

NOMENCLATURE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Edited by John McNeill

Report of the General Committee: 16

Karen L. Wilson, Secretary

*Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, Mrs Macquaries Road, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia; karen.wilson@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au*DOI <https://doi.org/10.12705/661.15>

Summary Decisions are reported on (1) two complicated proposals to conserve names (one rejected, one accepted); (2) two requests about potentially confusable names (both cases considered not confusable); and (3) two requests about whether descriptive material is adequate for valid publication (both considered adequate). The committee also discussed and voted on the list of institutional votes for the next Nomenclature Section in Shenzhen in 2017 and gave its collective opinion on proposed changes to the *Code* that are relevant to this committee.

The previous report of the General Committee for Botanical Nomenclature was published in *Taxon* 65: 1150–1151. 2016.

General Committee membership was 25 at the time that all of the following proposals and requests were considered so the super-majority (60%) required to approve or reject was 15 votes. The voting figures are shown against any proposal where the decision was not unanimous. Committee votes are shown in the order: For the proposal – Against the proposal – Abstain – More discussion/refer back to the relevant Committee.

1. Proposal (1927) in Report 18 from the Nomenclature Committee on Fungi (NCFungi) (in *Taxon* 60: 1200. 2011)

Proposal (1927) to conserve the name *Agaricus rachodes* with that spelling engendered much discussion in the NCFungi and General Committee (GC). The GC eventually voted to reject the conservation proposal (6–15–4–0). A second ballot then considered whether the spelling of the epithet should be the orthographically correct “*rhacodes*” or the original ‘*rachodes*’. The GC voted for the spelling “*rhacodes*” (18–4–3–0) and for *Agaricus rhacodes* to be proposed as a voted example (23–0–2–0) in the *Code*. As with some other proposals, this result will not please everyone but it does provide a clear ruling for the many users of this name. Assuming the Section approves this report in July 2017, the example will then be incorporated by the Editorial Committee in an appropriate place in the *Code*.

2. Proposal (1682) in Report 58 from the Nomenclature Committee on Vascular Plants (NCVP) (in *Taxon* 56: 590–594. 2011)

Proposal (1682) to conserve *Paeonia broteri* against *P. lusitanica* also engendered considerable discussion, not about the conservation of the name but about the correct spelling of the epithet. The GC voted to accept the proposal (22–0–3–0), and to keep the original spelling of the epithet (*broteri*) (15–8–2–0), as recommended by the NCVP.

3. Requests for binding decisions under Art. 53.5 on confusable names from NCVP Report 60 (in *Taxon* 58: 280–292. 2009)

The NCVP and GC have discussed extensively and frequently what defines confusable names but have agreed that no hard and fast rules can be set and that each case needs to be considered separately but aiming for consistency in approach as far as possible.

In the case of *Solanum cheesmaniae* and *S. cheesmanii*, the GC voted (2–21–2–0) that the names are not confusable, as recommended by the NCVP.

For *Astragalus matthewsii* and *A. matthewsiae*, the GC voted (6–17–2–0) that the names are not confusable, contrary to the recommendation of the NCVP.

4. Requests on adequacy of descriptive material under Art. 38.4 from NCVP Report 61 (in *Taxon* 59: 1271–1276. 2010)

The GC voted (19–4–2–0) that the description of *Moronobea esculenta* is adequate to validate the name, contrary to the NCVP’s recommendation. It was felt that if this description was considered inadequate then there was the potential for many other old names to be rejected. The GC is now voting on the original conservation proposal (1564) that involves this name.

Similarly, the GC voted that the description of *Agave noah* is adequate, contrary to the NCVP’s recommendation, and is now voting on the original proposal (1601) to reject this name.

5. Proposal (1956) from NCVP Report 63 (in *Taxon* 60: 1202–1210. 2011)

Proposal (1956) to reject *Muco* was accepted (20–3–2–0), as recommended by the NCVP. There had been a suggestion that “*muco*” might be a morphological term in Latin. Our discussion concluded that there is no such botanical term.

6. Proposal (2013) from NCVP Report 66 (in *Taxon* 63: 1358–1371. 2014)

The NCVP failed to reach a majority recommendation on Proposal (2013) to conserve *Myrcia* against *Calypttranthes*. The GC initially rejected the proposal (9–15–1–0). However, a convincing case for conservation was put to the GC by a group of 23 workers on New World Myrtaceae and a second vote (18–4–3–0) reversed the initial decision, i.e., *Myrcia* is conserved against *Calypttranthes*.

7. Institutional votes for the Nomenclature Section of the XIX International Botanical Congress in Shenzhen

The list was approved by our committee (23–0–2–0). Comments on votes allocated to a few institutions were made to the

Rapporteur-général, as chair of the Special Committee on Institutional Votes, for their consideration.

8. Proposed changes to the Code

The Rapporteurs invited the GC to give its collective opinion on proposals to amend the *Code* that are relevant to this committee, for mention in the forthcoming Synopsis of Proposals. Matters discussed include (1) defining which journal(s) conservation proposals and requests should be published in (Proposals to Amend the *Code* 207–213 and Proposal 286 paragraph 1.4); (2) setting up trial procedures for possible future registration of algal and plant names (including fossils) (Prop. 276–279); (3) the rewriting of Division III (Prop. 286) on the governance of the *Code*; and (4) changing the procedure for proposals to change the *Code* that affect names applying only to fungi (Prop. 362, 363).

On (1), the committee agreed with the principle of including a statement in the *Code* (votes 24–0–1–0) but that the statement should simply authorize the GC to nominate the appropriate journal(s), i.e., that no journal should be directly specified in the *Code* (votes 21–3–1–0). This would formalise what has been standard practice since at least 1994 (as outlined in *Taxon* 61: 248. 2012). This wording would avoid having to change the *Code* if the journal(s) of choice changed.

On (2), the committee was not unanimous about the principle of registration (votes 18–5–2–0) but agreed (votes 20–3–2–0) that the set of proposals (276–279) would be suitable for investigating possible mechanisms for future registration, if these proposals were accepted in Shenzhen in July 2017.

On (3), the committee agreed in principle that rewriting Division III was useful (votes 24–0–1–0) but felt that some sections were too detailed and too specific (e.g., new paragraphs 7.11 and 7.12). Keeping details such as number of committee members and number of voting rounds in committee guidelines (published in *Taxon* from time to time) as at present, not in Div. III, would maintain more flexibility. The GC will propose revised wording for some paragraphs.

On (4) – dealing with proposals to amend the *Code* that exclusively affect names applying to fungi – the Committee was divided. A narrow simple majority voted against supporting these proposals (votes 8–14–3–0), particularly (362), which is the one that involves the GC. Concern was expressed by some members about the complexity of what is proposed and the possible unforeseen consequences of that complexity.

The many points raised will, no doubt, be discussed extensively by the Nomenclature Section in Shenzhen in July.