The Heritage Stone Task Group (HSTG) has been established as a formal entity both of the “International Union of Geological Sciences” (IUGS) and “Commission C-10 - Building Stones and Ornamental Rocks” of the “International Association for Engineering Geology and the Environment “ (IAEG C-10).

HSTG leads the Global Heritage Stone (GHS) project, dealing with the establishment of a new formal international geological designation for those natural stone materials that have achieved widespread use and recognition in human culture. It also aims to formalize specific characteristics of a dimension stone in an internationally accepted context.

The GHS group commenced work in 2008, triggered by joining interests of people attending the IAEG Commission C-10 meeting at the 33IGC in Oslo. Currently, researchers from 35 countries are involved.

Since 2008 four circulars have been issued; several posters and communications have been presented at international conferences (Alicante 2010, Auckland 2010, Vienna 2011, Borba 2012, Brisbane 2012, Santiago de Compostela 2012); three editions of an ERASMUS Intensive Programme: Global Heritage and Sustainability: Geological, Cultural and Historical; two Final Year projects related to GHS (at the University of Salamanca)

The HSTG has also been accepted as an IUGS Task Group at the IUGS Executive Meeting in 2011, whilst Terms of Reference governing HSTG and the GHS designation were approved at the 2012 IUGS Executive Meeting.

International examples of potential Global Heritage Stones are shown below:

Perspectives for the near future:

- Possible links with any other networks or institutions dedicated to the same objectives. Such is the case of the Spanish network CONSTRUROCK, dedicated to develop research on Natural Stone as a constituent of the Architectonic and Historic Heritage as well as new construction.
- Preparation and publication of draft GHS citations. A paper on Portland Stone and research on Welsh Slate, both from the United Kingdom, and Podpeč Limestone from Slovenia are advancing. For further information, visit: www.globalheritagestone.org

If you are interested in the work of HSTG, please take a brochure and add your name to the increasing list of HSTG correspondents.