Minutes

Russell H. Vreeland, *Secretary*
Antonio Ventosa, *Chairman*

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Subcommittee on the taxonomy of the *Halomonadaceae*

Minutes of the meetings, 25 July 2005, San Francisco, CA, USA

Session 1. Closed meeting

Minute 1. Call to order. The closed meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Dr Antonio Ventosa, at 9:12 on 25 July 2005.

Minute 2. Record of attendance. Subcommittee members in attendance were Drs Antonio Ventosa (Chair), Russell H. Vreeland (Secretary), Carol D. Litchfield, Melanie R. Mormile and Brian J. Tindall. Dr Aharon Oren (Chairman, ICSP) attended as a non-voting *ex-officio* member of the subcommittee. Apologies for absence were received from Drs David R. Arahall, Agata Gambacorta, William D. Grant, Yong H. Park and Emilia Quesada.

Minute 3. Approval of the agenda. The agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minute 4. Minutes of the previous meeting. Copies of the minutes of the previous meeting held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on 8 September 2004 [Vreeland & Ventosa, *Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* 55 (2005), 2231–2232] were made available to all attendees.

Minute 5. Elections of Chairman and Secretary. Dr Antonio Ventosa was nominated for a second term as Chairman, and Dr Russell H. Vreeland was nominated for a second term as Secretary. Both candidates were approved by the attendees.

Minute 6. Election of new members. Dr Victoria Bejar was elected unanimously to formal membership of the subcommittee.

Minute 7. Review of current membership. The subcommittee discussed the removal of inactive members. The secretary will contact inactive members asking whether they are interested in continuing to be considered members. If no response is received within an appropriate time period (about 2 months), the secretary will send the member a formal letter. All email addresses of members were checked and approved.

Minute 8. Nomination of new members. Drs Aharon Oren and Rafael Montalvo-Rodriguez were nominated for

membership of the subcommittee. Both have accepted these nominations. The subcommittee will take a final vote on this issue at its next formal meeting.

Minute 9. Current membership. The current membership of the subcommittee is Drs Antonio Ventosa (Chair), Russell H. Vreeland (Secretary), David R. Arahall, Victoria Bejar, Agata Gambacorta, William D. Grant, Carol D. Litchfield, Melanie R. Mormile, Yong H. Park, Emilia Quesada and Brian J. Tindall.

Minute 10. Next meeting of the subcommittee. The next closed meeting will be scheduled for the next IUMS Congress, to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 4–8 August 2008. The subcommittee also suggested holding a meeting during the next halophile conference in Colchester, UK. This was deemed particularly desirable given the increased attendance by scientists interested in salt-loving microorganisms that will occur at the Colchester gathering. The committee also discussed the possibility of holding a joint open meeting with the ICSP Subcommittee on the taxonomy of the *Halobacteriaceae* at the upcoming Colchester halophile meeting.

Minute 11. Adjournment. The closed meeting was adjourned at 9:56 on 25 July 2005.

Session 2. Open meeting

Minute 1. Call to order. The open meeting was held at the Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco, CA, USA. The Chairman, Dr Antonio Ventosa, called the meeting to order at 10:41 on 25 July 2005.

Minute 2. Record of attendance. Subcommittee members in attendance were Drs Antonio Ventosa (Chair), Russell H. Vreeland (Secretary), Carol D. Litchfield, Melanie R. Mormile and Brian J. Tindall. Dr Aharon Oren (Chairman, ICSP) attended as a non-voting *ex-officio* member of the subcommittee. Apologies for absence were received from Drs David R. Arahall, Agata Gambacorta, William D. Grant, Yong H. Park and Emilia Quesada.

Minute 3. Review of current membership. The Secretary reviewed the names of current members of the subcommittee.

Minute 4. Review of new validly published names and brief description of taxa within the family. The genera and species currently listed under the subcommittee's area of responsibility were reviewed by the Secretary and included 32 species of *Halomonas*, five species of *Chromohalobacter*, one species of *Cobetia*, one species of *Carnimonas* and one species of *Zymobacter*. A total of five genera and 40 species is currently recognized as belonging within the family. The members of the subcommittee were informed that the type strain of *Carnimonas nigrifaciens* currently deposited in the Spanish national culture collection (CECT) is a patent strain and is therefore of limited availability. However, this strain is available from the ATCC and CIP culture collections. Due the short interval between this meeting and that held in Ljubljana, no novel species had been described. Descriptions of two novel species of *Halomonas* were in press [*Halomonas almeriensis* Martínez-Checa *et al.*, *Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* 55 (2005), 2007–2011; *Halomonas taeanensis* Lee *et al.*, *Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* 55 (2005), 2027–2032].

Minute 5. Report of the ad hoc working group on minimal standards. Carol Litchfield reported on a bioinformatics examination of all characteristics used in the taxonomic description of all currently accepted species names. Dr Litchfield noted a lack of common features being used to describe new taxa belonging to this group, as well as a trend towards using previously published data for comparisons without the inclusion of type strains of species in taxonomic studies. The subcommittee discussed ways to educate other scientists to the idea that authors *must* include the type strains of several related species in all taxonomic studies. Dr Litchfield stated that she will have completed this informational analysis by the end of August 2005. Subcommittee members discussed a draft document on minimal standards prepared by Dr Arahall. This was an extensive discussion. The subcommittee decided to prepare another draft and appointed Drs Ventosa, Vreeland, Litchfield, Mormile and Arahall to this task. This second draft would then be circulated to all

members, with a request for a response within 3–4 weeks, before final approval by subcommittee members by an email vote.

Minute 6. Discussion of private culture collections of halophiles. Dr Vreeland noted that several groups of scientists now possess fairly large private collections containing halophilic organisms, many of which might fall under the auspices of this subcommittee and the related ICSP Subcommittee on the taxonomy of *Halobacteriaceae*. The subcommittee discussed the importance of these collections and the fact that many of them may be lost if the scientists retire. Further, information about the organisms contained within these collections is not readily accessible to the general community. The subcommittee decided to investigate the establishment of a central database and website that would allow researchers access to this information. This would ultimately be an international effort, wherein several groups would upload information on their collection in the hope that it would provide an opening through which interested researchers or industries could learn about these collections and make use of the stored micro-organisms.

Minute 7. Discussion of the subcommittee web page. The subcommittee recognized that it does not presently have an active web page linked to the main ICSP site. Dr Ventosa agreed to collate the necessary information for submission to Dr Robin Dunford.

Minute 8. Other business. The subcommittee discussed the need to obtain complete genome sequences of one or more members of the family. The sequencing of the genome of *Chromohalobacter salexigens* is in progress. The Chairman noted that a manuscript formally placing *Pseudomonas beijerinckii* into the family, within the genus *Chromohalobacter*, was in preparation. Members noted that a representative strain needed to be deposited in another permanent culture collection. There was a short discussion of the formal position of the genus *Zymobacter* within the family. Subcommittee members were unable to cite a specific reference that formally placed this organism into the *Halomonadaceae*. The subcommittee members agreed to look into this issue further.

Minute 9. Adjournment. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:46 on 25 July 2005.