

# GEOETHICS NEWS

June 2011

The complete set of GEOETHICS NEWS (published since 2007) as well as other interesting useful news about various events in the field of GEOETHICS is available at the web page of the AGID National Chapter in Spain: [http://tierra.rediris.es/Geoethics\\_Planetary\\_Protection/](http://tierra.rediris.es/Geoethics_Planetary_Protection/) .

The basic version is limited mostly to textual part of news. This illustrated version can be found at the above indicated web pages together with much useful news.

*Editor: Dr. Václav Němec*

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## New challenges for geoethics

have been brought again by various recent events:

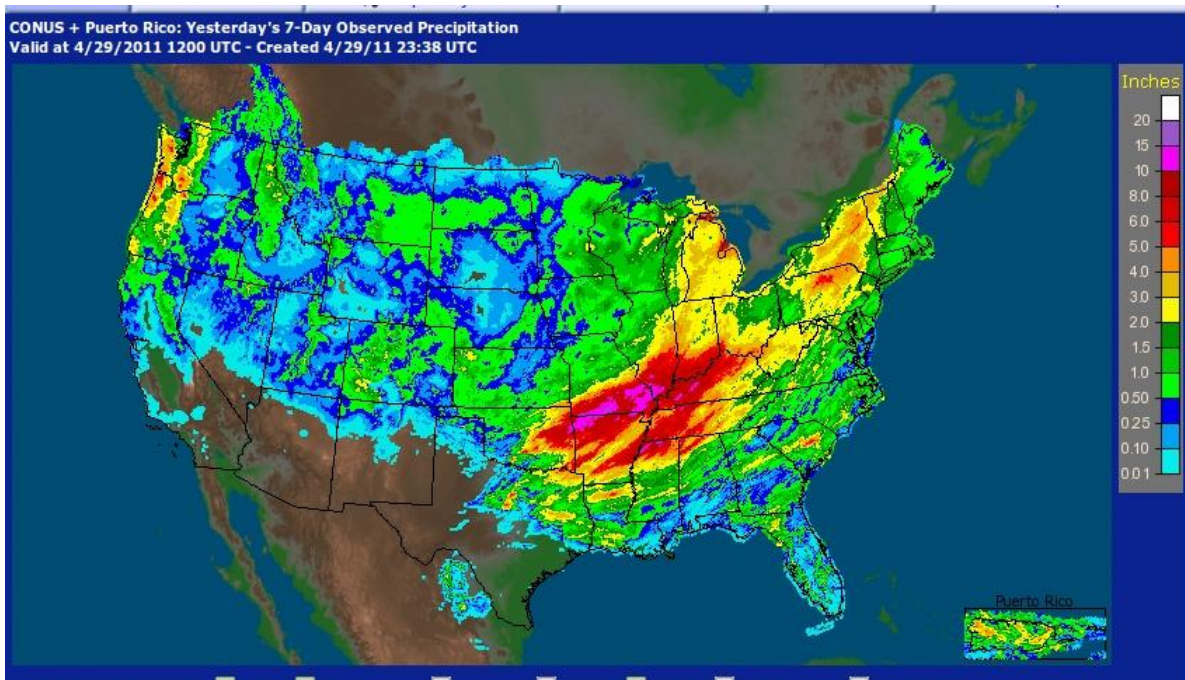


New volcanic eruptions and ashes (not only in Iceland) paralyze aerial traffic again

### *Earthquake in Lorca*

Earthquakes continue not only in Japan but also in South America and elsewhere...

From April 14–16, the storm system responsible for one of the largest tornado outbreaks in U.S. history; from April 25–28, another, even more extensive and deadly storm system passed through the Mississippi Valley dumping more rainfall resulting in deadly flash floods. US army engineers have opened floodgates in Louisiana that will inundate up to 3,000 sq miles of land in an attempt to protect large cities along the Mississippi River. The six cities in critical danger span from Tennessee to Louisiana.



*This graphic shows the rainfall between the mornings of April 22 and 29, which define the bounds of a heavy rain event which occurred across the Midwestern United States*

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## THE 50<sup>TH</sup> MINING PŘÍBRAM SYMPOSIUM

OCTOBER 2011, CZECH REPUBLIC



INTERNATIONAL SECTIONS:

**a) MATHEMATICAL METHODS IN GEOLOGY**

Prague: October 7- 9; Příbram: October 10 -12

**b) GEOETHICS**

**Příbram: October 10 -14**

Information published at [http://tierra.rediris.es/Geoethics\\_Planetary\\_Protection/](http://tierra.rediris.es/Geoethics_Planetary_Protection/) where it will be regularly replaced by more fresh news.

## **ATTENTION! ACTUAL DEADLINES:**

**July 10:** for paying advanced registration fees;

**July 20:** for submitting final texts of papers and communications for publication in printed proceedings of both sections

## **Many reasons to come to Prague and to Příbram for all those interested in geoethics:**

- To join your colleagues from Japan, P. R. of China, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Finland, Poland, Czech Republic, Germany, France, Spain, UK, Algeria and Brazil (already expected);
- To use the opportunity to meet top representatives of important international organizations as IUGS Vice-President Prof. Ochir Gerel, IAMG President Prof. Vera Pawlowsky-Glahn, IUGS COGE chairman Prof. Jesus Martinez-Frías and others;
- To share ideas and experiences **how to establish decentralised AGID National Chapters network with the competent AGID representatives**;
- To meet the former long serving chief of the famous APCOM symposia Professor F. Ludwig Wilke who was among six participants of the first meeting on geoethics at Příbram in 1992 (and many that followed afterward) with Lidmila Němcová and Václav Němec (unfortunately Professor Trembecki died and no recent replies from Jean Bussac and L. P. Ryzhova);
- To meet the former UNESCO representative Dr. Kaisa Savolainen who used for the first time the term of “geoethics”;
- To meet again frequent visitors of the meetings about geoethics at Příbram (and usually also at the International Geological Congresses) as Professor Azimkhan Kurmankozhaev; Dr. Nataliya Nikitina, Prof. Niichi Nishiwaki;
- To meet colleagues from Poland who were well acquainted with Professor **Adam Stefan Trembecki** (1921 – 2007) who also took part in our first meeting on geoethics and almost all following up to 2005); our meeting will be devoted to the memory of this very important promoter of geoethics;
- To meet Professor Jean Serra who took part in the first international meeting on mathematical geology at Příbram in 1968 (then accompanying the famous Professor Matheron);
- To share - **without any language barriers and without any lack of space and time** - your own experiences, ideas, visions with people deeply interested in developing geoethics.

## CONTACTS:

### The Mining Příbram Symposium:

P.O. Box 41  
261 92 Příbram  
CZECH REPUBLIC

**PHONE:** (++420) 274811801 or (++420) 281962158 (convenors, Prague, recorders)

**FAX:** (++ 420) 318644148 (add: For the Symposium Secretariat)

### E-MAIL:

[MARCINIKOVA@DIAMO.CZ](mailto:MARCINIKOVA@DIAMO.CZ) (secretary)

[LIDMILA.NEMCOVA@QUICK.CZ](mailto:LIDMILA.NEMCOVA@QUICK.CZ) (convenors)

[DOLEZALOVA@DIAMO.CZ](mailto:DOLEZALOVA@DIAMO.CZ) (Symposium and DIAMO library – this e-mail used by Dr. Němec when working at Příbram).

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## THE 34<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS

August 5 – 10, 2012; Brisbane, Australia

The Second Circular has been released and is posted on the IGC <http://www.34igc.org>. This is an important stage in the development of the IGC.

The 2nd Circular has lots of information including:

- A full list of symposia and topics to be presented at the congress;
- The call for abstracts and the on-line abstract submission system;
- Super Early Bird registration fee offer - the lowest cost registration fee available;
- Exhibition Space (GeoSpace) Release;
- GeoHost Scheme involving the Training Workshop Program (TWP) and the Funded Delegate Program (FDP);
- A revised list of all pre and post Congress tour offerings.

**To download a pdf of the 2nd Circular go to:**

[http://www.34igc.org/FileLibrary/34igc\\_second\\_circular\\_v9.pdf](http://www.34igc.org/FileLibrary/34igc_second_circular_v9.pdf) .

Two special events are planned on behalf of AGID in the field of GEOETHICS (lead convenor Dr. Václav Němec - [lidmila.nemcova@quick.cz](mailto:lidmila.nemcova@quick.cz)):

**SYMPOSIUM Nr. 5 within the Theme 2** and the

**TRAINING WORKSHOP:** *The Importance of Geoethics with Particular Reference to Low Income Countries.*



## NEWS ABOUT AGID

### The “Association of Geoscientists for International Development” (AGID) and Geoethics: Past, Present and Future

**A. J. Reedman**

(Secretary General/Treasurer, AGID)

The Association of Geoscientists for International Development (AGID) was founded in 1974 by a small group of geologists involved in international development projects and eager to promote the wider application of the geosciences in such projects. Its prime objectives were:

- a) To encourage communication between all individuals, societies, agencies and corporations interested in the application of the geosciences to international development;
- b) To encourage and promote activities in geosciences fields which are related to the needs of developing countries;
- c) To promote and encourage among earth scientists an awareness of their responsible role in the management of natural resources;
- d) To emphasise to countries cooperating in international geoscientific aid, the fundamental role of the geosciences in social and economic development.

In subsequent years in pursuit of these objectives, AGID's programme of activities included the organisation of conferences, seminars, courses and workshops relevant to the role of earth scientists in international development and to the application of the geosciences to the solution of problems of the developing countries. Its record in facilitating and carrying out such activities was impressive; in the ten years between 1984 and 1994, for example, AGID was involved in 150 different projects in 25 developing countries whilst 24 activities, mainly conferences, workshops and seminars, were also organised in a range of developed countries. During the same period over one hundred postgraduate students in developing country universities had received grants from AGID to support fieldwork in connection with their studies. From 1974 a total of eighty-five editions of the journal '**AGID News**' (later **Geoscience and Development**) were published until publication ceased in 2005. Much of this was made possible by an annual grant to

AGID of \$100.000 by the Canadian International Development Administration (CIDA) which continued for twenty-one years until it ended in 1996.

At the time of the foundation of the Association, there could be no specific reference to “geoethics” as this was a term which only appeared, and was defined, many years later. However, though it might reasonably be expected that all professional personnel would behave ‘ethically’, it was nevertheless one of the objectives of AGID, as quoted above, “to promote and encourage among earth scientists an awareness of their responsible role in the management of natural resources”. This stated aim foreshadowed many subsequent debates in geological circles on, for example, the sustainability of mining projects in the development aid business as most mineral resources were non-renewable and therefore, by definition, had finite sustainability. Several early articles in AGID News pointed out the environmental damage that could result from mining development and stressed that these environmental costs should be offset against the short term financial gain, an early expression of the “green economics” that was to become more popular several decades later. Geohazards, and how to mitigate their effects on local populations also provoked much concern and stimulated many articles in AGID News as well as relevant workshops and discussions, with the focus on particularly vulnerable communities in the low-income ‘third world’. All this could be seen as broadly overlapping with the as yet undefined field of “geoethics” and practice of geoethical behaviour.

Now time has moved on, and though AGID no longer enjoys the luxury of the CIDA grant and consequently has had to greatly reduce its project activity, the AGID Working Group on Geoethics founded by Dr Němec, based on his pioneering work on the topic through the Mining Příbram Symposia strengthened AGID’s agenda in an entirely appropriate way. AGID is now a decentralised organisation with national groups organising their own programmes, membership lists and fund raising and their awareness of geoethical issues can now be raised through **Geoethics News** produced by Dr Němec.

The successful symposia on geoethics at successive International Geological Congresses and the forthcoming symposium and workshop at the 34<sup>th</sup> IGC in Brisbane continue to further expose the topic to the world’s geoscientists. How this process can be extended and strengthened, perhaps through IUGS, deserves further serious consideration and discussion.

# IUGS appreciating AGID activities

Celebrating 50 Years of Earth Science for the Global Community



4 April 2011

Dr. A. J. Reedman  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Association of Geoscientists  
for International Development (AGID)

[www.iugs.org](http://www.iugs.org)

RE: **Association of Geoscientists for International Development (AGID)  
Annual Report**

Dear Dr. Reedman:

At the recent meeting of the Executive Committee (EC) of IUGS, held in Paris, France, 22-25 February, the EC discussed its affiliated organizations. The EC complimented the Association on the work it had undertaken during the past year and wishes it well for the coming year.

In the discussion of the budget for the year 2011, the EC voted to allocate the total amount of \$1,000 (USD) for AGID. This sum will be forwarded to you, only upon your request, to the Treasurer, William Cavazza. Please include your full bank coordinates (including IBAN and SWIFT codes) when requesting these funds.

The IUGS EC is pleased with AGID involvement in educational initiatives, in Nigeria, and Bangladesh, and in the next IGC session on Geoscience in Low-Income Countries. The IUGS EC is also looking forward to a positive collaboration of AGID with IUGS Commissions on Education, Training and Tech Transfer (COGE), and on the Management & Application of Geoscience Information (CGI), especially in relation to UNESCO's initiative on geoeducation in Africa.

AGID must also be congratulated on its Working Group on Geoethics, whose Newsletter, "Geoethics News" is fulfilling an important role for the improvement of Earth scientists' responsibilities.

The EC thanks its affiliated organizations for the many articles they have submitted to *Episodes* over the past few years. The Science Citation Index for *Episodes* has risen significantly, with which the Committee is very pleased. However, it is hoped that this value can be improved in the coming years. The regular support of IUGS bodies and members, through article submissions, is essential.

In a similar vein, the Executive Committee wishes to remind all of its affiliated organizations of the agreement signed with the Geological Society of London, concerning the publication of IUGS Special Publications. All affiliates are very strongly encouraged to submit proposals for scientific volumes arising either from their work or from conferences they have organized, to the Geological Society.

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International Union of Geological Sciences

You are most likely aware that the IUGS website ([www.iugs.org](http://www.iugs.org)) and the IUGS E-Bulletin are open to include information that could be of interest to the international geological community. All IUGS affiliated organizations are therefore strongly encouraged to visit the website and E-Bulletin regularly, to keep abreast of new information coming on-line. IUGS affiliates can also submit material to the Webmaster to be included in the section covering their body. Notices for up-coming workshops, conferences, etc. can also be submitted to the website and E- Bulletin for inclusion in the Calendar.

Yours Sincerely,



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Prof. Alberto C. Riccardi  
President IUGS

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## **Product of the AGID National Group in Spain: DEONTOLOGICAL CODE**

A significant Spanish geologist Jose Luis Gonzalez (member of the AGID Spanish Group) has been responsible for updating of the Deontological Code of the official Spanish Association of Geologists, which has been approved by the Assembly General of ICOG, April 9, 2011. Now Geoethics forms specifically a part - for the first time - of the Deontology of Geologists in Spain.

The publication of this new Deontological Code including Geoethics was announced in an open group in facebook and the official news has been published in the website of the ICOG: *Ilustre Colegio Oficial de Geólogos* (the official Spanish Association of Geologists):

[http://www.icog.es/\\_portal/noticias/noticias.asp?bid=1886&ini=1](http://www.icog.es/_portal/noticias/noticias.asp?bid=1886&ini=1)

As referred by Prof. Jesus Martinez - Frías, **this is a very important step for Geoethics, as - besides being in the congresses and workshops - now it forms officially part of a Deontological Code.**

Jose Luis Gonzalez has also cited GEOETHICS NEWS in his blog about "Natural Hazards" emphasizing the importance of Geoethics. The "post" of the blog is in Spanish but many readers will be able to understand it: *Mitigar los riesgos naturales: un objetivo primordial de la Geoética* (<http://icogblogs.com/riesgos/2011/04/12/geoetica-y-riesgos-naturales/>).

## One Response to “Mitigar los riesgos naturales: un objetivo primordial de la Geoética”:

Carlos González says ( [April 13th, 2011 at 3:36 pm](#) ) : *This is surely a topic of great transcendancy for our society. It should be taken into consideration from the political and administrative point of view. Its consolidation... is a significant and substantial element for determining the value of such an important and impressionable profession as the geology.*

### **DEONTOLOGICAL CODE (excerpt)**

#### **ARTICLE 4 - COMPROMISES WITH GEOETHICS**

1. Geoethics is a key discipline in the field of Earth and also of Planetary Sciences implying various aspects of the scientific, technological, methodological and socio-cultural character. In order to accomplish the geoethical principles, Geologist (Earth scientist) has to act with a scientific integrity, good practices and adequate protocol, maintaining adequate attitudes permitting a balanced relation between the praxis of Geology and the components of the abiotic world.
2. The Geologist has the obligation to be conscious of the importance of scientific and technical advances for the humanity, of its social responsibility in carrying out his/her professional activity. These advances open possibilities that suppose a big progress, but also they can involve risks and ethical dilemmas which have to be taken into consideration.
3. The Geologist is obliged to take care that the economic and social development satisfying necessities of the present time without making any danger for capacity of future generations, and to procure to maintain a global and integral vision for solving problems affecting the planet. For this reason he/she has to consider in his/her actions a reasonable use of the natural resources and the exigencies of the society in matters of the environment avoiding a transfer of products undesirable for the natural environment and always taking in mind to observe sustainability and precaution principles.
4. The Geologist should take into account all needed ethical necessities for protection of the geodiversity of the geological heritage. For this reason in his activities of examination and investigation of geological materials and processes he/she should purchase a preservation of rocks and outcrops which can be supposed as part of a unique register of processes occurring in the Nature.

5. The Geologist should use all his know how and capacities to the mitigation of natural risks and, giving priority to preventive strategies, he/she should procure guaranties for the security of persons and goods, as well as for the enviroment's protection. When achieving it he/she will cooperate – using all his/her responsibility and diligence – with competent public authorities in situations of risk and, in such a case, he/she will also cooperate in transmitting information to the society, using scientific data with seriousness, objectivity and severity.

6. The Geologist should value the crucial role of geological factors in the fight against poverty and, in such a case, he/she should contribute with his/her knowledge (know how) to the most sustainable conditions of life for the most vulnerable society.

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## OTHER NEWS

Many other useful information on geoethics can be found at the usual **website of the AGID National Chapter in Spain** (see p. 1) giving information about meetings on geoethics already realized (**Moscow 2011**) or in preparation (as **GEOITALIA 2011**). Useful information can be followed also at the **IUGS website** ([www.iugs.org](http://www.iugs.org) including links to **IUGS E-Bulletin**, **Episodes** etc.) or **AGID website**: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/agid/> including Publications with the **latest edition of the Geoscience Newsletter**. A new hyperlink has been established for the IUGS Commission on Geo-science Education, Training and Technology Transfer ( <http://www.iugscoge.com/> ).

\* \* \*

**Looking forward to news from you and to any further co-operation,  
With best personal regards,**

**Václav Němec\*** and **Lidmila Němcová\*\***,

**Convenors of the international section "GEOETHICS" at the Mining Příbram Symposia**

*\* **Dr. Václav Němec**: at the Mining Příbram Symposia also convenor of international section on Mathematical Geology (1968-1999, 2011); **AGID Vice-President for Europe**, Head of the AGID Working Group for Geoethics, founding member and Eastern Treasurer of the **IAMG** (1968-1980, 1984-1996).*

*\*\* **Dr. Lidmila Němcová**: besides her activity for the Mining Příbram Symposia (since 1985) co-founder and presently President of the Society for Ethics in Economics in the Czech Republic, member of various European structures oriented to business ethics and social dialogue, co-founder of the Czech branch of the European Anti-Poverty Network.*