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Geoscientists as social and political actors

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Geoscientists are at the fare front of informing on and supporting society to face global anthropogenic changes, at all levels. This requires making excellent science, in the full awareness of one's role towards society.

Research integrity and professionalism are the bedrock on which the individual geoscientist can develop a deep sense of responsibility and build a functional science-society relationship, being conscious of the ethical obligations that this implies.

It is precisely within the dyad individual-society that the utmost ethical and social value of the activity of geoscientists is achieved, as in this context they assume at the same time the dual role of moral subjects and social actors, and consequently can realize the meaning of being active and responsible subjects in the service of the human beings.

In order to achieve this goal, each geoscientist should individually strengthen the perception of being: (a) a moral subject, therefore an agent consciously responsible for the own conduct and the ethical and social implications of own actions; (b) a social and political subject, who actively contributes to the construction of the idea of society, to the vision of its future, to its cultural and economic development, including the creation of a knowledge society based on the democratic value of shared responsibility.

Within the ethical framework of reference in which geoscientists are called to act, there is an indispensable prerequisite, that makes possible the responsible action and allows behaving ethically: individual freedom.

A cohesive, motivated, and responsible international geoscience community can assure a safe operating space to geoscientists and encourage them to follow best practices and ethical behaviours while conducting their activities, to qualify their work and recognize the value of a responsible action to counter abuses, intimidations and political pressures.

This cannot simply be entrusted to codes of ethics and/or conduct, but demands an intense ethical training for the geoscientists, that shows them the numerous circumstances and difficulties that each one might be called upon to face during the scientific and professional career.

