



## **Geoheritage promotion of Thonon-les-Bains (Fr) region by the development of a geotourism product**

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Geoheritage promotion of Thonon-les-Bains (Fr) region by the development of a geotourism product

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Since 2012, the Chablais region (only in France) has acquired the Geopark label. This Geopark contributes to sustainable economic development of the region through geotourism. Moreover, the three Chablais (figure 1) are concerned by an Interreg IV program since 2009 (program of cooperation between European countries). The main objective of this program is to enhance the heritage resources (nature, culture and lifestyle of the region) ([www.interreg-francesuisse.org](http://www.interreg-francesuisse.org)). Therefore, the geotourism offer in this area just waiting to expand.

The geodidactics models like the simplification of the scientific content are essential for geoheritage promotion, because this content must be available to a wide audience, allowing thereby the geoheritage recognition. The geotourism permits to apply different models (Cayla et al. 2010, Sellier, 2009) through a wide range of geotourism products, like guide, educational panels, thematic hikes and recently developed, new medias (website, smartphone applications).

A geotourism product is based on four areas of questioning and was developed by Martin et al. (2010): (1) site (choice of sites to be valued), (2) public (a family public, good example of heterogeneous public), (3) contents (reasoning on geodidactics models) and (4) support (smartphone application). These four areas are very fundamental before the creation of any geotourism product. These reflexions aim to obtain a mediation product that integrates into geotourism offer of a region and contributes to its development and meets public expectations.

New media, such as digital media – smartphone, tablets, website – become geotourism products more and more attractive. In addition, the necessary technologies to develop new media help to integrate a high interactivity potential with the public and thus get their attention. The architecture of this geotourism product is based on the new application developed by the Institute of Geography and sustainability, and the Bureau Relief. One of the thematic itineraries is focused on the discovery of different natural resources by explaining their formation and their use by society, allowing to enhance a selection of geoheritage. The itinerary is entitled: In the footsteps of the exploitation of natural resources... a history of water and rock.

Keywords: Promotion, geoheritage, geotourism products, public, geodidactics models.

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