

35th Symposium on The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) – The Next Steps  
(A4.)

SETI I - Technical Aspects (1.)

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**SETI, EXTRASOLAR PLANETS SEARCH AND INTERSTELLAR FLIGHT:  
WHEN ARE THEY GOING TO MERGE?**

**Abstract**

The SETI Permanent Study Group (abbreviated SETI PSG) of the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA), with web site: <http://www.setileague.org/iaaseti/index.html>, is one of the few international venues where, as of 2006, scientists with different backgrounds and from all over the world can meet and discuss recent advances in the scientific, technical and societal aspects of SETI. In particular, the Pešek Lecture that traditionally opens in October every year the SETI 1 Session of the International Astronautical Congress (IAC), is intended to describe the updated state-of-the-art in SETI and related fields with the accent on science and technology rather than on the societal consequences of a contact with ET. We have thus come to the conclusion that a Pešek Lecture devoted to the interplay between SETI and the rapidly evolving field of the Search for Extrasolar Planets (or Exoplanets) would be quite up-to-date, especially in view of the over 200 exoplanets rapidly discovered in the 11 years between 1995 and 2006. Moreover, besides SETI and Exoplanets, there is a third field of scientific investigation that, although not as mature as the former two fields in terms of experimental research, is striving ahead among many theoretical difficulties but might really change the course of human history when becoming reality: this is the theory (so far) of Interstellar Flight, that would one day enable us to travel across the vast interstellar distances initially by virtues of probes only, and later "in person". The present Pešek Lecture is trying to compare the different growth rate and the (now small) overlap in between these three apparently "unrelated" fields. And even if we can hardly find any answer in these "dark ages" we live, let us at least raise the question: "When are SETI, Exoplanet Searches and Interstellar Flight going to merge in the future of Humankind?"