



FSUE Public Informal Meeting 16 September 2006, SEVILLA, Spain

start: 12:00

FSUE Present: Juan Carlos Lopez Casas, ES; Jean-Claude Thies, LU;
Olivier Vidal, FR; Ged Campion, GB, Bernard Thomachot, FR
(webmaster)

Audience: PT-Pedro Marotte, Manuel Freira, plus five other cavers; DE-Bärbel Vogel, Michael Laumanns; UIS-George Veni, Efraïn Mercado, Carlos Benedetto, José Labegalini; GR-Fani Ellinas; SE-Thomaz Gustafsson; CH-Urs Widmer, plus all others not listed here.

After the presentation of FSUE history by Jean-Claude Thies, LU which was very detailed and covered all the details of the FSCE-FSUE history, Olivier Vidal and Bernard Thomachot presented the new website which has been started by Nick Williams, GB, and is now maintained by Bernard. They showed the whole content so that everyone knows what kind of information is available in it. Important to say is that all important documents like reports, applications, statutes, forms,...are present and archived on the site. With this the FSUE Bureau maintains a much faster distribution of all the materials.

All these presentations were followed by the public debate about the future of the European Federation.

Important subjects to discuss about were:

EuroSpeleo Forum 2007 & 2008 presentation

Addition of a Vice-Secretary

EuroSpeleo Projects presentation

Participation of non-EU countries inside FSUE

EuroSpeleo Forum 2007, this label has been granted to the BSC conference.

Thomaz Gustafson, SE, presented the next BSC "Baltic Speleological Congress" which will take place in August 13-15, 2007 in Visby on the isle of Gotland. The SSF - Sveriges Speleolog Förbund is organising this congress.

Thomaz presented the program, the after-congress excursions and informed about all possibilities around the event. The detailed program as well as the registration is due to arrive by January 2007.

The FSUE secretary Olivier announced also that the next official General Assembly of the FSUE will take place during the BSC in August 2007. The coordination between national events and FSUE General Assemblies has always been an important manner to support such events and to encourage people to attend them.

EuroSpeleo Forum 2008, this label has been given to the VERCORS 2008 happening in France and organised by the FFS.

Olivier Vidal presents this major European Speleological event that is in the same time the “4th European Speleological Congress” after the 3rd one which was in 1999 in Lisbon, PT

As for many years there has not been any real “large” event anywhere in Europe the idea was born to gather several important European events around the European Congress.

Olivier and Bernard presented the official website of this event.

EuroSpeleo Projects

Olivier Vidal, FR, presented the related documents, which are important to apply for this new financial aid. The main aim of the EuroSpeleo Project funding is to contribute to speleological projects that are involving at least 5 European countries.

The expectation is to have at least 3 FSUE countries and 2 non-FSUE countries involved. Of course there might be much more countries than these 5 involved in such projects.

EuroSpeleo Projects can fund activities like educational, technical or scientific trainings, exploration and youth camps, expeditions in or outside Europe, media publications (books, films, softwares, photos, etc), caving meetings (festival, symposium, exhibitions, congresses, etc), etc ...

EuroSpeleo Projects can fund every club, local federation and national commission or federation who belong to a country member of FSUE. It can also fund the FSUE European work-groups (technical commissions).

There is already a budget of 1500.- EUR voted for the 2006-2007 period.

A special application Form together with informative material may be downloaded from the “Projects” page on the website.

Vice-Secretary

To open the discussion, Olivier Vidal explains that the FSUE Bureau wants to propose to the GA to add a “Vice-Secretary” to the team. This role should also help in coordinating the projects. This will give the regular secretary some more time for the usual business of the FSUE, like meetings with the EU, visits, communication with member-organisations.

He also wants to know what the general feeling of this role would be among all participants in the audience. (Following some answers)

- A good occasion to finalize some ideas
- It's good when one more meets the Bureau, but 5 persons are still not enough to deal with everything. More people should be involved.
- It encourages people to give their input, it's a good reason and a step forward.

- A good idea if someone focuses on a special title
- Is this person just dealing with projects? No this person is part of the team and does also other business in case of need.
- This person should be a delegate not someone from outside
- It's always good to have a team-member more in the boat.
- This would be an occasion to get a woman in the team. (...Looks over to the very few in the audience)

The FSUE and the participation of Non-EU countries

The FSUE got 3 requests from Caving organisations of Non-EU countries to be included in the FSUE.

These are Russia (RO), Serbia, (YU), and Monaco (MO)

Now, if the membership of these non-EU countries is adopted by next GAM, following questions arise:

- Can they be a member of the Bureau?
- Do they have voting-rights?
- Can they be on the voting list to become (president, treasurer,)?
- Can they officially represent the FSUE?
- How much should their subscription rate be?

Once again the remarks from the audience are requested.

GR/Fani - these are all political questions, and he would like to see a Federation of all European Cavers (Not EU alone)

SE/Thomaz - agrees with GR, the feeling of outsiders may arise. If member, then Full-member as half-member is discriminating!

PT/ - In that case all statutes have to be changed, and the name.

DE/Michael - either Full-member, then name and statutes change, or Observer status with a new set of rules for this status.

GB/Ged - It is never a good start to create rules and regulations between border organisations. The Observer could feel as a second bet. But we could try to start with such an idea.

LU/Jean-Claude - Not keen on opening the FSUE for Non-EU countries, this is not the aim of the FSUE. As the FSUE is THE federation of the political country "European Union" it should just be among the 25 (soon 27). In any other case a new structure for the whole Europe should be created.

SE/Thomaz - we shouldn't see the matter political but only in the interest of the cavers in Europe

DE/Bärbel - The European Commission would see a "European Federation" as interlocutor anyway even with all other countries inside.

FR/Olivier - understands the remarks from Jean-Claude, but a country with no regional relation should also be heard. At the latest EU Commission meeting in Brussels, the FSUE (represented by Olivier) was the ONLY "EU"-federation in the room! All others were geographical-European federations. We should open the Federation and give everyone the same voting rights.

CH/Urs - Switzerland is very active in the UIS, he doesn't know about any official interest of the Swiss cavers' federation. But if the federation is opening for other countries they should of course participate. For Swiss cavers there has never really been a border to other nations.

FR/Bernard - understands the Swiss, as they are already heavily involved. He remembers that Moldova too is very interested to get involved in the European caving process.

UIS/George - He cannot speak for Europe, but thinks that with the time the EU will grow larger anyway and in the far future the issue would solve anyway. It is not a good idea to have second-class members, his leads to problems.

Would be intereseted to know the official FSUE Bureau point of view.

PT/Pedro - Yes historically the FSUE was for EU only, but times are changing and we also should change and let all others participate in the process.

PT/Manuel - we heard different opinions now, let's make a balance and make a presentation of it. In case the FSUE bureau can't decide together what to do, drop the idea! A European Federation should only have Full-Members!

And the FSUE Bureau should present a common point of view at the next General Assembly.

CH/Urs - what about a NEW federation in Europe with individual members, not countries?

To close down this public session, Olivier thanks all to have contributed with the statements. The Bureau will, study all comments and make a conclusion, which will be the official proposal at the next General Assembly in 2007.

The meeting closes at 14:15