

International Committee on Systematic Bacteriology

Subcommittee on the taxonomy of genus *Bacillus* and related organisms

Minutes of the meeting, 18 August 1999, Sydney, Australia

Minute 1. Call to order. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, R. C. W. Berkeley, at 16:00 on 18 August 1999 in the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, Sydney, Australia.

Minute 2. Record of attendance. The members present were Roger C. W. Berkeley (Chairman), Niall A. Logan (Secretary), Paul De Vos, Antonio Ventosa, Hans-Jürgen Busse, Peter Kämpfer and F. G. Priest. Also in attendance were Sandra Buczolits and Monika Wieser. Apologies for absence were received from Leon Rabinovitch and Marc Heyndrickx.

Minute 3. Minutes of previous meeting. A formal meeting had been planned to take place in Jerusalem in 1996, but only three members were present (N. A. Logan, P. De Vos and M. Goodfellow). Consequently, an informal, unminuted meeting took place, attended by Antonio Ventosa and Hans-Jürgen Busse, who were invited to join the subcommittee. M. Goodfellow tendered his resignation and was thanked for his contribution to the subcommittee.

Minute 4. Changes in membership. M.-M. Lecadet has resigned following her retirement and has been asked to suggest a replacement on the committee, but her laboratory awaited the appointment of a replacement bacteriologist. As Dr Epstein had not responded to correspondence, the Secretary agreed to write once more and assume Dr Epstein's resignation if no response was received. There were no suggestions for new members of the committee.

Minute 5. Present membership. The present membership is: Roger C. W. Berkeley (Chairman), Niall A. Logan (Secretary), Paul De Vos, Marc Heyndrickx, Antonio Ventosa, Hans-Jürgen Busse, Peter Kämpfer, F. G. Priest, Mirja S. Salkinoja-Salonen, L. K. Nakamura, Dagmar Fritze, I. Epstein, R. A. Slepecky and Leon Rabinovitch.

Minute 6. Minimal standards. R. C. W. Berkeley and N. A. Logan explained that a set of minimal standards had been prepared for *Bacillus* and related organisms and had been circulated to members of the subcommittee following the

IUMS Congress in Prague in 1994. Since then there had been little progress, owing to the tendency of the draft to become a set of 'maximal standards', and uncertainty about the practical role of minimal standards. After some discussion it was agreed that minimal standards would be of value to newcomers to the taxonomy of *Bacillus* and relatives, and that the secretary would recirculate the 1994 draft to all members by the end of September 1999 for comment before the end of November 1999.

Minute 7. Work in progress. Members present outlined their current research programmes. A. Ventosa described the isolation of a new moderately halophilic species, *Bacillus marismortui*, from specimens collected by Benjamin Volcani from the Dead Sea in 1936. P. De Vos and N. A. Logan reported on their continuing polyphasic taxonomic study of aerobic endospore-forming bacteria, with the proposal of the genus *Virgibacillus*, of the species *Virgibacillus proomii*, and the recognition of a new, moderately thermophilic *Bacillus* species isolated from Antarctic geothermal sites. H.-J. Busse outlined his work on bacterial diversity within medieval wall paintings, a habitat dominated by *Bacillus* species, and reported that a new species of the genus had emerged. P. Kämpfer introduced his work on wind-drift of aerobic endospore-formers from organic-waste-disposal (composting) sites. F. G. Priest summarized his recent proposal to transfer some insect-pathogenic *Bacillus* species to the genus *Paenibacillus*. He also outlined his intention to investigate the clonal structure of the *Bacillus cereus* group, and reported the recognition of a new species of aerobic endospore-former with biocontrol potential which has been isolated from Ukrainian cotton plants.

Minute 8. *Bacillus* 2000. R. C. W. Berkeley, P. De Vos and N. A. Logan outlined their plans for a 2-day meeting on the 'Application and Systematics of *Bacillus* and Relatives' in Bruges, Belgium, from 30–31 August 2000.

Minute 9. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 17:30 on 18 August 1999.

N. A. Logan, *Secretary*
R. C. W. Berkeley, *Chairman*