

One step forward for subterranean biology

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When somebody takes over the leading of a journal or other duties linked to our research activities it is common-sense to speak about honour, privilege and great responsibility. I do not deny all these grantees or duties that come with a leading position. Still, I would rather say that it is a sweet challenge the offer to be the editor-in-chief of *Subterranean Biology*. The feelings are similar to those following long and frustrating research months when eventually you come to a surprising and satisfying result. I am happy and almost exult at the idea of working for the SIBIOS - ISSB (Société Internationale de Biologie Souterraine - The International Society for Subterranean Biology) journal. Of course, the first reaction is merely immature and the pleasures offered by the professional activity are in fact hard to achieve. It will be difficult, much more difficult than somebody wants. And there is also the burden of an impressive historical heritage. In 1907, Emil Racovitza, member of an aristocratic Romanian family, published "Essai sur les problèmes biospéologiques", the first manifesto on *biospéologie* (originally in French, biospeleology in English), defining the scope and future directions of researches on cave animals. Together with his collaborators Racovitza also developed the enterprise called *Biopeologica*, which was the precursor of all future journals on subterranean fauna.

Looking at the journals that increased significantly in the last years, one may speculate that they may have gathered many of the papers dealing with subterranean biology topics only because they are "blessed" with an Impact Factor. We will struggle for the same blessing and *Subterranean Biology* deserves it. The papers and the information found in the journal and its predecessor *Mémoires de Biospéologie*, the quality

and the amount of information on subterranean creatures makes me feel confident in the future of the *Subterranean Biology*. The outputs of the former editors-in-chief and the former editorial boards were without compromises on quality. We are thirsty for papers and we expect that, at least, once every three years each member of the Society will provide a good contribution to the journal. We are also inviting all the people that work in subterranean biology or related fields to contribute with the input of "fresh scientific blood" to the Society journal and hopefully become new members.

We announce a new format for *Subterranean Biology*. We offer a journal with a fully electronic format, with options for print on demand of reprints or whole issues for different purposes, with the content published simultaneously in several formats. The content can include free colour figures and multimedia and each article will be published when ready and issues will be completed upon publishing of the last article. Professional archiving in world's leading archives will be provided and there will be active and professional promotion and PR, with the widest possible dissemination of the published content as whole articles or parts of them to increase the online presence of the journal.

Probably, the next years will be the most difficult, but, with your precious help, it will hopefully be only for a short time. We need constant input of papers of good scientific quality. We propose to increase the types of contributions; young people are encouraged to submit their thesis abstracts in the journal and established researchers are invited to submit reviews and ideas for future research. Finally, we wish to make this journal more attractive to the large public by letting them know that subterranean biology is not only about those creepy creatures that live underground, but also that the underground world is deeply connected with the surface and the outside green turns into downwards black only in our eyes but not for the living beings.