



**Union Internationale de Spéléologie**

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[www.uis-speleo.org](http://www.uis-speleo.org)

## **THE UIS IN 2022 and PLANS FOR 2023**

As 2022 draws to a close, we're looking back at this year's notable events, publications, and new members. The presence of the UIS at the UNESCO Headquarters on three occasions in such a short period of 15 months deserves to be celebrated. The great success achieved has given the UIS unprecedented global recognition, which shows that we are heading in the right direction. At the same time, it shows also that there is still a lot of work to be done.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

The big news for the UIS in 2022 is that we welcome 6 new member countries: Armenia, Cyprus, India, Libya, Malaysia and Morocco.

### **EVENTS**

#### **UIS International Year of Caves and Karst 2021/22:**

Due to the COVID pandemic, the IYCK 2021 was extended through 2022 for public outreach opportunities not available in 2021. Through UIS member countries with about 263 partner organizations (international, regional and national) more than 800 events was reported globally so far. Please check at <http://iyck2021.org/index.php/partners/#>. If you don't find your event at the web page, please complete the report and sent it to the page master.

#### **International Cave Animal of the Year 2022 were Bats:**

They were chosen as 1,400 bat species living in the wild around the world without threatening their human neighbors in urban environments and they do not spread COVID-19. In 2021, Cave Beetles were selected as the first International Cave Animal of the Year as part of the IYCK. Please check at <http://iyck2021.org/index.php/cave-animal-of-the-year/>

#### **18<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Speleology (ICS):**

From July 24 to 31, 2022, Le Bourget-du-Lac, France, was the central meeting event for speleology and karstology in last 5 years. The organization of the Congress was fraught with many difficulties, but the organizers and volunteers did everything they could to make the Congress possible. At the Congress, we met, reported on new underground discoveries and scientific achievements, exchanged knowledge and experiences, and made many new acquaintances and friends. During the Congress, the delegates of the member states met twice for the UIS General Assembly, reviewed their activities, made plans for the time until the next Congress, accepted new member states, confirmed the location of the next Congress in Brazil and elected a new Bureau.

The report from the 18<sup>th</sup> ICS Organizing Committee has not yet been delivered to the UIS.

### **UIS at UNESCO**

The recognition of caves and karst at such a high level as UNESCO can be beneficial for both scientists and cavers, but especially for the underground world and karst in general. UIS was present at UNESCO in Paris twice during late 2022.

**On November 9, 2022**, UIS President was invited to participate in the Deep-time Digital EARTH (DDE) open Science Forum at UNESCO in Paris. In essence, the invitation to the UIS was to invite speleologists, through various geological organizations or as individual countries, to use and share major geoscience databases. For more information about DDE, please visit [www.ddeworld.org](http://www.ddeworld.org).

**Between December 6-8, 2022**, UIS participated in UN-Water Summit on Groundwater 2022 and organized side event 9 on Karst aquifers. The UN Groundwater Summit in Paris was an extremely important event. Groundwater was finally recognized as an important resource, part of the water cycle, and a source of drinking water. Although karst aquifers represent about 20 % of the world's drinking water, they are still misunderstood and are complex systems with a very fragile ecosystem easily vulnerable to pollution and destruction.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **Guidelines for Cave and Karst Protection**

The Second edition was published in 2022 by UIS and IUCN, Edited by David Gillieson, John Gunn, Augusto Auler and Terry Bolger. The guidelines provide an update and expansion of the original "Guidelines for Cave and Karst Protection," published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1997. They were published during IYCK 2021 and the follow UN 2030 Agenda (particularly its goals 15 and 6). <https://uis-speleo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/UIS-Guidelines-for-Cave-and-Karst-Protection-2nd-ed-electronic.pdf> Translation in the languages of UIS member countries is in progress, as well as the translation of Listing of 76 recommendations for cave and karst protection.

### **UIS Bulletin**

It is the UIS Bi-annual newsletter edited by Nivaldo Colzato and represents official publication of the UIS for publicizing the activities of the UIS and the state of the art of international speleology. It is only available digitally and, if you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please check the Guide for submitting and publishing articles. The next volume (64-2) will be published soon in the first week of 2023. <https://uis-speleo.org/index.php/uis-bulletin-bi-annual-newsletter-2/>

### **International Journal of Speleology – IJS**

Edited by Bogdan Onac represents the UIS official scientific journal on research and review articles concerning all sciences involved in karst and caves, such as geology, geomorphology, hydrology, archeology, paleontology, (paleo)climatology, cave meteorology, (geo)microbiology, environmental sciences, physics, chemistry, mineralogy, etc. <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/ijs>

### **Book "Karst, Caves and People"**

It was published in English in 2021 for which 64 photographers from 18 countries donated their photos for karst and caves promotion and to educate the world about caves and karst and their importance. It is still available at <https://zalozba.zrc-sazu.si/p/1638>.

In June 2022 it was also published and translated into German language as "Karst, Höhlen und Menschen" <https://shop.speleoprojects.com/cave-books/nonfiction-books/karst-hoehle-und-mensch.php>. Czech and Italian translations are on the way.

## **UIS COMMISSIONS**

Commissions and Working Groups are where UIS speleological work is actually done. Anyone who wants to contribute is encouraged to collaborate in the work of a commission under the coordination of its president directly. Many of groups are very active, some of the others are less or not at all. If you have the idea (enthusiasm) and energy to work in these less active commissions, you are invited to help and contribute to their revitalization or reorganization. <https://uis-speleo.org/index.php/uis-commissions-and-working-groups/>

## **SPELEOLOGICAL EVENTS SUPPORTED BY THE UIS**

All speleological events which are related to the aims and objectives of the UIS, whether of a general, international, national or even regional nature, are of interest to the UIS.

In 2022 the UIS received several applications for institutional support (use of the UIS logo) and nine projects asked for financial support. The UIS Bureau has recently analyzed carefully each one and the submissions and selection will be announced soon. The document Speleological Events Support Guidelines brings all information for requests. Please, see at <http://uis-speleo.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Speleological-Events-Support-Guidelines-Version-2-September-2019.pdf>

## **BUREAU MEETINGS**

In 2022 the UIS Bureau met personally twice during the 19<sup>th</sup> ICS in France and once more virtually on October 27. The Minutes of these meetings will be published in the next UIS Bulletin (Vol. 64-2).

Nadja Zupan Hajna  
UIS President



Postojna, 24. 12. 2022