

**Twenty-third Session
Vienna, 28 March – 4 April 2006**

**Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda:
Reports of the divisions**

Report of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD)

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Report of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD)

The activities of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division of UNGEGN since the 22nd UNGEGN session are indicated below, under the headings of the various resolutions accepted at the 8th UNCSGN.

Res. VIII-1: Promotion of minority group and indigenous geographical names

Austria: The “Gazetteer of Austria” following the censuses 2001 is published in 9 volumes, a CD-ROM with the same content is included in each volume. In this gazetteer the official Slovene minority place-names in Carinthia and the Croat and Hungarian place-names in Burgenland are contained (according to Art. 7 of the State Treaty (“Staatsvertrag”) 1955, the “Decree of the Federal Government from May 31st, 1977, by which the Slovene topographical inscriptions for populated places are prescribed and which singles out 91 bilingual place names within the bilingual region of Carinthia, and the “Federal Statute on the Legal Status of National Minority Groups” in June 2000 for the Croat and the Hungarian place names in Burgenland).

Germany: In November 2004 the Frisian Law (Friesengesetz) passed the parliament of the German Federal State of Schleswig-Holstein. Communes are now authorized to add on road signs the Frisian place name to the German one. In official registers or gazetteers, however, the Frisian place names are not yet considered. On the other hand several publishing houses are practising to render Frisian place names in their cartographic products and dictionaries. In Germany four languages have been officially recognized as minority languages: Danish, Frisian, Romanes (the language of the Sinti and Roma) and Sorbian.

Netherlands: All 1000 hydronyms in the Frisian language area in the Netherlands have been collected and edited and standardized in their Frisian version and published in map-form (Fryske Wetternammen, published by Fryslân Province, Leeuwarden/Ljouwert 2003) on behalf of the Frisian provincial government. These minority names have now been accepted as the official version by the provincial administration in 2005. They have been sent to the Topografische Dienst Kadaster, for incorporation in the topographical databases and maps and in the forthcoming new gazetteers.

A side effect of this standardisation project is that some hydronyms in the non-Frisian-speaking areas in the province have been standardised in the local Dutch dialect form. The Topographic Survey of the Netherlands, to whom - in absentia of an official names bureau in the Netherlands - the burden of establishing and maintaining standardised name forms has fallen, is now confronted with municipalities that want to change names from official Dutch into dialect forms, thus threatening the consensus on their spelling.

Res. VIII-5: Joint meetings of divisions and working groups

Netherlands: A joint meeting of the Dutch- and German-Speaking Division of UNGEGN and the DGSD Symposium series, Geonames 2005, was held in April 2005 in Leeuwarden, the capital of the Frisian minority language area in the Netherlands, with the theme “Toponyms in multilingual areas”.

Res. VIII-6: Integration of geographical names into national and regional spatial data infrastructures

Germany: A project for setting up a Europe-wide geographical names data infrastructure and associated services (EuroGeoNames) has been initiated. The services will link and provide access to the official multilingual geographical names data held at the national level. The project consortium brings together partners from the public, academic and private sectors embracing the full ‘value chain’ from data providers, technology partners and value added service applications.

StAGN dealt with a map project on the geographical names connected with the German coastal area shown on four map sheets at the scale of 1: 200 000. Currently the about 1400 geographical names data are being implemented in the Digital Landscape Model at 1.250,000 scale of the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG).

Res. VIII-8: Assistance to UNGIWIG

Germany: Digital data of the second administrative level of Germany was provided to the SALB project.

Res. VIII-9: Geographical Names as cultural heritage

Austria: The referee took part in the international symposium “Naming the world: From Common Nouns to Proper Names”, 1-4 September, which was organized by the University of Zadar / Croatia, and read a paper on “Alpine toponyms in the Eastern Alps of Austria as witnesses of the cultural heritage of past times”.

The referee participated in the symposium “*Genius loci*”, 12-13 November 2004, which was held by the Autonomous Province of Trento, Italy and lectured on “The tradition of place-names in Austria and South Tyrol from the beginnings up to the year 1200”.

The *Provincial Dialect Institute of Burgenland* organized a symposium on “*Place-names, hydronyms and field-names in the Pannonian border area*”, 2 April 2005. The lectures in this symposium aimed at the promotion of the collection of all field-names of Burgenland, an ambitious project of the province.

The Austrian Academy of Sciences hosts the project ALPKULTUR Cultural-historical documentation of toponyms in the Alpine region: The names of Alpine pastures and mountains in East Tyrol), in which the historical records of the mountains and Alpine pastures of East Tyrol together with a cultural-historical interpretation are analysed and digitized. The results will be presented by means of a digital map as web-GIS publication with manifold searches.

Res. VIII-11: Pronunciation

Germany: In 2003 a MoU was signed between the Dept of Language Information Administration of the Ministry of Education of the P.R. of China and StAGN on toponymic cooperation, especially in the field of pronunciation. A list of some 100 major important geographical names of the P.R. of China was compiled by StAGN and sent to the China Institute of Toponymy who provided us with an audio-file rendering the names in Mandarin pronunciation. The audio-file will be used to improve a pronunciation database maintained at the German Broadcasting station in Frankfurt am Main for assisting TV and radio newscasters.

Netherlands: The website started by the Nederlandse Taalunie (Dutch Language Union, an umbrella organisation in charge of the Dutch language in Belgium, Suriname and the Netherlands) which contains an updated list of officially accepted Dutch exonyms with their standardized spelling and their pronunciation, has temporarily lost its pronunciation module, which is under revision. This website can be found at: http://taalunieversum.org/taal/aardrijkskundige_namen/

Res. VIII-15: Support for training and publications

Germany: The exhibition on geographical names produced for the 8th UNCSGN has been mounted again at the 22nd International Congress of Onomastic Sciences held in Pisa, Italy, 28 August - 03 September, 2005. The material was also used in the 2004 and 2005 toponymy courses held in Bathurst (Australia), Maputo (Mozambique), and Malang (Indonesia). At these courses also the 2002 Enschede/Frankfurt/Berlin toponymy course lectures, published as nr 28 of the Publication series of the Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie (BKG), 2004, were used as course teaching material. A staff member of BKG contributed to the courses held in Maputo and Malang as lecturer.

Netherlands: UN Training courses were supported with teaching staff in Mozambique, Australia, Indonesia and Vienna, totalling 2 person-months .

Other activities:**Gazetteers:**

Austria: see report item 8.

Netherlands: A gazetteer based on the 1:100 000 topographic map was produced in 2005. New provincial topographical atlases 1:25,000 were published in 2004, and contain place name indexes.

Switzerland: A number of Gazetteers for municipalities and cantons have been elaborated, more are being worked upon. A project of the national research council will establish a database with all these gazetteers.

Toponymic data files:

Austria: The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Department Water Balance (Hydrographical Central Office) reported on the elaboration of a database on hydronyms, where relevant data from several provincial institutions are synchronized.

Toponymic guidelines:

Austria: see item 17.

Switzerland: A draft version of the toponymic guidelines for German speaking Switzerland has been presented in June, 2005 with the goal of harmonizing the decisions of the name boards of the cantons. Many specialists and organisations were interested and replied. The main problem is: How far shall local dialects influence the spelling of the place names?