

## A MAJOR NEW GLOBAL RESEARCH INITIATIVE ESTABLISHED

Prior to the annual spring symposium of the Centraalbureau voor Schimmelcultures (CBS) based in Utrecht, the Netherlands, a group of *Fusarium* researchers gathered in the city to develop the core structures of a new global *Fusarium* Research Centre. This preceded a formal launch of the International Centre for *Fusarium* Research (ICFR), not to be confused by the South African-based Institute for Commercial Forestry Research! The FABI delegation attending the first meeting of the ICFR included Professors Mike Wingfield and Emma Steenkamp.



The ICFR will have Prof. Pedro Crous (Director of the CBS) as its first Director (initially serving a one-year term) and Dr Lorenzo Lombard (another FABI graduate) as Executive Secretary. The core aims of the ICFR will be to promote global research on *Fusarium* spp., which include some of the most important pathogens of plants. Participation in the ICFR will be open to all groups and individuals working with *Fusarium*. The Centre will provide resources to researchers (cultures, data, and literature), join in developing grant proposals for research initiatives and it will have a strong focus on education and training of future *Fusarium* researchers.

Prof. Wingfield had the role of formally launching the Centre and he pointed out that initiatives such as the ICFR usually started small and grew to have substantial global impact and that he expected this for the ICFR. While he was not able to launch the initiative by breaking a bottle of champagne, attendees of the CBS symposium drank a toast to the future of the ICFR.

