PROPOSAL FOR EMENDATION OF RULE 9d

Definition of Neotype Strain and Method of Designation

ABSTRACT. Emendation of Rule 9d Note (c) of the International Code of Nomenclature of Bacteria and Viruses is proposed to simplify and make definitive the method of accepting and designating neotype strains of species, subspecies, and infrasubspecific forms of bacteria.

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The 1958 edition of the International Code of Nomenclature of Bacteria defines a neotype culture (strain) of bacteria and briefly outlines the procedure for its recognition as follows (Code p.56):

"(c). A neotype culture is one which has been accepted by international agreement to replace a type culture which is no longer in existence. It should agree with the diagnosis given by the original describer and should be recommended by those workers familiar with the species, and their agreed recommendations approved by the Judicial Commission."

The above statement has proved to be indefinite or inadequate in several respects. The definition of the term "neotype strain" is incomplete, the functions to be performed by a neotype strain are not clear, the need for neotype strains is not adequately appraised, the characteristics of the proposed neotype strain should be effectively published, the method of approval of the designation of a neotype strain should be detailed, and the technique of replacement of a designated neotype strain by a type strain, if one is later found to exist, should be indicated.

The six suggestions formulated below are being sent to all members of the Judicial Commission, to the members of the International Committee on Bacteriological Nomenclature, and to the members of the appropriate subcommittees on bacterial taxonomy. The suggestions were briefly outlined to the delegates to the International Conference on Microbial Classification at Quebec on September 4, 1964,

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with no dissent. Following is a list of suggestions for formulation of proposed emendation of Rule 9d Note (c).

1. Definition of a neotype. A neotype strain (culture) is one that has been accepted by international agreement to replace a type strain (culture) which is no longer in existence or to function in place of a type strain of a named taxon where no type strain has been designated.
2. Functions of a neotype strain. A neotype strain shall function, where designated and authorized, as a reference strain exactly as does a type strain.
3. Need of a neotype strain for a named taxon. Each named taxon of the rank of species, subspecies (variety); or infrasubspecific form (of special economic, diagnostic or scientific importance) of which there are available living cultures, in absence of a recognized type strain, should have a designated neotype.
4. Characteristics of a neotype strain. The characteristics of a strain proposed for designation as a neotype should be reasonably consonant with those of the original description of the taxon. The proposal should include a listing of the characteristics as noted by the proponent, with emphasis upon characteristics which are useful in distinguishing the proposed neotype from related taxa.
5. Publication of proposal for designation of a neotype strain. The proposal to designate a neotype strain should meet the requirements for effective publication of the name of a taxon (Rule 11 of the Bacteriological Code).

The proposal for designation of a neotype strain of a taxon should preferably be published in the International Bulletin of Bacteriological Nomenclature and Taxonomy. If effectively published elsewhere, an adequate resumé must be published in the International Bulletin to ensure notification of the members of the International Committee on Bacteriological Nomenclature and of the Judicial Commission and others interested.

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6. Approval of the proposed neotype strain. If no objection is submitted with reasons within six months after publication in the *Bulletin*, the proposal will be accepted and notice of approval published in the *Bulletin*. If one or more objections are submitted before the expiration of the six-month period, the proposal, with the objections, will be submitted to the appropriate taxonomic subcommittee of the International Committee for consideration and recommendation as to appropriate action. If there is no appropriate subcommittee an ad hoc committee of experts shall be constituted and the proposal properly referred.

The Judicial Commission will formulate the final proposal for emendation.

R. E. Buchanan
Chairman of the Judicial Commission