



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

10TH ISCA CONGRESS BRINGS TOGETHER THE INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVE COMMUNITY IN THE DORDOGNE

Dordogne, France (October 5, 2026) — The [International Show Caves Association](https://www.i-s-c-a.org) (ISCA) successfully concluded its 10th Congress, held from September 23 to October 1, 2026, in the Dordogne, France. The event brought together 107 participants from 17 countries, representing nearly 40 show caves as well as European and international associations and institutions.

The Congress was the first ISCA Congress to be held in France and provided an opportunity for show cave professionals, researchers, associations and institutions from around the world to meet, exchange knowledge and discuss the future of the underground tourism sector.

An international and multidisciplinary programme

The pre-Congress programme included guided visits to Domme Cave, Château de Milandes, Tourtoirac Cave and Château de Hautefort. During the Congress, participants visited Périgueux and took part in two *Around the World* sessions featuring presentations and videos from show caves around the globe who are members of ISCA. The scientific programme addressed a wide range of subjects related to caves, karst environments, prehistoric heritage and sustainable show-cave management.

Among the scientific speakers were Dominique Genty, paleoclimatologist and Research Director at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS); Laurent Bruxelles, geomorphologist and geoarchaeologist at Inrap and CNRS; and Frédéric Plassard, Doctor of Prehistory and Head of Rouffignac Cave. Further contributions focused on sustainable management and environmental monitoring, including Daniela Cinus from the CNR – Institute of BioEconomy in Italy, who

presented the CAVESTOUR project, and Alice Cimenti from the University of Turin, who discussed *lampenflora* as an indicator of anthropogenic disturbance in show caves.

ISCA members also contributed presentations on international cooperation and the work of the Association. Nina Aunar presented Mulu National Park and the 2024 ISCA Conference; Vesela Dimchova presented the forthcoming ISCA meeting in Bulgaria in 2027; ISCA Secretary Juan José Tíscar Moya presented the results of the 2026 ISCA & NCA Survey, which is conducted every two years; and Alexander Chrapko of Cave Lighting addressed challenges arising when public tenders do not fully meet the specific needs of show caves.

The programme also included the Catalog and Vendor Show of partners, as well as visits to Lascaux IV, Maxange Cave, the Gouffre de Proumeyssac, the Pôle d'interprétation de la Préhistoire and the Prehistory Museum in Les Eyzies, Rouffignac Cave, La Roque Saint-Christophe, Maison Forte de Reignac, Villars Cave and Brantôme.

An international and multidisciplinary programme

The programme combined scientific and professional presentations with visits to some of the most important underground, archaeological and cultural heritage sites in the Dordogne. The pre-Congress programme included guided visits to Domme Cave, Château de Milandes, Tourtoirac Cave and Château de Hautefort.

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Cooperation and the future of the underground world

The opening session brought together representatives of ISCA, French speleology and regional tourism authorities. Friedrich Oedl, President of ISCA, and Guilhem Cledel, President of the Fédération Française de Spéléologie (FFTS), were joined by Sylvie Chevallier, Vice-President responsible for tourism and promotion of Périgord, President of the Dordogne Tourism Development Committee and Departmental Councillor, and Colette Langlade, Regional Councillor of Nouvelle-Aquitaine.

Guilhem Cledel highlighted the importance of strengthening European cooperation and fostering an association capable of representing the interests of the underground world while contributing to its protection and conservation, always from an international perspective in which associations from all over the globe contributed to the achievement of common goals.

The Congress also provided an opportunity for ISCA members to work together through an ISCA Board Meeting and several sessions dedicated to cooperation and the future development of the Association.

General Assembly and new ISCA Board

The ISCA General Assembly was held in three sessions on September 25, 27 and 28. Among other matters, the Assembly elected the Association's Officers and Directors for the 2026–2030 term.

Officers:

- **Friedrich Oedl (Austria)** – President
- **Rafael Pagés Rodríguez (Spain)** – 1st Vice President
- **Nuno Querido Jorge (Portugal)** – 2nd Vice President
- **Juan José Tíscar Moya (Spain)** – Secretary & Treasurer

Directors:

- **Heros A. Santos Lobo (Brazil)** – Director
- **Yvonne Wagner (Germany)** – Director
- **Guilhem de Grully (France)** – Director
- **Peter Gažík (Slovakia)** – Director
- **Jakub Gabris (Czech Republic)** – Director
- **Joe Klimczak (USA)** – Director
- **Lorenzo Burzacca (Italy)** – Director
- **Peter Chandler (New Zealand)** – Director
- **Oliver Bowerman (UK)** – Director

The Association also announced the **Chairs** of its specialised **committees** and **commissions**:

- **Juan José Durán Valsero (Spain)** – Chairman, Scientific & Technical Committee
- **Joëlle Darricau (France)** – Chairwoman, Prehistory Commission
- **Rod Graves (USA)** – Chairman, Media, Public Relations & Resource Information Commission

Looking ahead

The Congress also looked towards the future of ISCA and its international programme. The next major ISCA event will take place in **Bulgaria in 2027**, with BAPET presenting the programme and plans for the meeting.

Further announcements concerning the venues of the **2028 ISCA Conference** and the **2030 ISCA Congress** will be made in the near future. The 2030 Congress will be a particularly significant occasion as ISCA will celebrate its **40th anniversary**.

The Congress concluded with a gala dinner attended by representatives of ISCA, FFTS and the local and regional authorities, including Friedrich Oedl, Guilhem Cledel, Germinal Peiro, President of the Dordogne Departmental Council, Sylvie Chevallier and Vincent Mathieu, representing the tourism sector of Crédit Agricole.

ISCA would like to express its sincere gratitude to FFTS, the local organising team, partner organisations, institutions, tourism representatives, speakers, volunteers and all the professionals and participants who contributed to the success of the Congress. Their commitment and collaboration made it possible to bring together the international show cave community in the Dordogne for an enriching programme of scientific exchange, professional cooperation and cultural discovery.

The International Show Caves Association looks forward to continuing this international cooperation and to welcoming its members and partners at future events.

About the International Show Caves

The International Show Caves Association (ISCA) was founded in 1990 and is headquartered in Frasassi/Genga, Italy. ISCA is an international organization of persons, associations, corporations, and government agencies who own, manage or operate show caves that are open to the public. For more information about the International Show Caves Association and its initiatives, please visit the official website: www.i-s-c-a.org.

Contact

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