



Project “Conservation of the Natural and Cultural Heritage in Wetlands”
Ramsar Culture Network Development in the Carpathian Region
Questionnaire

I.	Name of the wetland site with cultural aspect(s)
Ramsar site Domica (listed under No 1051, this cave system is also component of the trans-border World Heritage Property Caves of the Slovak and Aggtelek Karst since 1995) Domica was listed as a Ramsar Site on 2.2.2001.	
II.	Location details (country, general location, administrative region, municipality, geographical coordinates)
48° 28' 53" N, 20° 28' 15"E Košícký kraj County, District Rožňava, Cadastres Kečovo and Dlhá Ves	
III.	Time period to which identified value or practice relates (historical dates/earliest known origins, date at which it ceased to be present, or specify that it is still of continuing relevance if this is the case)
Neolithic inhabitation of the caves; Bükk culture from 5th millennium BC. Domica cave was discovered by Ján Majko in 1926. It was open for public access in 1932 and it was already fitted with the electric lighting. It includes Slovak part of the cross-border caves system Domica-Baradla.	

IV.	Typologies of cultural values and practices
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Please select for each identified site

☐ The site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland.

☒ The site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilisations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland.

☐ The site where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities.

☒ The site where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland.

Please describe of what type is the site (Wetland related human activities)

1. Habitation

1.1 Cultural landscapes

1.2 Cultural heritage sites (including religious heritage – monasteries, sanctuaries, hermitages, chapels)

1.3 Settlements and structures

1.3.1 Ancient sites and structures (up to 1599)

- 1.3.2 Traditional and modern settlements and structures
- 1.4 Wetland archaeology
- 1.5 Infrastructure
 - 1.5.1 Terrestrial transportation networks
 - 1.5.2 Water management and facilities and networks
- 2. Primary uses of wetland resources
 - 2.1 Wetland related agriculture
 - 2.2 Stock-breeding
 - 2.3 Fishing and aquaculture
 - 2.4 Management of forest wetland types
 - 2.5 Hunting
 - 2.6 Salt extraction, mineral extraction, mining
 - 2.7 Water use
 - 2.7.1 Irrigation
 - 2.7.2 Domestic use
 - 2.7.3 Water transfer infrastructure
 - 2.7.4 Energy production
 - 2.7.5 Other water uses (water mills, saw mills etc.)
 - 2.8 Use of other wetland natural resources
 - 2.8.1 Biomass extraction
 - 2.8.2 Sustainable use of medicinal plants
- 3. **Secondary use of wetland resources**
 - 3.1 Food processing
 - 3.1.1 Traditional methods of food preservation
 - 3.1.2 Culinary heritage
 - 3.2 Craftsmanship
 - 3.2.1 Artefacts (of ancient origin – up to 1599 / traditional and modern artefacts)
 - 3.2.2 Handicrafts and tools (of ancient origin / traditional and modern)
 - 3.2.3 Transportation means (boats etc.) (ancient / traditional and modern)
 - 3.3 Traditional building construction
 - 3.3.1 Dwellings
 - 3.3.2 Utilitarian buildings
 - 3.3.3 Public buildings
 - 3.4 Wetland-based traditional marketing
 - 3.5 Tourism – eco-tourism and cultural tourism**
 - 3.6 Leisure and sports**
 - 3.6.1 Having pleasure from being in the nature**
 - 3.6.2 Hiking, climbing
 - 3.6.3 Rafting and kayaking**
 - 3.6.4 Sailing and boating
 - 3.6.5 Diving
 - 3.6.6 Speleology**

- 3.7 Social practices and methods
- 3.8 Festivals, fairs, celebrations and events
- 4. Knowledge, belief systems and social practices
 - 4.1 Scientific research and education
 - 4.2 Traditional knowledge
 - 4.2.1 Oral traditions and expressions, sayings
 - 4.2.2 Languages, dialects and special terms
 - 4.2.3 Relevant place names and their etymologies
 - 4.2.4 Practice of traditional medicine
 - 4.3 Spirituality and belief systems (including processions, pilgrimages, nature rituals and ceremonies)
 - 4.4 Sacred natural sites or landscapes (e.g. caves, islands, rivers, springs, mountains...)
 - 4.5 Artistic expression**
 - 4.5.1 Dances and traditional rural games
 - 4.5.2 Music and traditional songs
 - 4.5.3 Nature photography**
 - 4.5.4 Literature of wetlands nature, traditional legends and stories***
 - 4.5.5 Movies and TV shows**
 - 4.5.6 Painting landscapes and nature**

Please provide details and comments if necessary.

* Please send the text of legend/story identified relevant to the aims of this project in English (Word format) to be published in the final publication.

The site represents a model of wise use of wetlands and demonstrates an application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use, which support the ecological character of the wetland.

Inhabitation

The site is an important archaeological site.

The caves Domica - Baradla have for several times provided a short-term refuge to the oldest Neolithic population of the current southeast Slovakia and east north Hungary, who were the creators of so called Gemer linear ceramics. Caves are known as a home of Bükk culture from 5th millennium BC. Because the original entrance to the cave was blocked in prehistoric times, all the evidence of human presence stayed naturally conserved until its discovery in 1926. Based on the many archaeological findings, especially ceramics, ground (rock axe, sledgehammers and wedges) and cleft (knives, scrapes) rock or bone (bodkins, dubbing tools, and comb's) tools we know that prehistoric people had settled in different parts of the cave during several phases. They used the cave soil to make ceramics; they customised the area by building small shelters, fireplaces and terraces. They left impressive wall paintings on the wall of so called Sacred Hall.¹

The westernmost part of the cave system is the cave called Čertova diera.

It is part of the Baradla – Domica cave system. The cave was researched by J. Böhm in 1932 and J. Bárta in the 1950s. J. Lichardus in 1963 has specified the existence of two cultures here (Gemer and Bükk). Younger findings come from Stone Age (Halstatt and Latén), as well as from Medieval Times. Human bones were found there, too.

¹ Gaál, Ľ. & Gruber, P. 2014. Jaskynný systém Domica – Baradla; jaskyňa, ktorá nás spája, Aggteleki Nemzeti park Igazgatóság, Jósavfő, 512 s.

Primary use of water sources

The waters of underground wetland are not used.

Secondary use of wetlands

The site is popular with tourists as an educational trail of both natural and cultural value. More than 100,000 tourists visit the site annually, for which tours and study trails, as well as hotels and campsites, are available. A boat trip on the underground river Styx is available during suitable hydrological conditions as part of the guided tour of the cave.

Knowledge, religious rituals and traditions

The area belongs to sites with long-term ongoing archaeological and historical research, but also geological and biological research.

In Domica cave, there are unique charcoal paintings in its Dome of Mysteries, which is entered through the Sacred Hall, a crevasse resembling female bosom. This whole area is considered a prehistoric sanctuary, where an unknown religious act was practiced. However, it is also possible that the area of the hall was used by farmers as a stable.

Legends

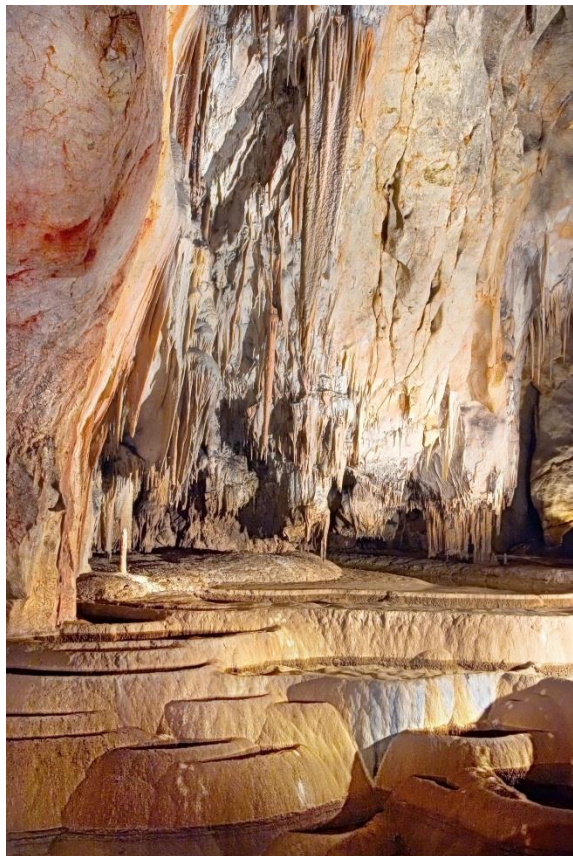
Čertova diera – the folk-tale speaks about a woman called Anča, who used to lure travellers into her house (a pub), where she made them drunk and stole money off them. After that she called her bandit friends and they throw the dead bodies into the Čertova diera.

V.	The main exponents, practitioners or beneficiaries of the documented values and practices.
Benefits of the site are used by tourists coming to see the caves. An entrance hall of the cave holds a permanent exhibition of cave's archaeological findings. During guided tour of the cave visitors learn about life of Neolithic man who inhabited this cave.	
The site is an important research object for archaeologists and historians.	
VI.	Specialised or vernacular terms used locally (including in local languages) to refer to the values and practices concerned
xxx	
VII.	Relative significance of the values and practices concerned (e.g. in terms of rarity, magnitude, degree of formal recognition, or diversity in combination with other values)
The caves Domica - Baradla have for several times provided a short-term refuge to the oldest Neolithic population of the current southeast Slovakia and east north Hungary, who were the creators of so called Gemer linear ceramics. Caves are known as a home of Bükk culture from 5th millennium BC. Post holes from housing objects and fireplaces were discovered at several places. Many archaeological artefacts, including the pot of Bükk culture buried in sinter, were found there. At the back of the cave there are well-preserved charcoal paintings (Sacred Hall), presumably, these were the sacred and cult places.	
VIII.	Transcription of any pertinent officially-adopted descriptions of the values and practices concerned , specifying the source in each case
xxx	
IX.	Conservation implications of the cultural values/practices for the wetland(s)
Domica cave was designated a Protected Nature Monument with a specified buffer zone in 1972. In	

1996 it was designated a National Nature Monument by a Governmental Decree. Its today's buffer zone was designated in 2005. It was the archaeological evidence and its relation to Neolithic population that contributed to enlisting the cave on the list of the most important caves of Slovakia.	
X.	Status of the cultural values/practices Clarify whether the values or practices relate to a former period of history or whether they are continuing. If they relate to a former period of history, the time of their cessation and the reasons of it (if known) should be noted. If they are continuing, it should be clarified whether any changes have occurred, are occurring or are likely to occur in relation to the values or practices concerned.
Any archaeological findings from the cave are duly documented and are part of collections of the Slovak Museum of Nature Protection and Speleology in Liptovský Mikuláš.	
XI.	Current touristic use and potential for sustainable tourism development in the area, tourism influence in the area Domica is open to public, this relates to its use. The potential of its adjacent area is not used, though. Facilities for tourists (catering and boarding) are missing.
XII.	Suggestions for conservation actions (for example to address threats, restore or enhance values, improve integrated management or strengthen policy) – see 4.1 above In relation to the Ramsar Site it is necessary to improve hydrological conditions of the site, renew and restore existing polders, eliminate activities which would potentially worsen the quality of underground water, cooperate with colleagues from Hungary on site conservation and promotion.
XIII.	Ongoing management activities at the site (if any) Practical management is carried out as needed. Hydrological and microclimatic monitoring is carried out here. Many of these activities are included in an approved cross-border INTEREG project.
XIV.	Please include reference sources (and links to them where relevant), images, illustrations, maps, data tables, interview results, further detail on case examples, useful contacts and anything else deemed appropriate www.ssj.sk Gaál, Ľ. – Gruber, P. (2014). Jaskynný systém Domica – Baradla; jaskyňa, ktorá nás spája, Aggteleki Nemzeti park Igazgatóság, Jósvalő, 512 s. Böhm, J., 1933: Domica – jeskyně pravěkých tajů. Krásy Slovenska, 12, 3-4, Liptovský Mikuláš, 75-84. Lichardus, J., 1968: Jaskyňa Domica – najvýznamnejšie sídlisko ľudu bukovohorskej kultúry. Bratislava. Lichardus, J., 1967-68: Neolitické osídlenie Slovenského krasu vo svetle nových archeologických výskumov. Slovenský kras, 7, Martin, s. 63-79. Šimková, Z. – Lázníčková, M., 2017: Významné speleoarcheologické lokality na Slovensku. Liptovský Mikuláš. Important art work (Slovak Museum of Nature Protection and Speleology): unknown author – Kvapľový ker, Veľký stĺp, Riečisko Acheronu, Naklonený stĺp (canvas, oil) Gejza Panczel – Domica (1930 – 1950, canvas, oil painting) Bohuslav Šroll – Vstupný areál jaskyne Domica (canvas, oil), Domica (1986, carton, oil) <u>Films:</u> Domica (1956) Domica – nový vchod (1930 – 1933) Slovenský kras a jeho jaskyne (1948) Domica – 50. výročie objavenia (1976)

Name of compiler	Dagmar Haviarová
Organization / Address	ŠOP SR – Správa slovenských jaskýň, Hodžova 11, Liptovský Mikuláš, Slovakia
E-mail	dagmar.haviarova@ssj.sk

With contribution of Leonard Ambróz, Eva Farkašová, Iveta Chomová, Zuzana Šimková, Mária Ošková – Slovak Museum of Nature Protection and Speleology, Liptovský Mikuláš



Domica – Roman bath, Photo: Jozef Klinda

Photo: V. Benický



Panenská chodba during floods, Photo: V. Benický