



International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

ICSP-Executive Board Meeting 30th September 2021

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 9.05 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), P. Nielsen (Treasurer), R. Hahnke (Member-at-Large), Y. Shouche (Member-at-Large), D.R. Arahall (Chair JC), and M. Göker (Secretary JC). An apology was received from R. Rosselló-Móra (Vice-Chair JC).

Minute 3. Minutes of the 26st August 2021 meeting of the Executive Board

The draft minutes of the 26st August 2021 meeting were approved. A. Oren will distribute a redacted version of the 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 29th July Executive Board meeting to all members of the ICSP, the Judicial Commission and the chairs of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy.
- E.R.B. Moore did not yet post the redacted minutes of the 1st July 2021 Executive Board meeting on the ICSP website. He will deal with this in the coming week.
- E.R.B. Moore still has not obtained access to the NatWest Bank online banking system.
- E.R.B. Moore did not yet prepare a draft for a response of the ICSP to the 'SeqCode' initiative (to be completed by M. Göker, S.L.W. On and A. Oren). As a paper with more information about the 'SeqCode' is expected to be published in the near future, the response of the ICSP will be finalized after publication of that paper.
- S.L.W. On has contacted the chairs and secretaries of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy and asked each to define their frame of reference (i.e., a summary of which taxa they have responsibility for) so that LPSN can be updated to flag the expertise of each subcommittee on the relevant taxon pages. E.R.B. Moore requested to receive copies of the replies, so that the relevant information can be added on the Taxonomic Subcommittees page of the ICSP website.

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

- E.R.B. Moore has forwarded to A. Oren the message he had received from M.E. Trujillo on August 2nd, suggesting the appointment of a team of one or more experts to assist IJSEM editors to deal with issues relating to culture collection documents and MTAs. See Minute 7 below.
- E.R.B. Moore has informed M.E. Trujillo of the discussions held following her suggestion to appoint a team of one or more experts to assist IJSEM editors to deal with issues relating to culture collection documents and MTAs.
- E.R.B. Moore has sent a letter to the members of the ICSP, JC, chairs of subcommittees, and potential candidates outside the ICSP membership, to identify experts who can assist IJSEM editors to deal with issues relating to culture collection documents and MTAs. See Minute 7 below.
- R. Hahnke has consulted the legal advisors of the DSMZ to inquire to what extent the list of countries that impose restrictions to the availability of type material, compiled by the DSMZ, can be shared. The information can be made available to IJSEM editors. See Minute 7 below.
- Following the request to all members of the Executive Board to study the proposed revision of Rule 30 of the ICNP and post their comments on the Slack platform, no comments were posted yet as of 29th September. See Minute 13 below.

Minute 5. Engagement with the Catalogue of Life

I.C. Sutcliffe was invited to speak to the Taxonomy Group of the Catalogue of Life (<https://www.catalogueoflife.org/about/governance>), an organization of zoologists and botanists with no representatives of scientists studying prokaryotes. Only about half the number of names of prokaryotic taxa found in LPSN is found in the Catalogue of Life Archaea and Bacteria listings (<https://www.catalogueoflife.org/>). M. Göker noted that Catalogue of Life may interface with the LPSN-API programming interface. It may be desirable to have one or more delegates of the ICSP to the Taxonomy Group of Catalogue of Life and they seem supportive. A. Oren, who regularly uses the Catalogue of Life database during his work as nomenclature and list editor, volunteered if the ICSP will be invited to send a delegate. I.C. Sutcliffe will contact Catalogue of Life and notify them that we are interested to send a delegate.

Minute 6. Ballot on Judicial Commission opinions 103-111

I.C. Sutcliffe once more thanked the Judicial Commission members for the hard work reducing the backlog of Requests for an Opinion. To ratify the opinions issued, a ballot form was prepared and approved. On 14th October, A. Oren will send it to the voting members of the ICSP. The voting will take place from 15th October until 15th November. I.C. Sutcliffe and A. Oren will serve as the tellers.

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Minute 7. IJSEM and culture collection documents and MTAs with restrictions

After a letter was sent to the members of the ICSP, JC members, chairs of subcommittees, and potential candidates outside the ICSP membership, to identify additional experts who can assist IJSEM editors to deal with issues relating to culture collection documents and MTAs, nine colleagues volunteered. I.C. Sutcliffe and A. Oren will send all information to E.R.B. Moore, who will contact M.E. Trujillo to organize a meeting of the people to get involved. The Editor-in-Chief of the IJSEM should coordinate the way the “Strain Accessibility Advisory Group” will work.

R. Hahnke informed the meeting that the list of countries with restrictions to the availability of type material, as prepared by the DSMZ, can now be shared with the IJSEM editors. This list is structured to classify countries into those with no regulations, countries with regulations but no restrictions, countries with special regulations or restrictions depending on the date the material was sampled, and countries with open issues where regulations are not clear and others with obvious problems.

Minute 8. ICSP Session at IUMS 2022

I.C. Sutcliffe received a message from B. Duim, delegate of the Koninklijke Nederlandse Vereniging voor Microbiologie to the ICSP and member of the organizing committee of the IUMS Congress in Rotterdam in July 2022. The organizing subcommittee of IUMS 2022 was enthusiastic concerning the suggestion to invite T. Woyke as a plenary speaker to deliver the van Niel International Prize lecture. Probably the ICSP will be invited to organize a symposium with two or three additional speakers. Possible topics for talks are (1) the revision of the ICNP; (2) the role of the ICSP in handling type strains under the Nagoya protocol, Rule 30 of the ICNP and accessibility of type strains; (3) the status of Candidatus names; (4) the future of the protologue. Names of potential speakers were suggested. I.C. Sutcliffe will ask B. Duim for further clarifications from the organizing committee of the conference on how many speakers can be invited.

Minute 9. Spam attacks based on information from the ICSP website

I.C. Sutcliffe reported about two recent attempts to misuse e-mail addresses harvested from the ICSP website. The option was discussed to delete the e-mail addresses of the officers and the members from the website. It was suggested that members (including JC and subcommittee chairs) should be canvassed as to whether they wished their e-mail address to be removed from the ICSP website.

Minute 10. Update from the Judicial Commission

D.R. Arahal and M. Göker started organizing the handling of the next series of Requests for an Opinion to be discussed by the members of the Judicial Commission.

The minutes of a meeting of the Judicial Commission held on 4th August 2021 were just published (Int. J. Syst. Evol. Microbiol. 2021;71:005045).

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Minute 11. Update from the Publications Committee

E.R.B. Moore reported that G. Redvers-Mutton of the Microbiology Society had been asked to provide financial projections to IUMS. On Monday 4th October a meeting will take place of I.C. Sutcliffe, E.R.B. Moore, M.E. Trujillo and G. Redvers-Mutton. Later a meeting of the entire Publications Committee may be scheduled.

Minute 12. Update from IJSEM

M.E. Trujillo needs assistance on the topic of restrictive MTAs and some culture collection documents. A list of countries and their restrictions in the framework of the Nagoya Protocol and/or local regulations will be helpful, and so will the ad hoc panel to assist the editors checking restrictions on type strain availability that may apply (see Minute 7).

On 10th September, the annual editorial board meeting of the IJSEM was held online. The ICSP Executive Board was represented by E.R.B. Moore (Vice-Chair and liaison with the IJSEM), A. Oren (List Editor), and D.R. Arahal (Editor). No specific issues were discussed that need the attention of the ICSP at this stage.

Minute 13. Update from the Editor-in-Chief of the ICNP

There has been little activity in the Slack discussions. M.J. Pallen has posted a comment relating to Rule 25a on the question whether protologues given in supplementary material can be accepted for validation of name. The call for suggestions to revise Rule 30 was not yet answered, but M. Göker reported that he will soon upload comments on Rule 30(4) and propose an alternative version to address the needs of all parties involved, following discussions at the DSMZ. He will also send the material to E.R.B. Moore to be forwarded to the working group on type strain accessibility.

.A. Oren reported that a paper to effect valid publication of the names of 42 phyla will soon be online in the IJSEM.

Minute 14. Update on Subcommittees of Taxonomy

S.L.W. On reported that his paper summarizing the current status of the ICSP Subcommittees on Taxonomy was accepted for publication in the IJSEM and will soon be available online.

S.L.W. On has contacted the chairs and secretaries of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy with a request to define their frame of reference (i.e., a summary of which taxa they have responsibility for, likely at the genus level and above) so that LPSN can be updated to flag the expertise of each subcommittee on the relevant taxon pages.

Minute 15. Treasurer's update

There was nothing to report. P. Nielsen and I.C. Sutcliffe will assist E.R.B. Moore in completing his access to the online banking system.

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

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

The working group consists of Y. Shouche, E.R.B. Moore, R. Hahnke, F. Venter, and M. da Silva. E.R.B. Moore has invited G.M. Garrity to join, but no clear response was yet received.

The current version of the ICNP is not very clear about the meaning of ‘organism deposited in such a fashion that access is restricted’ (Rule 30(4)). The question whether “for non-commercial exploitation only” is a restriction needs to be addressed. M. Göker will soon upload a proposal for an alternative version of Rule 30(4) on the Slack channel (see Minute 13).

I.C. Sutcliffe and A. Oren mentioned recent correspondence with M. Tank (DSMZ) and D.A. Bryant (Penn State University) about problematic MTAs attached to a strain isolated in a US National Park. Their request to publish a species description with an effectively published name in the IJSEM was denied by the Editor-in-Chief, with support from I.C. Sutcliffe and others involved in correspondence on the matter.

Minute 17. Working group on Education & Outreach

S.L.W. On reported that the abstract on the activities of the ICSP submitted to the meeting of the Federation of Asian and Oceanian Biochemists and Molecular Biologists, to be held in Christchurch, New Zealand, in November, was accepted for poster presentation.

Closing matters

Minute 18. Other business

I.C. Sutcliffe asked whether there may be more suitable conferencing platforms than GoToMeeting. A possible option is Microsoft Teams or Zoom. This will be further discussed at our next meeting.

Date of next meeting: (scheduled) October 28th 8 am UK time (postponed to November 25th, 8 a.m. UK time).

Adjourned at 10.40

Minutes prepared by A. Oren – 2 October 2021

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Action points

- A. Oren, to forward the redacted minutes of the 26th August 2021 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 redacted minutes of the 1st July, 29th July and 26th August Executive Board meeting on the ICSP website.

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

- E.R.B. Moore, to finalize the process to obtain access to the NatWest Bank online banking system. P. Nielsen and I.C. Sutcliffe will assist.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to contact the Catalogue of Life and explain that the ICSP is interested in sending one or more delegates to their Taxonomy Group.
- A. Oren, to send out the ballot for ratification of the JC Opinions 103-111 to all voting members of the ICSP on October 14, to start the voting process on October 15.
- All members of the Executive Board, to study the proposed revision of Rule 30 of the ICNP and post their comments on the Slack platform.
- M. Göker, to upload a proposed alternative version of Rule 30(4) of the ICNP on the Slack platform, and send a copy to E.R.B. Moore to be distributed to the type strain accessibility working group.
- A. Oren and I.C. Sutcliffe, to send to E.R.B. Moore a list of names of colleagues interested in participating in the “Strain Accessibility Advisory Group” to be forwarded to M.E. Trujillo for further discussion.
- E.R.B. Moore, to contact the ICSP members listed in our website and ask whether they want their email addresses removed.
- I.C. Sutcliffe to ask B. Duim for further details about the proposed ICSP symposium at the IUMS Congresses 2022.