

and practices in Vietnam. Based on the surveys conducted over the period 1992–2007, he concluded that it is possible to change the perception of farmers towards IPM. Unfortunately, such changes are unsustainable under the external pressures of aggressive marketing tactics of multinational pesticide companies.

The third day of the conference was devoted to brain-storming sessions orga-

nized into smaller groups of participants, each addressing one of the issues, viz. research, extension, policy and incentives. Each of the groups enlisted activities under the respective heads, that need to be continued, stopped or initiated to manage the issues. Each group presented their summary recommendations to the convener, which will possibly form the basis for developing a comprehensive ac-

tion plan document seeking international funding.

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## Prof. Y. T. Thathachari Research Award for Science 2007

The Prof. Y. T. Thathachari Research Award for Science 2007 for Life Sciences and Agricultural Science was shared by K. S. Rangappa, Department of Chemistry, University of Mysore and Desiraju Narasimha Rao, Division of Biological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. The awards were presented at a function organized by the Bharamara Trust on 26 April 2008 at AIISH Gymkhana, Mysore. Each of the awardees received a cheque for rupees fifty thousand

to be used for research, a citation and a memento.

Rangappa has made original contributions in medicinal, bio-organic and physical organic chemistry and has synthesized M1 receptor antagonists and AchE inhibitors for treatment of Alzheimer's disease. Rangappa's group has synthesized over 500 bioactive molecules and tested them for their anti-inflammatory (PLA2 inhibitors) and anticancer activities.

Narasimha Rao has worked in DNA–protein interactions. His work provides pathways for research in potential new pharmaceutical applications for treatment of diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

At the same function M. S. Valiathan, former President of the Indian National Science Academy was presented the Bharamara's Life-time Achievement award for his contributions to cardiac diseases and for the development of technology for cardiovascular devices.

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## Astronomical sites

In 2005, UNESCO approved the Astronomy and World Heritage Initiative (AWHI) for the recognition, promotion, protection and preservation of places of exceptional cultural value and significance relating to astronomy. AWHI interpreted to include worldwide perceptions of the sky through the ages. The first task is to identify the most exceptional astronomical sites and 'properties' that can be included in the world list. At the moment there are no criteria by which the suitability or otherwise, of a site for inclusion in the final list can be

determined. The criteria will have to emerge from the long list that we prepare.

UNESCO has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Astronomical Union (IAU) to ensure that the two organizations work together in this area. IAU in turn has asked its Commission 41 'History of Astronomy' to do the spadework. I would like to invite suggestions for possible Indian entries. Raja Jai Singh's Jantar Mantar Observatories in Delhi and Jaipur, St Xavier's College Observatory,

Kolkata and Kodiakanal Observatory are some obvious choices.

It is noteworthy that some sites associated with Struve Arc measurement have already been declared World Heritage Sites. In a similar fashion we can perhaps identify some landmark sites in the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India.

The nominations of astronomical sites through the ages, pertaining to India/Indian sub-continent may kindly be sent to Rajesh Kochhar (e-mail: Rkochhar2000@gmail.com)

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