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

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***Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* (Kruse 1896; Tsukamura et al. 1975) Tsukamura 1978 comb. nov. has priority over *Rhodococcus ruber* (Kruse 1896) Goodfellow and Alderson 1980. On the Approved Lists 1980, the year of valid publication of the name *Rhodococcus ruber* appears as 1979. This should be 1980, as this name was not effectively published before the Approved Lists 1980. I propose that the Judicial Commission of the International Committee on Systematic Bacteriology revise the name *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* by recognizing its priority over *Rhodococcus ruber*.**

The name *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* (Kruse 1896; Tsukamura et al. 1975) Tsukamura 1978 comb. nov. has priority over the name *Rhodococcus ruber* (Kruse 1896) Goodfellow and Alderson 1980, which appears on the Approved Lists 1980 (6). *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* should replace *Rhodococcus ruber*. The reasons for this are given below.

In 1969, Tsukamura (7) placed the taxa previously named "*Nocardia rubra*," "*Nocardia erythropolis*," "*Nocardia globerula*," "*Nocardia polychromogenes*," "*Nocardia minima*," and "*Nocardia lutea*" into one species, "*Nocardia rubra*." In 1975, Tsukamura et al. (12) transferred some strains of "*Nocardia rubra*" (all strains except the strains named "*Nocardia erythropolis*," "*Nocardia globerula*," and "*Nocardia polychromogenes*") into the genus "*Gordona*" (8) and named these strains "*Gordona lentifragmentus*" Tsukamura nom. nov. This name was chosen to avoid confusion with "*Gordona rubra*" (8), which was described in 1971 as a species of the genus "*Gordona*" and later became a synonym of "*Gordona rubropertincta*" (Hefferan 1904) Tsukamura (9) or *Rhodococcus rubropertinctus* (Hefferan 1904) Tsukamura 1974/1978 (10, 11). When, in 1978, Tsukamura (11) proposed to change the generic name from "*Gordona*" to *Rhodococcus*, this taxon was named *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* Tsukamura 1978. The articles of Tsukamura et al. (12) of 1975 and Tsukamura (11) of 1978 were published effectively in the International Journal of Systematic Bacteriology (IJSB). Therefore, the name *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* (Kruse 1896; Tsukamura et al. 1975) Tsukamura comb. nov. 1978 was validly published in 1978.

Goodfellow and Alderson (2) also transferred "*Nocardia rubra*" to the genus *Rhodococcus* in 1977 as *Rhodococcus rubrus* (Kruse 1891) Tsukamura 1971 comb. nov. (correct name, *Rhodococcus ruber*), citing the reference of Tsukamura et al. (12). However, this article (2) was not published in the IJSB. According to the *International Code of Nomenclature of Bacteria* (4), when a new name or combination is published outside the IJSB, the pertinent reference to the name or combination must be cited in the IJSB, and the date of valid publication of the new name or combination is the date of publication in the IJSB (5). Consequently, the name *Rhodococcus ruber* was not valid until the Approved Lists (6) erroneously included this name in 1980. The Approved Lists (6) cite the date of publication

of *Rhodococcus ruber* as 1979. This is erroneous, as, in 1979, two names described by Goodfellow and Alderson (2), *Rhodococcus rhodnii* and *Rhodococcus erythropolis*, were announced in the IJSB (3), but the name *Rhodococcus ruber* was not announced. Therefore, the date of publication of this name is not 1979 but 1980, when the Approved Lists appeared.

Furthermore, the citation of the name "*Rhodococcus rubrus*, (Kruse 1896) Tsukamura 1971" by Goodfellow and Alderson (2) is not correct. There is no publication by Tsukamura in this year concerned with this taxon. Goodfellow and Alderson probably confused the name with the name of another taxon "*Gordona rubra*" (8), which is now a synonym of *Rhodococcus rubropertinctus* (Hefferan 1904) Tsukamura comb. nov. (10, 11). To avoid future confusion, the name *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* is preferable. In addition, the American Type Culture Collection catalog (1) lists erroneously the type strain of the species *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* as that of the species "*Gordona rubra*."

The description of the species *Rhodococcus lentifragmentus* is that prepared in 1975 by Tsukamura et al. (12) for "*Gordona lentifragmentus*." The type strain is strain ATCC 27863 (- National Chubu Hospital strain NCH 23022 - N.M. McClung strain M-1).

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