

Regulation of conservation and use of geological collections of the Natural History Museum at University of Tartu

1. General articles

1.1. Natural History Museum at University of Tartu is responsible for managing the second largest geological collections (henceforth collections) of Estonian natural heritage.

1.2. The collections encompass geological and other storage items, an archive and an electronic database. Storage items include single specimens, preparations, drill cores, and rock and sediment samples. The archive comprises publications, manuscripts and a photo archive related to collections. The electronic database contains data on storage items, archive and the related geological information.

1.3. Collections are located in storage rooms in Tartu, Vanemuise 46 (University of Tartu).

1.4. The geological collections are managed by curators and the chief curator.

1.5. The museum's staff and the researchers handling the collections are responsible for the management, documentation and preservation of the collections.

1.6. The museum's staff members working mainly with the collections possess no personal systematic geological collections in the same field.

1.7. A special permit from the director of the museum is needed if the collections are intended to be used for commercial purposes.

1.8. The current regulation is equally binding for the museum's staff, researchers from other institutions or any individuals working with the collections. The institute reserves the right to ban people or institutions from using the collections if they fail to comply with the current regulation.

2. The collections

2.1. The collections comprise single items or item groups (mineralogical or paleontological specimens and preparations).

2.2. The acronym for denoting collection items in publications is TUG.

2.3. The material is registered, numbered and documented by collections, specimens or specimen groups according to the system established by the museum. The numbers used and all the relevant information, including the location of items in storage rooms, is registered in the collections database SARV.

2.4. Type, cited and figured specimens are stored separately from other collections and are available for comparative research by all specialists in the field.

2.5. Study of collections by guest specialists, except in case of collaborative research, needs to be arranged with the chief curator at least 14 days in advance.

2.6. Any individual from outside the museum needs a permit from the museum's leading specialist in the field to study unpublished material. At the completion of the study, all the material is returned to the museum. If the material is lost or destroyed, a report signed by the chief curator will be issued.

3. Archive

3.1. The archive of collections comprises publications, manuscript materials (field notebooks, descriptions, logs of geological sections, etc.), and hard copies of photos, films, etc. regarding storage items, geological objects or sites (e.g. outcrops) and geologists.

3.2. The museum is responsible for preserving and managing the archive. According to needs and possibilities more important archive materials are digitized and made available on-line via the collections database.

3.3. As a rule, hard copies of archive materials are intended to be used only at the museum. The original archive items, which are available also in digital form, are normally not given out for everyday use.

4. Working material of researchers

4.1. Geological material and related information that is in active use for current research projects are called working material. Such material is kept in office rooms, laboratories and a special storage area for samples.

4.2. Turning over the published material to the museum in order to keep it in the main depository a detailed list of items and, if available, corresponding publication need to be added to the material.

4.3. When numbering the individual specimens, the numbering system used in the museum must be strictly followed. Collection numbers are issued by the chief curator.

4.4. When numbering rock or sediment samples, it is recommended that researchers use an appropriate system to guarantee uniqueness of all numbers within the museum.

5. Electronic database

5.1. Geocollections database SARV is used for managing collections and the related information. Its technical development is made by Institute of Geology at Tallinn University of Technology. The data is inserted and edited by the museum's staff, as well as researchers, postgraduate students and the assisting staff.

5.2. The public interface of the database is accessible at <http://geokogud.info>.

5.3. As a rule, the information registered in the database is for free public use. Limits in public use may emanate from (a) on-going active research, (b) possible confidentiality clause of applied research projects, (c) restrictions resulting from nature protection, etc.

5.4. Unless noted otherwise, all publicly available information in the database is distributed under the Creative Commons BY-NC licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>), which

means that you are free to use, copy, distribute, transmit and adapt the data for non-commercial purposes, provided that you attribute the source and the author.

5.5. It is recommended that the following form of citation be used: Estonian geocollections database SARV, [photo/figure/data/...]: [author], geological collection at Natural History Museum, UT, [year]. Where possible, a reference or a link to a particular database entry as well as date of download should be added.

5.6. In publications, unique identifiers such as specimen numbers should be used together with the museum's acronym TUG.

6. Loans

6.1. Loans of specimens to another institution (in rare cases an individual) for research or exhibition purposes are normally given for a one year period.

6.2. Loans are managed by the museum. Loan invoices are signed by the chief curator.

6.3. All loan items are registered beforehand in the database, numbered and usually photographed. The loan specimens cannot be mechanically or chemically processed (preparation, cutting, analyses, etc. is not allowed), unless specifically permitted and indicated in the loan invoice.

6.4. Depending on the value and condition of the specimens, and on other circumstances, the museum may decline to send the material abroad. Usually, the borrowing institution covers the expenses, including transportation and return costs.

6.5. If loan specimens are used in publications, unique numbers provided by the museum must be employed in conjunction with institutional acronym TUG.

6.6. Upon return of the material the researcher will provide the resulting publication or manuscript, if such exists.

6.7. The use of a loan for commercial purposes is only allowed if a permit to do so is obtained from the director of the museum.