



BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
National Institute for Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography
Experimental Laboratory of Karstology

FORUM ProKARSTerra`2019



*150 years
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences*



*90 years of organized
cave movement in Bulgaria*



*10 years Scientific Network
ProKARSTerra*

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC-PRACTICAL CONFERENCE
“PROTECTED KARST TERRITORIES – LEGISLATION, TOURISM, MONITORING”
(September 29 - October 2, 2019, Sofia, Bulgaria)

Under the slogan: *Protected karst territories - islands of sustainable development*

INVITATION



Dear colleagues,

Global changes and the problems caused by them are already an indisputable fact. Against this background, the specific karst territories, occupying an impressive part of the Earth and the lives of millions of people, living there, are particularly vulnerable to changes and impacts. The consequences are already very serious and require urgent measures to ensure the sustainable development of karst areas.

As karstologists and speleologists we are professionally responsible and we realize the seriousness of these issues. That is why an open scientific discussion on the state and principles of management of karst territories is well-timed. Especially important are the problems of updating the legislative and regulatory framework and introduction of the principles of sustainable development. There are many topical issues and problems on national and international levels. Through the themes of the upcoming conference we invite you to discuss these problems together in Sofia.

At the same time, karst territories and sites are very attractive for different forms of tourism, especially cave tourism. Its development may have dangerous consequences for the sustainable development of karst territories. But tourism can and should have a positive effect too. It helps the local economy; it stimulates nice emotions, which contributes to the physical and mental health of people; it may have high educational effect, learning about karst and through karst. The balance between beneficial and harmful results from tourism in karst areas will also be discussed at this conference. This balance can be controlled by integrated monitoring. So another major topic will be what kinds and models of monitoring have been developed.

Integrated monitoring requires co-operation and good synchronization. It is necessary to organize international scientific networks and modern science infrastructure, focusing on model areas representative for various manifestations of active global change. Karst geosystems, being some of the most sensitive and vulnerable ones, are ideal for this purpose. They offer also natural underground laboratories. Integrated monitoring is also the basis for a wide international scientific and practical network. It will be a tool for tracking, analyzing and assessing impacts of global change on karst, and the role of karst in global change. Some ideas for such a network will be presented and discussed at the workshop prior to the conference. The potential of such a network as a basis for a new strategy for sustainable development of karst territories will be among the main issues discussed at the Round Table in the closing part of the conference.

There are many practically important problems in karst regions, the solution of which should not be delayed. In most cases these problems are due to the ignorance and disregard of karst and karst system's specifics. Despite the vast amount of research on karst and caves, authorities of different levels remain indifferent. This is especially dangerous, since rulers and politicians should have their responsibilities for the sustainable development of karst areas. This concerns strongly the life of people inhabiting them and depending on them. Unfortunately, karst continues to remain "Terra incognita".

The ProKARSTerra`2019 forum and the conference aim to discuss how to build a constructive integration between research, management, education and business. The success of this integration provides a basis for a new strategy for the sustainable development of karst territories in the context of global change - a key topic of the Round Table.

The upcoming conference in Bulgaria is the fourth one under the ProKARSTerra emblem. And that is not accidental. Karst in Bulgaria covers 1/4th of its territory. It is not only rich in caves (over 6000), but with its exceptional variety and human presence from deepest antiquity, it is a unique natural laboratory. Several generations of karstologists and speleologists work in it with serious scientific contributions, but this is still poorly known to the international scientific community. The geographic position of the Bulgarian karst also gives it a strategic advantage in studying the global changes and their effects on the contemporary karst genesis.

The conference with its planned field session and scientific excursion is an opportunity to explore, though partially, the diversity of karst in Bulgaria. This will be helped by a specialized exhibition where tour operators working at different karst sites will be invited, as well as producers of original items in karst areas. Comparing world traditions and good practices will create the basis for new ideas, and why not – for creation of new karst inspired brands...

We are looking forward to meet you in Bulgaria.

On behalf of the organizers,
Peter Stefanov -
Experimental Laboratory of Karstology

DATES



Conference: September 29 - October 2, 2019

Pre-conference Workshop: September 28, 2019

Post-conference Scientific excursion: October 3-5, 2019

Expo „ProKARSTerra`2019: Tourism and Karst”: September 28 - October 6, 2019

VENUE



At Pre-conference Workshop, Conference and Expo: Sofia, Bulgaria

At Field session of the Conference: Central northern Bulgaria

At Excursion: Northwestern Bulgaria

Working languages: Bulgarian and English

MAIN TOPICS



At the workshop before the conference:

ProKARSTerra-NET: Scientific-practical Network for sustainable development of karst territories in the context of global changes (on the example of model karst geosystems)

At the conference:

KARTS AND LEGISLATION

- Legislative framework for karst territories and sites.
- Protected karst territories - status, categories and potential.
- Standardization in the field of karst, caves and cave tourism.
- New strategies for economic use of karst and sustainable development of karst territories.
- Inter-institutional and international co-ordination in karst legislation.

KARST AND TOURISM

- Recreational and touristic potential of karst territories.
- Traditions and tourist policies in karst areas.
- Planning, management, marketing and advertising of tourism in karst areas.
- Tourism products and tourism patterns in karst territories in the conditions of globalization.
Cross-border forms of tourism.
- Good practices and original tourist destinations in karst regions.
- Forms of tourism in karst areas:
 - Cave tourism in well-developed show caves.
 - Extreme tourism in “wild caves”.
 - Specific forms of cave tourism such as religious (sacred) tourism, speleo-therapy, concerts etc.
 - Specialized forms of tourism in karst areas: eco-trails, culinary tourism, educational tourism.
- Staff policy for specialized tourism in karst territories
- Karst sites of the World Natural and Cultural Heritage and the role of UNESCO in karst education and training.
- Karst promotion: Marketing and advertising of karst objects and routes.
- Tourism and sustainable development of karst territories - problems and benefits.

KARST AND MONITORING

- Model karst geosystems as research bases for karst genesis and impacts of global change.
- Integrated karst monitoring systems - models and results.
- Specialized research infrastructure for monitoring. Underground (cave) laboratories.
- Research networks for monitoring and their role in the sustainable development of karst territories.

At the Round Table:

Global changes and the need for a new strategy for the sustainable development of karst territories, integrating science, management, business and education.

For detailed topics contents please see the conference website:

<http://prokarstterra.bas.bg/forum2019/topics>

FORMS OF PARTICIPATION



- Paper (oral presentation or poster)
- With a corporate presentation
- Expo Stand “ProKARSTerra`2019: Tourism and Karst”
- Listener / guest

You can apply for your participation in the forum by June 14, 2019 using the Application Form, available on the forum's website. Please send the completed application to e-mail address: forum2019@abv.bg or psgeo@abv.bg.

The authors of approved papers must send an extended resume by August 31, 2019. The papers must be original (unreported and unpublished). They should be consistent with the conference topics and be reported by the author or a member of the authors' team. The full text of the papers will be submitted for review after the conference (deadline 17 November 2019). The papers will be published in a collection with ISBN (electronic edition) and will be available online via the <http://prokarstterra.bas.bg> web platform. Some papers selected by the Conference Committee will be submitted for publication in reference scientific journals.

The conditions for corporate presentations and participation in the Expo “ProKARSTerra`2019: Tourism and Karst” will be announced on the conference website after June 17, 2019.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM



27/28 September 2019

Arrival and accommodation of the participants

28 September 2019

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

Presentation of the ProKARSTerra-NET. Presentations and discussions.

CONFERENCE

29 September 2019

a.m.

Accommodation of the participants.
Formal opening. Greetings.
Plenary session.

p.m.

Official Session:
• Presentation of the international educational initiatives of the ProKARSTerra-Edu strategy.
• Awarding the winners from the karst Art-Competition.
Opening of the exhibition with award-winning works from the karst Art-Competition.
Opening of the Expo “ProKARSTerra`2019: Tourism and Karst”.
Cocktail for the participants and conference guests.

30 September 2019

a.m.

Working meetings by sections.

p.m.

Poster session.
Corporate presentations.
Working meetings by sections.
Cultural program.

1 October 2019

Thematic one-day excursion in model karst areas in northern Bulgaria:
Visiting representative karst sites and tourist caves. Field session and discussions.

2 October 2019

a.m.

Working meetings by sections.
Round Table: New Strategy for Sustainable Development of Karst Territories.

p.m.

Closing plenary session: General discussion and acceptance of the conference papers.
Closing the conference.
Gala dinner for the participants and guests of the conference.

POST-CONFERENCE SCIENTIFIC EXCURSION

October 3-15, 2019

Karst masterpieces in the poorest region of the European Union

For more information please check the conference website after June 17, 2019

The final program at the conference will be published on September 2, 2019.

REGISTRATION FEES



Participants with paper:

- | | |
|---|---------|
| • Standard fee | 140 EUR |
| • Reduced fee for students/postgraduates and retirees | 90 EUR |

Participants without paper:

- | | |
|---|---------|
| • Standard fee | 100 EUR |
| • Reduced fee for students/postgraduates and retirees | 60 EUR |

The fee includes: a collection of abstracts, information materials, cocktail party, coffee breaks, working lunches, and transport for the field session.

Payment time: 17 June - 31 July 2019

Payment method: Bank transfer in euro (EUR) - the bank account will be indicated in the registration form.

Registration Fees for Corporate Presentation and participation in Expo "ProKARSTerra`2019: Tourism and karst" will be announced after June 17, 2019 on the conference website. Cost of the gala-dinner and excursion rates will be announced and the participants can pay them as additional financial items either together or separately from the registration fee.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES



14 June	Application for participation
17 June - 31 July	Registration of the participants
31 August	Submission of summaries of papers
28 September	Pre-Conference Workshop ProKARSTerra-NET
29 September - 2 October	Conference
3-5 October	Post-Conference Scientific Excursion
17 November	Submission the full text of papers for publishing

PLEASE CONTACT US AT:



E-mail: forum2019@abv.bg or psgeo@abv.bg

Conference website: <http://prokarstterra.bas.bg/forum2019>

We will be grateful, if you help us spread this information to those interested in the topic of the Forum ProKARSTerra`2019.