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NAMES OF FEATURES BEYOND A SINGLE SOVEREIGNTY

UNDERSEA FEATURES

Undersea features gazetteer

Presented by the Government of the United States of America

INTRODUCTION

This gazetteer contains about 2,800 official standard names for undersea features of the world approved, as of 1 December 1971, by the Board on Geographic Names (BGN) and the Secretary of the Interior for use by the Government of the United States. About as many unapproved variant names are cross-referenced to the approved names. It is the second cumulative listing of standardized undersea feature names published by the BGN for use in official publications. Although binding only on the United States Government, the names are being given the widest possible circulation to facilitate communication within the oceanographic community and by the public at large.

How the names are listed

The first section of this gazetteer is an alphabetized, cross-referenced list of all the names included. Unapproved variant names are cross-referenced to the approved names by use of the word "see". Users of the gazetteer should always refer to main entries for approved names. The second section lists the names within blocks bounded by parallels and meridians at 30-degree intervals shown on the frontispiece.

Designations

The second column of the gazetteer contains designations that identify the kind of topographic feature to which the name applies. The designator term is usually the generic term in the approved name, but will differ when a generic that is not properly descriptive under BGN definitions is retained as part of a name in established usage. In names of features that constitute dangers to surface navigation, generics have been changed where necessary to make them properly descriptive and emphasize the danger.

The following are the designations and definitions currently used by the BGN. Designations not appearing in this gazetteer because no names of such features had been approved as of its date are indicated by an asterisk (*).

*archipelagic apron - a gentle slope with a generally smooth surface on the sea floor, particularly found around groups of islands or seamounts.

bank - an elevation of the sea floor located on a shelf and over which the depth of water is relatively shallow but sufficient for safe surface navigation.

basin - a depression of the sea floor more or less equidimensional in form and of variable extent.

borderland - a region adjacent to a continent, normally occupied by or bordering a shelf, that is highly irregular with depths well in excess of those typical of a shelf.

canyon - a relatively narrow, deep depression with steep slopes, the bottom of which grades continuously downward.