

Philippines, 2018

United Nations, UNGEGN, and support for national geographical names standardization programmes



Helen Kerfoot, UNGEGN
Cecille Blake, UNGEGN Secretariat



What is important to know?

- Background on UNGEGN and its aims
- Participation from countries
- How does UN/UNGEGN function
 - *Divisions and working groups*
- Materials available – UNGEGN website
 - *Publications; documents; contacts*
 - *World Geographical Names Database*
 - *Other support*
- Recent changes to organization



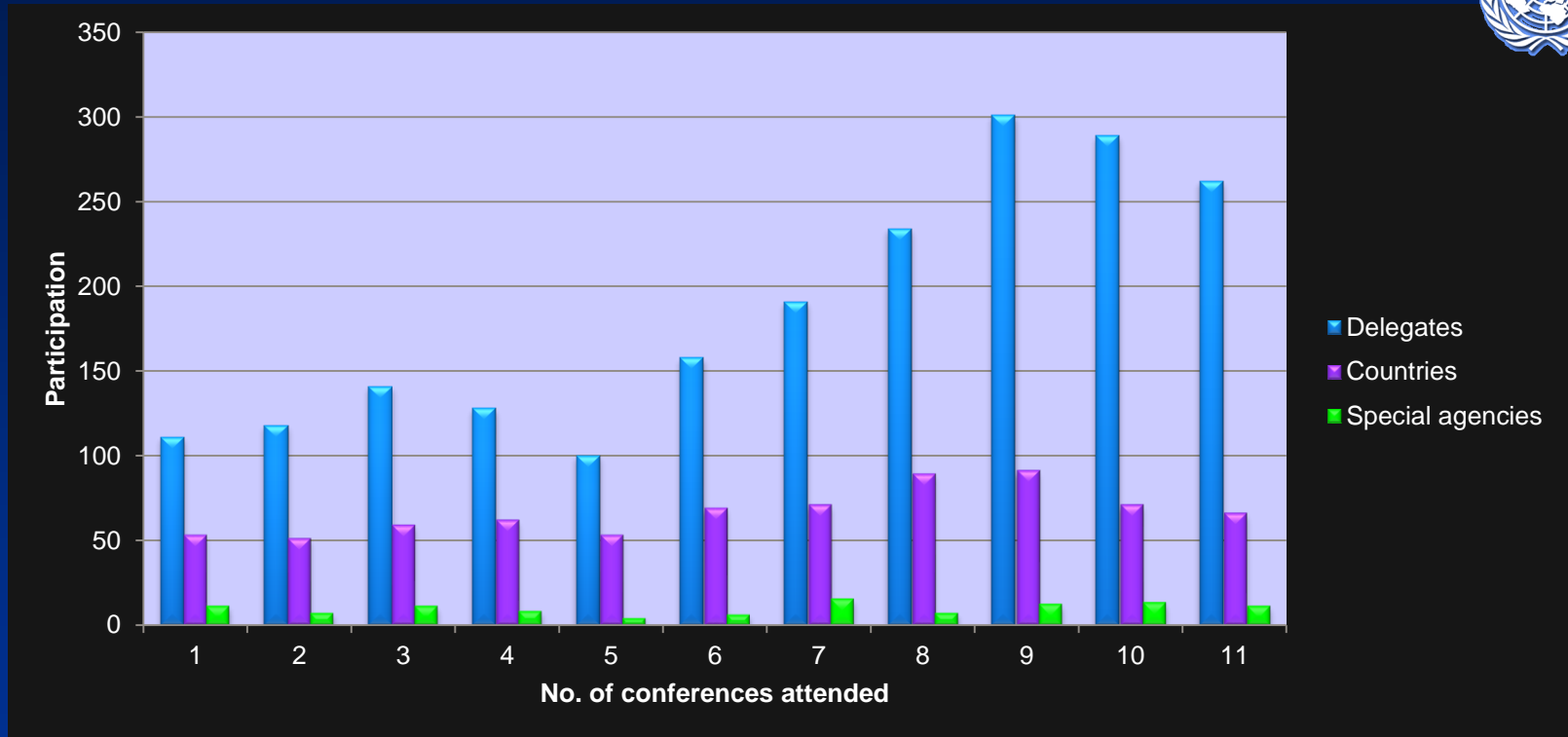
UN Conferences and UNGEGN

- UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSSGN) – since 1967
 - 11 Conferences, every five years
 - promotes national standardization as the basis of international standardization
 - starting with resolution I/4
- UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names
 - follows up Conference resolutions
 - assures continuity of work
 - networking; best practices; exchange ideas; new projects





United Nations Conferences 1967-2017



Countries – first time

- 2002 – 10
 - 2007 to 2017
 - 12
- 156 countries have participated (UN 193 + 2)
 - 13 countries represented at all 11 conferences
 - 12 SE Asia countries



UNCSSGN resolutions

- Conference resolutions reflect the technical work discussed
- From 11 Conferences - 211 resolutions assembled and grouped by subject area (26 groups)
 - Refer to: national standardization; systems of romanization; distribution of data through gazetteers (hard copy/web); data exchange in accepted formats; training and education; tools, toponymic guidelines; exonyms



UNGEEN

- UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names
 - one of expert groups of ECOSOC
 - follows up on implementation of resolutions
 - provides continuity between conferences
 - convenes between conferences (2) ... 30 sessions
 - supported by a Secretariat at UNHQ (NY)
 - creates working groups to follow up on resolutions
 - has 24 geographical/linguistic divisions for grass roots work





UN Conference/UNGEGN aims

- See national names authorities created
 - backed by legislation
 - respect local usage of names
 - collect, store and disseminate authorized names
 - for government and public use
- Develop single scientifically-based systems of romanization
- Today - encourage multi-national datasets

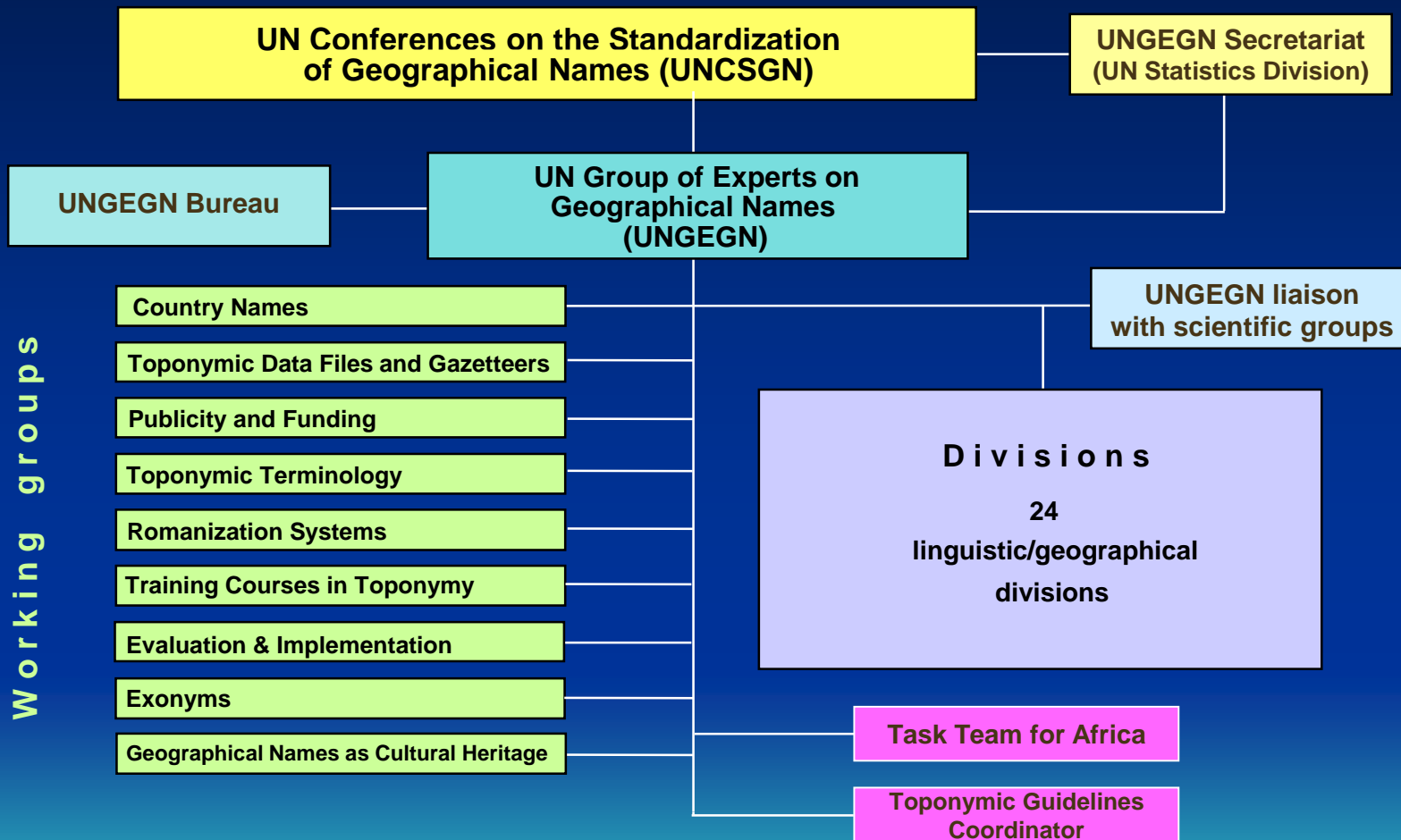


Nairobi





UNGEGN structure





... UNGEGN working groups

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Romanization

Training



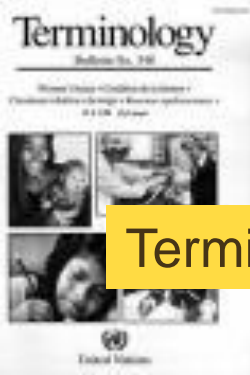
Data files / gazetteers



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1000111229	Chennai	India	Chennai	600019	91 44 261 1019
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Exonyms



Terminology

Evaluation / implementation



Country names



Cultural heritage

Publicity / funding



Task Team for Africa

Coordination of Toponymic Guidelines



WG - Toponymic data files and gazetteers

- Major tasks to promote consistency of data
 - development and maintenance of digital toponymic files and data bases
 - gazetteers (hard copy and digital)
 - data exchange formats and standards
 - liaison with ISO TC211 and Unicode consortium
 - need to be a focal point for info on software
 - processes for VGI and crowd-sourced data
 - definitions of general feature types/categories
 - updates for technical manual
 - relationship with UNGGIM



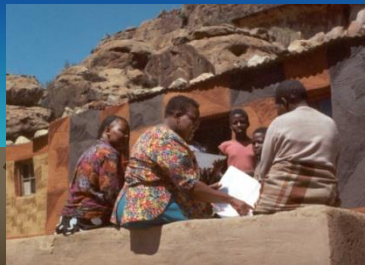
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Website: <https://wiki.gdi-de.org/display/wgtdfg/>



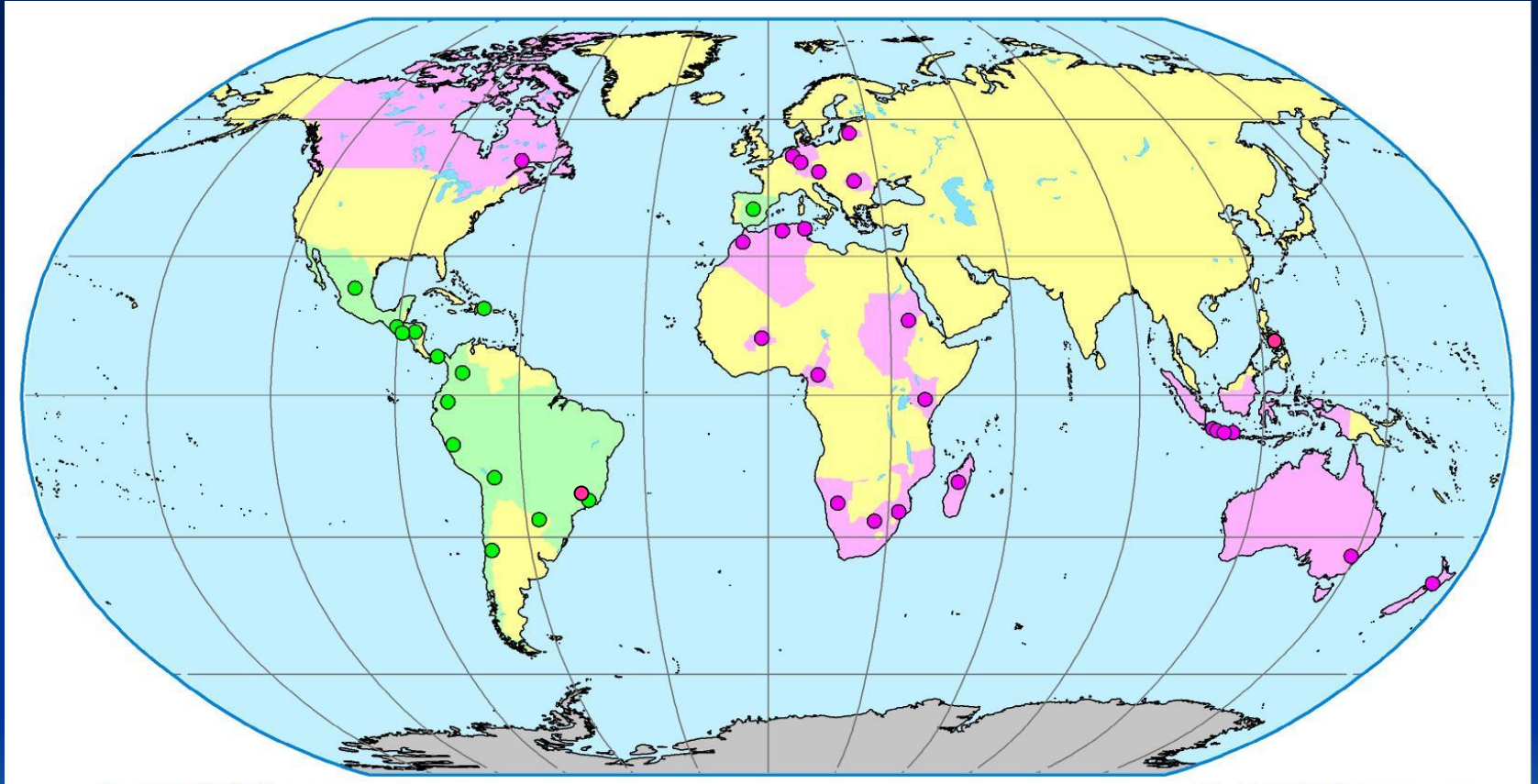
WG - Training courses in Toponymy

- Courses offered to international audiences since 1982 - in various languages and locations
- Collection of course outlines, etc. available
- To reach a larger audience ... moving towards web-based courses
 - unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/_data_ICAcourses/index.html (developed with ICA)
 - also in French (Div. Francophone) and in Spanish (PAIGH)
- New advanced manual online





WG – Training courses in toponymy



● **UNGEGN**

● **PAIGH**

Offering training courses and developing web-based training



WG - Toponymic terminology

- Need for commonly recognized terminology for any discipline
- First Glossary was published by the UN in 1984
- Updated and expanded Glossary in 2002 ... six languages of UN; 375 terms
- Into maintenance phase - first additions and changes on UNGEGN website, 2007
- Establishing database of terminology





WG – Geographical names as cultural heritage

- Aim to promote the work being done on cultural heritage, including indigenous, or minority and regional group names
- Retention / revitalization of cultures through toponyms
- Res. VIII/1 (2002), Res. IX/5 (2007)
- Compile guidelines; gather legislation and principles for recording and use of names in cultural context; dialogue with other groups





UNGEEN Divisions

- Africa Central
- Africa East
- Africa South
- Africa West
- Arabic
- Asia East (other than China)
- Asia South-East
- Asia South-West (other than Arabic)
- Baltic
- Celtic
- China
- Dutch- and German-speaking
- East Central and South-East Europe
- Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia
- East Mediterranean (other than Arabic)
- French-speaking
- India
- Latin America
- Pacific South-West
- Norden
- Portuguese-speaking
- Romano-Hellenic
- United Kingdom
- United States / Canada



Asia South-East Division



- Bhutan
- Brunei Darussalam
- Cambodia
- Indonesia
- Lao People's
Democratic Republic
- Malaysia
- Myanmar
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Sri Lanka
- Thailand
- Viet Nam

Division website <http://asedivision-ungegn.org/>

Participation at UN Conferences

- Thailand 9
- Malaysia 8
- Viet Nam 7
- Indonesia 6
- Philippines 6
- Brunei Darussalam 4
- Lao People's Democratic Republic 4
- Sri Lanka 4
- Cambodia 3
- Singapore 3
- Myanmar 2
- Bhutan 1





UNGEGN – here to help!

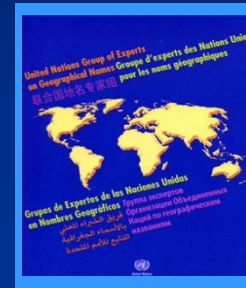
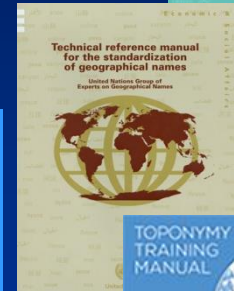
• Publications

- Manuals
- Brochures
- Reports of Conferences and UNGEGN Sessions
- Glossary
- Media kit

• UNGEGN website:

– unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegn/

- Publications noted; UN resolutions
- Links to national authorities and databases
- Documents from UN Conferences and UNGEGN
- Example documents from various countries
- UNGEGN Information Bulletin
- UNGEGN World GeoNames Database



UNGEGN World Geographical Names Database
 A multilingual, multiscriptural and geo-referenced database of names for countries, capitals and major cities.

 **UNEGGN** | United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

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- UNEGGN
 - General
 - Sessions
 - Divisions
 - Working Groups
 - Bureau and Convenors
 - Liaison Officers
- World Geographical Names
- Web Based Training
- National Names Authorities
 - General
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 - Geographical names databases
 - Toponymic guidelines
- Publications
 - UNEGGN Publications
 - Bulletin
 - Media kit
 - Other reference material
- Events
- Links
- Contact

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNEGGN)

In 1959, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) paved the way for a small group of experts to meet and provide technical recommendations on standardizing geographical names at the national and international levels. This meeting gave rise to the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSSGN) and to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNEGGN). The UNCSSGN is held every five years, and UNEGGN meets between the Conferences to follow up the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Conferences and to ensure continuity of activities between Conferences. Today, UNEGGN is one of the seven standing expert bodies of ECOSOC, with over 400 members from over 100 countries.

Outside its meetings, UNEGGN functions through 24 geographical/linguistic divisions and through working groups, currently addressing issues of training courses, digital data files and gazetteers, romanization systems, country names, terminology, publicity and funding, and toponymic guidelines.

[more](#)



A multilingual, multiscriptural and geo-referenced database of names for countries, capitals and major cities

Upcoming meeting

The next Plenary meeting will be held from 29 April to 3 May 2019.

Recent conferences and sessions

The 30th Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNEGGN) was held in New York on 7 and 18 August 2017.

The 11th Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSSGN) was held in New York from 8 - 17 August 2017.

Upcoming events

Regional Training Program in Toponymy, including Marine Toponymy
19-24 March 2018, Manila, Philippines
Coordinator: Mary Jane Montemor

Meeting of the UNEGGN Working Group on Country Names
19 March 2018, Paris (France, IGN Saint-Mandé)
Coordinator: (in English) Catherine Cheetham
Coordinator: (in French) Élisabeth Calvarin

Meeting of the UNEGGN Working Group on Romanization Systems
20 March 2018, Paris (France, IGN Saint-Mandé)
Coordinator: (in English) Catherine Cheetham
Coordinator: (in French) Élisabeth Calvarin



UNGEGN

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

[Overview](#)

[Mandate](#)

[Conference](#)

[General](#)

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[World Geographical Names](#)

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[National Names Authorities](#)

[General](#)

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[Geographical names databases](#)

[Toponymic guidelines](#)

National Names Authorities

Documents

[Summary world map of Authorities, as of July 2016](#)

[Summary List of Authorities, as of September 2016](#)

[Contact Information on National Geographical Names Authorities, as of September 2016](#)

[Links by countries to National Names Authorities and other related websites](#)

Useful reference documents (examples from national names authorities)

Overview - names authorities and procedures for naming

[Estonia overview \(English\)](#)

[Norway overview \(English\)](#)

[South Africa overview \(English\)](#)

Legislation for a names authority

[Canada, Order in Council - Canada, Décret en conseil](#)

[New Zealand Geographic Board \(Nga Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa\) Act, 2008](#)

[Tunisie, Décret du 2013 - Arabic version](#)

Publications

[UNGEEN Publications](#)

[Bulletin](#)

[Media kit](#)

[Other reference material](#)

Events

Links

Contact

Policies, principles and procedures for geographical naming

[Canada, Principles and procedures - Canada, Principes et directives](#)

[Indonesia, Principles, Policies and Procedures](#)

[USA, Principles, Policies and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names](#)

Place names acts

[Estonia Place Names Act \(English\)](#)

[Norway Place Names Act \(English\)](#)

[Poland Place Names Act \(English\)](#)

Information publicizing the work of names authorities

Annual reports of names authorities

[New Zealand Geographic Board Nga Pou Tauhana o Aotearoa, Annual Report, 2008-2009](#)

Forms for public submission of names

[Denmark names collection form: blank form \(English translation\) - Denmark names collection form: completed form \(in Danish\)](#)

[New Zealand places and features](#)

[New Zealand guiding notes for places and features](#)

[New Zealand undersea features](#)

[New Zealand guiding notes for undersea features](#)

Presentations (National Names Authorities)

Meeting of toponymy authorities, 6 September 2011, at ICOS XIV, Barcelona, Spain

Welcome (Yvonne Griley)

Introduction (Helen Kerfoot)

National committees - centralized

Estonia (Peeter Päll)

Republic of Korea (Sungjae Choo)

National/regional committees

Spain (Marta Montilla) and Catalonia (Francesc Vilaró)

Australia (Laura Kostanski)

Input of language specialists

Norway (Botolv Helleland)

Country without a geographical names authority

Netherlands (Ferjan Ormeling)

Concluding remarks (Helen Kerfoot)

Words of thanks (Yvonne Griley)

Short UNGEGN lunch-time presentation, GGIM High Level Forum, Seoul, October 24-26, 2011

UNEGN - what, why, how and relevance to GGIM

Le GENUNG et la normalisation des noms géographiques en Afrique

UNEGN Geographical Names Database

UNEGN - names and mapping / GIS

UNEGN - cultural connections

EuroGeoNames - data network

UNEGN - national names authorities and GGIM



UNGEGN World Geonames Database

- Access through UNGEGN web site
- To include names (geo-referenced) of:
 - Countries and capitals
 - 6 UN languages
 - Language(s) of country
 - Cities > 100,000
- Original writing system + romanization
- Audio for endonyms
- *In future to add: Variant names – exonyms, historical ...*

UN Statistics Home | UN Home

UNGEGN | United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

Overview

Mandate

Conference

- General
- Confere

UNGEGN

- Gene
- Sessio

World Geographical Names

Web Based Training

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- Geographical names databases
- Toponymic guidelines

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- Bulletin

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[more](#)

A multilingual, multiscriptural and geo-referenced database of names for countries, capitals and major cities



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Coordinator: Mary Jane Montemor

Recent conferences and sessions



Query



UNGEGN World Geographical Names

Multilingual, multiscriptural dataset of names of countries, capitals and major cities.

Interactive map

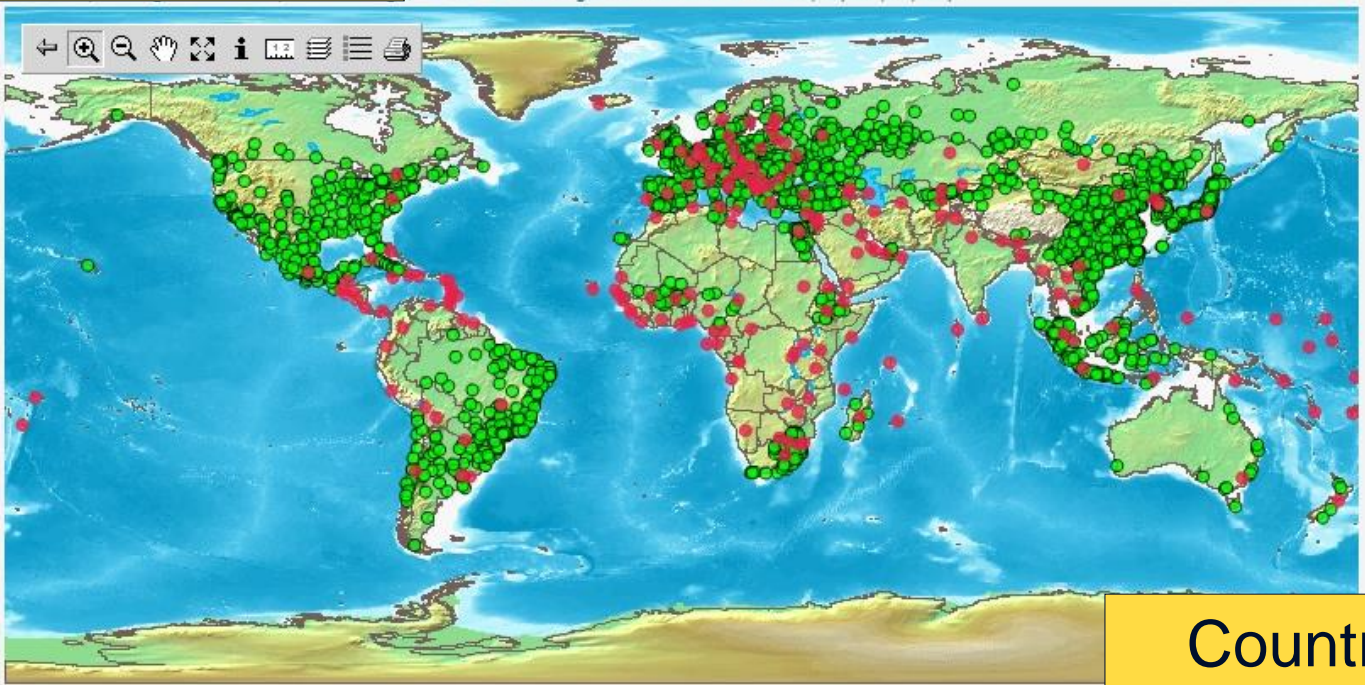
Geographical Names Database | About | FAQ | Feedback | Contact

Beta version

Select a country to zoom in and list the names below the map

List of countries

name in the six UN languages. Point to a city to see the city endonyms (where available and in the local language). Capital cities are shown in red, other cities are shown in green. Some names might not be able to be displayed properly.



Country map

Notes:

- The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
- The source for the file is UNGIWG.
- The Arabic fonts are not connected at this stage because of technical problems.

Tabular data

Drop down menu – by country

UNEGN Geographical Names - Windows Internet Explorer

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/geonames/ Yahoo! Search

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Microsoft Outlook Web Ac... UNEG N Geographi... x

Page Safety Tools

UNEGN World Geographical Names

Multilingual, multiscriptural dataset of names of countries, capitals and major cities.

Geographical Names Database | About | FAQ | Feedback | Contact Beta version

Select a country to zoom in and list the names below the map

- World
- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Andorra
- Angola
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas (the)
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bhutan
- Bolivia (Plurinational State of)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Brunei Darussalam
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi

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Point to a city to see the city endonyms (where e. Capital cities are shown in red, other cities are shown in green.



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SE Asia – capitals and cities



UNGEGN World Geographical Names

Multilingual, multiscriptual dataset of names of countries, capitals and major cities.

Geographical Names Database | [About](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Contact](#)

Beta version

Indonesia

Roll over a country to display the country name in the six UN languages. Point to a city to see the city endonyms (where available and in romanized form only) and the English name. Capital cities are shown in red, other cities are shown in green.

Note: Depending on the computer settings, some names might not be able to be displayed properly.



Notes:

- The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. The source for the file is [UNGIWG](#). Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.
- The Arabic fonts are not connected at this stage because of technical problems.



UNEGN World Geographical Names

Multilingual, multiscriptural dataset of names of countries, capitals and major cities.

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Beta version

Brazil ▼

Roll over a country to display the country name in the six UN languages. Point to a city to see the city endonyms (where available and in romanized form only) and the English name. Capital cities are shown in red, other cities are shown in green.

Note: Depending on the computer settings, some names might not be able to be displayed properly.



Notes:

Capital city

Lat: -15.78 | Long: -47.93 **Brasília**

Endonym

Language	City name	Source
Portuguese	Brasília 	UNGEGN

United Nations Languages

Language	City name	Source
Arabic	برازيليا	UN terms
Chinese	巴西利亚	UN terms
English	Brasilia	UN terms
French	Brasilia	UN terms
Russian	Бразилия	UN terms
Spanish	Brasilia	UN terms

Other major cities

Lat: -32.03 | Long: -52.10 **Rio Grande**

Endonym

Language	City name	Source
Portuguese	Rio Grande 	UNGEGN

Lat: -31.77 | Long: -52.34 **Pelotas**

Lat: -31.33 | Long: -54.11 **Bagé**

Lat: -30.08 | Long: -51.02 **Viamão**

Lat: -30.03 | Long: -51.23 **Porto Alegre**

Data from Asia SE Division

	City/town data	Pronunciation
• Bhutan	X	X
• Brunei Darussalam	Yes?	X
• Cambodia	X	X
• Indonesia	Yes	X
• Lao People's Democratic Republic	X	X
• Malaysia	Yes	X
• Myanmar	X	X
• Philippines	Yes	X
• Singapore	Yes?	X
• Sri Lanka	Yes	X
• Thailand	X	X
• Viet Nam	Yes	X



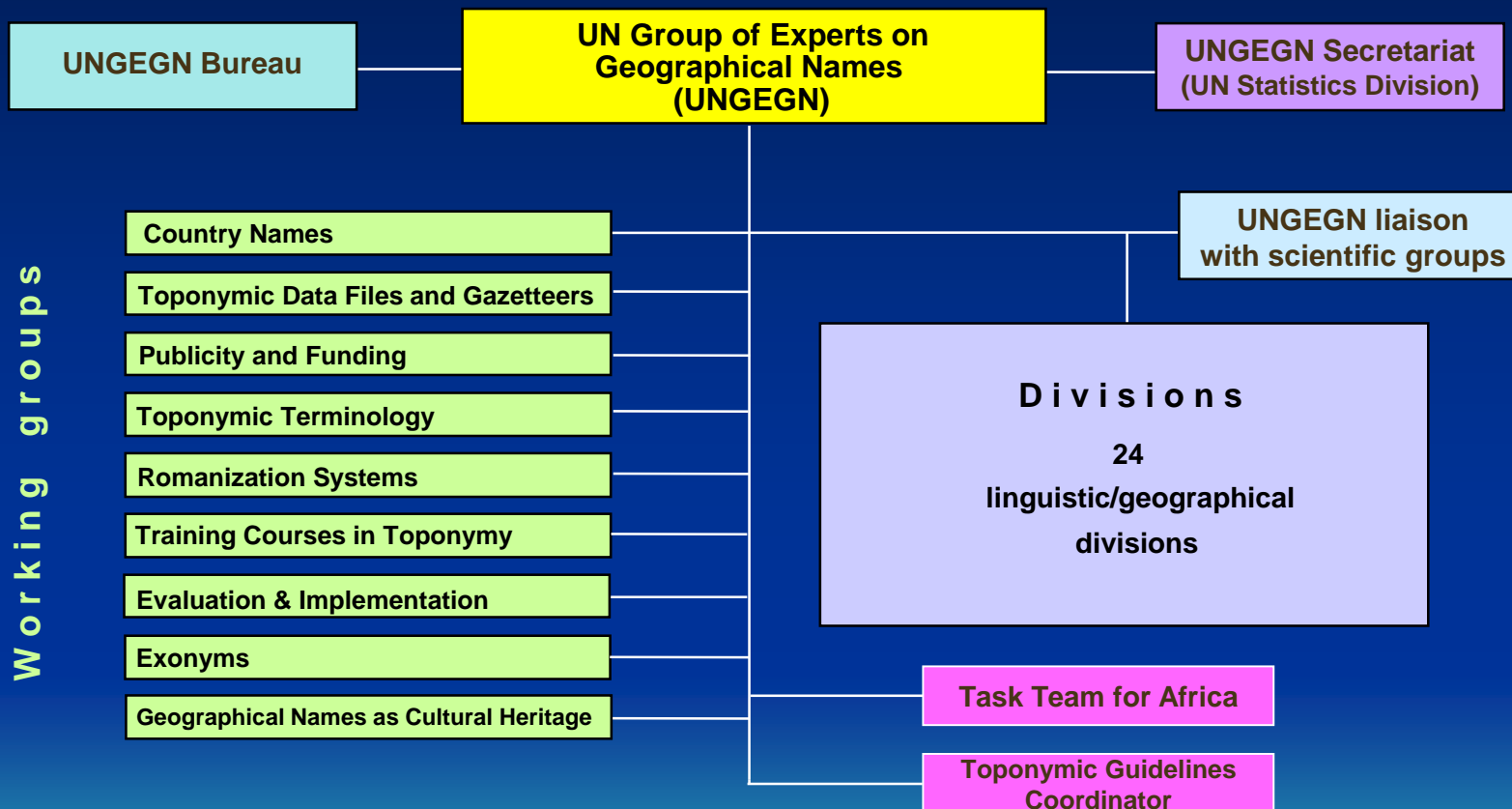
New arrangements for UNGEGN

New developments in the
UNGEEN World Geographical Names Database





New UNGEGN structure

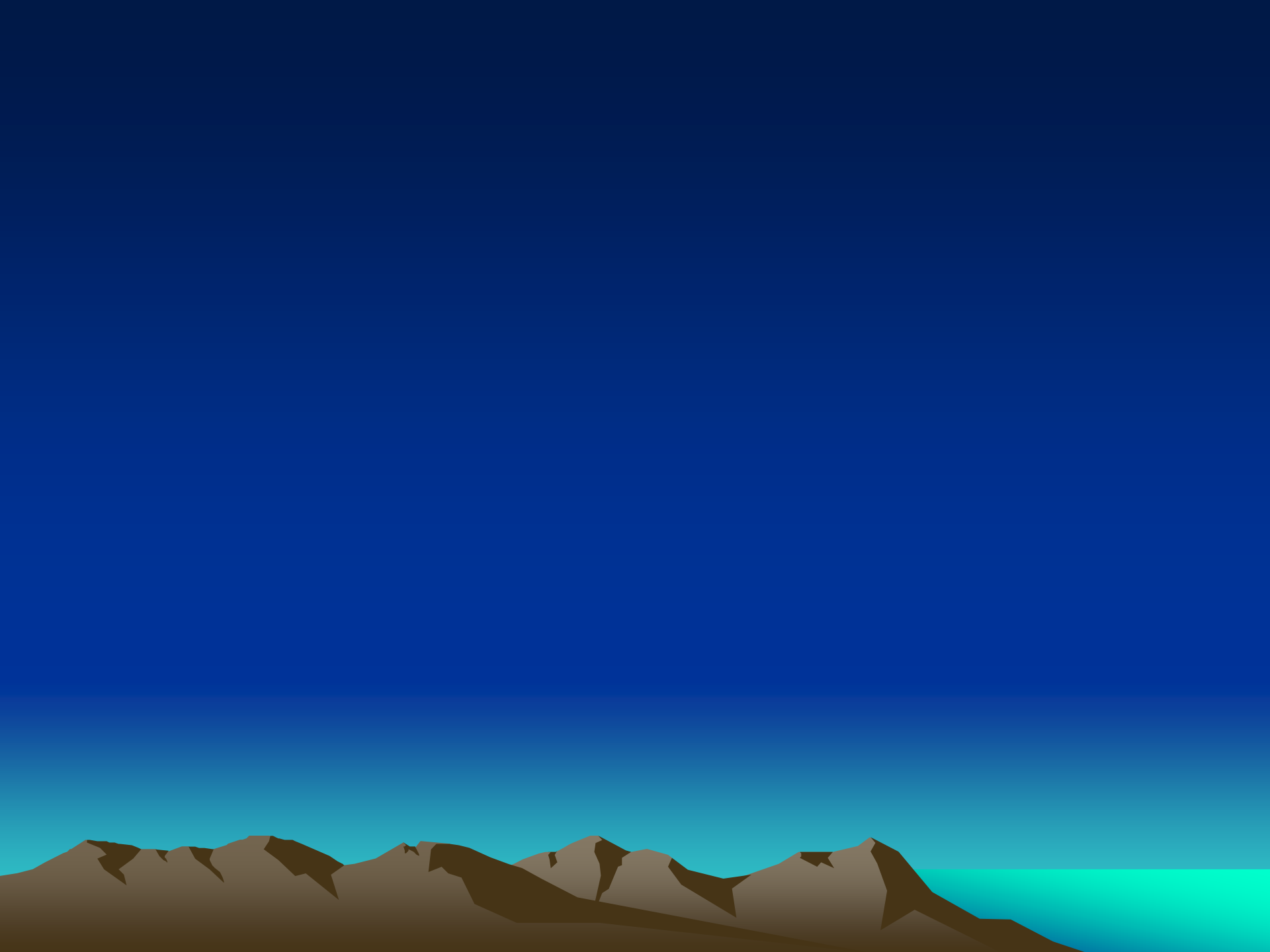


Olhe para o mundo
com outros olhos



Looking to the
future ...
for improved
communication
and a world
at peace

unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo





Continuing need for standardization

- Important advances - technology and communication
 - potentially a growing audience
 - sending and receiving data → easier
- This progress increases expectations
 - data must be reliable – accurate and up to date
 - not always easy to meet expectations
- Toponyms are indispensable components of all spatially-referenced information systems
 - ... Google Earth, etc.

