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Loess in Europe - its spatial distribution based on a European Loess Map, scale 1:2,500,000

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This paper focuses on the concept, mapping and discussion of loess distribution in Western, Central and Eastern Europe at a scale of 1:2,500,000. The research work is based on studies and data compilation primarily carried out in the 1970s and 1980s and completed recently by additional material and literature references. Reference is also made to recent GIS-based data processing and visualisation techniques that were utilised for the final version of the European Loess Map.

The paper provides an overview of the history of the conceptualisation of the map as well as on the loess study in Europe, and then considers the cartographic data on loess sediment formation and distribution in Europe. The classification of loess and loess-like sediments and their distribution throughout Europe as reproduced in the map are discussed. The paper illustrates the final state of the loess distribution map of Europe at a scale of 1:2,500,000 and the digital data references on which it is based. Some applications of the map are suggested.