

Suggestions of Significance Parameter for Cave Evaluation in the Speleological Province of Arcos-Pains-Doresopolis – MG in Southwest Brazil.

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Abstract

Since the decade of the 1990s the National Institute for the Protection of the Environment and Renewable Resources (IBAMA) and the State Foundation for the Environment (FEAM) have been exerting much more control over karst areas. They are supported on the 005187 CONAMA resolution, IBAMA's Edict 887, and Governmental Decree h=99556 of 01/09/90. This has led to the obligatory insertion of the item "speleology" in the procedure for obtaining a license to open a mine in limestone areas. The lack of a formal document to serve as a model for speleological reports evaluating the potential of a given area, however, has led to problems in the evaluation of the Arcos-Pains-Doresópolis Speleological Province. The size of the caves present, in conjunction with other data, suggests the adoption of eleven parameters for the evaluation of the importance of the caves – if at least two of these are present, a cave should be the object of special consideration in relation to the preservation of an area. Moreover, the karst system as a whole, including both internal and external features, as well as hydrogeological factors, should be considered.