
INTRODUCTION

Dear colleagues.

Now you find in your hands the Proceedings of the Second International Workshop on Ice Caves. Two years after we had been hosted by Romanian colleagues, we met in Slovakia between May 8 – 12, 2006 in an agreeable environment of the Repiská Hotel. This site lies in the territory of the Low Tatra National Park, in the centre of its most known karst parts – the Demänovská Valley. This is the place where one of the first show caves in Slovakia is situated – the Demänovská Ice Cave. Also the first written mention on the caves in our country is bound to this cave.

That was why where the workshop took place. International team of organizers prepared three days of excursions and two days of conference program. The pre-workshop excursion comprised the visit of the karst of the Demänovská Valley together with the Demänovská Cave of Liberty and Demänovská Ice Cave. Participants had the opportunity to get to know the unique Dobšinská Ice Cave, inscribed on the World Natural Heritage list. They visited the expositions of the Slovak Museum of Nature Protection and Caving. The post-workshop excursion enabled to visit different world heritage caves – the Ochtinská Aragonite Cave, Gombasecká Cave and its genetically connected Silická Ice Cave, as an ice cave with the lowest elevation within the temperate climatic zone of Europe.

17 papers and 9 poster presentations were presented during the conference part of the program. The courageous innovations were on the program: two moderated discussion oriented to speleoclimatic research and monitoring of ice caves and to cave glaciology. Every evening we had also an opportunity to watch the activities of amateur cavers, Slovak Caves Administration, Speleological Museum and participants themselves. We had 43 participants from originally 63 registered. We received (after repeatedly prolonged deadline) 14 contributions for the proceedings. That was the reason to refrain from reviewing the contributions and also the time for printing and distribution was delayed. At the same time, the majority of authors didn't respect the required form of contributions and mainly the appendices, which also influenced the printing quality. The full proceedings are available under this link <http://www.ssj.sk/edicna-cinnost/zborniky/>.

The UIS - GLACKIPR commission is quite active in matters dealing with ice caves and caves in glaciers. But where are caves with ice, glaciated caves or caves with ice fill? It is our personal matter, who are engaged in this problem, how we are able to push through in the commission. Shouldn't we change the name of our workshop from this perspective?

I am convinced that our meeting, except for the exchange of experiences, contributed to building new professional contacts. The already started collaboration will certainly bring new knowledge within the field of natural settings of caves with ice as very sensitive and threatened geocosystems, but also within the field of cave protection and preserving them for the next generations.

Ján Zelinka
editor

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