Applied geoethics: CITI199's essays from the Austral University of Chile

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Geoethics is a term that describes the internal knowledge of values which must be reflected in the interaction with other people and with the physical and biological environment that surrounds us.

When talking about ethics or specifically geoethics, exact definitions are sought which always seem to be short and very difficult to write in a sentence. One of the reasons may be is that it is about minimizing a life process to a noun, adjective or adverb. "It is a life process," is an awareness of the maximum expression of that part that we call human, internal, which maintains a balanced posture. This self-awareness is essential since it allows to relate to the environment (including peers) in the same way, tolerant, dignified, respectful humanly and environmentally speaking.

In 2020, during the pandemic, we have undertaken a challenge at our University by teaching a course on Geoethics in Earth Sciences (CITI199). This course was designed following the general guidelines of IAPG. The adaptation to the Chilean reality was given by the same students. After assimilating the bases of ethics, values and moral principles, through the interventions of anthropologists, sociologists, geographers and native peoples, we have generated 2 unpublished activities in Chile, a student survey on the state of knowledge of geoethics in the School of Geology and applied the geoethical foundations in the daily life of Chile.

In this series of presentations we report the results and analysis of the survey and recommendations to continue with the process of offering the university community the value of having an initial geoethical position in professional development. Later in the session, 4 situations in which society interacts with the environment from a geoethical perspective are evaluated and analyzed: 1) degradation and use of soils, 2) massive production of exotic salmon, 3) use of fresh water and 4) privatization of the common heritage of humanity in international waters.