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Group of Experts on
Geographical Names**

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MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TRAINING COURSES IN TOPONYMY

Geographical Names Workshop

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GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES WORKSHOP
ICA CONFERENCE
AUGUST 14, 1999

The 19th International Cartographic Conference and the 11th General Assembly of ICA were held in Ottawa, August 14 to 21, 1999. The principal role in the organization and administration of the Ottawa ICA 1999 Conference was provided by the Earth Sciences Sector of Natural Resources Canada in conjunction with the conference management services of the Canadian Institute of Geomatics. Federal government members of the Organizing Committee included the Department of National Defence, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Statistics Canada and the National Archives of Canada.

The theme of the conference was, "Touch the Past, Visualize the Future." In total there were 1,540 participants including 85 students from 79 countries; there were 500 posters and papers presented (256 papers/oral presentations) and 1,683 items included in the Carto Exhibit. There were eight workshops given with 104 participants and 10 technical tours given with 500 participants.

As part of this conference, the Geographical Names Section of the Centre for Topographic Information, Earth Sciences Sector, Natural Resources Canada, held a six hour workshop entitled, *Developing and Maintaining a National Geographical Names Data Base*. The workshop was aimed at those individuals involved with geographical names, mapping, charting, and GIS. The agenda was as follows:

- Introduction – history of Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN), CPCGN composition today, jurisdictional differences, and the CPCGN Secretariat
- Overview of names collection in Canada
- Impact of linguistic and cultural diversity on geographical names in Canada
- Design and development of the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base (CGNDB)
- Effect of social, political and technical issues on the CGNDB

The workshop was attended by eight participants from the following countries – Australia, Finland, United Kingdom, Zambia, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, and Canada. The workshop included showing the CPCGN Centennial video *What's in a Toponym? The Story of Canada's Geographical Names*, a presentation on the above-noted items, and a demonstration of the recently re-engineered CGNDB. The participation was very interactive and the feedback was positive.

As well as the delivery of a workshop, a staff member presented a paper entitled, "The CGNDB: Its Past, Present and Future" at the conference. Copies of this paper are available from the CPCGN Secretariat, Natural Resources Canada, 615 Booth St, Room 634, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0E9.

All in all, this was an extremely successful conference and it allowed us the opportunity to promote the wealth of information surrounding geographical names.