

A STANDARD PROPOSAL FOR BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES CENTRES

Anabela Martins

CEB-Biological Engineering Centre, Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal

Nelson Lima

*CEB- Biological Engineering Centre, Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal
(nelson@ie.uminho.pt)*

Paulo Sampaio

Systems and Production Department, University of Minho, Braga, Portugal

Abstract

Purpose

Culture Collections play a vital role by expertly preserving biological material (BM) in *ex-situ* repositories and making it promptly available to several users such as industry, R&D in biotechnology and teaching. The rise in the scientific and biotechnological importance of BM along with an increased awareness of governments on the necessity of preserve the microbiological diversity has resulted in a global understanding of the need to assure stable and well managed operations inside culture collections. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recommended culture collections to work under certificated or accredited schemes thus reaching the status of Biological Resource Centre (BRC). However, no relevant international normative document, covering all the activities of BRCs, exists. The purpose of this article is to establish the launch pad for the OECD purpose on the establishment of a Global Biological Resource Centre Network composed by certified or accredited BRCs.

Methodology

Relevant standards that could apply to BRC are compared with the OECD recommendation for BRCs. A new standard is proposed and the mechanism to its development is presented as well as the main structure and sub-clauses.

Findings

No relevant international document exists covering fundamental issues for BRC operation. Based on existing normative documents it is possible to develop a consistent, credible and compatible standard that fits BRC purposes without overlap existing normative documents.

Practical implications

The developed standard will enable the culture collections accreditation by providing the necessary requirements for the quality and competence management system

implemented, being though a fundamental step for the establishment of the Global BRC Network (GBRCN).

Originality/value: Original paper

Keywords: Culture Collection, BRC, standard, standardization, management system, quality, competence, certification, accreditation, standard-setting