



International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Chair:
I. C. SUTCLIFFE
Northumbria University
U.K.

ICSP-Executive Board Meeting - 29th October 2020 Redacted minutes

Vice-Chair:
E. R. B. MOORE
University of Gothenburg
Sweden

Minute 1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8.00 a.m. UK time.

Executive Secretary:
A. OREN
Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Israel

Minute 2. Record of attendance

Secretary for Subcommittees:
S. L. W. ON
Lincoln University
New Zealand

All members of the EB participated: I.C. Sutcliffe (Chair), E.R.B. Moore (Vice-Chair), A. Oren (Executive Secretary), P. Nielsen (Treasurer), S.L.W. On (Secretary Subcommittees), R. Hahnke (Member-at-Large), Y. Shouche (Member-at-Large), D.R. Arahal (Chair JC), R. Rosselló-Móra (Vice-Chair JC), and M. Göker (Secretary JC).

Treasurer:
P. NIELSEN
Novozymes, Copenhagen
Denmark

Minute 3. Minutes of 1th October meeting

Members at Large:

R. HAHNKE
Leibniz Institute DSMZ
Germany

Y. SHOUCHE
National Centre for Microbial
Resource
India

The minutes of the 1th October meeting were approved. A. Oren will distribute a redacted version of the minutes to the members of the ICSP, the JC and chairs of the taxonomic subcommittees and will send a copy to F. Venter to be added to the ICSP website.

Members of the Judicial Committee

Chair:
D.R. ARAHAL
University of Valencia
Spain

Minute 4. Matters arising/Action points from previous meetings

Vice-Chair:
R. ROSSELLÓ-MÓRA
Mediterranean Institute for
Advanced Studies
Illes Balears Spain

Secretary:
M. GÖKER
Leibniz Institute DSMZ
Germany

- S.L.W. On has sent an updated list of names and email addresses of the chairs of the taxonomic subcommittees to A. Oren, for distribution of the minutes of EB meetings.
 - I.C. Sutcliffe has contacted F. Venter about the maintenance of the ICSP website; F. Venter agreed to take care of the website until E.R.B. Moore is hopefully able to make the necessary arrangements to take over.
 - I.C. Sutcliffe and A. Oren have finalized the report over 2017-2020 for IUMS – BAM and sent the document to the IUMS Executive including the Chair of BAM. Receipt of the document was acknowledged by E. Ron (14th October, IUMS President) and by D. Becker (20th October, BAM Vice-Chair).
 - A. Oren has welcomed G. Felis as a co-opted member of the ICSP.
 - A. Oren has contacted those microbiological societies that are members in good standing of IUMS and have not sent a delegate to the ICSP, reminding them of their right to appoint a delegate. As a result, the following delegates have joined the ICSP as full members:
 - Prof. Svetla Danova, representing the Bulgarian Association of Microbiologists.
 - Dr. Carrie Brady, representing the Society for Applied Microbiology.
 - Dr. Pavel Švec, representing the Czechoslovak Society for Microbiology.
- No replies were yet received from the Sociedad de Microbiología de Chile, the

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Croatian Microbiological Society, the Estonian Society for Microbiology, the Hellenic Society for Microbiology, the Latvian Society for Microbiology, and the Polish Society of Microbiologists.

According to the information received from IUMS, the Council of Finnish Academies, the Science Council of Japan, and the Federation of Korean Microbiological Societies can send a delegate to the ICSP, but we do not have the names and e-mail addresses of suitable contacts there. I.C. Sutcliffe will inquire further, and A. Oren will contact D. Becker at BAM to request further information.

- I.C. Sutcliffe has sent notes to the EB on issues relating to ISCP membership. See further Minute 12.
- No further nominations for a new Editor-in-Chief of the ICNP were sent by the members of the EB to I.C. Sutcliffe. See further Minute 5.
- E.R.B. Moore, R. Hahnke and Y. Shouche have invited F. Venter to join the ad hoc committee to discuss the impact of the Nagoya protocol on the availability of type strains. See further Minute 7.
- A. Oren has forwarded the minutes of the September IJSEM editorial board meeting to all members of the ICSP.
- I.C. Sutcliffe has not yet contacted Tanja Woyke to invite her to give an outreach online talk. The citation of the awarding of the van Niel Prize for Studies in Bacterial Systematics to Tanja Woyke was published in the October issue of the IJSEM (vol. 70, pp. 5594-5595).
- The proposal by P. Nielsen to divide agenda items for future meeting in three categories: decisions, information, and debate, was implemented in the current meeting.
- I.C. Sutcliffe reported that the minutes of the ICSP plenary held during the FEMS congress in Glasgow in July 2019 may already have been submitted for publication in the IJSEM by L. Dijkshoorn, but no further information is available yet. This will be followed up at the next EB meeting.

Minute 5. Editorial Board and Editor-in-Chief of the ICNP

As no further nominations for the role of Editor-in-Chief for the ICNP were received, A. Oren is the only candidate. Following a vote by e-mail from the voting members of the EB, A. Oren was appointed Editor-in-Chief of the ICNP.

The new Editor-in-Chief will need to promptly convene the ex-officio members of the editorial board of the ICNP to start the work.

On 29th October, A. Oren sent discussion documents to the members of the ICSP, the JC and the chairs of the taxonomic subcommittees concerning proposals to modify the ICNP: (1) the proposed inclusion of the rank of phylum; (2) the status of the Cyanobacteria under the ICNP. These documents were earlier sent to the EB on 15th October. The discussion about the inclusion of the rank of phylum will be collated by E.R.B. Moore and D.R. Arahal; the discussion about the status of the Cyanobacteria will be collated by I.C. Sutcliffe and S.L.W. On. A. Oren will send copies of the documents to F. Venter to be added to the ICSP website.

Minute 6. Report from the JC

D.R. Arahal reported that the JC will handle the backlog of Requests for an Opinion in portions of ten. Comments have been received for eight requests in the first batch. In 2019, a single new

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Request for an Opinion was published in the IJSEM, but already seven new requests were published in 2020, so that currently the backlog is increasing.

The procedure for the handling of new Requests for an Opinion, is outlined in Article 8.b. of the statutes of the ICNP. In line with this, D.R. Arahal will contact M. Trujillo to ensure that the JC Chair is alerted when new Requests for an Opinion are published as not all are immediately apparent from their article titles.

Minute 7. Update from the working group on type strain accessibility

E.R.B. Moore, Y. Shouche and R. Hahnke reported that documentation about the accessibility of type material has been collected for India and South Africa (with the help of F. Venter). No contacts were yet established with the authorities in Brazil. It was suggested to approach the Brazilian member(s) of the Executive Board of the WFCC and other possible contacts in Brazil.

Minute 8. IJSEM matters

The topic of Material Transfer Agreements (MTAs) attached to type strains was discussed during an internet meeting held on 27th October 2020 between E.R.B. Moore, G. Garrity, A. Oren, and M. Trujillo. This meeting was initiated following the publication of a paper with the description of *Staphylococcus ursi* in the August 2020 issue of the IJSEM. The MTA from the US National Parks Authority attached to the type strain is not acceptable for type strains as it is considered to contravene Rule 30(4) of the ICNP. Therefore the name will not be included in the Notification List for IJSEM issue 70 (8) to be published in November, and a footnote will be added to explain the reason. The List Editors have written letter to the authors of the paper to explain the situation, a reply was received, and the issue will be followed up in the coming days.

Restrictive MTAs erode the purpose of type material. Restrictions on the availability of type material violate the concept about reproducible and replicable science, since types are the standards essential to do the science and make comparisons in a free and uninhibited way. MTAs that impose limitations on the use of the material for taxonomic and identification purposes cannot be considered permissible. Redefinition of the term 'type strain' was therefore proposed as an internationally accepted standard that must be made freely available to the world without restrictions on its use for taxonomic and identification purposes. The participants of the meeting of 27th October will prepare an Editorial to be published in the IJSEM to remind the readers what the purpose of a type strain is, and propose emendation of Rule 18a of the ICNP with the above-outlined emended definition of a type strain. M. Trujillo will be asked to explain the problems with restrictive MTAs to the members of the editorial board of the IJSEM.

Minute 9. Update on subcommittees

S.L.W. On has identified twelve active taxonomic subcommittees and he intends to complete his assessment of active subcommittees before the end of this year. Subsequently he will work towards establishing further subcommittees on important groups of prokaryotes such as the *Enterobacteriaceae*, *Burkholderia* and *Pseudomonas*.

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Minute 10. Treasurer's report

P. Nielsen reported that he had not yet heard from the bank. He will set up a meeting with W.B. Whitman to coordinate the transfer of the account. No invoices were received in the past month.

Minute 11. Working group on Education & Outreach

R. Hahnke and S.L.W On reported that contact with L. Dijkshoorn and C.T. Bull was established, and they expect to reactivate the working group soon.

Minute 12. Expanding the membership of the ICSP

A document prepared by I Sutcliffe, exploring possible ways to expand the membership of the ICSP, was discussed. Current membership is limited to full members appointed by a small number of microbiological societies that are members in good standing of the IUMS and a few co-opted members. Attempts to liaise with IUMS to identify member societies that lack delegates are ongoing and has resulted in the appointment of three new full members in the past month. The idea of increasing the number of co-opted members was favourably received by D.R. Arahal, A. Oren and R. Rosselló-Móra. According to M. Göker's interpretation of the words, "ICSP may co-opt members for the purpose of assisting with the work of the Committee" in Article 2 of the statutes, co-option should be restricted to persons with specific expertise essential for the functioning of the ICSP, whereas I.C. Sutcliffe put forward the alternative interpretation that this could simply refer to participating in the 'regular' business of the ICSP. The option of identifying societies that could be encouraged to renew or join IUMS and then delegate members has little chance of success, as societies must pay membership fees to IUMS; in addition, it will be a time-consuming process. The last option discussed was a review of the ICSP membership structure. A working group could be established to critically review the *raison d'être* for delegates needing to be affiliated to IUMS societies, including comparison with the membership structures of other IUMS ComCofs, and consideration of alternative membership models (bearing in mind that any changes would require revisions to our Statutes to be proposed). I.C. Sutcliffe volunteered to establish a working group to further explore this option, which can be revisited in future EB meetings.

Minute 13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on meeting Thursday November 26th 8 am UK time

Minute 14. AOB

E.R.B. Moore asked who covers the cost of the server that hosts the ICSP website. If necessary, such costs can be covered from the ICSP bank account.

Minute 15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10.15

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Minutes prepared by A. Oren – 30 October 2020

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Action points:

- A. Oren, to forward the redacted minutes of the 1st October EB meeting to all members of the ICSP, the JC and the chairs of the taxonomic subcommittees, and send a copy to F. Venter to be posted on the ICSP website.
- I.C. Sutcliffe and A. Oren, to make further inquiries about suitable contacts at the Council of Finnish Academies, the Science Council of Japan, and the Federation of Korean Microbiological Societies, to invite those institutions to send a delegate to the ICSP.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to contact Tanja Woyke to invite her to give an outreach online talk.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to report on the status of the minutes of the ICSP plenary held during the FEMS congress in Glasgow in July 2019, submitted or yet to be submitted by L. Dijkshoorn for publication in the ICSP.
- A. Oren, to send copies of the discussion documents on the proposed inclusion of the rank of phylum and the status of the Cyanobacteria under the ICNP to F. Venter to be added to the ICSP website.
- D.R. Arahal, to contact M. Trujillo to ensure that the correct procedures for the handling of new Requests for an Opinion, as outlined in Article 8 of the statutes of the ICSP, will be followed in the future.
- E.R.B. Moore and A. Oren: to prepare an Editorial for publication in the IJSEM, jointly with G.M. Garrity and M. Trujillo, to clarify the purpose of type strains, the problematic issue of restrictive MTAs and propose emendation of Rule 18a of the ICNP.
- E.R.B. Moore, to contact M. Trujillo to clarify the problems with restrictive MTAs to the members of the editorial board of the IJSEM.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to continue reviewing the ICSP membership structure and report back to the EB at a later date.