

**Using principles of geospatial ontology to explore
scientific and naïve conceptualizations of the landscape**

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The study of fundamental geographic types, criteria and relationships constitutes the research field of geospatial ontology. This talk focuses on the ontology of landscapes, and especially landforms. Formal scientific sources may suffice for designing ontologies for some specialized knowledge domains, but people's naïve conceptualizations of the landscape can hardly be studied without also explicitly invoking theories of human cognition, culture, and language. Different cultures and languages have already been shown to support similar, and also several incompatible landscape concepts. This raises the question if any criteria or principles of landscape characterization common to all languages and cultures exist at all. Although I claim that such a foundational ontology of the landscape is likely to be quite sparse, it is still essential for landscape related knowledge representation in information systems. In this talk, I will discuss some of the philosophical and technical issues related to establishing a foundational landscape ontology and how it may be combined with other ontologies to formally describe everyday human experience of the landscape.