



# International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

## Executive Board Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> March 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 8.00 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), P. Nielsen (Treasurer), R. Hahnke (Member-at-Large), Y. Shouche (Member-at-Large), D.R. Arahal (Chair JC), and M. Göker (Secretary JC). Apologies were received from S.L.W. On (Secretary Subcommittees), and R. Rosselló-Móra (Vice-Chair JC).

### **Minute 3. Minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 meeting of the Executive Board**

The draft minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 meeting were approved following corrections proposed by M. Göker. A. Oren will distribute the redacted minutes (deleting the name of the nominated Iranian delegate from 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**

- S.L.W. On has sent to A. Oren additional suggested changes/corrections to the minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 ICSP-EB meeting and these were incorporated in the minutes.

- A. Oren has forwarded the redacted minutes of the 25<sup>st</sup> January 2021 Executive Board meeting to all members of the ICSP, the Judicial Commission and the chairs of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy, and has sent 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 an 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 the preparation of an editorial for publication in the IJSEM to present the status of the Subcommittees on Taxonomy.

- I.C. Sutcliffe has notified the Iranian Society for Microbiology that the ICSP cannot consider membership of an Iranian delegate, as the society is not a member in good standing of IUMS. No reply was received.

- I.C. Sutcliffe's inquiries at the NatWest Bank have hopefully solved part of the

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problems with the transfer of signatures for the ICSP bank account. P. Nielsen and E.R.B. Moore can be added to obtain access to the online banking system. I.C. Sutcliffe still must arrange the 'mandate', the ownership of the bank account, with a different department of NatWest Bank.

- D.R. Arahal, M. Göker and R. Rosselló-Móra have completed a list of pending Requests for Opinions submitted to the Judicial Commission.

- A. Oren has distributed a letter from E.R.B. Moore requesting proposals how to improve the IJSEM to the ICSP members. Reactions were received from two members. These will be discussed at the upcoming meeting of the Publications Committee.

- A. Oren has distributed the minutes of the meeting of the Publications Committee of 23<sup>th</sup> February to all members of the Executive Board.

- A. Oren has sent a last reminder on 25<sup>th</sup> February to those voting members of the ICSP who had not yet returned the phyla ballot.

- S.L.W. On still has 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 reported that Icspeb Twitter account was set up by Carolee Bull. C. Bull has provided further details and passwords. I.C. Sutcliffe has forwarded the information to F. Venter and R. Rosselló-Móra to further develop the account.

- I.C. Sutcliffe reported that the minutes of the 2019 plenary meeting of the ICSP in Glasgow have just been published on the IJSEM website. He thanked L. Dijkshoorn for the preparation of these minutes.

## **Minute 5. Ballot to resolve the status of the Cyanobacteria in the ICNP**

I.C. Sutcliffe reported that thus far no reactions were received from A. Oren, G.M. Garrity and A.V. Pinevich. The ballot form was approved. I.C. Sutcliffe will send the ballot form to all voting members of the ICSP on 1<sup>st</sup> April, using a list to be provided by A. Oren. I.C. Sutcliffe and D.R. Arahal will collect the votes.

## **Minute 6. Certificates of deposit of type strains in the NRRL culture collection**

M.E. Trujillo had received a message received from Dr. Kirk Broders of the USDA-ARS culture collection (NRRL). The collection prefers to issue documents as proof of deposition and availability of type strains ('certificates') only after publication of papers in the IJSEM and not at the time of the first submission of the manuscripts. This causes problems for authors. The issue was first discussed during the 15<sup>th</sup> March meeting of the Publications Committee, and these discussions were followed up by the Executive Board. The conclusions were that [1] only a single certificate of deposition needs be issued so long as it unambiguously links the strain designation to the culture collection accession number, but that [2] it remains important to our processes that the certificate of deposition is available at the start of the manuscript

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submission process. This should mean that authors do not need to ask NRRL to issue multiple certificates. A. Oren will send a draft letter with suggestions on how to reply to Dr. Broders to all EB members for comments, and then forward the suggestions to M.E. Trujillo.

E.R.B. Moore and R. Hahnke commented that more severe problems encountered by culture collections relate to the authentication of cultures. The material received by the collections is not always, what the authors published; discrepancies are sometimes found concerning the geographic location where the material was collected, the date of collection, and incorrect 16S rRNA sequence information.

## **Minute 7. Report from the Judicial Commission**

D.R. Arahal reported that progress is being made to deal with the pending requests. Arrangements were being made to speed up the handling of the backlog.

It was noted that Article 8(i) of the statutes of the ICSP states: "In the absence of an opinion by the JC within one year of the publication of the Request for Opinion, the matter will transferred to the ICSP for a final decision. The JC will submit all correspondence on the matter to the Executive Secretary of the ICSP, who will arrange for the discussion and vote either by electronic means or at a plenary meeting within six months." Implementation of this procedure for Requests for Opinions submitted after the current version of the statutes took effect (27 June 2019) would mean that pending requests would not be dealt with in chronological order. This will be unfair to those who had submitted the earlier requests, some of which deal with similar issues as the later ones. The question is therefore, whether the Executive Board can overrule the statutes without first the approval of the ICSP plenary. D.R. Arahal will consult the members of the Judicial Commission whether or not their preference is to adhere to the statutes of the ICSP or deal with Requests for Opinions strictly chronologically until the backlog is cleared. Once the preference of the Judicial Commission is known, the Executive Board will decide what action to take.

## **Minute 8. Report from the IJSEM**

E.R.B. Moore and I.R. Sutcliffe reported that the 15<sup>th</sup> March meeting of the Publications Committee that was attended by Gaynor Redvers-Mutton, Head of Business Development and Sales, the Microbiology Society. The Publications Committee is working with Ms. Revers-Mutton toward the renewal of the publication agreement between the ICSP, IUMS and the Microbiology Society for publication of the IJSEM and the ICNP. A. Oren will forward the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting to all members of the Executive Board. This material must be treated confidentially.

## **Minute 9. Update from the Editorial Board of the ICNP**

The Editorial Board of the ICNP has prepared a draft manuscript for IJSEM to publish the outcome of the ballot to include the rank of phylum in the ICNP and the necessary emendations of the ICNP to implement the decisions made by the ICSP membership. A. Oren will send this draft manuscript to all members of the Executive Board for comments. It is the intention to submit the final version of the manuscript in the first days of April.

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A. Oren informed the meeting that, in cooperation with G.M. Garrity, he started the preparation of a list of names of phyla that can be validated in accordance with the decisions of the ICSP, after the formal publication of the decisions in the IJSEM. This manuscript will contain all the information required for the proposal of names of new taxa based on Rule 27 of the ICNP. All proposed phylum names will have the ending –ota and a proposed type genus. Discussions on the procedure to be followed to conserve older names of phyla that are in use are postponed to the next meeting of the Executive Board.

## **Minute 10. Update on Subcommittees on Taxonomy**

No updates were received from the Secretary of Subcommittees, other than those noted above in Matters Arising.

## **Minute 11. Treasurer's update**

The problem of transferring signatures for the NatWest Bank account has been hopefully been solved. E.R.B. Moore inquired how to submit invoices to pay the salary of Derek Cardew for this work on the ICSP website. An invoice by mail or e-mail can be sent to P. Nielsen, who will process the payment.

## **Minute 12. Update from the working group on type strain accessibility**

Y. Shouche reported that he had prepared a working document and shared it with Dr. Manuela da Silva, Coordinator of Biological Collections of Fiocruz, Brazil, and vice-president of the World Federation of Culture Collections. Dr. da Silva agreed to meet with E.R.B. Moore, Y. Shouche, R. Hahnke and F. Venter to further discuss the document. The goal is to prepare recommendations to be endorsed by the ICSP and to be sent to different national authorities that deal with biodiversity issues.

## **Minute 13. Update from the working group on Education & Outreach**

R. Hahnke and S.L.W. On will prepare a letter to be sent to colleagues involved in prokaryotic taxonomy, encouraging them to get involved in ICSP-related matters. The 'list of taxonomists' prepared several years ago by R. Rosselló-Móra may be useful to promote exchange of information.

## **Minute 14. AOB**

A. Oren mentioned the recent online workshop about the proposed SeqCode. The ICSP can either choose to ignore this (on the grounds that it will have a separate purpose and that cultured taxa will continue to be named under the ICNP) or we can respond to it and, possibly, thereby remove the need for a parallel code (in keeping with the stipulation in General Consideration 5 that the ICNP "applies to all Prokaryotes" i.e., whether cultivated or not). This will be further discussed at the next meeting of the Executive Board.

Date of next meeting: **Thursday April 29<sup>th</sup> 9 am UK time**

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## Minute 15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10.00

Minutes prepared by A. Oren – 27 March 2021

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### Action points:

- A. Oren, to incorporate the changes proposed by M. Göker in the minutes of the 25<sup>st</sup> February 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.
- 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's, to arrange the changes to the 'mandate', the ownership of the bank account, with the department of NatWest Bank that deals with such mandates.
- A. Oren, to distribute the minutes of the meeting of the Publications Committee of 15<sup>h</sup> March to all members of the Executive Board.
- 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.
- A. Oren, to send a list of voting members of the ICSP to I.C. Sutcliffe to prepare the mailing list for the ballot to resolve the status of the Cyanobacteria under the ICNP.
- I.C. Sutcliffe, to send out the ballot to resolve the status of the Cyanobacteria under the ICNP to all voting members on 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- A. Oren, to send to all Executive Board members a draft letter with suggestions on how M.E. Trujillo could reply to Dr. Broders of the USDA-ARS culture collection (NRRL), and then forward the consensus suggestions to M.E. Trujillo.
- D.R. Arahal, to consult the members of the Judicial Commission to decide whether to transfer Requests for Opinions received between July 2019 and March 2020 to the Executive Secretary of the ICSP to be voted on by the ICSP plenary in accordance with Article 8(i) of the ICSP statutes.

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- A. Oren, to send a copy of the draft manuscript prepared by the Editorial Board of the ICNP with the outcome of the ballot to include the rank of phylum in the ICNP and the necessary emendations of the ICNP to all members of the Executive Board for comments. Comments should be returned within one week.

- R. Hahnke and S.L.W. On, to prepare a letter to be sent to colleagues involved in prokaryotic taxonomy, encouraging them to get involved in ICSP-related activities.