

Geodiversity - A strategic concept in geological outreach

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Going back some 100-150 years, geology was a popular new science with a prominent place in society. It found itself in the scientific, cultural and religious debates and caught a huge amount of interest among the general public. Today geology is of central importance for society related to all kinds of industrial and agricultural resources etc, but its position in the public is not on the level this importance indicates. Perception of geology seems quite often to be related to environmental issues of the industrial society such as destruction of nature, production of non-renewable energy.

Geology should take its rightful place in a wider context than we often see today and especially increase its relevance in important fields such as land use planning, nature conservation and landscape strategies. All these fields are of high importance in the modern society, they engage people and have political attention. It is important for geology to be visible in all fields of society and it is vital to be so also within management and policies related to land use planning and nature management.

Main recent developments within geoconservation include the breakthrough of the term geodiversity and the acceptance of terms like geoheritage and geocnservation alongside biodiversity. This is a trend that has been accepted by the world leader in nature conservation - IUCN. It forms the basis for geology to make significant contributions within nature management and broadens the perspective of how we deal with and understands nature. Geodiversity have the potential as a concept to bridge the gap between traditional use of natural resources and management of immaterial nature values. It put geology in position to cooperate along side biology for the best of nature as a central part of ecosystem services and is a valuable element in our understanding of landscape strategies.

In this way it opens up for increased geological outreach in a field were geology has been almost marginalised.

References:

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