



UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS  
ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

# Information Bulletin

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## Inside this issue:

▪ <b>Preface</b>	
- Message from the Chairperson	3
▪ <b>From the Secretariat</b>	
- Message from the Secretariat	4
▪ <b>From the Divisions</b>	
- Asia South East Division	5
- Baltic Division	6
- Norden Division	7
▪ <b>From the Working Groups</b>	
- Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation	8
- Working Group on Exonyms	9
- Working Group on Publicity and Funding	11
- Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy	12
- ICA/IGU Working Group/Commission on Toponymy	14
▪ <b>From the Countries</b>	
- News from Brazil	16
▪ <b>Special Projects and News Item</b>	
- Are you in Need of Funding for the 28 <sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session?	17
- The 10 <sup>th</sup> United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas	17
- UN-GGIM Activities	19
- Seminar on Integration of Onomastic Data in National Spatial Data Infrastructure	20
▪ <b>Upcoming Meetings of Groups Associated with Geographical Names</b>	21

## Consistent Use of Place Names Makes a Difference



*Population and Housing Census*



*Promotes Peace*



*Delivery of Relief Supplies*

# UNEGN

## Information Bulletin

(formerly NEWSLETTER)

The *Information Bulletin of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names* (formerly UNEG N Newsletter) is issued twice a year by the Secretariat of the Group. The Secretariat is established within the Statistics Division (UNSD), Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Secretariat of the United Nations. It publishes contributions and reports from the Experts of the Group, its Linguistic/ Geographical Divisions and its

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Previous issues of the Bulletin (formerly Newsletter) can be found at

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegn\\_info\\_bulletins.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegn_info_bulletins.htm)

# Preface

## Message from the Chairperson

Dear Colleagues,

**T**he time is rapidly approaching when we will have the opportunity to meet together again. As mentioned in the report of the Secretariat, we were unable to gain the necessary support to hold the session in Bangkok as proposed. However, I still think that this should be pursued for a future session.

I must thank the Republic of Korea for hosting the joint working group meeting in July this year; I believe it was a productive meeting. For details on the outcome of the meeting I recommend that you read the reports of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation and the Working group on Publicity and Promotion.

I am also pleased to see the reports of the other working groups and divisions contained in this bulletin, recognising that most of the work of UNGEGN is supported by the efforts of these bodies.

As I have mentioned in the past, we are entering into a time of significant challenges resulting from the rapid increase in the use of spatial data for an increasing range of purposes. As we know, place names are by far the most widely used spatial identifier and therefore form an integral part in the effective use of such data. I am therefore

asking/encouraging all delegates to become more involved in their respective divisions and working groups. We have some positions to fill in relation to some of the groups and will be seeking those who would wish to contribute to the work of UNGEGN. The more of us who are proactive in this work, the lighter the burden will be for all and the faster the work of UNGEGN progresses.

I also had the opportunity to attend and speak in one of the Place Names Session of the International Conference on Geography and the Environment, held in Mexico City in October this year. I found the conference very informative, as it presented the issues, directions and successes in the use of spatial data across a number of disciplines. I am looking to relating some of these at our meeting in 2014.

I hope you are all successfully making your arrangement to attend the meeting in New York next year and look forward to seeing as many of you as possible there.

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# News from the Secretariat

## Message from the Secretariat

Dear Experts,

**A**fter some deliberations and discussions we are pleased to report that meeting facilities for the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of UNGEGN have been secured in New York. The dates, which still need to be formally approved by the Council later this year, are 28 April – 2 May 2014. Despite combined efforts from the UNGEGN Bureau and the substantive Secretariat, we were not able to create sufficient support within the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to hold the 28<sup>th</sup> Session in Bangkok next year.

We expect that the Note Verbale for this event will be sent out early next year. As usual, we will post all material (including the Note Verbale) on our event website as it becomes available. If you have any questions, please contact the Secretariat. We are looking forward to welcoming you to New York for the 28<sup>th</sup> Session.

In terms of publications, we are pleased to announce that the Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names has a new attractive cover and the addendum included. In addition, reprints of the

Manual for the National Standardization of Geographical Names (English volume) are now available.

I am happy to welcome Ms. Cecille Blake to our UNGEGN team. Cecille joined UNSD from The National Spatial Data Management Division Jamaica in August 2012, where she worked in the position of Senior Director/National GIS Coordinator for 17 years, she has since served as the substantive Secretariat of the UN Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas. She will be involved in all aspects of UNGEGN and has already started with giving this Bulletin a much improved look.

As is customary, I continue to encourage you to use our UNGEGN website, <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/default.htm> and please let send us your suggestions for improvement.

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# From the Divisions

## Asia South-East Division

### First UNGEGN Asia South-East Division Meeting in Brunei Darussalam

The first meeting of the Asia South-East Division was held in Brunei Darussalam on 14 May 2013, and hosted by Mr. Haji Ali Bakar bin Haji Kasim, Acting Director General of Survey Department of Brunei. In conjunction with the Division Meeting, the Survey Department of Brunei Darussalam successfully held a seminar a day earlier, with the theme of *Placenames Preserving Cultural Heritage* for local participants and the meeting delegates. During this seminar, eight papers were presented focusing on the cultural aspect of geographic naming. The presenters were from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Philippines and Malaysia.



*Photo no. 1: Delegates from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore attending the First Division Meeting in Brunei Darussalam chaired by Malaysia.*

This meeting was attended by delegates from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, and Malaysia. Datuk Prof. Sr Dr. Abdul Kadir bin Taib the Chair of the Division congratulated Mr. Bill Watt from Australia, who was elected as the new UNGEGN Chair during the 27<sup>th</sup> session of the UNGEGN held in New York on 30 July and 10 August 2012, for a period of five years (2012-2017). He replaces Ms. Helen Kerfoot from Canada who retired as Chair of UNGEGN after serving for 10 years as Vice-Chair and 10 years as Chair.

This meeting was a continuation of the 19<sup>th</sup> Division Meeting which was held in Manila, Philippines in February 2012. It is noted that the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of

UNGEEN in New York decided to split the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division into two Divisions, the Asia South-East Division and the Pacific South-West Division (see E/2012/90, para 38). This decision was supported by a resolution of the 10th Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (Resolution X/5), which also recommends that both Divisions be granted full recognition as linguistic/geographical divisions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.



*Photo no. 2: Delegates, Speakers and Participants of the Seminar on Geographic Naming with the theme of Placenames Preserving Cultural Heritage.*

The new UNGEGN Asia South-East Division is now comprised of twelve member countries which include Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.



*Photo no. 3: Seminar on Geographical Names during the presentation of papers.*

During this meeting, country reports of member countries were presented. Indonesia had organised

the Fourth UNGEGN Training Course on Toponymy in Jogjakarta on 17-21 September 2012 and about 60 participants from this Division had attended this important course. This course was taught by eight UNGEGN toponymic experts including Ms Helen Kerfoot, ex-Chair of UNGEGN, Prof Dr. Ormeling from Netherlands now Vice Chair of UNGEGN, Ir Rudolf Matindas from Indonesia and other tutors from Germany, the Netherlands, Australia and Indonesia.

On the regional map and gazetteers currently maintained by Australia; the Division will work further with Australia with the view to eventually to take over the maintenance and updating responsibility for the Asia South East Division. Indonesia has also agreed to develop and maintain the Division's website.

The members were treated with great hospitality by the Director General of Survey Department of Brunei Darussalam during the seminar and meeting.

A technical visit was also arranged for the members to the Royal Museum, and to a floating village. We extend heartfelt gratitude to Brunei Darussalam for hosting and successfully organising the seminar and meeting.

The next division meeting will be held in Lombok, Indonesia on 31 March to 1 April 2014 and all member countries are welcome to attend. At this meeting new chair of the division will be elected.

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## Baltic Division

### 16th Meeting of the Baltic Division

The 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Baltic Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) took place on September 18, 2013 in Tallinn, Estonia, upon the invitation of the Estonian Ministry of the Interior. Co-organizers of the event were the Estonian Land Board and the Institute of the Estonian Language.

Experts from the following member countries of the Baltic Division participated in the meeting: Estonia (Marja Kallasmaa, Mall Kivisalu, Jaak Maandi, Peeter Päll, Tõnis Rüütel, Evar Saar, Liisi Sokk, Urmas Sutrop, Väino Tõemets and Olev Veskimäe), Latvia (Vita Strautniece –Vice-Chair of the Division, Zane Cekula, Otilija Kovaļevska, Sanda Rapa, Ineta Rušmane, and Māra Šterna), Lithuania (Laimutis Bilkis, Dalia Kačinaite-Vrubliauskienė, Kipras Mensevičius, Lina Papšienė, Sigitas Rušinskas, Valdas Urbanavičius and Raminta Vitkauskienė), Poland (Katarzyna Przyszewska and Jerzy Ziuzia), Russian Federation (Marina Morozova – Chair of the Baltic Division, Vladimir Boginskiy), and experts from the observing countries: Belarus (Irina Borodich). Also present were members of the Norden Division from Denmark, Norway and Sweden who had their meeting the same day in Tallinn.

Participants of the meeting exchanged information about the status of legal, methodical and organizational base of national standardization of geographical names, about the status and

development perspectives of national toponymic databases (cadastres, registers etc.); the use of geographical names in maps and the use and preservation of geographical names as part of a cultural and historical heritage. A total of 12 papers were presented. There was a small exhibition of specific cartographic production, e.g. specifically for the blind people (Poland), and toponymic glossaries and dictionaries that had been published in participating countries. In some countries geographical names had recently attracted wide public attention, e.g. the spelling of cadastral names in Estonia.

Participants welcomed the joint initiative of the Baltic and Norden Divisions in arranging a seminar on the integration of onomastic data into the geo-spatial infrastructure.

The next meeting according to the rotation principle should be held in Warsaw, Poland, in the second half of 2014.

The materials and other documents of the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Baltic Division are published on the website of the Baltic Division (<http://eki.ee/knn/ungegn/index.htm>; [http://eki.ee/knn/ungegn/bd\\_ru.htm](http://eki.ee/knn/ungegn/bd_ru.htm)).

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## Norden Division

**T**he Norden Division held its yearly meeting in Tallin, Estonia, in conjunction with the Baltic Division meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

Fifteen members were present at the meeting. It was particularly nice to have the Sami communities represented and very valuable information was relayed.

One of the central points discussed was that geospatial data was recently made available, in particular geographical names data, from most of the Norden Division members. Finland has had free access to and use of its geographical names for a few years now, and since the last Norden Division Meeting, Norway and Denmark have released their geographical names datasets for general use. In Sweden, free use of the geographical names data is restricted to research purposes. These developments open new set of possibilities with and usage of National Mapping Agencies' geographical names data, and the extent of usage has not yet been fully envisaged. However, the freeing of such data should ensure an easier distribution and usage of correct and officially sanctioned data in Scandinavia.

Otherwise, the meeting focused on the status of the INSPIRE and EuroGeoNames projects and the Norden Division homepage. It was decided that the next Norden Division Meeting will take place in conjunction with the 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session in spring 2014.

It was an interesting and instructive experience to have a joint meeting with the Baltic Division. There is always a lot to learn from seeing how other Divisions work and interact and what subjects are particularly important to them. I hope we can have similar joint meetings in the future.

Whilst I have the opportunity, I would like to thank Peeter Päll and Tõnis Rüütel warmly for organizing the joint Baltic and Norden Division Meeting and the seminar on *Integration of onomastic data in National Spatial Data Infrastructure* (see also under **Special Projects and News Items**).

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# From the Working Groups

## Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

**Working Group Meeting, Suwon & Seoul, Republic of Korea, 4-6 July 2013**

The Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation held a joint meeting with the Working Group on Publicity and Funding in the Republic of Korea, on 4-6 July 2013. The meeting was composed of a two-day agenda sessions at the conference room of the National Geographic Information Institute (NGII) in Suwon, and a one-day excursion in Seoul, focusing on Korean places, history and geographical names. Participants were Convenors of the Working Groups, Sungjae Choo and Peder Gammeltoft; UNGEGN Chair, Bill Watt; Vice Chairs, Ferjan Ormeling and Naima Friha; Rapporteur of the Working Groups, Hubert Bergmann; former UNGEGN Chair, Helen Kerfoot; former Convenor of the Working Group, Ki-Suk Lee; experts from Korea, Young-Hoon Kim, Yeon-Taek Ryu and Hyo Hyun Sung; and observers from the NGII, Northeast Asian History Foundation and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea.

Before the agenda sessions, the NGII as the host institution organized an opening ceremony at the auditorium of the Institute. The opening addresses were delivered by two Working Group Convenors, and Director General of the NGII, Mr. Joo-Bin Im. A special presentation was made by the UNGEGN Chair, titled "Getting them right: Cultural and technical accuracy,". On the second day a special lecture "New names drive out old names: The case of place-name changes in the construction of the new administrative town *Sejong* in Korea," was given by Prof. Sang-Hyun Chi of Kyung Hee University. This presentation enriched the meeting.

At the meeting, the current working conditions and status of the UNGEGN were generally reviewed, including completed or on-going items since the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference, the status quo regarding arrangements for the 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session in 2014, forging links to the UN Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM), and considerations to improve the efficiency of future UNGEGN sessions, among other items.

Narrowing down to the functions of the Working Group, its mandate, objectives and responsibilities were confirmed. The current status of the United

Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) resolutions database was reported. The English and French versions are now working well with the 12 new resolutions from the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference added. Next extension could be Spanish or Arabic, depending on the readiness of complete texts of the 207 resolutions adopted so far. This will be available with the technical and financial support of the NGII, the current host of the database.



Photo no. 4: Participants of the Joint Meeting of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation and Working Group on Publicity and Funding with the Director General of the NGII, Suwon, Korea, July 2013.

### Implementing resolutions

It was reminded that the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation was missioned to encourage members of UNGEGN to implement resolutions adopted at the Conferences as norms of the standardization of geographical names. It was emphasized to continuously motivate UNGEGN experts to refer to the resolutions in their works. Some measures were suggested, *e.g.* inserting an item in the "Documentation for the Session" requesting each working paper to note on which resolution it is based; including a question in the evaluation questionnaire regarding the implementation of resolutions; preparing a working paper to arouse interests in resolutions, etc. Working papers fully elaborating actions by resolutions, *e.g.* those submitted to the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference by Austria and New Zealand, those just briefly naming resolutions on which their action was based, *e.g.* by Indonesia, and those mentioning resolutions just generally, *e.g.* by Greece and Romania, would give some hints on how to refer to resolutions.



## Results of the evaluation questionnaire

Basic findings from the evaluation survey carried out at the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference were reported as follows:

- All respondents evaluated positively (expectations were met by all; 40 out of 46 evaluated said that the meeting as successful or very successful).
- Special presentations were evaluated to be the most useful, followed by workshops, documents and networking, while exhibitions, displays and Division meetings were regarded as less useful.
- With regards to references of the meeting, such items as allocation of time, summarizing groups of documents and resolutions elaborated by the Conference were evaluated positively, while time for Working Group and Division meetings and duration of the Conference (8 days) were evaluated negatively.
- Suggested changes for future Conferences included: reduction of Conference duration, reduction of reports, and better communication of Division and Working Groups, etc.

- Toponymic training was ranked at the top of the to-do list before the 11<sup>th</sup> Conference, as well as of the type of assistance needed.

Based on these findings, some measures for improving the efficacy of future conferences and sessions were discussed; selecting better location for the poster exhibition within the given capacity; allocating blocs for Working Group and Division meetings with minimal conflicts and announcing them more effectively; organizing training courses continuously; providing more precise guidelines for working papers and presentations, etc.

The next meeting of the Working Group will be scheduled within the framework of the 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session in 2014. A complete set of minutes of the Working Group meeting will be available, on request, from the Convenor.

### Sungjae CHOO

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## Working Group on Exonyms

### 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms, Corfu [Kerkyra], Greece, 23-25 May 2013

The Working Group on Exonyms met in the Saint Michael & Saint George Palace, Corfu City, hosted by the Greek UNGEGN delegation, the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the City of Corfu. The Vice-Mayor welcomed the audience on behalf of the City. The meeting was organized in conjunction with a meeting of the UNGEGN Working Group on Toponymic Terminology (Convenor: Staffan NYSTRÖM), which met in the afternoon 25<sup>th</sup> May. The meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms was attended by 33 experts from 20 countries.

The meeting started with a sequence of three sessions with a total of 17 papers:

#### Session 1: The Great Divide – comprehensive approaches

(chair: Peter JORDAN, Austria)

- WOODMAN, Paul (United Kingdom): The scope of activities of the UNGEGN Working Group

on Exonyms, and the definitions of *endonym* and *exonym*

- JORDAN, Peter (Austria): Arguments for new definitions of *endonym* and *exonym*
- NYSTRÖM, Staffan (Sweden): Endonym and exonym: basically linguistic concepts after all?
- MATTHEWS, Philip (New Zealand): Endonyms and exonyms: New definitions
- CHOO, Sungjae (Republic of Korea): The matter of “reading” in the exonym discussions
- HELLELAND, Botolv (Norway): Why *Hellas* in Norway and *Grekland* in Sweden?
- BUŠS, Ojārs (Latvia): Two kinds of exonyms – two kinds of classification problems

#### Session 2: The Great Divide – specific aspects (chair: Paul WOODMAN, United Kingdom)

- PÄLL, Peeter (Estonia): Exonyms: special case of countries with non-Roman scripts
- ZAGÓRSKI, Bogusław R. (Poland): Some problems of exonym use in Arabic

- BELL, Herman (United Kingdom): Toponymic teleology: the Great Divide from a Nubian perspective
- TANABE, Hiroshi; WATANABE, Kohei (Japan): A reflection on names of large seas
- ZYCH, Maciej (Poland): Country names in Polish as an example of using exonyms and endonyms



Photo no. 5: The Working Group during its consultations in the Royal Palace of Saint Michael and Saint George (Photo: Maciej Zych)

### Session 3: Exonyms – documentation and use (chair: Sungjae CHOO, Republic of Korea)

- MANDOLA, Malgorzata (France, Poland): Reflections about *endonym* and *exonym* as proper place names
- KLADNIK, Drago; GERŠIČ, Matjaž (Slovenia): A gazetteer of Slovenian exonyms
- CREȚAN, Remus (Romania): South-Danubian place names reflected in Theodor Capidan's seminal works
- CEKULA, Zane (Latvia): Use of place names on maps in the border area with Russia: The territory of former Abrene
- PAIKKALA, Sirkka (Finland): Finnish exonyms: a pragmatic approach to defining *exonym* and *endonym*

All papers will be published as Volume 3 of *Name & Place*, edited by JORDAN and Paul WOODMAN.

An intensive and vivid general discussion on new definitions of *endonym* and *exonym* following the paper presentations and lasting three and a half hours focused on the questions, whether *language* and *officiality* were essential criteria for the endonym/exonym divide and whether it was necessary to make them part of the definitions.

It became obvious that opinions in favour of and opposing *language* as a criterion are very much divided. The divide, however, crosses the lines of linguists and geographers/cartographers and coincides by no means with the scientific disciplines represented.

Also as regards *officiality*, opinions were not at all uniform, although a qualified majority voted against making it a criterion of the definitions. This debate was related to the question, whether for standardization purposes official names, names in official languages or at least standardized names were not the most and perhaps even only important. It was argued that it was often difficult to find reliable sources for other than standardized names. It was, however, also emphasized that the definition of the *endonym* in the UNGEGN Glossary had to be all-comprehensive, had to include all kinds, status versions and linguistic forms of a name.



Photo no. 6: The Greek hosts welcoming the Working Group at the evening reception (Photo: Maciej Zych)

Since this discussion had consumed much time, other questions such as whether the divide should be confined to differences in writing or whether a third term besides *endonym* and *exonym* was necessary for large unpopulated features was not discussed. (For a more detailed account of the discussion see the minutes of the meeting on the Working Group website <http://ungegn.zrc-sazu.si/Home.aspx>).

Although no consensus could be achieved for any item, the meeting certainly contributed to the clarification of viewpoints and can be regarded as an important step forward. But it will be necessary to discuss this question further. To maintain the momentum, a next meeting of the Working Group devoted exclusively to the endonym/exonym divide will take place rather soon, i.e. **5-7 June 2014 in Hermagor, Carinthia, Austria**. All persons interested are welcome to attend and to contribute. A first call will be disseminated by the end of 2013. As is usual, this next meeting will not be confined to Working Group members. If you wish to be included into our mailing list, please contact me.

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## Working Group for Publicity and Funding

The Working Group on Publicity and Funding held a joint meeting with the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation at the National Geographic Information Institute in Suwon (NGII), Republic of Korea, on 4 – 5 July 2013.

In conjunction with the meeting, our host institution, NGII, organized an opening ceremony with addresses by the Convenors of the two Working Groups, as well as by Mr. Im, Director General of the NGII. In addition, UNGEGN Chair, Mr. Watt, gave a presentation titled "Getting them right: Cultural and technical accuracy". During the meeting, Prof. Sang-Hyun Chi of Kyung Hee University gave a special lecture entitled "New names drive out old names: The case of place-name changes in the construction of the new administrative town Sejong in Korea."

12 Working Group members and 7 observers participated in the joint Working Group Meeting.

### Funding

Of the items completed since the last Working Group Meeting, expert help with the new place-name commission's work in Burkina Faso has been completed by Ms. Élisabeth Calvarin. These activities were financed by the IGN France International. In addition, the FTM-UNGEEN Teacher Training Course in Toponymy had just been undertaken in Antananarivo, Madagascar, 17 – 21 June 2013. Work on designing an UNGEGN terminology database is also progressing at the Working Group Convenor's home institution.

In order to obtain an idea of the need for funding for participation in the coming 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session, experts knowing they will have difficulty in obtaining funding will be asked to report to the Convenor. It should be stressed that neither the Working Group on Publicity and Funding, nor UNGEGN have funds on their own to support experts in need of funding for session participation. Instead, this survey is being made in order to obtain a picture of the funding need so that relevant funding bodies can be approached in due course. Additional information will be provided under the *Special Projects and News Items*, section of this bulletin.

### Publicity

The English and German Wikipedia entries on UNGEGN have been updated, a short version in Russian has also been created, and the links between subject-related articles in these three languages have been improved.

UNGEEN presence in related bodies, such as the Joint ICA Working Group and IGU Commission on Toponymy has been in the form of presence of UNGEGN experts and UNGEGN brochures in six languages in Cologne 2012, and the 2013 IGU Regional Conference in Kyoto. Likewise, it is hoped that the solid participation seen at the 24<sup>th</sup> International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) Congress in Barcelona would be as high at the 25<sup>th</sup> ICOS Congress from 25 – 29 August 2014 in Glasgow, UK. For more information, see under Upcoming Meetings of Groups Associated with Geographical Names at the end of this bulletin.

A few updates have been made to the Media Kit by Ms Helen Kerfoot, and new versions have been uploaded to the UNGEGN webpage.

The Information Bulletin and the UNGEGN website were also discussed and it was generally held that both served well for information and general public outreach. However, it was noted that some sections of the UNGEGN website need updating, such as:

- UNGEGN World Geographical Names Database
- Summary world map of Authorities
- Summary List of Authorities
- National Names Authorities

Everybody is hereby invited to check whether the information for their country and/or national authority is still correct. If you find any mistakes or outdated information, please contact the UNGEGN Secretariat. Likewise, all Working Group Convenors are asked to monitor and update their respective Working Group subsections.

Organizers of events regarding the standardization of geographical names should also inform the UNGEGN Secretariat about upcoming events early, so that events can be announced in time on the UNGEGN website. After the meeting, Working Group members were guided around the City of Seoul, a tour which included the Namsan mountain, the palace of Gyeongbokgung, the National Folk Museum of Korea, the Bukchon Hanok Village and Insadong.

In conclusion, I would like to thank sincerely Mr. Sungjae Choo and the National Geographic Information Institute, for organizing a very instructive and enjoyable Joint Working Group meeting.

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## Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

### Report on the FTM-UNGEEN-UNECA international teacher training course in toponymy held in Antananarivo, Madagascar June 17-21, 2013

Organised locally by the national mapping organization Foiben-Taosarintanin' i Madagasikara (FTM), the UNGEEN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy set up a new training course, (training of trainers), targeted at those who could be required to provide training, either in-house at mapping organizations or at higher education teaching facilities. The emphasis has changed from transferring information about toponymy to providing awareness of the ways of transferring the information and skills and teaching the subject with the best training practices.

The course was opened by FTM director general Franck Razafindrabe, UNGEEN chair 2002-2012 Helen Kerfoot and the Vice-Premier Ministre en charge du Développement et de l'Aménagement du Territoire, Mr. Hajo Andrianainarivelo. The event was comprehensively reported on in the press and on national television. Mrs. Nivo Ratovoarison, head of the FTM Hydrography-Oceanography Service and chairperson of the UNGEEN East Africa division was in charge of the local organisation of the course.

#### Participants

The course, intended primarily for Eastern African countries, had 30 participants from 6 countries: Botswana (2), Burundi (1), Ethiopia (1), Kenya (1), Madagascar (24) and Uganda (1). Lecturers came from Canada, Ethiopia, Germany and the Netherlands. Foreign participants were from national mapping offices and Malagasy participants reflected a multitude of interested institutions, apart from FTM: postal authorities, statistical department, national academy (and national commission on geographical names), inclusive of the press, linguists and lawyers.

#### Facilities

There were excellent facilities for the course, it was held at the MDLC training center, with direct online translation of the lectures from English into French and vice versa, with good projection facilities and an online connection with the web, necessary for the demonstration of the teaching material available. Meals and coffee breaks were provided in-house, and participants were also transported to and from the training center and the fieldwork area. Given that UNGEEN materials are now online including the

webcourses in toponymy, all participants had the opportunity to get acquainted with the material to teach for the various toponymic subjects. During the demonstrations on how to teach hands-on training in the production of names data bases, gazetteers and maps containing the names collected during the fieldwork, PC's were made available to all participants and the GEONYM open-source database structure recently developed by UNECA was used.



Photo no. 7 and 8: GPS-training outside and lecturing within the MDLC

As teachers should know what educational material would be available to them, there were ample demonstrations of the schemes to set up teaching a specific subject, the contents to teach, the relevant modules in the webcourse on this subject, relevant texts that can be downloaded and the UNGEEN material. The UNGEEN Secretariat had shipped manuals, glossaries and other printed material just in time for the course participants.

## Contents

The course consisted of the following modules:

1. Teaching the functions of geographical names, terminology
2. Teaching the naming process
3. Demonstration of the structures and work of national names authorities
4. Teaching the processing of geographical names
5. Demonstration of field work preparation
- 6a. Teaching the design of field work forms
- 6b. Field work demonstration (Andasibe area)
7. Teaching the processing of the names collected during fieldwork, database characteristics
8. Demonstration of the GEONYMS software designed by UNECA and made available to African countries and the production of databases and gazetteers
9. Teaching small-scale applications
10. Teaching the diffusion of the standardised geographical names, Cooperation within Africa
11. Demonstration of the support role of UNGEGN

With the exception of the fieldwork day, teaching took place from 9-5, with an 1 hour break for lunch provided for the participants at the premises. On the last day, the headquarters of FTM were visited, participants were shown how geographical information was processed, as well as the production of the geospatial database of the country and the production of topographic maps and charts.

A special part of the excursion was the visit to the Cartothèque, that is being developed by FTM. This is the first step in the creation of a cartographic museum aimed at showing the development of the mapping of the island (by Portuguese, French, English, Dutch and Malagasy cartographers) from the end of the 15th century onwards,

## Fieldwork

Demonstrations on how to conduct fieldwork were held in the Andasibe area, which in the times of the Malagasy kingdom in the 18th and 19th centuries was a staging post in the courier service, linking the capital to the coast. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it became a logging area, from which logs were transported by rivers to the coast; after 1902 it became a station on the Antananarivo-Toamasina railway. The area is interesting from a toponomistical point of view, as it is characterized by the phenomenon that settlements there changed place as well as names (because of slash- and burn practices or by removal of villages to be located adjacent to the

new Antananarivo-Toamasina road) and by the incursion of colonial names (All the railway stations along this line were named for French colonists during colonial times). These colonial names were changed into Malagasy names in 1970.

FTM Director-General, Mr. Franck Razafindrabe accompanied us into the field, and led the discussions with the elders and mayors in three villages, which had already been briefed in advance by Mrs. Nivo Ratovoarison.



*Photo no. 9 and 10: Informants in the fieldwork area: left by the wayside, and right village elders convened in the local school, with FTM director Franck Razafindrabe at right*

Regarding the reason for our venue, the DG explained to them that because of the update of the maps of Malagasy it was necessary to check the names on the map, and that it depended on their knowledge to correct the names wherever necessary. Consecutively, questions were asked by the course participants, who all had a map of the area, and these, were answered by the mayors and the elders, who were able also to give reasons for the names or name changes, or relocation of names. The anticipated visit to a fourth village could not take place as the rains had made a river crossing impossible. As the interpreters followed

us into the terrain, all these proceedings in Malagasy were translated into English and French.

### Cooperation within Africa

On the last course day there was also a discussion on interafrican cooperation in the field of toponymy. The group discussed the report of the division for the next UNGEGN session in Bangkok and future training possibilities, which were considered essential.

Communication problems have plagued the division for the past years, and the installation of an informal regional toponymic network next to the official channels was considered beneficial to overcome these problems. The Africa East countries agreed to exchange material such as field work rules and regulations and office practices, and also provide input to the Africa-East section of the UNGEGN website.

The following recommendations were made:

1. To organise additional hands-on training in the GEONYMS software package, preferably in Nairobi (at RCMRD)
2. To request continuing support from UNECA for the revision and standardization of geographical names in Africa, and follow-up relevant recommendations from the GAP (Gaberone Action Plan).
3. To organise more training activities, such as the present course, for young employees, enabling them to take over eventually.
4. The Malagasy participants present made the recommendation to revitalise the Malagasy national committee for geographical names (KPMA), and to make both the government departments and the general public aware of the results of its activities.

The KPMA members attending the course indicated that after the course they would quickly ensure that the 27 names already agreed on, regarding their standardization, would be implemented officially. Mrs. Nivo Ratovoarison would undertake to write a paper on the

organisation of the teacher training course in toponymy for the next UNGEGN session, so that other interested organisations would be able to see when to start with applications and finding sponsors, and the items to be included in the budget of such a course.

### Social aspects

On arrival the participants had a short tour of the city. During the fieldwork the participants stayed over at the Andasibe-Matadia national park area 180 km east of Antananarivo, and after the fieldwork they had an excursion into the Rainforest where they were able to glimpse some lemurs. The course concluded with a closing session and a cocktail-dinner, which also included a performance of Malagasy folklore dancing.

### Support

The course had been made possible, apart from the important input by FTM in human resources for the preparation of the course and the planning and realization of the fieldwork, by financial support from the Malagasy Ministry de Developpement et de l'Amenagement du Territoire and the PGDI (Programme de Gouvernance et de Développement Institutionnel) funded by the World Bank. UNECA in Adis Abeba contributed by enabling Mr. Yoseph Mekasha, one of the developers of the GEONYMS software package, to lecture on database production, UNSD paid for the 5 participants from mainland Africa and for the other three lecturers to attend. The latter had been delegated from the National Mapping Organization in Germany, BKG (Mr. Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu), Natural Resources Canada (Ms Helen Kerfoot) and Utrecht University (Ferjan Ormeling).

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## ICA/IGU Working Group/Commission on Toponymy

### Activities of the new Joint ICA/IGU Working Group/Commission on Toponymy in 2013

**A**s already reported earlier, a joint ICA/IGU Working Group/Commission on Toponymy has been established at the IGU Regional Geographic Conference in Santiago (Chile),

14 - 18 November 2011, and has subsequently been approved by the relevant ICA bodies. It is to foster toponymic research in cartography and geography complementary to UNGEGN with its main orientation towards standardization. Several UNGEGN experts are also members or corresponding members of this Working Group/Commission. It has so far the status

of a Working Group on the ICA side with Paulo DE MENEZES (Brazil) as the chair, and from the very beginning a commission on the IGU side, with Cosimo PALAGIANO (Italy) as his IGU counterpart. Sungjae CHOO (Republic of Korea), Yaïves FERLAND (Canada), Peter JORDAN (Austria), Ferjan ORMELING (Netherlands), Peter RAPER (South Africa) and Kohei WATANABE (Japan) function as steering board and full members. Corresponding membership is open to everybody interested.

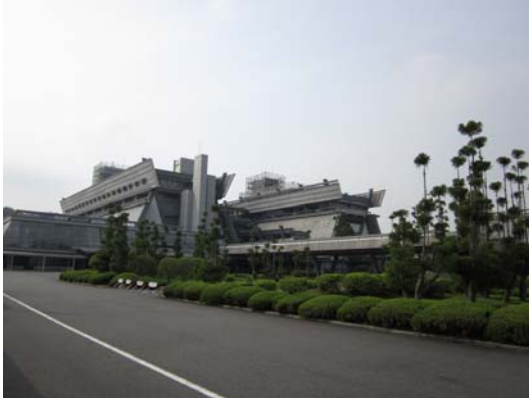


Photo no. 11: The Kyoto Conference Center (Photo: Peter Jordan)

In 2013, this new body set a number of activities. A brief report follows:

- (1) **IGU Regional Conference, Kyoto, Japan, 4-9 August 2013:** Four sessions on geographical approaches to toponymy with a total of 15 papers were locally organized by Kohei WATANABE (Japan) and were well-attended. The proceedings will be published in English as a monothematic issue of the scientific journal *Studi e Ricerche di Geografia* published at the University La Sapienza in Rome [Roma].
- (2) **Seminar "Historical maps, atlas maps, and toponymy", Leipzig, Germany, 21-23 August 2013:** As a pre-conference event of ICC Dresden three ICA commissions/working groups, i.e. the ICA Commission on the History of Cartography (chair: Elri LIEBENBERG, South Africa), the ICA Commission on Atlases (chair: Peter JORDAN, Austria) and the ICA/IGU Working Group/Commission on Toponymy (chair: Paulo DE MENEZES, Brazil) in co-operation with the Leibniz Institute of Regional Research [Leibniz Institut für Länderkunde, IfL] Leipzig, met in the facilities of this Institute in Leipzig. The seminar saw 40

registered participants and 17 paper presentations with many fruitful interdisciplinary discussions. The proceedings will be published open access by the host institute as a volume of its book series "forum IfL".

- (3) **26<sup>th</sup> International Cartographic Conference, Dresden, Germany, 26-30 August 2013:** In two sessions organized by the Working Group/Commission in total six papers on toponymy were presented.
- (4) **EuGeo Congress, Rome, 5-7 September 2013:** In a panel on toponyms organized by Cosimo PALAGIANO (Italy) five papers were presented.

Planned activities for the year 2014 comprise toponymic sessions in the framework of the next IGU Regional Geographic Conference in Cracow [Kraków], 18-22 August 2014, and a workshop on place-names changes in Rome in November 2014.

All persons interested are welcome. To be included on the mailing list, please contact the chairs or a steering board member.

**Peter JORDAN**

on behalf of Paulo DE MENEZES (ICA chair) and Cosimo PALAGIANO (IGU chair)  
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# From the Countries

## News from Brazil

Since 2008, the Committee on Geographic Names (CNGEO) has been working on the basic Principles, Guidelines and Procedures to promote the standardization and minimally organize the set of Brazilian geographical names. The work of the Committee is a joint effort of the following institutions: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), The Directorate of Geographic Service of the Army (DSG), the Directorate of Hydrography and Navigation of the Navy (DHN), the National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI), the National Institute of Studies and Research on Education of the Ministry of Education (INEP), the Institute of Land and Cartography of the State of Paraná, the State of Santa Catarina, the State of Pernambuco, the Brazilian Academy of Letters, the Instituto Antonio Houaiss and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE).

It is expected that the Guidelines and Procedures will be developed in more detail as they are implemented and used.

The list of Principles prepared by the Committee is currently awaiting the approval of the Ministry of Planning, in order to become a resolution of the National Commission on Cartography (CONCAR).

The nine Principles regarding the Brazilian Geographical Names are as follows:

1. Respecting the rules of internal and international rights emanating from the UN;
2. Respecting the orthographic rules of Portuguese, exceptionally accepting spelling

change taking into account the traditional use of the geographical name depending on the specific cultural backgrounds, noting the use of native languages or foreign local tradition;

3. Respecting the local tradition of the geographical name, evaluating its regional and national context;
4. Rejecting the use of offensive or derogatory names;
5. Avoiding using duplicate names in different geographical elements, which may cause misunderstanding in their identification. Create forms and criteria of differentiation or limitation for duplication of names;
6. Avoiding altering the geographical name;
7. Considering the official geographic names formally issued by the executive and legislative authorities, in their various instances;
8. Consider only one official name for each geographic element capable of representation in the territory of Brazil;
9. Recognizing the MRE as the institution responsible for the final word in matters involving disputes between countries concerning geographical names and names of features which constitute the international boundaries of Brazil.

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# Special Projects and News Item

## Are you in Need of Funding for the 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session?

In order to determine the need for funding for participation in the upcoming 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session, experts knowing they will have difficulty in obtaining funding are asked to inform the Convenor (e-mail: [gammelt@hum.ku.dk](mailto:gammelt@hum.ku.dk)) about their funding needs. Please state your name, work address and who has commissioned you as an UNGEGN expert. If you hold any positions within the UNGEGN structure, please state this also, and, most importantly, please state how much funding you need.

It should be stressed that neither the Working Group on Publicity and Funding, nor UNGEGN have any funds of their own to support experts in need of funding for session participation. Therefore, there is no guarantee of funding. Instead, this survey is being done in order to obtain a picture of the funding needs so that relevant funding bodies can be approached.

Should funding be found for one or more persons to attend the 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session, prioritization will be made at the discretion of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding.



Any person granted funding will be required to submit a report on the session attendance to the Working Group Convenor and the funding body shortly after the 28<sup>th</sup> Session.

### **Peder Gammeltoft**

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## The 10th United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas

The United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas (UNRCC-A) was held from August 19 to 23, 2013 at the UN headquarters in New York under the theme, *UN-GGIM and the Americas, addressing global challenges through geospatial information*.

The main objectives of the Conference were for Member States and supporting stakeholders to:

- identify existing and new opportunities for increased regional and global collaborations aimed at advancing geospatial information management for sustained economic development of the Americas,
- share experiences, knowledge and best practices on geospatial information management at all levels and
- gain greater understanding of the relevance and work of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) Committee of Experts, the issues being addressed in

addition to the strategic direction and related program of work.

Over 90 participants comprising government officials, planners, scientists and experts in the field of surveying and mapping, cartography, hydrography, remote sensing, land and geospatial information systems from the Americas and other regions participated in the Conference.

The conference began on Monday 19th August, 2013 with an opening session followed by administrative formalities. The delivery of reports on the Resolutions of the 9th UNRCC-A and Permanent Committee for Geospatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas (PC-IDEA) followed. The technical conference began in the afternoon with an important session on UN-GGIM and the Americas. The topics covered during the Conference were:

- UN-GGIM and the Americas
- Strategy, policy, economic and institutional issues
- Spatially Enabling Government
- Geospatial data collection, management and dissemination
- Best practices and applications

- Climate change and disaster risk reduction



*Photo no. 12: Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, Acting Director, UNSD/DESA, Mr. Rolando Ocampo-Alcántar, newly elected UNRCCA President, Mr. Kenji Nakano, Executive Secretary*

A major outcome of the conference was the creation of the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas (UN-GGIM Americas). This new regional body replaces the Permanent Committee for Geospatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas (PC-IDEA). This significant action was done in accordance with resolution seven, adopted at the Conference. The name change is in keeping with the regional body's renewed mandate to have increased, close cooperation and coordination with UN-GGIM and to be aligned to the global architecture, which will better address regional and global challenges, especially in the context of sustainable development and humanitarian assistance. Visit the following web page <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/RCC/unrcca10.html> for the Conference reports, papers and presentations.

The Conference culminated with a Technical Visit to the New York City Office of Emergency Management. Conference participants were able to see the application of geospatial information to planning and mitigation, responding to and recovering from emergencies such as Hurricane Sandy. They also benefited from the interaction with experts on technical and managerial best practices relating to the use of geospatial information to make national safety

and security decisions. The feedback from conference participants, both formal and informal confirmed that they had an enriching and an invaluable experience. William from Colombia stated, "*The visit was a real and didactic contact with a very advanced example of a best practice under the umbrella of the spatial data infrastructures. In fact, the availability of resources of such a city as NYC is not comparable with many of our countries, but the strategies, solutions, ideas and results that they have achieved are a valuable path that can be followed or at least, emulated.*" The technical visit was a great and meaningful addition to the Conference.

The Conference remains to be very relevant, as the evaluation results indicated that 90% of the delegates gained substantial knowledge on the building of national GIS and developing core data sets, and the content and conduct of the Conference were said to be good. The delegates also indicated that the most useful elements of the Conference were, networking, making new contacts and learning from others, sharing and discussing best practices, making the transition from PC-IDEA to UN-GGIM Americas and the passing of important resolutions. The 11<sup>th</sup> UN Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas should be held in 2016 in New York.



*Photo no. 13: 10<sup>th</sup> UNRCCA participants*

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## United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) Activities

The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management was established in July 2011 to be the official UN consultative inter-governmental mechanism on geospatial information. It plays a leading role as a coordinating body to ensure that Member States are able to set the agenda for the development of global geospatial information, while promoting its use to meet key global challenges.

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management meets annually and held its Third Session in Cambridge, United Kingdom (24-26 July 2013). Its inaugural Session was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, on 26 October 2011, in conjunction with the first High Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) (24-26 October 2013), and its second Session was held at UN Headquarters in New York, from 13 - 15 August 2012. The Second High Level Forum on GGIM took place in Doha, Qatar, 4-6 February 2013, at the Qatar National Convention Centre (<http://www.qncc.com/>). It is worth noting that the UN-GGIM sessions are formal UN policy-oriented meetings where Member States meet to set the agenda and direction for the development of global geospatial information and exchange ideas about its use to address key global challenges. The high level forums on GGIM are technical meetings, hosted by member state countries and is open to all stakeholders of the geospatial community, including member state countries, international organizations, as well as the private sector and the civil society.

### Third Session of the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 24-26 July 2013

United Nations Statistics Division, in collaboration with Ordnance Survey of the United Kingdom, held the Third Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, in Cambridge, UK, 24-26 July, in conjunction with the Cambridge Conference, 22-24 July 2013. The Third Session was attended by 238 participants (173 representatives, from 66 Member States and 1 Non-Member State, and 65 representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and observers from intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations).

The participating countries represented a wide spectrum of national, regional and global experiences

in the development of geospatial information infrastructures in support of evidence-based decision making and sustainable development. The participants expressed an affiliation to UN-GGIM and emphasized its role to promote common frameworks, sustainable development and economic growth, and enhance countries capacities in different aspects of geospatial information management regionally and globally. In this regard, the formation of regional committees on GGIM, such as UN-GGIM for Asia and the Pacific and UN-GGIM for the Arab States, and the progress made towards the establishment of UN-GGIM Europe as well the interest and consideration expressed by other regions, including the Americas and Africa, to create similar UN-GGIM regional entities, reflect the importance and usefulness of the work of UN-GGIM. Countries also agreed to endorse the document the "Future trends in geospatial information management: the five to ten year vision" and the regional entities are willing to use some of the identified issues as a basis for their future programme of work.

Countries expressed their willingness to build their national reference system and participate in the building of the Global Geodetic Reference Frame and maintaining it (The building of the Global Geodetic Reference Frame has been confirmed as an important mission to be carried out by UN-GGIM). Integrating geospatial information and statistical information has been also considered as a major issue to be carried out by UN-GGIM and many countries expressed their interest to participate in the new UN Group of Experts on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information. This group of experts was established by the UN Statistical Commission in February 2013 and endorsed by the UN-GGIM at its Third Session in July 2013 (its first meeting will be held in New York, 30 Oct. – 1 Nov. 2013). The Fourth Session of UN-GGIM will take place in New York, from 4-6 August 2014.

Further information on the Third Session is available on [http://ggim.un.org/ggim\\_committee.html](http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html)

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## Seminar on Integration of onomastic data in National Spatial Data Infrastructure

**I**n conjunction with the recent joint Baltic and Norden Division Meetings, a seminar on the possible Integration of onomastic data with data in National Spatial Data Infrastructures was held at the Estonian Land Board in Tallinn.

The 12 **papers** given at the seminar focused on various aspects of the seminar theme. Some gave an overview of national collections and how onomastic data had been included in national data infrastructures and the online availability of georeferenced onomastic data collections. Others focused more on the problems of digitisation, on assigning coordinates to place-names or how to undertake field collection of place-names by means of mobile devices. One of the more unusual papers focused on how to use a georeferenced onomastic database as the basis of a printed book publication by means of a document type-setting software.

The seminar provided a good overview of not only established systems and ongoing projects with the aim of integrating onomastic data into spatial data infrastructures or the utilization of spatial data in onomastic databases, but also how to utilize such data for other purposes.

The seminar presentations will be made available online on the Baltic Division website at <http://www.eki.ee/knn/ungegn/>.

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# Upcoming Meetings of Groups Associated with Geographical Names

Some forthcoming meetings of organizations relevant to geographical names



## **The Nordic cooperative committee for onomastic research**

NORNA's 43<sup>rd</sup> Symposium: Innovations in names and name patterns  
6 - 8 November 2013, Halmstad, Sweden  
(<http://www2.sofi.se/NORNA/NORNA.html> and  
<http://www.hh.se/hum/norna43>)

## **Asia South-East Division Meeting**

31 March – 1 April 2014, Lombok, Indonesia

## **The Nordic cooperative committee for onomastic research**

NORNA's 44<sup>th</sup> Symposium: Scandinavian Names and Naming in the medieval North Atlantic Area  
23 - 25 April 2014, Caen, France  
(<http://www2.sofi.se/NORNA/NORNA.html>)

## **Working Group on Exonyms meeting devoted exclusively to the endonym/exonym divide**

5-7 June 2014, Hermagor, Carinthia, Austria

## **IGU Regional Geographic Conference**

18-22 August 2014, Cracow [Kraków], Poland

## **25h International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) Congress**

25 - 29 August 2014, Glasgow, UK  
(<http://www.icos2014.com/>)