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Biology Curators Group

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or

Federation for Natural Sciences Collection Research

After a minor hiccough in titling this organisation, the following is an account of its genesis.

FENSCORE

On the 5th February 1981 the Federation for Natural Sciences Collection Research, FENSCORE, was formed to coordinate the further development of the work of the Collection Research Units. The Federation committee is composed of two voting members from each of the collection research units and one voting member from each of the seven national museums holding natural science collections (from whom much support has been received), together with one voting representative of Manchester Museum, which institution has agreed to process and maintain the national register of collections.

Observers have been invited from interested organisations such as the Museum Documentation Association, the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History, and the Biology and Geological Curators Groups.

The aims of FENSCORE are:

1. To act as coordinator between the component units of the Federation and the Manchester Museum Computer Cataloguing Unit in order to:
 - a) Devise and maintain data standards used in recording natural science collections.
 - b) Produce and maintain a register of Botany, Geology and Zoology collections housed in the British Isles in a machine readable form.
 - c) Provide an information service from the Register (without prejudice to the rights of the independent collection research units).
 - d) Produce union catalogues from the Register.
2. To encourage and assist the regional Collection Research Units, without interfering with their regional autonomy.
3. To foster the development and implementation of goals and priorities associated with natural sciences' collection research.
4. To seek and advise on the distribution of aid to assist further research into natural sciences' collections.
5. To coordinate searches of bibliographic and archival material to establish the existence and location of natural sciences' collections, including those that may be no longer extant.
6. To establish and develop links with British and overseas organisations having similar aims to the Federation.

There is a constitution and under its rules the chairman, elected at the first meeting for this year, is Peter J. Morgan of the National Museum of Wales and the secretary is Charles W. Pettitt of the Manchester Museum. One of the principal developments from the first two meetings has been the decision to begin immediately organising a Type Registry (reported below). The format of the recording forms is being worked on at the moment. Secondly, formal connections between the essentially provincial Collection Research Units and the National Museums are being forged through the common goals of both types of institution in terms of identifying the destiny and contents of taxonomically and historically important collections. The organisation of all this effort into one body, FENSCORE, is seen also as a potential medium between grant-aiding bodies and the curator working in Natural Science Collection Research.

FENSCORE Working Party on Type Specimens Register

Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 28 April, 1330 hrs., BM(NH)

Present: Eric Greenwood (in the Chair)
Howard Brunton Peter Morgan
Gordon Corbet Adrian Norris
Geoff Hancock Charles Pettitt
David Heppell Andrew Roberts

The meeting took the form of a general discussion, and the following decisions were made about the proposed National Register of Type Specimens.

1/. NEED FOR REGISTER.

AGREED: There is a need for a Register of Type Specimens to be compiled.

2/. OBJECTIVES.

AGREED: That the objectives of the Register should be
a) to identify the location of material likely to be of interest to taxonomists and
b) to stimulate scholarly investigation of this material.

3/. ORGANISATION.

AGREED: That FENSCORE would be the appropriate body to coordinate the compilation of the Register.

4/. COVERAGE.

AGREED: The Register should contain information on
a) type and figured material (see item 5) of
b) Botany (recent and fossil), Mineralogy, and Zoology (recent and fossil) from
c) all collections in the British Isles whether in private or public ownership, although
d) data for BM(NH) and, possibly, other national museums may need to be restricted to citation of published catalogues.

5/. DEFINITION OF TERMS.

AGREED: a) 'Type' to mean any specimen which the recording curator knows, or has reasonable grounds for suspecting, to possess type status at any level (e.g. syntype, paratype,