



# International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

## ICSP-Executive Board Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Redacted version

**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 8.05 a.m. UK time.

### Minute 2. Record of attendance

The following members of the Executive Board participated: I.C. Sutcliffe (Chair), E.R.B. Moore (Vice-Chair), A. Oren (Executive Secretary), S.L.W. On (Secretary Subcommittees), R. Hahnke (Member-at-Large), Y. Shouche (Member-at-Large), R. Rosselló-Móra (Vice-Chair JC), and M. Göker (Secretary JC). P. Nielsen (Treasurer) and D.R. Arahal (Chair JC) did not participate.

### Minute 3. Minutes of the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 meeting of the Executive Board

The draft minutes of the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 meeting were approved with a minor change proposed by A. Oren. S.L.W. On will send an additional suggested minor change. A. Oren will distribute the redacted minutes (deleting the name of the proposed Iranian delegate – see Minute 5) 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 added to the ICSP website.

### Minute 4. Matters arising/Action points from previous meetings

- A. Oren has forwarded the minutes of the 7<sup>st</sup> January 2021 Executive Board meeting to all members of the ICSP, the Judicial Commissions and the chairs of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy, and has send a copy to E.R.B. Moore to be posted on the ICSP website.

- E.R.B. Moore has not yet contacted G.M. Garrity to advance the preparation of the editorial to clarify the purpose of type strains, the problematic issue of restrictive MTAs and propose emendation of Rule 18a of the ICNP.

- S.L.W. On is still working on an editorial for publication in the IJSEM to present the status of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy.

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- I.C. Sutcliffe has inquired who chairs the organizing committee of the 2022 IUMS conference to propose a plenary session on systematics. Marien de Jonge (Radboud University Nijmegen) is the chair of the Koninklijke Nederlandse Vereniging voor Microbiologie (KNVM) that will organize the event. Dr. de Jonge agreed that the National Organizing Committee would ensure that the ICSP would be represented in the scientific program and will ask Brigitta Duim, the delegate of the KNVM to the ICSP, to be our liaison with the organizing committee.
- A. Oren has sent the ballot form on including the rank of phylum to all voting members of the ICSP on 1<sup>st</sup> February (see further Minute 10).
- I.C. Sutcliffe has contacted R. Samson (IUMS) to obtain access to the server that hosts the ICSP website. The process was completed, and E.R.B. Moore and his team can now edit the website (see further Minute 6).
- E.R.B. Moore will provide an estimate of the salary cost of Derek Cardew for maintaining the ICSP website at the next meeting of the Executive Board.
- A. Oren has distributed the minutes of the meeting of the Publications Committee of 24<sup>th</sup> January to all members of the Executive Board.
- E.R.B. Moore has prepared an updated summary of the public discussion on the inclusion of the rank of phylum in the ICNP; the document was distributed to the ICSP members and to all participants in the discussions.
- I.C. Sutcliffe has invited A. Oren, G.M. Garrity and A.V. Pinevich to respond to the comments raised during the public discussion on the way the cyanobacteria should be treated under the ICNP (see further Minute 9).
- P. Nielsen and I.C. Sutcliffe's attempts to contact NatWest Bank to provide P. Nielsen and E.R.B. Moore with access to the ICSP bank account were yet unsuccessful (see further Minute 7).
- Several members of the Executive Board, including I.C. Sutcliffe, A. Oren, R. Hahnke, S.L.W. On, and R. Rosselló-Móra, have contacted their national governments to inquire whether there may be any restrictions to engage with Iranian colleagues (see further Minute 5).

## **Minute 5. Request from the Iranian Society for Microbiology to send a delegate to the ICSP**

The request from Mohammad Feizabadi, President of Iranian Society of Microbiology, to nominate a delegate to the ICSP, in spite of the fact that his society is not a member of IUMS, was discussed. Several members of the Executive Board have contacted their national governments to inquire whether there may be any restrictions to engage with Iranian colleagues. No relevant objections were received from the UK, Israel, Spain, and New Zealand. However, the German government has blacklisted the institution where the nominated delegate is employed. The consensus opinion was that we must follow the statutes and we cannot accept the nominated delegate as a member of the ICSP. I.C. Sutcliffe will notify the

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President of the Iranian Society of Microbiology of the decision.

## **Minute 6. ICSP website management**

E.R.B. Moore reported that Derek Cardew now has full access to the ICSP website, and he invited the board to send him relevant material for the website. At the next ICSP-EB meeting, E.R.B. Moore will provide estimates of the hourly payment and the expected cost for employment of Mr. Cardew to be charged to the ICSP.

## **Minute 7. The ICSP bank account**

I.C. Sutcliffe reported that no progress was made during the attempts to transfer the signatures for the NatWest bank account. The bank is making unreasonable demands about documentation to be provided, and the helpline is not helpful. I.C. Sutcliffe will make further inquiries in person at a local branch of NatWest Bank and try to speed up the process.

## **Minute 8. Report from the Judicial Commission**

R. Rosselló-Móra and M. Göker reported that discussions on (to become) Opinions 103-113 are still ongoing, and that no further progress was made in the past month.

M. Göker inquired whether requests for opinions need to be discussed in the order in which they were received. R. Rosselló-Móra replied that, based on past practice and past decisions, the order must be conserved. The Judicial Commission does not have the possibility to selectively advance requests that are easy to deal with or requests considered as especially important or urgent.

A need was felt for an updated list of the requests for opinions that are waiting to be discussed. R. Rosselló-Móra will discuss preparing such a list with D.R. Arahal and M. Göker.

## **Minute 9. Report from the IJSEM**

An editorial on the move to 'true continuous publication', explaining the changes, including the necessary modifications of the rules of the ICNP, has been published (paper DOI 10.1099/ijsem.0.004732 in the February 2021 issue)

E.R.B. Moore reported that negotiations about the new publishing agreement with the Microbiology Society have started. This was further discussed at the meeting of the Publications Committee of 23<sup>th</sup> February. A. Oren will distribute the minutes of that meeting to all members of the Executive Board.

At its meeting of 23<sup>th</sup> February, the Publications Committee also discussed possible ways to improve the impact factor of the IJSEM. The committee decided that E.R.B Moore would prepare a letter soliciting input from the ICSP membership; A. Oren will distribute this letter to the ICSP, inviting comments and suggestions to be sent to E.R.B Moore and A. Oren before 31<sup>th</sup> March.

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## **Minute 10. Update from the Editorial Board of the ICNP**

The ballot to include the rank of phylum in the ICNP started on 1<sup>st</sup> February and will end on 28<sup>th</sup> February. Out of the 26 voting members, thus far 13 have voted. A. Oren will send reminders to those who have not yet sent their votes.

The public discussion on the way the cyanobacteria should be treated under the ICNP has ended. I.C. Sutcliffe invited A. Oren, G.M. Garrity and A.V. Pinevich to respond to the comments until the end of March in accordance with Article 13 (b) (4) of the statutes of the ICSP. A. Oren has acknowledged receipt of the invitation. No further responses were received.

A. Oren had sent annotated text files of the entire code and its appendixes, including all proposed emendations and further proposals to improve the document, to the other members of the ICNP editorial board in the last months of 2020. D.R. Arahall and R. Rosselló-Móra have returned comments on the entire document, and comments on a short section were received from E.R.B. Moore. A. Oren reminded I.C. Sutcliffe and E.R.B. Moore to comment on the documents sent.

## **Minute 11. Update on Subcommittees on Taxonomy**

S.L.W. On did not succeed in establishing contact with the officials of the Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of Gram-Negative Anaerobic Rods, and he now considers this subcommittee inactive so that it may be dissolved.

A. Oren reported that minutes of meetings of the subcommittees on the taxonomy of the Chlamydiae and of Campylobacter and related bacteria were published in the February issue of the IJSEM.

E.R.B. Moore proposed that subcommittees should also recommend about how to deal with uncultivated members of the groups covered, based on genome sequences and additional information available for non-cultivated representatives. S.L.W. On will contact the subcommittees to consider this proposal.

## **Minute 12. Treasurer's update**

As the treasurer P. Nielsen did not attend the meeting, I.C. Sutcliffe reported that there were no financial transactions in the past month. Attempts to transfer signatures for the NatWest Bank account are ongoing (see Minute 7).

## **Minute 13. Update from the working group on type strain accessibility**

Y. Shouche reported about a simplified automated procedure for submission of requests to the Indian Biodiversity Authority; still little progress has been made to ensure distribution of type material without restrictions.

R. Hahnke reported that discussions with Brazil and China are ongoing but that especially the Chinese system is not user-friendly. Micronesia also has a National Focal Point, but its staff are

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not responsive.

It was agreed that it might be best to concentrate first on efforts to solve the problem for India, South Africa and Brazil.

## Minute 14. Update from the working group on Education & Outreach

S.L.W. On reported that ideas were exchanged to advance education at the undergraduate level. The 'list of taxonomists' prepared several years ago by R. Rosselló-Móra may be useful to promote exchange of information.

I.C. Sutcliffe suggested that social media (Facebook, Twitter) or platforms such as Slack might be useful to promote interest and share information, in spite of the fact that older colleagues are reluctant to use these platforms and the problem of overload of online forums.

R. Rosselló-Móra reminded the committee that the ICSP already has a Twitter account, since November 2019: <https://twitter.com/lcspEb>. It probably was set up by C.T. Bull or by W.B. Whitman. The last activity in this account was in October 2020. I.C. Sutcliffe will inquire who started this account and who is responsible for it.

## Minute 15. AOB

There was no other business

Date of next meeting: **Thursday March 25<sup>th</sup> 8 am UK time**

## Minute 16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 09.40

Minutes prepared by A. Oren – 26 February 2021

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### Action points:

- S.L.W. On, to send to A. Oren additional suggested changes/corrections to the minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 ICSP-EB meeting.
- A. Oren, to incorporate the changes proposed by S.L.W. On in the minutes of the 25<sup>st</sup> January 2021 Executive Board meeting, and to forward the redacted minutes to all members of the ICSP, the Judicial Commissions and the chairs of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy, and send a copy to E.R.B. Moore to be posted on the ICSP website.
- E.R.B. Moore, to contact G.M. Garrity to advance the preparation of an editorial to clarify the purpose of type strains, the problematic issue of restrictive MTAs and propose emendation of Rule 18a of the ICNP.

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- S.L.W. On, to complete the preparation of an editorial for publication in the IJSEM to present the status of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to notify the Iranian Society for Microbiology that the ICSP cannot consider membership for the nominated delegate as the society is not a member in good standing of IUMS.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to inquire at the local branch of the NatWest Bank to attempt to solve the problems with the transfer of signatures for the ICSP bank account.
- R. Rosselló-Móra, to consult with D.R. Arahal in order to provide a list of pending Requests for Opinions submitted to the Judicial Commission.
- A. Oren, to distribute the letter from E.R.B. Moore requesting proposals how to improve the IJSEM to the ICSP members.
- A. Oren, to distribute the minutes of the meeting of the Publications Committee of 23<sup>th</sup> February after finalization to all members of the Executive Board.
- A. Oren, to send a last reminder to those voting members of the ICSP who have not yet returned the phyla ballot.
- S.L.W. On, to contact the subcommittees to consider the preparation of recommendations how to deal with yet-uncultivated members of the group based on genomic information.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to inquire who set up the Icspeb Twitter account and who is responsible for it.