

## GEOITALIA 2011

### **GEOETHICS AND GEOLOGICAL CULTURE:**

#### **the contribution of Earth Sciences to a cultural renewal of society**

The session on Geoethics, held in Turin (Italy) within the GeoItalia Congress (September 19-23, 2011) and convened by Dr Silvia Peppoloni, who works at the Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia (Rome), was a great success.

The session started with a very interesting interview of Dr. Peppoloni to the famous sociologist Prof. Franco Ferrarotti (University of Rome) about the social implications of geological research and practice, and continued with an introductory talk by Dr. Ian Lambert, the Secretary General of the 34th International Geological Congress (Brisbane - August 2012), invited by the President of Geoitalia for a Plenary Lecture. In his speech Dr Lambert talked about ethical aspects related to geo-resources management, suggesting to the audience cues of reflections.

After his inaugural address, presentation of papers began. There were 2 keynotes (in video), 4 invited lectures, 35 speakers in total (including not only geologists, but also philosophers, social scientists, geophysicists, seismologists, psychologists, naturalists, anthropologists, freelancers, technicians of the Public Administration, etc.).

Among others, the interview to Prof. Giulio Giorello (one of the most prominent Italian philosophers of science) aroused much interest. He praised the important contribution of Earth Sciences to major cultural changes occurred in history and gave ethical and epistemological references on which to base the research on Geosciences. He also talked about the precautionary principle, the uncertainty concept in the Earth Sciences field and the probability calculation as tool for the evaluation of natural risks, with a final reflections on the relationship between politicians and citizens and on attitudes towards technology.

Other treated topics were: sustainability, geo-resources exploitation, Geodiversity, natural hazards, property of the subsoil data, scientific dissemination, relationships among geoscientists, mass media and politics, evaluation criteria of geological researches, didactics in schools, cultural and social aspects in the territory management.

The session hosted two important international speakers from the Russian Federation: Prof. Ludmila Ryzhova, Professor at the State Geological-Explorative University of Moscow, and Dr Nataliya Nikitina, head of the Geoethical Section within the Russian Geological Society.

Thanks to the large number of participants and the high value of the contents presented by the speakers, an interesting debate was developed, that highlighted the desire of the Italian scientific community to deepen the themes of Geoethics, being aware that the geoscientists activity is above all a service to the society, when it is performed with scientific skills, professional ethics and intellectual honesty.

In her closing speech Dr Silvia Peppoloni expressed gratitude to Dr Ian Lambert for his invigorating presence and thanked the delegates for their contributions and discussions. She also mentioned the Meeting of International Section on Geoethics at Mining Příbram Symposium (Czech Republic - October 10-14, 2011), the session "Geoethics and natural hazards" at the General Assembly of European Geosciences Union (Vienna - April 22-27, 2012), and the Geoethics Symposium under the Theme 2 at the 34th IGC (Brisbane - August 5-10, 2012), as important future events on Geoethics.