Rocks were used since the beginning of human history and are also one of the best preserved materials in archaeological sites, especially those from Palaeolithic times. Their study is essential to knowing more about human behaviour and the relationships human groups had with their environment, in particular as concerns raw material procurement. Provenance studies have historically focused on the analysis of lithic artefacts and potential sources using visual and petrographic methods. Some decades ago, however, the development of geochemical methods to characterize lithic artefacts and potential sources began to be more established and studies using one or several of these methods have constantly increased since that time.

This session will focus on any geochemical methods that may be used to characterize lithic artefacts as well as potential sources. We will focus our attention on the comparison of different geochemical methods with the aim of discussing their applicability, their potential as well as their limitations. Proposals concerning preferably more than one geochemical method applied to characterize any type of stone artefact (e.g., tools, beads, pigments) will be considered.