



The Cape Town Statement on Geoethics

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The interest of geoscientists in (geo)ethical aspects of geoscience knowledge, education, research and practice is rising and today geoethics has a significant visibility. This prominence is the result of hard work done in the last 4 years by the IAPG – International Association for Promoting Geoethics (<http://www.geoethics.org>), a not-for-profit, multidisciplinary, scientific network (with more than 1350 members in 107 countries) established for widening the discussion and creating awareness about problems of ethics applied to the geosciences.

IAPG has produced a strong conceptual substratum on which to base the future development of geoethics, by clarifying the meaning of the word Geoethics, formalizing its definition, and identifying a framework of reference values on which the geoscience community can base more effective codes of conduct. IAPG members have published numerous books and articles in peer reviewed international journals, and organized scientific sessions to bring geoethics at the most important geoscience conferences. Geoethical issues have been included in the European project ENVRI-Plus, dedicated to the environmental and solid Earth research infrastructures. Moreover, the most prestigious geoscience organizations around the world now recognize geoethics as an important issue that warrants attention.

This success was confirmed by the high quality of contents and the large participation of scientists in the 6 technical sessions and single panel session on geoethics organized by IAPG at the 35th IGC – International Geological Congress, held in 2016 in Cape Town (South Africa), with the cooperative work of different geoscience organizations (IUGS-TGGP – Task Group on Global Geoscience Professionalism; GSL - Geological Society of London; EFG - European Federation of Geologists; EGS - EuroGeoSurveys; AGI – American Geosciences Institute; AGU – American Geophysical Union, and AAWG – African Association of Women in Geosciences).

IAPG considers the 35th IGC the scientific event that opened a new phase for Geoethics and for the Association. In order to celebrate this passage, the IAPG has produced the "Cape Town Statement on Geoethics" (CTSG), a document recognized as the result of an international effort to focus the attention of geoscientists on the development of shared policies, guidelines, strategies and tools, with the long-range goal of fostering the regular adoption of ethical values and practices in the geoscience community. The final document (available at <http://www.geoethics.org/ctsg>) sums the values, concepts, and contents developed in the first 4-year activity of IAPG, giving a perspective for the future development of geoethics.

This presentation illustrates the content of the “Cape Town Statement on Geoethics”, that is now supported officially by several geoscience organizations.