

# Key decisions of the Nomenclature Section of the XVIII IBC

The Nomenclature Section met for five days, 18–22 July 2011, to discuss proposals to amend the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*. The more significant changes to the *Code* are outlined below and will be put to Congress for ratification on Saturday.

## Electronic publication of new names from 1 January 2012

The Nomenclature Section strongly supported a series of proposals prepared by the Special Committee on Electronic Publication set up by the Vienna Congress in 2005. This means that it is no longer required for new names of plants, fungi and algae (and type designations) to be issued in printed matter in order to be *effectively published* – effective publication being a fundamental requirement of the *Code*. As an alternative, publication online in Portable Document Format (PDF) in a publication with an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) or International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is permitted. These new rules come into effect on 1 January 2012.

Rules were also approved to prevent changes to a particular electronic publication once it is issued, to prevent preliminary versions being effectively published, and to make clear the date of publication. Also approved was a series of recommendations on best practice, particularly with regard to long-term archiving.

## Latin descriptions no longer required

Since 1935 it has been required for names of new plants and algae to be published with a Latin description or

diagnosis. For names of fungi, the same rule has applied since 1958, whereas names of fossils can have either a Latin or an English description or diagnosis since 1996. These rules have now been changed so that all names governed by the *Code* require either a Latin or an English description or diagnosis on or after 1 January 2012.

## One fungus, one name

For over 30 years, the *Code* has permitted separate names for the asexual and sexual forms (*morphs*) of certain fungi. This was an exception to one of the basic principles of the *Code*, whereby one taxon defined in a particular way can have only one correct name. This anomalous rule (Article 59) has now been deleted from the *Code*, so that different names applying to asexual and sexual morphs of the same fungus compete for priority in the same manner as other names (i.e. based on date of publication). An additional new set of rules will allow lists of widely used names to be protected en masse, so as to minimize disruption by applying the rule of priority strictly.

## One fossil, one name

The *Code* also had special rules for names of fossils, whereby separate names could be applied to *morphotaxa*, each of which represents a particular part, life-history stage, or preservational state, even if those separate names could be demonstrated to belong to the same organism. The Nomenclature Section decided to abandon the whole concept of *morphotaxa*, so that when two or more *morphotaxa* can be shown to belong to the same organism, their names compete for priority in the usual way.

## Registration of fungal names via MycoBank now required

Over the past several years, the online database MycoBank ([www.mycobank.org](http://www.mycobank.org)) has become increasingly used by mycologists to register new fungal names and associated data, such as descriptions and illustrations. Upon registration, Mycobank issues a unique number which can be cited in the publication where the name appears. This number is also used by the nomenclatural database *Index Fungorum* and serves as a Life Science Identifier (LSID). The Melbourne Nomenclature Section approved a new rule in the *Code* whereby the publication of a new fungal name must include a citation of “an identifier issued by a recognized repository”, at present the MycoBank number, in order to be *validly published* – valid publication being necessary for a name to have any status under the *Code*. This rule applies only to names of fungi.

## The name *Acacia*

See the separate article about the *Acacia* code changes (front page).

## New title for the *Code*

Finally, the *Code* is no longer the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*. The Nomenclature Section recognized the need to reflect better the groups of organisms covered by the *Code*, i.e., that algae and particularly fungi are nowadays separated from plants, and approved a new title: *the International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants*.