APPROVED BY
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Regulations of preservation and use of TalTech Department of Geology research collections

1. General provisions

1.1. The geological collections of the Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech) Department of Geology (DG) consist of different types of objects (fossils, minerals, rock and sediment samples, preparations, drill cores etc.), a physical archive (manuscripts, reports, photographs) and a digital database. The geological collections of DG constitute an important part of the Estonian multi-institutional national geological collection.

1.2. DG collections are mainly used in scientific work and applied research, as well as in wider society learning, nature education and citizen science.

1.3. DG geological and archive materials are located on the premises of the DG in Tallinn and at the Särghaua Earth Science Center in Pärnu County.

1.4. The DG collections are managed by the Chief Curator and the Geological Collections Unit (GCU) together with the staff members who are using the collections. If necessary, the director of the DG and other specialists from TalTech will be involved in solving the problems related to the collections.

1.5. The internationally registered institutional abbreviation for the DG collections is "GIT". When using the DG collection specimens, drill cores, samples, etc., as well as the archive and database outputs in research, it is mandatory to cite them as belonging to the DG, and where relevant, with the institutional abbreviation GIT.

1.6. Adherence to these regulations is mandatory for all users of the DG research collections, including own employees. The DG has the right to restrict access to the collections to persons who do not comply with the regulations or have violated them.

2. Collection specimens (museum objects)

2.1. Specimens ("museum objects") are items of permanent scientific value that can be numbered and described individually (e.g., fossils, minerals, meteorites, rock specimens), are usually identified according to biological, mineralogical or lithological classifications, and are permanently kept as part of the DG research collections.

2.2. The DG takes specimens from its employees, other individuals and institutions both in Estonia and abroad for permanent keeping, according to possibilities and the main focus of the existing collections (especially materials from the Baltic region and Scandinavia, Early Palaeozoic specimens and already well-represented fossil groups).

2.3. As a rule, each specimen belongs to one specific collection of objects, characterised by a common systematic position, scientific publication, locality, stratigraphic level, collector or other common feature.

2.4. Specimen collections and individual specimens are registered and documented in accordance with the practice established at DG. The identifiers used for specimens and all related information, including the location in the repositories, are recorded in the geoscience data management platform SARV (see Article 6).

2.5. When numbering specimens, it is mandatory to follow the system used in the DG. The specimen number consists of the collection number and a serial number of the specimen within the collection (e.g., GIT 405-255 is DG specimen No. 255 within the collection No. 405). As a rule, collection numbers are issued by the Chief Curator.

2.6. Type, figured and cited specimens (the so-called originals) are generally kept separate from other collections and are available for comparative examination by all professionals in the field. Examination of unpublished material by an external person requires the consent of a specialist in the same field working at the DG (if such a specialist exists).
2.7. The use of specimens of the DG collections by researchers from other institutions must be approved by the Chief Curator, as a rule, at least 14 days in advance. Specimens can also be borrowed for research (see Article 7).

3. Drill cores, samples and preparations

3.1. Drill cores and samples (rock and sediment samples, water samples, etc.) are stored as part of the DG collections, mainly for ongoing and future research and analysis. Samples could be completely used up for analysis so that only data or derivative objects (e.g., microfossil preparations) remain. Preparations are usually permanently stored objects resulting from the examination and analysis of samples.
3.2. Drill cores, samples, sample processing residues and preparations shall be stored in numbered boxes and drawers the contents and location of which shall be recorded in SARV.
3.3. The drill cores are open for use by both DG staff and external researchers, provided that there is no conflict of interest with the work of researchers at the DG and other Estonian institutions. Samples and preparations are used by non-DG researchers primarily in the context of scientific collaboration.
3.4. Non-DG researchers shall notify the Chief Curator at least 14 days in advance of the intention to use the drill cores. The work of external researchers with drill cores shall be carried out in the presence of the Chief Curator or a person authorised by her/him. Due to the uniqueness of a drill core, its condition and the nature of the planned work, the Chief Curator may prohibit new sampling.
3.5. Samples from drill cores should be taken using a diamond saw or drill and avoiding crushing of the core. Only the amount required for analysis should be sampled, up to a maximum of half the diameter of the core.
3.6. The researcher shall mark the sampling locations on the core box. It is mandatory to follow the system used in the DG for marking. As a rule, the core boxes are photographed after the samples have been collected and boxes marked.
3.7. Work with drill cores is registered in SARV, where data on the researcher(s), objectives, planned analyses, etc. are entered. When collecting samples, the corresponding data are entered directly into SARV or presented to Chief Curator as a spreadsheet file. The numbering of the samples must be agreed in advance and the same numbering shall be used for the publication of the data. When taking pictures of the core boxes, the photos must also be added to the information system or forwarded to the GCU. Sample metadata (number, depth, name of the collector, collection time) are public and will be made visible online through SARV.
3.8. Palaeontological material from drill cores or samples is subject to transfer/return to the DG collections and must be numbered according to the DG numbering system. The research data obtained from the examination of drill cores and samples shall be added to SARV after their publication.

4. Work materials of researchers

4.1. All geological objects and information are in physical or digital form collected by the users of the material for a specific purpose, usually within a research project, are considered as work materials of researchers and students. The materials are stored in offices, laboratories and sample storage areas (i.e., not in the main storage facility for the collections).
4.2. When transferring material to the GCU for permanent storage, the transferor shall add all supplementary data on the materials, including related publications, photographs, data files, etc.
4.3. When initially numbering new rock or sediment samples, it is recommended to immediately register the data in SARV, which ensures the uniqueness of the numbers and prevents confusion in the future.

5. Archives

5.1. The archives of the DG collections consist of manuscript materials (incl. field notebooks, reports, drawings) and photographs, films, etc. related to geological objects (e.g., outcrops) and geologists.

5.2. The preservation and management of the archives is organised by the GCU. Where possible and appropriate, important archival materials will be digitised and made available through SARV and its web services.

5.3. Physical archive materials are generally for DG internal use only.

6. Digital database

6.1. Geoscience data management platform SARV (previously called Geocollections Information System SARV), developed and coordinated by the DG, is used to manage the DG collections and related geological information. The DG data are inserted and edited by the DG staff, students and, if necessary, employees of other institutions according to the user rights granted to them.

6.2. Data related to the DG collections are publicly available on the Estonian geoscience data portal "e-Maapõu" (https://geoloogia.info) and the Estonian geocollections portal (https://geocollections.info).

6.3. In general, the information entered into the database is public. Restrictions on public use of the data may result from: (a) involvement in ongoing research, (b) a possible requirement for confidentiality, (c) restrictions on nature conservation or other legal considerations.

6.4. When referring to a specific object or data of the DG collection in publications as well as via electronic channels, it is mandatory to use unique record identifiers (e.g. specimen number, sample identifier, photo number, IGSN number, DOI number, etc.) with the DG official acronym "GIT".

6.5. Unless noted otherwise, use of publicly available information is subject to the Creative Commons BY license: use of the data is free for all, provided the original author and source are properly cited (see https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0).

6.6. The following form shall be used to refer to publicly available information in the database:

- [photo / drawing / data / ...], TalTech, [author, year], Estonian geoscience portal: https: //geoloogia.info/... (visited ...)

For example:

- Photo 123967, TalTech, author: G. Baranov, 2018. Estonian geoscience portal: https://geoloogia.info/file/123967 (visited 13 Nov 2021)
- *Paerticrinus arvosus* GIT 405-255, TalTech, Estonian geoscience portal: https://geoloogia.info/specimen/152915 (visited 13 Nov 2021)

7. Loans, exchanges and transfer of materials

7.1. Lending is the making specimens available to another institution (in exceptional cases an individual) for the purpose of research or display. The loan period is usually 1 or 2 years. The lending is based on a loan act signed by the DG Chief Curator and the borrower institution.

7.2. All borrowed items shall be registered in SARV, numbered and photographed. A separate permit is required for mechanical or chemical treatment (preparation, cutting, analysis, etc.) of the material, which shall be fixed in the loan act.

7.3. Depending on the value, condition and other circumstances of the material, DG may not allow transporting the material.

7.4. When using the borrowed materials in publications, the unique numbers of the specimens and the acronym GIT must be used. Upon returning the borrowed materials, the researcher shall add a list of the returned material and, upon publication, the corresponding publication.

7.5. With the approval of the Chief Curator, the DG researchers have the right to send comparative specimens and samples to, or exchange material with other institutions or researchers. Only specimens that are abundantly represented, have not been published and the abandonment of which does not harm the integrity of the Estonian national geological collection or the DG collections may be transferred.

7.6. For the purposes of scientific or applied research, rock and sediment samples may be provided to external researchers for analysis. The material will only be handed over for a specific research project and pre-agreed types of analyses. If during the study a need should arise for different and/or additional analyses, a separate permission must be granted by the DG. Material from the same section will not be made available to other researchers for the same type of analysis within two years of the transfer.

7.7. All exchanges and assignments of material shall be registered in loan acts and recorded in SARV.

7.8. The transfer of the collections of other institutions or individuals to the DG and issues related to the transfer of the DG collections shall be resolved by the Chief Curator, with the involvement of the Director of the DG, if necessary.