

International Mineralogical Association (IMA)

Commission on New Minerals and Mineral Names (CNMMN)

Activities of the year 2002

CNMMN data for the IUGS Annual Report

Information on objectives and workplan of the CNMMN

11. Workplan for the next year

The CNMMN handles since 1959 all nomenclature matters in mineralogy. The CNMMN repartitions its workload amongst the three officers: the chairman prepares the new-mineral proposals, the vice-chairman handles the proposed changes to existing nomenclature (discreditations and redefinitions), and the secretary coordinates the subcommittees created to examine the nomenclature of mineral groups. The 30 members of the CNMMN evaluate all nomenclature proposals (new minerals, changes in existing minerals, mineral groups), and cast their votes on these, on a monthly basis for the new-mineral proposals, and as they come for the other proposals. About 70-80% of the members participate actively in the monthly new-mineral proposals, and about 60% in the others. This workplan, which has been successfully operated for more than 40 years, will not be changed in the next year.

12. Critical milestones to be achieved next year

The CNMMN is probably the only IMA Commission that has not only annual milestones, but also a milestone each month: the evaluation of, and the voting on proposals for mineralogical nomenclature, new minerals and changes in existing minerals.

Nevertheless, the CNMMN hopes to implement moreover the following two other major achievements in the next year.

- The CNMMN has decided in its Edinburgh September 2002 meetings, at the suggestion of the incoming chairman, to change its monthly communication stream (from officers to members, and back) from airmail to electronic media. This was already initiated by the vice-chairman and the secretary by distributing their nomenclature proposals by e-mail, but this will now be applied to all proposals. The electronic system for the new-mineral proposals (PDF files through an Internet CNMMN web site with limited access for CNMMN members) has been tested in October 2002, and its full employment is hoped to run smoothly in 2003. There will be some transition measures for members having problems with these PDF files.
- The CNMMN will publish in 2003 a PDF file (through the CNMMN web site) called "IMA list of minerals approved, discredited and redefined by the CNMMN". This list will be freely available to all persons interested in it. The list contains the 3500 or so mineral names on which the CNMMN has taken an official decision since its start in 1959, with references to the literature in which the decisions have been published. A preliminary version of this list, with key references instead of the original ones, will be available on the CNMMN web site in the last months of 2002. The IMA list has been prepared in a cooperation

between the CNMMN (under coordination of the vice-chairman and the incoming chairman), and Aleph Enterprises of Livermore (California, USA), and the production of the list is by courtesy of Materials Data, Inc., also of Livermore.

13. Anticipated results/products next year

The CNMMN will handle in 2003 about 60 new-mineral proposals (52 proposals in 2002, 70 in 2001, 50 in the first nine months of 2002) in batches of on average five proposals per months. There will also be proposals for changes in mineralogical nomenclature (5 – 10 per year), and several subcommittees are working on the nomenclature of mineral groups (astrophyllites, eudialytes, pyrochlores, sulphosalts, unnamed minerals); several of these subcommittees will publish their final results in 2003. New subcommittees will be started in 2003 for tourmalines, epidotes, and amphiboles.

The “IMA list of minerals approved, discredited and redefined by the CNMMN” (see section 12.) will be published in 2003.

14. Communication plans

Due to its continuous, regular and heavy workload the CNMMN has always had monthly communication between officers and members (officers mainly memoranda and proposals to members, members mainly evaluation remarks and votes to officers). As stated above, about 70-80% of all members participate actively in this monthly communication.

It has been decided to save workload and costs for the chairman (copying memoranda and proposals, and mailing these to the 30 members) by starting an IMA-CNMMN Internet web site which has a section with limited access for CNMMN persons only. This section will provide as PDF files the monthly memoranda of the chairman and the new-mineral proposals prepared by him. The members (who have access through a user name and a password) can read, download and print those files for their own use. This section of the web site will eventually also be used by the vice-chairman and the secretary for their communications with the members, although e-mail will of course remain in use.

The sections of the IMA-CNMMN web site open to the whole mineralogical community and the general public will be used for giving news and results of the CNMMN: the “IMA list of CNMMN decisions”, the new minerals approved yearly (without their names to protect the intellectual rights of the authors), reviews of nomenclature decisions and reports.

The IMA-CNMMN web site is assembled and maintained by the incoming chairman, it has been opened on 18 September 2002, and the members-only section is being tested in October 2002. The URL of the web site is: www.geo.vu.nl/users/ima-cnmmn. The web site is hosted by the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, without any charge of costs to the CNMMN.

15. Summary budget for next year

Because of the switch from the monthly air-mailed distribution of copied paper versions of new-mineral proposals to electronic PDF files via the CNMMN web site, the chairman no longer has a need for a budget for secretarial help and mailing costs. Other, smaller administrative costs for the three CNMMN officers are being taken care of by their respective employers.

16. Potential funding sources outside IUGS

The CNMMN has profited considerably from generous financial assistance from several sources, for which the IMA as a whole should duly show its gratitude.

- The workload of the CNMMN chairman amounts to 2-3 days full time, not per year, not per month, but per week. In the past CNMMN chairmen have always been supported for this by their respective employers. Also the incoming chairman has received official permission from his faculty (in the form of an adapted working-schedule) to spend up to 50% of his work-time on CNMMN business. This amounts to a yearly donation of about US\$ 35,000 from the Amsterdam Faculty to the CNMMN and the IMA.

Although the vice-chairman and the secretary have lower workloads, their employers also agree with spending some of their work-time for CNMMN matters.

- The preparation and production of the “IMA list of minerals approved, discredited and redefined by the CNMMN” has been made possible by Aleph Enterprises and Materials Data, Inc., both of Livermore (California, USA).
- The 35 or so officers, members and chairmen emeritus of the CNMMN have received from Materials Data, Inc. a free copy of the MINERAL database in CD format, a product normally marketed for US\$ 500 per copy. This database is of unvaluable help for the work of the officials and members on mineralogical nomenclature.

17. Review of chief accomplishments/results over the last 5 years (period 1998-2002)

- The CNMMN has voted on 293 new mineral proposals in the period from January 1998 to September 2002. Approximately 80% of these were approved, the remainder being either rejected, or suspended pending further information. Annual summaries of minerals approved (without names) were published by Commission officers in various mineralogical journals.
- The CNMMN has adjudicated on 22 proposals to discredit, redefine or revalidate mineral species or to amend nomenclature in mineral groups. About 50% of these were approved, with the remainder being rejected, withdrawn or pending.
- Long-running subcommittees revising the nomenclature for important groups such as amphiboles, micas and zeolites submitted their reports for voting during the period. After discussion and amendments, all were approved and have subsequently been published widely. More recently, reviews of the labuntsovite and eudialyte groups have been undertaken and approved.
- The CNMMN has sponsored sessions on new minerals, mineral nomenclature and general mineralogy at IMA, IGC and Mineralogy and Museum meetings.

18. Summary of anticipated objectives and workplan for the next 5 years (period 2003-2007)

In the next five years the CNMMN will handle about 300-350 new-mineral proposals, about 35-50 proposals to change existing nomenclature, and a number of extensive reports on the nomenclature of mineral groups. Besides carrying out these ‘routine’ objectives and

workplan, and in addition to the activities outlined in section 12 of this report, the CNMMN hopes to implement two major achievements in the next five years:

- Production of an official IMA list of all unnamed minerals ever published in a chemically based listing, with literature references and eventual remarks on their present status. This list will be prepared by the CNMMN subcommittee on unnamed minerals, and it will be a highly appreciated instrument for all scientists working on unknown or new minerals.
- As a complementary task to producing in 2003 the “IMA list of minerals approved, discredited and redefined” the CNMMN plans to achieve agreement on the mineral names published before 1959, the start of the CNMMN. This will constitute a formidable task as there are numerous controversies on the orthography and the status of hundreds of ‘traditional’ minerals and their names, and decisions should be taken on these, especially for the use of journal editors.

Ernst A.J. Burke, incoming chairman of the CNMMN,
Amsterdam, 24 October 2002