



# WORLD FEDERATION FOR CULTURE COLLECTION

Maroochydore, Australia, 16 August 2018

**Dr Cristiana Paşca Palmer**  
**Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity**  
**United Nations Environment Programme**  
**413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800**  
**H2Y 1N9 Montreal, Quebec**  
**Canada**

## **Ref: UNRESTRICTED ACCESS TO DIGITAL SEQUENCE DATA INFORMATION**

Dear Madam,

Generation of in-depth information on the full genetic make-up of biological resources is of vital importance for the international scientific community. With the advent of powerful molecular techniques, it is now possible to identify microorganisms at their genome levels and subsequently storing the data in digital forms. For the advancement of the man-kind, biological and biotechnological sciences as well as for the taxonomic studies and documentation of diversity, it is again vitally important that such information should be freely accessible by the international scientific community.

World Federation of Culture Collections (WFCC) is a multidisciplinary commission of the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) and a Federation within the International Union of Microbiological Societies (IUMS) that is concerned with the collection, authentication, maintenance and distribution of cultures of microorganisms and cultured cells. Accordingly, reflecting on the concerns of the member collections and end users, the WFCC Executive Board would like to bring the following points to your attention:

- WFCC supports open access to DSI for the advancement of biological sciences and scientific endeavours,
- Culture collections require such information to be able to correctly identify the cultures under their conservation. Integrity and true identity of such reference strains have extreme importance for taxonomists when new strains are identified using such reference strains,
- In parallel, the WFCC also acknowledges that the benefit sharing rights that should be acknowledged during the utilization of the DSI,
- WFCC strongly supports the ethical use of DSI at all times,
- WFCC also acknowledges sovereign rights and existing rules and regulations that might apply to information sharing in locations where the original DSI might have been generated.

Currently, the genomes of about 6,300 of the 15,200 type strains have been sequenced worldwide. The World Data Centre of Microorganisms (WDCM) jointly with the WFCC has initiated the 10K Type Strain Sequencing Project, Global Catalogue of Microorganisms, to provide free of charge service to taxonomists for standard genome sequencing and annotation. By joining the forces with the Community Sequencing Program of DOE-JGI for a new Genomic Encyclopedia of Bacteria and Archaea (GEBA) the genome sequence of the remaining un-sequenced and non-pathogenic type strains are targeted to complete the full understanding related to the genetic make-up and biosynthetic powers of microorganisms. Results will also have further significance for industry and applied sciences as well as for the sustainable global development.

### **President**

Dr Ipek Kurtboke  
University of the Sunshine Coast  
Faculty of Science, Health,  
Education  
and Engineering  
University of the Sunshine Coast  
Maroochydore DC, QLD 4558,  
Australia  
Tel: +61 7 5430 2819  
Fax: +61 7 5430 2881  
Email: [ikurtbok@usc.edu.au](mailto:ikurtbok@usc.edu.au)

### **Vice-President**

Prof Kevin McCluskey  
Fungal genetics Stock Centre  
Department of Plant Pathology  
4024 Throckmorton Plant  
Sciences Centre  
Kansas State University  
Manhattan, KS 66506E  
Tel: +1 (785) 532 6176  
Fax: +1 (785) 532 5692  
Email: [mcccluskeyk@ksu.edu](mailto:mcccluskeyk@ksu.edu)

### **Secretary**

Dr Marizeth Groenewald  
Westerdijk Fungal Biodiversity  
Institute  
P.O. Box 85167,  
NL-3508 AD Utrecht, The  
Netherlands  
Fax: + 31 30 2512097  
E-mail:  
[m.groenewald@westerdijkinstite.nl](mailto:m.groenewald@westerdijkinstite.nl)

### **Treasurer**

Dr Andrey Yurkov  
Deutsche Sammlung von Mikro-  
organismen und Zellkulturen  
GmbH  
7B Inhoffenstrasse,  
38124 Braunschweig, Germany  
Fax: +49531 2616 254  
E-mail: [ayu@dsmz.de](mailto:ayu@dsmz.de)

### **WDCM-Director**

Dr Juncai Ma  
Institute of Microbiology  
Chinese Academy of Sciences  
No 1 West Beichen Road,  
Chaoyang District  
Beijing 100101, CHINA  
Tel.: +86 10 64807422  
Fax: +86 10 64807426  
E-mail: [ma@im.ac.cn](mailto:ma@im.ac.cn)



# WORLD FEDERATION FOR CULTURE COLLECTION

WFCC Executive Board members thereby, kindly request unrestricted access to DSI by the international scientific community to generate knowledge that will provide foundational stones for future bio-economies and biotechnological advances. WFCC also supports current Vice-President Prof. Kevin McCluskey as the scientific participant representing the Federation at the AHTEG on DSI. He will continuously bring our views to the attention of the AHTEG in the future meetings.

WFCC is also ready to work with the CBD in full cooperation to facilitate global uniformity of the rules and regulations to ensure no lengthy delays would happen during access to biological resources and thus ongoing research activities are not hampered in any detrimental way impacting the research progress of the global scientific community.

WFCC also supports optimal transparency in the exchange of microbiological material through the MOSAICC code of conduct and the TRUST guidelines registered in the CBD international ABS Clearing House.

We thank you in advance for taking our views into consideration,

Sincerely yours

Dr İpek Kurtböke  
WFCC President (2017-2020)