

Geoethic and Geoheritage

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The Italian landscape well represents the dualism risk / resource which characterizes -with its contradictions- the whole Italian country, offering continuous questions to the other parallel relation: defense / management. That is true, particularly referring to those cases where the natural environment is a high source of risk for the population that lives on the concerned territory, at the same time lending it an added value due to the beauty expressed by the shapes of the landscape.

Knowing the environment in which each one lives, as a member of communities and society, is an essential process, even for the same surviving; the complex path towards knowledge was characterized, at various times, from different approaches, conditioned by the availability of tools and resources, as well as by the particular historical, social, political phases. The most important steps fit the skills of the geologist: the survey on the evolution of the phenomena, their determination in time and space, their description, presentation and analysis. Now is finally emerging the need of approaching to the territorial knowledge considering our planet as a whole: so the interaction between man, his social forms and the physical environment becomes the core of the research.

These themes of shared knowledge, awareness, perception of risk, are still open; the prevention practices are still a goal dramatically distant: it is therefore essential to disseminate scientific heritage, implementing processes of communication, using new codes and strategies, able to make individual / community / society aware of the territorial reality, in order to trigger such behavior, consistent and shared. The strategies of participatory democracy are based on these essential prerequisites, aiming to involve the population in the policies of management and development of the area as well as in the prevention practices.

This proposal is oriented to suggest some new links between society and its territory, thanks to the use of tools such as GIS and GIS technology, useful to understanding both of the natural heritage and the fragility of the Italian territory, thus allowing people to get the awareness of what a territory is, changing mentality and behaviors in a better way .

New strategies are mandatory: some experiences have been performed in the aim to reaching a wide public, proposing scientific information about the geological settings of an area, particularly the geological heritage, during the stages of the Giro d'Italia, the cycling race that crosses every year the whole Italian country. Further projects are now starting, aimed to communicating the Geoheritage characterizing the scenes of the major TV series. The results of such experiences are expected as a long term process outcomes, but some interesting parameters have been identified, as well as new ways in the scientific communication styles.

All these projects and objectives can be considered as a concrete expression of a Geo-ethical way in researching. The common goal -to the research world and the whole society - should aim to overcome the usual, sterile activities of mere compensation of damages and related financial loss, aiming to arrive at a shared conscious knowledge, an essential basis for starting concrete actions of prevention, mitigation and recovery of the geoenvironmental risk, in reciprocal interaction and integration.