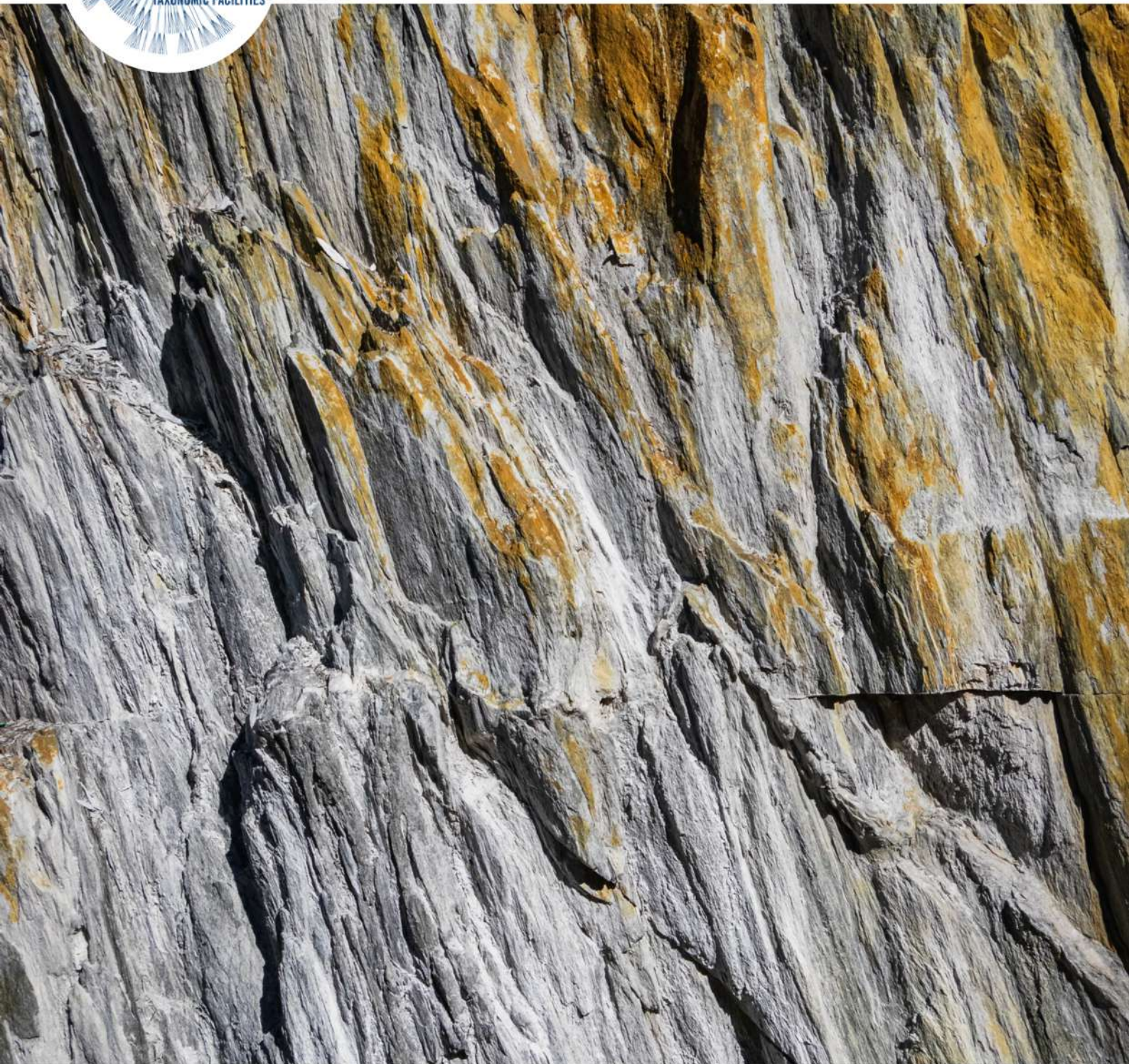


*Consortium of European Taxonomic Facilities*

# VIENNA STATEMENT

## ON THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH IN NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

29 NOVEMBER 2023



ONE COMMUNITY 25+ COUNTRIES 75+ INSTITUTIONS 5000+ SCIENTISTS 1.5 BILLION SPECIMENS



# Signatories

## AUSTRIA

Biology Centre of Upper Austria State Museums  
Natural History Museum Vienna

## BELGIUM

Meise Botanic Garden  
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences  
Royal Museum for Central Africa

## BULGARIA

Bulgarian Consortium: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,  
Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research  
Bulgarian Consortium: National Museum of Natural History

## CZECH REPUBLIC

Czech Consortium: Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague  
Czech Consortium: Institute of Botany, The Czech Academy of Sciences  
Czech Consortium: National Museum, Prague

## DENMARK

Natural History Museum of Denmark

## ESTONIA

Estonian Consortium: Estonian Museum of Natural History  
Estonian Consortium: Estonian University of Life Sciences  
Estonian Consortium: Tallinn University of Technology  
Estonian Consortium: University of Tartu Natural  
History Museum and Botanical Garden

## FINLAND

Finnish Museum of Natural History – LUOMUS

## FRANCE

National Museum of Natural History

## GERMANY

Bavarian Natural History Collections  
Natural History Museum Berlin  
Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin  
Senckenberg Society for Nature Research  
Stuttgart State Museum of Natural History  
NORe Consortium: Haus der Natur - Cismar  
NORe Consortium: LIB Leibniz Institute for Analysis of Biodiversity Change  
NORe Consortium: German Oceanographic Museum Stralsund  
NORe Consortium: Müritzzeum  
NORe Consortium: Museum of Nature and Environment Lübeck  
NORe Consortium: Natural History Museum Namu Bielefeld  
NORe Consortium: State Museum of Natural History Braunschweig  
NORe Consortium: State Museum Nature and Man Oldenburg  
NORe Consortium: Übersee – Museum of Bremen  
NORe Consortium: Zoological Collection of the University of Rostock  
NORe Consortium: Zoological Institute and Museum Greifswald  
NORe Consortium: Zoological Museum Kiel

## GREECE

Natural History Museum - University of Crete, Greece

## HUNGARY

Hungarian Natural History Museum

## ICELAND

Natural Science Museum of Iceland

## ISRAEL

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, National Natural History Collections  
The Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, Israel

## ITALY

Italian Consortium: Natural History Museum, University of Florence  
Italian Consortium: Natural History Museum of Genova  
Museum and Botanical Garden of the University of Pisa

## LUXEMBOURG

Natural History Museum of Luxembourg

## NETHERLANDS

Naturalis Biodiversity Center

## NORWAY

Natural History Museum - University of Oslo

## POLAND

Museum and Institute of Zoology - Polish Academy of Sciences

## SLOVAKIA

Slovakian Consortium: Comenius University- Faculty of Natural  
Sciences - Botany & Zoology  
Slovakian Consortium: Pavol Jozef Šafárik, University in Košice - Faculty of Science  
Slovakian Consortium: Plant Science and Biodiversity Centre,  
Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute of Botany  
Slovakian Consortium: Slovak Academy of Sciences - Institute of Zoology  
Slovakian Consortium: Slovak National Museum-Museum of  
National History

## SPAIN

CSIC. National Museum of Natural Sciences  
CSIC. Royal Botanic Garden of Madrid

## SWEDEN

Swedish Museum of Natural History  
Gothenburg Consortium: Department of Biology and Environmental  
Sciences, Gothenburg University  
Gothenburg Consortium: Gothenburg Botanic Garden  
Gothenburg Consortium: Gothenburg Natural History Museum

## SWITZERLAND

Geneva Consortium: Conservatory and Botanical Gardens of Geneva  
Geneva Consortium: Natural History Museum of Geneva  
Natural History Museum of Bern

## UNITED KINGDOM

Bristol Museum & Art Gallery  
London Natural History Museum  
Manchester Museum- The University of Manchester  
Natural History | National Museum Wales  
British Geological Survey | National Geological Repository  
National Museums Liverpool  
National Museums NI  
National Museums Scotland  
NHM Oxford University  
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh  
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew  
The Hunterian – University of Glasgow

**DRAFTED BY** the CETAF Executive Committee: Michelle Price,  
Ana Casino, Eva Häffner, Gila Kahila Bar-Gal, Gergely Babocsay  
and Erik Smets



The **CETAF community**, with 44 members from 25 European countries and Associated states that represent 77 natural history institutions, manages over 1.5 billion natural history specimens. This long-standing association embodies a distributed network of scientific facilities that encompass the geological and biological collections held in natural history museums, science centres and botanical gardens as well as their associated research scientists and research infrastructures. CETAF forms a cohesive and well-structured research community and provides an essential platform for exchange, collaboration and the development of joint initiatives in the natural sciences.

**Natural history collections** – a scientific asset that has been developed over the last 350 years – are an unparalleled source of diverse types of data on species, the evolution of life on Earth and the geological processes at work over deep time. The analysis, interpretation and synthesis of the scientific data contained in the diverse objects in natural history collections, and the transmission of scientific knowledge derived from research conducted on them, are core activities of natural history institutions and other research institutes that focus on **understanding biodiversity and geodiversity**. Unlocking data on biological and geological entities, the interpretation of the data derived from them, the creation of biodiversity and geodiversity knowledge and ensuring its equitable accessibility are essential components for our understanding of biological species, communities and habitats, in an evolutionary context, and on the geological entities and processes that have contributed to shaping our planet. Scientific discovery and innovation in the domains of biodiversity and geodiversity science are inseparable from natural history specimens, research infrastructures and the competencies of the institutions that house them.

Our community is well-positioned to develop the **CETAF Research Agenda for Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sciences in Europe** (CETAF RA) as an outcome of the CETAF Strategy and Strategic Development Plan 2015-2025. It will represent the vision of experts in the biodiversity and geodiversity sciences on the questions we need to target in order to understand the Earth and the past, present and future biological life on it as well as those that are pertinent at the European level. The questions raised by the community will be addressed with scientific excellence with the aim of strengthening the European Research Area (ERA). Our endeavours are built on top of a long history of effective and efficient cooperation and collaboration that has been created within CETAF that reaches across borders and disciplines. CETAF RA activities are to be based on FAIR data and metadata principles, anchored in the mobility criteria that ensure skill and knowledge transfer, sharing and enhancement, and based on the adoption and implementation of common standards, best practices and guidelines that have been produced by CETAF as a community resource. These actions and resources ensure that understandable, reliable biodiversity and geodiversity knowledge is made available to a wide range of potential users, from professionals to policymakers and scientists to citizens, in a format that is both understandable and reproducible.



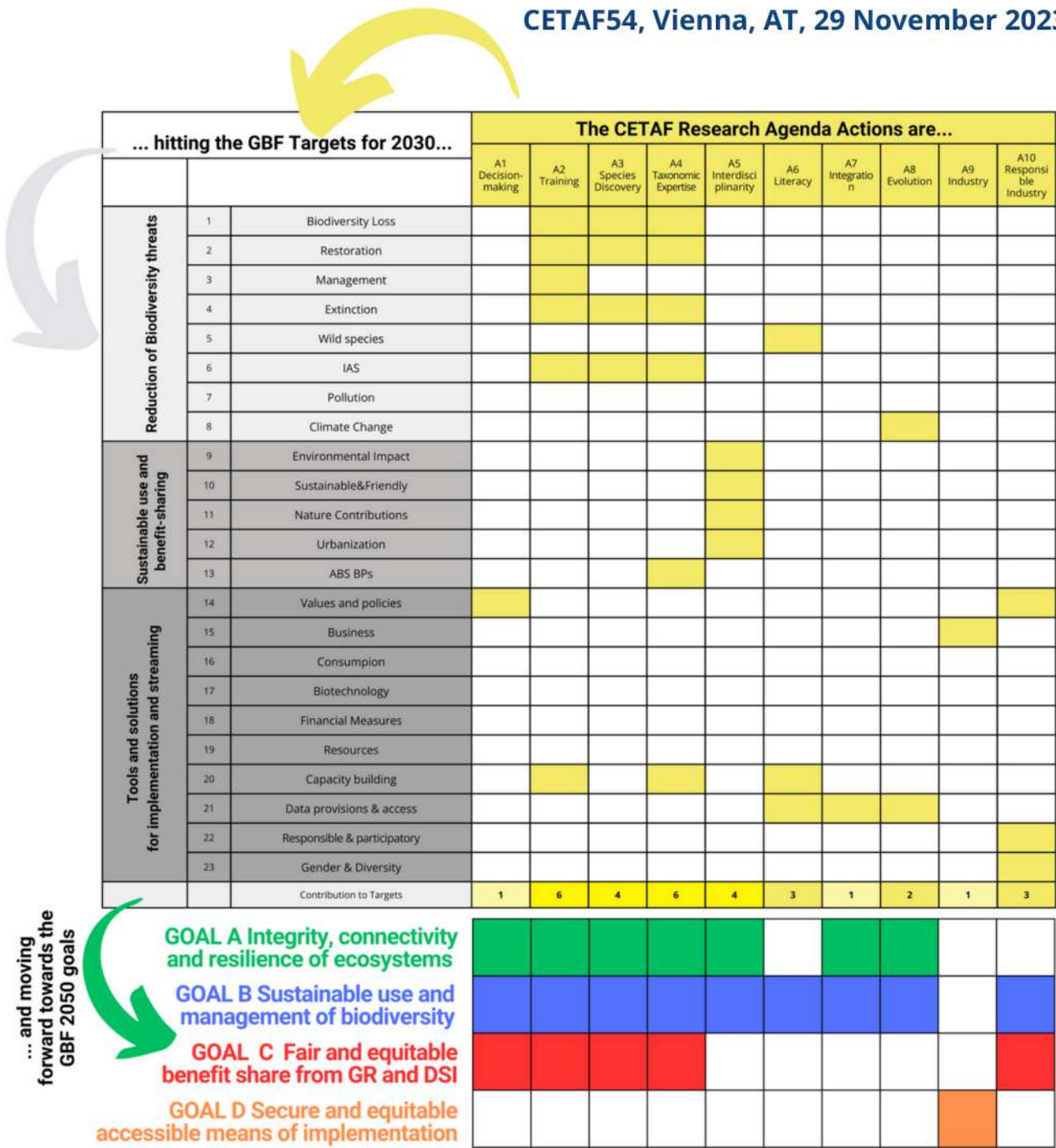
The CETAF RA provides **opportunities for the community to promote, coordinate and undertake research on natural history specimens** with the aim of contributing to the European Union's drive to promote scientific excellence, supporting its position as a world leader in science. The CETAF RA includes three key pillars, based on CETAF and its membership, of expertise, research facilities and data. These pillars contribute to the accomplishment of the ERA objectives of collaboration, innovation, and knowledge exchange across Europe. **Ten drivers for action** have been identified to be supported and implemented by 2030 through an array of activities undertaken by the CETAF community, based on FAIR data and metadata principles and scientific excellence. Jointly, outcomes will raise acknowledgement of the relevance of the natural history collections within Europe for research as well as their contribution to scientific advancement in the natural history sciences. More globally, research conducted in natural history institutions will have an **impact on societal challenges** and sustainability goals by unlocking the critical information needed to make informed decisions.

1. Integrate taxonomic knowledge into the **policy-science dialogue** in Europe to enable informed decision-making in the realms of biodiversity and geodiversity.
2. Enhance training and **capacity building in the natural sciences** through the maintenance and development of Europe's premier training platform, the CETAF Distributed European School for Taxonomy (DEST)
3. Accelerate **species discovery** and enable adequate monitoring and modelling of biodiversity across Europe through the support of taxonomy initiatives and funding mechanisms.
4. Increase **research capacity** in Europe to provide sustainable expertise in support of biodiversity and geodiversity research.
5. Promote **interdisciplinarity and integrative approaches** to improving the use of taxonomic information and knowledge, in an evolutionary or geological context, in related scientific fields.
6. Combat biodiversity and geodiversity **awareness disparity** through coordinated outreach activities, education programmes, exhibitions and social media campaigns.
7. Promote and channel the **integration** of specimen data and associated metadata into a harmonised system and distributed infrastructure.
8. Accelerate the study of the **evolution of European biodiversity** in order to predict the future impacts of human activities and climate change on species and ecosystems.
9. Explore opportunities with the **private sector** to identify potential innovation niches, focusing on sustainable technologies to reduce the negative impacts of human activities on biodiversity and geodiversity.
10. Implement **responsible research** principles and promote equality in research and research opportunities.



CETAF's active engagement at the science-policy interface and its provision of reliable and trusted information in the natural history domain to the user community provides a solid foundation for decision-making that in turn supports the transformative change needed to fulfil the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) that was adopted at the 15th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 2022.

CETAF54, Vienna, AT, 29 November 2023



The CETAF Research Agenda for Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sciences in Europe will contribute to the achievement of 18 out of the 23 Global Biodiversity Framework targets by 2030, and more broadly to the recognition and accomplishment of the overarching four GBF goals for 2050

Biologie  
zentrum  
Linz

naturhistorisches  
museum wien

Meise  
Botanic Garden

N natural  
sciences  
.be

AFRICA  
museum



INSTITUTE  
OF BOTANY CAS



NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM  
OF DENMARK  
UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN



Eesti Maaülikool  
Estonian University of Life Sciences

TAL  
TECH



LUOMUS  
FINNISH MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



SNSB  
Staatliche Naturwissenschaftliche  
Sammlungen Bayerns

for Nature  
MUSEUM FÜR  
NATURKUNDE  
BERLIN



SENCKENBERG  
world of biodiversity

NATURKUNDE  
MUSEUM  
STUTTGART

LIB Leibniz Institute for the Analysis  
of Biodiversity Change

Deutsches  
Meeresmuseum  
Stralsund

MÜRITZEUM

Museum für Natur  
und Umwelt | Lübeck

namu  
natur | mensch | umwelt

STAATLICHES  
NATURHISTORISCHES  
MUSEUM

natur  
und  
mensch



Zoologisches Museum  
Universität Göttingen

Zoologisches  
Museum  
Kiel

Natural  
History  
Museum  
of Crete  
UNIVERSITY OF CRETE

Hungarian  
Natural History  
Museum

NATTÚRU  
MINJASAFN  
ISLANDS  
Icelandic  
Museum of Natural  
History

המוזיאון  
הטבעי  
הלאומי  
המרכז  
הלאומי  
למחקר  
הטבעי  
National Natural History Collections  
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

מזמור  
הטבע  
הלאומי  
המרכז  
הלאומי  
למחקר  
הטבעי

Orto e Museo Botanico  
Università di Pisa  
1543

SISTEMA MUSEALE  
DI ATENE  
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI  
STUDI DI FIRENZE

MUSEO DI STORIA NATURALE  
"GIACOMO DORIA"

Kew  
Royal Botanic Gardens

Naturalis  
Biodiversity  
Center

Natural History  
Museum



FACULTY  
OF NATURAL SCIENCES  
Comenius University  
Bratislava



PLANT SCIENCE  
& BIODIVERSITY  
CENTRE SAS

Museum of  
Natural History  
University of Oxford

SLOVAK  
NATIONAL  
MUSEUM

250  
years of  
natural history  
collections

REAL JARDÍN  
BOTÁNICO

SWEDISH MUSEUM OF  
NATURAL HISTORY



BOTANISKA  
GOTHENBURG BOTANICAL GARDEN

GÖTEBORGS  
naturhistoriska  
museum

Conservatoire  
et Jardin botaniques  
Genève

mséum  
genève

NATUR  
HISTORI  
SCHES  
MUSEUM  
BERN

Royal Botanic Garden  
Edinburgh

National Museums  
Scotland

THE  
HUNTERIAN

Natural History  
Museum

national  
museum  
wales  
amgueddfa  
cymru

NATIONAL MUSEUMS NI

National  
Museums  
Liverpool

BGS  
British  
Geological  
Survey

MANCHESTER  
1824  
The University of Manchester  
Manchester Museum

british  
museum &  
art gallery



Consortium of European Taxonomic Facilities AISBL  
General Secretariat  
c/o Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences  
Rue Vautier 29 — 1000 Brussels, Belgium  
info@cetaf.org +32 (0)2 627 42 51  
www.cetaf.org

