Strengthening the Role of Geoscience in Public Decision-making

Geoscience is among the least overtly-relevant sciences to the public, but arguably among the most important for addressing the “wicked” problems of sustainability. But strengthening the role geoscience in policy-making, especially at the national level, is hard. The complicated, unsolvable, and inherently political nature of challenges like anthropogenic climate change can provoke cynicism and apathy. Improving earth science literacy among the public is a critical piece of the puzzle, but it is not sufficient. Geoscientists, geoscience students, and non-majors alike must advocate for the role of science in policy solutions. Fortunately, the transdisciplinary nature of sustainability provides a venue for engaging all of these groups. In this talk, I will describe several models for strengthening the role of geoscience in public-decision making through science advocacy, service-learning, and alternative career paths for geoscientists.

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