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English only

**Eighth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names**

Berlin, 27 August-5 September 2002

Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries
and on the progress made in the standardization of
geographical names since the Seventh Conference**

Report of Sweden

Submitted by Sweden

* E/CONF.94/1.

National standardization

The Swedish Act concerning Ancient Monuments and Finds (Sw. *Kulturminneslagen*) was revised in 2000. It now includes a paragraph dealing with "good place-name practice" in central and local governmental activities. The emphasis is put upon the importance of preserving the place-names as a part of the nation's cultural heritage. Place-names shall be spelt in accordance with adopted linguistic rules, but established names shall not be changed without strong grounds. Swedish, Saami and Finnish names shall as far as possible be used on maps, signposts and other marking in multilingual areas. Names that are approved for public map production shall also be used in other contexts in their approved form.

The supervision of the Act is the responsibility of the National Heritage Board (Sw. *Riksantikvarieämbetet, RAÄ*) and in order to cope with that a position as a place-name expert has been established at this authority. However, the role as national place-name authority is performed by the National Land Survey (NLS, Sw. *Lantmäteriverket, LMV*). The third main part involved in Swedish place-name standardization is the Institute for Dialectology, Onomastics and Folklore Research (Sw. *Språk- och folkminnesinstitutet, SOFI*). Furthermore, the local governments of Sweden (289 in all) are responsible for postal addresses, urban and rural, containing a large amount of place-names.

Registers, gazetteers and toponymic data files

The place-names data base of the National Land Survey contains up to now some 700,000 names. The NLS has the intention to replace the so called MapSearch with a service where the place-names data base is accessible. Hopefully that would be done at the end of the year 2002 and will be seen on the web site of the NLS (www.lantmateriet.se). Up to then the MapSearch service is accessible with some 50,000 names on the same Internet address.

The place-name collections at the Institute for Dialectology, Onomastics and Folklore Research now exist in a computer-based version containing almost four million records. The aim is to make it available on the Internet, but so far only a minor part of it can be seen on the web site (www.dal.lu.se/sofi/sofi.htm) for demonstration purposes.

Names in multilingual areas

The NLS decided in 1983 that the geographical names in the North Saami area of Sweden should be treated according to special principles on the official maps. I. a. all names of natural features should be written in correspondence with the North Saami orthography, accepted by the Saami themselves in 1978. Since the Saami in 1983 had decided upon a new Lule Saami orthography, the NLS decided in 1988 to use this orthography in the same manner. The NLS has gradually introduced these two orthographies in the official maps, also for settlement names.

In 2001 the NLS made a new decision after referring the question to the Saami Council for consideration. According to this decision also the South Saami orthography and a special Ume Saami orthography shall be used for the Saami names in the area to the south of the Lule Saami area. The work to introduce these orthographies has already started.

Toponymic education and practice

Within the NLS there are in-house training programmes to meet the need from its staff, both those concerned with cartography and those occupied by real estate information and registration. The NLS and the two other central name authorities also – in various ways – support the local authorities in their work with the new addressing system.

Publications

In the series on geographical names and the preservation of names published by the NLS (Sw. *Ortnamn och namnvård*) two new issues have been published. Nr 5 deals with the names in the Real Property Register and their relations to the corresponding original names. Nr 6 is written by the Place-Name Advisory Board and is an account of different aspects of the new paragraph in the Act concerning Ancient Monuments and Finds (see above). The same subject is dealt with in the booklet *Place-names and the Act concerning Ancient Monuments and Finds* (Sw. *Ortnamnen och kulturminneslagen*) published by the National Heritage Board in 2001. There it is shown, by means of some examples, how to interpret "good place-name practice".
