

European Manifesto on Earth Heritage and Geodiversity

Earth heritage for our present and our future

Geodiversity links the Earth, its people and their culture. It forms the basis of the European society. Earth heritage including landscapes, landforms, rocks, sediments, soils, minerals, fossils and waters, is an essential part of Europe's natural heritage. A geological, geomorphological and soil heritage that needs to be safe-guarded for present and future generations.

Europe has outstanding examples of earth heritage and geodiversity

Mount Etna of Italy, the Giant's Causeway of Northern Ireland, the Dorset Coast of the United Kingdom, the maar lakes of the German Eifel, the Wadden from The Netherlands to Denmark, the caves of Slovenia, the Troodos Massif of Cyprus, the Curonian Spit of Lithuania and Russia, the High Coast of Sweden, the Finnish Kvarken Archipelago, the Baltic Klint, the glaciers and fjords of Norway, the Alps and the volcanoes and geysers of Iceland are but a few examples of Europe's rich earth heritage.

Earth heritage and geodiversity create opportunities for education, recreation and tourism...

Geological landscapes and sites, by themselves or in combination with their cultural, historical and ecological heritage, offer potential for sustainable tourism, education and landscape appreciation. European Geoparks are examples of the sustainable economic use of this resource.

... and increase the quality of life in rural areas and cities

Landforms, patterns and earth heritage sites contribute to the character of rural areas and cities, and help create a living space and environment of high quality.

The task of the EU: "safeguarding by development, safeguarding by protection"

The EU should incorporate Earth Heritage and Geodiversity in policy, planning and related procedures. Unique earth heritage sites and landscapes should be given protected status. Sustainable development and restoration should respect and reflect the natural patterns and processes: the geology, the geomorphology and the soils.

The EU soil strategy is the instrument to realize these goals!

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| • EFG | European Federation of Geologists |
| • EGN | European Geoparks Network |
| • IAG | International Association of Geomorphology |
| • ECSSS | European Confederation of Soil Science Societies |
| • EUCC | European Union of Coastal Conservation |
| • GEOSEE Task Force | a joint Geoheritage initiative of UNESCO, IUGS and IGU |
| • IUGS | International Union of Geological Sciences |
| • Eurosite | European Platform of Nature Management organizations |
| • IGU | International Geographical Union |
| • Wadden Sea Team | Environmental organizations along the Wadden Sea Coast |
| • IUSS | International Union of Soil Sciences |

- and many national European organizations for Geoheritage

With reference to Recommendation Rec (2004) 3 of the Council of Europe on conservation of the geological heritage and areas of special geological interest (*Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on May 2004*).

