



International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

EB-ICSP Meeting November 30th 2023 Redacted Minutes

Chair:

E.R.B. MOORE
University of Gothenburg
Sweden

Vice-Chair:

C.M. MANAIA
Universidade Católica Portuguesa
Portugal

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

M. SAKAMOTO
RIKEN BioResource
Research Center
Japan

**Members of the Judicial
Committee**

Chair:

D.R. ARAHAL
University of Valencia
Spain

Vice-Chair:

H. CHRISTENSEN
University of Copenhagen
Denmark

Secretary:

M. GÖKER
Leibniz Institute DSMZ
Germany

Minute 1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 09.00 a.m. CET.

Minute 2. Record of attendance

The following members of the Executive Board (EB) participated: E.R.B. Moore (Chair), C. Manaia (Vice-Chair), A. Oren (Executive Secretary), S.L.W. On (Secretary of Subcommittees), R. Hahnke (Member-at-Large), M. Sakamoto (Member-at-Large), D.R. Arahal (Chair JC), H. Christensen (Vice-Chair JC), and M. Göker (Secretary JC); P. Nielsen was absent.

Minute 3. Minutes of the 26st October 2023 meeting of the Executive Board

The draft minutes of the 26st October 2023 meeting were approved with a few minor corrections. A. Oren will distribute the minutes to the members of the International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes (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 minutes of the 28th September 2023 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 31st August 2023 Executive Board meeting and the redacted minutes of the 28th September 2023 Executive Board meeting on the ICSP website. Ongoing.

- As M. Göker did not forward the last updated version of the proposed revisions of the ICSP statutes to A. Oren, no action was taken on this topic. Ongoing.

- S.L.W. On has sent a letter to the chairs and secretaries of all Subcommittees on Taxonomy to make them aware of the rules of the ICSP statutes and rules concerning the mandate of the subcommittees as defined in Article 6 (5) of the statutes. See Minute 11.

- A. Oren sent reminders on November 1st to the ICSP members who did not yet vote on the ballot to elect a new commissioner to replace K. Konstantinidis in the 26th Class of the JC. See Minute 5.

- The members of the EB have notified E.R.B. Moore on which days in the last two weeks of November and the first week of December they will not be available for an online meeting of the greater ICSP. See Minute 9.

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- C. Manaia and E.R.B. Moore organized and have convened a meeting of the Publications Committee on 28th November. See Minute 13.
- A. Oren sent a ballot to the voting members of the ICSP on 11 November on the proposal to emend Appendix 9 of the ICNP (Naming genera after geographical locations. Proposal to emend Appendix 9 of the International Code of Nomenclature of Prokaryotes, by A. Oren and M. Chuvochina). E.R.B. Moore and C. Manaia serve as the tellers. See Minute 6.
- E.R.B. Moore and M. Göker discussed the ICSP Twitter/X account with M. Chuvochina during the BISMIS conference in Guangzhou. M. Chuvochina was open to other members of the ICSP accessing the ICSP account. She would organize to share Username and Password information with E.R.B. Moore.
- E.R.B. Moore did not receive any notice from the members of the Executive Board that indicated disagreement with the document sent by M.L. Ferrari that proposed a solution to the problem of availability of type material isolated in France. See Minute 17.
- E.R.B. Moore and C. Manaia communicated with M.E. Trujillo about support of the Executive Board members for the above-mentioned document received from M.L. Ferrari. From the standpoint of the ICSP, further restriction on publication of articles that reference nomenclatural types originating from France is not warranted. See Minute 17.
- M. Göker has sent E.R.B. Moore a list of the culture collections that did not respond to the request to deposit singleton strains in a second collection. E.R.B. Moore spoke with some of the curators of those collections about the singleton initiative during the tenth World Data Center for Microorganisms (WDCM) *conference* held on November 2-3 in Shenzhen, China.

Minute 5. Ballot to replace K. Konstantinidis in the 26th Class of the Judicial Commission

The election began on 16th October; the ballot closed on 15th November. A. Oren and E.R.B. Moore served as the tellers. From the 36 ICSP members eligible to vote, 27 votes were received. There was one abstention. C. Dunlap was elected. E.R.B. Moore has notified C. Dunlap of his election and has corresponded with the candidates who were not elected.

Minute 6. Ballot to emend Appendix 9 of the ICNP

The ballot on the proposal to emend Appendix 9 of the ICNP (Naming genera after geographical locations, by A. Oren and M. Chuvochina) started on 11th November. E.R.B. Moore and C. Manaia serve as the tellers. Thus far, 13 out of the 36 voting members of the ICSP have returned the ballot. E.R.B. Moore and C. Manaia will send reminders to those who have not yet voted. The ballot will close on 10th December. A. Oren will then announce the result in a manuscript to be submitted for publication in the IJSEM.

Minute 7. Revision of the ICSP Statutes

M. Göker has added comments on the latest version of the proposal to revise the statutes of the ICSP and wrote a document explaining the potentially controversial changes proposed. A. Oren will further work on the documents and send those to all members of the Executive Board and to I.C. Sutcliffe and Y. Shouche in the first week of December, inviting comments to be sent no later than 25th December. A. Oren will then compile the comments, to be discussed during

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the next meeting of the EB or during a special meeting dedicated to the topic, so that the proposed revision can be approved for publication in the IJSEM.

Minute 8. Report from the BISMIS conference in Guangzhou

E.R.B. Moore and M. Göker attended the BISMIS conference in Guangzhou, presented talks and participated in a roundtable discussion on the merits of the SeqCode. E.R.B. Moore reported on the many talks by supporters of the SeqCode, and stated that many of the criticisms against the main points of the SeqCode, i.e., the use of DNA sequence data as nomenclatural types, that were raised in the past were still never addressed in those presentations or in the round-table discussion at the end of the meeting. Some of the SeqCode proponents were open to discussions on how to solve the impasse between the ICNP and the SeqCode. A notice was made about a forthcoming paper (IJSEM, in press) that proposed an emendation of the ICNP to formally regulate *Candidatus* names so as to satisfy all real needs regarding the nomenclature of as yet uncultivated prokaryotes.

E.R.B. Moore was particularly impressed by the high level of current Chinese research, qualitative as well as quantitative, and the extremely high degree of expertise and innovation demonstrated by young researchers and students, not only in massive sequencing efforts but also in the massive efforts towards isolation and characterization of novel prokaryotes. He wondered whether the capacity of culture collections worldwide will be sufficient to accommodate all the type strains of novel species that probably will be described based on such studies. M. Göker noted that the apparently huge effort to cultivate the uncultivated is a positive development and that a high number of new cultures does not necessarily imply an equally high number of published taxonomic proposals

W.-J. Li (Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou China, and ICSP representative for the Chinese Society for Microbiology), has succeeded K. Jangid (Agharkar Research Center, Pune India) as President of BISMIS for the next term, which began at the conclusion of the BISMIS Meeting in Guangzhou.

A. Oren could not be present in Guangzhou, and therefore he presented the programmed three-hour nomenclature workshop online, followed by two one-hour questions-and-answers sessions, to more than 200 participants. He will present his cancelled lecture on the nomenclature of the *Cyanobacteria* under the ICNP and the ICN in the framework of the BISMIS Live lecture series, probably on 16th December. E.R.B. Moore reported that the BISMIS organisers reported that the online presentation was well received by the young researchers and students.

Minute 9. Plenary on-line meeting of the ICSP

E.R.B. Moore will schedule an online meeting of the greater ICSP in mid-December, to be held at a time to try to accommodate as many as possible ICSP members worldwide, i.e., from New Zealand to Mexico. A. Oren will invite all members of the ICSP, the Judicial Commission, and chairs of Subcommittees on Taxonomy to attend the meeting, and to request the chairs of the subcommittees to forward the invitation to the subcommittee members. E.R.B. Moore will send later on 30th November to A. Oren a proposal for the date and time for the Plenary meeting.

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Minute 10. Report from the Judicial Commission

There was nothing new to report.

Minute 11. Update on Subcommittees on Taxonomy

- Update on letter to all Subcommittees on Taxonomy
S.L.W. On has sent a letter to the chairs and secretaries of all Subcommittees on Taxonomy to remind them or make them aware of the rules of the ICSP statutes and rules concerning the mandate of the subcommittees, as defined in Article 6 (5) of the statutes. Officers of several subcommittees have acknowledged receipt of the document, and have forwarded it to their members.

Minutes of two subcommittee meetings were published in the past month: the minutes of the closed meeting of the Subcommittee on the taxonomy of *Leptospiraceae*, 14 November 2022, Bangkok, Thailand (Picardeau, *Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* 2023;73:006131) and the minutes of the online meeting of the Subcommittee on the taxonomy of aerobic *Bacteroidota*, 25 April 2023, Bowman et al., *Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* 2023;73:006114).

A. Oren reported that an updated version of the proposed minimal standards for description of new taxa in the class *Halobacteria* is now being finalized. The document will replace the earlier version published in 1997. H.-L. Cui will be the leading author.

- Updating of mailing list of Subcommittee members

This was an issue raised by E.R.B. Moore, who had recently received an updated list of the Members of the *Chlamydiae* Subcommittee from the Chair of the Subcommittee, to be posted on the ICSP website. E.R.B. Moore raised the question of whether listings of the members of all the Subcommittees should be updated. S.L.W. On pointed out that the issue of posting Subcommittee membership lists may conflict with privacy issues and that the membership lists were not required to be posted online.

Minute 12. Update from the Editor-in-Chief of the ICNP

A. Oren announced that the Emendation of Principle 8, Rules 5b, 8, 15, 33a, and Appendix 7 of the International Code of Nomenclature of Prokaryotes to include the categories of kingdom and domain was published on 1st November (*Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* 2023;73:006123).

On 10th October, M. Göker and A. Oren submitted a paper to the IJSEM proposing names of seven kingdoms and two domains, based on the newly approved rules. This paper is currently under review.

Minute 13. Update from Publications Committee

On 28th November, Chair of the Publications Committee, C. Manaia, convened a meeting of the Publications Committee to discuss ongoing problems with the typesetting of IJSEM papers and other current issues. The meeting was attended by C. Manaia (chair), D.R. Arahal, H. Christensen, E.R.B. Moore, A. Oren, M.E. Trujillo, and staff members of the Microbiology Society H. Cook, N. Froude, J. Kelly, and A. Monica. The following topics were discussed:
- Continuing problems with the typesetting process, especially in the References sections of papers. The staff of the Microbiology Society will further work with the typesetters to improve

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the typesetting process and quality control.

- Unexplained delays of up to several months from the time authors approved the page proofs until online publication of certain papers. The staff of the Microbiology Society will investigate the cases presented.

- J. Kelly reported that earlier problems with staffing issues had largely been solved and that the production team was close to fully staffed.

- The current status of the embargo against authors based in Russia. Recently the editorial office staff, with the consent of the Microbiology Society, processed a validation request from Russia based on a list of 'approved' institutions in Russia maintained by the society. The Council of the Microbiology Society will reconsider the embargo in the coming weeks, and the staff of the society will update us.

Minute 14. Update from IJSEM

M.E. Trujillo nominated R.R. de la Haba and D.N. Proença to join the Editorial Board of the IJSEM following the retirement of A. Ventosa. Both appointments were approved unanimously by the voting members of the EB. C. Manaia will notify M.E. Trujillo that the EB has approved the appointments.

Minute 15. Treasurer's update

The treasurer P. Nielsen did not attend the meeting. E.R.B. Moore reported that the problems with bank account access for C. Manaia were solved, and that P. Nielsen is processing a number of requests for refund of travel expenses.

- Financial support of LPSN by the ICSP

M. Göker reported that the DSMZ now wants a signed contract with the ICSP to formalize the financial support of LPSN, which could be based on the agreement signed earlier by I.C. Sutcliffe but requires more work. M. Göker will work with the management of the DSMZ to prepare an agreement to formalize the funding of LPSN by the ICSP.

Minute 16. Update from the working group on Education & Outreach

R. Hahnke and S.L.W. On reported nothing new.

- The ICSP website

M. Göker indicated that the ICSP website should be improved and should be more current with updates. He has indicated a willingness to assist in the maintenance of the website. E.R.B. Moore explained that he would be happy if M. Göker could assist him and D. Cardew with updating the ICSP website, as discussed during earlier EB meetings. R. Hahnke questioned the need for an additional person besides E.R.B. Moore to keep control over the ICSP webpage, especially if that person is not a member of the ICSP as per Article 2 of the Statutes. R. Hahnke objected to M. Göker managing the ICSP website, as M. Göker is not a member of the ICSP. The majority of EB members agreed with the arrangement that M. Göker will be given access to the server of the website and be allowed to modify the website under the supervision of E.R.B. Moore. An announcement about this will be made at the upcoming plenary meeting of the ICSP (see Minute 10).

D.R. Arahal once more raised the question of whether the function of webmaster should be established and defined in the ICSP statutes. This role exists in the Spanish Society for

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Microbiology (SEM). He will consult A. Ventosa, who is a member of the ICSP, past president of SEM, current president of FEMS, and vice president of IUMS, for advice on this matter.

- **Social Media – The ICSP Twitter/X account**

In view of the controversies over the past year and especially the most recent ‘scandals’ of Elon Musk, the owner of Twitter/X, E.R.B. Moore raised the question of whether the ICSP should remain associated with this social medium and asked for the opinion of the EB. It was pointed out that it is not clear what the best alternatives are, i.e., is another social medium more relevant for the scientific community. There were no objections to continue on Twitter/X at present, but future developments with the social media should be monitored. E.R.B. Moore is in contact with M. Chuvochina, who manages the Twitter/X account.

Minute 17. Update from the working group on type strain accessibility

The problem with accessibility of strains isolated in France appears to be solved. M.L. Ferrari (Bioresource Center, Institut Pasteur, Paris) will publish a Letter to the Editor in the IJSEM, explaining that registration is required for access to strains originating in France, but there is no process of submitting applications for approval that can be rejected.

E.R.B. Moore reported that he has discussed the situation for strains from India with K. Jangid during the BISMIS conference in Guangzhou. The Biodiversity Authority of India seems to be willing to modify the regulations, but no quick solution can be expected. K. Jangid will work with the ICSP to try to resolve the restrictions on Indian type strains to be used in taxonomic research.

Minute 18. Update on the Singleton Deposit Initiative

M. Göker was contacted by the UNIQEM collection in Russia to make arrangements for exchanging strains. M. Göker reported on a DSMZ curator who discussed the possibility with J.P. Bowman (University of Tasmania) to obtain access to strains from the Australian ACM / ACAM collections that were discontinued but are still maintained in Dr. Bowman’s private collection.

Minute 19. Co-option of new ICSP members

The possibility to enlarge the membership of the ICSP by co-opting new members was discussed, and names of a number of candidates to be nominated were mentioned. It was pointed out that such nominations do not need to be considered by the EB; anyone may nominate co-opted members, following the procedure outlined in Article 2 (b) (1) of the ICSP statutes.

Date of next meeting: To be decided later, 9 a.m. CET.

Adjourned at 11.15

Minutes prepared by A. Oren – 1st December 2023

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Action points:

- A. Oren, to forward the minutes of the 26th October 2023 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 EB meetings of 31st August 2023, 28th September 2023 (redacted), and 26th October EB meetings on the ICSP website.
- A. Oren, to send the new version of the proposal to revise the statutes of the ICSP to all members of the Executive Board and to I.C. Sutcliffe and Y. Shouche in the first week of December.
- All members of the Executive Board, to critically examine the new version of the proposed revisions of the ICSP statutes, and to send any proposed changes A. Oren no later than 25th December.
- A. Oren, to collate the received suggestions for emendation of the statutes and prepare a new version to be approved for publication during the next meeting of the EB or during a special meeting dedicated to the topic, if necessary.
- M. Göker, to forward the page proofs of the paper in press in the IJSEM (see Minute 8) to A. Oren.
- E.R.B. Moore, to notify A. Oren of the date and time to hold an online plenary meeting of the ICSP in mid-December.
- A. Oren, to invite all members of the ICSP, the Judicial Commission, and chairs of Subcommittees on Taxonomy to the online plenary meeting, and to request the chairs of the subcommittees to forward the invitation to the subcommittee members.
- E.R.B. Moore, to prepare the agenda for the online plenary meeting of the ICSP in mid-December.
- E.R.B. Moore, to post links of the published minutes of the November 14th 2022 closed meeting of the Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of *Leptospiraceae* and the minutes of the 23rd April 2023 meeting of the Subcommittee on the taxonomy of aerobic *Bacteroidota* on the ICSP website.
- E.R.B. Moore and C. Manaia, to send reminders to the voting members of the ICSP who have not yet returned the ballot on the emendation of Appendix 9 of the ICNP, which will close on 10th December.
- A. Oren, to announce the result of the ballot on the emendation of Appendix 9 of the ICNP in a manuscript to be submitted for publication in the IJSEM.
- C. Manaia, to notify M.E. Trujillo that the Executive Board has approved R.R. de la Haba and D.N. Proença to join the editorial board of the IJSEM.
- M. Göker, to work with the management of the DSMZ to prepare a contract to be signed between the ICSP and the DSMZ to formalize the funding of LPSN by the ICSP.

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- E.R.B. Moore, to enable M. Göker to edit the ICSP website under his supervision.
- D.R. Arahal, to inquire with A. Ventosa about the convenience of a webmaster for ICSP.