

**EC50 - Meeting of the Executive Committee (EC)
International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV)
Wednesday 11 July - Friday 13 July 2018
at Carriage House MAA Meeting Space, 1781 Church Street NW,
Washington, DC 20036, USA**

EC Members Attending

Andrew J. DAVISON (President and Chair) [AD]
Stuart G. SIDDELL (Vice-President) [SGS]

Arcady R. MUSHEGIAN (Secretary – Business) [AM]
Andrew M. Q. KING (Secretary – Proposals) [AMQK]
Elliot J. LEFKOWITZ (Secretary – Data) [EJL]

Balázs HARRACH (Chair, Animal DNA Viruses and Retroviruses SC) [BH]
Nick J. KNOWLES (Chair, Animal ssRNA+ Viruses SC) [NK]
Peter SIMMONDS (Chair, Fungal and Protist Viruses SC) [MN]
F. Murilo ZERBINI (Chair, Plant Viruses SC) [FMZ]
Jens H. KUHN (Chair, Animal dsRNA and ssRNA- Viruses SC) [JK]

Robert L. HARRISON (Elected member) [RH] ('Bob')
Sandra JUNGLÉN (Elected member) [SJ]
Mart KRUPOVIC (Elected member) [MK]
Max NIBERT (Elected member) [MN]
Luisa RUBINO (Elected member) [LR]
Arvind VARSANI (Elected member) [AV]

Others Attending

Richard J. ORTON (Wellcome Trust grant employee) [RO]
Donald SMITH (Wellcome Trust grant employee) [DS]

EC members Not Attending

Andrew M. KROPINSKI (Chair, Bacterial and Archaeal Viruses SC) [AK]
Bas E. DUTILH (Elected Member) [BD]
Sead SABANADZOVIC (Elected member) [SS] ('Sejo')

Wednesday 11 July

Section 1: Introductory business, minutes and commitments

1.1 Welcome to Washington DC (AM); local arrangements (AM)

1.2 Introduction of new members (AD)

1.3 Amendments to agenda (all)

1.4 Review and approval of EC49 (Singapore) minutes (AM)

Reviewed and approved by all members.

1.5 Matters arising (when not part of the agenda) (AM, all)

None raised.

1.6 Review of commitments made at EC49 (Singapore); some commitments are addressed later in more detail. Highlights:

The new Newsletter Editor (SGS) has been appointed. RH and MN are applauded for organizing the ASV Satellite Symposium following EC50. It is decided to produce, starting with this EC meeting, a condensed executive summary of minutes for posting online for public view (this document). The EC members not in attendance will be asked for their consent, and the policy will then be considered to be in effect. Online voting using SurveyMonkey is seen as a success, but the voting page format should be explained better in future.

Section 2: General business

2.1 Virology Division News (SS)

2.2 ICTV newsletters (SGS)

2.3 ICTV Taxonomy Report

2.3.1 Report of the editor-in-chief (EL)

Chapters are being posted online; some need updates already, e.g., when a new genus is added to a family. Version control is currently semi-hidden ("History" link at the bottom of each chapter page). It is requested that an easy way of generating a PDF copy of a chapter is provided.

2.3.2 Report of the managing editor (DS)

The frequency of online access to the published chapters, the pipeline of manuscripts and the publication logistics are discussed. There is discussion of what 'current taxonomy' is and how it relates to 'stable/established' taxonomy; also on the vocabulary: what the name of the product currently called "10th Report" should be and how to convey the fact that some of the products are stable but may not be current, while others are continuously updated. Email suggestions will be collected and a plan will be developed to clarify this.

2.4 ICTV Virus Metadata Resource (SGS)

The VMR, as well as Master Species List (MSL), includes 4853 virus species, each with an exemplar. There are also about 625 additional isolates. The work with NCBI is ongoing to align the ICTV and NCBI databases and websites. It is noted that VMR/MSL may be the single most accessed resource on the ICTVonline site for many practical virologists;

“where is my virus in the taxonomy?” may be asked more frequently than “why is my virus in this taxon?”).

2.5 Life membership (AD)

AD nominates Mike Adams, former EC Business Secretary, as an ICTV Life Member. All 16 EC members vote in favor of the nomination. Life Members are elected by the entire ICTV; a profile will be needed for the ratification vote.

Section 3: Finances

The financial position of the ICTV, reports on the active Wellcome award, and plans for future funding are discussed.

Section 4: Procedures

4.1 Process for changing the Statutes and Code (AM)

4.2 Review of EC procedures (AD)

The procedures are reviewed and approved, mostly by 15-16 FOR/1-0 ABSTAIN.

Highlights: Over the years, the physical presence of all EC members at EC meetings has been considered essential. As this may disadvantage certain people and even entire cohorts the policy is adopted that presence by teleconferencing should be allowed, but only under exceptional circumstances and, as a rule, for the entire meeting. There may be no prospective, retrospective or proxy votes.

General taxonomy proposals shall be administered by the President, who may delegate them to any other EC member. This person shall act as the SC chair for such proposals.

All proposals that have been voted on will be designated into one of the following categories: **R** (rejected; reasons for the decision recorded in the minutes and conveyed to the authors by the SC Chair; any modifications of such proposal to be treated as a new proposal in the future); **A** (approved without amendments); **Ac** (approved on condition of specific amendments, which are recorded in the minutes and must be made by the authors within a month and deemed satisfactory by the SC chair; if some of these conditions are not met, the proposal is deferred to the following meeting, where the approval is either confirmed or moved to **R** status); **U** (approved without amendments but will be taken to the email vote by the entire EC to confirm approval; if not confirmed, moves to **Ud**); **Uc** (approved subject to specific amendments, which are recorded in the minutes and must be made by the authors within two months and deemed satisfactory by the SC chair, after which they will be taken to the email vote by the entire EC to confirm approval; if not satisfactory or not confirmed, moves to **Ud**); **Ud** (deferred until the following EC meeting, for reasons recorded in the minutes and conveyed to the authors by the SC chair; the authors have until the following EC meeting to make changes, at which a vote is taken to the EC to r move to **R**, or approve and move to one of **A**, **Ac**, **U** or **Uc**).

It is clarified that, after the discussion of each proposal or group of streamlined proposals, the President suggests the letter to which it is assigned; any EC member may require the vote for the vote to be conducted as an anonymous, written ballot. The outcome shall be decided by simple majority of those voting; abstentions are not votes. If a majority is not obtained, the President shall call for another vote on an alternative category. The President may also call for a re-vote on the same letter code. If a majority is not obtained for any outcome, the proposal shall move to **Ud**. Only EC members

present at the time of the vote can vote . The EC shall send proposals for changes to taxonomy, nomenclature or the constitution for ratification by the whole ICTV. Other proposals shall be decided by the EC alone. Proposals to create or abolish taxa above the level of genus will go to the U track on first consideration.

4.3 Improving the streamlining process (AD)

The rule for approving the streamlining procedure for a proposal is: two approvers, none of them an author of the proposal, must approve. EC has designated approvers for different SCs, and additional approvers for a proposal must be obtained when one or both of the designated approvers are also authors of the proposal.

4.4 Ethics and propriety (AM)

A query was made at EC49 about whether the EC should have a designated 'conflict of interest official'. It is agreed that this is not needed at this point, and it is sufficient that the entire EC watches out for real conflicts of interest and appearances of such conflicts. EC members make various disclosures at their day jobs, which should give some guidance; in the end, disclosing of relationships/affiliations/interests is what matters.

Section 5: Proposals deferred by the outcome of the EC email vote in December 2017

All proposals pass, the Code will be re-written, and the additional ratification vote will be organized in Fall 2018. (The results are reported in VDN articles 10.1007/s00705-018-04136-2 and 10.1007/s00705-019-04306-w 5.1.)

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Section 6: Data

6.1 ICTV website and MSL (EL)

The ICTVonline website has been stable in appearance and access for the last year. On the front page, the left column is constant and the right column is news; this was changed on purpose. Future development of the site functionality is discussed.

6.2 Deadline for corrections to the new MSL (EL)

Corrections that deal with procedural errors, involving not the proposal itself but the EC's handling of the proposal, can be corrected any time during the process of MSL compilation. Errors made by proposers and then ratified because they were not caught during the process of approval may only be changed by another proposal, resulting in a delay of at least a year. Modifying the cycle of approvals to make these corrections more frequently would nearly double the amount of work for the EC data support group. A message to the proposers will be developed: check your text, otherwise you will be delayed for another year.

6.3-6.6 Updates on proposal submission format and on the ability to release ICTV reports 1-8 online.

6.7 Scope, practicalities and progress of online proposal submission system (RO)

The pros and cons of the current (Excel/email) system vs. the Taxonomic Proposal Management System (TPMS) under development are discussed. The functions of a prototype are demonstrated. The TPMS would not speed up proposal consideration, but would improve proposal validation and record keeping.

6.8 EU GDPR compliance (EL, AM)

The law adopted by the EU, called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), aims at giving EU subjects control of their online privacy. It is decided that the EC will explain what its policy is and will write it into a disclaimer on the website, as well as make it easy for people to delete personal info. This will also be done in the vote-related emails and SurveyMonkey voting pages.

Section 7: General issues

Section 8: Discussion and voting on general taxonomic proposals - Results are reported in VDN article 10.1007/s00705-019-04306-w 5.1.

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Section 9: SC reports and proposals - Results are reported in VDN article 10.1007/s00705-019-04306-w 5.1.

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Section 10: Optional catch-up session

Section 11: Future activities

11.1 Roles, responsibilities and voting eligibility in changeover years (AM)

It is agreed that commission of EC members should start upon election and terminate when the term is over (also marked by the election); only those currently in office can vote, regardless of whether or not they were in office for some or all of the history of the question or proposal voted on; authorship of the ratification paper in the changeover year should involve past as well as new members, if the past members so wish.

11.2 Arrangements for EC51, 2019 (SGS)

EC51 will be in Berlin on July 15-17, 2019 (Mon-Wed), in the Kongresszentrum Reinhardtstraßenhöfe, with accommodation in Hotel Leonardo.

11.3 Improving the functioning of SCs and SGs (establishing and morphing SGs, Chair education, overlapping/interdependent proposals)

JK brings up the question of how to arrange SGs when they are at different ranks, especially when the taxa entrusted to SGs are nested in the taxonomy; for example, if there is an SG at a higher rank, should the Chairs of SGs for a lower rank be included automatically in the first SG by default? SCs also overlap sometimes, but this has not been much of a problem and can be solved by good communication between SC chairs. It is decided that SC structure will be discussed at EC51.

11.4 Communications, including efficacy of the online forum (EL)

The online forum is provided as is; it is currently not facilitated or moderated. The EC discusses the ways to establish a Twitter presence.

11.5 Review of procedures for elections and appointments to the EC (AM, AMQK, EL)

AM explains that there are different categories of EC position (President, Vice-President, Secretaries, SC Chairs, Elected Members). There are many differences between the appointment mechanisms, and some misalignments of these with the Statutes. A proposal to remedy the inconsistencies and improve the process fairness and transparency will be presented at EC51. Former EC members, no longer in office, will be approached to help with drafting the proposal.

Section 12: Concluding business

12.1 Review of commitments (AM)

12.2 Miscellaneous

The EC discusses how to acknowledge all authors when multiple proposals say exactly the same or significantly overlap others. Currently, SGs are usually requested by the SC Chair to provide the opinion on the proposals that have not come from the SG, i.e. the SC Chair is unlikely to support a proposal if the SG disagrees. However, although proposals must get a response from the relevant SG, a negative opinion does not prohibit submission of a proposal. SGs do not have a veto over what may be submitted – they are only invited to comment so that the EC can decide what to do. There is no procedural problem here. It is noted that an SG may focus on standard operating procedures, or focus on actually considering proposals, or some mix; there is no explicit rule dictating where on this spectrum an SG should be.

Official business of EC50 ends