to the Fragrant Hills where vascular wilt (*Verticillium* sp.) on the smoke trees was prevalent. This was followed by a tour of the Summer Palace. The second day consisted of a morning trip to Badaling Forest where a diverse range of plant species, native to China, was seen. That afternoon the delegates were treated to a visit to the Great Wall of China, entering at Badaling gate. The final day of the Forest Pathology Field tour was to the Songshan National Nature Reserve where an example of woodrot fungi was observed. This was followed by a visit to the museum at Beijing Forestry University where a very impressive collection of plant pathogens, plants and insects found in China could be seen.



Members of the “**FABI family**” and the “**extended FABI family**” who attended the ICPP 2013 Conference in Beijing.

On the flight back to South Africa one was filled with mixed emotions as the trip was over but it felt good to be going home. Everyone enjoyed the time visiting Beijing. We were all happy to have had the opportunity of joining colleagues from all over the world and sharing our knowledge at the 10th International Congress of Plant Pathology.