

International Committee on Bionomenclature – Constitution

(adopted by the initial Membership on 2 October 2009)

I. Preamble

1. The International Committee on Bionomenclature (ICB) was created in 1995 by joint decision of the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) and the International Union of Microbiological Societies (IUMS) – the Founding Unions – to explore ways and means to harmonise the various sets of international rules governing the creation and use of scientific names of organisms. By the present constitution, the ICB establishes itself as an international not-for-profit association, operating under the auspices of IUBS and IUMS.

II. Duration, seat, affiliation

2. The International Committee on Bionomenclature (ICB) is an international scientific, non-commercial membership association of unlimited duration, constituted under the relevant provisions (currently: Art. 60 to 79) of the Swiss Civil Code.
3. Its duration is unlimited.
4. Its seat is Winterthur (Ct. Zürich).
5. It affiliates with its Founding Unions and reports to their General Assemblies, and may adhere to or cooperate with other organisms with similar or complementary objectives.

III. Purpose and means

6. The objectives of the ICB are:
 - a. To serve as an inter-Union scientific body for Organismal Bionomenclature within ICSU and to both Founding Unions.
 - b. To provide a forum for discussion between representatives of the various organisations and committees responsible for the international rules governing the scientific names of extant and fossil organisms.
 - c. To explore issues of common concern to the aforementioned organisations and committees with a view to identifying and implementing common solutions.
 - d. To promote the understanding of organismal nomenclature amongst biologists as a whole through the organization of workshops and symposia at appropriate scientific meetings and through publication.
7. In fulfilment of its objectives the ICB will, in particular:
 - e. Pursue work on the BioCode so as to make it an appropriate instrument to govern the nomenclature of all extant and fossil taxa in the future, and to work toward its adoption by the World's biologists.
 - f. Promote the set-up of a system for the mandatory declaration of future nomenclatural acts such as the creation of new scientific names of organisms.
 - g. Encourage efforts toward registration of scientific organismal names of the past, so as to protect and stabilize those that are useful as tags in the handling of taxon-relevant data.
 - h. Work toward the resolution of issues relating to organisms that are or have been treated as covered by more than one of the existing sets of nomenclatural rules.
8. The ICB pursues its objectives by such means as can be obtained from other parties, including but not limited to voluntary contributions from its members and the produce of its services.
9. The ICB's assets are used exclusively for the furthering of its constitutional objectives.

IV. Membership

10. The ICB consists of up to 20 personal members.
11. Membership is obtained by co-option.
12. Members pay no fee but participate actively in the ICB's work.
13. Membership is terminated by resignation or death. Upon proposal by the chair, two officers or five members, a member may be excluded for notorious inactivity or for activities contrary to the ICB's constitutional objectives.

V. Governance

14. The ICB is governed by its Members, either in physical assembly or through consultation by mail. A mail consultation is, for the purposes of this Constitution, equivalent to a general assembly of Members.
15. All decisions require a simple majority of the votes cast. The subject need not be announced in advance. However, prior to a mail vote, any request for discussion by a Member will entail a two-weeks' postponement of the ballot deadline.
16. The Members may, in particular:
 - a. Deliberate and decide on matters of the ICB's general policy.
 - b. Elect and discharge the Officers.
 - c. Receive reports and financial statements prepared by the Officers.
 - d. Co-opt new members proposed by the Officers.
 - e. Modify the present Constitution.
 - f. Approve, modify or repeal bylaws
17. The ICB's current affairs are run by the Officers: a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Secretary-Treasurer. They are elected by the Members, from among the Membership, for renewable three-years' terms of office.
18. The Officers take their decisions by absolute majority. They will, in particular:
 - a. Summon Membership assemblies, organise consultations and ballots, with a minimum notice period of two weeks.
 - b. Present activity reports and financial statements to the Members, as well as reports to the Founding Unions on the occasion of their General Assemblies and Congresses.
 - c. Propose additional Members for co-option, bearing in mind the need for a balanced representation of the bodies currently governing the various sets of rules of scientific organismal nomenclature.
19. The ICB is legally bound by the signature of the Chair or the joint signature of the other two Officers.

VI. Winding up

20. A decision to wind up the ICB must be endorsed by the absolute majority of its Members, consulted by mail with a four-weeks' notice.
21. In the event of the ICB being wound up, any remaining assets will go by equal shares to the Founding Unions.

VII. Introductory provision

22. The initial Membership of the ICB comprises the nominated representatives of the internationally mandated bodies responsible for organismal nomenclature, together with those invited to participate in the ICB workshop and fifth meeting held in London on 4-5 June 2009.