



Geodiversity and Geoethics: added values for UNESCO Geoparks

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Obstacles to the international recognition of a UNESCO Geopark are not limited at finding well representative geosites of the local geoheritage. Even the best strategy for sustainable geotourism could be inadequate to ensure its success of a proposal, if it is not permeated with ethical values, in the sense of the term introduced by Aristotle to indicate analyses and reflections on human operating behaviour. An ethical approach is therefore related to the modes of both acquisition of knowledge on geodiversity, and to its disclosure, essential to achieve truly collaborative management of local geoheritage.

For successful Geoparks we are therefore proposing to develop an Ethic of Geodiversity, which allows to:

- acknowledge and improve the awareness geodiversity from the experience of everyday life: becoming aware of the responsibility of man in the earth resources management, recognizing the need to reconcile the geosciences with the human sciences, in particular ethics;
- locate Geodiversity and geoheritage sites. To achieve this goal we need to develop a scientific method that analyzes geoheritage components in space and time;
- define Geodiversity according to scientific literature and established methodologies, and;
- use appropriate images, maps, documents, models for representing it;
- evaluate geoheritage from a scientific point of view;
- conduct scientific activities with the recognition of certain ethical rules.

Similarly it is proposed to apply the concept of Geoethics (<http://www.iapg.geoethics.org>) to facilitate the balanced management of the (cultural, political, social) diversity of a Geopark. But to talk about Geoethics we must to:

- know and recognize it: to become aware of the responsibility of man in the management of Earth resources, recognizing the need to reconcile the geosciences with the human sciences, in particular ethics;
- locate it: to find a proper geoethical approach to goals, methods and results of Science;
- define it: according to scientific and epistemological foundations (bibliographical references, methodological approaches and experience of authors of the past);
- codify it: uniquely define a code of ethics for being explicated;
- fully apply geoethics: identifying methodologies relating to scientific research, land management, teaching and dissemination;
- make it easier through a simple language and a shared knowledge to the greatest number of people (use of social media, involvement of public institutions);
- make it accessible, for example through the provision of geoheritage for the disabled.

In conclusion: an ethical path for building Geoparks can spread geodiversity awareness through different cultures. More: a geoethic approach to geodiversity can reconcile the diversities (cultural, political, social) of a territory, also contributing to promotion of solidarity and peaceful coexistence, and to increase the quality of life of local populations.