

**Minutes EB23-02**  
**Meeting of the SeqCode Executive Board**  
**31 March 2023 @ 7h00 (EST)**

**Attendance**

Maria Chuvochina (MC)	- Chair Reconciliation Commission
Phil Hugenholtz (PH)	- Member without portfolio
Kostas Konstantinidis (KK )	- Chair, Standards Working Group
Anna-Louise Reysenbach (ALR)	- Vice Chair
Luis Miguel Rodriguez (LMR)	- Chair, Registry Working Group
Iain Sutcliffe (IS)	- Chair, Legislative Commission
Fanus Venter (FV)	- Secretary
Barney Whitman (BW)	- Chair

**Apology**

Fengping Wang (FW)	- Member without portfolio
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**1. Welcome**

BW welcomed the members of the Executive Board.

**2. Additions to the Agenda**

None

**3. Matters Arising/Action points from the previous meeting**

1. *FV to send out a poll to determine the date of the next meeting.*  
Completed.
2. *FV to contact all members of the SeqCode Steering Committee who are not part of the EB to thank them for their participation and share the minutes of this meeting.*  
Completed.
3. *MC to liaise with Sabine to update the SeqCode information on the ISME website.*  
Completed.
4. *LMR and KK to share the names and short CVs of the proposed co-opted members of their working groups with FV.*  
Membership for Registry and Nomenclature Working Group completed.  
Membership for Standards Working group to be discussed during the meeting.
5. *FV to send out a ballot to the EB to vote for approval of co-opted members of the working groups.*  
Membership of Maria Dzunkova, Maria Chuvochina, Marike Palmer and Emiley Eloë-Fadrosh approved by EB.
6. *FV to circulate the minutes to the EB for their comments within a set time period.*  
Completed.
7. *MC to arrange for the posting of the minutes on the ISME webpage.*  
Completed. Archiving the minutes on Zenodo will be investigated.
8. *MC and FV to alert the broader community of the posting of the minutes via email, twitter and slack.*  
Completed. Suggestion to send the minutes directly to the broader SeqCode committee via email.
9. *MC to have news items posted on the ISME website after consultation with the EB.*  
Ongoing.

10. *EB to decide on person responsible for the newsletter at the next meeting.*  
Responsible person(s) will be identified at a later date. Would like the first issue to coincide with the validation of the first 100 (or 50) names in the SeqCode Registry.
11. *EB to prepare a formal report on the activities of the SeqCode for submission to ISME communications after January 2024.*  
Ongoing.
12. *FV with the assistance from AP to investigate the creation of a channel for the SeqCode EB, commissions and working groups on rocket.chat.*  
Trial started but hosting on Innsbruck server will be investigated to avoid subscription fees.
13. *MLR to provide a proposal on how best to spend the ISME funding for the development of the Registry.*  
Discussed during meeting.
14. *KK and BW to contact Brian Hedlund to follow-up on the NSF-RCN funding.*  
Meeting set for 10 April with Brian, Anna-Louise, and Alison Murray.
15. *LMR to investigate the EU COST Action funding.*  
Ongoing.
16. *FW to look for Chinese funding opportunities.*  
Ongoing.
17. *BW and ALR will write a piece for ASM's Microcosm newsletter.*  
Editor contacted, BW will follow up.
18. *[MC to indicate to Markus Göker that he is welcome to approach the EB with a proposal to establish a better way of dealing with the ICNP and SeqCode names.*  
Ongoing] **To be redacted**
19. *ALR to create slides for general use to promote the use of the SeqCode.*  
Ongoing. Decision that we need only 2 or 3 slides. [For larger presentations members could use the resources at <https://fileshare.uibk.ac.at/d/83044528c7dc477597bf/>] **To be redacted**

#### 4. Reports from Commissions and Working Groups

##### Legislative Commission

This commission will be mostly reactive and will deal with proposals to amend the SeqCode as they arise. A "legislative commission" channel on has been set up in the 'SeqCode-Public' Slack workspace for wider discussion of possible amendments. All subscribers to the workspace were alerted to this option.

##### Standards Working Group

KK suggested 5 names as potential co-opted members of the working group. Additional suggestions can be sent to KK. Five co-opted members of the working group will be approved by voting via email once their names and a short CV have been shared with the EB. KK to share the names and short CVs with FV. FV to send out a ballot to the EB.

The EB confirmed an earlier decision to use flexible standards for genome sequences, such as lower genome completeness scores for certain DPANN Archaea and CPR Bacteria as well as other scientifically justified exceptions such as polyploid bacteria and endosymbionts. This will be discussed in more detail by the Standards Working Group. It was noted that CheckM2 could provide more realistic scores. The working group will look at ways in which this issue could be addressed and the related information shared with the wider community.

##### Registry and Nomenclature Working Group

The proposals for use of the ISME funding were discussed at the meeting of the working group. Two suggestions were made:

- a) Use some of the funding for a prize (grant) awarded to the person or group with the best proposal to further develop the registry.

The EB supported this idea and LMR was tasked to prepare a brief that can be widely shared with the community. Early career researchers will be encouraged to participate.

- b) Hire a part-time graduate student to assist with some of the data curation needs including updating of the Candidate taxa data and to investigate the incorporation of some of the taxa with effective names into the SeqCode.

The cost and availability of a student will be investigated. FV will look at the possibility of finding a student for his institution in order to benefit from the favourable exchange rate.

The working group also addressed three additional issues:

- a) It was suggested that a curation SOP should be established to ensure consistency between the curators.
- b) MC was tasked to prepare a letter to the Editors of relevant journals informing them of the functioning of the SeqCode registry and how they can obtain relevant information related to the registration of names prior to publication.
- c) Education & Outreach: the creation of presentations for use in under-graduate settings to create an awareness of the SeqCode.

### **Reconciliation Commission**

MC reported that arrangements are in place to have the first meeting in April.

## **5. Expanding the SeqCode to include fungi**

In reaction to a letter received, the expansion of the SeqCode to include fungi was discussed. The EB agreed that this is not something we want to pursue at present. The ICTF is currently investigating the issue.

## **6. Funding of the Registry**

BW request the EB members assist in developing a target budget to support the activities of the SeqCode and the development of the Registry. LMR indicated that the current estimate would be at least funding for a year for one developer.

## **7. Information sharing**

FV gave a presentation on the SeqCode at a one-day ISME workshop held in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

BW is writing a piece on the SeqCode for mLife to create an awareness amongst the Asian scientists.

KK and FV will assist with the editing of the special SeqCode issue of Systematic and Applied Microbiology.

PH informed the EB that the GTDB will be incorporating links to the SeqCode Registry when this code is used to validate a name.

The meeting was adjourned.

### **New action items**

1. FV to send out a poll to determine the date of the next meeting.
2. FV to circulate the minutes to the EB for their comments within a set time period.

3. MC to arrange for the posting of the minutes on the ISME webpage.
4. IS and FV to investigate archiving the minutes on Zenodo.
5. MC and FV to alert the broader community of the posting of the minutes via email, twitter and slack.
6. LMR to investigate hosting of rocket.chat on Innsbruck server.
7. KK to share the names and short CVs of the proposed co-opted members of his working group with FV.
8. FV to send out a ballot to the EB to vote for approval of co-opted members of the standards working group.
9. MLR to provide a proposal on how best to spend the ISME funding for the development of the Registry. LMR to develop a brief to communicate the funding for a prize (grant) to the person or group with the best proposal to further develop the registry.
10. 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.
11. KK, BW and ALR to meet with Brian Hedlund and Alison Murray to follow-up on the NFS' RCN and ICB funding on 10 April.
12. ALR to create 2 slides for general use to promote the use of the SeqCode.

### Ongoing action items

1. MC to have news items posted on the ISME website after consultation with the EB.
2. EB to decide on person responsible for the newsletter.
3. EB to prepare a formal report on the activities of the SeqCode for submission to ISME communications after January 2024.
4. LMR to investigate the EU COST Action funding.
5. FW to look for Chinese funding opportunities.
6. BW and ALR will write a piece for ASM's Microcosm newsletter.
7. [MC to liaise with Markus Göker to provide a proposal to establish a better way of dealing with the ICNP and SeqCode names.] **To be redacted**

Minutes prepared by FV, March 31, 2023

Approved April 7, 2023