

Actions of the Judicial Commission of the International Committee on Systematic Bacteriology on Requests for Opinions Published Between January 1985 and July 1993

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Eleven requests were published between January 1985 and July 1993. Four of these requests were granted and have been published as Opinion 64, replacing and recognizing type strains of *Methanobacterium formicum* and *Methanobacterium bryantii*, respectively; Opinion 65, replacing the type strain of *Selenomonas sputigena*; Opinion 66, replacing the type strain of *Streptococcus mitis*; and Opinion 67, rejecting *Citrobacter diversus*. Six requests were denied, including requests for conservation or recognition of "*Rhodococcus lentifragmentus*," "*Pediococcus acidilactici*," and "*Salmonella enterica*," rejection of *Erwinia carnegieana*, *Pectobacterium carnegieana*, and *Lactobacillus paracasei*, and transfer of the type strain of *Methanosaeta concilii* to *Methanotherix soehngenii*. A request based on a proposal for reinterpretation of the position of *Xanthomonas maltophilia* was not considered by the Judicial Commission because it represented a substantive taxonomic issue rather than a nomenclatural question governed by the *Bacteriological Code*.

The Statutes of the International Committee on Systematic Bacteriology (ICSB), which are printed in the *Bacteriological Code* (7), provide for formal publication of Opinions that have been issued by the Judicial Commission of the ICSB. There is, however, no provision for formal publication of denials of Opinions that have been requested, other than as minutes of the meetings of the Judicial Commission, which normally occur at four-year intervals. In order to publicize the disposition of Requests for Opinions, reports are prepared from time to time that summarize the status of these requests (12-14). This is such a report on the disposition of Requests for Opinions published between January 1985 and July 1993. A postpublication waiting period of one year is required before action can be taken on a request, but no requests were published between July 1992 and July 1993. All Requests for Opinions that were published in the period covered by this report have been resolved, as follows.

Opinions awarded. The following Opinions were awarded by a positive vote of at least 10 members of the Judicial Commission of the ICSB but were published too late to appear in Appendix 5 of the 1990 revision of the *Bacteriological Code* (7); therefore, the citations for the publication of these Opinions are included here.

Opinion 64 (Int. J. Syst. Bacteriol. 42:654, 1992). Designation of strain MF (DSM 1535) in place of strain M.o.H. (DSM 863) as the type of *Methanobacterium formicum* and recognition of strain M.o.H. (DSM 863) as the type of *Methanobacterium bryantii*.

Opinion 65 (Int. J. Syst. Bacteriol. 42:655, 1992). Replacement of strain VPI 10068 (ATCC 33150) with ATCC 35185 as the type of *Selenomonas sputigena*.

Opinion 66 (Int. J. Syst. Bacteriol. 43:391, 1993). Designation of strain NCTC 12261 in place of NCTC 3165 (= ATCC 33399) as the type of *Streptococcus mitis*.

Opinion 67 (Int. J. Syst. Bacteriol. 43:392, 1993). Rejection of *Citrobacter diversus* as a nomen dubium.

Opinions denied. The following Requests for Opinions were reviewed by the Judicial Commission of the ICSB, and after due consideration, the Judicial Commission voted not to award the requested opinions.

Priority of *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* (Kruse 1896; Tsukamura et al. 1975) Tsukamura 1978 comb. nov. over *Rhodococcus ruber* (Kruse 1896) Goodfellow and Alderson 1980. Request for an Opinion. The Judicial Commission voted not to award an Opinion requested by Tsukamura (10) recognizing *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* over *Rhodococcus ruber*. For discussion of the basis for the decision, see Minute 20 of the 1986 meeting of the Judicial Commission (5).

Request for an Opinion conserving *Pediococcus acidilactici* with a new neotype. The Judicial Commission voted not to award an Opinion requested by Garvie (4) conserving *Pediococcus acidilactici*. For discussion of the basis for the decision, see Minute 17(iii) of the 1990 meeting of the Judicial Commission (6).

Request for an Opinion designating *Salmonella enterica* as the only species in its genus. The Judicial Commission voted not to award an Opinion requested by Le Minor and Popoff (8) designating *Salmonella enterica* as the only species in its genus. This Request for an Opinion was subjected to extensive discussion before a vote was taken, as documented in Minute 17(i) of the 1990 meeting of the Judicial Commission (6), and the topic was reopened for further discussion as noted in Minute 18(iii) of the same meeting. In subsequent correspondence, a number of Commissioners expressed a desire to see an alternative proposal published as a Request for an Opinion, but none has been forthcoming; insufficient support was presented to justify distribution of another ballot simply to try to overturn the prior decision against awarding the Opinion. If a different Request for an Opinion is published on *Salmonella* nomenclature, it will be examined on its own merits.

Request for an Opinion rejecting *Erwinia carnegieana* and

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Pectobacterium carnegieana. The Judicial Commission voted not to award an Opinion requested by Alcorn and Orum (1) rejecting *Erwinia carnegieana* and *Pectobacterium carnegieana*. For discussion of the basis for the decision, see Minute 17(ii) of the 1990 meeting of the Judicial Commission (6).

Request for an Opinion replacing the type strain of *Lactobacillus casei* and rejecting the name *Lactobacillus paracasei*. Dellaglio and colleagues (3) requested that ATCC 334 be designated in place of ATCC 393 as the neotype of *Lactobacillus casei* subsp. *casei* and that *L. paracasei* be rejected as a synonym of *L. casei*, as the latter would be defined by the proposed neotype. In reviewing the arguments, the Commission noted that the authors cited both Rule 18g (now Rule 18e in the 1990 revision) and Rule 18i (now Rule 18g in the 1990 revision) as authority for the request. The first of these rules would apply only if the original type strain were discovered, a claim which was not made for ATCC 334. The second would apply if the type "has become unsuitable due to changes in its character or for other reasons." The authors did not argue that it has become unsuitable but rather that it was not a good original choice. The Commission concluded that there is not enough basis for concern about confusion leading to serious consequences in industrial microbiology to justify awarding an exception to the Rules and voted to deny the request.

Reinterpretation of the taxonomic position of *Xanthomonas maltophilia* and taxonomic criteria in this genus. Request for an Opinion. The paper by Van Zyl and Steyn (11) presented a purely taxonomic question and should not have appeared as a Request for an Opinion. The Judicial Commission renders formal Opinions only when a nomenclatural question is raised relating to interpretation or clarification of the code or when an exception to the rules in the code is requested. The Judicial Commission will not consider the request; if the authors wish to initiate the taxonomic change that was implied in the paper, they may simply publish an article proposing, describing, and naming the new genus that they feel is needed and designating a type for it.

Request for an Opinion assigning the type strain of *Methanosaeta concilii* to serve as the neotype for *Methanotherix soehngeni*. Boone (2) proposed that strain GP6 (DSM 3671 = ATCC 35969 = OCM 69 = NRC 2989), the type strain of *Methanosaeta concilii*, be adopted as the neotype of *Methanotherix soehngeni*. This would have the effect of reducing *M. concilii* to a synonym, rendering it invalid. It is doubtful whether the original type strain of *M. soehngeni*, "Op-fikon," was ever a pure culture, and no viable culture of that strain is known to exist. Patel, who originally isolated strain GP6 in pure culture and assigned it to the new species, *Methanosaeta concilii*, has published a counterargument to this proposal (9). After careful consideration, the Judicial Commission concluded that the interests of clarity and stability would be served best by denying the Request for an Opinion. Strain GP6 (DSM 3671 = ATCC 35969 = OCM 69 = NRC 2989) remains the type of *Methanosaeta concilii*; there does not appear to be an extant type strain for

Methanotherix soehngeni, which remains a species of doubtful validity.

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