

**THE TOURIST VALUE OF THE COLINA DO HORTO GEOMORPHOSITE,
ARARIPE GEOPARK, CEARÁ: A QUANTITATIVE EVALUATION**

**O VALOR TURÍSTICO DO GEOMORFOSSÍTIO COLINA DO HORTO,
GEOPARK ARARIPE, CEARÁ: UMA AVALIAÇÃO QUANTITATIVA**

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ABSTRACT:

In recent decades, geodiversity has been gaining importance in discussions about the valuation and geoconservation of geosites. In light of this, the present study aims to quantify the tourist value of the Colina do Horto geosite using the viewpoint valuation methodology. As a result, the geosite obtained 22 points, confirming information that Colina is the geosite with the highest tourist flow due to its religious symbolism, considering the appropriation of the landform as the main manifestation of faith.

Keywords: Geodiversity. Geotourism. Geoconservation. Valuation method.

RESUMO:

Nas últimas décadas, a geodiversidade vem ganhando espaço nas discussões sobre valoração e geoconservação dos geossítios. Diante do exposto, o presente escrito objetiva quantificar o valor turístico do geossítio Colina do Horto, a partir da metodologia de valoração de mirantes. Como resultado, o geossítio obteve 22 pontos, o que ratifica as informações sobre a Colina ser o geossítio de maior fluxo turístico por conta do simbolismo religioso, considerando a apropriação da geoforma como principal ponto de manifestação da fé.

Palavras-chave: Geodiversidade. Geoturismo. Geoconservação. Método de valoração.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, geodiversity has gained prominence in studies of physical-natural components aiming to promote protection and conservation of the abiotic elements present on the planet. In his studies, Gray (2004) states that geodiversity "is the diversity of abiotic aspects, such as geological and geomorphological, integrated into the

landscape." In this context, features and processes can be configured as geomorphological heritage that can be valued for various types of services, including tourism. In this perspective, for geoparks to be created, they must contain geosites that have special scientific or aesthetic relevance (BRILHA, 2005). Geosites are geographically delimited locations that present various values, from a tourism, cultural, educational, scientific, and other perspectives. Among geomorphosites are those classified as viewpoints, as they allow for a panoramic view from an observation point, as well as an area to be observed. Thus, this study aims to quantitatively assess the tourist value of the Colina do Horto geomorphosite in the Araripe Geopark/CE, according to the proposed methodological valuation of viewpoint geodiversity by Diniz and Araújo (2022).

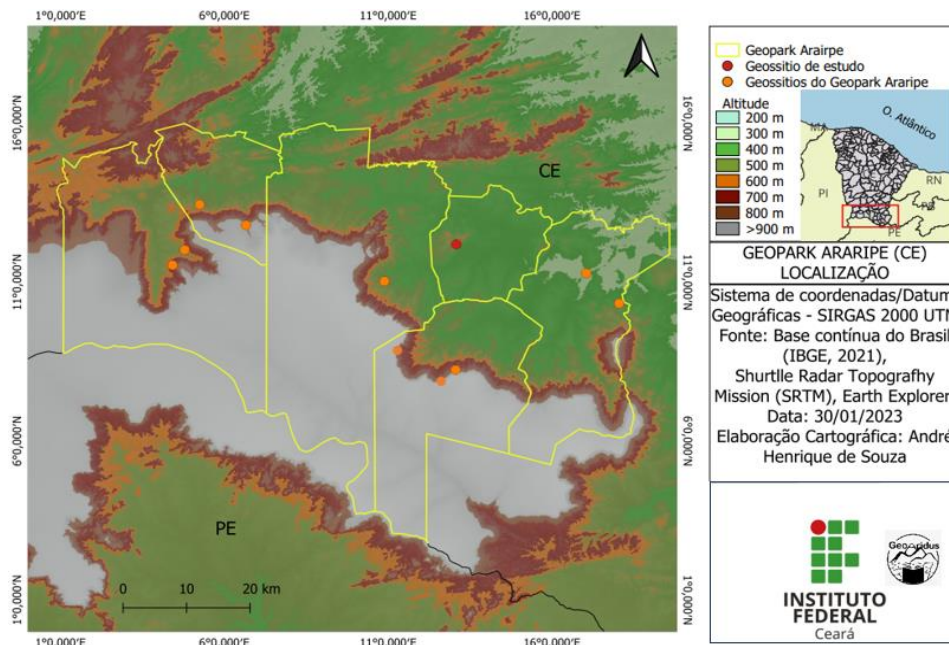
METHODOLOGY

The geomorphosite was quantitatively valued using the methodology of Diniz and Araújo (2022), which classifies the geodiversity of viewpoints into three valuation categories: scientific value, aesthetic value, and additional values, which include cultural, educational, and tourist values. However, this study will only analyze the relevance of the Tourist Value of the geomorphosite based on the following criteria: accessibility, tourism category, existence of ongoing use, convenience, signage, and safety. Field visits were conducted to analyze the conditions of factors contributing to the functionality of the geosite as a geodiversity element and an important tourist attraction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As a methodological proposal, the Colina do Horto geosite was selected because it is a type of geomorphosite known as a viewpoint with a strong tourism dynamic.

Figura 1 – Mapa de localização do Geomorfossítio Colina do Horto, Geopark Araripe/CE



Fonte: Autores (2023)

At coordinates 07° 10' 47" S and 39° 19' 48" W lies the Colina do Horto geosite, a granite inselberg at the beginning of the sertaneja depression bordering the Chapada do Araripe in the municipality of Juazeiro do Norte. At its top stands the monument in honor of Padre Cícero, one of the great personalities who marked the history of Ceará. The inselberg is considered one of the main tourist attractions in the Northeast, where thousands of pilgrims pay homage to the statue of Padre Cícero and fulfill their vows.

Evaluation Parameters

Regarding accessibility, the Colina do Horto geosite has extensive infrastructure (4 pts.), where visitors make their way to the top of the hill via roads considered the most important in the city, all paved and well signposted, providing visitors with easy orientation on the route. Another alternative available to tourists is the cable car that departs from the city center to the top of the inselberg, providing a privileged view of the sertaneja landscape with the Chapada do Araripe in the background. Regarding the tourism category, this parameter seeks to analyze the tourist segments that are evident in the geosites, based on their relationship with the natural physical characteristics of the geomorphosites in question. In this parameter (3pts.), Colina do Horto presents 3 types of tourism: religious, cultural, and ecotourism. Among them, religious tourism stands out

the most due to the emotional attachment not only of tourists but also of the population surrounding the figure of Padre Cícero.

Figura 2 – Categorias turísticas do geomorfossítio: turismo religioso associado à figura de Pe. Cícero (A) e as formações geológicas e vegetação da trilha do Santo Sepulcro (B), no geossítio Colina do Horto.



Fonte: Autores (nov./2022).

The parameter of Ongoing Use is an indication of visitation to the site aimed at analyzing the dynamics of visitation and the conditions under which the tourist activity of the geosite is subjected. With that said, the site of interest (3 pts.) has a high visitation rate frequented by different audiences, absent of any type of control on the number of visitors on-site, with the presence of accommodations less than 3 km away due to being in an urban area. Regarding the Convenience parameter, Colina scored highly (4 pts.), where a comprehensive support apparatus for visitors was observed, equipped with infrastructure exceeding 5 convenience elements starting from a large parking lot, restaurants, snack bars, bathrooms, lodging, and others that can be listed, available to visitors at the top of the inselberg.

With maximum score, Colina will present both extensive signage (4 pts.) with basic information to visitors about the abiotic and cultural characteristics of the geosites as well as a diversified infrastructure due to a comprehensive security apparatus (4 pts.) such as side rails along the edge of the inselberg, secure access on both the statue and cable car platforms, and a reasonable number of guards ensuring the normality of the high tourist flow at the site.

Tourist value of the geomorphosite After presenting the data, the quantitative valuation of the geosite was developed according to the tabulation of the following information. (Table 1)

Tabela 1 – Valoração do geomorfossítio Colina do Horto.

Parâmetros do Valor Turístico	Colina do Horto
Acessibilidade	4
Categoria turística	3
Existência de uso e progresso	3
Conveniência	4
Sinalização	4
Segurança	4
TOTAL	22

Fonte: Elaboração dos autores (2023).

Having presented a high tourism potential, the Colina do Horto geomorphosite was valued at 22 points, receiving maximum scores in practically all criteria, confirming its great relevance in the Cariri region and throughout the Northeast.

CONCLUSIONS

The Colina do Horto geosite is a location with high tourism potential, which allowed it to be valued at 22 points, making it the most visited geosite in the Cariri region, with great importance at the State and National levels, which corroborates with the research data. The Colina do Horto geomorphosite offers a wide panoramic view along the edge of the inselberg, encompassing the Chapada do Araripe and its valley in the landscape.

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