



# NEWS

No. 1 1995 January

## The newsletter

The newsletter has not been seen for a long time and this has been a problem for our organization. With this number of the newsletter we try to do something about this. If we succeed or not will depend of the response among ProGEO members.

Please, send in news from the different countries about conservation and management of our geological heritage, opinions about ProGEO and geotope strategy, news about meetings etc. and everything that may be of interest to other ProGEO members. Send also drawings and illustrations that can be printed on normal office laser printer.

As will be seen, the editor will try to issue the newsletter 4 times a year. Depending on you these will be short and not so interesting issues, or good issues filled with interesting news.

Do your best! - Good luck!



## Executive Secretary's News:

### Elections

As you know, ProGEO has its first General Assembly in Finland/Sweden in May. This will be the first opportunity for us to hold more democratic elections. We are moving towards an electoral system in which nationally appointed representatives will elect ProGEO's committee.

The Executive Committee is required to nominate a replacement committee. Will you want to retain the same committee? The President has been in post for two years and so has to be replaced, other officers may stand again. The election will be done under the election procedures which were circulated to you before the Hungary meeting; they were agreed at that meeting. The present committee has yet to make any nominations. It would help enormously in our deliberations if we could have the thoughts and suggestions of the membership. Could I ask you to suggest names for posts? Could you please get these to me

by February 17 at the latest?

### National representatives

I have had some interesting letters from members telling me of the setting up of national committees and national liaison groups, for which thank you very much indeed. This is a recognition of our decision at our Weymouth meeting that each country would as soon as circumstances allowed set up its own internal ProGEO network. As an example, in Britain all societies and bodies with an interest in the Earth-sciences and conservation of E-S sites have been contacted to establish a liaison network. A steering committee will place nominations for a national representative before this network: then there will be a vote. This is designed to get away from the dangers of any small clique doing the voting.

We also agreed at Weymouth that having set up similar systems in our countries each would generate a national representative. In some cases I have been told the name of the individual who has been nominated, but there is no indication

that there was an elective process.

I have yet to hear from certain countries about their arrangements for election of a national representative. It is necessary before the General Assembly for each country to tell the Executive Secretary who they have elected as their one representative, also how that election was carried out. I have to send out voting papers very soon, so that any member not attending the Finland / Sweden meeting can have their postal vote. It is essential that all countries are represented and are able to vote. If you have not announced the name of your country's representative, and the mechanism of their election, please contact me immediately.

Bill Wimbleton



## Conservation of Geological Monuments in South-East Europe

On the page 3 of the Newsletter are the details circulated by our Bulgarian colleagues for the above very important

## From the president

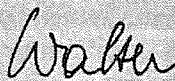
The "European Association for the Conservation of the Geological heritage" (the full name of proGEO) encourages the constitution of national committees in the countries itself, some are working already. Because the geotop-conservation has to work in the countries, with their laws and special situations, but with the help of the European association.

Therefore proGEO tried early to develop guiding rules for fruitful work. This concerns useful methods to elect geotopes and the necessary management of sites. The methods should lead to a comparable systematic, although they have to stay manifold for some reasons. Starting-points for definitions are probably:

\*Type-localities for tectonic, stratigraphic, paleontologic, mineralogic, geomorphologic questions,

\*rarity and endangerness of phenomenas,  
\*degree of practical possibility to preserve the site (easy accessible or not, striking or not) and chiefly durable or not.

The treatment of such rules will result in a geotop-inventory first in the countries, later in Europe. The inventory will make a survey possible, but will also be a challenge and finally a task.



meeting. Our President is planning to attend and Gerard Gonggrijp and the executive secretary have both been asked to speak to the meeting on behalf of ProGEO.

ProGEO voted its support for the meeting at Budapest last May, and we wish the conference and field meetings every success.

Please attend if you can. UNESCO have shown that they consider the meeting of

considerable importance and are funding it accordingly.

Prof. Zagortchev, Chairman of the organising committee, informs me that the organisers seek, especially, more support from colleagues in Slovakia, Croatia and Greece. Registration is through Dr Nakov at the Geological Institute.

Bill Wimbledon



## ProGEO's general assembly and meeting in Finland and Sweden, May 1995.

The first circular for the ProGEO meeting in Finland and Sweden is distributed. Please respond as quickly as possible. If you have not got the circular or need more information contact

Dr L.O. Karis  
Geological Survey of Sweden, Box 670, S-751 28 Uppsala, Sweden.

or

Dr. V. Suominen  
Geological Survey of Finland, Kivimiehentie 1, 02150 Espoo, Finland.

for more information.



## Status of ProGEO membership

Up to now, very few of us have taken full responsibility in building ProGEO as a living organisation! According to our bank account very few have paid their membership. This must be better, please wake up, and pay. We need official members.

The procedure for next year is the same as last year:

Payment of DM 30,- (organisations: DM 500) p.a. with collection cheque ("Verrechnung-Cheque") to Stadt- und Kreissparkasse Erlangen. Bank code: 76350000. Bank account: 27128628.



## Minutes of Hungary Meeting

As you have noticed you have not received a full set of minutes for the above. Technical difficulties have made it possible for Odon to produce only partial minutes, and for this we apologise. However, I did take careful notes of the discussions, particularly in relation to which individuals needed to take which action - and this is the business end of things; also which decisions were agreed by the group. These are listed below. I have underlined outstanding items; these must be done, as they are vital to the progress of ProGEO. The failure to undertake any task prevents the development of ProGEO, but failure to carry out major essential tasks, which an individual has freely (to be continued on page 4)

**First circular: Conservation of Geological Heritage in South-East Europe, Sofia  
6-12 May 1995**

Dear Colleague,

The combined efforts of many scientists within the frame of the Working Group of Geological (incl. Fossil) Sites (UNESCO, IUGS & IGCP) and the European Association for the Conservation of the Geological Heritage marked a considerable progress in the establishment of the WORLD HERITAGE LIST, and in the study of important geological sites (geotops) in the world. However, one of the important geological regions of Europe (the Balkan Peninsula) remained aside from these developments, mainly due to limited geological information, and to the turbulent political and military situation.

**Invitation**

The First Subregional Meeting "Conservation of Geological Heritage in South-East Europe" will take place in Sofia in May 1995. The Organizing Committee extends a cordial invitation to the geologists interested in the preservation of our important natural geological sites for the future generations to attend the meeting. The meeting aims to make the first step towards a wide-scale collaboration and co-operation of the efforts of the Earth scientists of the sub-region in this respect. The main goals are:

- \*To exchange information about the important geological sites under protection in the interested countries
- \*To exchange information and ideas about the national policy of each country in the domain of nature conservation, and the place of the sites of geological interest in this policy
- \*To exchange information for to establish in the future a Balkan List of Geological Heritage, and to choose the most important geological sites for to propose them to be included in the World Heritage List
- \*To discuss on the basic features of the important geological sites that should be included in the national and Balkan heritage lists. The organization of the present Meeting was made possible thanks to the resolution of the 27th General Conference of UNESCO, and the Note of the Director General. The Meeting is financed by UNESCO, and is organized by the BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES and the Bulgarian Commission for UNESCO.

**Information about the meeting**

Time: 6-12 May 1995. Schedule: Arrival in Sofia: 5 May 1995. Conference in Sofia: 6 and 7 May. Field trips:

- 1) Permian, Triassic and Jurassic sections and impressive rock landscape along the Iskar Gorge and the vicinity of Belogradchik, NW Bulgaria; historical and archaeological sites (8 and 9 May).
- 2) Metamorphic, igneous and sedimentary rocks and sequences in and around the Pirin horst, SW Bulgaria; superposition of tectonic events of different age (from Precambrian to recent); beautiful landscape (rock forms); National parks; cultural, archaeological and historic sites; biological endemic taxa and conditions of endemism (10-12 May). Departure from Sofia: 13 May 1995.

Financial conditions: the Organizing Committee, thanks to the financial support from UNESCO, is able to cover the expenses on Bulgarian territory of 1-2 participants from each Balkan country, and of few participants from the European Association for the Conservation of Geological Heritage. The cost for additional participants will be held to the reasonable minimum. Titles of proposed contributions should be sent with your answer to this announcement. We would be grateful to receive data (at least, preliminary) about the list of important geological sites (geotopes) of your country, and your possible pre-conference contribution to the special issue of *Geologica Balcanica* on the important geological sites of the Balkan Peninsula, in your answer to the present letter.

**General information**

Organizers: Geological Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences; Bulgarian Geological Society; Bulgarian National Committee for the International Geological Correlation Programme; National Museum "Earth and Man"; Faculty of Geology and Geography of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"; Faculty of Geology of the Higher Institute of Mining and Geology; Committee of Geology and Mineral Resources.

**Organizing Committee:** Prof. I. Zagortchev (Chairman); Assoc. Prof. Z. Iliev, Assoc. Prof. T. Todorov (Vice Chairman); Dr. R. Nakov (Secretary); Assoc. Prof. M. Antonov; Prof. Ch. Dabovski; Assoc. Prof. M. Maleev; Assoc. Prof. P. Petrov; Prof. P. Tchoumatchenco; Prof. Tz. Tzankov.

**Address:** Geological Institute; Acad. G. Bonchev Str. block 24, 1113 Sofia, Bulgaria.

**Fax:** (00359-2)-724638; **telephone:** (00359-2)-713-3472 (Dr. R. Nakov).

agreed to do, damages ProGEO, and prevents it from growing and gaining influence!

### Action points arising from Hungary meeting, and decisions taken:

☞ WAW to write to Anna Spiteri suggesting that Malvern 'task force' literature should include full and proper reference to ProGEO: the 'task force' circular letter we were shown in Hungary, it overlooks ProGEO, and the fact that ProGEO is the existing network in Europe, it refers to Digne without mentioning the group at all.

☞ List of national contact points to Guy Martini (WAW - done) leaflet wording finalised (WAW - done).

☞ Guy M to collect suitable photographs from individuals, to replace those already included, but for which he has no copyright.

☞ Guy M to assess profit from Digne Proceeding which can be used for printing the leaflet.

☞ Guy M to get written costs from printer, to be OK'd by Exec Comm Guy M agreed to complete leaflet by end June pay for leaflet and claim costs back from

ProGEO afterwards. Accepted by council meeting.

☞ Guy M to let Ex Sec have copy of his short-term publication strategy ASAP.

☞ Exec Sec to write to all to urge they implement use of leaflet, when it is complete.

☞ Newsletter: Lars Erikstad to contact Ödön and set up new working method, acting as co-editor.

☞ All to send one page 'strategy' to Anna Spiteri for compilation / rationalisation - discussion paper to be prepared by her by end September. Exec Sec to request contributions for this from membership (done).

☞ All to send in names of persons in the contact networks for their state to WAW, so he can compile a directory.

☞ Hans-P Schonlaub to speak on ProGEO's behalf at meeting of heads of Geological Surveys in September. Poster to be produced? plus leaflet for that meeting.

☞ Nordic Council paper to be presented at INQUA: ice front presentation - Alf Grube to liaise with Carl-Erik Johanssen.

☞ WAW to send out Bruno's paper on a 'geotope' convention.

☞ Ipolytarnóc -

WAW to send new text for letter on World Heritage status to Ödön.

☞ WAW to write to Rome, suggesting to Italian colleagues that Rome conference is to be "ProGEO '96, second international symposium on the conservation of the geological heritage".

☞ Recast procedures for general assembly, particularly voting (WAW). Organisers 1995 meeting to produce suggested outline by end June.

☞ Write to Sweden/Finland on possible requirements / amendments to plan after discussion by Exec Comm, by 15 July.

☞ Define dates for two-monthly fax meetings of Exec Comm Minutes of Exec Comm production (ÖR).

☞ Notify all that Veli and Lars have been co-opted onto Ex Comm (in minutes) (WAW).

☞ Minutes of Council (ÖR).

☞ Alf G. and Hans-Dieter D. to examine bank account and registration with notary situation and report back (AG).

☞ Ex Secr to write demanding money from members as soon as bank account situation is clarified (WAW).

☞ Thank you letter to

Ödön for excellent meeting in Hungary (President) Behaviour at meetings problem: Ex Sec to draft letter on agendas and correct procedure for raising issues at meeting.

☞ European nature conservation week project: Gerard Gonggrijp to investigate and contact organisers (GPG).

☞ Ödön to inform on integration of essay competition on geological heritage within such a week.

☞ Guy to advertise in Europe context.

☞ President to write on Merkers mine, asking for an answer on its future.

☞ 'Manual of conservation laws and methods in European states' - It was agreed again that work should proceed on this project, following Gerard's circulation (prior to Hungary) to all of an outline for each country entry in the book: Gerard to inform regional contact points on method of working (GPG), and to ask for funding from Hoekstra.

☞ Ödön to send WAW list names and addresses of Hungarian colleagues involved in Hungary meeting (OR).

### A Strategy for the future

In the absence of a total strategy based on the



views of all members, perhaps I could give a few observations. Several members have sent me copies of their opinions, and for this I thank them very much. What is written here takes these very varied views into account; much of it, if not all of it, has been agreed at our past meetings

**Aims** - We have as a basis for our activities a set of principles. Earth-science conservation in Europe is, comparatively, still weak. ProGEO intends to give it a stronger voice, by acting as the forum for the discussion of issues, as a pressure group to advise and influence policy makers, and as an advisory service for colleagues in the field. We agree we are to do this through publications, meetings and various collaborations. We have, however, to develop our influence, by small publications, by meetings, then by larger publications, by policy papers submitted to local, regional, national and perhaps European governing bodies. Like a race horse, we need a record before anyone will put their money on us: this comes with long and careful work.

The balance between national and international activity presents us with a classic 'chicken and

egg' situation: with no national activity and no ability to generate enthusiasm and funds, we cannot very well do things collectively; without success internationally we cannot show an example and try to initiate activity or better directed activity within the countries - we have less influence. We currently are making advances nationally, but we have yet to work collaboratively in a continuous and concerted way. There is an overriding need for individuals to work selflessly for ProGEO: some work tirelessly, for instance in organising our yearly meetings. We need this kind of activity from more members for more time. We sleep too much between annual meetings. Therefore what we need is not a set of tasks, we have plenty of agreed tasks and some are busy with them, but a mechanism to carry out those activities successfully, to do them well and to a timetable.

**Our strategy** needs to be viewed in two parts: 1) national, and 2) international

**1) Nationally**, we need:

- ☞ primary ProGEO publicity (that means a simple leaflet, which has been written for some time)

- ☞ ProGEO publicity
- ☞ explanatory letters (example attached) describing ProGEO, published proceedings of conferences, and our own papers always bearing the name of ProGEO
- ☞ to promote and form an ProGEO network, open to those interested in geoconservation
- ☞ to put together a full database of national geological / geomorphological / landscape resources - to popularise geoconservation amongst geoscientists and a wider public
- ☞ to have a national policy

Without stronger bonds nationally, a network in each country, fund-raising and influence we cannot make ProGEO into the powerful body it might become: we must be sure of national strength before we can develop any whole-Europe policy or activities.

**2) Internationally** (in Europe) we need:

- ☞ primary ProGEO publicity (primarily the leaflet)
- ☞ to organise general conferences (Digne 1991, Roma - ProGEO '96)
- ☞ to organise conferences on specific topics or issues or in

specific regions

- ☞ to develop the concept of a democratic general assembly, and therefrom a European network that truly represents geoconservation activists and others with an interest
  - ☞ to develop a European geosite list
  - ☞ to publish comparative printed works on conservation (e.g. the 'manual')
  - ☞ to publish the results of individuals', groups' or the association under the aegis and logo of ProGEO
  - ☞ to initiate and publish on specific subjects related to site conservation (e.g. Ice Limit Project)
  - ☞ to work to forge links with any organisation working in the field of geoscience, or geoscience and nature conservation which is working to further the stated aims of ProGEO
  - ☞ to work towards a European convention on geoconservation
  - ☞ to promote conservation of geoscience sites and terrains in Europe
  - ☞ to contribute to the development of a European strategy for geoconservation
- None of this is news. To achieve these ends we have already

initiated a number of projects. We are active to some extent on everything listed except the last two items. To achieve success on all of the items in the list, however, will require a greater effort from more people.

It is my own feeling that strength nationally must come first. To have one or two members per country is not enough. Countries require a number of members who are working, then we can get the association working better collectively: as an association we must walk before we can run. We have just adopted a new structure and, more particularly, a new constitution: we cannot change the world overnight. We are in no position to popularise geoconservation internationally when some countries have yet to establish a network of human contacts and a network of sites.

Perhaps we need to work on a limited number of projects to begin with in, say, the next three years. Our meetings are fixed and they take much effort to arrange. Other than these, I suggest we should put our effort into one or two key projects only, working with greatest vigour to

complete joint projects like the 'manual', like the Ice-limit project. How about completing the manual soon.

**Bill Wimbleton**



## **New Law of Nature Conservation in Poland**

A new act of nature conservation was confirmed by the Polish Parliament in October 1991. It is the third legislation on this matter in Poland after two previous dating on 1934 and 1949. After the new law, the organisation and execution problems dealing with nature and landscape conservation are managed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry.

The older legislations gave a possibility to protect inanimate objects as nature reserves and monuments, while the new one established an additional kind - the Site of Inanimate Nature Documentation, a category unknown in the Polish regulations before. This is especially important for protection of the most interesting geological and geomorphological sites. In a general part of the new act the term

"conservation of geological heritage" was introduced first time as one of its principal aims.

Parallely the environmental management and conservation is regulated by another legislative act since 1981. According to the new law the categories of inanimate nature conservation could be described as follows:

1. Inanimate Nature Reserve - an area with interesting geological complexes or natural geomorphological localities of high scientific value.
2. Inanimate Nature Monument - a single object or small group of objects of the same type as well visible localities usually having aesthetic and historical values. The typical monuments are: tors, erratic boulders, springs, waterfalls, small caves, rock crevices and relatively permanent geological exposures as picturesque elements of landscape.
3. Site of Inanimate Nature Documentation - small area which can be compared with the nature monument. It is not distinguished on the surface and usually does not represent any aesthetical value. These sites are good documents of important stages of the

geological and geomorphological development of particular areas. They are interesting for scientific research and education too.

The typical sites are: geological and soil profiles, deposits containing fossils (esp. *locus typicus*), stratotypes, unique rocks, important sedimentation, microtectonic and mineralization structures, localities with natural morphodynamic processes and forms. Moreover interesting elements of inanimate nature are protected together with the biotical environment in different types of nature reserves and in national parks.

The new Law enacted two new categories for protection of landscape: Landscape Park and Area of Protected Landscape. A special category for protection of small area of aesthetical and historical value: Natural-Landscape Complex was also established.

**Zofia Alexandrowics**  
Polish Academy of Science  
Institute of Nature Conservation  
Krakow, Poland





## General letter introducing ProGEO

Some members have inquired about a template letter that could form the basis for correspondence when advertising ProGEO in their own country. The letter on page 8 and 9 may be of some use for this purpose.

Bill Wimbleton



## Achievements of geological heritage conservation in Poland

In 1991 the document "State ecological politics" was approved by Polish Parliament. It defines the principles of realization of International Declaration of Ecodevelopment. The nature and environment conservation for present-day and future generations is the central idea of this declaration. The grounds for the realization of ecological politics and Agenda 21 as a programme for activity according to the Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro '92) are being prepared in Poland now. Some elements of these grounds are also connected with inanimate nature

conservation. The documents and activity effects are following:

1. The new Nature Conservation Act (1991) - see above.
2. Since 1990 governmental "Lithosphere conservation" programme has been applied in Poland. It is co-ordinated by the State Geological Institute included in EUROPROBE, the European programme for lithosphere studies. The conservation and protection of geological exposures, which have scientific and didactic values is the one of the Polish programme purposes. The Institute of Nature Conservation of Polish Academy of Sciences participates in the studies of this problem. The model system for outer Carpathians conservation was worked out in the framework of this cooperation. The selected area, which is characterized by great physiographic differentiation and formal elimination (according to the code) of lithostratigraphic units exemplify this.
3. The general stock-taking of environment and nature state including the abiotic elements have been initiated. It is performed in particular areas, which belong to basic local

communities. The Institute of Nature Conservation participates in this action.

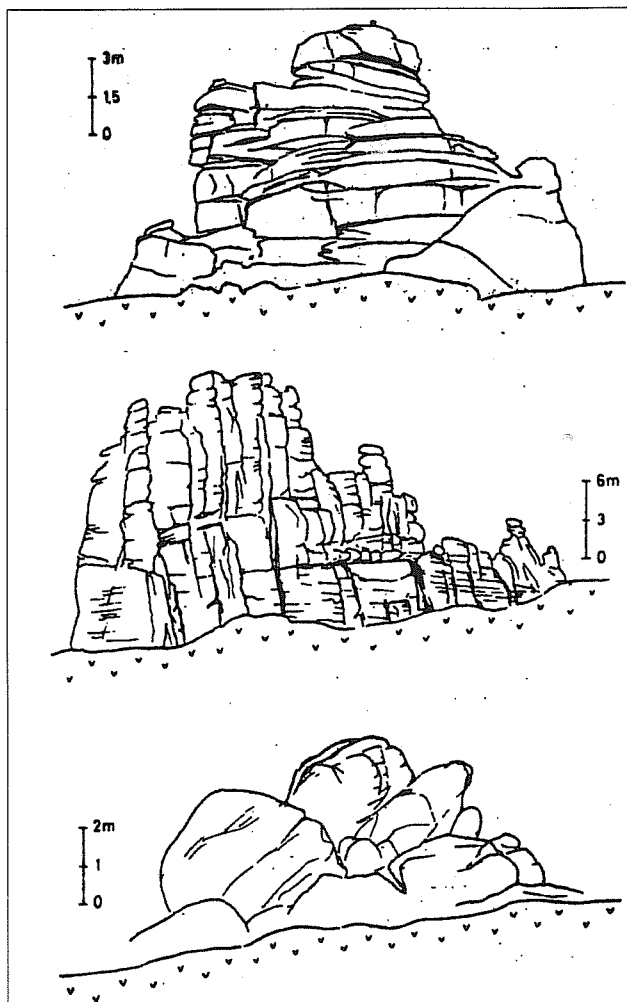
4. The first sheets of map in the scale of 1:50,000 of "Geologically-economical map of Poland" series appeared in print (Prof. Z. Rubinowski from the State Geological Institute is the editor). Besides the geological contents, there are the data concerning the already protected and

planned to conservation, natural, varying in type, areas and objects.

5. Since 1992 four new nature reserves were established.

(to be continued on page 10)

The periglacial felsenmeers (2 reserves) in the Holy Cross Mts., the areas rich with springs in the Carpathians and in the moranic region are protected there. At present, there are 46 nature reserves specially created for the



Granite tors in the Karkonosze Mts and the Jelenia Góra Depression, example of valuable Polish geotops (Alexandrowicz, Z. 1990. The optimum system of tors protection in Poland. *Ochr. Przyr. Ann.* 47: 277-308).



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## **European Association for the Conservation of the Geological Heritage**

### **Association Européenne pour la protection du Patrimoine Géologique**

### **Europäische Gesellschaft für Geotopschutz**

The European Association for the Conservation of the Geological Heritage (ProGEO) works to promote the protection of Europe's typical and important landscapes, as well as its many-faceted inheritance of geological phenomena. They are all of the greatest scientific and cultural importance. ProGEO aims also to raise awareness of this aspect of conservation by putting Earth-science site and terrain conservation on a par with the conservation of biological areas of interest. We aim to work collaboratively in the protection of landscapes and sites and in research into all aspects of conservation, including the formulation of state and European policy and legislation, for site management, education, interpretation and physical methods of protection and maintenance. ProGEO's concerns and its broader aims are set out in *Naturopa*, the journal of the Council of Europe (see *Naturopa* 65).

Europe was the birthplace of geology as a science. Its rocks, fossils, minerals and landforms have inspired the great figures of World geology over the last two centuries. At times they have fascinated the general public, and are still an inspiration to modern researchers and students at all levels. Our knowledge of the Earth, of continental collision, of volcanic activity, of the evolution of life, of the ascent of Man, and of the creation of all the mineral resources on which our culture depends, is based on an understanding of essential rock and landform localities. Therefore, to maintain the sites on which our knowledge is founded and from which new discoveries will undoubtedly come, it is essential to preserve this inheritance.

ProGEO exists not just to further conservation on behalf of scientists, but for society as whole, and it is necessary for conservationists to explain the relevance of Earth heritage conservation in our daily lives, and to put comprehensible and coherent information (on sites and regions) before a wider public. In furtherance of these aims, the "First International Symposium on the Conservation our Geological Heritage" was held at Digne, France in June 1991 under the patronage of UNESCO and ProGEO. Our membership includes all kinds professional conservation practitioners and all types of Earth scientists; they are involved in conservation as planners, as managers of their state heritage, and of reserves, in geological surveys, as research scientists, interpreters of sites, museum workers, educationalists and those concerned with tourism, as well as workers in the private sector and all aspects of consultancy. The Council of the European Association includes some of the best-known and most respected names in Earth-science Conservation.

ProGEO is an association that is open to all; it developed from the former European Working Group on Earth-Science Conservation (EWGESC), an informal group first convened by colleagues in the Netherlands to exchange ideas and experiences; a group of those working in conservation, mostly for governmental organisations responsible for conservation in their individual state. The old aims of EWGESC still hold true, and because in the membership we have some of the most able scientists, interpreters, educationalists, planners and conservationists involved in the geoscience sphere, there exists the greatest potential for collaborative physical and theoretical projects, and to learn from one another on all these subjects and many more.

Most of Europe's nations are now represented in the new European Association, reformed from the EWGESC. The Association is striving, particularly, to develop stronger links with colleagues in middle and eastern Europe, and to achieve their full involvement. ProGEO's new structure and constitution requires that national representatives, elected by conservationists in their own country, should guide the future of the Association; which means that ProGEO is the beginning of a truly international and democratic body which has the capacity and the legitimate right to speak for Earth-science conservation in Europe: it is thus the only conservation body of its kind. In May-June 1995 ProGEO will hold its first General Assembly, in Sweden and Finland under the auspices of the Geological Surveys of those countries and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency: this will be the first such open forum where the future of Earth-science conservation in Europe will be discussed by national representatives.

The inspiration of the First International Symposium at Digne provided a great momentum for the developing cause of European Earth-science conservation. It also provided an ethos to underpin the day-to-day efforts of ProGEO and us all in the form of the Digne Declaration (attached). This gives us a philosophical basis for our work to preserve our rich European, and indeed global, heritage. The Second International Symposium ProGEO '96, the successor to the great success of Digne, is planned for 1996 in Roma.





Earth-science conservation in Europe is, comparatively, still weak. ProGEO intends to give it a stronger voice, by acting as a forum for discussion of issues, as a pressure group to advise and influence policy makers, and as an advisory service for colleagues in the field. It intends to assist fellow workers and projects in those regions and states where conservation initiatives need our support. We look to a future where physical landscape and site conservation are equally regarded alongside other forms of conservation, and given equal prominence in all the states of Europe. Through the evolution of the former EWGES into the European Association (ProGEO), we have developed an open and representative body in which all can participate to protect our common geological, landform and landscape patrimony. ProGEO provides the only focus for the many individuals and organisations who have long been proclaiming the need for greater efforts, nationally and internationally, to conserve this irreplaceable heritage.

ProGEO Executive Committee

## International Declaration of the Rights of the Memory of the Earth

1. Planets, like people, have their own life history - they are born, they mature and die. For planets, as for people, each life history is unique: the time has come to recognise the uniqueness of the Earth.
2. Our planet, the Earth, is the only bond which unites all mankind. We are, each and everyone of us, linked to the Earth, and it is the link between us, and indeed all life .
3. The Earth is 4.5 thousand million years old and the cradle of life; life which has undergone many metamorphoses and renewals through geological time. Its long evolution, and slow maturation, have shaped the environment in which we live.
4. Our history and the history of the Earth cannot be separated. Its origins are our origins, its history is our history and its future will be our future.
5. The surface of the Earth is our environment. This environment is different, not only from that of the past, but also from that of the future. We are the Earth's companions for the present, but are only transient, and with time we will pass.
6. Just as an ancient tree retains the record of its life and growth, the Earth retains 'memories' of the past inscribed both in its depths and on its surface, in the rocks and in the landscape, a record which can be read and translated.
7. We have always been aware of the need to preserve our memories - our cultural heritage. Now the time has come to protect our natural heritage. The past of the Earth is no less important than that of Man. It is time for us to learn to protect this Earth heritage, and by doing so learn about the past of the Earth, to learn to read this 'book', the record of our geological heritage in the rocks and the landscape, which was mostly written before our advent.
8. Man and the Earth share a common heritage, of which we and our governments are but the custodians. Each and every human-being should understand that the slightest damage could lead to irreversible losses for the future. In undertaking any form of development, we should respect the singularity of this heritage.
9. The participants of the First International Symposium on the Conservation of our Geological Heritage, including over 100 specialists from more than 30 nations, urgently request all national and international authorities to take into consideration and to protect this heritage, by all the legal, financial and organisational measures that may be necessary."

conservation of geological or geomorphological values. All nature reserves in Poland amount to about 1050 and they cover 0.5 % of the country's territory.

Two new national parks were established. The first one Biebrza National Park covers the surface of 592 sq km with the protected zone of 668 sq km. It comprises the unique in Europe natural river system, vast swamps and peat bogs in the postglacial area of north-eastern lowlands of Poland.

The second one - the Stolowe Mts. National Park covers the surface of 63 sq km with the protected zone of about 106 sq km. It has unusual, geological significance as a platform massif of cross-stratified sandstones of Upper Cretaceous. Numerous, unusually shaped tors occurs there. There are 19 national parks in Poland now. They cover a surface of 0.6% of the country's territory.

6. This year, the International Earth Day in Poland was the day of an appeal for Vistula river protection and occasion of protest against its contamination, flood control and construction works. That day was also

devoted to the defence of natural course of Vistula River, which is the queen of Polish rivers, of natural landscape of its valley as well as its forest and vegetal biotopes.

In Vistula valley from its springs in the Carpathians up to the estuary to the Baltic Sea, there are many reserves and protected landscape areas, which show the differentiation of Polish nature in the south-north profile.

7. The special issue of *Przegląd Geologiczny* (Polish Geological Review) was edited to commemorate the Earth Day. It was, first of all, devoted to domestic as well as world-wide problems of geological heritage conservation.

8. The special issue of popular-scientific magazine devoted to geological heritage conservation in the medieval salt mine in Wieliczka near Krakow is being prepared now.

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