Opinion

The type species of the genus *Paenibacillus* Ash *et al.* 1994 is *Paenibacillus polymyxa*. Opinion 77

Judicial Commission of the International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

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trueper@uni-bonn.deThe Judicial Commission of the International Committee for Systematics of Prokaryotes decided that the type species of the genus *Paenibacillus* is *Paenibacillus polymyxa*.

In 1993, Ash *et al.* proposed that members of 'group 3' within the genus *Bacillus* should be transferred to the genus *Paenibacillus*, for which they proposed *Paenibacillus* (formerly *Bacillus*) *polymyxa* as the type species. These proposals were validated by publication of the names in Validation List no. 51 (*Paenibacillus polymyxa*; Ash *et al.*, 1994) and no. 52 (further species; Ash *et al.*, 1995). Collins *et al.* (1994), clearly referring to Ash *et al.* (1993), also proposed that *Clostridium durum* should be transferred to the genus *Paenibacillus* as *Paenibacillus durum* [sic]. This minor orthographic error was corrected by Euzéby (1998), and the statement on priority of *Paenibacillus durus* over *Paenibacillus azotofixans* was corrected in Opinion 73 (Judicial Commission of the International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes, 2003).

According to the principle of priority based on page numbers in the same issue of the *International Journal of Systematic Bacteriology*, unintended confusion arose about the type species of the genus *Paenibacillus*, because *Paenibacillus durus* (Collins *et al.*, 1994) appeared on page 824, whereas Validation List no. 51, validly publishing the name *Paenibacillus polymyxa*, appeared on page 852 of the same issue (*Int J Syst Bacteriol* **44**, October 1994). This was certainly not intended by Collins and co-workers, as Collins himself was a co-author of Ash *et al.* (1993). Furthermore, the problem could have been avoided had the Validation Lists been published at the beginning of the journal, a course of action that has now been adopted.

To clarify the situation, Tindall (2000) published a Request for an Opinion in which he carefully explained the pros and cons of both possibilities. The Judicial Commission considered that the confusion arose unintentionally and

decided that *Paenibacillus polymyxa* is the type species of the genus *Paenibacillus*.

References

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