

OPINION 2308 (Case 3480)***Mastodon waringi* Holland, 1920 (currently *Haplomastodon waringi*; Mammalia; Proboscidea): request to designate a neotype not approved**

Abstract. The Commission has not supported the request to designate a neotype to conserve the usage of the name *Mastodon waringi* Holland, 1920, for a species of extinct South American proboscidean.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Mammalia; Proboscidea; Ecuador; Brazil; *Haplomastodon*; *Cuvieronius*; *Mastodon waringi*; gomphothere; South America.

Ruling

- (1) It is hereby ruled that the application to designate a neotype for *Mastodon waringi* Holland, 1920 is not approved.
- (2) No names are placed on the Official Lists or Indexes in this ruling.

History of Case 3480

An application to designate a neotype to conserve the usage of the name *Mastodon waringi* Holland, 1920 for a species of extinct South American proboscidean was received from Spencer G. Lucas (*New Mexico Museum of Natural History, Albuquerque, NM, U.S.A.*) on 15 October 2008. After correspondence the case was published in BZN **66**: 164–167 (2009). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. Comments were published in BZN **66**: 358–359; **67**: 96, 181–182, 333; **68**: 80–81; **69**: 65.

Decision of the Commission

On 1 March 2012 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN **66**: 165–166. At the close of the voting period on 1 June 2012 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes – 9: Brothers, Halliday, Kottelat, Krell, Minelli, Pape, Yanega, Zhang and Zhou.

Negative votes – 14: Alonso-Zarazaga, Ballerio, Bogutskaya, Grygier, Harvey, Kojima, Kullander, Lamas, Lim, Patterson, Rosenberg, Štys, van Tol and Winston. Bouchet abstained.

Fautin, Ng and Pyle were on leave of absence.

Voting AGAINST, Alonso-Zarazaga commented that to his reading, the texts presented in this application indicated neither consensus among specialists nor prevailing usage of any of the names. Moreover, in his opinion, the designation made by the author of the application (paragraph 10) of the neotype of *Mastodon chimborazi* as the neotype of *Mastodon waringi* as well did not fit the requirements of Article 75.3 and was thus invalid, so that the current status of *Haplomastodon* as typified by *Mastodon chimborazi* Proaño was to be maintained. He felt that as the taxonomic dispute was still in process, the Commission should not intervene, as that

would act only to reinforce the nomenclatural acts and their relative priority. Also voting AGAINST, Grygier said that the point of this application was to make *waringi* and *chimborazi* objective synonyms, with the same specimen serving as neotype for both. However, as the Comment by Ferretti (BZN 66: 358–359) had pointed out, the neotype designation for *chimborazi* by Ficcarelli et al. (1995) was invalid: part of the original material exists. Designating the proposed specimen as the neotype only of *waringi* would fix the taxonomic concept of that nominal species, but not make it an objective synonym of *chimborazi*. To fulfill the latter goal, an additional proposal was required, asking the Commission to ratify the invalid neotype designation under Article 75.8, but no such proposal was ever made. Grygier felt that the resulting chasm between original intention and effective result was too wide to warrant a ‘yes’ vote. Also Voting AGAINST, Štys said that all the arguments against the original application were summarized by Ferretti (BZN 66: 358–359) and Demirjian (BZN 67: 333). There was a genus or subgenus *Haplomastodon* with a type species *Masthodon chimborazi* with an extant holotype so no Commission’s action was needed. There was a nomen dubium, *Mastodon waringi*, with a non-diagnostic holotype – some taxonomists regarded it as a distinct species some as a senior subjective synonym of *M. chimborazi* – the Commission should not intervene in cases of taxonomic uncertainty and at present a neotype was not needed and not desirable, certainly not the one as suggested by the applicant. Also Voting AGAINST, Winston said that the proposed neotype was from a locality quite distant (4000 km) from that where the species was originally collected. This contradicted the qualifying conditions in Article 76.3.6 ‘. . . as nearly as practicable from the original type locality. . . and the same geological horizon. . .’. ABSTAINING, Bouchet commented that the published comments indicated that the taxonomy was unsettled, and that this should be settled before a nomenclatural decision was made.

No names are placed on Official Lists and Indexes by the ruling given in the present Opinion. The issue is left open for subsequent workers to follow the precepts of the Code or to make new proposals to the Commission.