



Caves, otherworldly places.

An online event which will explore the future of humankind, and their connection with caves.

An unprecedented initiative to enhance the values of the caves and the importance of their conservation, projecting them on a timeless universal scale.



Organizers: Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU and ICNF Institute of Nature Conservation and Forests (PT)

Caves are valuable, sensitive, vulnerable and sometimes extremely beautiful places. Some of us are so fascinated that we spend most of our lives in its company.

The caves are important supports for biodiversity but also invaluable testimonies of the Planet geodiversity and climate records. They have played a decisive role in the development and culture of our specie.

Caves are entities that can reach very advanced ages, even on a geological scale, so during their long existence they've watched and memorized countless episodes of the Planet and humankind history.

To what extent is the information they contain decisive for our future?

The adaptive solutions of life in the cave's environment. The memory of the Earth climate changes will be some enlightening examples that **CAVES CONTAIN RELEVANT INFORMATION FOR THE FUTURE OF HUMANKIND.**

But... can human beings once again anchor themselves in the protective environment of the caves in order to print an adaptable habitat for new explorers outside the Earth? And will they contain extra-terrestrial biodiversity?

The International Year of Caves and Karst is celebrated in 2021 on the initiative of the International Union of Speleology (UIS) with the support of numerous international and national organizations.

The Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU and ICNF are hosting a joint virtual event to celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity (on 22 May) in the context of the *relevant information that caves contain for the future of humankind*.

Agenda - 25th May 9,00 -13H CET

Opening Panel

- João Pedro Matos Fernandes, Portuguese Minister for the Environment and Climate Action.
- John Gunn, Chair of the Caves and Karst Working Group in the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas.
- Manuel Soares, President of Portuguese Speleological Federation.

1st Panel: **FROM PAST KNOWLEDGE...** - Diogo de Abreu, moderator - Centre of Geographical Studies, University of Lisbon, PT

- **Cave environment life's adaptive solutions.** Ana Sofia Reboleira, Subterranean Biology researcher - Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes, Faculdade de Ciências, Universidade de Lisboa.
- **The memory of the planet's climate change.** Stein-Erik Lauritzen. Geology researcher, Bergen University.

Interactive session with speakers

2nd Panel: **... TO SOCIAL USES** - Eduardo Carqueijeiro, moderator - Adviser, Nature Conservation, Forest and Territorial Planning Secretary of State, PT

- **10,000 generations have passed:** from pre-historic to contemporary art, Eduardo Carqueijeiro
- **Caves and leisure** (the largest geotouristic destination in the world). Bärbel Vogel, Adjunct Secretary at International Union of Speleology UIS.
- **The sustainability of its use.** Maria de Jesus Fernandes, Biologist at ICNF Institute of Nature Conservation and Forests.
- **From reality to fiction in the arts and the great entertainment industry.** Pedro Martins, Cirque du Soleil Project manager.

Interactive session with speakers

3rd Panel: **CAVES, FUTURE OF HUMANKIND:** Carlos Neves, moderator - Instituto Politécnico de Leiria, PT

- **Lava Caves.** Paulino Costa, Geologist, Azores Geopark.
- **Caves on other planets: technological challenges and science opportunities.** Francesco Sauro, Temporary Professor at the University of Bologna.
- **From CAVES to space.** Loredana Bessone, Senior Instructional Technologies and Exploration Engineer Head of Instructional Technologies, European Astronaut Centre Directorate of Human Spaceflight and Operations, European Space Agency.

Interactive session with speakers

Closing panel

- European Space Agency Portuguese Delegation (tbc).
- **Ged Campion**, President of the European Speleological Federation.
- **George Veni**, President of the International Union of Speleology and Executive Director of the National Cave and Karst Research Institute.
- *Concluding remarks Portuguese Presidency:* **Nuno Banza**, ICNF President,

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Please register until **21 May 2021** by filling in this form:

Click: [Registration Form](#)



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