

## CAWS STUDENT TRAVEL AWARD REPORT

I attended the 7<sup>th</sup> International Weed Science Congress during 19-24 June 2016 at Prague, Czech Republic. I presented a poster entitled as “Eco-physiological drivers of parthenium weed invasion-an overview” based on my PhD research project. I reached the *Golden City*, Prague on 18 June with great excitement and enthusiasm. The congress was organized by International Weed Science Society in collaboration with European Weed Research Society and Czech Weed Research



Society. It was sponsored by Czech Government, Bayer, BASF, Monsanto, Dow AgroSciences, and Syngenta. The congress registration and organizational introduction was completed on 19 June. The official opening ceremony was held on 20 July in the morning. It was great to see that over 700 delegates from all over the world were in attendance for this prestigious event. Scientific programs were kicked off with nice plenary presentation on innovations in weed control by Hermann Stubler. There were seven concurrent sessions each day providing great opportunity of diverse learning. I presented my poster on the very first day during poster session and was glad to see immense interest and feedback by renowned scientists, fellow students and conference organizers. I was able to get the nice feedback, suggestions and appreciation by several researchers.

In addition to present my research in a comprehensive manner, I was also able to learn a lot by listening more than 25 presentations during the course of congress on key aspects including, weed biology, weed ecology, weed invasion, weed-crop interference, weed management and herbicide resistance. My understanding on these subjects was broadly improved and I had a chance to extract some potential research concepts for my project. Being an international event, congress attracted scientists from around the world which enabled the participants to learn about diverse management options and to develop a multi-disciplinary understanding. Over 400 posters were also a continuous source of knowledge throughout the congress. It was a great forum to interact, socialize and collaborate with great names of weed science, peers, and industry people. I was privileged to meet and discuss my research with some of the most eminent weed scientists including, Drs. Lewis Ziska, Carol Mallory-Smith, Nilda Burgos, Hans Krahmer, Chris Preston, Gurjeet Gill, Fabiane Lamego, Lammert Bastians, Parsanta Bhowmik, Jonne Rodenburg, Muthukumar Bagavathiannan, Samundar Singh, Baruch Rubin and Josef Soukup. Interaction with these people helped me to get some insights about

future research directions and career orientation in weed science. Apart from these big names, I also interacted with several PhD students from different countries for knowledge sharing and networking. No doubt, this congress was an enlightening event in terms of scientific learning, career orientation and skill development. I recommend all the post-graduate students in the field of weed science to attend the next congress at Bangkok in 2020.

It would be injustice if I do not mention the beauty of the heart of Europe, Prague here. It is one of the most beautiful cities I have ever seen. I had a chance to explore the beauty of this historic city on 22 June which was officially devoted for this purpose by congress organizers. Everything was stunning and wonderful including, Town Hall, Old Cathedral, Vltava River, Charles Bridge, Prague Castle and Zofin Palace.

Overall, it was a fruitful travel with immense learning, exposure and networking. I am very thankful to Council of Australasian Weed Societies for providing my financial support to attend this great event. I admire the kind guidance by Dr. Kerry Harrington regarding application and technical support by my Advisors, Prof. Steve Adkins and Dr. Bhagirath Chauhan.

**Best Regards,**

**Ali Ahsan Bajwa**

