



PHOUHIN NAMNO 2019

Summary

Region: Laos, northern Laos, Vang Vieng and Kasi districts

Clubs: EEGC (Val-de-Marne, France).

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Participants: Steffi Broussebart, Marine Chappuis, Gaël Brewal Diraison, Jean-Baptiste Dilly, Marina Ferrand, Frédéric Glinec, Ludovic Guerault, Dorian Hache, François Lallier, Guillaume Lapie, Thomas Marguet, Régis Mercier, Manon Perrin, Fabrice Philipppo, Ilian Robin, Jean-Pierre Voillot.

Dates: 8–26 March 2019

The 2019 Phouhin-Namno expedition was the EEGC's tenth expedition to the Vientiane area since 2000. It was preceded by two reconnaissance trips (CBMA 1 and CBMA 2) in March and November 2018. The high numbers of participants set this year's expedition apart from the 2016 efforts, with 17 in March 2019 and 21 in total including CBMA 1 and 2.

This report covers all our explorations from 2018 to 2019; we surveyed 9,641 m of new topography in 12 cavities, comprising 10 discoveries.

The expedition's two main objectives were located in Nam Fuang, 35 km WSW of Kasi and Pha Koy / Pha Lay, 15 km WSW of Kasi.

We also explored the Pho Beuy plateau and the Ban Houey sector.

In the Nam Fuang sector, our explorations led to two major discoveries:

- Tham Pha Yem – where the stream re-emerges from the sector's first underground section – the focus of the majority of our explorations. 4,704 metres surveyed.

- Go Phio 1, a huge, difficult-to-access sinkhole located on a mountain peak overlooking Tham Pha Yem: an ascent route was cleared in March 2018, and photogrammetry data was collected from its rim in November 2018 with the aid of a drone.

To the north of the massif, we inventoried the Nam Fuang's active and extinct inflow points, in preparation for future exploration north of the first underground section.

In the southern sector, in Tham Pha Ka, we successfully negotiated the Nam Fuang's strong current upstream from the 'Padirac' sinkhole, which had been hindering our progress in 2014 and 2016, thus extending our exploration of the cavity in the direction of the inflow point. 1,192 metres surveyed.

In the Pha Koy and Pha Lay sector, we further explored 'Tham Patho 2', doubling the cavity's known length. Crossing the Pha Lay is feasible for the next expedition.

We also discovered two other smaller cavities, Tham Patho 3 and 4, which like their big sisters are oriented NNW->SSE intersecting the Pha Lay. 2,514 metres surveyed in the massif.

Marina Ferrand and Guillaume Lapie undertook an observational cave biology study in the Nam Fuang and Pha Koy / Pha Lay sectors.

Lastly, drone flights procured us topographical information through photogrammetry. The images taken in November 2018 also helped us identify other promising objectives for expeditions in 2020 and beyond.

All our expedition reports can be downloaded from our website : <https://eegc.org>