

<i>Term</i>	<i>Proposed definition or note</i>	<i>Reference</i>
	Undersea Gazetteer, where it designates "catoche tongue", a lateral protrusion from an island slope. The term has not been incorporated in the United States Board on Geographic Names list of standard terms and designations. It is not in 8a nor in the other lists of definitions consulted.	
<i>Trench</i>	A long, narrow and deep depression of the sea floor, with relatively steep sides.	D-23/9/71 8, 8a, 9, 10, 12, 12a
# <i>Trough</i>	A long depression of the sea floor, wider and shallower than a "trench", which may or may not be open-ended. The definition in 8, 8a, 9, 10, 12 and 12a is: a long depression of the sea floor normally wider and shallower than a trench.	D-23/9/71
# <i>Valley</i>	A relatively shallow, wide depression with gentle slopes, the bottom of which has a continuous gradient. Please see comments under <i>strath</i> .	D-23/9/71
<i>Zone</i>	Not recommended. Use <i>fracture zone</i> .	

## THE APPLICATION OF NAMES TO UNDERSEA FEATURES BEYOND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF MARITIME NATIONS\*

### Report presented by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Analysis has shown that in many cases the same undersea features are named in a different way on the charts of different countries. Frequently it is not only the specific names of features that differ but also their generic terms, i.e. the terms defining the type of undersea formation to which the features belong.

Ambiguity in the definition of generic terms is attributable mainly to the absence of a common approach to the classification of the sea bottom in world geographical science. Inaccurate definitions of generic terms, discrepancies between the definitions of identical generic terms accepted in different countries, and the premature assignment of generic terms without adequate identification of features also bear a grave responsibility for aggravating the problem. Even the changing of a generic term with the intention of selecting a more accurate one results sometimes not in general recognition of a new term, but in inconsistency in the application of generic terms. Finally, different generic terms may be assigned in various countries to the same feature when the feature in fact possesses no distinctive generic characters.

Differences in specific names of features are attributable to the aspiration of states to claim priority in the study of the oceans or to preserve a deep-rooted and customary name, or to merely formal reasons connected with the transferring of names from one language into another (which frequently results in an alteration in the structure of a name, as when what was originally a generic term becomes included in a specific name).

Along with the sources of ambiguity in the generic terms and specific names assigned to undersea features,

there are factors which contribute to the introduction of uniformity in the names of features. The main factor is the objective nature of the conclusions of world geographical science, unifying the terminology accepted in various countries.

History has also played a certain role, as charts used to be published by only a few countries, with other states either using foreign charts or reproducing them, retaining usually generic terms and specific names of features.

Finally, the standardization of the names of undersea features is to a considerable extent promoted by international co-operation in the study of the oceans as well as in the publication of charts.

At present the development of techniques in the study of the oceans and the identification of a great number of new undersea features call for the establishment of general principles governing the allocation of generic terms and specific names to newly discovered undersea features, their registration, and the distribution of information on the names assigned. These principles, which could be determined by concluding an appropriate international convention, should be binding on all States.

Practical work on the regulation of the naming of undersea features beyond the territorial waters of individual countries could be best of all carried out by an *ad hoc* agency attached to the United Nations. The decisions of that agency could be binding on all Member States of the United Nations, and a wide representation of countries in it could enable it to define generic terms of features with very great accuracy. However, should any difficulties arise in establishing such an agency under United Nations auspices, its powers could be entrusted to the most representative interna-

\* The original text of this report was contained in document E/CONF.61/L.78.

tional organization concerned with undersea features, viz., the International Hydrographic Organization.

In our opinion this organization is ready to fulfil the functions of an international legislative body for the co-ordination of generic terms and specific names of undersea features. The advisory committee of this organization (the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans Committee) has already carried out considerable work on the standardization of the names of undersea features. The international agency on the standardization of names of undersea features should be guided in its work by two principal documents: the paper determining the main principles for defining generic terms of undersea features, and the paper determining the principles for assigning specific names to undersea features.

Specific names should be assigned only to those undersea features of the oceans which have been sufficiently examined, i.e. those whose limits, general nature and greatest depth (or the area of the extension of such depths) have been identified, and whose co-ordinates can be given.

It is desirable to abstain from assigning specific names only on the basis of individual soundings or lines of soundings since this may result in an error even in the identification of the type of bottom feature.

It should be considered reasonable to attach to the recommendations on the assignment of names for newly discovered and identified bottom features the following documents:

Proposals, explaining reasons, for the assignment of a specific name;

An explanatory note, briefly describing the newly discovered and identified feature, the methods of geographical identification and the accuracy of the work carried out; and

A plotting sheet showing characteristic depths and curves, indicating fairly completely the nature of the bottom, and covering both the newly discovered and identified undersea feature and the areas surrounding it and contributing to the determination of the limits of the new feature.

## REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE NAMES OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES\*

### INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Secretariat, the problem of names of extraterrestrial topographic features was included as a special item on the agenda of the second session of the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Geographical Names held in New York from 10 to 20 March 1970. As was pointed out in the report of the second session, the Group of Experts "first considered whether its competence covered the consideration of extraterrestrial topographic nomenclature. The proposition was advanced that such names are not geographical and that they fall more properly within the field of the astronomer, but the majority opinion was that changing technology in space matters was placing it within the purview of both the cartographer and the geographer."<sup>1</sup>

A special working group, composed of M. F. Burrill (United States of America), A. M. Komkov (USSR) and H. A. G. Lewis (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), was formed for the further study of the problem. A. M. Komkov was nominated as Chairman of the working group, and in the period between the second and the third sessions of the Group of Experts he prepared, on the basis of a preliminary examination of the material, a report on the names of extraterrestrial topographic features.<sup>2</sup>

The paper was discussed at the meeting of the working group on 5 February 1971, and was adopted as background material. The members of the working group agreed that the nomenclature system applied to major lunar formations approved by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) should be maintained as the standard, but it was pointed out that the system had proved to be inadequate for designating numerous small topographic features, the mapping of which had lately become possible owing to new means of space investigation.

The working group recommended continued study of the problem and the development of adequate systems for designating extraterrestrial topographic features, particularly systems based on the use of selenographic co-ordinates. The working group noted that such work should be carried out by astronomers, geodesists and cartographers, in conjunction with the United Nations *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Geographical Names. These recommendations became the basis of the final report of the working group for the 1972 London Conference, which was drafted by the Chairman.<sup>3</sup>

An exchange of information took place with the representatives of the International Astronomical Union immediately interested in the problem.<sup>4</sup> The data received

\* The original text of this report, prepared by the three members of the working group, was contained in document E/CONF.61/L.41.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Geographical Names on its second session from 10 to 20 March 1970 (ESA/RT/C/GN/I), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Third session of the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Geographical Names, 2-12 February 1971, Information Paper No. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Geographical Names on its third session, April 1971 (ESA/RT/C/GN/2), annex Y, pp. 18-19.

<sup>4</sup> A. Dollfus (France), Convener of the Inter-Union Commission on Lunar Studies, President of IAU Commission 17 (The Moon) and member of the IAU Working Group on Lunar and Martian Nomenclature; B. Yu. Levin (USSR), Vice-President of IAU Commission 17 (The Moon) and member of the Working Group on Lunar Nomenclature; and D. Menzel (United States), Chairman of the Working Group on Lunar Nomenclature.