VII. Sample Policy

The infrastructure to support sample deposition and archiving varies among OCE programs.

A. Marine Geological Samples

Principal Investigators are required to archive and curate sediment, core, and dredge samples and to make them available to other investigators as soon as possible but no later than two (2) years after the samples are collected. NSF anticipates that most sediment, core, and dredge samples will be archived at NSF-supported repositories listed in Appendix IV. Principal Investigators may choose to archive their materials at their home or alternative institution provided that the following conditions are met:

- Samples must be curated in an institutional facility that has a written and NSF-approved sample distribution policy.
- The facility must be open to all US investigators and metadata on samples must be available through an electronic data base, preferably web based.
- Metadata on samples, including where they are archived must be submitted to the appropriate National Data Center within 60 days post cruise.
- If samples are transferred to a new location for permanent archiving, the metadata at the National Data Center must be updated when the transfer takes place.

NSF supported sample repositories are listed in Appendix IV. The cognizant NSF Program Officer must approve any exceptions to this policy or the two-year exclusive use period in writing.

B. Biological Samples

Academic, private, and community facilities have traditionally been sites where biological materials are curated. Not all material can (or should) be accommodated in these facilities. PIs should archive voucher and type specimens as dictated by community standards and practices, as required by journals for publication, and as appropriate to support research results. Sharing of valuable sample material is highly encouraged and can be facilitated by providing metadata, indicating that samples are available early in the development of a research program.

For further information on sample repositories, see Appendix IV.