



International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

ICSP-EB Meeting 29th September 2022

Minutes

Chair:

I. C. SUTCLIFFE
Northumbria University
U.K.

Vice-Chair:

E. R. B. MOORE
University of Gothenburg
Sweden

Executive Secretary:

A. OREN
Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Israel

Secretary for Subcommittees:

S. L. W. ON
Lincoln University
New Zealand

Treasurer:

P. NIELSEN
Novozymes, Copenhagen
Denmark

Members at Large:

R. HAHNKE
Leibniz Institute DSMZ
Germany

Y. SHOUCHE
National Centre for Microbial
Resource
India

**Members of the Judicial
Committee**

Chair:

D.R. ARAHAL
University of Valencia
Spain

Vice-Chair:

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

Secretary:

M. GÖKER
Leibniz Institute DSMZ
Germany

Minute 1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9.00 a.m. UK time.

Minute 2. Record of attendance

The following members of the Executive Board participated: I.C. Sutcliffe (Chair), A. Oren (Executive Secretary), S.L.W. On (Secretary of Subcommittees), P. Nielsen (Treasurer), Y. Shouche (Member-at-Large), D.R. Arahall (Chair JC), R. Rossello-Mora (Vice-Chair JC), and M. Göker (Secretary JC). Apologies were received from E.R.B. Moore (Vice-Chair) and R. Hahnke (Member-at-Large).

Minute 3. Minutes of the 1st September 2022 meeting of the Executive Board

The draft minutes of the 1st September 2022 meeting were approved. Before distribution of the document to the ICSP members and publication on the ICSP website, parts of Minute 6, the entire Minute 8, and one of the action points should be redacted. A. Oren will distribute the redacted minutes to the members of the ICSP, the Judicial Commission, and chairs of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy, and he will send a copy to E.R.B. Moore to be posted on the ICSP website.

Minute 4. Matters Arising/Action points from previous meetings

- A. Oren has forwarded the redacted minutes of the 28th July 2022 meeting to all members of the ICSP, the Judicial Commission and the chairs of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy.

- E.R.B. Moore has not yet posted the minutes of the 23rd June and the 28th July meetings of the Executive Board on the ICSP website. Ongoing.

- E.R.B. Moore has not yet posted the paper by Oren et al. 2022, Reply to 'Regulating access can restrict participation in reporting new species and taxa', Nat. Microbiol. 10.1038/s41564-022-01167-z, on the ICSP website. Ongoing.

- S.L.W. On did not have any new lists of taxa received from the subcommittees on taxonomy to M. Göker to be included in LPSN. Ongoing.

- A. Oren has set up the Zoom meeting of the members of the ICSP, Judicial Commission and the chairs of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy for 11th October, has invited the participants and sent the agenda. I.C. Sutcliffe suggested inviting

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also IJSEM Editor-in-Chief M.E. Trujillo to the meeting, and this proposal was accepted.

- A. Oren has sent letters to the current full members of the ICSP to ask whether they want to continue for another three-year term and to obtain a mandate for renewal from their societies, as well as letters to all other relevant microbiological societies that are members of IUMS, inviting them to appoint a delegate. The following current members of the ICSP have since been appointed by their societies for another term: M. Birbir, C. Brady, B. Duim, P.-E. Fournier, R. Hahnke, P. Hugenholtz, W.-J. Li, M. Serruga Musič, A. Oren, I.C. Sutcliffe, and A. Ventosa. Replies were received from the microbiological societies and current delegates from Denmark, Hungary, Latvia, New Zealand, and Switzerland, and from the Mycoplasma Society, but no members were yet appointed. A. Oren also contacted two colleagues in Romania to encourage their society to appoint a member.

- E.R.B. Moore has not yet submitted an invoice for expenses made in 2021 for maintenance of the ICSP website to P. Nielsen for reimbursement. Ongoing.

- I.C. Sutcliffe and A. Oren met online on 26th September to consider proposals for candidates to join the nomenclature review team of the IJSEM. Ongoing.

- A. Oren has requested the staff of the Microbiology Society to grant M. Göker access to the Google Docs spreadsheet on which validation requests are recorded, and the request was granted. M. Göker was also invited to the IJSEM editorial board meeting on 8th September, and he apologized for not being able to attend.

- I.C. Sutcliffe has prepared a ballot to request the approval of the voting members of the ICSP to grant life ICSP membership to G.M. Garrity. See Minute 6.

- All members of the Executive Board, to propose nominees for the 2023 van Niel International Prize. Ongoing; see Minute 8.

- A. Oren has prepared the ballot for ratification of Judicial Opinions 123-127 by the ICSP voting members, to be open during the month of September. Until 29th September, 19 of the 29 voting members of the ICSP had responded. Except for one abstention for Opinion 124 and one vote against and one abstention for Opinion 125, all votes endorsed the JC opinions.

- I.C. Sutcliffe has sent a letter to D.R. Brown concerning his inquiry about possibilities to appeal Judicial Opinion 122. No reply was received.

- I.C. Sutcliffe has requested M. Chuvochina to post a note on the ICSP Twitter account that Judicial Commission Opinions 112-122 were published.

Minute 5. Contribution to a special issue of the Canadian Journal of Microbiology commemorating R.G.E. Murray

I.C. Sutcliffe has received an invitation to contribute a paper to a special Issue of the Canadian Journal of Microbiology to honour the lifetime contributions to microbiology of Professor R.G.E. Murray who passed away in February. Guest editors are Cezar Khursigara and Susan

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Koval. As A. Oren already has a manuscript, originally intended for a different journal, which can easily be adapted to include references to Robert Murray's taxonomic studies and contributions, I.C. Sutcliffe will correspond with S. Koval and propose that this amended and updated manuscript be submitted for publication in the special issue of the Canadian Journal of Microbiology.

Minute 6. Appointment of G.M. Garrity as Life Member of the ICSP

Since the ballot was sent out on 15th September, 22 of the 29 voting members of the ICSP have voted in favour of the proposal to appoint G.M. Garrity as Life Member of the ICSP. After the ballot closes on 15th October, I.C. Sutcliffe will contact G.M. Garrity and ask whether he accepts the appointment.

Minute 7. Response of the ICSP to Sharma *et al.*, mBio 10.1128/mbio.02323-22

The Executive Board noted the publication of our response to the Panda *et al.* commentary and discussed whether the ICSP should react to the subsequent mBio letter by Sharma *et al.* Reply to Oren *et al.*, "New Phylum Names Harmonize Prokaryotic Nomenclature", written as a response to the Oren *et al.* mBio letter (<https://doi.org/10.1128/mbio.01479-22>). The Sharma *et al.* paper is full of inaccuracies and errors. Members of the Executive Board were especially displeased to note that P. Rahi, who is a co-opted member of the ICSP, is one of the authors. By signing the Sharma *et al.* paper, and especially by endorsing the last paragraph, he undermines the reputation of the ICSP.

Different solutions were proposed, ranging from no action to publication of another response in mBio (if its editors will allow us to do so), or writing a response in IJSEM or in another journal and/or posting it on the ICSP website. M. Göker has circulated a draft response. It is also possible to publish a paper in an appropriate journal in which we explain (once more, as this may not yet be clear to the public) what the ICSP is and how it functions, not primarily as a response to the Sharma *et al.* paper. The following action points were approved: (1) I.C. Sutcliffe and S.L.W. On will draft a paper explaining the positive aspects of the work of the ICSP for a journal to be decided; (2) M. Göker, and others if appropriate, can consider finalizing the draft response to Sharma *et al.*, either for publication or simply presentation on the ICSP website (which could be further publicized via the ICSP Twitter account).

Minute 8. Nomination of the next van Niel International Prize recipient

Tania Woyke is scheduled to give her van Niel prize lecture at the Hamburg 2023 FEMS conference and it is now known that the IUMS conference will take place in Florence, Italy, in October 2024. This may therefore be a suitable venue for the next van Niel prize awarding ceremony, rather than having two in 2023. Rather than nominating candidates now, I.C. Sutcliffe will first contact Paul Young (University of Queensland, who is also President-elect of IUMS) to obtain further clarifications about the procedure for nominating candidates and about their preferred venue for the prize lecture.

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Minute 9. Response of the ICSP to the publication of the SeqCode

The ICSP Executive Board has noted that the SeqCode, a nomenclatural code for prokaryotes described only from sequence data, was recently launched (Hedlund *et al.*, *Nat Microbiol* <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41564-022-01214-9>). As the SeqCode is not a product of the ICSP and since the views of the members of the ICSP are not uniform regarding the SeqCode, no response from the ICSP is necessary at this stage.

Minute 10. Update on Subcommittees

S.L.W. On reported that an online meeting of chairs and secretaries of Subcommittees on Taxonomy has been scheduled for 25th October. The participants will be asked to address the following questions: What are the current challenges you face as leaders of your respective Subcommittees and in your respective fields? What are the current trends in your areas of taxonomic research, and what (if any) are your concerns that may stem from those? What could be done to encourage the formation/reinvigoration/re-establishment of taxonomic committees? What impact if any do you feel the SeqCode will have on your field and on your Subcommittee?

The newly established Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of *Myxococcaceae* had its first meeting on 21st September. R. Hahnke was elected chair. I.C. Sutcliffe attended and thanked the members for beginning this activity.

Minute 11. Update from the Judicial Commission

D.R. Arahal reported that commissioners P.-E. Fournier and R. Rossello-Mora, both from the 26th class, expressed the wish to resign from the Judicial Commission at the end of the current term. In September 2023, also the members of the 25th class of commissioners (C.T. Bull, H.-J. Busse, S.N. Dedysh, and A. Ventosa) will retire. Therefore, in addition to a new class (28th) the two vacancies in the 26th class will need to be elected by the ICSP.

M. Göker had circulated a document about the lack of clarity in parts of Article 8 of the ICSP statutes regarding the timeline for handling and publication of requests for opinions. Following discussion it was recommended that the Editor-in-Chief of the IJSEM should notify the Judicial Commission of new Requests for an Opinion papers immediately after acceptance of the manuscript rather than after typesetting is finished and the paper is published online. I.C. Sutcliffe will further work on proposals for restructuring of the statutes, including emendation of Article 8 and adding a time limit of e.g. two months for the ICSP to ratify opinions issued.

M. Göker reported that a manuscript by the JC on guidelines for interpreting the ICNP and for authoring a Request for an Opinion was submitted to the IJSEM.

Minute 12. Update from the Publications Committee

There were no updates.

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Minute 13. Update from the IJSEM

The annual editorial board meeting was held on 8th September in London in hybrid format. M.E. Trujillo chaired the meeting, and I.C. Sutcliffe attended the event. The minutes of the meeting have not yet been published. A. Oren, who participated online, noted that he did not have the opportunity to discuss two major problems. The first is the very long time that passes between approval of the page proofs by the authors and online publication of the paper in an issue of the journal. When continuous publication was introduced by the journal, the understanding was that accepted and typeset papers will be made available online without delay; the reality is that the process can take several months and Author Accepted Manuscripts are no longer published immediately. The second problem A. Oren identified is the highly problematic way the typesetters often deal with formatting the references. For reasons that are not clear, the typeset text generated from a correct manuscript often differs greatly from the submitted version. Online editing of references in the page proofs by authors is very user-unfriendly, and in the process, new errors are often automatically generated. I.C. Sutcliffe will request E.R.B. Moore to convene the Publications Committee to discuss these issues.

I.C. Sutcliffe reported that the Instructions for Author of the IJSEM have recently been updated.

A. Oren had an online meeting with M. Göker on 26th September to discuss different issues related to the work of the List Editors. They agreed on several minor changes in the workflow toward the production of the different types of lists and minor changes in the text of the preamble to those lists. Concerning *Candidatus* List no. 5, to be prepared in 2023, they will find a way to refer to the >65000 correctly but arbitrarily formed names for *Candidatus* taxa proposed by M.J. Pallen and colleagues (Naming the unnamed: over 65,000 *Candidatus* names for unnamed Archaea and Bacteria in the Genome Taxonomy Database; *Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* 2022;72:005482).

Minute 14. Update from the editor-in-chief of the ICNP

A. Oren reported that the paper with proposals to emend Rules 8, 15, 22, 25a, 30(3)(b), 30(4), 34a, and Appendix 7 of the ICNP was accepted for publication on 15th September. A paper authored by M. Göker and A. Oren with a proposal to include the categories kingdom and domain in the ICNP was accepted for publication on 25th September. A. Oren is working with M. Chuvochina on a proposal to emend Appendix 9 of the ICNP with guidelines on how to use names of geographical locations in compound names.

Minute 15. Update from the treasurer

P. Nielsen reported that he had reimbursed D.R. Arahal for travel expenses.

Minute 16. Update from the working group on type strain accessibility

Y. Shouche had nothing to report.

A. Oren reported that the IJSEM has recently received a submission from Brazil describing new

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prokaryotic taxa and that the List Editors have received validation requests for names of three species recently isolated from India and effectively published in Archives of Microbiology. He inquired with the culture collections (KACC, KCTC, JCM) whether distribution of the type strains is restricted, and replies were received. These validation requests were rejected or are on hold. A. Oren will refer these cases to the IJSEM advisory group on availability of type strains chaired by E.R.B. Moore.

Minute 17. Update from the working group on Education & Outreach

There was nothing to report.

Minute 18. Other business

There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: **27st October 2022, 9 am UK time.**

Adjourned at 11.15.

Minutes prepared by A. Oren – 30th September 2022

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Action points

- A. Oren, to forward the redacted minutes of the 1st September 2022 meeting to all members of the ICSP, the Judicial Commission and the chairs of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy.
- E.R.B. Moore, to post the minutes of the 23rd June, the 28th July and the 1st September meetings of the Executive Board on the ICSP website.
- E.R.B. Moore, to post the paper by Oren et al. 2022, Reply to 'Regulating access can restrict participation in reporting new species and taxa', Nat. Microbiol. 10.1038/s41564-022-01167-z, on the ICSP website.
- S.L.W. On, to send any lists of taxa received from the subcommittees on taxonomy to M. Göker to be included in LPSN.
- E.R.B. Moore, to submit an invoice for expenses made in 2021 for maintenance of the ICSP website to P. Nielsen for reimbursement.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to invite M.E. Trujillo to the open online meeting of the ICSP scheduled for 11th October.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to correspond with Susan Koval, suggesting submission of a paper by A. Oren for

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a special issue of the Canadian Journal of Microbiology to honour the contributions of Robert Murray to microbiology.

- I.C. Sutcliffe, to contact G.M. Garrity after 15th October to ask whether he accepts the appointment as Life Member of the ICNP.
- I.C. Sutcliffe and S.L.W. On, to draft a paper explaining the positive aspects of the work of the ICSP to the general public.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to contact Paul Young (University of Queensland; vice-president of IUMS) to obtain clarifications about the procedure for nominating candidates for the van Niel International Prize.
- D.R. Arahal, to contact M.E. Trujillo and remind her of the need to forward Request for an Opinion papers to the Judicial Commission immediately after acceptance of the manuscripts.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to compile proposals for restructuring of the ICSP statutes, including proposals to update Article 8d with a better-defined timeline for approval of judicial opinions.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to request E.R.B. Moore to convene the Publications Committee to discuss current problems with the production process of the IJSEM such as the slow online publication of accepted papers and problems with the typesetting of References sections.
- A. Oren, to forward information about the recently received IJSEM submission from Brazil with description of new prokaryotic taxa and the validation requests received for names of three species recently isolated from India and published in Archives of Microbiology to E.R.B. Moore, to be discussed further by the advisory group on availability of type strains.