



Geomojis – a symbolic alphabet to communicate Earth Sciences

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Communicating geosciences requires that a lay audience (as opposed to us geologists) grasp concepts that can be very far out of their range of normal experience. Yet all of us, specialists and non-specialists alike, live in a geological environment and can use our surroundings to more fully understand the world in which we live. We think that geoheritage has a huge roll in helping people gain this link, but also that the gap between people's everyday existence and their surroundings has grown so large, that a special effort is needed to bring this back. One way to increase people's awareness is by symbolism. This works for example, with hazard symbols, road signs, sport strips and can also work for natural features. We have recently produced a global framework for geology (see Global and Planetary Change), and we realised that this already has some symbolism that can assist in increasing geo-awareness. So here, we start to lay out an alphabet of geological symbolism. And we invite feedback on this proposal, that needs to be tested globally to check how it works. These geo-glyphs, or geomojis can be used in various ways, such as to frame a geological hazard, a geological resource, to indicate the provenance of a purchased article. At geological sites, outcrops and viewpoints, symbols could be placed to fix rapidly a person's sense of place in their geological environment. If we can agree a set of clear 'Geomojis' that are standardised across the geosciences, then they will become commonplace in usage and ultimately be recognised more routinely by the community. We plan a questionnaire for EGU participants and Viennese society that will accompany this presentation and which will form part of a more global effort to consolidate this geo-alphabet as a way of communicating Earth sciences.