

Sharing ichnofabrics: theory, design and implementation of an open-access ichnological database (ICHNOBASE)

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The ICHNOBASE project aims to create the first comprehensive database on trace fossils, allowing to organize, store, and retrieve large amounts of ichnological information (Fig.1). The structure of the project is based on a linked database design. According to this approach, the architecture of ICHNOBASE consists of three interconnected levels, corresponding to bibliographic, taxonomic and morphological data (Fig.2).

The first two levels refer to bibliographic data and taxonomic identification (diagnoses, synonymies,...), while the morphological level encompasses images of ichnotaxa, pictures of ichnofabrics and three-dimensional models achieved by laser-scanning. When fully developed, ICHNOBASE will allow users to interactively interrogate the database through an open-access web-interface, analyze its data and update it according to the users' privileges.

The goal of this work is not only to present the ICHNOBASE project, but also to encourage ichnofabric workers to take part into it by submitting relevant information (e.g. ichnofabric pictures, bibliographic information).

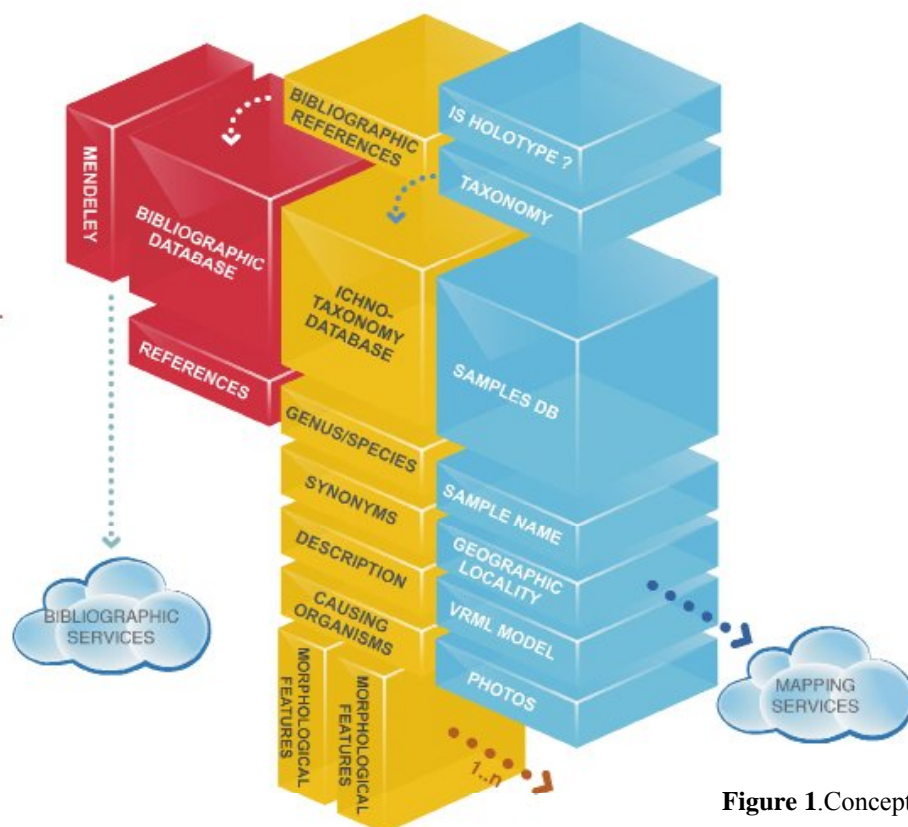


Figure 1. Conceptual structure of ICHNOBASE.

