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THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Athens, 17 August-7 September 1977

Item 14 of the provisional agenda.

Policies, procedures and co-operative
arrangements for the naming of
features beyond a single sovereignty:

(c) Undersea features

REPORT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON
PROGRAMMES FOR NAMING UNDERSEA FEATURES*

Paper presented by the United States of America

* Prepared by Richard R. Randall, Executive Secretary of the United States Board on Geographic Names, June 1977.

Since 1972, the United States has continued to be active in standardizing names of undersea features for official purposes through the Board on Geographic Names (BGN) Advisory Committee on Undersea Features (ACUF).

In keeping with the growth of undersea exploration programs, much of which is related to efforts to locate natural resources, the committee has dedicated considerable time to processing new names proposed by scientists, technicians, and other persons involved with such efforts. Thanks to procedures developed by the committee, names proposed for newly discovered features are nearly always described on BGN proposal forms in adequate detail. Occasionally, further correspondence with the proponent of a name has been required to obtain additional information. Although names are processed as expeditiously as possible, normally from one to three months are required inasmuch as action by BGN (meeting as a separate body) and by the Secretary of the Interior is necessary. Proposers who have an urgent need for names, however, are given provisional approval as soon as the committee accepts a name.

During the period 1972-1977, the committee reviewed about 400 names, of which 340 were approved as new names, 35 were changed in terms of location or feature designation, and the rest were not accepted or were deferred. These actions were accomplished in 36 sessions of ACUF.

To ensure timely distribution of information about new names to users, the committee is designing an informal publication containing decisions about names which will be issued after names have been fully approved. In the past, the BGN Gazetteer

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