

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
LIMITED

E/CONF.53/L.66
8 September 1967

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
Geneva, 4-22 September 1967
Item 9 of the agenda

COLLECTION AND TREATMENT OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN SWEDEN

Information paper submitted by the
Geographical Survey Office of Sweden

GE.67-18257
67-21810

Information paper, submitted by the Geographical Survey Office of Sweden.

Collection and treatment
of Geographical Names in Sweden

Geographical names on the 1:10 000 Economic Map sheets, which are the base maps for the other official maps produced by the Geographical Survey Office, can be divided into three categories according to the methods used for collecting and checking the geographical-name material during the preparation of the sheets. The three categories are:

1. Names of administrative divisions.
2. Property Register names.
3. Other place names and feature names.

1. The names of the administrative divisions present no problems since their form and spelling are universally accepted. Publications of the Central Bureau of Statistics are, for example, a frequently used source of information.

2. Decisions concerning the spelling of Property Register names are the responsibility of the National Land Survey Board. No systematic check of the spelling of these names has, however, taken place; instead the policy is to check and, where necessary, make connexions to place names at the same time as the national coverage of the Economic Map is extended. The methods used are indicated below. The geographical Survey Office compiles lists of property names, parish by parish, from the Property Registers. At the same time the spelling of these names as they appear on available map sheets and other documents such as older Economic Map sheets, Topographical Map sheets, Land Office maps, Land Registers and church records is entered on the lists. The lists are then passed on to the Swedish Place-Name Archives who make their comments. In those cases where the suggested spelling differs from that used in the Property Register the material is handed over to the National Land Survey Board for a final ruling. The Survey Board, in turn, requests the local authorities concerned, together with private land owners to comment on the proposed changes. Thereafter the Royal Place-Name Commission may comment on the collected material before the National Land Survey Board gives a final ruling. The names are spelt on the Economic Map sheets in compliance with this ruling.

During the course of the field work which is later carried out by the Geographical Survey Office, place names are checked to a certain degree, largely by means of interviews with local inhabitants, and in a few cases the information obtained may be such that changes in the spelling used in the Property Register appear to be warranted. In these cases also, it is the National Land Survey Board which gives a ruling after consultation with the Royal Place-Name Commission.

3. So far as the third category, other place names and feature names, is concerned a method has been worked out in conjunction with the Royal Place-Name Commission such that all the names which appear on our maps are checked by place-names experts. The direct result of this is that map-users can be confident of the correctness of the names which appear on the sheets. The method is as follows. Copies of all documents referring to geographical names in each proposed mapping area are obtained from the Swedish Place-Name Archives. These are then used by the field surveyor when he interviews members of the local population. At the same time the names are entered in their correct positions on the field sheet and, where possible, the areas to which they refer are also defined. In addition, the surveyor goes through all the available name material, checks pronunciation and collects all the additional information that he deems to be of value. To help with these investigations the surveyor has access to certain map sheets such as old Economic Map sheets, Topographic Map sheets, Land Office maps, forest maps etc. Since the surveyor interviews only those persons whom he happens to meet in the course of normal field work, the investigations can hardly be looked upon as systematic. A more strictly systematic enquiry into the local place names is, however, carried out by the leader of the field party who contacts persons who are known to be well familiar with the area being surveyed, large land owners and employers of the companies who are employed in the exploitation of local timber resources. In this way an independent check of the material collected by the surveyor is obtained. As a general rule an attempt is made to obtain the views of at least two independent witnesses when place names are being checked.

The leader of the field party then enters the collected information on a master field sheet. All names are entered in their correct relative positions and a clear indication is given of what the place name refers to and, where possible, to the limits of the area for which the name is used. The type and size of the lettering used is determined from a key governing the differing lettering types used on the

Economic Map sheets. At the same time the sources of information (Swedish Place-Name Archives, local pronunciation, various map sheets) are indicated together with the differing spellings used by these sources. The material is then handed over to the Swedish Place-Name Archives for expert examination of the spelling of those names which do not appear in the records in the archives together with others, which as a result of the information collected in the field, appear to require further study. Thereafter the Geographical Survey Office determines the spelling to be used on the map sheets.

The Geographical Survey Office's field staff are not geographical-names experts; but they are given a certain amount of tuition with a view to making the field investigations both easier and more reliable. In this connexion it can be mentioned that instruction is given in field methods of collecting name information. Besides this tuition, experts from the Swedish Place-Name Archives give lectures before the beginning of each field season on the place-names in those areas where field work will be carried out.