Facilitating the use of subterranean biodiversity data in nature conservation: examples from Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Context

Subterranean animals are bound to live **exclusively in subterranean habitats**, but they are still affected by the activities on the surface.

Subterranean biodiversity is **rarely included in impact assessments** and conservation plans, which may also be related to lack of information about their importance and lack of data on their distribution.

Inventorying subterranean habitats is **challenging,** species are rare and have small distribution ranges. The information gained is often **scattered** in various sources.

Conservation actions and monitoring critically **depend on standardized and retrievable data** that policy-makers can easily interpret and understand.

Slovenia: Life NarcIS

NAture Conservation Information System (LIFE19 GIE/SI/000161, financed by Life programme). Eight partners, main partner: Slovenian Enviroment Agency. SubBioLab participates with information on subterranean species.
Duration: 1. 1. 2021 - 31. 12. 2024

Establishing an information system that will serve as 'one-stop-shop', to shorten the time to retrieve the information on nature conservation documents and regulations, as well as species and habitats in the studied area, which are all needed for informed conservation guidelines and strategies.

The project will connect **11 data sources** (8 project partners and 3 Natura 2000 managing authorities). Databases will be upgraded for **interoperability** with the main information system.

SE Bosnia and Herzegovina: SubBIOCODE

Developing new tools for rapid assessment of subterranean biodiversity in Bosnia and Herzegovina (funded by Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund and own funds). Partner: SubBioLab (leading), partner: Centre for Karst and Speleology;
Duration: 1.9.2019 - 31.5.2022

Improving **gathering and access to data** on subterranean species, identifying **conservation priorities** and **educating** conservationists in the region.

Goals will be achieved by intensive fieldwork, laboratory work, educational workshops and especially the development of **molecular tools** for rapid assessment of biodiversity and the **database** on subterranean species in the project area.

Both projects aim to

✓ **Improve access to information about subterranean species**

✓ Develop tools for more efficient conservation planning

✓ Reach out to stakeholders, policy-makers and broader public

✓ Raise awareness

Goals

✓ **Enhance the protection of subterranean species**

✓ Prevent the destruction of their habitat

✓ Contribute towards slowing down the biodiversity loss