

A percepção geográfica da paisagem cárstica como instrumento de preservação (Geographical interpretation of karst landscapes as instrument of preservation)

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Abstract

This paper presents a preliminary study of the interpretation of ordinary limestone landscapes in Central Minas Gerais, Brazil. Its purpose is to show how this sort of interpretation can facilitate the definition of how people 'see' caves and their ecosystem, thus furnishing a basis for the development of strategies for conservation and management programs. The author also reviews how the science of Geography undertook the study of landscapes as a whole, progressing from the first studies in the XIX century until the present day.

Speleology is a multiple science, involving intertwined threads which function as a whole. This complexity reveals how people interact with the natural landscape and should facilitate the protection of karst ecosystems by encouraging more efficient programs of management, thus reducing environmental degradation to a more acceptable level.