World Federation for Culture Collections

Minutes of the General Assembly, 14 October 1992, Beijing

Minute 1. Call to order. The General Meeting of the World Federation for Culture Collections (WFCC) was called to order at 11:30 a.m., 14 October 1992, at the International Convention Center, Beijing, during the Seventh International Congress of Culture Collections.

Minute 2. Approval of agenda. The agenda was approved with the requested amendment made by a number of WFCC members that an explanation of the nomination and election procedures for WFCC officers be taken into consideration and added to the item "Results of ballot."

Minute 3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed upon. Matters arising: an announcement for the formation of a resolutions committee was made with the invitation to all interested members to contribute. It was also announced that the full proceedings of the congress will be published.

Minute 4. Reports of officers and committee reports. The officers' reports and the reports of the committees were read out by the representatives. The full wording of the reports have been published in the December 1992 newsletter of the WFCC. All existing WFCC committees were formally dissolved at the closure of this meeting. The need for future committees and their tasks will be discussed by the newly elected Executive Board on 16 October 1992.

Minute 5. Results of ballot for next WFCC Executive Board. The results of the postal ballot conducted according to the statutes were announced. The President (Dr. Lindsay Sly, Australia), Vice President (Dr. Vanderlei Canhos, Brazil), and seven board members (Dr. Dagmar Fritze, Germany; Dr. T. Nakase, Japan; Dr. Dirk van der Mei, The Netherlands; Mrs. Bobbie Brandon, U.S.A.; Dr. George Pinaev, Russia; Dr. Tibor Deak, Hungary; and Dr. Antonio Ventosa, Spain) were elected. From these, the Secretary (Dr. D. Fritze) and the Treasurer (Dr. D. van der Mei) were appointed. Three additional Board Members had to be chosen to complete the Board.

The work of the nominations committee, the nomination process, the procedure of the ballot, and the counting of the ballots were explained. These had been carried out according to the Statutes and past precedent. In particular, the meaning of the term simple majority was discussed. Because of a tie in the ballot for the sixth Board Member, seven instead of six Board members were proposed as being elected. This was agreed upon by the assembly.

Minute 6. Resolutions. The following resolutions were prepared and adopted. At the Seventh International Congress of Culture Collections, delegates noted with great concern that the Convention on Biological Diversity signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992 failed to fully appreciate the fundamental importance of microorganisms to the maintenance and functioning of global ecosystems. De-

legates also recognized that the diversity of microorganisms and cell lines (e.g., viruses, bacteria, fungi, yeasts, algae, and protozoa) represents a vast, largely untapped source of new genes and organisms essential for developments in medical, industrial, agricultural, and environmental biotechnology. The following areas of concern should be addressed as matters of urgency.

I. Delegates resolved that governmental and nongovernmental agencies at both the national and international levels be asked to strengthen their commitment to the following:

- support of interdisciplinary studies for the search and discovery of new microorganisms and novel products necessary for the advancement of medicine, industry, and agriculture;

- support of national and international data exchange through the development of data bases, computerized networks, and other appropriate systems;

- assurance that microbial diversity features prominently in all future national and international policies on the sustainability and conservation of the natural resource base; and

- support for the inventory and conservation of microbial resources.

II. The decline in the number of microbial systematists is and will be detrimental to a full expression of biodiversity, and the delegates resolved that:

- universities in particular be encouraged to increase the number of positions and facilities for the training of microbial systematists, which is vital for the continued development of applied strategies for biodiversity, and

- research in microbial systematics and ecology as fundamental sciences necessary for the understanding and exploitation of biodiversity should be encouraged and supported.

III. Financial support to realize all these objectives is required, especially for culture collections, which are the conservators of the living gene pool.

Minute 7. Future meetings. The offer made by the resigned Director of the Centraalbureau voor Schimmelcultures (CBS), Dr. R. Kokke, to house the next International Congress of Culture Collections, ICCV-VIII, was renewed by Dr. D. van der Mei, Director, CBS, Baarn, and gratefully accepted.

An offer by Dr. Lindsay Sly, Australian Collection of Microorganisms, was made to host the next following International Congress of Culture Collections, ICCV-IX, in the year 2000 in Brisbane, Australia. A call for formal submissions will be made for consideration by the Executive Board.

Minute 8. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

D. Fritze, Secretary