



Geoethics in communication of science: the relationship between media and geoscientists

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In the urgency to reconsider the relationship between humankind and planet Earth, in the light of the issues of a sustainable economic and technological development, the defence against natural risks and climate change, the themes addressed by Geoethics are becoming central to the scientific debate. A growing number of scientists begins to consider this discipline as an effective tool to increase, in the scientific community and society as a whole, the awareness of local and global environmental problems that humanity is facing.

Geoethics deals with the ethical, social and cultural aspects related to geosciences. It was born with the goal of orienting humankind toward a balanced relationship with the planet and providing references and guidelines to find socio-economic solutions compatible both with the respect for the environment and the protection of nature and land. Geoethics addresses fundamental issues such as the exploitation of geo-resources, the management of natural hazards, the defence of the geoheritage as a common value to be protected and enhanced. But above all geoethics aims at raising in the community of geoscientists the awareness of their responsibilities in conducting the scientific and professional activity.

In order to extend this awareness to the whole civil society and also to foster the recognition of the usefulness of geosciences in daily life, it is important to develop a proper communication of the geological knowledge, that is capable to contribute substantially to the construction of the social knowledge of human communities.

But nowadays what is the role played by geosciences in the scientific mass culture? Are geosciences part of the collective cultural heritage? Do the publishing world and media in general offer an adequate space to geosciences? Through the analysis of case studies, the authors will highlight the critical features of the relationship between geoscientists and the media system, their different languages, times and perspectives that characterize the geological community and the media world, as well as the most common mistakes made in the communication of geosciences. And as far as the authors are concerned, they will try to suggest some actions, useful to make more functional the relationship between these two separate fields, with the goal of bringing citizens closer to geosciences and increasing the awareness of the individual and collective responsibility towards the planet Earth.