

**Sandstone Landscapes:
Diversity, Ecology and Conservation**

14 - 20 September, 2002

Doubice in Saxonian-Bohemian Switzerland, Czech Republic



an international conference

jointly organised by



**Institute of Botany, Academy of Sciences
of the Czech Republic, Pruhonice,**

**Institute of Geology, Academy of Sciences
of the Czech Republic, Prague,**

**Ceske Svycarsko (Bohemian Switzerland) National Park
Administration, Krasna Lipa, Czech Republic**

in collaboration with



**Sächsische Schweiz (Saxonian Switzerland) National Park
Administration, Bad Schandau, Germany**

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, U.K.

**Administration of the Protected Landscape Areas
of the Czech Republic, Prague**



Caspar David Friedrich, The Pilgrim above the Mist, 1818

Background and aims of the conference

There are many sandstone regions scattered over Europe. They host specific flora and fauna; they support landscapes where dynamic geomorphological processes occur at rates unseen in landscapes that surround them. The pronounced geomorphological gradients create strong gradients in mesoclimatic conditions and vegetation zone inversions; in addition, they generate high levels of natural disturbance and resulting patch dynamics. Recently, they have often witnessed disastrous spread of invasive species; although the true reason is unknown, it may be facilitated by the fact that these habitats support so many highly disturbed patches ideally suited for an opportunistic plant invader. All these features make them very distinct from the surrounding landscapes, both now and in the past. Much of the Holocene they seem to have supported ecosystems and species markedly different from the other landscapes; some of the species occurring there are of distinctly relict nature. Much later, when agricultural practices changed the European landscape, sandstone regions usually remained forested to a much greater degree than other landscape types.

Sandstones are not only a phenomenon of geological and biological interest. Strong geomorphological gradients forced people living there to adopt specific agricultural practices and to live in specific kinds of settlements. Bizarre landscapes of sandstone regions have attracted human attention, particularly since the Romantic period; then they became major tourist destinations with a specific settlement structure developing around an early tourist industry.

We believe the uniqueness of geomorphologic and ecological processes in sandstone regions calls for a much more intimate link between geomorphology, climatology, landscape history and biology/ecology. We see this as a challenge for science: in no other landscape type botanical research would be in a stronger need for data on geomorphology, or a geomorphologist on hydrology; many similar examples can be named. A tentative list of topics that we consider really interesting may include:

- Sandstone surfaces as a "memory" of past environmental processes
- Formation of sandstone landscapes: deposition and erosion
- Vegetation history and palaeoecology
- Interaction of vegetation and sandstone relief
- Sandstone regions as islands in the current landscape mosaic hosting relict species of plants and animals
- Forests and sandstone regions
- Case studies of individual sandstone regions: natural history, history and conservation history
- History of human settlement in sandstone regions
- Romantic painters' discovery of sandstone regions
- Tourism - history, present impacts and future

- Ecological fragility of sandstone systems in the modern landscape: effects of management change, invasive/alien species

(These subjects are, quite naturally, shaped by the organizers' experience of central European sandstones only. Still we hope that they may provide a starting point for further discussions and research.)

Quite surprisingly, there has not been a systematic effort devoted to bridging all these disciplines to show the real uniqueness of sandstone regions in geological, ecological and historical context. Therefore we decided to organize a conference devoted specifically to sandstones, while not restricted to any particular scientific field. We hope that this conference will

- **identify which general research topics can use sandstone regions as particularly suitable model systems (habitat islands, patch dynamics in a landscape with high disturbance rates, interactions of vegetation and climate)**
- **facilitate comparisons of different sandstone regions over Europe and elsewhere**
- **establish contacts and collaboration among people interested in sandstone regions, both across different fields and over geographic space**
- **address conservation issues specific for sandstone regions (tourism, rock climbing, restoration management).**

Preliminary programme

We are heading for a five-day conference with two to three days of talks and posters, and two days of **excursions**. We expect to organize the conference on five major topics:

- 1. Geodiversity:** Geology and Geomorphology (convened by Vaclav Cilek)
- 2. Biodiversity:** Botany and Zoology: plant and animal distribution in and out of sandstone regions (convened by Handrij Härtel and Ivan Horacek)
- 3. Ecology:** interactions among organisms and abiotic factors, palaeoecology (convened by Tomas Herben)
- 4. Landscape nature/cultural history** (convened by Vaclav Cilek)
- 5. Conservation** (convened by Handrij Härtel)

After the conference a 2-4 days **post-conference tour** will be organised.

Preliminary schedule

Sat, 14 September: arrival and registration
 Sun, 15 Sept.: pre-conference excursion
 Mon, 16 Sept.: late registration, conference session
 Tue, 17 Sept.: conference session
 Wed, 18 Sept.: mid-conference excursion
 Thu, 19 Sept.: conference & poster session, conference closing
 Fri, 20 Sept.: departure for home or post-conference tour
 20-22 (-24) Sept.: post-conference tour

Conference venue

The conference venue is the **Hotel JEF in Doubice, Czech Republic**. The village Doubice is situated close to the German border, in Northern Bohemia, in the area of **Saxonian-Bohemian Switzerland**.

Language

The conference language will be **English**. In the nature conservation section the talks can be presented both in English (preferably) and German. Posters can be presented in English (preferably), German or French. There will be no interpretation during the conference. The conference documents will be in English.

Excursions

Two full-day **excursions (pre- and mid-conference)** are planned to **Saxonian - Bohemian Switzerland**, which is a transboundary National Park & Protected Landscape Area on both sides of the Czech-German border. It is a typical erosion sandstone landscape known for the unique Prebischtor rock bridge in Bohemian Switzerland or for table mountains in Saxonian Switzerland. The old tourist tradition of this area dates back to the period of romanticism, when Swiss and German painters "discovered" this landscape, one of them was the famous **Caspar David Friedrich** (1774 - 1840).

A 2-4 days **post-conference tour** will be arranged to other sandstone regions in the Czech Republic (according to the preliminary interest of participants).

Call for talks and posters

There will be a possibility of presenting both talks (15 + 5 min discussion) and posters. All presentations will be in plenary. No separate workshops are planned as the conference aims to bring together scientists from various fields.

If there should be too many oral contributions, preference will be given to those that fall better into the scope of the conference, whereas the remaining ones may be asked to be presented as posters.

Call for abstracts

Please submit abstract of your presentations, both talks and posters (max. 400 words) electronically to the following e-mail address: conference@npcs.cz, as a MS Word (*.doc) or Rich-text-format (*.rtf). Please use your last name as a file name (preferably abbreviated to 8 characters). If you have no access to e-mail, please send a floppy disk with the file to the conference secretariat (see address below).

Make sure that the file contains following information: (1) planned as oral or poster presentation, (2) abstract title in bold, (3) presenting author and his/her address, (4) the text proper.

Deadline for submitting abstracts is **1 June, 2002**.

Accommodation

The accommodation will be arranged in the Hotel JEF, Doubice.

Costs

The **total conference fee** will be (according to the room and time of payment):

Total conference fee if you take:	single room	shared room (2,3,4 pers.)
early payment	280 EURO / 7300 CZK	220 EURO / 5400 CZK
late payment	320 EURO / 8150 CZK	250 EURO / 6600 CZK

This fee includes admittance to conference sessions, conference documents incl. abstract volume, reception, food and coffee breaks as well as both pre- and mid-conference excursion.

The post-conference excursion will be paid separately during the conference.

There is a limited possibility for cheaper accommodation for students from the Czech Republic. For more information please contact the [conference secretariat](#).

Registration

For **registration** please use the [registration form](#) on the conference homepage and send it electronically or fill in the enclosed form and send it by mail or fax to the conference secretariat.

Please note that the conference capacity is limited.

Deadline for registration is 30 April, 2002.

Payment

Before you pay, send first registration form and wait for a reply of the conference secretariat. You will be informed if conference places and rooms required are still available. After this assurance you can pay the conference fee. Please pay the conference fee by the bank transfer to the bank account no. 78-5193700267/0100 for EURO (Komerční banka (Commercial Bank), třída 9. května, CZ-408 01 Rumburk, Swift Code KOMBCZPP) or no. 78-5193690257/0100 for CZK. Please use the conference abbreviation (**sand2002**) as the payment identification.

Please note rooms will be not reserved until the payment is received. Deadline for early payment is 20 May, 2002.

Currency

The Czech monetary unit is the Czech Crown (CZK) called "koruna".

Cancellation

Cancellations have to be sent in writing to the conference secretariat address. If your cancellation is received **before 20 July, 2002** your payment will be refunded (minus bank costs of the transfer). **No refunds can be made for cancellations after this date.**

Information about the organizing institutions

Institute of Botany: <http://www.ibot.cas.cz/>

Institute of Geology: <http://www.gli.cas.cz/>

Academy of Sciences: <http://www.cas.cz/index.html.en>

Bohemian Switzerland National Park: <http://www.npcs.cz/>

Conference Steering Committee

Pavel Benda, Bohemian Switzerland National Park, Krasna Lipa (CZ);
Jan Cerovsky, Chair, Bohemian Switzerland NP Council, Prague (CZ);
Vaclav Cilek, Institute of Geology, Prague (CZ); Jeffrey G. Duckett,
University of London (UK); Handrij Härtel, Bohemian Switzerland
National Park (CZ); Tomas Herben, Institute of Botany, Pruhonice (CZ);
Ivan Horacek, Charles University, Prague (CZ); Andrew Jackson, Royal
Botanic Gardens, Kew (UK); Rüdiger Krause, Museum für Tierkunde,
Dresden (DE); Marek Krukowski, Agricultural University, Wroclaw
(PL); Vojen Lozek, Institute of Geology, Prague (CZ); Piotr Migon,
University of Wroclaw (PL); Radek Mikulas, Institute of Geology, Prague
(CZ); Jiri Sadlo, Institute of Botany, Pruhonice (CZ); Peter A. Schmidt,
Technische Universität, Dresden (DE); Thomas Voigt, Universität Jena
(DE).

Conference Organizing Committee

Zdenek Patzelt, Director of the Bohemian Switzerland National Park;
Jürgen Stein, Director of the Saxonian Switzerland National Park;
Frantisek Pelc, Director of the Administration of the Protected Landscape
Areas of the Czech Republic; Marek Mraz, Public Benefit Organization
Bohemian Switzerland; Lenka Koprivova, Conference Secretariat;
Zuzana Varilova, Lenka Voriskova, Milos Tryzna, all Bohemian
Switzerland National Park; Petr Bauer, Elbe Sandstones Protected
Landscape Area, Decin; Tomas Tichy, Institute of Botany, Pruhonice.

Scientific information

Please address all questions on the scientific programme to:

Handrij Härtel, e-mail: h.hartel@npcs.cz

Practical information

For practical information, e.g. registration, transport,
accommodation etc., please contact the **Conference Secretariat**:

Lenka Koprivova, Conference Secretariat,

Svedska 2504, CZ-27201 Kladno

Tel. +420 723851012

Fax no. of the secretariat: +420 2 24816360

E-mail of the secretariat: conference@npcs.cz

Conference homepage:

<http://www.ibot.cas.cz/conferences/sandstone>

Final Circular

with detailed travel and programme information will be
distributed in July 2002. It will be presented also on the
conference homepage.

***We look forward to seeing you
in Saxonian-Bohemian Switzerland !***

Handrij Härtel & Tomas Herben & Vaclav Cilek

Conference organizers

