NOTE: This categorization is intentional– what was the sample collected originally to represent? Recognizing that the sample might have multiple contexts of interest not recognized at initial collection.

Yes →
No ⇢

START

Extraterrestrial environment

Extraterrestrial environment

Anthropogenic environment

Atmosphere

Atmosphere

Research environment

Glacier present

Glacier environment

Sample of ice or water from a glacier, ice sheet, ice shelf, iceberg. Does not include various environments adjacent to glacier.

Experiment product

Experiment setting

e.g. synthetic materials

Laboratory or curation environment

e.g. lab blank

Currently occupied by humans

Active human occupation site

A place where humans are currently living or otherwise directly affecting the environment, e.g. farms, mines, waste disposal sites.

Site of past human activities

A place where humans have been and left evidence of their activity

Earth surface

Samples things at boundary between solid earth and hydrosphere or atmosphere; Includes samples representing things collected on the surface.

Subaqueous surface

In marine or brackish water body?

Marine water body bottom

Things collected on the surface at the bottom of a water body, e.g. dredge haul, manganese nodules. Includes benthic zone,

Lake, river or stream bottom

Active sediment from stream bed should be included in 'Regolith, sediment or soil horizon'

Subaerial surface environment

Sample is collected on the surface (e.g. leaf litter), or immediately below surface (zone of bioturbation). Include soil profile, regolith, and 'biomantle'

Water body

Subsurface fluid reservoir

Subsurface fluid reservoir

Feature of interest is the liquid or gas contained in a subsurface reservoir, e.g. oil, natural gas, CO_2, water, including liquids or gas from hydrothermal vents or hot springs.

Earth interior

Marine or brackish water body?

Marine water body

Include brackish and hypersaline water bodies in marine borderland wetlands, estuaries, coastal sabka.

Terrestrial water body

Sampled feature is river, stream, lake, salt lake, spring that is not directly interacting with marine water.

Earth interior

Specimen samples rock, sediment, or mineral that is within the Earth, below the zone of direct interaction with the atmosphere or hydrosphere

Suggest new category

iSamples Sampled Feature Decision Tree v. 20210703