

Preface

The IUPAC International Conference on Biodiversity and Natural Products (ICOB-6 & ISCNP-26) was held in Charlottetown, Canada, 13–18 July 2008. This conference represents an amalgamation of the International Conference on Biodiversity (ICOB) and the International Symposium on the Chemistry of Natural Products (ISCNP).

Twenty outstanding scientists from academia, government, and industry gave plenary and invited talks, and another 38 short talks were presented by an equally diverse group. Speakers represented 20 different countries and, with poster presenters, a total of 28 countries were represented. Symposia topics included: isolation and structure elucidation, biosynthesis, spectroscopy, synthesis, engineered biosynthesis, natural products as anticancer leads, new methods in natural products, chemical ecology, metabolomics, and genomics. One highlight was the Royal Society of Chemistry's "Natural Product Reports" lecture award by Jason Micklefield (University of Manchester) on the biosynthetic engineering of nonribosomal lipopeptides. Mary Garson presented an overview of the next IUPAC meeting in this series to be held in 2011 in Brisbane, Australia.

This issue of *Pure and Applied Chemistry* comprises a collection of 12 papers based on lectures delivered at ICOB-6/ISCNP-26. These reports feature the major themes of the conference and thus provide a representative view of current activity in the expansive field of biodiversity and natural products. As will be evident from reading this issue, marine organisms continue to serve as a prolific source of bioactive natural products with varied applications. Questions about the ecological role of marine natural products continue to intrigue research groups, and synthetic and biosynthetic studies are being used to develop methods to produce both known natural products and unnatural derivatives.

Russell G. Kerr
Conference Editor