

The Wonder of Caves

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Chair IUCN /WCPA Task
Force on Caves and Karst

The background of the slide is a gradient of teal and dark blue. A thin, light blue curved line starts from the top left and sweeps across the upper half of the slide. A larger, darker teal shape is on the right side, partially overlapping the main background.

Presented in honor of the 100th Birthday of Flora and Fauna International

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The background is a gradient of teal and dark blue. A curved line starts from the top left and sweeps towards the bottom right, creating a sense of movement. The text is centered in a bold, yellow font.

Most Caves are found in
Karst Areas.

KARST IS . . .

- A land system formed when rock [usually limestone] is dissolved in water
- and includes not only caves but other distinctive landforms, life, energy, water, gases, soils and bedrock

All of these . . .

- Interact in complex ways
- Alteration to any one will causes changes in many others

Which means that . . .

- Conservation must consider all of these and their effect upon the whole

In Particular . . .

- Given that solution is basic to the formation of karst
- The relationship between water and the land is of the highest importance

The background is a gradient of teal and dark blue. A curved line starts from the top left and sweeps across the upper right portion of the slide. The text is centered in the middle of the slide.

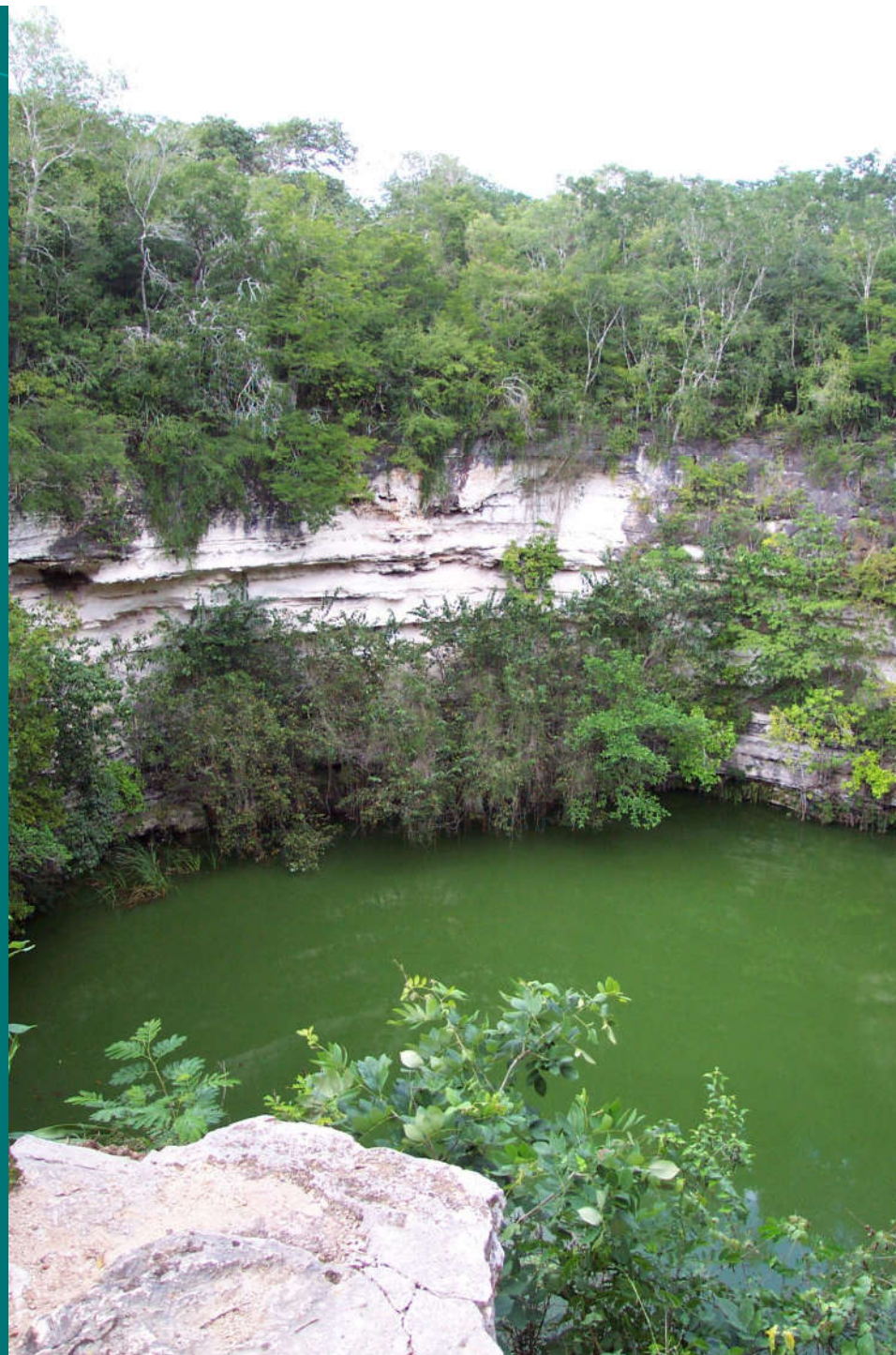
Now, to look at some karst
landscapes . . .

















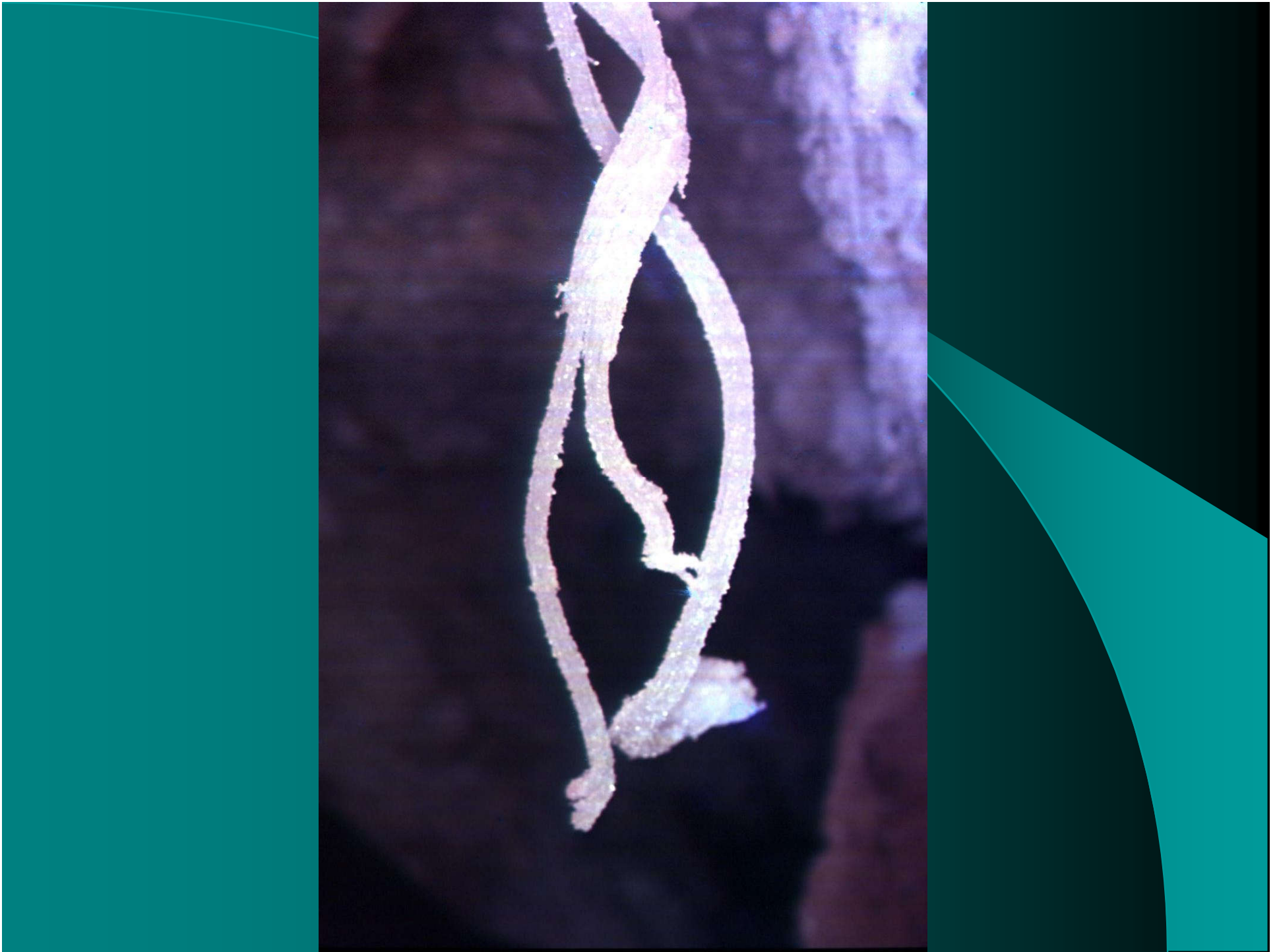
The background is a gradient of teal and dark blue. A thin, light blue curved line starts from the top left and arcs towards the right. A darker teal shape is visible on the right side of the slide.

Next, we turn to why caves
and karst are important . . .

People are fascinated by them











Scientific Value . . .

“Caves are the books in the
Library of the History of the
Earth”





















Important economic qualities:

- Rich and productive soils
- Water Storage and supply
- Limestone
- Tourism

and specific products . . .

- Guano
- “White Gold” – swiftlet nests
- Other foods, e.g., mushroom farming

So, for human, scientific
and economic reasons,
karst and caves are of
great value and must be
conserved . . .

Quarries must be properly
sited, operated and restored

Note the standards currently
being developed by the
Cement Industry

Dams must not be located on
Karst

Caves should not be filled in
or used for rubbish dumps

Avoid Pollution. . .

- Sewerage or other human wastes
- Industrial wastes
- Chemicals
- Microbial infections
- Sediment

Many human activities threaten karst and must be given special attention in planning. . . .

- Agriculture, viticulture, forestry, military action, urban settlement, tourism

In conclusion, and so far as possible, the normal interaction of the karst system should be preserved


This demands management
of the

TOTAL WATERSHED,

not just a cave, or a nature
reserve, or even the karst
only

Specifically in protected areas . . .

- Avoid soil erosion
- Avoid excessive paving or construction
- Observe minimum impact practices whenever relevant

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Let us make sure that our
children and grandchildren will
be able to enjoy the wonders
of our caves and karst

Remember, what we have
now is all we will ever have