



Editorial

urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:03ED9EC3-118D-47CF-B746-15C2FCE72AD9

A new era in zoological nomenclature and taxonomy: ICZN accepts e-publication and launches ZooBank

ZHI-QIANG ZHANG

Landcare Research, Private Bag 92-170, Auckland 1072, New Zealand; e-mail: zhangz@landcareresearch.co.nz

In this issue of *Zootaxa*, we publish the amendment of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature*, 4th edition (ICZN 1999) by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN 2012: 1–7) to expand and refine methods of publication. This landmark publication not only defines the conditions for the validity of e-publications in zoological nomenclature and taxonomy, but also announces the formal transition of ZooBank (<http://zoobank.org/>) from being the prototype ICZN registry (started on 1 Jan. 2008; see Pyle et al. 2008) to the official ICZN registry. It should be noted that the original proposals for the amendment were also first published in *Zootaxa* (ICZN 2008), when we made a special effort to publish the paper for open access under the “Creative Commons Attribution License”¹ (Zhang 2008). We are doing the same here for this amendment (ICZN 2012) to ensure it reaches the widest possible readership.

The amendment to the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (ICZN 2012: 1–7) allows publication in “widely accessible electronic copies with fixed content and layout” of new names and nomenclatural acts in zoology after 2011 under the following conditions² (in addition to articles 8.1.1–8.1.3 of ICZN 1999):

- 1) the work must be registered in ZooBank before it is published,
- 2) the work itself states the date of publication with evidence that registration has occurred, and
- 3) the ZooBank registration states both the name of an electronic archive intended to preserve the work and the ISSN or ISBN associated with the work.

While the amendment conforms to the basic principles of registration and archiving for electronic publication as originally proposed in ICZN (2008), it does not require the registration of new scientific names and nomenclatural acts as proposed in ICZN (2008) and requires only the intent to archive by stating the intended archive in ZooBank; this is less ideal but it is more practical as users will find it easier to comply.

It is really encouraging to see that the changes to the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature* (ICBN) (Knapp *et al.* 2011) and *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (ICZN 2012) both allow electronic publication from 2012, and require ISSN/ISBN for e-publications with immutable fixed content and layout such as PDF. However, the two Codes do differ in some aspects: while ICBN requires PDF explicitly and does not require registration of works (except for papers on fungi from 2013) nor archiving, ICZN only mentions PDF/A as one of the formats and requires both registration of the work (so that it is known widely to the public) and archiving (so that it is preserved for the future). In the requirements for both registration and archiving, zoologists have made one important step. There is no doubt that the changes in both ICBN and ICZN in 2012 have opened an exciting new era for taxonomy through electronic publication, which will greatly accelerate the description/publication of biodiversity and also reduce the cost of publication.

What does this ICZN amendment mean for *Zootaxa* from now on? We will follow the requirements of ICZN (2012) for the electronic edition, and will continue the print edition, which is a physical archive for the journal, as long as the print edition is affordable and needed by the community. It is good to accept e-publication, and better to have both online and print editions.

References

- International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (1999) *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature*, 4th edition. International Trust for Zoological Nomenclature, London, xxix + 306 pp.
- International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (2008) Proposed amendment of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* to expand and refine methods of publication. *Zootaxa*, 1908, 57–67.
- International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (2012) Amendment of Articles 8, 9, 10, 21 and 78 of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* to expand and refine methods of publication. *Zootaxa*, 3450, 1–7.
- Knapp, S., McNeill, J. & Turland N.J. (2011) Changes to publication requirements made at the XVIII International Botanical Congress in Melbourne—what does e-publication mean for you? *Phytotaxa*, 28, 1–5.
- Pyle, R.L., Earle, J.L. & Greene, B.D. (2008) Five new species of the damselfish genus *Chromis* (Perciformes: Labroidae: Pomacentridae) from deep coral reefs in the tropical western Pacific. *Zootaxa*, 1671, 3–31.
- Zhang, Z.-Q. (2008) Opening the door to electronic publication of zoological nomenclature and taxonomy. *Zootaxa*, 1908, 68.

1. See details <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>

2. But it disallows publication on optical discs after 2012