

PROPOSALS TO AMEND THE CODE

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Procedures and timetable for proposals to amend the *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants*

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Introduction

The *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants* or “*Melbourne Code*” (McNeill & al. in *Regnum Veg.* 154. 2012, hereafter “*Code*”) was published on 19 December 2012. It incorporates the changes that were adopted on 30 July 2011 at the XVIII International Botanical Congress in Melbourne, Australia, to the previous edition, the “*Vienna Code*” (McNeill & al. in *Regnum Veg.* 146. 2006). In accordance with its Division III (Provisions for the Governance of the *Code*), the *Code* may be modified only by action of a plenary session of an International Botanical Congress on a resolution moved by the Nomenclature Section of that Congress. The next Congress will be held in Shenzhen, China, in July 2017. The Nomenclature Section will meet from 18–22 July prior to the scientific sessions of the Congress (23–29 July; see <http://www.ibc2017.cn/Dates.htm>).

Basic procedure for amending the *Code*

Anyone proposing changes in the *Code* should be familiar with the basic procedure:

1. After each new edition of the *Code* appears, proposals to amend it are published in *Taxon* (see below), where they are numbered serially.

2. Shortly prior to the next International Botanical Congress, a “Synopsis of proposals” assembles all published proposals, organized by Article and Recommendation, and republishes them with appropriate comments from the Rapporteur-général and Vice-rapporteur but without the justification accompanying the original publication.

3. A ballot for the Preliminary Mail Vote (an entirely advisory opinion from individuals) is sent at the same time as the Synopsis to those entitled to vote, and the ballots are tabulated so that the results are available at the Nomenclature Section of the Congress.

4. The Nomenclature Section, meeting ahead of the main sessions of the Congress, considers proposals, including any amendments offered, and acts upon them on the basis of a combination of individual and institutional votes.

5. Decisions of the Nomenclature Section are ratified by vote of a plenary session of the Congress.

Details of the method of appointment of the Rapporteurs, and of those eligible to vote in the Preliminary Mail Vote (principally members of IAPT) and at the Nomenclature Section of the Congress, appear in the *Code*, Division III (McNeill & al. in *Regnum Veg.* 154:

141–143. 2012, online at <http://www.iapt-taxon.org/nomen/main.php?page=div3>). For further information about institutional votes see http://www.iapt-taxon.org/index_layer.php?page=s_institutional_votes.

Timetable and regulations for proposals

In our capacities as Rapporteur-général (NJT) and Vice-rapporteur designate (JHW), we have decided that the following timetable and regulations shall apply to proposals submitted to *Taxon* for consideration by the Nomenclature Section of the XIX International Botanical Congress in Shenzhen:

1. *Taxon* will open for proposals beginning now, for publication possibly starting in the February 2014 issue.

2. *Taxon* will close for proposals on 31 March 2016. Late submissions received by the end of June 2016 may be accepted at the editors’ discretion if no reviewing or major editing is necessary.

3. Proposals should be submitted by e-mail to the Rapporteur-général (n.turland@bgbm.org); but see notes 6 and 7 below.

4. Manuscripts must conform to the general standards of *Taxon* (see “Guidelines for authors” in *Taxon* 62: 211–214. 2013, online at http://www.iapt-taxon.org/downloads/guidelines_authors.pdf), except that the method of citing references follows that of the special “Guidelines for proposals to conserve and reject names” (McNeill & al. in *Taxon* 61: 248–251. 2012, online at http://www.iapt-taxon.org/downloads/guidelines_proposals.pdf), which are also adopted in the present paper.

5. The rationale for a set of proposals must be presented concisely. Any main proposal comprising more than 400 words of general explanation (rather less than half a page of *Taxon* in the font used for proposals) is liable to be rejected (or condensed) by the editors. Additional explanation of individual proposals, when essential, must be extremely brief: more than 125 additional words per proposal are likewise liable to be rejected or condensed by the editors. Alternatively, the text may be subjected to a regular review process in order to establish whether the topic that the proposals address is of such importance or complexity as to justify greater space.

6. If a proposal results from a more general context, authors should make that context the subject of a separate paper to be submitted to the Nomenclature column of *Taxon* (or some other journal), reviewed in the normal way, and considered for acceptance in competition with papers on other topics. Such manuscripts must be submitted via the *Taxon* online manuscript submission system (<http://www>

.editorialmanager.com/taxon/) and be categorized as “Nomenclature Article”, whereas the proposal itself, including a cross-reference to the relevant paper, can then be kept very brief and should be submitted separately by e-mail to the Rapporteur-général.

7. The above space limitations do not apply to reports of Special Committees appointed to report to the XIX International Botanical Congress (see Wilson in *Taxon* 61: 878–879. 2012, online at <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/iapt/tax/2012/00000061/00000004/art00015>). Nevertheless, such reports should be written as concisely as possible. They should be submitted by e-mail to the Rapporteur-général.

Points to note in making proposals

1. Proposals to amend the *Code* at the Shenzhen Congress in 2017 must be based on the text of the *Melbourne Code* (McNeill & al. in *Regnum Veg.* 154. 2012).

2. Proposals should state explicitly what change is proposed, e.g.: “Insert a new Article after Art. 29.3”; “Change Art. 30.7 to read as follows.”; “Delete the second sentence of Art. 41 Note 3”; “Reword the last line of Rec. 60D.1 as follows.”; “Add the following example to Rec. 31B.”. In other words, proposals should not consist simply of new text or explanation but should indicate exactly what text is to be *altered, deleted, or added* in the *Code*. A clearly expressed, concise proposal is more likely to be read sympathetically than a long complex argument or a series of repetitive proposals.

3. Proposers are encouraged to provide, as part of the rationale for their proposal, some assessment of its impact to the stability of nomenclature. In general, proposals that contribute to nomenclatural stability are more likely to be successful.

4. Proposals that address nomenclatural situations that occur only rarely are unlikely to succeed if they also add to the complexity of the *Code*. Such situations may be better addressed through

conservation, rejection, suppression of a work, a request for a binding decision, or a new Example in the *Code*. Note that new Examples do not necessarily require formal proposals and may be directly submitted, via the Rapporteurs, for consideration by the Editorial Committee.

5. If a general principle applies to several Articles and Recommendations, the matter can often be covered succinctly by a *single proposal*, in which details are given at the most relevant point in the *Code*. If, for example, there should be a proposal to eliminate the “x” sign for hybrids, or to make the rank of section equivalent to subgenus, it would not be necessary to make a separate formal proposal for amending every single passage where “x” or “section” is mentioned in the *Code*. Similarly, if acceptance of a proposal would require renumbering or rewording of the remainder of an Article or Recommendation, such changes would automatically be made by the Editorial Committee, and it is not necessary to make separate proposals for them. Separate proposals for derivative changes would only increase unnecessarily the text of the Synopsis and, especially, the number of mail votes to be cast and tabulated.

6. Proposers are, however, encouraged to provide a list of all the Articles, Notes, Recommendations and Examples believed to be affected by a given proposal. This is of help to the Editorial Committee, whose main job is to ensure that any amendments adopted for the new *Code* are fully integrated with the existing text and consistently implemented throughout. Details of Examples that could illustrate the effect of a proposal, even if not included in the formal proposal, are also welcomed by the Editorial Committee.

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