

GEOETHICS NEWS

December 2009



PF 2010

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the AGID Working Group for Geoethics and as Convenors of the international Section GEOETHICS at the Mining Pribram Symposium we send you our best wishes for the New Year 2010.

We are looking forward to get also news from you and to continue in work with you. Any your help in promoting the ideas of GEOETHICS will be highly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Vaclav Nemec, AGID vice-president, and **Lidmila Nemcova**

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THE MINING PRIBRAM SYMPOSIUM

The international section **GEOETHICS**

October 12-16, 2009 - Příbram, Czech Republic

Conveners: Vaclav Nemec, Lidmila Nemcova

THE FINAL REPORT

History

The international section on **GEOETHICS** was organised at **Příbram** - the Czech town 60 km SW from Prague in a region with long famous mining activities (recently stopped) going back to the 13-th century. Since early 1960s' regular annual symposia have been organised in Příbram dealing with various problems of not only mining activities but also with specialised sections on geology of mineral deposits and many other disciplines. Regular meetings on geoethics take place here usually every second year since 1992. The 2009 meeting was for the third time organised jointly with the meeting of the **Working Group for Geoethics** established by the Association of Geoscientists for International Development (**AGID**) in 2004.

Statistics

A good response was obtained from 13 states in the spring of the year 2009. Finally 18 colleagues from 6 countries of Europe and Asia were present (Germany, Italy, Japan, Poland, Russia, and the Czech Republic), 5 newcomers among them. Four accompanying persons were registered.

In fact the number of participants was lower than in previous years – in some cases because of strictly personal problems (illness etc.) but mostly for actual economic crisis (about 10 regular visitors cancelled their arrival to Příbram already in the summer period, four other only a few days prior to the symposium). Fortunately the technical level and quality of the program were not influenced by this fact.

Altogether 19 papers have been published in the Proceedings volume of the section (co-)authored by colleagues from 12 countries (including also Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Canada, Spain and UK). Sixteen contributions had oral presentations followed by high level discussions. The total number of all contributions to geoethics at the Příbram forum in the course of last 17 years - written by authors from 25 countries - has reached the number 258.

The presentations were classified in one of four thematic groups:

GA: General Problems of Geoethics

GB: Geoethics and Mineral Resources

GC: Geoethical Problems in the Environmental Protection

GD: Planetary Aspects of Geoethics

Each group spent one half-day session. The closing session was focussed on discussing especially problems how to continue in promoting geoethical ideas and how to establish appropriate useful structures. It has been approved to continue in the future (with the 2 years interval) in the traditional meetings at Pribram and to put all effort to promoting the existing network for geoethics in the frame of the AGID structures.

The participants appreciated the friendly efficient atmosphere as well as other social events including the excursion to the city of Pisek (huge floods in 2002, interesting regional museum – the director accompanied the group) and a small village of Vysoka with the Memorial of Antonin Dvorak where the last living grandson of this famous Czech composer had made it possible to visit also the usually inaccessible private house of the family showing there many souvenirs of extreme importance.

(Contributed by Dr. Vaclav Nemec; lidmila.nemcova@quick.cz .

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OTHER EVENTS IN 2009

Italy (September 2009): GEOETHICS Session at the 7th Forum of Earth Sciences in Rimini

The 7th Forum of Earth Sciences, one of the most important Conferences on Geosciences in Italy, included - for the first time in its Program - a special session dedicated to Geoethics, under cooperation of Forum organizers and AGID. A large number of papers were contributed for this session, which exceeded the expectations of organizers. This helped in the development of discussions and interaction on the ethical issues, which must necessarily be associated with any activity related to the Earth Sciences in Italy. Although this was the first formal discourse on Geoethics in the country, Italian geoscientists have been already working on various issues related to the subject and have presented their papers at the 33rd International Geological Congress in Oslo (August 2008) and at the 9th International Conference in Moscow (April 2009). Due to the earthquake in L'Aquila, the capital of Abruzzo region in Italy, just a few days before the Moscow meeting, the delegates had also an opportunity to discuss Geoethics in relation to disaster management.

The session at Rimini included papers on topics such as

- (1) Elements that characterize the relationship between scientific research and mass media,
- (2) Using geothematic exhibitions as an education method for a sustainable environmental development,
- (3) Reliability of geological models and the responsibility in their interpretation,
- (4) Relationship between scientific research, public opinion and policy choices, Importance of ethics in rationalizing the use of resources in a country, and
- (5) Ethical aspects concerning the organization and funding of the research in the field of disaster management.

The presence of Dr. Vaclav Nemec, AGID Vice President and one of the pioneers in the field of Geoethics, for inaugurating the Session was a very encouraging factor for the delegates. Messages from other experts such as Dr. S. D. Limaye, Past-President of AGID, were also received giving a truly international flavor to the Session. The Session concluded with an emphasis on the individual and social responsibility of every geologist in promoting Geoethics, striking a balance between the “needs of national economy for developing geological resources” and the “environmental protection.”

(Contributed by **Dr Silvia Peppoloni**, Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia, Italy, silvia.peppoloni@ingv.it .)

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Bangladesh (October 2009): Geoscience for Global Development (GeoDev)

The GeoDev conference, held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 26th to 31st October 2009, was jointly organised by the Association of Geoscientists for International Development (AGID), Bangladesh Geological Society (BGS), Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GSB), International Geoscience Education Organization (IGEO) and the International Union of Geosciences (IUGS). Dhaka, a bustling city of 12 million inhabitants and an estimated 600,000 bicycle rickshaws, was a vibrant site for this, the third AGID and GSB sponsored international geosciences conference to be held in Bangladesh during the last ten years.

At the outset of the conference a handy “pocket-sized” volume containing the 141 abstracts received was distributed to all participants. In all, 130 scientific papers had been submitted in advance of the Conference with many from geoscientists from a total of 43 countries other than the host country. These scientists, many from developing countries in Africa and Asia, were well represented at the conference though, inevitably, financial constraints prevented some of the intending overseas participants from travelling to Bangladesh. Parallel scientific sessions were run over two days covering three main themes as follows:

Theme A: Geoscience Education (30 abstracts)

A-1: Geoscience Education and Awareness

A-2: Women in Geo-Education and Geo-Development

A-3: New Approaches in Geoscience Education and Research

Theme B: Natural Resources (58 abstracts)

B-1: Exploration, Exploitation and Management of Natural Resources

B-2: Combating Energy Crisis and Researching Alternative Energy Sources

B-3: Water Resources Development, Management and Quality Assurance

B-4: Role of NGOs in Natural Resource Management and Environmental Protection

Theme C: Development Activities (50 abstracts)

C-1: Geoscience for Development Activities – Development of Cities and Industries and Construction of Highways, Dams and Bridges.

C-2: Impacts of Development Activities on the Natural Environment

C-3: Natural HAZARDS Assessments and Infrastructure Development

C-4: Climate Change, Ecology and Biodiversity

In a final plenary session three special papers were presented with the following titles:

The Growth and Rise of the Tibet Plateau (by Paul Tapponnier, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore and Institute de Physique du Globe, Paris, France);

Applying Geoscience to Australia's most Important Challenges (by Paul Kay, Geoscience Australia);

The Value of Geoscientific Information in Developing Countries (by Anthony Reedman, Secretary General AGID).

In addition to the rich diversity of topics presented in the three parallel thematic sessions, there was a poster session and exhibition and also ample opportunity for informal discussions and the establishment of personal and inter-organisational relationships, not least during two excellent conference dinners and a spectacular final evening display of Bangladesh dancing and music. Many participants joined the post conference field trip to the Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world and one of the two World Heritage Sites in Bangladesh. It is planned to publish the full proceedings of the conference following editing and preparation for printing. This will make a valuable addition to the recently published Proceedings of the GSB/AGID International Conference on The Role of Natural Resources and Environment in Sustainable Development in South-eastern Asia which (NESDA) which was available for distribution during the present conference. This attractively produced 394 page publication contains seventy papers covering the nine themes of the NESDA conference held in Dhaka in 2003.

The Organising Committee of the GeoDev Conference, working under the guidance of AGID President and Director General of GSB Ms.Afia Akhtar, is to be congratulated on their fine work in convening and successfully running GeoDev, the latest international geosciences conference of recent years in Bangladesh.

*(Contributed by **Dr A. J. Reedman**, Secretary Treasurer, AGID)*

EVENTS IN PREPARATION

THE MINING PRIBRAM SYMPOSIUM THE INTERNATIONAL SECTION ON GEOETHICS October 10 – 14, 2011 - Pribram, Czech Republic

with a joint meeting of the Working Group for Geoethics - established by the Association of Geoscientists for International Development (AGID)

Contacts:

e-mail: lidmila.nemcova@quick.cz (conveners) and
marcinikova@diamo.cz (secretary)

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THE 33rd INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS August 2 – 10, 2012; Brisbane, Australia <http://www.34igc.org/>

Some of the session topics as suggested by AGID:

- 1) Best practices for sustainable ground water development in low income countries.
(session related to UNESCO-IUGS-IGCP Project GROWNET).
- 2) Industrial minerals in national economy of developing countries.
- 3) Geoscience education at high school & university level for sustainable resource development.
- 4) Ground water management of coastal aquifers.
- 5) Role of geoscientists in geo-tourism, eco-tourism and medical-tourism.
- 6) **Geoethics in theory and practice.**

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Information and retrospective visit of the previous Congress (**Oslo, 2008**) available on: <http://www.33igc.org> .

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AGID MEMBERSHIP

AGID is an increasingly de-centralised organisation and wishes to make it easy for all geoscientists who sympathise with its aims to establish national AGID networks and initiate local activities. With this objective in mind the following guidelines have been promulgated.

Anyone interested in becoming a Member of AGID is asked to contact the relevant AGID Vice President and Secretary General of AGID (**see AGID website: www.bgs.ac.uk/agid** for contact details) and in accordance with further advice from these officers either contact their respective national AGID representative. **Where there is no national representative, they may wish to establish a local national AGID network. The general aims of AGID can be found on the AGID website.**

Such local national networks may be deemed a national chapter of AGID and may be a purely informal body and levy appropriate membership dues in local currency and use any money so raised for local administration and local projects/events. If, however, levying annual subscriptions requires the national network to be legally registered in the country, then any money required for local administration should be raised from members on an ad hoc voluntary basis. All members of such a network will be considered as normal members of AGID. One member of such a local chapter should be nominated as a contact person and their names communicated to the relevant regional Vice President and Secretary General of AGID. The contact person should send a brief annual report at the end of the calendar year listing new members and contacts with any other AGID projects, working groups or other activities such as preparing symposia for International Geological Congresses etc.

A national chapter of AGID may also be part of a recognised national association of earth scientists (e.g. a national Geological Society) or part of a specialist group of such an association. Members will in this case pay their normal membership fees to the respective national Association/Society but again a contact person should be nominated from the group for liaison with AGID centrally. The contact person should send a brief annual report to the Secretary General of AGID detailing activities in which the AGID name is used and contacts during the year with other AGID groups/working parties etc. All members of the group will be regarded as normal AGID members. Such groups might explore the possibility of the society to which they subscribe providing some funds for specific local activities in which the interests of AGID and their Society coincide (e.g. working groups and activities linked to geoscience and development).

Of course the previous practice of accepting individual AGID members individually paying their membership fees directly to the AGID Secretary General and Treasurer can be continued.

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New AGID National Chapter in Spain

The new AGID National Chapter in Spain includes 13 members who belong to four universities (Complutense University, Madrid Polytechnic University, Valladolid University and La Laguna University), two public research organizations (CSIC and INTA) and two Science Museums (OAMC and MCCM). This "official foundational group" of the AGID Spanish Chapter, in this first step, is mainly focussed on Geoethics. The Spanish website is hosted thanks to the backing of the Thematic Network of Earth Science in Spain (TIERRA):

http://tierra.rediris.es/Geoethics_Planetary_Protection/

The contact person (Coordinator) of the AGID Spanish Chapter is **Prof. Dr. Jesus Martinez Frias**, Planetology Laboratory, Centro de Astrobiologia (CSIC/INTA) associated to the NASA Astrobiology Institute, Ctra de Ajalvir km. 4., 28850 Torrejon de Ardoz, Madrid (Spain); e-mail: martinezfj@inta.es.

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All useful information, suggestions, comments etc. from you and your colleagues will be highly appreciated and – if necessary – incorporated into the next issues of GEOETHICS NEWS.

Contacts:

(for THE MINING PRIBRAM SYMPOSIUM as well as for the GEOETHICS NEWS and for the AGID Working Group on GEOETHICS):

by the e-mail (preferably) to

lidmila.nemcova@quick.cz (conveners) and marcinikova@diamo.cz (secretary)

or by the mail to

Dr. Vaclav Nemec

or/and

The Mining Pribram Symposium

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Czech Republic

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or by the fax to

(++420) 318644148 - THE MINING PRIBRAM SYMPOSIUM

Many thanks for informing your colleagues who may be interested.

Dr. Vaclav Nemec

Vice President for Europe, Association of Geoscientists for International Development

Convenor of regular sections on Geoethics, the Mining Pribram Symposium

Member of the Business Ethics Society, Czech Republic

This version of GEOETHICS NEWS has been issued for the e-mail distribution (with a simplified Czech alphabet)

Be so kind to send the following preliminary registration form by the e-mail to
lidmila.nemcova@quick.cz ; marcinikova@diamo.cz
or by the mail or fax to the above given addresses (see PAGE 8).

QUESTIONNAIRE

Personal data:

Name:

Address:

E-mail:

Fax No. (incl. country and city codes):

Phone No. (incl. country and city codes):

Working Group for Geoethics (x – inappropriate indications to be deleted):

- x I am interested to continue in an active co-operation
- x I am interested only to get further GEOETHICS NEWS

AGID membership(x – inappropriate indications to be deleted):

- x I am already regular member of AGID
- x I want to be a corresponding AGID member
- x I want to be member of the AGID national chapter in my country
- x I am interested to initiate and coordinate a new AGID chapter in my country
- x I am recommending for the coordinator of a new AGID chapter in my country
(name, contact address):

Events in preparation - Probability of participation (x – inappropriate indications to be deleted):

1. **THE MINING PRIBRAM SYMPOSIUM 2011 (October 10-14)** - the international section on geoethics
x high x medium x low x I shall not attend
2. **The 34-th International Geological Congress – Brisbane 2012 (August 2-10)**
x high x medium x low x I shall not attend

Other special wishes, remarks, suggestions: