

«Speleotherapy commission / commission de speleotherapie» of UIS – ICSU and UNESCO member; role in the development of speleotherapy, halotherapy and speleotherapeutic tourism

Simionca Yu.^{1,2}

¹ Permanent Commission on Speleotherapy (PCS) / Commission permanente de spéléothérapie (CPS) of the UIS (member ICSU & UNESCO);

² National Institute of Rehabilitation, Physical Medicine and Balneoclimatology (Bucharest, Romania)

In 1968 the East Slovak Museum at Kosice organized an international symposium about Speleo-climate, Speleo-therapeutics and Speleo-chemistry (UIS-BULLETIN2, 1970). A report of 1968th Symposium at the proposal of Prof., Dr. med. Karl H. Spannagel (Germany) and speleologist Prof. Dr. Hubert Trimmel (Austria) was presented at the UIS General Assembly of the 5th ICS (1969, Stuttgart, Germany (Jose Ayrton Labegalini, 2015), which named «The Permanent Commission on Speleotherapy (PCS) / Commission permanente de spéléothérapie (CPS)» and in 2017 at the XVI UIS Congress, according to Assamblea's decision, was also awarded the title «Speleotherapy Commission / Commission de spéléothérapie». The first international speleotherapy symposium took place in 1971 (2 years after its foundation) at Ennepetal (Germany), which was later organized every 2–4 years in different countries. At the World «Interasma'89» Joint Meeting, by the International Association of Asthmology in Prague (1989) with the Association of Czechoslovak Medical Societies J. E. Purkyne – the Czechoslovak Society of Allergology and Clinical Immunology and Speleotherapy Commission, organized the International Symposium of Speleotherapy, where they communicated and discussed scientific works on speleotherapy in karst caves and salt mines.

Starting with the 10th International Speleotherapy Symposium (Bad Bleiberg, Carinthia, October 1992), there were talks dedicated to speleotherapy in salt mines and halotherapy. A scientific committee had also been established to set guidelines for physical and chemical measurements of those caves where speleotherapy is performed [(UIS-BULLETIN47 (1), 2001].

At the following symposia of the PCS / CPS results of scientific works were presented and discussed which were dedicated to speleotherapy in karst caves, «subteraneo therapy» / speleotherapy in galleries of salt mines and therapy in surface areas chambers («haloaerosol therapy», aerosol of salt particles by «halogenerators» in rooms lined with salt walls) and aerosol of salt particles formed by walls salt due to specific physical and microclimatic processes.

In 2008–2015, the PCS / CPS organized international speleotherapy symposia and participated in the organization of conferences in different countries (Czech Republic, Romania, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Austria):

- XIII International Symposium on Speleotherapy from October 23 to 25, 2008, in Blansko, Czech Republic.
- XIV International Symposium on Speleotherapy from October 4 to 6, 2012, in Turda, Cluj County, Transylvania, Romania, with 143 participants from 11 different countries.
- Speleotherapy Symposium at the UIS International Congress of Speleology in Brno, Czech Republic, 2013.
- The XV International Symposium on Speleotherapy from October 23 to 25, 2014, in Wieliczka, Poland.
- The National Speleotherapy Conference, Turda, 2011, organized by National Institute of Rehabilitation, Physical Medicine and Balneoclimatology, Bucharest, Romania) and Executive Unit for Financing Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation (UEFISCDI) – Ministry of Education, Research, Tourism and Sport (MECTS), dedicated to the results of Project 2550 / financing contract 42120/2008–2012 of the National RDI Plan from Romania.
- Conferences of speleotherapy in Sototvino, Ukraine in 2013, 2015.
- Workshops in Wieliczka, Poland in 2013, 2014.
- Working meeting in Turda, Romania, with the participation of specialists in the field of speleotherapy and mining tourism from Wieliczka, Poland – 2016.
- The 16th International Speleotherapy Symposium of PCS / CPS of UIS (2018) prepares and will be in Zlate Hory, Czech Republic, «EDEL» Sanatorium, where speleotherapy for children with chronic respiratory diseases is practiced.

These activities and results in the field as well as the evaluations of several centers for speleotherapy were described in editions of the UIS Bulletin (2011–2016).

«The Permanent Commission on Speleotherapy (PCS) / Commission permanente de spéléothérapie (CPS) of UIS – member of ICSU and UNESCO, collaborates in their activities with different medical, touristic, physical, chemical, biological, geographic, climatic associations, societies and institutions.