Imagine walking into a whole other world underneath the world you know. A world with unknown limits, life, and processes. This is what cave explorers experienced in 2009, when they entered Hang Son Doong cave in Phong Nhake Bang national park, Vietnam. Hang Son Doong is an amazing cave with unique characteristics and features that are one of a kind.

Measuring in as the largest cave in the world, Hang Son Doong has a consistent passageway 300 feet wide that’s 2.5 miles long, with ceilings higher than 600 feet tall in some places.

The Cave has formed over 2 to 5 million years, in the middle of a huge block of limestone pushed upwards when the Indian subcontinent and Eurasian continent collided. The cave river then eroded the limestone creating the large passageway and skylights.

What’s so interesting about Hang Son Doong is the amount of scientific information accumulated from it, such as new species of fish, parasites, and limestone cave processes. For example, scientists have discovered clouds within the cave from where water vapor from the river creates clouds and with it an atmosphere. Jungles and life within the cave form a biosphere and the river forms the hyrdosphere all within a geosphere. Hang Son Doong allows scientists to study new geological processes as well as earth processes on a smaller scale.

Hang Son Doong is a cave of scale not seen anywhere else on Earth. It’s rarity, contribution to science, vulnerability to urban development, scale, and conservation and protection all contribute to it’s geoheritage persona and recognition.

Hang Son Doong is an amazing cave with so much to be learned and explored. This geoheritage site is a marvel that needs to remain protected and conserved. Hang Son Doong is a natural wonder that towers over us mortals.

References


<http://www.geosociety.org/positions/>.

