

MINERAL DIVERSITY PRESERVATION -CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

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Unlike the problems of biological diversity, which for more than 15 years have received a standing attention, no initiatives for the preservation of the mineral diversity are known to be prepared and accepted yet. No coordinated actions dealing with the problem have been carried out. The mineral diversity is of utmost importance for the sustainable development of biosphere as a substratum for the existence of various forms of life. On the other hand the minerals are the basis of our developed technological civilization. Unlike the living creatures the minerals do not reproduce and once worked out they are lost for ever. Following the doctrine for sustainable development, preserved mineral diversity should be understood as a combination of the minerals from region, which should be preserved in-situ and ex-situ, in quantity and quality which can satisfy the scientific and cultural needs of today's and incoming generations. Mineral diversity of a given region is the combination of all the forms of the mineral substance, which are described in several levels - mineral individuals, species, aggregates and associations. The mineral diversity is destroyed by both the natural geological processes and the human activities. Each part of the Earth to be destroyed in the process of mining needs preservation of its mineral diversity according to the degree of uniqueness - world-wide, national, regional or local. The identification of the mineral diversity, its preservation should lay the foundations of a new branch of the mineralogy, which can be named preserving mineralogy.