

Minutes EB23-04
Meeting of the SeqCode Executive Board
6 October 2023 @ 7h00 (EST)

Attendance

Phil Hugenholtz (PH)	- Member without portfolio
Kostas Konstantinidis (KK)	- Chair, Standards Working Group
Luis Miguel Rodriguez (LMR)	- Chair, Registry Working Group
Iain Sutcliffe (IS)	- Chair, Legislative Commission
Fanus Venter (FV)	- Secretary
Barny Whitman (BW)	- Chair
Fengping Wang (FW)	- Member without portfolio

Apology

Maria Chuvochina (MC)	- Chair Reconciliation Commission
Anna-Louise Reysenbach (ALR)	- Vice Chair

1. Welcome

BW welcomed the members of the Executive Board.

A special welcome to Cheng Li the Secretary of the Standards Working Group who has joined as an observer.

2. Additions to the Agenda

None

3. Matters Arising/Action points from the previous meeting

Action items from previous meeting

1. MC and FV to alert the broader community of the posting of the minutes via email, twitter and slack.

Done

2. LMR to investigate hosting of rocket.chat on Innsbruck server.

The platform has been established. [Redacted] This platform will be used in future for EB communication. Once the system has been tested a final decision will be made on the migration of the SeqCode Public Slack channel to rocket.chat.

3. MC to prepare a letter to the Editors of relevant journals on how they can obtain relevant information related to the registration of names prior to publication.

Ongoing

4. KK to follow-up on the NSF's RCN and ICB funding

Proposal to be submitted by the end of 2023

5. LMR to investigate the EU COST Action funding

Could not get the minimum team together and this proposal will have to stand over until next year.

6. FW to look for Chinese funding opportunities.

Ongoing. FW required clarity on the purpose of the funding. It was agreed that the most pressing need would be the improvement and development of the Registry. Funding for workshops to promote the SeqCode would also be helpful. KK and LMR will assist FW in developing proposals

Ongoing or future action items

1. EB to prepare a formal report on the activities of the SeqCode for submission to ISME communications after January 2024.

4. Reports from Commissions and Working Groups

Legislative Commission

Following the publication of the first proposal to amend the SeqCode (Whitman et al. ISME Comms, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43705-023-00303-y>), a public discussion on the proposal will be conducted on the SeqCode Public Slack Channel for a period of 3 months. IS will provide the details of the discussion to FV, LMR and MC in order to inform members via email, the Registry and the official website.

Standards Working Group

The working group had their first meeting. The possibility of adding additional recommendations related to genome quality and metadata were discussed. The working group felt that genomes (e.g. in the case of polyploidy) where some of the standards cannot be met should be dealt with on a case by case basis and authors are requested to provide the necessary justification for such exceptions.

There was agreement that any new proposal for changes to the current standards and recommendations should be dealt similar to the approach used by the Legislative Commission for the discussion of changes to the SeqCode.

Registry and Nomenclature Working Group

The linking of additional metadata to existing entries in the Registry poses a problem and needs to be discussed in greater detail. LMR indicated that there has been an increased activity on the Registry and that there may soon be a need for additional curators.

Reconciliation Commission

The discussion of the proposal for validation of a name linked to a poor-quality genome to ensure the stability of the names of the higher-ranking taxa has been completed. The originators of the request have now been asked to provide comments in response to the issues raised in the discussion.

5. Coordinating SeqCode amendments

Changes to the SeqCode related to arbitrary names and the inclusion of categories above the phylum level (as recently added to the ICNP) should be investigated and discussed in greater detail to decide if such changes to the code should be initiated. The sensitivity surrounding existing common names for groups to be recognised as representing Kingdoms (e.g. super phylum) should be considered.

6. Application for ISME19 workshop

FV reported that a proposal for the workshop was submitted and that we hope to have feedback on whether our proposal was accepted in the near future.

7. Conference and Meeting Updates

KK reported that the presentation as VAAM went well. [Redacted]

IS presented at the Microbiology Society's Focused meeting "WHAT'S IN A NAME? FIT-FOR-PURPOSE BACTERIAL NOMENCLATURE" held at the University of Strathclyde Glasgow Technology and Innovation Centre on 26 - 27 September 2023.

These interactions have again emphasised the importance of interacting with the members of the ICSP on how we could operate these two codes in harmony and work towards merging them in future. As members of the SeqCode EB we should continue to encourage the submission of type material to culture collections whenever possible.

A number of EB members will attend and present at the upcoming BISMIS meeting in China during November.

KK and FV reported that the planning for the special SeqCode issue of Systematic and Applied Microbiology (SAM) is progressing well. The target date for the submission of manuscripts is December 2023.

The meeting was adjourned.

New action items

1. FV to circulate the minutes of this meeting to the EB for their comments and approval.
2. **IS to provide the details of the Slack discussion with FV, LMR and MC in order to inform members via email, the Registry and the official website of the discussion.**
3. FV to share the EB minutes and other relevant information, including the discussion of the proposal to amend the SeqCode, with the SeqCode Community via email and post the minutes on Zenodo.
4. MC to share the instruction to authors with the relevant journals.
5. MC to prepare a proposal for a round table discussion at ISME19.

Ongoing or future action items

1. EB to prepare a formal report on the activities of the SeqCode for submission to ISME communications after January 2024.
2. MC to share the instruction to authors with the relevant journals.
3. KK to investigate possible RCN funding
4. EB members should still provide LMR with the details of possible contacts in COST Inclusiveness Target Countries. There is a need to include female PIs.
5. FW to look for Chinese funding opportunities.

Minutes prepared by FV, October 6, 2023

Approved October 12, 2023