International Committee on Systematic Bacteriology
Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of Methanogenic Bacteria

Minutes of the Interim Meetings, 13 August 1986, Haren, The Netherlands, and 4 March 1987, Atlanta, Georgia

13 August 1986

Minute 1. Call to order. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 p.m. by the Acting Chairman J. G. Ferry.

Minute 2. Record of attendance. The members present were J. G. Ferry, H. Hippe, E. Stackebrandt, K. O. Stetter, W. B. Whitman, and R. S. Wolfe. The members absent were M. P. Bryant, W. J. Jones, R. A. Mah, T. L. Miller, and T. N. Zhilina.

Minute 3. Permanent officers. J. G. Ferry reported that R. A. Mah, who had called the meeting, was unable to attend and had asked him to chair. He suggested that D. R. Boone be invited to join the subcommittee as the permanent Chairman. The members agreed to this proposal unanimously. W. B. Whitman was elected Secretary of the subcommittee.

Minute 4. Membership. It was agreed that the membership of the subcommittee should be more international and that the Chairman should seek additional members from nations not represented. M. P. Bryant resigned from the subcommittee.

Minute 5. Scope of the subcommittee. K. O. Stetter asked that the scope of the subcommittee be increased to include the extremely thermophilic archaebacteria. While the members felt that it was acceptable to include the extremely thermophilic archaebacteria within the scope of the subcommittee until a subcommittee could be formed to deal exclusively with these bacteria, they requested that the Chairman determine the position of the subcommittee on the Halobacteriaeae before making a final decision.

Minute 6. Culture collections. R. S. Wolfe proposed that the subcommittee recommended that validly published species be deposited with H. Hippe of the Deutsche Sammlung von Microrganismen. Hippe responded that cultures should also be deposited with other culture collections in the interest of safety and to encourage more widespread participation in the collection of methanogenic bacteria.

Minute 7. Minimal standards. E. Stackebrandt proposed that the members of the subcommittee correspond with the Secretary concerning the preparation of recommendations for new taxa. He suggested that members should suggest appropriate methods to distinguish species, genera, and higher taxa of methanogenic bacteria. The Secretary agreed to compile and distribute the responses of the subcommittee.

Minute 8. Valid naming of bacteria. It was proposed that members suggest names of consultants who have agreed to assist investigators in the valid naming of bacteria. The Secretary agreed to distribute a list of consultants to the members and other investigators.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m. on 13 August.

W. B. Whitman, Secretary
J. G. Ferry, Acting Chairman

4 March 1987

Minute 1. Call to order. The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. on 4 March 1987 by the Chairman, D. R. Boone.

Minute 2. Record of attendance. The members present were D. R. Boone (Chairman), W. B. Whitman (Secretary), D. Archer, B. Biavati, E. Conway de Macario, H. C. Dubourgier, W. J. Jones, T. L. Miller, E. Stackebrandt, and C. van der Drift. Guests present were I. Mathrani and L. Xun. The members absent were J. G. Ferry, H. Hippe, Y. Koga, R. A. Mah, K. O. Stetter, R. S. Wolfe, and T. N. Zhilina.

Minute 3. Scope of the subcommittee. The members agreed to broaden the scope of the Subcommittee to include the sulfur-dependent archaebacteria and Thermoplasma sp. until such a time as separate subcommittees could be formed to deal exclusively with these bacteria. Because this measure is considered temporary, the name of the subcommittee was not changed.

Minute 4. Membership. The members asked the Chairman to invite additional scientists to join the subcommittee to increase the international character of the subcommittee and to reflect the broadened scope of the subcommittee.

Minute 5. Methanobrevibacter taxonomy. T. L. Miller pointed out that the isolation and characterization of the type strain of Methanobrevibacter smithii, strain PS, has never been published. Moreover, Methanobrevibacter arboriphilus strain DC is identical to strain DC1.

Minute 6. Minimal standards. The Chairman pointed out that minimal standards were for description of taxa and not distinguishing of related taxa. After some discussion, the subcommittee agreed that the minimal standards for description of a new species should include properties such as cell morphology, colony morphology, and other cultural aspects, Gram stain, catabolic substrates, anabolic substrates, minimal medium, if possible, temperature optimum, pH optimum, salt optimum, guanine-plus-cytosine content, and detergent sensitivity. Moreover, in certain circumstances DNA-DNA hybridization, RNA sequencing, protein fingerprinting, lipid analysis, and electron microscopy are recommended but not required.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m. on 4 March.

W. B. Whitman, Secretary
D. R. Boone, Chairman