

**Twenty-ninth session  
Bangkok, Thailand, 25 – 29 April 2016**

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**Item 9 of the Provisional Agenda**

**Activities Relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers**

## **Online Discussion Forum of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers – a status report**

Submitted by the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers \*

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## **Online Discussion Forum of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers – a status report\*\***

### **Summary**

The Discussion forum was established in 2013 to investigate on following issues:

1. volunteered geographic information / crowd-sourcing.
2. definitions for gazetteers and data types.
3. general feature types/categories.

As a result of collaboration between experts from the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers (WG TDFG) of UNGEGN this document reports the achievements of the online discussion forum re-launched in February 2015.

Two annexes are attached and refer to this Working Paper:

- the current outcome/findings, i.e. content of the Q & A of the forum as “offline” documentation. This compilation can be printed out and read immediately (Annex 1).
- a one-page file as “PDF portal” with direct links to all pages/content in the forum. The idea behind this is to provide an easy overall look and access to the topics and questions “online” (Annex 2).

## **Online Discussion Forum of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers – a status report**

### **Progress since the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of UNGEGN**

The discussion forum for several issues related to this Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers (WG TDFG) was updated in February 2015: <https://wiki.gdi-de.org/display/wgtdfg/Discussion+forum>

As presented at the last 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session in 2014 this online discussion forum shall be utilized to investigate three tasks/issues assigned to the WG TDFG:

- **Forum 1 - volunteered geographic information (VGI)/crowd-sourcing** (moderator: Ms. Annette Torensjö, Sweden) is aimed to examine processes and to find out good practices for the exploitation and validation of volunteered geographic information and crowd sourced data as part of the national toponymic standardization work.
- **Forum 2 - definitions for gazetteers and data types** (moderators: Ms. Laura Kostanski, Australia, and Ms. Vita Strautniece, Latvia) is aimed to commence investigations into defining appropriate definitions for gazetteers and toponymic data types (ranging from official and authorized to unofficial and informal ), to discuss the practice and potential to expand national gazetteers and registers as well as to incorporate both official and unofficial names to serve better the needs of our communities.
- **Forum 3 - general feature types/categories** (moderators: Ms. Naima Friha, Tunisia and Mr. Teemu Leskinen, Finland) is aimed to discuss possibilities and challenges in developing the global named feature classification being so important in global spatial data projects (e.g.in UN Spatial Data infrastructure).

Due to the fact that the activity of the this WG through the online discussion forum could be better, the aforementioned moderators and the Convenor provided the WG TDFG on 24 March 2015 with two documents showing the potential of the forum in order to motivate and stimulate members to start to be active “online” (see Annex 1 and Annex 2 attached):

- the current outcome, i.e. content of the questions & answers of the forum “offline”. This compilation can be either printed out and read immediately (Annex 1)
- a one-page file as “PDF portal” with direct links to all pages and questions in the forum. The idea behind is to provide an easy overall look and access to the topics and questions “online” (Annex 2).

Please be aware that all content of the online discussion forum can be accessed even without being registered. However, if experts would like to comment and substantially contribute to it, a registration is mandatory in order to identify people, e.g. as UNGEGN expert.

The moderators and the Convenor are available for any assistance needed.

A few things concerning the forum are suggested as follows:

- Rules for participants and information about how to use the discussion forum (wiki software) has been made available through the main site "Getting started": <https://wiki.gdi-de.org/display/wgtdfg/Getting+started>
- If experts would like to log-in and contribute to forums 1, 2, 3, please get in touch with one of the aforementioned moderators (or with the Convenor). Log-in-details (usernames, password) will be provided immediately.