



IGCP 637 Heritage Stone Designation: A UNESCO and IUGS project on natural stones

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IGCP 637 was approved in 2015 to facilitate establishment of a new international geological standard for building and ornamental stones. Formal international recognition of those natural stone types that have achieved widespread utilization in human culture is now underway and the term “Global Heritage Stone Resource” (GHSR) has been proposed for this designation. Stones that have been used in heritage construction, sculptural masterpieces, as well as in utilitarian (yet culturally important) applications are obvious GHSR candidates. In co-ordination with these aims the project has an associated role to promote the adoption and use of the GHSR designation. Consequently an interim list of potential GHSRs is maintained and a register of GHSR approved stones is being created. IGCP 637 also enhances the capacity of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) in the realm of dimension stone and geological standards as it is the first IUGS involvement in this subject. As a consequence, the largest known international grouping of dimension stone professionals has been established.

Within IGCP 637 a web page has been created at www.globalheritagestone.com, including information on the Working Group and also specific information on the evolution of the project. Several researchers were funded to attend the Heritage Stone working group activities, including researchers from Algeria, Malawi, India, Italy and Russia. We also have produced many publications, both as individual papers and special issues in journals included in the Journal Citation Reports. Monographs are being prepared at present. Hopefully, IGCP 637 will help to widen the circle of researchers interested in natural stones as part of our geoheritage.

Heritage Stone references: articles and special issues

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