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Barbel VOGEL

Verband der deutschen Höhlen- und Karstforscher e.V.
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President,

I have heard of the uncovering of a big and beautiful cave with speleothems and lakes when digging a tunnel for the ICE train path (from Erfurt to Nürnberg).

I am very surprise about the behaviour of the overseers of this important infrastructure work who don't give enough time to cavers to explore and survey quickly all the cave and so have the minimum knowledge of it.

In my point of view, it could be very dangerous to fill up definitively a cave with concrete because it became then impossible to know what is append in this cave.

In the case of the cave discovered in the tunnel for the ICE train path it is indeed totally irresponsible because we don't know now what will happen with the rising of the underground water. May be will it seep away dangerously the limestone somewhere just under the tunnel!

It's not for nothing that the Walloon Region administration in Belgium had paid an important study to specify parameters where the following statute of limitation should be implemented :

- infrastructure works should be forbidden in the high zone of duress
- each new planned work should have preliminary geophysical complementary study in the moderating and low zone of duress

<http://www.cwepss.org/amenagementTerritoire.htm>

To conclude, we can think the overseers of the work have thus engaged their own responsibility because they don't take the time to make these complementary studies.

In any case I hope no problem will occur in the future.

Best regards

Jean-Pierre Bartholeyns