

## **ANNUAL SYMPOSIA OF THE DST-NRF CTHB AND THE TPCP**

Prof. Mike Wingfield predicted “lots of science” would come out of the CTHB symposium during his welcome address, and that was exactly what our visitors got!

Prof. Wingfield, director of FABI, welcomed research partners, students, overseas guests and other stakeholders this morning to a three day symposium hosted at the University of Pretoria. The first of the three days consisted of talks by core team members and students linked to the DST/NRF Centre of Excellence in Tree Health Biotechnology (CTHB), where the research focus is on the health of natural ecosystems and especially native trees. Over the following two days attention will shift to health problems related to commercial forestry during the 26th Annual Meeting of the Tree Protection Co-operative Programme (TPCP). Although the two symposia focus respectively on native and commercial forests, the two research programmes running in parallel complement each other as there are many overlaps between these focus areas and interactions between native and plantation ecosystems.

The three-day programme is a unique opportunity for all the attendees to network, exchange ideas and gain a broad view of tree health in South Africa and other parts of the world. Prof. Wingfield especially encouraged the young scientists to make the most of this opportunity to interact with such a broad range of international experts and industry representatives attending the event.

During the CTHB symposium, a select group of postgraduate students from the Universities of the Free State, Rhodes, Stellenbosch, the Witwatersrand, Pretoria and the Agricultural Research Council, showcased their research projects related to the health of native trees in 15-minute presentations. The presentations were a perfect reflection of the rich diversity of the research done in the CTHB, which has contributed to its success over the past decade.



**A) Ms Lovejoy Tembo from the University of Venda presenting her PhD project, B) Dr Seonju Marincowitz talking about the CMW culture collection at FABl, C) CTHB students and Core Team Members enjoying the symposium, D) Tessa Laas and Lelanie Smit from the University of Stellenbosch presenting their Honours work**