



Opening the door to electronic publication of zoological nomenclature and taxonomy

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On pages 57–67 of this issue of *Zootaxa* we publish a notice entitled “Proposed amendment of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* to expand and refine methods of publication” by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN 2008). We publish this notice under the “Creative Commons Attribution License” (for information about this license, see <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>) to make it freely available online for everyone to read, download, copy, distribute, and use (with attribution). *Zootaxa* is now the most important journal in zoological taxonomy with the largest base of editors and authors (over 5000) and the highest rate of online access use. It is opportune for *Zootaxa* to help publicise this important notice by ICZN so that it reaches the widest readership possible.

Online access to electronic taxonomic literature has been increasingly popular among taxonomists. It has already played a key role in facilitating the communication of taxonomic literature and information. There is no doubt that it will play an even greater role in accelerating progress in taxonomy worldwide (Wheeler 2008). There have been calls for the revision of the current codes of nomenclature, for bacteria, plants and animals, to allow electronic publication of scientific names and nomenclatural acts (e.g. Knapp *et al.* 2007, Wheeler & Krell 2007). The ICZN (2008) has responded in a timely manner by proposing the following amendment of the fourth edition of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (ICZN 1999) to allow electronic publishing of new zoological names and nomenclatural acts coupled with (1) proper archiving of works to ensure permanent conservation and access and (2) registration of new scientific names in open access ICZN registry (i.e. ZooBank) to ensure that they are made widely known. The ICZN proposal also addresses methods of publication in general, discusses the reasoning behind the proposal, and provides explanations of the procedure for amendment and adoption of the proposal. The ICZN encourages comments from the community of zoologists as to whether they oppose, support, or can suggest improvements and alternatives to the various parts of the proposal.

To facilitate the discussion on this important topic for zoological taxonomy, *Zootaxa* also welcomes comments on the ICZN proposal. *Zootaxa* will publish accepted manuscripts in the correspondence section, and all will be published as open access communications available at no cost to users.

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References

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