

FOREWORD

There has been an increasing interest during the last years towards the effects caused by the light pollution not only for the limitations imposed to ground based telescopes but also for the loss of what has been defined a “world heritage”.

The pollution does not concern only the visible light, but extends to a large fraction of the electromagnetic domain reaching the surface of the Earth. The pollution, for instance, in the radio wavelength is such that radioastronomers are considering to place their instrumentation on the dark side of the Moon. The Commission 50 (The identification and protection of existing and potential astronomical sites) of the International Astronomical Union, established in 1973, has played an important role in developing the interest about the protection of astronomical sites.

Nowadays the study of the phenomena related to the light pollution is so broad, since it concerns astronomy, botany, biology, psychology and other sciences, that it constitutes a new interdisciplinary field of research, which deserves to be more and more developed.

Dr. Pierantonio Cinzano, who is the editor of the present volume, is one of the pioneers in the field. In addition to the several papers on the subject he has recently published a textbook, now being translated into English, where the various aspects of the light pollution are rigorously treated.

The articles collected in this book represent the contribution of several scientists which are very active in the field of research on light pollution. It will certainly contribute to stimulate further studies and to draw the attention toward a problem endangering the relationship of the man with the cosmos.

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