

**Annual Geological Conference 2005**  
**Allson Klana Resort, Seremban, Negeri Sembilan**  
**4-5 June 2005**

**ABSTRACT OF PAPERS**

**Popularising Geology – Presenting The Past, Present And Future In The Earth Sciences**

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**Abstract:** The Earth Sciences have come a long way since the birth of Geology as a systematic scientific study of the earth about 250 years ago. From its early start in Europe where the two principally opposing schools of uniformitarianism popularised by James Hutton and Charles Lyell and the catastrophists led by Georges Cuvier, it has developed into a modern science backed up by the most sophisticated of equipment to explain the earth's evolution through plate tectonics. All of these is most fascinating to the geologists but often is lost to the layman because of the specialised language that is often used.

There is a need to explain such lofty concepts in terms that are both attractive and understandable so that the history of the universe, the earth and its inhabitants can be put within his grasp. From its history, we need to bring him to the present and show him how geology affects his life and also to the future to show him how he and his descendants will be affected by the choices he makes concerning the earth today.

This then is the task of the geologist in popularising his science and helping his fellowman to know the earth better. It is not an easy task but it can be a fulfilling and noble one if we put our hearts to it and begin to see things from a layman's perspective. We then draw him into our world of geology by presenting to him with various examples of how we study, understand and apply our knowledge of the earth.

An opportunity to do so was in my recent plenary lecture titled MAKING ROCKS TALK – DECIPHERING THE PAST, UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE at the COSTAM Malaysian Science and Technology Congress in April this year. The Society has invited me to present it as a keynote at this conference.