

Method, handling unit and stand for acquiring a sample from a seabed top layer**ABSTRACT**

Handling unit equipped to acquire a sample from a seabed top layer by retracting and retrieving a piston corer holding the sample from a seabed, and to remove the sample from the piston corer, wherein the handling unit is a stand-alone unit arranged for mounting on a vessel and for retrieval of a sample from the piston corer while it remains vertical. The handling unit comprises a container with dimensions and/or lifting points and/or connections as provided on a standard sea freight container. It also comprises a lifting device which is foldable out of and back into a container of the handling unit.

FIGURE 1