



Gua Baba,
Kaki Bukit, Perlis,
Malaysia.
This 560 m long
cave has been
mined for alluvial
tin deposits
(EuroSpeleo
Project
ESP 2026-03).

GotoSatoshiPhotography

Photo: S. Goto.



Fédération Spéléologique Européenne a.s.b.l.

European Speleological Federation (F.S.E.)

Headquarter: 2, Rue du Fort Olisy, L-2261 Luxembourg

Postal address: B.P. 3067, L-1030 Luxembourg

R.C.S. Luxembourg F7846

Web: www.eurospeleo.eu

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/eurospeleo>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/eurospeleo_fse/

e-mail: contact@eurospeleo.eu

ISSN 2418-4500

Become part of the team

Dear Cavers,

the FSE now with 32 Member Organisations has existed for 36 years and during all this time tried to be present at national or regional caving events. It will also be a pleasure for the FSE Bureau to join the 18th EuroSpeleo Forum (ESF) in Pazin, Croatia in a few weeks from now. It will be the first ESF in Croatia and will take place on the Istrian peninsula, a region where speleology has a long-time tradition. 2026 marks the 130th anniversary (1896) of E.A. Martel's final visit and exploration of the Pazin Cave (Pazinska jama).

During this Forum, the European Cave Protection Commission (ECPC) which is an important commission from the FSE is organising a "Workshop on Karst Underground Preservation". Cavers, local officials, regional experts, nature protection organisations and decision-making authorities have been invited to discuss ideas and solutions around cave and karst protection and conservation. Don't miss this event. The EuroSpeleo Forum takes place from 13th to 15th of November this year. Please don't forget that the FSE has launched a scholarship funding again

making it possible for 2 young students to take part at the EuroSpeleo Forum. Further information can be found in this Newsletter.

As cavers usually wear protective helmets, headhunting is not so easy for the FSE Bureau. However, we are trying to look for colleagues who are willing to get active in the Federation and present their candidatures as a Bureau member or as member in an FSE Commission or Working Group. Detailed call-outs will be made public in early 2027. The elections for all mandates will take place at the next FSE General Assembly Meeting which will be held in May 2027 at the French-Swiss national meeting and 19th EuroSpeleo Forum in Morteau, France. Even though there are still about 7 months to go, we are already inviting you now to consider an application to become part of a good working team. For any questions, come to Pazin or contact the FSE Bureau.

The Federation also has produced new items of clothing in beautiful fancy colours and with a nice new design generously provided by Taraneh Khaleghi. They are waiting to be worn by you and will be available at the FSE stand at the next EuroSpeleo Fora.

Jean-Claude Thies, FSE President

Make a donation

With a donation you will support projects and initiatives to explore and protect caves and karst. The new FSE donation button can be found on the starting page of the FSE website when you scroll a little bit down:

<https://www.eurospeleo.eu>

or directly at:

<https://www.eurospeleo.eu/donations>

**The 18th EuroSpeleo Forum
in Pazin (Istria/Croatia)
takes place from 13-15 Nov
2026. Please find the 2nd
Circular with all info at**

https://www.eurospeleo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Mundus_Spelaus_Second_Circular-En.pdf

FSE Partners



EuroSpeleo Project ESP 2026-03 Malaysia-Swiss Expedition to Perlis

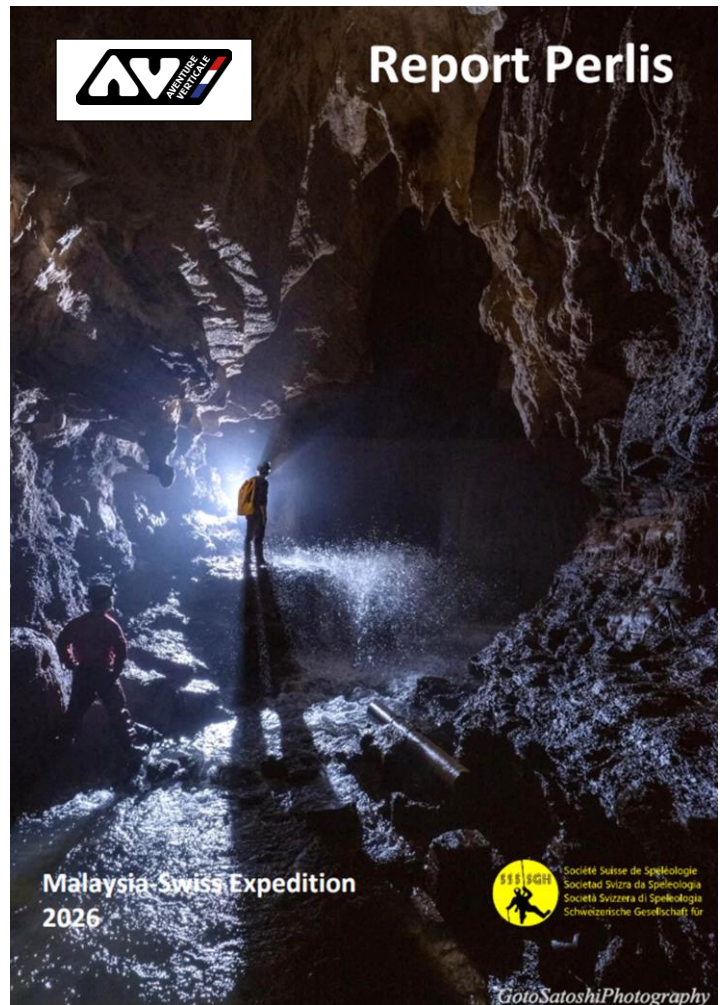
This EuroSpeleo Project led scientists and cavers from Malaysia, Switzerland, the UK and Japan to Perlis in the northern part of the Malaysian Peninsula close to the Thailand border. The University of Malaysia (Malaya) as well as the Malaysian Cave and Karst Conservancy (MCKC) acted as local project partners.

The expedition targeted the mountain range extending south from Kaki Bukit to Kangar. The limestone in this area belongs to the Setul Formation of Ordovician to Lower Devonian age. The caves were filled with alluvial tin deposits due to mineralization at the contact zone with the Mesozoic Bukit China Granite. Tin ore was extensively mined between the early 20th century to the early 1980s. Many of the caves still contain abandoned mining installations like plankways etc., which makes exploration a unique experience.

Ten caves with a total of almost 7.7 km of passages were surveyed. Gua Kelam 2 yielded 3.8 km of underground galleries. Wang Mu was mapped to 1.3 km. Only minor open leads were left unexplored in the caves. Two pits with a depth of more than 140 m remained undescended.

The project received a financial grant from FSE as well as equipment support by FSE's Official Partner Adventure Verticale (AV).

Full report available at: https://www.eurospeleo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/ESP-2026-03_Malaysia_Expedition_Perlis_2026.pdf



A cave in the Chuping Hills, Perlis, Malaysia (photo: Satoshi Goto).



Gua Kelam 2 (Perlis, Malaysia) (photo: Satoshi Goto).

Cave and Karst related events

For more detailed information please consult the list of European caving events at the FSE website:

<https://www.eurospeleo.eu/events/>

29 October – 1 November 2026

Int. Italian Meeting - Costacciaro (Umbria), Italy

<https://www.radunocostacciaro.it>

1 - 8 November 2026

22nd Int. Symposium on Vulcanospeleology - Lanzarote & Tenerife, Canary Islands

<https://www.magnacongresos.com/2026-isv22/>

13 - 15 November 2026

18th EuroSpeleo Forum - Pazin, Istria, Croatia, 2nd circular available at https://www.eurospeleo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Mundus_Spelaesus_Second_Circular-En.pdf

6 - 9 May 2027

Annual meeting of the German Cavers - Dohna/Saxony, Website t.b.d.

14 - 17 May 2027

19th EuroSpeleo Forum and meeting of the French and Swiss cavers - Morteau, Departement Doubs, France
<https://congres2027.speleo-doubs.com/en/home/>



18th EuroSpeleo Forum in Pazin, Croatia

Only a few more weeks to go until the 18th meeting of the European cavers in Pazin (Croatia)! This event will feature many caving fieldtrips, club stands, presentations and workshops. It is also a unique opportunity for networking. All details can be found at the event's website <https://www.speleo.hr/mundus-spelaesus-en/>



19th EuroSpeleo Forum in Morteau, France

The French and Swiss Speleological Federations invite the European cavers to their joint annual meeting between 14-17 May 2027 to the town of Morteau

(Doubs/France). At the same time the meeting will be the 19th EuroSpeleo Forum.

Note this event already now in your calendar. All currently available details are at <https://congres2027.speleo-doubs.com/en/home/>

The FSE General Assembly for 2027 will take place on 15th May 2027 during the event in Morteau. Delegates of FSE member organisations are kindly requested to forsee their participation.

Workshop on Karst Underground Preservation in Pazin, Croatia

The European Cave Protection Commission is inviting you to its workshop held during the 18th EuroSpeleo Forum in Pazin on Saturday 14th of November 2026.

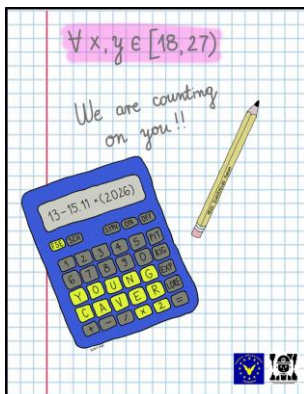
On the schedule are many presentations around cave and karst cleaning and conservation topics from Europe and worldwide karst regions.

Several presentations are held by winners of the EuroSpeleo Protection Label from the years 2018-2026

- PROTECTUS – Cleaning and Protecting Cave Habitats for the Conservation of the Black Olm (SI) ;
- Clean underground: a grassroots model of cave protection (HR);
- Twenty Years of "Puliamo il Buio": Cleaning, Mapping, and Protecting Italy's Subterranean Caves (IT);
- Additional presentations by representatives from Institutions are scheduled; the Ministry of the Environmental Protection and Green Transition of Croatia, The Public Institute of Natural History, the European Cave Protection Commission.

Don't miss this opportunity and take part in this unique workshop.





FSE scholarships to encourage young cavers to attend the 18th EuroSpeleo Forum in Pazin, Croatia 13-15 Nov. 2026

The annual EuroSpeleo Forum is a unique opportunity to discover karst areas around Europe, exchange knowledge about recent karst research, discoveries and cave protection activities on an international level.

But most importantly, it is the place to become part of the European speleological community, where old and new friends as well as different generations of cave enthusiasts meet. It is the place to get connected to Speleology in Europe. For this reason the FSE supports especially the attendance of young speleologists active in caving, karst research or karst protection to the 18th EuroSpeleo Forum in 2026 in Croatia.

The FSE grants two scholarships to young speleologists for attending the 18th EuroSpeleo Forum in Pazin, Istria, Croatia. Information on the EuroSpeleo Forum can be found here: <https://www.speleo.hr/mundus-spelaeus-en/>

The requirements are:

- a) Applicants must be affiliated to an organisation being member of FSE (e.g. via your local club).
- b) Applicants must be 26 years of age or younger. You must be at least 18 years old when signing and sending in the application form.
- c) Applicants are required to send an application form and a letter of recommendation to the FSE.

Each scholarship is up to a maximum of EUR 500. Details, including the deadline, will be specified on the application form to be downloaded here:

https://www.eurospeleo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/FSE_Scholarship_2026.pdf

Please send your application by e-mail as soon as possible to contact@eurospeleo.eu

EuroSpeleo Protection Label 2027

The EuroSpeleo Protection Label is a European Speleological award managed by the European Cave Protection Commission (ECPC), financed by the FSE budget. The EuroSpeleo Protection Label will help to promote amongst the speleological clubs of Europe, Cave Protection activities that are designed in an integrated ecological way, taking into account EU environmental directives, the principles of administration of the Natura 2000 sites and the IUCN Guidelines on caves and karst protection.

It is with great pleasure that the FSE announces the call for Cave Protection projects to receive the "EuroSpeleo Protection Label 2027" from the European Cave Protection Commission of the FSE (ECPC).

With what kind of projects can you apply?

The EuroSpeleo Protection Label will be awarded every year to one unique Cave Protection project. Any project aiming at protecting caves developed by a club, a local committee or a national commission from a member of the FSE can be the subject of an application.

What are the criteria to receive the FSE EuroSpeleo Protection Label and what is the prize?

The application should be a quality project easily reproducible in other European regions and countries. The application should be sent to protection@eurospeleo.eu before 31st of March 2027, in English language.

The approval of the national speleological organisation, member of the FSE is mandatory.

The reward for the EuroSpeleo Protection Label 2027 is EUR 800 plus rope from our FSE-sponsor Korda's.

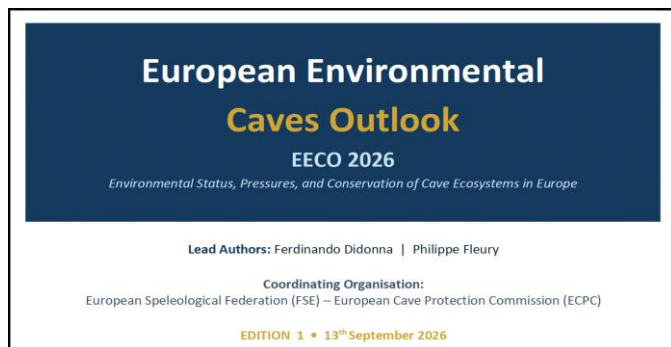
Please refer to the Guidelines and Application Form published on the FSE site at

<https://www.eurospeleo.eu/ECPC/espl/>

Best Speleo Wishes - The ECPC Team

FSE shop items are available online by email to shop@eurospeleo.eu

*For the available items please visit the FSE website
<https://www.eurospeleo.eu/supporting-items/>*



The European Speleological Federation (FSE) and its European Cave Protection Commission (ECPC) highlight the ongoing development of the European Environmental Caves Outlook (EECO). Modeled after the UN Global Environment Outlook (GEO), this framework addresses the environmental status, pressures, and protection needs of Europe's subterranean heritage. Karst landscapes cover approximately 22% of Europe's land surface and provide drinking water for roughly 20% of the continent's population. Despite this reliance, subterranean ecosystems remain largely under-represented in broader environmental policies, requiring a shift toward karst-aware regional planning across EU Member States.

Verified Environmental Pressures & Status

- **Habitats Directive Coverage:** "Caves not open to the public" are protected under EU law as Habitat Type 8310. However, monitoring reports indicate that a significant portion of these subterranean habitats remain in unfavorable conservation status across several Member States.
- **Subterranean Climate Impacts:** Due to global warming, subsurface temperatures are rising. The underground ice in the Alps and the Pyrenees is melting. This will have considerable consequences for karst aquifers and subsurface ecosystems.
- **Aquifer Contamination:** Extreme precipitation events increasingly trigger rapid transport of surface pollutants and pathogens directly into karst aquifers via swallow holes and sinkholes, bypassing natural filtration. The report tracks severe emerging pressures on these systems, highlighting critical data points such as a 42% pathogen-pulse increase following extreme weather, the vital protection of Vienna's 400,000

m³/day karst water supply, and severe regional shortages like Armenia's 0.5 billion m³ water deficit.

The EECO Environmental Index (E_{ka}^1)

A key methodological addition to the EECO report is the introduction of the EECO Environmental Index (E_{ka}^1). This framework aims to provide comparative per-country scores evaluating karst vulnerability, ecological health, and protection levels across the 32 FSE member-organisations.

- **Provisional Status:** As outlined in Section 1.3.4 of the EECO report, the E_{ka}^1 is currently a provisional index. The comparative assessments presented in the initial tables (which currently cover 16 core countries) serve as a foundational baseline and will be refined as more standardized data is collected across the continent.

Policy & Protection Priorities

Following the passage of the EU Nature Restoration Law, Member States are developing National Restoration Plans to meet target deadlines. The ECPC continues to advocate for key conservation measures:

- **Restoration Integration:** Incorporating Habitat Type 8310 and karst groundwater bodies explicitly into national ecosystem restoration strategies.
- **Water Protection Zones:** Integrating mandatory karst vulnerability mapping into river basin management plans under the Water Framework Directive.
- **Geodiversity Recognition:** Strengthening legal protections for physical subterranean structures (speleothems, sediments, and ice reserves) alongside biological species.
- **Shared governance:** Establishment of EU-level coordination body for subterranean heritage governance.

This work was made possible through the collaboration of the ECPC and builds directly upon the national EECO fact sheets available for Croatia, France, Italy, and Poland with public data elaboration. To expand this initiative, the ECPC has established a standardized data request form for all FSE member organisations, enabling every FSE delegate to contribute local data, cave inventories, and regional environmental profiles towards future editions of the Outlook. The full EECO report and accompanying national fact sheets will be available on the ECPC website: <https://www.eurospeleo.eu/ECPC/eeco-european-environmental-cave-outlook/>

For the ECPC, Ferdinando Didonna and Philippe Fleury



FSE was present at the Belgian Caving Days in September 2026 with a sales stand, offering its new T-shirts and hoodies in 10 fancy colours and with a brand new logo created by Taraneh Khaleghi.

An FSE sales stand will also be present in Pazin, Croatia, at the next EuroSpeleo Forum.

Photo: Jean-Claude Thies