

Report
of activity of the Pseudokarst Commission of UIS between September 2015
and May 2023

The report covers the period between the 13th International Symposium on Pseudokarst held in 2015 (Kunčice pod Ondřejníkem, Czech Rep., 16–19.09.2015) and this 14th International Symposium

In this time the honorary members and functionaries of the Commission have been:

Jiří Kopecký (honorary president), István Eszterhás (honorary president up to his death on the 2nd August 2020) William R. Halliday (honorary member),
Jan Urban (president), Rudolf Pavuza (vice-president), Hartmut Simmert (secretary).

The Commission has had the following members: Jiří Adamovič, Ilya Agapov, Ivo Baroň, Bartosz Baturo, Pavel Bella, Peter Crossley, Filip Duszyński, Ludovít Gaál, William R. Halliday, Andreas Hartwig, Kacper Jancewicz, Jiří Kopecký, Konstantin Kostov, Maria Kotowska, Jan Lenart, Shirish S. Manchi, Włodzimierz Margielewski, Douglas Medville, Claude Mouret, Jan Paul van der Pas, Rudolf Pavuza, Wioleta Porębna, Saul H. Riffel, Juan Ramón Vidal Romani, Jill Rowling, Hartmut Simmert, Rabbe Sjöberg, Herman de Swart, George Szentes, Peter Tarsoly, Maurizio Tavagnutti, Marcos Vaqueiro Rodriguez, Jan Urban, Marina Vdovets, Josef Wagner, Karel Žák.

During the reported period 13 new members were adopted into the Commission, while four ones died: Ahmad Afrasiabian (17.07.2017), John Dunkley (1.02.2018), Istvan Eszterhás (2.08.2020), and Erich Knust (6.07.2021). Consequently, the total number of the Commission members has increased by 9 persons and comprises 36 members. The Commission members represent the following countries: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Brazil, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Spain and United States of America.

The Commission Assemblies

In the reported period theoretically three Commission Assemblies took place.

The first Commission Assembly took place during the 13th International Symposium on Pseudokarst in Czech Rep. and gathered 11 members of the Commission from 9 countries. During this meeting the Commission activity between 2013 and 2015 was discussed (basing on the President's report), and the new executive committee (but with the previous composition) was elected, as well as the place of the next symposium was considered, however, no final decision was made.

The next Commission meeting was held during the 17th International Congress of Speleology in Sydney, Australia on 24th July 2017. Among ca. 10 persons participating in this meeting, including George Veni, only two ones were genuine members of the Commission: George Szentes and past John Dunkley. Behalf the Commission President, G. Szentes presented the Commission report for the period 2013-2017, which was then discussed. Several persons participating in the meeting, declared their will to join the Commission or close cooperation with the Commission executive.

The Commission meeting was also organized during the 18th International Congress of Speleology, Savoie Mont Blanc, France on 24th July 2022. In this meeting four members of the Commission participated. The subject of discussion was the Commission report for the period 2017-2022 and future plans. During the meetings in 2017 and 2022 no significant resolutions were passed and no election was held.

The next Commission assembly was planned during the 14th International Symposium on Pseudokarst, which was to be held in the Świętokrzyskie Mts., central Poland, in June 2020, and then was postponed to 2021 due to pandemic restrictions. Finally, it is organized on 23-26th May 2023 in the Stołowe Mountains, SW Poland.

Publications:

1. The Pseudokarst Commission Newsletter (PCN), previously also called "Nachrichtenbrief" has been issued once a year or two years, in two languages: English and German up to the no. 29, and only in English – no 30. Editors of the issues were: Jan Urban, Rudolf Pavuza and Christa Pfarr. The Newsletter is distributed in digital version by internet but up to the no. 29 it was also distributed in printed copies by mail.

During the reported period five issues were published:

- no. 26. (March 2016), composed of 4 scientific papers, report from 13th International Symposium on Pseudokarst, book review, and two obituaries (G. Dènes and C.A. Self) – in total 43 pages;
 - no. 27. (June 2017), composed of 3 scientific papers, several short reports and event announcements and three obituaries (K. Grimes, J. Demek, R. Wray) – in total 53 pages;
 - no. 28 (December 2018), composed of 4 scientific papers, 4 short reports and event announcements, and 2 obituaries (A. Afrasiabian, J. Dunkley) – in total 47 pages;
 - no. 29 (December 2019), composed of 4 scientific papers, 2 meeting announcements and one obituary (G. Klassek) – in total 48 pages;
 - no. 30 (March 2022). which was of special character, since it was published on the occasion of the International Year of Caves and Karst (IYCK); therefore, it included 11 scientific-popular papers promoting various types of pseudokarst caves and other features in nine countries on four continents; plus preface commenting the problem of the pseudokarst caves promotion during the IYCK, as well as 1 meeting announcement and 3 obituaries (I. Esterhás, N.A. Mörner, E. Knust) – in total 82 pages.
2. The reports on the Pseudokarst Commission activity in 2013-2023 were published in the UIS Bulletin no. 58,1/2016 (pp. 10-12), no. 59,2/2018 (pp. 79-80), no. 64,2/2022 (pp. 47-49).
3. In the UIS Bulletin were also published (by Commission members) obituaries of the members and collaborators of the Pseudokarst Commission: Grzegorz Klassek (UISBull 61,1/2019, pp. 26-27), Niels Axel Mörner (UISBull 62,2/2020, pp. 46-47) and István Eszterhás (UISBull 62,2/2020, pp. 48-49).

Webpage

The webpage of the Pseudokarst Commission (edited by the Commission secretary, Hartmut Simmert) is permanently active (address: <http://www.pseudokarst.com/>). It presents documents produced by the Commission assembly and executive group, issues of the Pseudokarst Newsletters, reports and announcements concerning meetings and other events, past symposia proceedings, as well as cave pictures. All activities providing new data and improving the informational level of the webpage are welcome.

Other activities

1. The messages on events related to cave and karst exploration, study and management (meeting announcements, publications, etc.) have been efficiently redistributed to the Commission 23 October 2021 members and friends. Such relations between the Commission executive and its members make it possible to get contacts also in other, inner-Commission affairs.

2. On 23 October 2021, during the Polish-Czech Speleological Workshop prepared and chaired by the Honorary President of the Pseudokarst Commission, Jiří Kopecký, the president of the Pseudokarst Commission presented the objectives, activeness and problems of the Pseudokarst Commission (the adequate presentation is accessible on the website). It was resulted in the increase in number of the Commission members.
3. The Commission members participated in preparation of the IYCK webpage, collecting the set of photographs of pseudokarst caves in different countries.

Current and planned activities

1. Despite the meeting problems that lasted since the beginning of 2020 up to 2023, in the recent period the number of the Commission members has distinctly increased and – the more important – the composition of the Commission has been evidently rejuvenated. It has already resulted in the increased activity of the Commission, that is currently reflected in the preparation of the 14th International Symposium on Pseudokarst. In the Commission Assembly held during this Symposium new objectives and ways of their realization by the Commission, adequate to modern cooperation possibilities and challenges, should be discussed, accepted, and then implemented.
2. The traditional – previously and currently realized – activeness of the Commission, is and should be continued, so the Pseudokarst Commission Newsletter will be issued (however the form and technique may be changed - e.g. into a blog), the website will be managed (proceedings of pseudokarst symposia as PDF files will be completed, etc.), the activity of Commission members in other media (UIS Bulletin, etc.) will be visible.
3. During this meeting, the election of functional members of the Commission should be conducted. We suggest that the following Commission officers should be elected:
 - President,
 - Vice-President,
 - Secretary,
 - Second Secretary,
 - Executive Member - Newsletter Editor.Secret ballot would be better method, but we are not sure if we are able to manage it online.
4. Initial measures for a preparation of the 15th International Symposium on Pseudokarst in 2025 or 2026 should be conducted.

We would like to thank all Members of the Commission for their active cooperation in the reported period (2015-2023), especially in the preparation of the Newsletter, but also in other affairs. We hope for similar and even closer and more active cooperation in the future.

Kraków-Wien-Dresden 24th May 2023

Hartmut Simmert
Secretary

Rudolf Pavuza
Vice-President

Jan Urban
President