

## PROTOCOL

*This protocol aims to establish the mechanisms of the  
Collection by those who would require it.*

### **1. SPECIMENS UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MEF Collection:**

In this section, specimens that are the responsibility of the MEF Collection are defined. The MEF Collection is responsible for conservation and storage of specimens, as this protocol specifies, and the specimens can be removed from the collection only under a temporary loan.

1.1 Deposited specimens: these are specimens that have been collected in the field (with their corresponding field or lot number) and deposited at the collection, but which still lack a collection number. Requisites to deposit specimens at the MEF Collection are the following:

1.1.a. To inform the corresponding curator about the intention of depositing the specimen in the Collection, to be evaluated by the curator.

1.1.b. Once approved by the curator, the researcher should write a note indicating the kind and amount of deposited specimen, along with any other relevant information. This note must be presented with its carbon-copy, and must be signed by the Collection Manager, the Curator, and the researcher who is depositing the specimens.

1.1.c. To attach the field report/chart with the field/lot numbers and details of the specimens (if applicable).

1.2. Catalogued specimens: these are specimens deposited at the Collection that have been assigned a collection number, and have been entered into the database along with their origin data.

- An effective entering means the specimen has been entered into the database and assigned a Collection number.
- All specimens entered in the Collection must have along the data given on its entering-card.

- Every specimen in the collection is identified with the Museo Paleontológico “Egidio Feruglio” acronym (MPEF), the Collection to which it belongs (AC for Living Collection, IC for Ichthyology, Pb for Paleobotany, PI for Invertebrate Paleontology and PV for Vertebrate Paleontology) and the collection number. For instance, a specimen belonging to the Vertebrate Paleontology collection will be identified as MPEF-PV 1200.

## 2. PROCEDURES PERFORMED TO MEF SPECIMENS

The corresponding curator must authorize every action taken with MEF specimens in advance. Please carefully read the following sections on the basic concepts for interventions, and instructions for studying specimens (via a visit to the collection, or loan of specimens). The non-fulfillment of any of these regulations will result in consequences, either immediate and/or in the future (see below).

### 2.1. Basic concepts

- Every person who requests or makes any procedure to specimens from MEF Collection must be a qualified professional with an institutional endorsement. Graduate and post-graduate students must be endorsed by their director or direct supervisor.
- Any intervention (e.g., preparation, sampling) or treatment (e.g., molds, copies) of the specimens during study or on loan must be detailed in a written form to the corresponding curator, as well as to the collection manager. It will be a prerogative of the corresponding curator to authorize or deny any of the procedures.
- Any sample taken from a specimen of MEF Collection remains part of the collection, thus belonging to the MEF Collection; therefore they must be returned after their study.
- If any damage to the specimens occurs during their handling and/or transportation from or to MEF, the researcher in charge of the loan will be responsible for declaring it (e.g., kind or circumstances of the damage) to both the responsible curator and the collection manager, who will decide the measures to be applied on the matter.
- Any specimen deposited in the MEF Collection that would be published, must be cited with its corresponding acronym and number (see above). To corroborate that the specimens have their corresponding acronym and number, authors are asked to

submit a list of the specimens to be published and/or a preprint to the curator and the collection manager.

- Once the specimen has been published, the author must send a digital copy of the work to the corresponding curator and the collection manager.
- Every image of MEF specimens taken (e.g., photographs, films, X-Rays, C.T. Scanning, surface exploration and any other sort) will only be used for research purposes, and must not be distributed except for the publication of the research work, and only under written approval and appropriate credits to MEF.
- If any surface exploration or C.T. Scanning is performed on specimens housed at MEF, their digital copies must be deposited in the institution as well.
- Authors are encouraged to send general photographs of the specimens to the curator and the collection manager as a contribution to the digitization of the MEF Collection.
- If there is any necessity to take images for any other purpose (not for research), previous authorization from the corresponding curator is necessary.

### **3. STUDY OF SPECIMENS AT THE COLLECTION:**

- Curators will be in charge of authorizing visits, study of specimens, and access to the collection's data.
- During their visit, visitors will be accompanied by the collection manager, or whomever he/she designates, and they must adapt to the Collection's protocols and working schedule.
- Any behavior from a visitor that violates the existing protocol and/or is inappropriate for the institution might lead to an end of the visit and/or banning of further visits or study of MEF specimens.
- Visits to the collection must be requested at least one month in advance, through MEF's website (Click [HERE](#)), and all documentation detailed therein must be attached.

### **4. LOAN OF SPECIMENS**

- Loans of specimens from the Collection must pass two approval stages, the first one

by the corresponding curator and the second by the Culture Office of Chubut, which is in charge of implementing the Provincial Law on Paleontological Heritage (Provincial Law XI-Nº11, statutory decree 1387/98).

- Loan requests must be made through the MEF website ([Click Here](#)), and all documentation detailed therein must be attached to begin the loan procedure.
- Loans will be effective for periods up to 12 months, with potential extensions under approval from the corresponding curator, as well as from the Culture Office of Chubut. Permanent loans are not permitted.
- In the case of type specimens, handling should be minimized. The priority is examination at the MEF, therefore, loans could occur only when a technique/method not available at the MEF would like to be applied to them. As a result, loan requests for type specimens must be appropriately justified and submitted to the corresponding curator.
- Both the curator and the collection manager will determine the most suitable shipping method for each specimen. In-person deliveries will be prioritized. In case of mail delivery, the requesting researcher will bear all packing, handling, and insurance expenses of the fossil.
- A person who has received a MEF specimen on loan cannot loan them to any third party.
- If a researcher in charge of a loan changes their working place, the curator must be notified in advance, and an endorsement from the new institution must be submitted.
- Corresponding curators reserve the right to end a loan, no matter how much time has passed, given prior, written justification. When facing an unusual and/or justifiable situation, the corresponding curator will submit a request for suspension to the Council of Curators, who will jointly resolve the suspension of the loan as well as any further measures to be taken on the matter. If necessary, this act will be declared to the Culture Office of Chubut.