

A testimony of geological heritage in Portugal presenting the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development

Dinosaur tracks should be preserved *in situ* integrated into walking paths so visitors can observe them in their geological context. The sites where they are preserved are an important component of the Geological Heritage. To demonstrate this, it should be mentioned that the Sesimbra GEOcircuit received an honourable mention on National Geological Heritage Day and World Earth Day for the participation in the 2013 Geoconservation Prize, awarded by the Portuguese group of the European Association for the Conservation of Geological Heritage. While it is preferable to choose to preserve footprints *in situ* it is possible to collect some tracks when their integrity in the tracksite is in danger, so they can be stored in a museum and be available for future research. Another way to preserve the information associated to the tracks is by using 3D photogrammetry, a technique which uses computer software to match multiple photos of an object taken from different directions and angles into one 3D digital model of that object. Scientists who study tracks can also produce latex moulds of original footprints and trackways and use them to make plaster replica casts. This allows the study of the three-dimensional details of tracks. Thus, besides the enhancement and addition of new scientific knowledge it will be also possible to virtually guarantee the protection and the “everlasting” preservation of footprints from important tracksites.

