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## The Biology Curator

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to members as soon as it is available. Below is a copy of a letter to the BCG Chair which states the current position. So at the moment don't panic! General exemptions for all museums are in place and you will be informed before they run out!

For more information or application forms for permits or certificates contact the CITES enquiries desk on 0117 987 8749. We are hoping a representative of the Department will come and speak at the BCG AGM in Edinburgh in April 1998.

Sam Hallett  
BCG Committee, Bristol Museum

Jane Pickering  
BCG Chair

### LETTER TO BCG

**Department of the  
Environment, Transport  
and the Regions**

Bob Ford  
Wildlife Licensing and  
Registration  
Ref 8/07  
Tollgate House  
Houlton Street  
Bristol BS6 5AR

Dear Ms Pickering

#### **EC REGULATION 338/97 - SALE AND DISPLAY OF MUSEUM SPECIMENS**

1. I refer to your letter of 3 September to my colleague Ms Middleton about the above, which has been passed to me for reply.

2. As you may be aware, the sale of specimens listed in Annex A of the above Regulation is strictly controlled and museums will need an exemption from this Department if they wish to use or display such specimens for commercial purposes. However, special derogations from these prohibitions may be granted to such institutions where such specimens are being used for research or education purposes aimed at the conservation or preservation of the species concerned. Provision may also be made for the movement between certain registered scientists or institutions of non commercial loans, donations, and exchanges of herbarium specimens, preserved dried, or embedded museum specimens and live plant material for scientific study, using a special labelling system. The sale, etc of worked items acquired before 1 June 1947 is covered by a Community-wide derogation.

3. For the moment the commercial display of museum or herbarium specimens is covered by two general exemptions (GEX/18 and 19) which expire at the end of 1998. However, these will be reviewed at the end of this year and we will be writing to all the major institutions advising them what they need to do to apply for a certificate under these Regulations. Your assistance in forwarding this information to your members would therefore be much appreciated.

4. Detailed guidance on these matters is currently being prepared and I will forward this to you for information as soon as it is available. In the meantime if you have any further queries on this matter please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely  
R A Ford  
Global Wildlife Division

### Footnote

The DOE have agreed that Registration will serve as a means of identifying museums able to hold exemption certificates . . . thank heavens . . . and further details will be published soon! So definitely do not panic.

Jane Pickering

### Acquisition and Conservation Grants

What do a fossil starfish in York, an early geological map of the British Isles in Cornwall and a collection of lepidoptera in Luton have in common? The answer is that all three have benefited from the support of the MGC/Science Museum PRISM Grant Fund. PRISM can offer grants of up to £20,000 towards the cost of acquiring and/or conserving all kinds of industrial and scientific material, including biological, geological and palaeontological specimens, as well as archives and rare books.

The Fund is keen to encourage more applications from natural history collections, particularly for conservation projects. PRISM covers the whole of England and Wales. Museums that are registered with the Museums and Galleries Commission are automatically eligible for the Fund. Applications from other organisations, such as charitable trusts engaged in the preservation of historic material, record offices and archives can also be considered.

If you would like more details of the Fund, or if you think you have a project which would be eligible for support, please contact the Fund Manager, Simon Chaplin, or the Assistant Manager, Sam Evans, on 0171 938 8005, by email at [s.chaplin@nmsi.ac.uk](mailto:s.chaplin@nmsi.ac.uk), or by post at the following address:

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