



Main passage of C8 Cave, Krong No Volcanic Field, Dak Nong Geopark (southern Vietnam), EuroSpeleo Project ESP 2017-10.

Photo: Takeshi Murase



This Newsletter is issued by the Bureau of the European Speleological Federation (FSE)

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Editorial

Regrettably, most speleological activities are again on hold due to the second wave of the problematic Covid-19 pandemic. While everybody hopes that this nightmare will soon be over, we would

like to share some recently received information with all of you.

Please forward this Newsletter as widely as possible to caving clubs and individual cavers.

The FSE Bureau

FSE Virtual General Assembly 2020

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic the FSE Bureau organised, for the first time in the FSE history, an electronic General Assembly (GAM) through a ZOOM video conference on Thursday evening 24 August 2020.

17 member countries attended the GAM and discussed the activity reports of FSE's Bureau, Commissions and Workgroups, as well as the budget. Voting was done through an electronic voting form provided by the FSE Bureau.

A GAM report and the results of the online voting were made available to members.

Although the meeting worked out very well we sincerely hope to meet in person again at the next GAM that will be held during the 18th International Congress of Speleology in Le Bourget-du-Lac in France in July 2021.

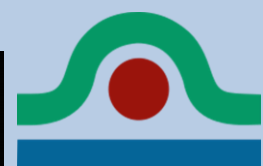


The UIS is glad to share with you volume 62-1 of the UIS Bulletin. To all who contributed materials and all readers: we really appreciate your comments and suggestions in order to improve upcoming issues.

The PDF interactive format can be downloaded by clicking on the link:

<http://www.uis-speleo.org/downloads/uis-bulletins/uisb621.pdf>

FSE Partners



Cave and Karst related events

Only limited information for the last months in 2020 and for 2021 is provided below, as most of the conferences and speleological camps planned for summer/autumn 2020 have been cancelled or postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. For more detailed information please consult the list of European caving events at the FSE website:

<https://eurospeleo.eu/images/stories/docs/bureau/European%20agenda%20of%20speleological%20events%2027-05-2020.pdf>

No reliable information on events outside Europe can currently be provided.

22-25 April 2021

14th Int. Symposium on Pseudokarst - Świętokrzyskie Mts, Poland - <https://14pseudokarst.wonders4you.com/>

13-16 May 2021

Annual meeting of the German cavers – Truckenthal/Schalkau (Thuringia) – no website yet

14-18 June 2021

28th Int. Karstological School: Regional Karstology-Local and General Aspects - Postojna, Slovenia - <https://iks.zrc-sazu.si/en/>

22-24 June 2021

Eurokarst 2021 - Malaga, Spain - <http://www.eurokarst.org/>

25 July - 1 August 2021

18th International Congress of Speleology - University of Savoie Mont Blanc, France - <http://uis2021.speleos.fr/>

11-14 July 2021

Karst Record IX (KR9) Conference - Innsbruck, Austria - <https://www.uibk.ac.at/congress/kr9/news/2017/kr9-postponed-to-2021.html.en>

25 July - 1 August 2021

18th Int. Congress of Speleology - Le Bourget-du-Lac, France - <http://uis2021.speleos.fr/>

NEW DATES: 28 August - 3 September 2021

19th International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology - Catania, Sicily, Italy - <http://www.19isvetna.com/>

30 September - 3 October 2021

26th Int. Cave Bear Symposium - Reiss-Engelhorn-Museum, Mannheim, Germany - doris.doeppes@mannheim.de

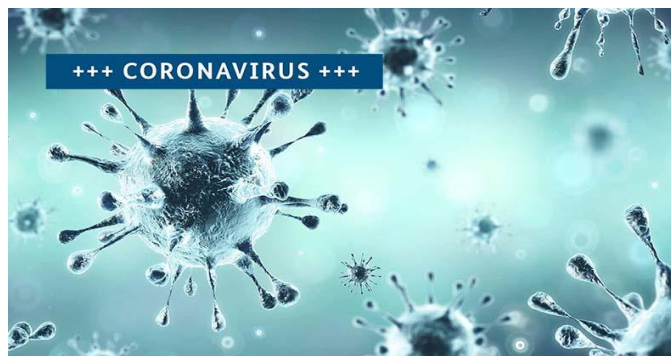
NEW DATES: 26-30 October 2021

6th EuroSpeleo Protection Symposium "Assessing, monitoring and protecting cave biotopes and geotopes through Natura 2000 or similar programs in Europe" - Vilm Island/Baltic Sea, Germany - information at

<https://www.facebook.com/events/438983103449721/>

29 October - 1 November 2021

Speleo Kamaraton 2021. International Meeting - Marina di Camerota, Salerno, Italy - <http://www.speleokamaraton.eu/>



UNESCO adds ten new cave/karst related Geoparks to the list

In August 2020 UNESCO designated 15 new Global Geoparks, of which 10 were listed partly for their caves and/or karst resources. They are:

- Discovery (Canada)
- Xiangi (PR China)
- Hantangang (Rep. of Korea)
- Dak Nong (Vietnam - see page 3)
- Yangan-Tau (Russia)
- Rio Coco (Nicaragua)
- Lauhanvuori-Hämeen kangas (Finland)
- Djerdap (Serbia)
- Granada (Spain)
- Maestrazgo (Spain)

This would not have been possible without the work of many speleologists and karst scientists who explored, documented and published these important areas.

More info at: <https://en.unesco.org/news/geopark-2020>

BERGER 2020 camp successfully conducted (EuroSpeleo Project 2019-15)

High hygienic standards and a strict distancing concept enabled the organizers of the 2020 camp at Gouffre Berger to host 320 speleologists from 11 countries in July/August 2020.

Traditionally, the members of the event contributed to the cleaning of the cave. This time the old "Bivouak Mélusine" at -950 m was targeted by the clean-up teams and over 200 kg of rubbish were taken out of the cave and properly disposed.

Also, at -750 m in the Salle Eymas, scientific work was done with mapping and sampling sediment deposits (rhythmites). Laboratory studies are expected to yield new data about the time, periodicity and conditions of the sediment deposition.

The camp was supported by the Fédération Française de Spéléologie (FFS), the European Speleological Federation (FSE), as well as FSE's equipment sponsors Aventure Verticale, and Scurion.

EuroSpeleo Project ESP 2017-10 contributed to new UNESCO Geopark in Vietnam

EuroSpeleo Newsletter July 2018 reported about a lava tube documentation project which targeted the Krong No volcanic area in Dak Nong province of southern Vietnam.

The longest pyroducts of SE Asia are found in the extensive lava field, including 1,067 m long C7 Cave.

The comprehensive report compiled by the project participants covered all the 49 caves known in the area with a total of underground passages of 10.1 km. The project's report, also sent to UNESCO, proved very helpful to support the application of the local authorities to become a Global Geopark.

In consequence, UNESCO officially recognized the now called Dak Nong Geopark as the third Global Geopark in Vietnam in August 2020. The new Geopark covers nearly the whole province of Dak Nong and includes many other scenic, historic and ethnic sites worth visiting.

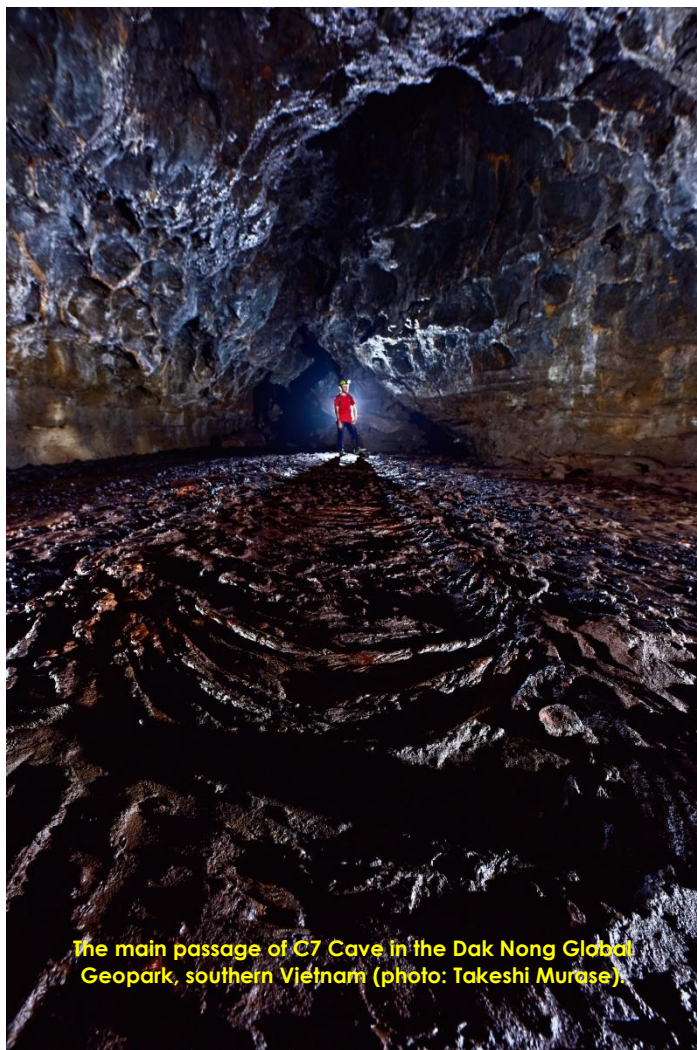


The International Year of Caves and Karst 2021

Next year will be the International Year of Caves and Karst. The European Speleological Federation FSE fully supports this initiative. This will be the biggest and most important speleological event ever. Your participation as part of the global cave and karst community is crucial. The purpose of the International Year of Caves and Karst (IYCK) is to teach the world about the importance of caves and karst. Public understanding and support of caves and karst is currently very limited. As a result, funding, protective regulations,



Please send info on all your international events (expeditions, congresses, symposia etc.) to contact@eurospeleo.org



The main passage of C7 Cave in the Dak Nong Global Geopark, southern Vietnam (photo: Takeshi Murase).

and opportunities for exploration, research, and management are also very limited.

The International Union of Speleology (UIS) has declared 2021 as the IYCK in a major effort to make the world aware of how caves and karst are valuable to all people. To make this possible, the UIS is calling on all of its member countries and other organizations to begin with planning a series of public lectures, programs, demonstration of caving techniques, and other activities for 2021.

The IYCK website is now open at <http://www.iyck2021.org/>. It is designed to teach the public about caves and karst, and so it has a great amount of educational information. It also has information on how to become involved in the IYCK. Please send the activities you plan for the IYCK to <http://iyck2021.org/index.php/contact-us/> so we can post them on the "Events" page of the website. Have a look at the "Partners" page, and if your organization is not listed, send your logo and website address and you will be included. If you know of organizations that should be involved, please contact them. The website will continue to be updated, so bookmark the URL.

The IYCK has incredible potential to advance speleology in many and great ways, but only if we all work together to make it possible.

The SPELOMEDIT Project: Speleology of the Mediterranean, call for participation

As a contribution the International Year of Caves and Karst 2021 (IYCK) the Speleological Society of Italy, in collaboration with TETIDE, introduces a publication project on karst and caves of all countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The book is foreseen to be presented at the 18th Int. Congress of Speleology in France as well as the international Meeting "Kamaraton" in Italy in 2021.

The book will include the physical geography/geomorphology, hydrology, speleology, biospeleology of the area as a whole. It will be a fundamental contribution to create a common awareness of the karst and caves of the Mediterranean, strengthening the bonds between cavers and karst researchers while supporting the protection of karst and caves.

The publication will be in English as a PDF file and will be translated into all the languages of the contributing countries, thus being a communication tool for each participating country. Currently, 17 of the 21 Mediterranean countries have joined and we hope that the remaining countries (Malta, Monaco, Montenegro and Syria) will join soon.

For more information please contact us at tetide@speleokamaraton.eu

Urgent calls for the 18th Int. Congress of Speleology in France

The 18th International Congress of Speleology (25th July to 1st August 2021) will be organised by the French Speleological Federation FFS on behalf of the International Union of Speleology UIS and will take place in Le Bourget-du-Lac in the Savoie region: <https://uis2021.speleos.fr/>

Before and after the congress the FFS is planning to organise pre- and post-camps. The European Speleological Federation FSE agreed to the FFS and UIS to **ask clubs and organisations in member countries to also organise such pre- and post-camps** to provide an opportunity for cavers from outside France and Europe to get acquainted with European caves and karst and to give a European dimension to the congress. We would like to invite not only the neighbouring countries of France but all FSE member countries to organise a camp before or after the congress in the Savoie. Proposed activities are exploration or traditional speleology, canyoning, cave diving, scientific internships, photography ... or cultural tourism and/or speleo-culinary, either above or below ground, all in accordance with speleo and canyoning codes of conduct. For more information, the conditions and the application form please read this document:

<https://u.pcloud.link/publink/show?code=XZRjfOkZMWLUXiS3Ke5e07rnb76Sa4DTtTUV>. The application should be sent to camps@uis2021.speleo.fr Upon approval you will be notified and information about the camp will be published on the above-mentioned congress website.

Lets make this congress a real exhibition of European cave and karst activities for all the cavers to come to France next summer.

News about the UIS congress 2021 in France

The deadline for early bird registration has been extended from 31st Dec. 2020 to 24th of Jan. 2021. Get your tickets with a discount of more than 25%:

<https://uis2021.speleos.fr/infos/inscriptions-au-congres/>

You can now book your mid-congress excursions for Wednesday 28th of July 2021. You can choose from one of the 21 excursions offered. There are limited places. Prices are given per participant and include return transport from the congress site, picnic and entry to paid sites (tourist caves, monuments, etc.). See:

<https://uis2021.speleos.fr/programme/excursions/>

During the congress there will be a UIS film festival. All information on submitting a film, participation and the program can be found here:

<https://uis.explos.fr/en/bienvenue-sur-https-uis-explos-fr-english>

The campsite for those who would like to stay in a tent or a motorhome is situated a 5-minute walk from the congress venue. The price is 5 € per night and per person:

<https://uis2021.speleos.fr/infos/hebergements/>

For the Scientific Conference about 580 abstracts have been submitted for the 20 symposiums. There will be a great choice of presentations during the congress! For those who submitted an abstract, please do not forget to submit your paper of 4 pages before the 31st Dec. 2020. Information at: <https://uis2021.sciencesconf.org/>

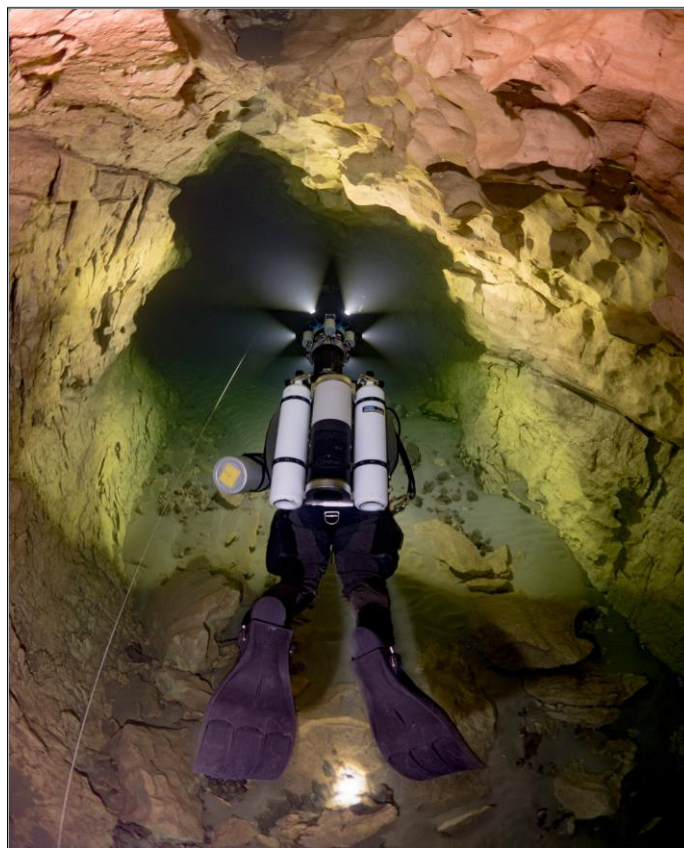




The winner of FSE's EuroSpeleo Protection Label 2020 is: ***Phreatic* Project: Cave diving at the service of Science and Environmental Protection**

The non-profit project *Phreatic* was born in 2014 with the aim of boosting the concept of citizen science, fostering the interaction between cave divers and researchers in the field. In essence, creating a network of cave divers capable of cooperating with scientists and delivering reliable results working in extreme environments. Generally, scientific research is not conducted in such areas due to the complexities and possible dangers posed by the environment. The perfect sites for this experiment were the coastal cave systems of the Gulf of Orosei, Sardinia (Italy) where, every year, dozens of volunteer cave divers from all over the planet carry out campaigns dedicated to exploration, sediment/water sampling, cave mapping, geo referencing of paleontological remains, documentation and video production.

During the past six years, the dedication of about 50 volunteers, specialised in cave diving and surveying, dry caving, photo/video production and 3D modelling has already supported the work of scientists of the Italian Institute of Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA). Two investigative paths have been studied: the first - never before tested in temperate cave environments - is the research on benthic foraminifera, microscopic shells that are environmental and ecological indicators in transitional habitats; the second is related to the documentation and analysis finalised to the conservation of Mediterranean Monk Seal bones (*Monachus monachus* included in IUCN red list of threatened species) found in Bel Torrente Cave and dated back to 5,000-6,500 years ago. Other important activities in the seasonal campaigns of the Project are the mapping of the springs with modern technologies (MNemo and Suex Sinapsi DPV systems) and production



of underwater cave 3D photogrammetry, as a new means to represent such environments and make them accessible to the general public.

Over the years, *Phreatic* volunteers co-authored scientific publications, held presentations and organised photo exhibitions for cavers, general public, schools and universities across Europe, UK and USA. The project gained also the attention of Italian mainstream newspapers and social media.

The stimulating outcomes led to the idea of expanding the model and the approach of *Phreatic* Project Sardinia to other areas of the Mediterranean basin, where coastal caves present a similar scenario. Unfortunately, they also present similar threats in terms of anthropic impact and tourism, which makes them ideal candidates to become marine protected areas. *Phreatic* long-term engagement is, indeed, to strengthen the synergy between scientists and cave divers in order to contribute to achieve the UN sustainable development goals with a focus on the ones related to biodiversity in the life below water and actions against climate change and pollution.

In the next years *Phreatic* will continue primarily its work in Sardinia, supporting new different researches and scientific partners, such as "Dive for antibiotics" Project (Strathclyde University, UK) and the Italian geologists of University of Chieti. From the beginning *Phreatic* is partnering with Global Underwater Explorers (gue.com) organisation and Project Baseline initiative (projectbaseline.org), with the sponsorship of local administration Comune di Dorgali and Italian Speleological Society (SSI).

The next session of the Project will include Scurion lamps, kindly donated by our ESPL sponsor.

Website: phreatic.org - Facebook Page: Phreatic