**Comments on the proposed revocation of Article 74.7.3 of the Code (requirement for an express statement of the taxonomic purpose of a lectotype designation)**
(See BZN **58**: 133–140)

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The comments on Article 74.7.3 of the Code published in BZN **58**: 133–140 present the opinions of 23 persons who propose or support the revocation of the Article and of only seven who favour its retention.

One of the latter is Dr P.K. Tubbs, the Executive Secretary of the Commission (although he does make clear that the views he has expressed are personal ones). I find the argument in his penultimate paragraph especially surprising: 'The belief that lectotypes should be designated as a matter of 'routine' revisory work is surely mistaken. Many well known species do not have any existing type material, and yet their names are of undoubted application; in other instances the taxon is better delineated by the original author's type series than by a subsequent author's arbitrary, if well meaning, restiction to a single specimen . . .'.

While literally correct when taken in isolation, in the context of the present discussion this statement implies that typification has only *ad hoc* function: the type is necessary only when the application of the name presents an explicit problem, and it is otherwise redundant. A modest extension of this claim uncovers the logic behind it, and would be: 'The belief that types should be designated as a matter of routine work is surely mistaken'. To be consistent with this view and with Article 74.7.3 other Articles (those dealing with the designation of holotypes, type species and type genera) would have to be modified, to include demands that an author of *any* name must make an 'express statement of taxonomic purpose'. However, nobody has proposed such modifications.

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I continue to hold the view which I mentioned previously about 'routine' lectotype designations which have no expressed statement of taxonomic purpose, but I certainly do not subscribe to the 'modest extension' of logic which Prof Rasnitsyn describes and which would hold that typification of taxa is usually redundant. Nor do I believe that all type designations, including those by the original authors of names, should be invalid unless accompanied by statements of purpose.

In practice most authors rightly explain the taxonomic purpose of establishing a new genus and why they are selecting a particular type species for it; the same applies to family-group taxa (in which the type genus determines the name itself). Typification has been mandatory for genus-group taxa since 1930, but the current Code is the first to require (Article 16.4) the explicit fixation of name-bearing types for new species. Typification of species has always been different from that of genera or families because the name-bearing type consists of one *or more* specimens, and is not a necessarily single named entity (a nominal species or genus). Because the author may consider that the new species is best illustrated by a series of specimens (e.g.