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Geoevents as a New Category of Geotourism: A Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Foundations

Abstract. Planned events are increasingly recognized as important components of tourism development and destination promotion, whereas geotourism research has primarily focused on geoheritage, geodiversity, geoeducation, and geotourism products. The article conceptualizes geoevents as a new category of events that directly utilize geographical space, geodiversity, and geoheritage as their fundamental thematic and organizational components. It presents a conceptual synthesis integrating event studies, geography, geotourism, geoheritage, and UNESCO Global Geopark literature. Under the proposed theoretical framework geoevents are viewed as tourism resources, tourism attractions, and tourism products. Taking into account four constitutive dimensions of geoevents – spatial-environmental, socio-cultural, geoeducational, and geotourism-economic – the author proposes an expert-based preliminary assessment framework for assessing the geographical character of particular geoevents. The framework bridges the gap between event studies and geotourism by providing coherent theoretical foundations and a practical guidance for UNESCO Global Geoparks, aspiring geoparks, protected areas, museums, geoeducation centres, and other institutions interested in developing geographically grounded tourism products and educational initiatives.

Keywords: geoevents; geotourism; geoheritage; geodiversity; tourism product

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1. Introduction

Over the past decades, planned events have become an increasingly important component of contemporary social, cultural, and economic life. Their growing significance has led to the emergence of a distinct field of research encompassing event studies, event management, and event tourism, focusing on events as multidimensional phenomena that influence destinations, local communities, and tourism development (Getz, 2008; Getz & Page, 2019). Today, events are widely recognized as effective instruments for place branding, place marketing, cultural promotion, and community development, while simultaneously contributing to local and regional economic growth. Their ability to attract visitors, create memorable experiences, and strengthen the identity and competitiveness of destinations has made them one of the key components of the contemporary experience economy.

The relationships between events and tourism have been extensively examined in the literature. Event tourism is widely recognized as an important segment of the tourism industry, encompassing travel undertaken primarily to participate in planned events such as festivals, concerts, exhibitions, conferences, sporting events, and cultural celebrations (Getz, 2008; Marczak, 2015). Numerous studies have demonstrated that events enhance destination attractiveness, stimulate tourist flows, extend tourism seasons, and generate socio-cultural and economic benefits for host communities (Connell et al., 2015; Laing, 2018; Getz & Page, 2019). Moreover, the growing importance of planned events in contemporary societies has sometimes been described as the “eventisation of culture”, reflecting the increasing role of organised experiences in leisure, tourism, and social life (Zduniak, 2017).

Within geographical research, events have traditionally been examined primarily from the perspectives of tourism and destination development (Getz & Page, 2016). More recent studies, however, increasingly emphasize that place and geographical space should not be regarded merely as passive settings for events but rather as active components shaping their authenticity, meanings, and participants' experiences (Getz & Page, 2019; Ash et al., 2023; Ong & Coetzee, 2025). Events frequently contribute to strengthening local identity, reinforcing connections with heritage, promoting the principles of sustainable development, and fostering relationships between visitors and host communities. Consequently, the geographical context has become one of the key dimensions for interpreting contemporary events.

The relationship between events and geographical space is particularly evident in geotourism. Since the emergence of this concept, geotourism has evolved from an approach focused primarily on geological heritage toward a broader perspective encompassing landscapes, geodiversity, surface waters, cultural her-

itage, local communities, and sustainable regional development (Ruban, 2015; Ólafsdóttir & Tverijonaite, 2018). Contemporary geotourism increasingly employs events as instruments of geoeducation, heritage interpretation, destination promotion, and visitor engagement. Geological festivals, mineral fairs, geopark events, thematic walks, science festivals, and mining heritage events represent only selected examples of initiatives that use geodiversity and geoheritage (understood as geological heritage of scientific, educational, cultural, or aesthetic value) as their principal thematic focus (Miśkiewicz, 2023, 2024; Allan & Dowling, 2023; Štrba et al., 2025).

Despite the growing importance of such initiatives, the literature still lacks a coherent conceptual framework for interpreting events directly embedded in geographical phenomena and processes, landscapes, and geoheritage. Existing studies have generally considered such initiatives as tourism attractions, tourism products, educational activities, or individual geotourism events. Although the term 'geo-event' has occasionally appeared in the literature (e.g., Brilha, 2010; Miśkiewicz, 2024), it has been largely restricted to geological and palaeontological festivals and has not yet been developed into a broader theoretical category. Furthermore, event studies have only rarely attempted to systematise events from a geographical perspective, despite the fact that many contemporary events explicitly draw upon landscapes, natural processes, geodiversity, environmental change, and the interactions between society and the natural environment. This research gap calls for a more comprehensive conceptual framework capable of integrating the diverse forms of events associated with geographical space and geographical knowledge. Such an approach could provide valuable insights not only for theoretical interpretation but also for practical applications, including event planning, destination management, geoeducation, and geotourism development, thereby contributing to more sustainable forms of tourism.

The present study therefore aims to redefine and conceptualise geevents as a category of events within geotourism. To achieve this objective, the article develops the theoretical foundations of the concept through a synthesis of literature from event studies, tourism, geography, and geotourism. Furthermore, it proposes a conceptual framework that identifies the constitutive dimensions, defining characteristics, and interpretative perspectives of geevents. In doing so, the study broadens the theoretical scope of geotourism research, establishes a foundation for the future classification and evaluation of geographically grounded events, and provides a framework to support the conscious development of innovative geotourism products.

To address the conceptual, analytical, and research gap, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What theoretical premises justify distinguishing geoevents as a separate category of planned events?
2. Which constitutive dimensions and defining characteristics distinguish geoevents from other categories of events and determine their relationships with geographical space?

Accordingly, the primary objective of this study is to introduce and conceptualise geoevents as a distinct category of events that utilise geographical resources. More specifically, the study seeks to develop the theoretical foundations of the geoevent concept, identify its constitutive dimensions and defining characteristics, and propose preliminary classification and assessment frameworks. Furthermore, it aims to explain the relationships between geoevents, geographical space, and geotourism resources, while highlighting the potential applications of the proposed concept in geotourism development and UNESCO Global Geopark management.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Conceptual Development

2.1. Rationale for the Conceptual Framework

The concept of geoevents emerges from the growing importance of planned events in geotourism, geoeducation, and the promotion of geoheritage. Contemporary geoparks, museums, and geotourism destinations increasingly employ a wide variety of events to engage visitors, facilitate the interpretation of geological heritage, and strengthen local identity. Despite their considerable practical significance, such initiatives remain conceptually fragmented and are most often examined separately as tourism attractions, educational activities, festivals, or geotourism products. Consequently, the existing literature lacks a coherent theoretical framework that would enable their comprehensive interpretation from a geographical perspective. Existing event classifications only rarely acknowledge direct relationships between events and geographical space, landscapes, geodiversity, and geoheritage. This gap limits both the advancement of theoretical research and the practical inclusion of geographically grounded events in destination management and geotourism planning. Therefore, there is a clear need to develop a conceptual framework that systematizes the terminology, identifies the constitutive dimensions of geoevents, and explains their relationships with geographical space and tourism. Such a framework could provide a foundation for future research while also supporting

the conscious development of innovative geotourism products in UNESCO Global Geoparks, aspiring geoparks, and other tourism destinations.

In theoretical terms, the proposed conceptual framework contributes to the existing body of knowledge in three complementary ways. First, it contributes to event studies by conceptualising geographical space as a constitutive element rather than merely the setting of an event. Second, it extends the conceptual scope of geotourism by introducing events as a dynamic and temporary form of utilising geodiversity and geoheritage. Third, it integrates geographical, tourism, and event perspectives into a single conceptual framework for identifying and analysing geevents.

2.2. Literature Review and Terminological Analysis

The conceptual framework proposed in this study was developed following a literature review combined with a terminological and conceptual analysis. The review covers publications representing the fields of event studies (Getz & Page, 2019; Ash et al., 2023), event tourism (Getz, 2008; Getz & Page, 2016; Liang 2018), geography, geotourism, geoheritage, and UNESCO Global Geoparks research (Gray, 2008; Martini et al., 2022; Abramowicz & Tritt, 2026; Gianoglio et al., 2026). Particular attention was paid to studies examining the relationships between planned events and geographical space, geoeducation, geoheritage interpretation, and tourism destination development (Hose, 2000; Ho & McKercher, 2004; Allan & Dowling, 2023; Ong & Coetzee, 2025). The literature review includes both seminal works addressing events as tourism attractions and tourism products (e.g., Lew, 1987; MacCannell, 2001; Swarbrooke, 2002) and more recent publications devoted to geotourism events and so-called geevents (e.g., Brilha, 2010; Sütő et al., 2020; Miśkiewicz, 2023, 2024; Allan & Dowling, 2023; Štrba et al., 2025). In addition, a terminological analysis was conducted to examine the use of the key terms ('geoevent', 'geotourism event') and related concepts found in the literature (e.g. geological festivals, geological picnics, geopresentations, geoconferences, competitions of geographical or geological knowledge). The analysis revealed considerable terminological inconsistency and the absence of a coherent theoretical framework for the comprehensive interpretation of events based on geographical values. The term 'geoevent' has primarily been applied in the context of geological and palaeontological festivals and other events related to geological heritage, with limited consideration of the broader spectrum of events associated with geographical space (Miśkiewicz, 2016). It is worth noting that, regardless of the terminology employed, activities related to geevents tend to focus predominantly on the physical-geographical environment, most often within the organisational frameworks of geoparks or in connection with

events such as International Geodiversity Day and Earth Day, while themes related to social and economic geography are addressed much less frequently (Khanh et al., 2024; Khoso et al., 2024; Hooton et al., 2025). This indicates that the existing understanding of geoevents remains largely rooted in the physical-geographical dimension of geographical space, with the social and economic dimensions receiving comparatively limited attention. Consequently, the identified terminological and conceptual inconsistencies, together with the limited consideration of the social and economic dimensions of geographical space, provided the basis for defining the research gap and developing the theoretical framework for the concept of geoevents proposed in this study.

2.3. Conceptual Development Procedure

The conceptualisation of geoevents consisted of three consecutive stages. The first stage involved identifying and analysing key concepts found in the literature on event studies, event tourism, geography, geotourism, geoheritage, and UNESCO Global Geoparks. Particular attention was paid to the defining characteristics of planned events, their functions in tourism and destination development, and their relationships with geographical space and geoheritage resources. In addition, publications on geotourism products, geoeducation, and events related to geoheritage interpretation were examined to identify existing approaches to geographically grounded events.

The second stage focused on the synthesis and interpretation of the collected knowledge. Based on the literature review, three principal perspectives for interpreting geoevents were identified, namely tourism resources, tourism attractions, and tourism products. Subsequently, the constitutive dimensions and defining characteristics of geoevents were identified and systematised, including the relationships between events and geographical space, landscapes, geoheritage, and geotourism resources, as well as attributes that distinguish geoevents from other categories of planned events.

The third stage consisted in developing an original conceptual framework for geoevents, including a definition of the concept, a preliminary classification framework, and preliminary assessment criteria for identifying events that exhibit direct or indirect geoevent characteristics. The proposed framework integrates the theoretical foundations of event studies and geotourism, providing a basis for future empirical research as well as practical applications in geotourism management and destination planning.

2.4. Empirical and Practical Background of the Concept

The proposed concept of geoevents is also grounded in the author's long-term academic, educational, and practical experience in the fields of geography, tourism, and geotourism. These experiences made it possible to identify recurring organisational patterns, thematic dimensions, and spatial relationships characteristic of events based on geographical resources. Consequently, the proposed concept is not only theoretically grounded but draws on practical insights that can facilitate the planning, development, and management of geoevents in geotourism destinations.

3. Conceptualisation of Geoevents

3.1. Geoevent as a Category of Planned Events

Following the literature review, an attempt was made to conceptualise geoevents as a distinct category of planned events. According to the proposed conceptual model, geoevents exist at the intersection of three fundamental spheres: geographical space (Tuan, 1977), geodiversity (Gray, 2008), and planned events (Getz, 2008) (Fig. 1).

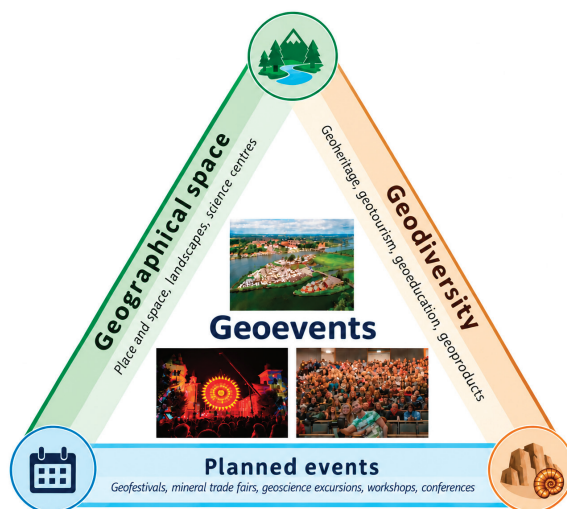


Fig. 1. Conceptual model of geoevents: the intersection of geographical space, geodiversity and planned events.

Source of photographs: Top: Viking and Slavic Festival, Wolin – J. Niewinczany; bottom left: Light Move Festival, Łódź – D. Abramowicz; bottom right: Tourism Days Festival, Poznań; own conceptual elaboration, graphical support ChatGPT

Geographical space and place do not merely locate events; they also provide the primary context through which those events are interpreted. Geodiversity determines their thematic focus, narrative, and overall character. The body of knowledge developed within event studies provides the organisational, functional, and marketing foundations necessary for the design and implementation of such events. Consequently, geoevents can be understood as planned events whose identity is shaped by the values of geographical space and geoheritage, integrating educational, social, tourism, and promotional functions.

These assumptions provide the basis for a conceptual framework, which systematises the interpretation, constitutive dimensions, and potential practical applications of geoevents. The proposed framework illustrates a logical sequence including the identification of geoevents, their definition (conceptualisation), and the formulation of the principal directions for their analysis, planning, and staging (Fig. 2).

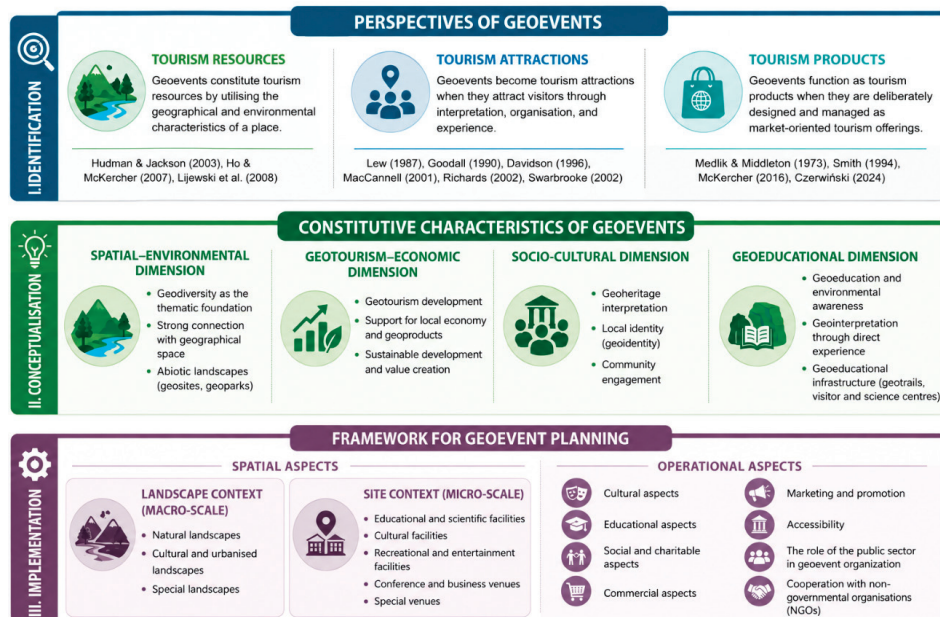


Fig. 2. Conceptual framework for the identification, conceptualization, and implementation of geoevents.

Source: Own conceptual elaboration, based on: Czerwiński (2023), Davidson (1996), Richards (2002), Smith (1994), graphical support ChatGPT

Figure 2 summarizes the main conceptual dimensions of geoevents and indicates the principal directions for their interpretation, planning, and implementation. The framework distinguishes the ontological status of geoevents from their

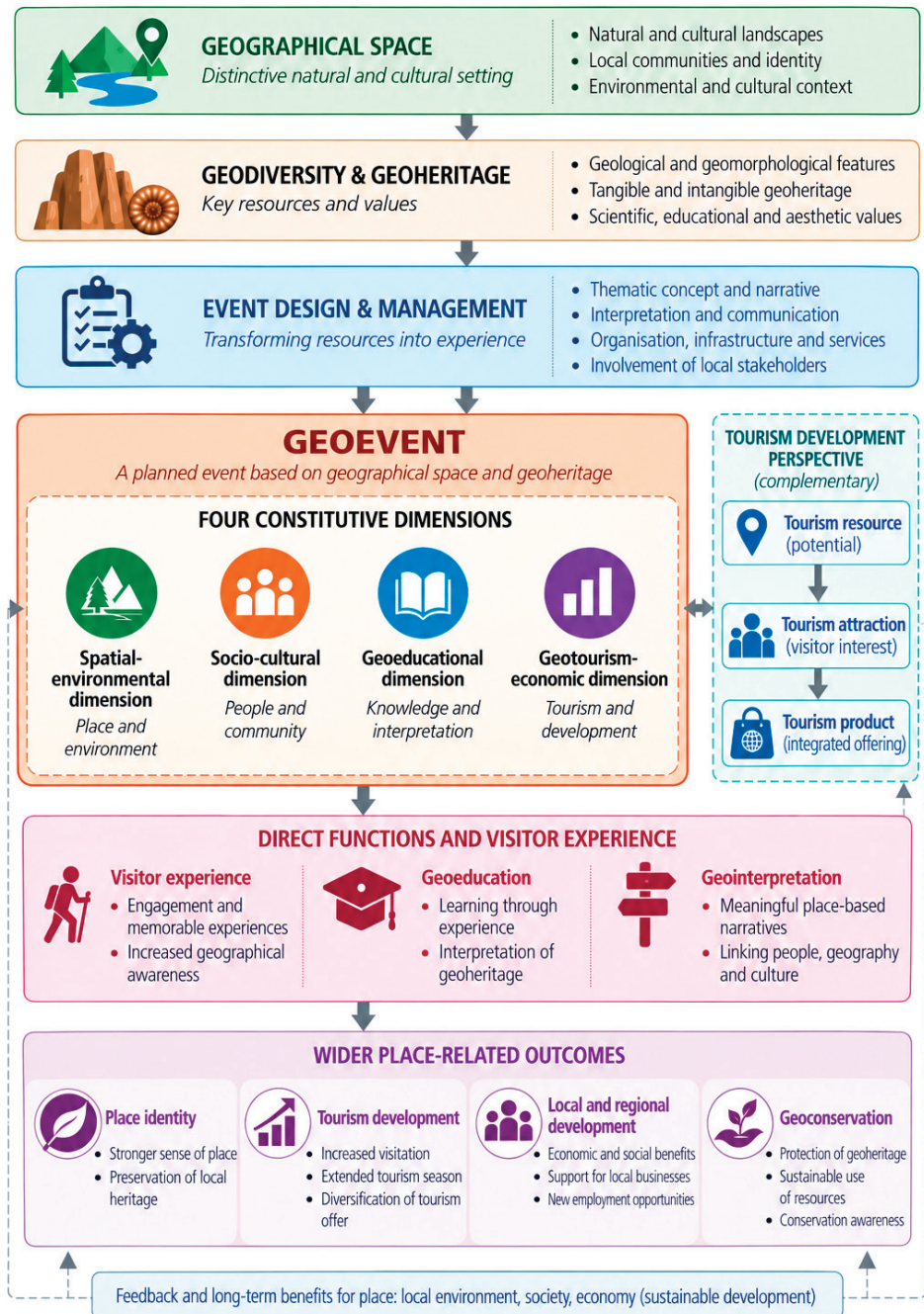


Fig. 3. Conceptual model of geoevent functioning.

Source: Own conceptual elaboration, graphical support ChatGPT

potential tourism functions. Geoevents are fundamentally a category of planned events. From a tourism perspective, however, they can be interpreted in terms of their three complementary functions: as tourism resources, tourism attractions, and tourism products. According to the first perspective, geoevents represent a distinct category of tourism resources, which exploit the resources of geographical space, including geodiversity and geoheritage, thus providing the foundation for the development of tourism functions within a given area (Hudman & Jackson, 2003; Lijewski et al., 2008). As tourism products, geoevents can be deliberately designed and managed to integrate the resources and distinctiveness of geographical space with tourism services, infrastructure, and visitor experiences (Lew, 1987; MacCannell, 2001). Seen from the third perspective, geoevents are tourism products, designed and managed in order to integrate the resources and distinctiveness of geographical space with tourism services, infrastructure, and visitor experiences (Medlik & Middleton, 1973; McKercher, 2016). These three functions are not mutually exclusive; rather, they represent successive levels of tourism development – from the tourism potential associated with a geoevent, through its capacity to attract visitors, to its development as an integrated tourism product. Building on these complementary perspectives, geoevents are furthermore construed as functional processes rather than merely as an analytical category. Figure 3 illustrates the relationships through which geographical space, geodiversity and geoheritage are incorporated into the design and interpretation of planned events, resulting in geoevents and their associated functions and outcomes.

Figure 3 illustrates the functional relationships underlying the geoevent concept and highlights its theoretical contribution. The model contributes to event studies by incorporating geographical space as a constitutive element of planned events, while extending the scope of geotourism by emphasizing the temporal and dynamic character of events. It also integrates geographical space, geodiversity, geoheritage, and event organization into a single conceptual construct, through which geographical resources are interpreted, experienced, and transformed into tourism, educational, social, and conservation outcomes.

3.2. Conceptual Boundaries of Geoevents

As described above, geoevents are conceptualised as a distinct category of planned events that exploit the resources and distinctiveness of geographical space. The following definition provides the basis for identifying their constitutive characteristics and helps to further develop the concept. A geoevent is defined as a planned event whose location (and/or geographical space), thematic focus, form, or mode of organisation is depends on geographical aspects, including physical-geograph-

ical, landscape, cultural, and socio-economic characteristics. A defining feature of a geoevent is the interpretation, experience, and use of geographical space in ways that promote a place or region, enhance knowledge and understanding of its characteristics, strengthen its local or regional identity, and foster awareness of the need for its protection and sustainable development. The term 'geoevent' is used as a broader conceptual category than descriptive terms referring to events focused on particular aspects of geotourism, geoheritage, geology, or geoeducation. Such terms may describe specific thematic or functional forms of events, whereas a geoevent is defined by the fundamental role of geographical space and its characteristics in the event's interpretation, experience, and organization. As such, geoevents constitute a distinct category of planned events where geographical space is not merely a setting but a fundamental interpretative and functional component. Depending on their degree of development and integration with tourism, geoevents can function as tourism resources, tourism attractions, and/or tourism products.

3.3. Constitutive Dimensions of Geoevents

The structure of a geoevent can be described in terms of four constitutive dimensions that determine its spatial, thematic, and organizational distinctiveness (Fig. 2). These are the spatial-environmental dimension, the socio-cultural dimension, the geoeducational dimension, and the geotourism-economic dimension.

From the spatial-environmental perspective, geoevents exploit geographical and landscape resources as their principal thematic and organizational foundation. Geodiversity constitutes their conceptual core, shaping both the thematic focus and the overall character of the event. Geoevents can be organized at local, regional, or supra-regional scales while remaining firmly embedded in a specific geographical setting, such as a UNESCO Global Geopark, or in the geodiversity represented by individual geosites. A representative example of this dimension is the GeoFestival held at Kadzielnia (Poland), a former limestone quarry designated as a geological nature reserve, where the event is directly linked to the distinctive geographical character and geological history of the region (Geonatura Kielce, 2026). In this case, the landforms themselves are an integral part of the programme, including guided geological walks across limestone outcrops, kayaking through the limestone valley, cave exploration, rope-access and caving competitions, and visits to the Geoeducation Centre.

From a socio-cultural and regional perspective, geoevents contribute to the development and reinforcement of local identity by bringing communities together and creating shared experiences rooted in geographical space. This dimension fosters emotional attachment to place while supporting the construction of narratives

about the region, its landscape, and its geoheritage, thereby strengthening local identity and the sense of belonging. A representative example is BarbórkoweLove, organized at the Coal Mining Museum in Zabrze (2026). Held as part of the annual St. Barbara's Day celebrations, the event takes the form of a traditional market that brings together residents and visitors to celebrate the mining heritage of Poland's Upper Silesia. Its programme includes guided underground tours, concerts, exhibitions, local food and handicraft markets, as well as educational workshops for children. Through these activities, the event promotes the industrial heritage of the region while strengthening social cohesion and reinforcing local identity by encouraging participation in a celebration deeply embedded in the cultural traditions of Upper Silesia.

Another dimension of geoevents is their educational role, i.e. geoeducation. By employing engaging and interactive forms of communication, geoevents facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, the development of geographical skills, and the formation of attitudes that foster a deeper understanding of geographical space. Particular importance is attached to the interpretation of physical-geographical and socio-environmental processes through geointerpretation, which enables participants to better understand the complexity of the natural and human environment. Representative examples include Earth Day celebrations organized by geological museums, geoparks, and geoeducation centres. During the Earth Day event at the Geological Museum of the Polish Geological Institute – National Research Institute in Warsaw (2026), visitors could explore more than thirty popular science stands offering lectures, demonstrations, and hands-on workshops devoted to rock types, mineral resources and their significance for the development of civilization, mining technologies, and environmental conservation. Consequently, the dissemination of geographical knowledge, the development of geographical competencies, and the promotion of pro-environmental attitudes constitute one of the principal constitutive dimensions that distinguish an event as a geoevent.

From a geotourism and economic perspective, geoevents contribute to tourism development by creating place-based experiences rooted in the resources and distinctiveness of geographical space. They stimulate visitor flows, support local economies, promote traditional crafts and geoproducts, and encourage geoconservation, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of destinations. This aspect is exemplified by the Lwówek Agate Summer Festival (2026), a recurring event dedicated to mineralogy and the geological heritage of Poland's Lower Silesia. Its programme includes mineral exhibitions and demonstrations, particularly those devoted to agates, together with workshops on agate prospecting and processing, enabling participants to engage directly with one of the region's characteristic geoproducts. At the same time, satellite events – including guided tours of the historic

Lwówek Town Hall, regional food markets, performances by local artists, and thematic field excursions – enhance the visitor experience while generating additional tourism expenditure and supporting the local economy. The festival, which attracted approximately 50,000 visitors in 2025, has become one of the region's leading tourism attractions. The festival's success has been recognised with several prestigious awards, including the Best Tourism Product awarded by the Polish Tourism Organisation in 2004 and the Lower Silesian Tourism Organisation Certificate in 2007 and illustrates how geoevents can simultaneously promote geoheritage, strengthen regional economies, and enhance the competitiveness of geotourism destinations.

The four dimensions described above represent complementary elements of the geoevent concept. To further clarify their theoretical status and explain why they are considered constitutive of the construct, Table 1 summarises their theoretical foundations, constitutive roles, and distinctive contributions.

Table 1. Theoretical foundations and constitutive roles of the four dimensions of geoevents

Dimension	Theoretical foundation	Why constitutive?	Question addressed
Spatial-environmental	Geographical space, place, geodiversity	A geoevent must have a substantive relationship with geographical space; without this relationship, it cannot be distinguished from other planned events.	Where and through what geographical characteristics is the event grounded?
Socio-cultural	Place identity, cultural geography, local heritage, community	Geographical space acquires social and cultural meaning through local identities, heritage, and community involvement. This dimension captures the human meanings attached to place.	How does the event relate to local identity, heritage, and community?
Geoeducational	Geoeducation, geographical knowledge, geointerpretation	A geoevent involves not only the presence or use of geographical characteristics, but also their interpretation, communication, or experiential understanding.	How are geographical characteristics interpreted and communicated?
Geotourism-economic	Geotourism, destination development, local economy, geoconservation	This dimension captures the transformation of geographical distinctiveness into tourism, economic, and conservation-related functions and its contribution to destination development.	How does the event generate tourism, economic, and conservation functions?

Source: Author's own elaboration

As shown in Table 1, the four dimensions address distinct but complementary aspects of the geoevent construct. The spatial-environmental dimension establishes its fundamental relationship with geographical space, the socio-cultural dimension captures the meanings and social processes associated with place, the geoeducational dimension represents the interpretation and communication of geographical knowledge, while the geotourism-economic dimension links the event to tourism, economic, and conservation functions. Thus, the dimensions should not be understood as mutually exclusive categories, but as complementary components that together define the multidimensional character of a geoevent.

3.4. Theoretical Propositions

The conceptual framework developed in this study provides the basis for a set of theoretical propositions concerning the nature, defining characteristics, and functional structure of geoevents. The propositions summarise the main assumptions underlying the concept and establish theoretical relationships between geographical space, geodiversity, geoheritage, event organization, and tourism functions. They are theory-based statements that can guide future empirical research and contribute to the further development and validation of the geoevent concept.

Proposition 1. The geographical distinctiveness of a place is a constitutive rather than contextual element of a geoevent.

A geoevent is fundamentally embedded in a particular geographical space, whose distinctive characteristics contribute to the event's identity, thematic content, interpretation, and participant experience. Geographical space therefore functions not merely as the physical setting in which an event takes place, but as an integral component of its conceptual and organizational structure. The stronger the dependence of an event on the distinctive characteristics of a particular place or region, the stronger the basis for considering geographical space a constitutive element of the event.

Proposition 2. The more strongly geodiversity and geoheritage are connected with the thematic and organisational structure of an event, the more aptly it can be classified as a geoevent.

Geodiversity and geoheritage constitute fundamental resources underlying the thematic and interpretative dimensions of geoevents. They can feature as merely incidental or supplementary references or be directly included in the core programme and participant experience. Accordingly, whether an event can be viewed as a geoevent is a matter of degree, depending on the extent to which geographical resources are part of its thematic, organizational, educational, and experiential structure.

Proposition 3. Geoevents combine functions of a tourism resource, attraction, and product, all of which in themselves represent different levels of tourism development rather than mutually exclusive categories.

Geoevents can simultaneously exploit the tourism potential of geographical space, attract visitors through place-based experiences, and operate as deliberately designed tourism products combining resources, infrastructure, services, interpretation, and visitor experiences. These perspectives should therefore be regarded

as complementary rather than alternative classifications. They reflect successive levels of tourism development, from the existence of geographical resources and their tourism potential, through their capacity to generate visitor interest, to their deliberate organization as integrated tourism products.

Proposition 4. The character of a geoevent is multidimensional and cannot be adequately determined by its thematic focus alone.

Although thematic content is an important component of a geoevent, its geographical character also depends on spatial-environmental, socio-cultural, geoeducational, and geotourism-economic dimensions. An event may therefore address geographical or geological topics without necessarily being a geoevent if its relationship with geographical space, local communities, geoeducation, tourism development, or geoconservation is limited. In order to categorise an event as a geoevent, one needs to consider interactions of multiple constitutive dimensions rather than rely on thematic classification alone.

Proposition 5. The socio-cultural and geoeducational dimensions extend the function of geoevents beyond the presentation of geological heritage towards place-based interpretation, community engagement, and the development of geographical awareness.

Geevents may contribute not only to the interpretation and promotion of geological and geomorphological heritage but also to the construction of place-based narratives, strengthening of local identity, engagement of local communities, and development of geographical knowledge and environmental awareness. The inclusion of these dimensions broadens the concept beyond narrowly defined geological or palaeontological events and reflects the wider relationship between geographical space, society, education, and tourism.

Taken together, these propositions define the principal theoretical assumptions of the geoevent concept. They emphasise the fact that geoevents are distinguished not by a single thematic characteristic but by the integrated role of geographical space, geodiversity, geoheritage, social and cultural context, education, and tourism functions. The propositions also provide a conceptual basis for the subsequent operationalisation of the geoevent concept through the proposed assessment framework and the degree to which an event can be categorised as a geoevent.

4. Conceptual Framework for Geoevents

Classification and Operationalisation of Geoevents

An event that directly fulfils all of the constitutive characteristics described above may therefore be classified as a geoevent. It should be recognized, however, that the boundaries of the concept remain inherently fluid, as many contemporary events incorporate geographical elements only indirectly or as complementary components. The mere location of an event in a geographically distinctive area, such as a geopark, does not in itself constitute sufficient grounds for classifying it as a geoevent. For example, a music festival held in a geopark would not necessarily qualify as a geoevent if its programme, narrative, and visitor experience are unrelated to the geographical characteristics of the place. Conversely, an event of a non-geological theme may exhibit a strong geoevent character when its programme, interpretation, and organization are deliberately integrated with the landscape, geodiversity, or geoheritage of the location. This is particularly evident in the case of events organised by national and landscape parks, whose primary objective is to promote nature conservation, most often with a focus on biodiversity and ecosystem functioning, including aquatic, forest, wetland, and mountain environments. In such cases, geographical space, landscape, or geoeducational aspects do not constitute the event's principal organisational framework but merely enhance its educational message, visitor experience, and regional identity. Similarly, events such as Earth Day may be considered geoevents only when geographical content and place-based interpretation constitute an integral component of the event rather than an occasional or supplementary element. Nevertheless, even partial incorporation of geographical resources may contribute to the promotion of geoheritage, the enhancement of environmental awareness, and the development of tourism functions within a destination. Thus, an event should not be classified as a geoevent solely on the basis of its location, title, or thematic reference to geography; rather, its classification depends on the extent to which geographical space and its characteristics are integrated into its thematic, interpretative, and organisational structure. Such events can therefore be regarded as exhibiting certain characteristics or partial dimensions of a geoevent.

The relationship between geoevents and geographical space can be understood at two complementary spatial scales: the macro scale, referring to the landscape that provides the broader setting for an event, and the micro scale, referring to the specific venue in which it takes place (Table 2). The landscape shapes the thematic focus, narrative, and overall character of a geoevent, whereas the choice of a venue

influences its organisational possibilities, forms of participant engagement, and the interpretation of geographical heritage.

Table 2. Typology of geoevent settings at the macro- and micro-spatial scales

Scale of analysis	Geographical setting	Representative type	Example of a geoevent
Landscape settings (macro-spatial scale)	Natural landscapes	Coasts and islands	Fossil Festival (Møns Klint, Møn, Denmark)
		Lakelands	Finnish Lakeland Geopark Week (Saimaa UNESCO Global Geopark, Lappeenranta Region, Finland)
		Mountains	Festiwal Klimatyczne Karkonosze (Jelenia Góra, Karpacz, Poland)
		Karst areas	Karsen Festival (Divača, Slovenia)
		Volcanic areas	Experience Volcano Festival (Volcano Village, Hawaii, USA)
		Forests	New Forest Thrive Festival (Ringwood, England, United Kingdom)
		River valleys	Danube Day (e.g. Vienna, Austria; Budapest, Hungary; Belgrade, Serbia; Ruse, Bulgaria; Galați, Romania)
		Wetlands	World Wetlands Day (Everglades National Park, Florida, USA; world-wide)
	Cultural and urbanized landscapes	Cities	English Riviera Geopark Festival (Torquay, England, United Kingdom)
		Rural areas	Cross-Channel Geopark Festival (Dover Castle, England, United Kingdom)
		Industrial landscapes	BarbórkoweLove (Zabrze, Poland)
		Revitalized areas	ExtraSchicht (Essen, Duisburg, Dortmund, Ruhr Region, Germany)
		Port environments	Cork Harbour Festival (Cork, Ireland)
	Special landscape settings	Protected areas	Araipe Geopark Week (Crato, Ceará, Brazil)
		Areas of distinctive cultural identity	International Festival of the Highland Folklore (Zakopane, Poland)
		Extreme landscapes	Desert Discovery Day (Tucson, Sonoran Desert, Arizona, USA)
Places and objects (micro-spatial scale)	Educational and scientific centres	Science centres	GeoFestival Kielce (Geonatura Kielce, Poland)
		Educational centres	Geotope Day (Subalyuk Museum Visitor Centre, Bakonybél, Hungary)
		Universities	Tourism Days (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland)
	Cultural venues	Museums	Fossil Festival (Aurora Fossil Museum, Aurora, North Carolina, USA)
		Art galleries and other cultural institutions	Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale (Tokamachi & Tsuman, Niigata Prefecture, Japan)
	Recreation venues	Theme parks, zoological gardens, botanical gardens	Park- und Blütenfest (Lausitzer Findlingspark Nochten, Boxberg/O.L., Germany)
		Sport and recreation venues	Red Rock Rendezvous (Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA)
	Conference and business venues	Conference centres, congress centres, hotels, trade centres	11 th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks 2025 (Hotel Dreams Araucania, Temuco, Chile)
	Special-purpose venues	Post-industrial sites	ExtraSchicht (Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex, Essen, Germany)
		Warehouse buildings	Amsterdam Wine Festival (Westergas, Amsterdam, Netherlands)
		Religious buildings	Świerzawskie Święto Krainy Wygasłych Wulkanów (Church of St. John the Baptist and St. Catherine of Alexandria, Świerzawa, Poland)

Source: Author's own elaboration

At the macro scale, geoevents may be situated within three broad categories of landscape settings: natural landscapes (including coasts and islands, lakelands,

mountains, uplands, volcanic areas, forests, river valleys, and wetlands), cultural and urbanised landscapes (such as cities, rural areas, industrial landscapes, revitalised areas, and port environments), and special landscape settings (including protected areas, areas of distinctive cultural identity, and extreme environments such as quarries or former military sites). The distinctive characteristics of these landscapes provide the basis for designing geoevents with specific themes, narratives, and functions. At the micro scale, geoevents are organised within a wide range of venues, including educational and scientific centres (science centres, universities, and educational centres), cultural venues (museums, art galleries, and other cultural institutions), recreational venues (theme parks, zoological gardens, botanical gardens, and sports and recreation venues), conference and business venues, as well as special-purpose venues (e.g., post-industrial sites, warehouse buildings, and religious buildings). Specific characteristics of these venues determine the form of an event, the infrastructure required for its implementation, and its potential to achieve educational, social, and tourism-related objectives.

It is important to note that Table 2 presents only representative examples of geoevents, which illustrate possibilities of organising such events within different types of landscape settings and venues. The assignment of individual events to specific categories is therefore indicative rather than definitive and is intended primarily to highlight the dominant spatial context in which they are organised. In practice, most geoevents simultaneously utilise multiple types of geographical settings and venues, forming an integrated system that combines geoeducation, geointerpretation, tourism activities, engagement with geoheritage and cultural heritage, and a wide range of supporting infrastructure. These components do not function in isolation but are closely interconnected, together creating a coherent tourism product rooted in the resources and distinctiveness of geographical space. Consequently, the value and effectiveness of a geoevent depend not on a single landscape or venue, but on the successful integration of tourism resources, tourism attractions, and tourism products into a complementary whole. For this reason, geoevents should be planned according to a systemic approach that integrates resources of the geographical environment with infrastructure, tourism services, and interpretative, educational, promotional, and organisational activities, all of which collectively shape the visitor experience.

In addition to spatial considerations, the planning of geoevents is also shaped by a range of planning and operational aspects that determine how an event is designed, organised, and delivered. These include programme design, the selection of appropriate interpretative and communication methods, marketing and promotion, geoevent infrastructure, and the provision of accessible and inclusive conditions for participants. Equally important are the social and organisational

dimensions of geoevent planning, including cooperation with public authorities, non-governmental organisations, local communities, and other stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of events. The integrated consideration of these elements enables the effective use of the resources and distinctiveness of geographical space and geoheritage, thereby enhancing both the quality of geoevents and their educational, social, economic, and tourism-related impacts.

To facilitate the operationalisation of the geoevent concept, this study proposes indicative classification thresholds reflecting the degree to which an event fulfils its constitutive characteristics (Table 3). These thresholds make it possible to distinguish three categories of events: geoevents, representing events with a high degree of conformity to the proposed conceptual framework; events which exhibit substantial but incomplete geoevent characteristics; and events lacking distinctive geoevent characteristics, in which geographical aspects do not play a significant organisational, interpretative, or thematic role.

Table 3. Framework for the classification of geoevents

Constitutive dimension	Constitutive characteristics	Assessment
The spatial-environmental dimension	Theme related to geodiversity (e.g., rocks, minerals, fossils, landforms, geological and geomorphological processes, volcanoes, karst landscapes, and glacial landforms).	0 – Geodiversity is not addressed in the event theme. 0.25 – Geodiversity is mentioned only incidentally or as a supplementary element. 0.50 – Geodiversity represents one of several equally important themes of the event. 0.75 – Geodiversity constitutes the dominant theme of the event. 1.00 – Geodiversity constitutes the principal and unequivocal thematic foundation of the event.
	A direct relationship between the event and the distinctive geographical space in which it is held (e.g., mountain, coastal, river, karst, post-mining, or urban landscapes, protected areas, and geoparks).	0 – The event shows no relationship with a specific geographical space. 0.25 – The location has little influence on the character of the event. 0.50 – The event partially utilizes the distinctive characteristics of the place or region. 0.75 – The event is clearly associated with a specific geographical space. 1.00 – The event is inseparably linked to a particular place or region and could not be relocated without losing its identity.
	Direct interaction with geodiversity or geoheritage (e.g., geosites, rock outcrops, quarries, mines, caves, glacial erratics, gorges, cliffs, and geoparks).	0 – No interaction with geoheritage or elements of abiotic nature. 0.25 – Interaction with geoheritage is indirect or symbolic. 0.50 – Participants have the opportunity to experience selected elements of geoheritage. 0.75 – Direct interaction with geoheritage constitutes an important component of the event programme. 1.00 – Direct interaction with geoheritage constitutes the core element of the participants' experience and of the event itself.
The socio-cultural dimension	Use of cultural and geological heritage (e.g., mining, quarrying and stone-working heritage, metallurgical heritage, extractive traditions, local legends associated with the landscape, and historical geotourism sites).	0 – The event does not refer to geoheritage or to cultural, geological, or geomorphological heritage. 0.25 – References are incidental or symbolic in nature. 0.50 – Cultural and geological heritage constitutes one of the thematic components of the event. 0.75 – Cultural and geological heritage is prominently presented and interpreted throughout the event. 1.00 – Cultural and geological heritage constitutes the principal narrative and identity of the event.
	Strengthening of local identity (e.g., local traditions and customs, regional history, place-related historical figures, local dialects and place names, regional symbols, and the cultural heritage of local communities).	0 – The event does not incorporate elements related to local identity. 0.25 – References to local identity are incidental in nature. 0.50 – The event incorporates selected elements of local identity. 0.75 – The event makes a substantial contribution to strengthening participants' sense of local identity. 1.00 – Strengthening and reinforcing local identity constitutes one of the principal objectives of the event.
	Community engagement (e.g., involvement of local residents in event organization, participation of local organizations and associations, volunteering, intergenerational activities, cooperation with local businesses, and shared community activities).	0 – The event does not promote community engagement. 0.25 – Community engagement is limited in scope. 0.50 – The event engages selected community groups and fosters shared experiences. 0.75 – The event actively engages the local community and participants. 1.00 – Community engagement and the creation of shared experiences constitute one of the principal objectives and outcomes of the event.

Constitutive dimension	Constitutive characteristics	Assessment
The geotourism-economic dimension	Contribution to geotourism development (e.g., increasing tourist flows, extending the tourism season, promoting geosites and geoparks, and developing the region's geotourism offer).	0 – The event does not generate tourist flows and is not intended for tourists. 0.25 – The event has limited significance for tourism development. 0.50 – The event attracts tourists and partially supports geotourism development. 0.75 – The event constitutes an important component of the region's geotourism offer. 1.00 – Promoting geotourism development constitutes one of the principal objectives and outcomes of the event.
	Support for the local economy and geoproducts (e.g., sale of local products, minerals and fossils, handicrafts, regional products, cooperation with local businesses and producers, and promotion of geoproducts).	0 – The event does not support the local economy or local geoproducts. 0.25 – Local businesses or producers participate in the event to a limited extent. 0.50 – The event partially promotes local geoproducts, services, or handicrafts. 0.75 – The event actively supports promotes geoproducts and the local economy. 1.00 – Promoting geoproducts and supporting the local economy constitute one of the principal objectives of the event.
	Geoconservation and sustainable development (e.g., promotion of geoheritage conservation, reducing tourism pressure, activities supporting sustainable tourism, geoeducation on geoconservation, and promoting the responsible use of geosites).	0 – The event does not address issues related to geoconservation or sustainable development. 0.25 – Geoconservation issues are addressed only symbolically. 0.50 – The event partially promotes geoheritage conservation and the principles of sustainable development. 0.75 – Geoconservation and sustainable development constitute important components of the event programme. 1.00 – Promoting geoconservation and sustainable development constitutes one of the principal objectives and outcomes of the event.
The geoeducational dimension	Fulfilment of geoeducational objectives (e.g., providing geographical, geological, and geomorphological knowledge, developing geographical and field skills, and fostering pro-environmental attitudes).	0 – The event does not pursue geoeducational objectives. 0.25 – Only isolated geographical information is provided. 0.50 – The event enables participants to acquire geographical knowledge. 0.75 – Geoeducation constitutes one of the principal components of the event programme. 1.00 – Providing geographical knowledge and fostering environmental awareness constitute the principal objectives of the event.
	Use of geointerpretation methods (e.g., interpretive panels, guides, workshops, demonstrations, models, multimedia presentations, films, mobile applications, and storytelling).	0 – The event does not employ geointerpretation methods. 0.25 – Geographical space is presented only descriptively. 0.50 – The event employs selected geointerpretation methods (e.g., interpretive panels, models, presentations, films, and guides). 0.75 – Geointerpretation is based on a variety of methods combined with direct interaction with geographical space. 1.00 – Geointerpretation constitutes the primary means of experiencing geographical space, integrating direct observation with appropriately selected interpretive methods and tools.
	Use of geotourism and geoeducational infrastructure (e.g., geotourism and geoeducational trails, geoeducation centres, heritage interpretation centres, viewpoints, geosites, geological museums, and geoparks).	0 – The event does not utilize geoeducational infrastructure. 0.25 – Geoeducational infrastructure is used only incidentally. 0.50 – The event partially utilizes geoeducational infrastructure. 0.75 – Geoeducational infrastructure constitutes an important component of the event. 1.00 – Geoeducational infrastructure is comprehensively utilized and adapted to the distinctive geographical character of the place.

Source: Author's own elaboration

The proposed criteria represent an initial attempt to operationalise the concept of geoevents by identifying its four fundamental constitutive dimensions: the spatial-environmental, socio-cultural, geotourism–economic, and geoeducational dimensions. The resulting framework should be regarded as a preliminary expert assessment tool rather than a validated measurement instrument. Each dimension is represented by three criteria reflecting the principal characteristics of geoevents and is assessed using a five-point scale ranging from 0 to 1. The proposed scoring system reflects the degree to which an event conforms to the theoretical criteria of geoevents, from the complete absence of a given characteristic to its full realisation. To facilitate interpretation, each criterion is accompanied by a brief description and illustrative examples of the elements that may be considered during the assessment process. The proposed framework is intended to be sufficiently flexible to

be used for evaluating events differing in theme, spatial scale, and organizational format. The proposed criteria are therefore indicative rather than prescriptive and should be regarded as a starting point for the further development and empirical validation of geoevent assessment methods. Their primary purpose is to provide a systematic approach to identifying events that draw upon the resources and distinctiveness of geographical space, geodiversity, and geoheritage.

The degree to which an event can be classified as a geoevent is determined by first calculating the arithmetic mean for each of the four constitutive dimensions and then calculating the arithmetic mean of these four values. The use of equal weights should likewise be considered a preliminary methodological assumption, adopted in the absence of empirical evidence supporting the differentiation of the relative importance of individual criteria or dimensions. The resulting score can be expressed as follows:

$$G = \frac{D_1 + D_2 + D_3 + D_4}{4}$$

where: G denotes the degree to which an event can be classified as a geoevent, and D_1 – D_4 denote the mean scores calculated for each of the four constitutive dimensions.

The resulting score should be interpreted as follows: values ranging from 0.00 to 0.39 indicate events with a low level of constitutive characteristics; values between 0.40 and 0.69 indicate events which partially meet the criteria of a geoevent; whereas values from 0.70 to 1.00 indicate events that largely meet these criteria.

The proposed procedure represents an expert-based assessment designed to evaluate the degree to which an event can be classified as a geoevent by examining the extent to which it displays the constitutive characteristics and satisfies conceptual assumptions of the proposed framework. It is not intended as a tool for ranking or comparing events, but rather as a framework for identifying their strengths, diagnosing areas requiring further development, and supporting their continuous improvement. In practice, the framework can be applied by event organisers, UNESCO Global Geoparks and aspiring geoparks, museums, geoeducation centres, local and regional authorities, and other institutions to support the conscious design and evaluation of events, strengthen their geographical, geological, and geotourism dimensions, and facilitate their gradual development into geoevents consistent with the proposed conceptual framework.

5. Theoretical Contributions and Implications

While event studies have evolved primarily within the fields of tourism, place marketing, and event management (Getz, 2008; Ash et al., 2023; Ong & Coetzee, 2025), geotourism research has focused predominantly on geoheritage, geoeducation, geoconservation, and geotourism products (Dowling & Newsome, 2018; Allan & Dowling, 2023; Miśkiewicz, 2024). However, the literature has lacked a coherent conceptualisation of events as a distinct category of geotourism products that utilise geographical space as their fundamental interpretative component. At the same time, recent years have seen a growing need to develop effective tools for promoting geodiversity, geoheritage, and the principles of sustainable development. According to UNESCO Global Geoparks programme documents, one of the core missions of geoparks is to promote geoeducation, science communication, and the active engagement of local communities and visitors in the appreciation of geological heritage (UNESCO Global Geoparks, 2015; Zouros, 2016). Similarly, recent research by Rodrigues et al. (2025) demonstrates that events organised by geoparks constitute an important instrument for science communication and public engagement, enhancing awareness of geodiversity while strengthening public interest in environmental issues. Martini et al. (2022) likewise argue that the effective promotion of geoparks requires integrated strategies encompassing not only geoheritage conservation but also the promotion of local products, place branding, and the development of new tools for communication and stakeholder collaboration. These findings indicate that events play an increasingly important role in achieving the objectives of geotourism and supporting the functioning of geoparks. Nevertheless, their significance remains fragmented across studies on geoeducation, science communication, geoheritage promotion, and tourism management. Taken together, these findings highlight the need for a conceptual approach that recognizes events as a distinct category of geotourism products integrating educational, social, promotional, and tourism functions, providing the principal rationale for the development of the geoevent concept.

The development of geotourism over the past two decades has resulted in the emergence of numerous conceptual frameworks and methodological approaches supporting the identification, assessment, and planning of individual components of the geotourism system. These have focused primarily on geodiversity assessment (e.g., Serrano & Ruiz-Flaño, 2007; Najwer & Zwoliński, 2014), the evaluation of geosites and geomorphosites (Brilha, 2016; Kubalíková, 2019; Abramowicz & Tritt, 2026; Gianoglio et al., 2026), UNESCO Global Geopark planning and management (UNESCO Global Geoparks, 2015; Zouros, 2016), as well as the development of geoeducation and geointerpretation as tools for promoting geoheritage (Hose,

2000, 2026; Sütő et al., 2020; Abramowicz et al., 2022). Increasing attention has also been devoted to geotourism products and their role in the sustainable development of regions (Miśkiewicz, 2024; Štrba et al., 2025). A common feature of these studies is the provision of practical guidance for identifying, evaluating, and utilising geographical resources. However, nearly all of them focus on permanent elements of geographical space or on methods for their interpretation. Events, by contrast, represent a dynamic and temporary form of engagement with geographical space, and their potential as geotourism products has received comparatively limited conceptual attention. The concept of geoevents proposed in this study seeks to address this gap by extending existing geotourism research to include the event dimension, thereby bringing together knowledge from geodiversity research, geotourism, geoeducation, geointerpretation, and event within a common conceptual framework. At the same time, the proposed framework may serve as a practical tool supporting the planning and development of events in UNESCO Global Geoparks and aspiring geoparks, national and landscape parks, geological museums, geoeducation and geointerpretation centres, as well as other institutions that utilize the potential of geographical space for educational, promotional, and tourism purposes.

The proposed concept also opens new avenues for research into the role of events in geotourism development and the promotion of geodiversity. Previous studies have highlighted the need to develop innovative tools that support the promotion of geoheritage, enhance environmental awareness, and foster the development of sustainable geotourism products (Gray, 2008; Gordon et al., 2021; Miśkiewicz, 2024; Štrba et al., 2025). Against this background, geoevents may provide a platform through which these objectives can be pursued in an event-based format, while also strengthening regional identity and encouraging the active engagement of local communities. Future research should focus on the empirical validation of the proposed conceptual framework, the evaluation of geoevents as a tool for promoting geodiversity, and the assessment of their contribution to tourism development, destination branding, and the achievement of sustainable development goals. Another important research direction is the development of methods for evaluating the effectiveness of geoevents from the perspectives of participants, organisers, and local communities, as well as their application in the management of UNESCO Global Geoparks, aspiring geoparks, and other areas with high geotourism potential. Geoevents also align with the growing concept of the experience economy, in which active visitor participation and the co-creation of place-based experiences constitute fundamental elements of the tourism experience (Pine & Gilmore, 2013).

6. Conclusion

This study proposes the concept of geoevents as a category of events that use geographical space, geodiversity, and geoheritage as their fundamental thematic, organizational, and interpretative components. The proposed conceptual framework demonstrates that geoevents can be examined from the perspectives of tourism resources, tourism attractions, and tourism products, thereby integrating the theoretical foundations of geography, geotourism, and event studies. Seen from the first perspective, geoevents represent the potential for developing new forms of tourism activities rooted in the distinctiveness of geographical space; viewed as tourist attractions, they contribute to destinations' overall appeal and stimulate tourist flows; and understood as a distinct category of tourism products, they support local economic development and regional promotion.

The proposed framework for the identification and preliminary assessment of geoevents systematises their constitutive dimensions and provides an expert-based approach for assessing the degree to which individual events satisfy the conceptual assumptions of geoevents. The model may serve as a practical tool for UNESCO Global Geoparks and aspiring geoparks, national and landscape parks, museums, geoeducation centres, and other institutions engaged in the promotion of geodiversity and geoheritage. The proposed framework should not, however, be regarded as a tool for ranking or comparing events but rather as a means of supporting the design, evaluation, and improvement of events based on the values of geographical space. Since the assessment framework has not been empirically validated, the proposed model needs to be tested across different types of events and geotourism destinations in order to evaluate its applicability in event planning and geotourism management. Consequently, the proposed concept provides a starting point for establishing geoevents as a distinct field of research at the intersection of geography, geotourism, and event studies, thereby creating a foundation for the further development of both theory and practice concerning events rooted in the values and distinctiveness of geographical space.

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Declaration of Generative AI Technologies in the Manuscript Preparation Process

ChatGPT (OpenAI) was used to assist in drafting the abstract and to improve and harmonize the graphic and aesthetic design of Figures 1–3. The original conceptual model presented in Figures 1–3 was designed by the author and subsequently provided to the AI system solely for the refinement and harmonization of its graphical and aesthetic presentation.

CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

DA: conceptualization, data curation, formal analysis, funding acquisition, investigation, methodology, project administration, resources, software, supervision, validation, visualization, writing — original draft, writing — review & editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None.

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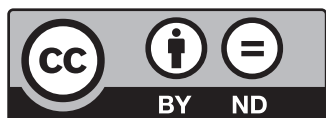
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Geowydarzenia jako nowa kategoria wydarzeń. Zarys koncepcyjny i podstawy teoretyczne

Streszczenie. Pomimo tego, że planowane wydarzenia są coraz częściej uznawane za istotny element rozwoju turystyki i promocji destynacji, dotychczasowe badania nad geoturystyką koncentrowały się przede wszystkim na dziedzictwie geologicznym, georóżnorodności, geoedukacji oraz produktach geoturystycznych. Niniejszy artykuł ujmuje pojęcie geowydarzeń (*geoevents*) jako kategorię wydarzeń, które bezpośrednio wykorzystują przestrzeń geograficzną, georóżnorodność oraz dziedzictwo geologiczne jako podstawowe komponenty tematyczne i organizacyjne. Zaprezentowana została synteza koncepcyjna łącząca dorobek geografii, w tym geografii wydarzeń, geoturystyki oraz dziedzictwa geologicznego, z uwzględnieniem literatury dotyczącej Światowej Sieci Geoparków UNESCO. Według zaproponowanych ram teoretycznych, geowydarzenia należy postrzegać równocześnie jako walory, atrakcje oraz produkty turystyczne. Biorąc pod uwagę cztery konstytutywne wymiary geowydarzeń – przestrzenno-środowiskowy, społeczno-kulturowy, geoedukacyjny oraz geoturystyczno-ekonomiczny – opracowano model walidacji oparty na ocenie eksperckiej, służący do określania geograficznego charakteru danego wydarzenia. Wypełniając lukę pomiędzy badaniami nad wydarzeniami i geoturystyką, przedstawiona koncepcja zapewnia spójne podstawy teoretyczne oraz dostarcza praktycznych wskazówek dla Światowej Sieci Geoparków UNESCO, aspirujących geoparków, obszarów chronionych, muzeów, centrów geoedukacji oraz innych instytucji rozwijających produkty turystyczne i inicjatywy edukacyjne oparte na uwarunkowaniach geograficznych.

Słowa kluczowe: geowydarzenia, geoturystyka, geodziedzictwo, produkt turystyczny



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