



A zoologist's viewpoint on the *Draft BioCode*

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Abstract

The *Draft BioCode (DBC)* is the result of an attempt at unifying the nomenclatural Rules currently in force in different taxonomic domains (mostly zoology and botany), which are the result of a long historical process during which they have widely diverged in several important respects. The proposals of the *DBC* tend to extend several basic concepts and idiosyncrasies of botanical nomenclature to other fields, mostly zoological nomenclature. This is unfortunate, as in several cases the zoological Rules can be argued to be more appropriate, especially to meet the new challenges that biological nomenclature will be facing in the 21st century. The *DBC* is not ripe and its implementation in its present form should not be accepted by the international community of taxonomists, and particularly by zoologists. Among the many problems that would remain to solve before considering this possibility, the following ones are particularly stressed here: (1) the need of a better plan for this document and of a better technical terminology for nomenclatural concepts and tools; (2) the abandonment of absolute ranks and their replacement by relative ranks in the frame of a small number of nominal-series within which a Principle of Coordination is in force; (3) the adoption of more precise, stringent and unambiguous Rules for the nomenclature of higher taxa of the class-series; (4) the dissociation, in the nomenclatural process, between the stage of creation of nomina and that of their registration, which should not be compulsory; (5) the suppression of all prescriptions regarding the use of any language in taxonomic and nomenclatural publications; (6) the need of more stringent Rules for homonymy between “similar” nomina.

Key words: *BioCode*, nomenclature, nomenclatural process, zoology, botany, bacteriology, plan, terminology, ranks, nominal-series, coordination, higher taxa, registration, language, homonymy