

FEDERATION SPELEOLOGIQUE EUROPEENNE



FSE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING EXTRAORDINARY SESSION Tuesday 26th of August 2008 in Lans en Vercors, France

Reported by Olivier Vidal

Nota Bene : In this Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting (XGAM), the FSUE has changed its name to FSE during the vote of the point 12. So up to the point 12 we will use the name FSUE, and then, the name FSE.

Introduction

The FSUE General Assembly meeting was held in Lans en Vercors on the mythic karstic plateau of Vercors in the northern French Alps, during the 4th European Speleological Congress, 3rd EuroSpeleo Forum, organised by the French Federation of Speleology (FFS). Juan Carlos Lopez, FSUE president, chaired the meeting.

The FSUE Bureau members and the country delegates wish to thank the FFS and its president, Laurence Tanguille, to have received them during Vercors 2008, as well as the organizing committee.

The meeting starts at 9h30.

Present participants of the GA meeting

Voting countries delegates :

Bureau members : Juan Carlos Lopez (President, Spain), Jean-Claude Thies (Treasurer, Luxembourg), Olivier Vidal (Secretary General, France)

Other delegates : Thomas Gustafsson (Sweden), Bärbel Vogel & Stephan Marks (Germany), Jose Antonio Berrocal (Spain), Szabolcs Leel-Ossy & Csaba Egri (Hungary), Viorel Lascu & Roman Costache (Romania), Michele Sivelli (Italy), Manuel Freire (Portugal), Peter Magdolen (Slovenia), Glenn Jones (UK), Marjan Temovski & Oliver Gichevski (FYRO. Macedonia), Alexey Zhalov (Bulgaria), Uros Askamovic & Misic Robert (Serbia), Ditta Ziansko & Marcin Gala (Poland), Jean-Marc Mattlet (Belgium), Patrick Deriaz & Roman Hapka (Switzerland)
+ 2 non-voting Greek delegates Fannis Ellinas (HSS) and Nikos Mitsakis (FHS) (cf. point 5).

Heads of Commissions : Christiane Grebe (ECPC, Germany)

Observers : Iria Epalza (European Parliament, Spain), Andy Eavis (UIS President, UK), Lambros Makrostogivs & Stelios Zacharias (FHS, Greece), Wietske van den Berge (Netherlands),

Excused : Ged Campion (Vice-President, UK), Monaco and Lithuania delegates.

Opening speech

In the name of the Bureau, the FSUE secretary general, Olivier Vidal, welcomes all participants for this XGA meeting. The agenda of the meeting has been established by the Bureau and sent to the delegates. The corresponding topics are developed in the report below.

1. Quorum - Presentation of voting delegates and observing countries

The FSUE counts 18 full members + 3 members to be confirmed at point 4 (Lithuania, FYR. of Macedonia and Ireland). So the quorum of a minimum of 9 voting delegates is reached with 17 countries present or represented (presence of 17 delegates). Only Monaco is not represented in spite of having paid their fee. Austria, though is not a member, made a contribution of 20 euros to the FSUE as a donation for the year 2007-2008. Denmark has only 3 active cavers this year and do not come to the Vercors 2008. Czech republic decided not to be a member in 2007. For the EU countries we are still waiting for the answer of Slovenia and the Netherlands.

The GA accepts the points, included in the meeting Agenda, that have been added after the version sent by registered mail 3 months before the GAM.

2. Welcome of new member countries

Since last year we have 5 new members : one as EU-member (Poland) and 4 as new European non-EU members (Switzerland, Monaco, Serbia and FYRO. Macedonia).

The FSUE warmly welcomes them among the big European speleological family.

3. Approval of reduced membership fees

One request has been received from Lithuania to pay 15 euros instead of 56 euros.

This request is adopted at unanimity minus 2 abstentions.

4. Vote about fees paid after time limit

3 member countries have paid their 2007-2008 fee after the limit date of the 30th of June 2008 : Lithuania, FYR. of Macedonia and Ireland.

The GA accepts at unanimity these 3 countries to be full voting members for the period 2007-2008 and for this XGAM.

Thus the FSUE comprises a total of 21 full member countries. 18 are present, 1 is represented (Lithuania gave a proxy to Luxembourg). 18 countries only are voting (cf point 5) and 2 countries are absent with no proxy (Monaco and Ireland).

5. Possibility of multiple organisations from a single country

* Face to the passed and present situations where several organisations of a same countries proposed different FSUE delegates without consultation, it has been proposed to open the possibility to accept different organisations for a same country.

This possibility is rejected by the GA at 15 voices against, 1 for and 2 abstentions.

* Then it is studied the situation of Greece where 2 organisations are asking the membership. The HSS that was representing Greece up to now in the FSUE and the FHS that is officially requesting the Greek FSUE delegation since end of 2007. They have brought a letter that is read to the FSUE GA :

“Dear delegates, The bureau of the Hellenic Federation of Speleology (FHS) would like to thank all of you who have offered advice and suggestions for the “Greek problem” with the representation of Greece in today’s XGAM. The HSS is an historic club, which has represented Greece in the past both to the FSUE and UIS GAM. Through discussions we have had with you, we realize that this long history of representation and cooperation with the HSS club places you in a difficult position as regards to the choice of representative of Greece for the present meeting (agenda : point 5).

Following your advice we make the following proposal of conciliation : The FHS will represent Greece with voting Delegate and accepts for the present meeting the HSS club to provide the Vice-Delegate as honorific recognition of the club’s history and its importance to Speleology in Greece. We trust in your wise decision. With respect, For the council of the FHS, The President & The Secr. General.”

After the reading of this letter, the HSS representative wants to say that HSS does not agree with this proposal and ask the FSUE delegates not to vote for HSS as Greek voting organisation.

It is asked to both organisations how many cavers there are in Greece. The HSS answers that there are about 800 cavers and the FHS answers that there exist about 700 cavers in Greece.

The vote on the representation of Greece gives the following result :

- FHS as voter : 1
- HSS as voter : 0
- None as voter : 8 voices
- Abstentions : 9

So Greece is considered as a full FSUE member, and has voice but no vote for this XGAM.

So the number of votes for each following point is 18 and the majority of the 2/3 is 12 votes.

* Finally a proposal from Spain is studied. It is proposed to add at the end of the article 1 of the Statutes the following sentence :
 “The countries must be recognized by the European Council or the United Nations”.

This proposal is accepted at unanimity.

6. Approval of last General Assembly Meeting report

Last GAM report of Visby is approved at unanimity minus 1 abstention.

7. Situation of the 27 EU countries

Jean-Claude Thies explains the situation of the 27 EU countries + the new European non-EU countries members of the FSUE :

<u>Code</u>	<u>Full Members :</u>	<u>Confirmed Delegate Presence at XGAM 2008</u>
BE	BELGIUM	Jean-Marc Mattlet
BG	BULGARIA	Alexey Zhalov
CH*	SWIZERLAND	Patrick Deriaz
DE	GERMANY	Stephan Marks / Christiane Grebe
ES	SPAIN	Juan Carlos Lopez
FR	FRANCE	Olivier Vidal
GB	GREAT BRITAIN	Glenn Jones
GR	GREECE	To be voted by GA
HU	HUNGARIA	Szabolcs Leél-Össy
IE	IRELAND	Absent
IT	ITALY	Michele Sivelli
LT	LITHUANIA	Proxy JCT
LU	LUXEMBOURG	Jean-Claude Thies
MC*	MONACO	(absent) Georges Castellano
MK*	FYR. of MACEDONIA	Marjan Temovski/Oliver Gichevski
PL	POLAND	Ditta Kicinska
PT	PORTUGAL	Manuel Freire
RO	ROMANIA	Viorel Lascu
RS*	SERBIA	Uros Aksamovic
SE	SWEDEN	Thomaz Gustavsson / Mats Lind
SK	SLOVAKIA	Peter Magdolen / Peter Bella

(*) New non-EU full member countries since 2007 GAM

<u>EU countries not Yet Members :</u>	<u>Observations</u>
AUSTRIA	Made a 20 euros donations in 2007-2008
DENMARK	Only 3 active covers this year, don't come to Lans.
SLOVENIA	Jasmina Rijavec – answer pending
THE NETHERLANDS	Will be observer at the XGAM
CZECH REPUBLIC	Decided not to be a member early 2007

EU countries with no Speleological Organisation :
CYPRUS, ESTONIA, FINLAND, LATIVA, MALTA.

8. Short report of the Bureau 2007-2008

The general report of the FSUE for 2005-2007 is read by the 4 Bureau members. Here it is°

Major advancements (JCL) :

This year has been deeply marked by the development of the activities of the Protection Commission. The FSUE Bureau would like to congratulate Christiane Grebe and all her team for the very good job that have been done.

Not only the ECPC has developed a real European project for Cave protection in Europe, but also they have with the help of national federations, like the German VdHK, and the UIS Protection Commission, made a great step ahead in terms of relationships with the EU parliament. We'll hear with interest their report afterwards.

Internal and Public representation (OV) :

To give you a short summary of all the meetings that the members of the FSUE Bureau have made, here are the main meetings (about 20 meetings for these 2 years) we have done, together or separately :

1/ 1 Bureau meetings : Paris on February 2008.

2/ 2 Meetings at the European Commission in Brussels : Jan & March 2008

4/ 6 Meetings with national boards and FSUE stands : Italy on Nov 2007, UK on Sept 2007; Switzerland on Sept 2007 and April 2008, Portugal on May 2008, Vercors (France) on this week.

5/ 1 FSUE-UIS Meeting : Paris on Feb 2008.

7/ 9 European Congress organisation meetings in Lans-en-Vercors : from Aug 2007 to July 2008.

EuroSpeleo Projects (CG) :

Now we would like to give some news since Kalamos, concerning the new « EuroSpeleo Projects ». These projects, for the moment financed by the own FSUE budget only, involve at least 5 European countries, with financial grants from 100 to 500 euros. For 2008 Up to now we have received 3 projects applications that have been approved :

1/ The "European cave project" expedition in Lao that have gathered 6 European countries + Lao cavers.

2/ The 4th International Cave Diving Congress in France that have gathered 7 European countries

3/ A survey camp in Romania that have gathered 8 European countries

European License (JCT) :

About the European license, the Bureau has worked a lot in order to establish a common project for the proportional fee system. We'll present you this project here after.

The General Report is approved at unanimity minus 1 abstention.

The Belgian delegate says that he is very happy that many interesting activities are carried out by the FSUE since 2005.

9. Annual report of the FSUE Protection Commission 2007- 2008 & Head of Commission election

Christiane Grebe, in charge of the ECPC presents the annual report of the Protection commission for its first year of existence. See report in annex.

The report is accepted at unanimity minus 1 abstention by the GAM.

Then the General Assembly proceed to the election of the Head of the FSE Protection Commission (ECPC). There is one Candidate : Christiane Grebe

Result : Elected at the unanimity of the voters as Head of the ECPC for 4 years up to 2012.

The General Assembly warmly thanks Christiane and her team for the good work and encourage to keep it on.

10. Financial report 2007-2008

The financial report of the FSUE for 2007-2008 is distributed to the delegates and presented by the Treasurer (see annexe).

The financial report is approved at unanimity minus 2 abstentions.

11. Change to proportional membership fees & system of 1 to 5 voices per country

(Statut. Art. 8,12,22,23,26,28,29,32 & IR Art 8,9,23)

This point is the main one of this XGAM, since it is the reason why the GA decided last year to organise this XGAM this year. This debate is a long one (almost 10 years), and deep discussions happened last year in Sweden about it. The idea is to give a number of voting delegates from 1 to 5 according to the number of cavers, and to have a fee proportional to the number of cavers (11 cents per caver + 11 euros per organisation). The following rules have been agreed among the Bureau :

- Each country is represented at least by a delegate and a vice-delegate even if it has one voice
- In order to have the maximum number of voices, the country should physically or by proxy have the number of corresponding delegates
- In case of the absence of one or several delegates, a country can do proxies, to the other delegates of its country or from other countries.
- Each delegate can hold a maximum of two proxies

The subject has been explained more and more during the past year and every country could do its own opinion about it. A new debate happen during this XGAM, each delegate giving his/her opinion and arguments.

The final vote is :

11 voices for

0 voices against

7 abstentions

The vote is negative since it has to be approved by the 2/3 of the present or represented delegates (12 voices).

The GA decides at unanimity that for the year 2008-2009 the 3 slices fees will be 58 / 140 / 400 euros.

The GA also decides at unanimity to extend its authorisation for Belgium for half-reduced membership fee to the year 2008-2009.

12. Change of name from FSUE to FSE

After the opening last year of the FSUE to non-EU countries, the Bureau proposes this year to change the name of the FSUE to FSE :

Official name : Fédération Spéléologique Européenne

Official acronym : FSE

Name in English: European Speleological Federation

Name in Latin for the logo : Europae Spelaeologica Foederatio

This proposal is approved at unanimity minus 3 abstentions (15 voices on 18).

At this point of the GAM, 2 voting delegates leave the room and the number of countries present or represented is 16 (majority of the 2/3 at 11 voices).

13. Change of statutes for the registration of the FSE

(Statut. Art 3,10,26)

In order to comply with the law of Luxembourg where the FSE has its headquarters, we need to change the statutes :

* Art 3 : Add “ Grand Duchy of ” Luxembourg

* Art 10 : Add “The number of member countries can not be less than three.”

* Art 26 (about Annual fees) : Add “this amount can not be more than 10.000 euros”

These points are approved at unanimity minus 1 abstention (15 voices on 16).

The Statutes articles 3, 10 and 26 are changed accordingly.

14. Internal Regulations of the Protection Commission

Christiane Grebe, Head of the Protection Commission, presents a project of text for the internal regulations of the commission. The text is not finalised but it presents the main principles to be followed.

These principles are approved at unanimity minus 1 abstention (15 voices on 16). The final text will be presented to the GA next year.

15. European cave protection declaration & Charta

Christiane Grebe presents the project of Written declaration (WD 66) to be signed by the half the EU deputies in Brussels. It is requested to each country :

- to ask its EU deputies to sign the WD66
- to send to the ECPC its national legislation on cave protection
- to fully support the WD

This proposal is approved at unanimity minus 1 abstention (15 voices on 16).

It is informed then that the project of European Charta on Cave protection will be built during this European congress and proposed by email o all delegates and the ECPC workgroup. The final text will be presented to the GA next year.

16. Adoption of FSE-FEALC Agreement

Juan Carlos presents to the GA the proposal of agreement that have been signed by both FSE and FEALC presidents and approved by FEALC GA on February 2008 in Malargue, Argentina. In order to be valid, this agreement needs to be approved by the FSE GA.

Some delegates regret the commercial aspect of this agreement in spite of its great interest that represent the development of connections between Latin American and European cavers.

This agreement is approved by 11 voices and 5 abstentions on 16 voices.

17. Organisation of EuroSpeleo Forum 2009, 2010 &2011.

A call will be sent to the national organisations for the organisation of the EuroSpeleo Forums of the 3 coming years.

Spain and Portugal explain that they might be interested to organise it for 2010.

The application will need to be sent to the Bureau by the 30th of September 2008.

18. Provisional Budget 2008-2009

The Treasurer, Jean-Claude Thies, presents the proposal of budget for 2008-2009 :

Budget Plan 2008 - 2009 pending

EuroSpeleo Forum 2009	500
EuroSpeleo Projects	2500
Meetings	200
Stamps, Office, Copies	400
EuroSpeleo Newsletter	600
Commercial items (stickers)	500
ECPC	500
Internet	100
15th ICS presence, stand	100
<u>Total</u>	<u>5400 euros</u>

This budget is approved at unanimity minus 2 abstentions (14 voices on 16).

19. Election of Bureau members Treasurer & Vice-secretary

The positions of Treasurer and Vice-secretary have become vacant because of the leave of :

- Thomaz Gustafson from the Vice-secretary position on October 2007
- Jean-Claude Thies who informed on July 2008 that he would resign from the Treasurer position at the end of the GAM in Vercors

According to the article 11 of the Internal Regulations, these 2 positions go up to 2011 like the position of Vice-president. For information, the positions of President and Secretary General will be renewed in 2009.

The Bureau has already received by email the candidature of Alexey Zhalov from Bulgaria, for the position of Vice-secretary.
After a last call the Bureau receive the written candidature of Manuel Freire from Portugal, for the position of Treasurer.

Here is the result of the elections :

Treasurer position

Manuel Freire : 15 voices, 1 abstention

Vice-secretary

Alexey Zhalov : 14 voices, 2 abstentions

Both candidates are elected and the GA congratulates them for their election.

The new Bureau is comprised of :

President : Juan Carlos Lopes (up to 2009)

Vice-President : Ged Campion (up to 2011)

General Secretary : Olivier Vidal (up to 2009)

Treasurer : Manuel Freire (up to 2011)

Vice-Secretary : Alexey Zhalov (up to 2011)

20. Miscellaneous

It is proposed by some delegates to open the positions of the Bureau to persons, members of the FSE national organisation, who are not delegates or vice-delegates.

This proposal will be submitted to next GAM in 2009.

The meeting ends at 13.00
