



On the necessity of making geoethics a central concern in eduethics world-wide

David Crookall (1) and Pimnutcha Promduangsri (2)

(1) Université Côte d'Azur, France (crookall.consulting@gmail.com), (2) Lycée Auguste Renoir, France

Our planet is in dire need of ethical behaviour by all its citizens. However, recent research has highlighted the increasingly dangerous impact of human activity on life systems of the planet. CO₂ emissions continue to rise (400+ppm, end 2016), methane emissions are accelerating. The Arctic is about 28°C above the normal average. Average global temperature is reaching 1° above normal. Air, water and ground pollution levels are reaching devastating levels. Resource depletion is accelerating. Yet most governments still beat the drums of growth, while hypocritically humming the tune of sustainability. Humans are overshooting the carrying capacity of the planet; as attested by top scientists and organizations. Earth overshoot day in 2016 was 8 August; we need 5½ earths to live like Australians.

Of course, efforts are being made globally and locally to combat impending disaster and to encourage more respectful behaviour towards the planet and its life. Individuals include scientists, writers, film makers, journalists. World-wide organizations include Climate Literacy and Energy Awareness Network (CLEAN), the Climate Change Education Partnership Alliance, the International Geoscience Education Organisation (IGEO), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). A key organization is the International Association for Promoting Geoethics (IAPG) because it focuses firmly and explicitly on the key issue of ethics, which few others appear to do. One might argue that the general lack of major progress in environmental care is rooted to a large degree in the world-wide lack of strong adherence to geoethical principles.

Learning to behave ethically needs far more than knowledge about energy imbalance, pollution, acidity, ice melt, etc. It needs people to learn, and grow up learning, about what is right and wrong in regard to each aspect of our personal earth citizen lives. That needs nothing short of a revolution in educational practice for all schools across the globe – a tall order, and an intergenerational process.

Our worry is: Can 'we' educate sufficient numbers of (younger) voyagers on our spaceship Earth in time – in order for a fully informed humanity to guide it towards becoming a healthy environment, fit for the wellbeing of humans, animals and plants. It seems to us that the IAPG is in a unique position to encourage this.

The most powerful way to mitigate climate change, pollution, etc is to make geoethics the core of education across the globe. In our presentation, we will emphasize the need to boost strong eduethics, so that the positive effects are passed on from generation to generation. The presentation will outline this rationale and then suggest ways in which we might wish to make eduethics the companion of geoethics, to encourage them to advance hand in hand. We hope to start a process of reflecting on how the IAPG, its members, educational communities and society can together move towards education programmes that encourage ethically sound behaviour individually and collectively. The aim would be for informed and ethical citizens to vote for governments that put the planet and its citizens at the centre of their preoccupations.