COVER
Calliphora sp., Head close-up, by Jonathan Brecko, ©RBINS / DIGIT-3 Belspo; license: CC-BY-NC-ND
Dinosaur Gallery — Iguanodon bernissartensis, by Thierry Hubin ©RBINS 2016
The Consortium of European Taxonomic Facilities (CETAF) is the unique platform for natural history collections and natural history sciences within and across Europe. CETAF member institutions, united by common objectives, are also leaders in the field of taxonomy and systematics world-wide.

CETAF’s objectives are to promote scientific research on and access to European collections, to facilitate the formation of partnerships, to develop funding opportunities, and to act as a voice for taxonomy and systematic biology in Europe. CETAF advocates the value of both natural history collections and taxonomy to science and society. CETAF is at the forefront of key issues in the natural sciences and natural history collections in Europe. Together, CETAF’s member institutions represent the largest natural history collection infrastructure, taxonomy and systematics research network, training and education facility, and natural science communication in Europe.

These integral properties of the consortium and the strength of its 20-year-old collaborative network ensure that CETAF is the most significant distributed natural history collection research infrastructure in Europe.

THE CORE ACTIVITIES OF CETAF AND ITS MEMBER INSTITUTIONS ARE DIVIDED BETWEEN 6 KEY STRATEGIC AREAS:

**Research in systematics & taxonomy: integrating new tools and innovations**
Fostering taxonomy and promoting activities that accelerate the documentation and understanding of the natural world, including the development of a CETAF-wide taxonomy and species discovery initiative.

**Science policy and key performance indexes**
Representing natural history collections, taxonomy and systematics in European science policy and within relevant legislative processes in order to strengthen our position.

**Natural history collections management and collection access**
Developing, adopting and implementing best practices, common policies and joint initiatives that promote physical and digital access to our collections.

**Biodiversity informatics and information technologies**
Ensuring that collection and taxonomic data are digitally interpretable, interconnected and retrievable in order to increase the visibility and use of collection data.

**Taxonomy training and e-learning**
Fostering education, training and e-learning initiatives on taxonomy and collections, and ensuring the capacity to deliver courses and training programmes in Europe and beyond.

**Communication, public outreach and societal relevance**
Promoting and sharing scientific knowledge on biological and geological diversity that is key in tackling current societal issues.

The synergies created within CETAF and between its member institutions — their directors, their heads of science, their collection managers, their information specialists, and their scientists — demonstrate that the benefits and added-value of knowledge and resource sharing, cooperation, and collaboration are greater than the sum of the institutions themselves.
**CORE CETAF VALUES**

Trans-national commitment to understanding and promoting diversity in nature; cooperation and transparency; science in society for the understanding and sustainable use of biodiversity; resilience; equality; collaboration; responsible research.

**CETAF WORKING GROUPS**

The activities of CETAF working groups are at the forefront of key issues within and across Europe: **Collections Policy Board** (common collection management and collections access policies); **Digitization Group** (discussion of specimen digitization, digital data storage and curation, Digi-wiki); **Earth Sciences Group** (developing collaborations on Earth Sciences within CETAF); **European Initiatives Advisory Group** (reviewing of European funding initiatives); **Information Science and Technology Commission** (CETAF Stable Identifiers for biological collections, biodiversity data standards); **Legislation and Regulations Group** (Nagoya Protocol implementation, CETAF Code of Conduct and Best Practices for Access and Benefit Sharing); **Research Assessment Group** (CETAF guidelines for the assessment of taxonomists and taxonomic works); **Strategy Group** (strategic development of the Consortium); **Training and e-learning Group** (development of training and e-learning opportunities).

**25 TARGETS FOR CETAF FOR 2025**

Research in systematics & taxonomy, integrating new tools and innovations

- 30,000 new species described and 20,000 new impact factor articles, books, and monographs published
- CETAF is a partner in two EU funded projects and two multidisciplinary projects are launched
- 90% of the journals of our member institutions are digitized and digitally available
- CETAF undertakes a taxonomic expertise gap-analysis and initiates a collaborative taxonomy-based initiative

Science policy and key performance indexes

- CETAF position papers and statements are published regularly
- CETAF outcomes and positions are endorsed by all CETAF members
- CETAF has a consultancy role within European decision making mechanisms
- CETAF participates in the development of the European Research Agenda concerning natural history sciences
- CETAF actively supports natural history scientists via its CETAF recommendations and guidelines

Natural history collection management and collection access

- 10% of the 1.5 billion specimens in our natural history collections are databased, digitized and digitally available, and scientific collection visits increase by 10%
- CETAF best practice and common collections policies are implemented in the majority of member institutions
- all CETAF institutions have self-assessed collections
- five collaborative collecting, surveys or field-work initiatives are undertaken

Biodiversity informatics and information technologies

- CETAF interoperable standards for biodiversity data and natural history specimen databasing are adopted in 80% of CETAF institutions
- CETAF standard identifiers are adopted in 80% of CETAF institutions
- digital data curation guidelines are produced and adopted
- digital storage capacity infrastructure is established within the Consortium

Taxonomy training and e-learning

- collaborative training capacity and infrastructure established, incorporating at least 50% of the CETAF members
- training and e-learning offers by CETAF members are increased by 50%
- two collaborative training and e-learning initiatives are undertaken
- a taxonomy training and e-learning programme for Europe is established

Communication, outreach and societal relevance

- five communications on natural history collections and associated research are published
- CETAF organizes four symposia on natural science issues
- two collaborative exhibitions on natural science research are produced
- two citizen science or crowd-sourcing initiatives are undertaken

We seek to achieve these targets by supporting the synergies within CETAF and between CETAF member institutions: building on 20 years of successful collaboration, advocacy for natural history collections and leadership in the natural sciences within and across Europe.

www.cetaf.org
A composite picture of visible and UV lights. It is exposed by flash on the left hand side of the picture and by 2 UV 365 nm on the right hand side.
Micro-CT scan of an *Agapantha* flower head.
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