

## (165–167) Miscellaneous proposals to amend the Code

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### (165) Proposal to eliminate later starting points for the nomenclature of blue-green algae (cyanoprokaryotes)

Delete the paragraphs with the subheadings “NOSTOCACEAE HOMOCYSTEAE” and “NOSTOCACEAE HETEROCYSTEAE” from the list of exceptions in Art. 13.1(e).

As the founder and maintainer of the *Index nominum algarum* and thus the chief bookkeeper of names of blue-green algae (cyanoprokaryotes), I have been trying unsuccessfully, for many decades, to eliminate later starting points in the nomenclature of this group of organisms (Silva in Taxon 7: 181–184. 1958; Silva in Taxon 9: 3–7. 1960). In my proposal offered to the Nomenclature Section of the Vienna Congress (Silva in Taxon 53: 852. 2004), I summarized the philosophical and ethical objections to later starting points in general as well as numerous practical problems in their employment in the nomenclature of blue-green algae (cyanoprokaryotes) in particular. One problem that I have not mentioned previously is the presence of lists of species inquirendae in both starting point monographs (*Nostocaceae homocysteae*, Gomont in Ann. Sci. Nat. Bot., ser. 7, 15: 263–368, 16: 91–264. 1892; *Nostocaceae heterocysteae*, Bornet & Flahault in Ann. Sci. Nat. Bot., ser. 7, 3: 323–381, 4: 343–373, 5: 51–129, 7: 177–262. 1886). These lists have been ignored almost entirely and thus there is no consensus regarding the validity of publication of the listed names. Drouet (in Monogr. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philadelphia 15: 14. 1968) explicitly accepted them, as well as all names listed in synonymy by the starting point monographers, as having been validly published. He wrote, “It is presumed that somewhere in the voluminous literature on blue-green algae published since that date [1892, the date of Gomont’s monograph] almost every novelty published before that date has been validated by reference or by a new description. Such validating references are included here for the large majority of these names. A further search through thousands of local floras, check-lists of species, and morphological, ecological, and physiological papers would require more time than is now at my disposal.” At my advanced age, I have even less time at my disposal to pursue such an unrewarding task. The situation has been further complicated by microbiologists, who have commandeered these organisms as oxygen-evolving photosynthetic bacteria (cyanobacteria), with their nomenclature governed by the bacteriological code based on type cultures. The response in the Nomenclature Section to my proposal to eliminate later starting points in blue-green algae (Silva in Taxon 53: 852. 2004) was guardedly positive, resulting in the creation of a Special Committee on the Harmonization of Names of Blue-Greens (Lucien Hoffmann, Chairman). To my knowledge, no decisions have been forthcoming from that committee. Therefore, I again ask the Nomenclature Section to restore Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. ed. 1 (1 May 1753) as the starting point for blue-green algae (cyanoprokaryotes),

### (166) Proposal to update Recommendations 16A.1 and 16A.2.

Change Recommendations 16A.1 and 16A.2 to read:

“16A.1. A name of a division or phylum should end in *-phyta*

unless the taxon is a division or phylum of fungi or algae, in which case its name should end in *-mycota* or *-phycota*, respectively.

“16A.2. A name of a subdivision or subphylum should end in *-phytina* unless the taxon is a subdivision or subphylum of fungi or algae, in which case its name should end in *-mycotina* or *-phycotina*, respectively.”

With the realization that “algae” are a heterogeneous collection of end-points of numerous phylogenetic lineages, many of which have never been treated as plants, an increasing number of phycologists have chosen to express taxonomic affinities by using *phykos* (alga; seaweed) rather than *phyton* (plant) as name-forming elements. Using *-phyc* rather than *-phyt* avoids the implication that algae are plants. This change would follow the action taken previously by mycologists with regard to fungi, first embodied in the Stockholm Code (Lanjouw & al. in Regnum Veg. 3. 1952). Some phycological authors have already made the change (e.g., Howard & Orcutt in B. Parker & Roande (eds.), Distrib. Hist. Biota S. Appalachians 4: 35–49. 1976; Friedmann in S. Parker, Syn. Class. Living Org. 1: 45–52. 1982; Robins in Austral. Syst. Bot. 3: 689–699. 1990; Guiry in Costello & al., Eur. Reg. Mar. Spec.: 20–38. 2001; Neto & al. in Aquatic Bot. 72: 1–11. 2002; Pedroche & al., Cat. Alg. Mar. Pacifico México 1. Chlorophycota, 2005; 2. Phaeophycota, 2008).

### (167) Proposal to establish an appendix to list binding decisions regarding confusability of names

Add to the end of Art. 53.5: “These binding decisions are listed in Appendix VIII.”

In Appendix VIII list the binding decisions in the categories currently recognized in Ex. 17 and Ex. 18. Add the binding decision listed under Art. 53.3.

“Binding decision” is not defined in the Glossary of the Code, but presumably it is any decision recommended by the General Committee that has been ratified by an International Botanical Congress.

Binding decisions as to the confusability of names are as important as lists of conserved and rejected names. Because they are designated as examples, the “rulings” (binding decisions?) listed in Ex. 17 and Ex. 18 suggest that there are other unlisted rulings. The user of the Code needs to have access to all such rulings.

The examples under Art. 53.3 are heterogeneous. Ex. 6 and Ex. 7 list names so similar in spelling as to be confusable. Whereas Art. 53.3 states that “they are to be treated as homonyms”, thus effectively constituting a ruling, the examples lack the imperative wording “to be”, an omission that should be rectified. Ex. 8 is a ruling (binding decision?) regarding the confusability of a pair of parahomonyms. Ex. 9 is effectively a ruling regarding confusable epithets whereas Ex. 10 specifies names not likely to be confused. Ex. 11 lists four pairs of parahomonyms of which one has been conserved. Ex. 12 is an example of treating parahomonyms as homonyms in accordance with “established practice”. In summary, Ex. 8 is the only binding decision included in the examples offered under Art. 53.3.