

Notice of the formation of the *International Committee for the Nomenclature of Lichens and Allied Fungi* (ICNLAF)

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ABSTRACT. – Notice is given regarding the formation of the *International Committee for the Nomenclature of Lichens and Allied Fungi* (or ICNLAF). The ICNLAF is an independent committee focused on the nomenclature of lichenized and allied fungi. The committee has no official authority to adjudicate matters of nomenclatural dispute and governance. It stands ready to consult with the other bodies on such matters however, and will accept such responsibility if mandated to do so by IAPT and the authorities that govern the ICN. In the event that the committee is charged by IAPT to govern lichen nomenclature, the ICNLAF will formally become active and the membership expanded to include appropriate equality in geographical and taxonomical representation.

INTRODUCTION

Recently, the Nomenclature Section of the 18th International Botanical Congress (IBC) was held in Melbourne, Australia. A remarkably diverse body of nearly three hundred botanists and mycologists attended the section to discuss, debate, and ultimately vote on, numerous proposed changes to the *International Code for Botanical Nomenclature* (now called the *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants*). As has been noted elsewhere, a large number of these proposals specifically addressed the needs of the mycological community (Norvell 2011, Lendemer 2011). Among the issues debated in Melbourne was a series of proposals designed to integrate the Nomenclature Committee for Fungi (NCF), whose members are appointed by the IBC/IAPT, with independent fungal committees such as the International Commission for the Taxonomy of Fungi (ICTF), whose members are invited by that commission rather than by IBC/IAPT. Although the spirit of collaboration displayed in these proposals was accepted in Melbourne, there was an understandable reluctance to enshrine a non-IBC/IAPT appointed body into the ICN.

It was nonetheless clear that there exists a strong desire within some corners of the mycological community for more involvement in the governance of the nomenclature of fungi. Specifically, there is a desire to establish special committees comprised of taxonomists who focus on specific fungal groups. The

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goal of these groups would be to assemble a body of specialists whom could provide guidance, and advice, on nomenclatural matters relevant to each group of fungi. In response to this call to action by the ICNF we were motivated to form such a committee for lichenized and allied fungi. This committee is named *International Committee for the Nomenclature of Lichens and Allied Fungi* or ICNLAF. Below we provide a brief explanation of the historical and modern events that have led to the scope and creation of this committee. This contextual statement is followed by a brief outline of the statutes governing the committee. It is important to state clearly that we recognize at present that the ICNLAF has no formal authority to adjudicate matters of nomenclatural dispute and governance. Thus the committee as formed here, merely represents a group of lichenologists with an interest in nomenclature and the maintenance of nomenclatural stability. It is also important to state that we do not desire authority to be delegated by the IBC/IAPT. Nonetheless should authority for nomenclatural governance of certain taxonomic groups be partially or completely delegated to special committees by the IBC we stand ready to consult with these bodies and accept official responsibilities if mandated to do so. In the event that this occurs, the ICNLAF will become formally active and the membership revised and expanded to include equality in geographical and taxonomic representation (for further details, see below).

CONTEXT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

It is widely known and well established that lichens represent a subset of fungi that have adopted a lifestyle involving the capture and propagation of an alga for the purposes of obtaining nutrition. Living as we do at beginning the twenty-first century, it is easy to forget that a little over one hundred years ago, the debate over whether lichens are fungi was fierce and strong (with many lichen taxonomists opposing this view). The community eventually did accept that lichens are fungi. Nonetheless it was only research in recent decades that conclusively dispelled the notion that these organisms represent a monophyletic group and dispersed them across the many taxonomic groups that comprise Fungi.

Perhaps given the above, it is not surprising that the historical divide that separated lichens from other fungi persists today in the taxonomic community, despite the fact that the organisms have been fully integrated into the fungal phylogeny. Indeed, lichenologists represent a distinct subset of the mycological community whom, for the most part, concern themselves with the taxonomy and systematics of groups that were traditionally treated as lichens, regardless of the true biology of the organisms. After all, many groups traditionally treated as lichens include non-lichenized members (e.g., *Arthonia* s.l.), and some even consist entirely of non-lichenized taxa (e.g., *Mycocaliciaceae*). These non-lichenized taxa have, for the most part, never been treated by traditional mycologists, but rather have been considered the domain of the lichenological community. Interestingly, even lichenicolous fungi, the vast majority of which are non-lichenized and belong to groups never traditionally considered lichens, have largely been treated by lichenologists.

Clearly, although lichens are not a monophyletic group, the evidence of a discrete lichenological community within the broader mycological one is manifold. There are many regional lichenological societies in addition to the *International Association of Lichenologists* (IAL). There is an array of journals whose entire contents pertain to lichens and lichenicolous fungi (e.g., *Bibliotheca Lichenologica*, *The Lichenologist*, *Lichenology*, *Opuscula Philolichenum*). The field even has its own literature indexing system, *Recent Literature on Lichens* or RLL, a system that has yet to be implemented in other areas of mycology. All of these factors support the notion that lichenologists should be responsible for the governance of the nomenclature of the organisms they study. For these reasons we have proposed the formation of the ICNLAF, which will be governed by the statutes outlined below if mandated to do so by the IBC/IAPT, NCF, or ICTF.

FORMATION OF THE ICNLAF

1. **Definition.** – The International Committee for the Nomenclature of Lichens and Allied Fungi (ICNLAF) is an independent body of lichenologists concerned with matters of nomenclature and nomenclatural stability for names of lichens and allied fungi.

2. **Scope.** – The taxonomic scope of the ICNLAF includes all groups of lichens and allied fungi as outlined by Hodkinson (2012). Recognizing that lichens are not a monophyletic entity, when dealing with certain

groups, such as those with non-lichenized members or those belonging to the basidiomycetes, the ICNLAF will consult with other relevant bodies as it is mandated to do so.

3. **Objective.** – The objective of the ICNLAF is to assemble a body of lichenologists to whom the NCF and INCF can refer matters of governance of the nomenclature of lichens and allied fungi.

4. **Membership and governance.** – As the ICNLAF has not been sanctioned by IBC/IAPT or NCF to adjudicate nomenclatural matters, the committee is presently an informal grouping. The formal rules for membership and governance will be established in consultation with the mandating body (e.g., IAPT) as well as the International Association of Lichenologists (IAL) when the committee is formally recognized.

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