

FABI PROFESSOR ATTENDS WORKSHOP ON MICROBIAL SYSTEMATICS

Prof Fanus Venter attended a National Science Foundation (NSF) sponsored workshop on “Microbial Systematics for the Next Decade” held in Hood River, Oregon, USA, between 28 and 31 October. He joined a dozen other evolutionary biologists and specialists in bacterial systematics and ecology from across the world to develop a road map for the taxonomy and nomenclature of uncultured Bacteria and Archaea. The focus of the workshop was on how the taxonomy of these organisms could be stabilised and incorporated into the current taxonomic system.



At present, the International Code of Nomenclature of Prokaryotes does not allow the validation of names for uncultured Prokaryotes, as they are not represented by type cultures. These organisms are only linked to metagenome-assembled genomes or single-amplified genomes and are therefore not covered by the Code. The workshop recommended that the International Committee on the Systematics of Prokaryotes (ICSP) should establish an ad-hoc working group to investigate how the use of genome sequences as type material for uncultured Bacteria and Archaea should be regulated in order to include them in the formal taxonomic framework for the Prokaryotes.