



# International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

**Chair:**

I. C. SUTCLIFFE  
Northumbria University  
U.K.

14<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Vice-Chair:**

E. R. B. MOORE  
University of Gothenburg  
Sweden

Dear Members of the IUMS Executive,

**Executive Secretary:**

A. OREN  
Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
Israel

The International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes (ICSP) statutes require that every three years we provide reports detailing

- A complete list of all members and officers of the ICSP and the Judicial Commission.
- All pertinent actions of the ICSP and the Judicial Commission and other committees of the ICSP.

**Secretary for Subcommittees:**

S. L. W. ON  
Lincoln University  
New Zealand

As the statutes specify that the new term of office for ICSP members began on 1 April 2020, followed by the election of a new Executive Board who began their terms of office on 1 September 2020, it is now an appropriate time to provide these reports which are below and attached. A Treasurer's report for 2017-2020 is attached.

**Treasurer:**

P. NIELSEN  
Novozymes, Copenhagen  
Denmark

We look forward to receiving any comments and suggestions BAM/IUMS may have on the ICSP and its activities.

**Members at Large:**

R. HAHNKE  
Leibniz Institute DSMZ  
Germany

Y. SHOUCHE  
National Centre for Microbial  
Resource  
India

Sincerely yours,

**Members of the Judicial  
Committee**

**Chair:**

D.R. ARAHAL  
University of Valencia  
Spain

Aharon Oren  
On behalf of the ICSP Executive Board

**Vice-Chair:**

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

**Secretary:**

M. GÖKER  
Leibniz Institute DSMZ  
Germany

# International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

## ICSP Report to International Union of Microbiological Societies and Bacteriology & Applied Microbiology (BAM) Division 2017-2020

Report compiled by the ICSP Executive Board (2017-2020).

### 1. Review of current members of the ICSP and its Judicial Commission

At the beginning of 2020, all ICSP delegates for the 2017-2020 term were asked to confirm their renewal or replacement by their respective IUMS member societies, for the new term from 1 April 2020. This required review of IUMS current member societies and thus we are confident that all delegates are legitimate. We thank the IUMS Treasurer Heather Lawrence for her help in compiling a list of IUMS member societies in Spring 2020.

For a list of list of ICSP members, please see the attached xl file and listing at <https://www.the-icsp.org/icsp-members>

N.B. To both ensure effective communications and also allow the ICSP to extend its membership, it would be helpful if IUMS could provide ICSP with a confirmed listing of current IUMS member societies on an annual basis. This will enable us to contact societies without delegates to ask for nominations.

The term of the '24<sup>th</sup> Class' of the Judicial Commission ended in 2020, whilst the terms of the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Classes are ongoing. The outgoing members of the 24<sup>th</sup> Class are thanked for their contributions to the work of the Judicial Commission. In August 2020, the members of the ICSP elected the 27<sup>th</sup> Class of the Judicial Commission. The following four members began their terms on 1 September 2020:

- David Arahal (Universitat de València, Spain)
- Maria Chuvochina (University of Queensland, Australia)
- Markus Göker (Leibniz Institute DSMZ, Germany)
- Charles Parker (Namesforlife, USA).

The 12 current members of the Judicial Commission are listed at <https://www.the-icsp.org/judicial-commission-on-prokaryote-nomenclature>.

### 2. Officers of ICSP

Following the start of the new ICSP term on 1 April 2020, a new Executive Board was elected. Members of the ICSP Executive Board can only serve a maximum of two terms, necessitating five of the officers to stand down. The newly elected Executive Board comprises the following:

- Chair: Iain Sutcliffe (Northumbria University, UK; re-election for second term)
- Vice-Chair: Ed Moore (University of Gothenburg, Sweden)
- Executive Secretary: Aharon Oren (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel)
- Secretary Subcommittees: Stephen On (Lincoln University, New Zealand)
- Treasurer: Preben Nielsen (Novozymes Copenhagen, Denmark)
- Members-at-large: Richard Hahnke (Leibniz Institute DSMZ, Germany) and Yogesh Shouche (National Centre for Microbial Resource, India).

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Subsequent to the election of the 27<sup>th</sup> Class of the Judicial Commission, the 12 members have elected the following as Officers of the Judicial Commission

- Chair: David Arahal (Universitat de València, Spain; re-election for a second term)
- Vice-Chair: Ramon Rosselló-Móra (Mediterranean Institute for Advanced Studies Illes Balears Spain)
- Secretary: Markus Göker (Leibniz Institute DSMZ, Germany)

### 3. Key activities and achievements of the ICSP in 2017-2020 term and since April 2020

1. Publication of an updated edition of the *International Code of Nomenclature of Prokaryotes* as a supplementary issue of IJSEM (Parker et al. 2019; <https://doi.org/10.1099/ijsem.0.000778>). The Editors (Charles Parker, Brian Tindall and George Garrity) are thanked for their considerable efforts in bringing this volume to publication. The ICSP Executive Board is in the process of appointing a new Editor-in-Chief, as specified in the statutes, to take on the further development of the Code.
2. Well attended ICSP-sponsored scientific sessions were held as part of the programmes of the FEMS 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Congresses of European Microbiologists, in Valencia (2017) and Glasgow (2019).
3. Plenary meetings of ICSP delegates have been held in Valencia (2017) and Glasgow (2019). Minutes of the Valencia meeting were published in IJSEM (Dijkshoorn 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1099/ijsem.0.002787>) and those from Glasgow are currently being finalised for publication.
4. The ICSP Executive Board has met monthly using 'gotomeeting' to ensure matters of relevance to ICSP and IJSEM are promptly addressed. Minutes are available online at <https://www.the-icsp.org/reports>.
5. ICSP members have voted on Requests for Opinion (see Judicial Commission activities) and other matters related to ICSP operation.
6. Two Life Members of the ICSP were elected in 2020: Prof Jean Euzéby (Ecole Nationale Vétérinaire, Toulouse, France; confirming a decision originally taken in 2014 but not formalised) and Prof Dr. Karl-Heinz Schleifer (Emeritus Professor, Technische Universität München, Germany). All ICSP Life Members are listed at <https://www.the-icsp.org/icsp-life-members>.
7. On the recommendation of the ICSP Executive Board, the University of Queensland has awarded the *van Niel International Prize for Studies in Bacterial Systematics* 2020 to Dr Tanja Woyke from The DOE Joint Genome Institute, Berkeley, USA. A citation announcing the award has been published in IJSEM (<https://doi.org/10.1099/ijsem.0.004466>).
8. Subcommittees on Taxonomy: following a review of active subcommittees, the ICSP Secretary for Subcommittees on Taxonomy, Dan Brown, published a "Notice of impending dissolution of inactive Subcommittees on Taxonomy" in IJSEM (Brown 2018,

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<https://doi.org/10.1099/ijsem.0.002587>). Subsequent to this, 15 inactive Subcommittees were disbanded and two subcommittees have revived their activities. As a result, the ICSP currently has 16 active subcommittees, which are listed at <https://www.the-icsp.org/taxonomic-subcommittees>

9. The ICSP has held a far-reaching email discussion (January to April 2020) on the proposed modification of the *International Code of Nomenclature of Prokaryotes* to allow the use of DNA sequence data as type material in the naming of prokaryotic taxa. In the subsequent ICSP vote, these proposals were rejected. An announcement of this result and summation of the email discussion were published in IJSEM (Sutcliffe et al. 2020; <https://doi.org/10.1099/ijsem.0.004303>).
10. A Working Group (led by William Whitman) prepared revised statutes, which were published for consultation (Whitman et al. 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1099/ijsem.0.003117>). The ICSP voted in 2019 to adopt these revised statutes.
11. Response to the Nagoya protocol. The Nagoya protocol has had an unintended negative impact, in some countries, on the sharing of prokaryotic strains that is a crucial to taxonomic work. A Working Group (led by Fanus Venter) was formed and has provided an ICSP Position statement and useful information (<http://www.the-icsp.org/cbd-and-nagoya-protocol>). The ICSP position is to help support scientists affected by the Nagoya protocol on a case-by-case basis.
12. A Working Group on Education & Outreach (led by Carolee Bull and Lenie Dijkshoorn) launched a competition to engage young systematists in producing video introductions to taxonomic topics. Activities of the Working Group will be ongoing.

## **4. Key activities and achievements of the Judicial Commission in the 2017-2020 term.**

Materials regarding six *Requests for an Opinion* were prepared and voted on by the Judicial Commission. Subsequently, the members of the ICSP deliberated on these requests and the Judicial Commission votes, resulting in six Opinions issued in IJSEM as Opinions 97, 98 and 99 (Arahal, 2020; <https://doi.org/10.1099/ijsem.0.003921>) and Opinions 100, 101 and 102 (Arahal, 2020; <https://doi.org/10.1099/ijsem.0.004390>).

The Judicial Commission is now considering subsequent *Requests for an Opinion*, following the emended process introduced in the revised statutes.

Two proposals to emend the *International Code of Nomenclature of Prokaryotes* have been considered. However, there were procedural complications with one of these, and neither were referred to the ICSP for endorsement. The process by which proposals to emend the Code are to be processed was altered as part of the 2019 revision of the statutes.