

Meeting of the Executive Committee (EC)
International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV)
Wednesday 2 August - Friday 4 August, 2023
Rosensäle, Fürstengraben 27, 07743 Jena, Germany, and virtually on Zoom

Participants

Attending in person:

F. Murilo ZERBINI (President, interim Proposals Secretary, and meeting Chair) [MZ]

Stuart G. SIDDELL (Vice-President) [SGS]

Elliot J. LEFKOWITZ (Data Secretary) [EJL]

Evelien ADRIAENSSENS (Chair, Bacterial Viruses SC) [EA]

Poliane ALFENAS-ZERBINI (Elected Member) [PA]

Bas E. DUTILH (Elected Member) [BD]

Małgorzata ŁOBOCKA (Elected Member) [ML] ('Malgosia')

David L. ROBERTSON (Elected Member) [DR]

Nobuhiro SUZUKI (Elected Member) [NS]

Attending on Zoom:

Arcady R. MUSHEGIAN (Business Secretary) [AM]

Mart KRUPOVIC (Chair, Archaeal Viruses SC) [MK]

Jens H. KUHN (Chair, Animal dsRNA and ssRNA- Viruses SC) [JK]

Luisa RUBINO (Chair, Plant Viruses SC) [LR]

Sead SABANADZOVIC (Chair, Fungal and Protist Viruses SC) [SS] ('Sejo')

Peter SIMMONDS (Chair, Animal ssRNA+ Viruses SC) [PS]

Arvind VARSANI (Chair, Animal DNA Viruses and Retroviruses SC) [AV]

María Laura GARCÍA (Elected Member) [MG]

Sandra JUNGLEN (Elected member) [SJ]

Amy LAMBERT (Elected Member) [AL]

Hanna OKSANEN (Elected Member) [HO]

Koenraad VAN DOORSLAER (Elected Member) [KVD]

Anne-Mieke VANDAMME (Elected Member) [AMV]

Donald SMITH [DS] (Attending non-member, Microbiology Society supported)

Unable to attend: All EC members attended the meeting.

Wednesday 2 August

1. Introductory business, minutes and commitments

The agenda of EC55 was amended to include a discussion on Study Groups (third day of the meeting). The agenda of the EC55 meeting was approved.

The minutes of the EC54 meeting and the Public Summary of the EC54 meeting minutes were approved.

The Commitments made at the EC54 meeting were reviewed and the following issues were approved and/or discussed:

- Development of a policy on the permissible forms of sequence data deposition for Taxonomic Proposals (TPs). The policy draft was reviewed. It was agreed that the policy will be a comment to the ICTV Code 3.6. The requirement for one exemplar sequence for each species to be recorded as such in the Virus Metadata Resource (VMR) was agreed. It was also agreed that the example sequence must be deposited and be protein-coding complete and its accession number must be included in TP. It was decided to revise the document.
- Development of a written remit for the Bioinformatics Expert Group defining the composition of the group and its interaction with Study Groups (SGS) and Subcommittees (SCs). It was decided to finalize the document.
- Development of the virus taxonomy challenge for bioinformaticians as an ICTV activity. This is an ongoing work with substantial community interest.
- Analysis of the ICTV policy-making activities for the last 10 years. Analysis has been done and it was agreed to include EC54 and EC55 and improve statistics. It was decided that a report will be made.
- C.1.5.5 Proposal withdrawal should be by consensus of the authors, and if there is no consensus, then the EC must deal with it on a case-by-case basis. This is covered later in the agenda (TP 2023.002G.N.V1.Proposal_withdrawal).
- Naming-taxa-after-living-people policy. It was agreed that the honoree must consent to the nomination and that needs to be documented in TP.
- Revision of the TP Excel module is ongoing and will be in use in the next proposal cycle
- Future relationships with various publishing houses and making TPs citable with doi were discussed.
- ICVCN and Statutes are being harmonized and revised. Approval of the Comment related to the guidance the relationship between “species” and “virus” on Rule 3.20 of the ICTV Code will be followed up in the context of the harmonization work. In addition, it was agreed that if a phylogenetic tree is included in a TP, it should make a point directly relevant to TP. It was decided to make a comment in the Code.
- C.11.2.1 The Virology Division of IUMS approved the new asynchronous election schedule.

2. General ICTV Business

EC received the reports on activities related to publishing by Virology Division News, ICTV Newsletters, ICTV Report, and JGV Profiles, and on interactions with the Microbiology Society. It

was noted that profiles are referred to in considerable numbers, but do not cover the whole taxonomy. It was discussed the possibility to produce ICTV Report chapters at higher taxonomy level.

The VMR continues to be developed and will be automated and updated with each new VMR dataset.

The benefits of information exchange between NCBI/GenBank and ICTV were discussed, in order to achieve the highest possible quality of databases with up-to-date information on taxon IDs and that they are unique.

3. Finances

EC received the Treasurer's Report.

4. Procedures and Policies

President summarized the progress on the conversion of the virus species names to the binominal format with the deadline of this year.

The spelling of the non-viral taxa was discussed and there was agreement that the spelling includes italicization.

It was discussed whether an SC chair can serve two terms, then be elected to chair another SC. The rule was examined in such a way that the EC sees no obstacle to this.

It was agreed to amend the Statutes 4.3.1. The following text will be included in the revised Statutes: "no earlier than 180 days and no later than 60 days before the ICTV Plenary Meeting" in the years when there is no ICTV Plenary Meeting.

5. Data and Software

Data Secretary gave an overview on the updates on the Taxonomy Database and Website. In addition, a list of all demarcation criteria is being compiled, which are being extracted from the approved TPs.

6. General Taxonomy and Nomenclature Issues

Discussion on virus and species names and whether each species should have a named virus. The question of how to deal with the distinction between the name of the virus and the name of the species was raised and whether this could be reconsidered. In addition, metagenomics brings a new layer to this reflection. It was agreed to continue the discussion at EC56.

Thursday 3 August

7. General Taxonomic Proposals and Subcommittee Reports and TPs

President presented the 2 general TPs.

8. Subcommittee reports and proposals

SC Chairs reported on the progress in adopting the virus binominal nomenclature and presented the TPs. The EC members voted on each TPs. A total of 207 TPs were examined, 102 under streamlined procedure and 95 under the full procedure including discussion.

Friday 3 August

EC discussed on TPs and minimal information standards and trees included in TPs. It was decided that TP file and its Help Documentation should include minimal requirements: request tree image, tree file, source alignment, metadata file, explain that they will be stored in a non-public area.

10. EC nominations and elections

The President reported on the work on the Nominations Committee, which will meet in a week to finalize the organization of the election of EC Officers (Business Secretary and Proposal Secretary position in this round) and EC Elected Members and the list of candidates. A vote will be organized by AM.

The EC voted on the Vice-President and the SC Chairs to be nominated according to the procedure. Unanimous decision was reached.

The term of office (3-years, 2023- 2026) of the new Officers, Chairs and Elected Members will start after the plenary session.