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MissMarble - interactive Internet-based information system on archaeological marble

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Abstract

The aim of the MissMarble project was to develop an interdisciplinary data base management system for analytical results of marble occurrences (geological samples) and marble artefacts (archaeological and architectural objects). The system is characterised by user friendly interfaces for data entry, storage, continuous dissemination, and exchange. Furthermore, the system provides practical hints to understand the techniques applied on various samples and relate them to other literature data. The goal of the developed system is to provide help for data comparison, provenance analyses and to reveal missing analytical results. The various user groups have different access rights. Beside of the Editors, Contributors are a special user group who are allowed to enter their own analytical results. Conceptually we intend to manage the results of analyses of both type of material (archaeological and geological samples) together to handle the data in the same manner. It enhances the overlaps and the gaps in the analytical results defining the further analyses to be done. The data entries are organised in the following scheme: sample identification; methods applied on the sample; colour and fabric; mineralogical composition; textural properties; chemical and isotope geochemical composition; engineering physical properties. Dependencies on the sample type: (in case of geological sample) geological classification (age, facies); (in case of archaeological samples) archaeological description of the objects; probable provenance (if determined); conservational and restoration experience.

The system is designed so that further amendments and extensions are possible without data loss. It is updated and tailored according to the experience gathered during its use. To this end a pin board is used for user feedback. The system functionalities, data structure and data content are regularly revised according to the requirements of the users and data providers. However, the amendments should be done so that the changes do not hamper the comparisons with the previous data and applied methods.