



**Strengthening relationships, links and connections
in geographical names standardization and for
sustainable development and pandemic recovery**





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Previous issues of the Bulletin (formerly Newsletter) can be found at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/pubs/#bulletin>



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

De notre session de 2023 à celle de 2025

Chers Collègues,

Le Conseil économique et social des Nations unies vient d'adopter les trois recommandations que lui a faites notre toute récente session biennale, qui s'est tenue du 1er au 5 mai 2023 à New York (États-Unis), avec 10 réunions plénières, 15 événements parallèles et de multiples discussions informelles. Le thème de la session et de ses recommandations était aussi celui du présent Bulletin : « Renforcer les relations, liens et connexions dans la normalisation des noms géographiques et aux fins du développement durable et du relèvement au sortir de la pandémie ». Il faut souligner de nouveau, comme le faisait la documentation de la session, que « ce thème est aligné sur la stratégie 2 (relations, liens et connexions) du plan stratégique et du programme de travail pour 2021-2029. Il est également aligné sur le thème du forum politique de haut niveau pour le développement durable de 2023. »



Notre session a ainsi marqué une nouvelle étape vers une meilleure intégration du GENUNG au système des Nations unies décidée en 2017. Et c'est au regard des objectifs de développement durable des Nations unies qu'il faut l'évaluer. Elle a notamment joué un rôle de « renforcement des capacités » (cible 17.9) pour nombre d'entre nous (220 experts de 62 pays, auteurs de plus d'une centaine de rapports). Il faut cependant encore « renforcer les efforts de protection et de préservation du patrimoine culturel [...] mondial » (cible 11.4), auquel nous avons reconnu depuis longtemps que les noms géographiques appartiennent (décisions V/6, VI/9, VIII/9, IX/4, X/3...). C'est une tâche à laquelle nous devons nous atteler d'ici à notre session de 2025 !

Pierre Jaillard (France)

Président du GENUNG

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From our 2023 session toward 2025 one

Dear Colleagues,

The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations has just adopted the three recommendations made to it by our most recent biennial session, which was held from 1 to 5 May 2023 in New York (United States), with 10 plenary meetings, 15 parallel events and numerous informal discussions. The theme of the session and of its recommendations was also the theme of this Bulletin: “Strengthening relationships, links and connections in geographical names standardization and for sustainable development and pandemic recovery”. It should be stressed once again, as the session documentation did, that “the theme is aligned with the strategic plan and programme of work, 2021–2029, under strategy 2, on relationships, links and connections. It is also aligned with the theme of the 2023 high-level political forum on sustainable development”.



Our session thus marked a new step towards better integration of UNGEGN into the United Nations system, as decided in 2017. And it must be assessed in the light of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, it played a role in “capacity-building” (target 17.9) for many of us (220 experts from 62 countries, authors of more than a hundred reports). However, we still need “strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural [...] heritage” (target 11.4), to which we have long recognized that geographical names belong (decisions V/6, VI/9, VIII/9, IX/4, X/3...).. This is a task we must work at between now and our 2025 session!

Pierre Jaillard (France)

Chair, UNGEGN

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MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dear UNGE GN Experts,

At the time of writing this article it has been six weeks post the 2023 UNGE GN session which was convened from 1 to 5 May 2023. For many delegates the session was a welcome return to having face to face discussions, an opportunity to reconnect and network with colleagues and to make new expert links and connections. The week was described as intensive, given a full programme with 10 plenary meetings which included: discussions on 60 technical papers, a national dialogue with 30 country presentations, two panel discussions, and four special presentations, in addition to 17 side events. The session was attended by over 220 delegates representing 62 Member States, academia, international organizations and the private sector.

A few noteworthy highlights from the session included:

- the launch of the redeveloped World Geographical Names Database, a global repository of toponymic data featuring names of cities in all UN languages, with population over 100,000;
- the decision on Exonyms, which seeks to reconcile past resolutions on the topic. There was one hour of discussions and consultation before the decision was made;
- the two panel discussions, one featured geographical names and the environment and the second featured the session's theme. Both panel discussions and the diverse views expressed were appreciated, noting that work in both areas would strengthen the Group of Experts capacity to develop and share expertise to support Member States geographical names standardization activities and
- four special presentations:
 - i) *Indigenous issue cultural heritage and language and identity* by a board member (Canada) of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,
 - ii) *Addressing Data Challenges: responding to emergencies and disasters* by the Director of International Business at Esri
 - iii) *The Gazetteers.net web application: a tool for harvesting digital gazetteers*, delivered jointly by the Herder institute and the Leibniz Institute Germany and
 - iv) *Geographical Names by Google: empowering users* by two Directors from Google.

The success of a session is predicated primarily on the outcomes which includes the recommendations, decisions and the report. Through consensus, the date (28 April to 2 May 2025) and provisional agenda for the 2025 UNGE GN session, the procedural report and recommendations and decisions from the 2023 session were successfully adopted. I am delighted to let you know that the completed 2023 session report ([E/2023/84](#)) is now accessible on the session webpage under the Documents tab.



Delegates who attended the 2023 session are kindly invited to complete the online session evaluation survey if you have not already done so. Please click here for the survey [UNGE GN Session EVALUATION \(google.com\)](#). The information collected from this survey will be used to improve the work of the Group of Experts.



This 65th issue of the UNGEGN Bulletin features the theme ***‘Strengthening relationships, links and connections in geographical names standardization and for sustainable development and pandemic recovery’***. This is the same theme of the 2023 UNGEGN session, and it is aligned to the theme of the 2023 [Economic and Social Council High-level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#) on sustainable development, that is scheduled to take place 10 to 19 July in New York. The theme for the HLPF will be ***‘Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels’*** and the forum will review in-depth SDG Goals 6 on clean water and sanitation, 7 on affordable and clean energy, 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, 11 on sustainable cities and communities, and 17 on partnerships for the Goals.



In support of the theme, seven member states: Canada, Cyprus, India, Indonesia, New Zealand, Panama and the Russian Federation, and the ICA/IGU shared their work on strengthening relationships, links and connections in support of national names standardization. I found that most articles featured collaborative projects and activities with other government organizations, UNGEGN Divisions, academia, international organizations and Member States and the resulting benefits. Canada’s article shared collaborative activities that strengthened cultural heritage, indigenous names and supported names dissemination. The contribution from Cyprus showed that opportunities for cooperation between government and citizens promoted transparency and democracy in decision making and improves communication among citizens. The article from India is a must read, as the theme was approached from an economic angle and mapped the connection between the SDG targets and indicators to the need for standardized geographical

names. Panama’s article also looked at the importance of geographical names to economic activities, the management of space and maritime actions. Indonesia’s contribution focused on investment in human resources through educational institutions to advance toponymic studies to support development and growth in the field and to preserve Indonesia’s diverse linguistic and cultural heritage.

I wish to note that SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals, on which the theme is based, not only addresses partnerships between governments, the private sector, and civil society, but importantly focuses on mobilizing financial resources to respond to crises and invest in the SDGs, and also science, technology and innovation (STI): triggering transformation and sustaining a science-based recovery. There remains a need to examine the connections among finance, technology and geographical names standardization in supporting the SDG’s.

Also included in this issue are contributions from countries and Working Groups, two special projects and upcoming events. Under UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work (SP&PoW) 2021-2029, an update is provided on its implementation and the decision that emanated from the discussions on the technical report presented at the 2023 UNGEGN session. The objective of the Bulletin is to keep you informed on the work of the Group of Experts, we kindly ask you to help us to achieve this by completing the following contact information form. [The UNGEGN contact information for national geographical names authorities](#) The information collected from this form will be used to update the Group of Experts contact database. We thank all our contributors to this issue, and to Andreas Hadjiraftis of Cyprus for designing the front page. Your comments on this issue and contribution to the next Bulletin, number 66, to be circulated in November 2023 under the theme ***‘Geographical names supporting the international decade of indigenous languages’*** are welcomed. You are encouraged to refer to the special presentation delivered by [Ms. Aluki Kotierk \(UNPFII\)](#) at the third meeting of the 2023 UNGEGN session.

Please circulate the bulletin among your colleagues and other toponymic enthusiasts. To receive issues of the Bulletin you may register at <https://rb.gy/pgnvog>. Remember to tweet your geographical names activities @UNSD_GEGN.

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SPECIAL FEATURE: Strengthening relationships, links and connections in geographical names standardization and for sustainable development and pandemic recovery

Cyprus - Strengthening relationships, links, and connections

Introduction

The Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names (CPCSGN) is actively involved in the standardization and protection of the geographical names of Cyprus. Authoritative geographical names awareness and dissemination are among the primary tasks of the Committee. In this role, the Committee has a strong cooperation with Government departments and services, European and international organizations, attempting to further promote and secure geographical names, which are an inseparable part of cultural heritage.

The Department of Lands and Surveys (DLS) is a strategic partner of CPCSGN, as geographical names are stored and maintained in several geospatial databases, maps and records. DLS through the on-line Platform of Electronic Services DLSPORTAL (<https://portal.dls.moi.gov.cy>), supports in practice the wide provision of Public Sector information, as well as the further use of information.

Public Sector Information Availability in Cyprus

The term Public Sector Information (PSI) includes information and data produced by the public sector, as well as the products resulting from public funding of cultural, educational and scientific activities. Such information, for example, is statistical data, information about businesses, addresses, maps or geoscientific data, as well as meteorological, legal, traffic and financial information. Geographical names are a fundamental part of public sector information, and they are widely respected and distributed in Cyprus. The further use of public sector information strengthens the right to information, creates opportunities for cooperation between governments and citizens, promotes transparency and contributes to social and economic development.

The expansion of information channels, through the adoption of new technologies (eg. government websites and web portals, such as www.geonoma.gov.cy and www.geoportal.gov.cy), strengthens transparency and democracy in decision-making and improves communication between the stakeholders of Cypriot society.

Public sector information, can form the basis for new value-added services (eg. applications) on digital GPS navigation devices, personal computers or mobile phones for road traffic, weather, parking spaces, real-time public transport timetables, etc. Therefore, the use of information is an alternative way of strengthening the competitiveness of the economy. Further the use of public bodies' data by citizens and businesses also meets the objectives of modernizing and improving the administrative capacity of the public authorities, as well as reducing the volume and scope of its activities.

Recognizing the importance and possibilities arising from the further use of information, the European Union, with Directive 2003/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, provided the legislative framework which includes the conditions governing the further use of public sector information, to ensure its fair, proportionate and impartial further use. Re-use of Public Sector Information in Cyprus is regulated by Act 205(I)/2015, Cyprus Gazette, n° 4546 of 23/12/2015, p. 1442.

The trend towards the further use of public sector information is gaining momentum in the member states of the European Union, which, within the framework of democratic values, are embracing this idea for reasons of transparency, economic exploitation, and administrative efficiency.

The National Open Data Portal of Cyprus

The National Open Data Portal of Cyprus (<https://www.data.gov.cy/>) is a tool for implementing the open data policy and the further use of public information in Cyprus. The concept of "further use of information" refers to the right of citizens to extract data produced by the various public bodies in the context of their public mission, with the aim of exploiting them for commercial or non-commercial purposes. In the context of exercising its public mission, the public sector collects, produces, processes, and disseminates a huge amount of information, concerning a wide range of topics.

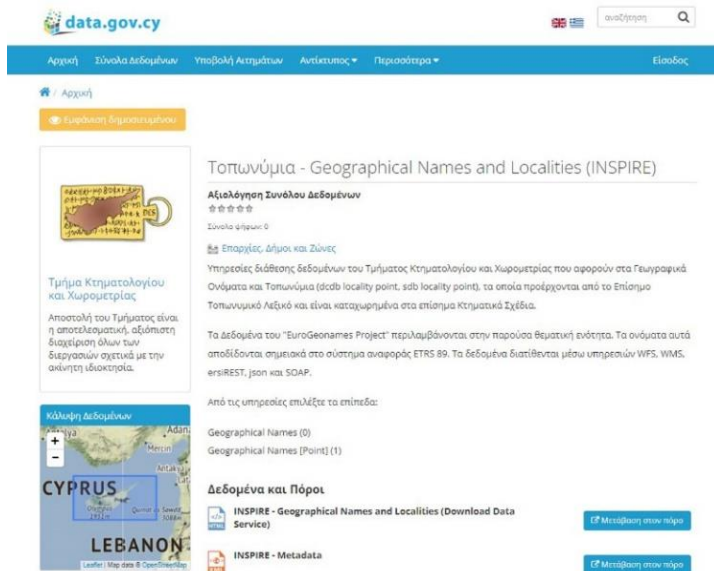


Fig. 1: National Open Data Portal of Cyprus (<https://www.data.gov.cy/>) – Geographical Names

Active Involvement of Cyprus in EuroGeographics' Project "Open Maps for Europe"

"Open Maps for Europe" is an online service that provides free to use maps from more than 40 European countries. The datasets are created using authoritative digital geospatial data and land information from official, national sources.

Users can access the data, created by members of EuroGeographics, through an online interface. The gateway enables users to discover, view, license and download the open datasets.

Four open datasets were created using authoritative geospatial data and land information from EuroGeographics members that are included in this first release:

1. **EuroRegionalMap** – multi-themed topographic open data at 1:250 000 scale – initial data provided by 31

National Mapping, Cadastral and Land Registration Authorities.

2. **EuroGlobalMap** – provides multi-themed topographic open data at 1:1 million scale covering 55 countries and territories in the European region.
3. **EuroDEM** – 1:100 000 scale digital open data elevation model provided by 26 National Mapping, Cadastral and Land Registration Authorities.
4. **Open Gazetteer** – an open gazetteer service providing authoritative multilingual geographical names – data provided by 36 National Mapping, Cadastral and Land Registration Authorities.

Release 1 of Open Maps for Europe also includes Pan-European Imagery provided by Germany's Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy. This is 10 metre resolution high-quality open data images and mosaics that serve as uniform reference products for mapping and visualisation, created from data taken from the European Union's Earth observation programme Copernicus (Sentinel-2, L1C-L2A).

The project is coordinated by EuroGeographics, in partnership with the National Geographic Institute (NGI) Belgium. The cartography and styling on the Open Maps for Europe interface is based on NGI Belgium cartography.

Cyprus participates actively in the development of all of the above EuroGeographics databases. The databases include, among others, all basic authoritative geographical names of Cyprus, which are available on-line.



Fig. 2: Open Maps for Europe includes Open Gazetteer with all basic authoritative geographical names

Conclusion

Cyprus is in line with Strategy 2: Relationships, links and connections, included in UNGEEN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029. We are trying our best in order to strengthen UNGEEN's existing collaboration, cooperate with several bodies regarding geographical names and attempt to create synergies to promote the work of CPCSGN and UNGEEN in general, and also to create new strategic connections with different stakeholders to address the needs as new challenges emerge.



Fig. 3: Strengthen collaboration and promote geographical names

Cyprus has a fully functioning and globally-aligned structure and policy framework, based on common principles for national standardization of authorized geographical names, which identify location and respect the associated culture and heritage. Geographical names are easily accessible for national and international use, which foster communication and cooperation. In addition, the systems that have been implemented are solution-oriented, relevant, user-friendly, innovative, and fully and equitably accessible. Furthermore, Cyprus monitors the availability of free and easily accessible authorized digital geographical names data, as it is seen as a key driver in encouraging the use of nationally standardized geographical names.

Andreas Hadjiraftis

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Canada - Les noms naskapis dans la toponymie québécoise

Le peuple naskapi occupe traditionnellement un territoire correspondant au nord-est du Québec et au centre-nord du Labrador terre-neuvien. Parlée par plus de 1 200 locutrices et locuteurs, la langue naskapie est à l'origine de noms de lieux particulièrement descriptifs, qui relatent des tranches de vie ayant pour toile de fond ce territoire sis entre la forêt boréale et la toundra. Nous retrouvons par exemple **Musuwaaw Siippiy** (translittéré de la forme ᓄᓄᓄᓄ ᓄᓄᓄᓄ), le nom traditionnel naskapi de la rivière George, qui signifie « rivière de la toundra », une référence au paysage des rives de ce cours d'eau nordique, ou encore **Lac Aahchikwaapitaahwaakinuut**, qui signifie « quelqu'un a vu un phoque et a essayé de le tirer, mais a raté sa cible », un nom qui rappelle une anecdote.

Dans le but de mettre en valeur ce patrimoine toponymique, la Commission de toponymie du Québec et la Société de développement des Naskapis ont travaillé ensemble pour normaliser des noms traditionnels naskapis et les inclure dans le corpus toponymique québécois.

La Commission de toponymie du Québec et la Société de développement des Naskapis

La Commission de toponymie du Québec est l'organisme responsable de la gestion des noms de lieux du Québec, institué en vertu de la *Charte de la langue française* en 1977. Elle diffuse les toponymes officiels du Québec dans la *Banque de noms de lieux du Québec*.

Commission de toponymie

Québec



La Société de développement des Naskapis est un organisme constitué à la suite de la Convention du Nord-Est québécois de 1978, qui a notamment pour mandat « d'encourager, de promouvoir et de protéger le mode de vie, les valeurs et les traditions naskapis et d'aider à leur conservation ». La Société a créé, dans le cadre des travaux qu'elle mène depuis plusieurs années, une base de données toponymiques de plus de 580 entrées, la *Naskapi Placenames Database*.

En 2021, la Commission et la Société ont convenu de travailler ensemble pour inclure une vingtaine de noms sur la carte interactive *Éléments du patrimoine toponymique autochtone du Québec*, qui met en valeur certains noms autochtones culturellement significatifs choisis par les communautés

autochtones représentées. Étant donné la grande quantité d'informations toponymiques disponibles, la collaboration entre la Commission et la Société a rapidement dépassé le cadre de la carte interactive.



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Naskapi Development Corporation
Société de développement des Naskapis

Officialisation de noms naskapis

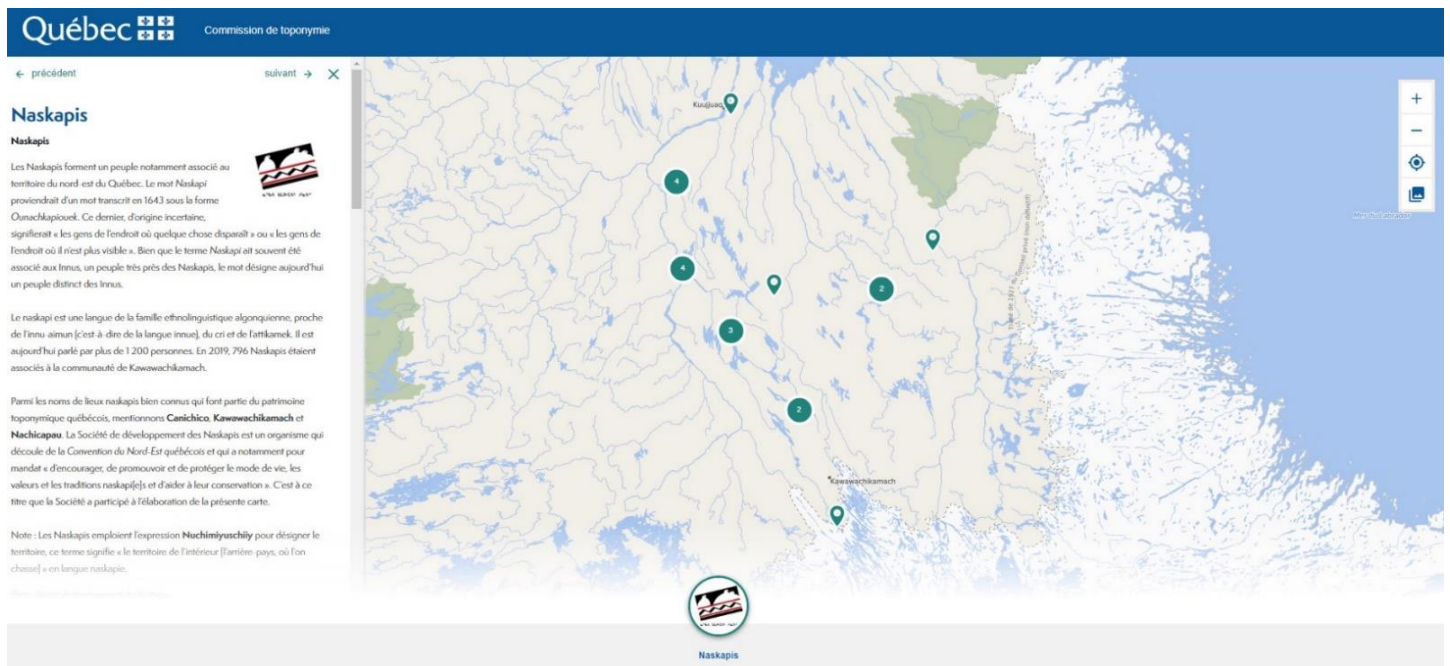
Le traitement des noms de lieux naskapis en vue de leur officialisation ou de leur mise en valeur comportait plusieurs étapes.

Le syllabaire utilisé pour transcrire la langue naskapie est associé au syllabaire autochtone canadien. La Société, en plus de fournir les noms naskapis à la Commission, les a translittérés en caractères de l'alphabet latin et a traduit les informations associées à ceux-ci, comme leur signification et leur origine.

À la Commission, les noms ont ensuite été normalisés, par exemple par l'ajout d'un générique en français, et soumis aux membres de la Commission pour officialisation.

Ainsi, entre avril 2022 et mars 2023, 121 nouveaux noms naskapis ont été officialisés et 6 noms naskapis qui étaient déjà officiels ont vu leur graphie révisée.

En 2020, soit avant le début de ce projet, un peu plus de 250 noms de lieux d'origine naskapie étaient officiels et diffusés dans la *Banque de noms de lieux du Québec*. La collaboration entre la Société et la Commission aura permis d'augmenter d'environ 50 % le nombre de toponymes naskapis officiels.



Commission de toponymie, Québec [<https://cartes.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca/autochtone>]

Autres collaborations toponymiques

Les noms naskapis désignant des entités géographiques qui avaient déjà un nom officiel non naskapi ont pu être valorisés grâce à leur diffusion en tant que « noms traditionnels autochtones ». Les noms autochtones qui ont ce statut sont intégrés dans la *Banque de noms de lieux du Québec* avec leur générique d'origine, dans le cas présent un générique en langue naskapie.

Entre avril 2022 et mars 2023, 25 noms traditionnels naskapis ont été diffusés de cette manière et sont venus s'ajouter aux quelque 165 noms traditionnels naskapis déjà diffusés. Cela représente une augmentation d'environ 15 % et cette augmentation devrait se poursuivre puisque la diffusion de noms traditionnels autochtones sera au cœur des autres collaborations à venir entre la Commission et la Société.

Un autre élément important de la collaboration entre la Société et la Commission a consisté à l'enregistrement et à la diffusion de fichiers audio permettant d'entendre la prononciation des toponymes naskapis par un locuteur de langue naskapie. Aucun de ces fichiers n'étaient précédemment diffusés.

Conclusion

Ces travaux récents ont permis à la Commission de toponymie du Québec et à la Société de développement des Naskapis d'établir une collaboration durable qui contribue à la mise en valeur de la toponymie naskapie dans la nomenclature toponymique québécoise.

Références

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Canada - Naskapi Names in Québec Toponymy

The traditional lands of the Naskapi people are located in northeastern Québec and north central Labrador. With more than 1,200 speakers, the Naskapi language is at the root of some particularly descriptive place names that recount slices of life within this territory nestled between the boreal forest and the tundra. For example, we find **Musuwaaw Siippii** (transliterated from ᑭᑭᑦᑦ ᑭᑭᑦ), the traditional Naskapi name for the George River, which means “river of the tundra,” a reference to the landscape of the banks of this northern waterway, and **Lac Aahchikwaapitaahwaakinuut**, which means “someone saw a seal and tried to shoot it but missed,” a story within a name.

In order to promote this toponymic heritage, the Commission de toponymie du Québec and the Naskapi Development Corporation worked together to standardize traditional Naskapi names and include them in the Québec toponymic corpus.

The Commission de toponymie du Québec and the Naskapi Development Corporation

The Commission de toponymie du Québec is the organization responsible for managing Québec’s place names, instituted under the *Charte de la langue française* in 1977. It publishes the official toponyms of Québec in the *Banque de noms de lieux du Québec* [Québec Bank of Place Names].

Commission de toponymie

Québec



The Naskapi Development Corporation is an organization created following the Northeastern Québec Agreement of 1978 whose mandate is to “foster, promote and assist in preserving the Naskapi way of life, values and traditions.” As part of its work over the past several years, the Corporation has created the *Naskapi Placenames Database*, a toponymic database that contains more than 580 entries.

In 2021, the Commission and the Corporation agreed to work together to include 20 names on the *Éléments du patrimoine toponymique autochtone du Québec* interactive map, which highlights some culturally significant Indigenous names chosen by the Indigenous communities represented. Given the significant amount of toponymic information available, the collaboration between the Commission and the Corporation quickly surpassed the scope of the interactive map.



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Naskapi Development Corporation
Société de développement des Naskapis

Officialization of Naskapi names

The treatment of Naskapi place names for their officialization or their promotion involved several steps.

The syllabary used to transcribe the Naskapi language is associated with the Canadian Indigenous syllabary. The Corporation provided Naskapi names to the Commission, transliterating them into characters of the Latin alphabet and translating related information, such as their meaning and origin.

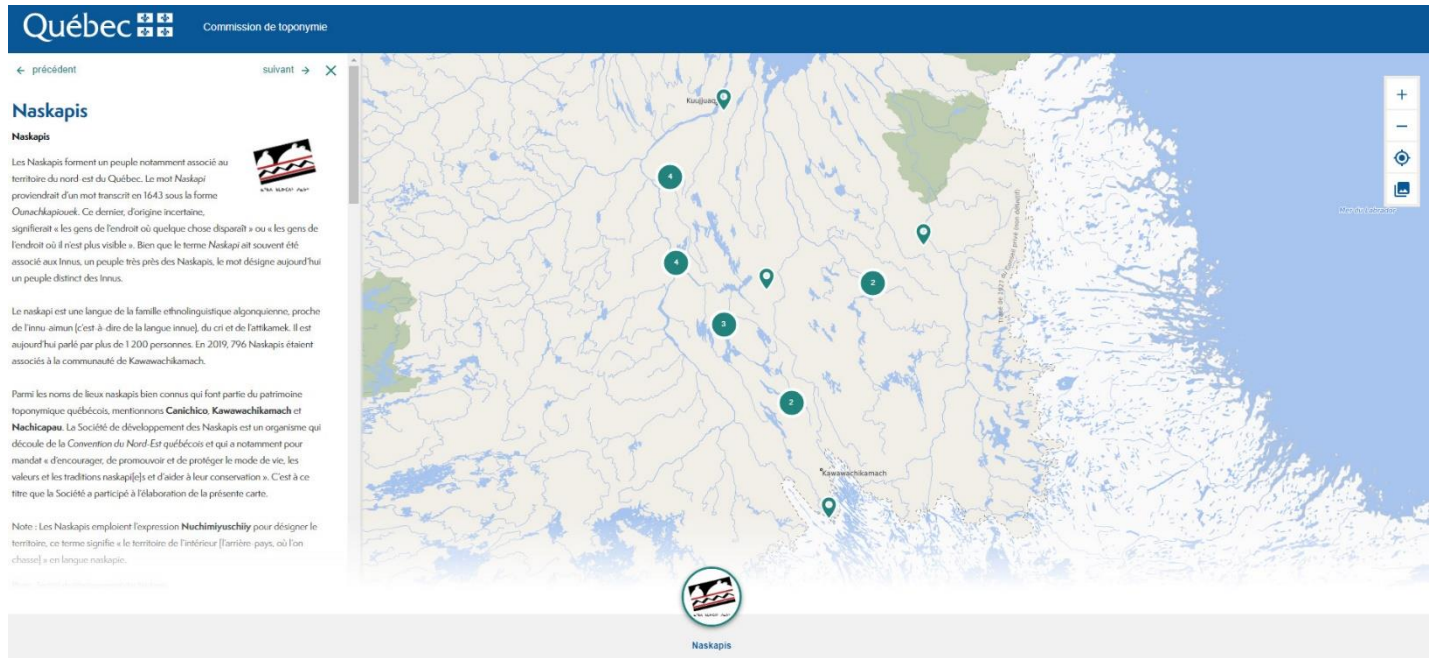
The Commission then standardized the names by adding a generic name in French and submitted them to the Commission members for officialization.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, 121 new Naskapi names were made official and 6 Naskapi names that were already official had their spellings revised.

In 2020, before the beginning of this project, a little over 250 names of places of Naskapi origin were official and disseminated in the *Banque de noms de lieux du Québec*. The collaboration between the Société and the Commission made it possible to increase the number of official Naskapi geographical names by 50%.

Other toponymical collaborations

Naskapi names designating geographic entities that already had official non-Naskapi names have been promoted thanks to their dissemination as “traditional Indigenous names.” Indigenous names with this status are integrated into the *Banque de noms de lieux du Québec* with their original generic, in this case a generic in the Naskapi language.



Commission de toponymie, Québec [<https://cartes.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca/autochtone/>]

Between April 2022 and March 2023, 25 traditional Naskapi names were disseminated in this way and were added to the 165 traditional Naskapi names already disseminated. This represents an increase of about 15%, which is expected to continue since the dissemination of traditional Indigenous names will be at the heart of other future collaborations between the Commission and the Société.

Another important element is the collaboration between the Société and the Commission which involved the recording and dissemination of audio files, making it possible to hear the pronunciation of Naskapi geographical names by a Naskapi speaker. None of these files was previously disseminated.

Conclusion

These recent projects have allowed the Commission de toponymie du Québec and the Naskapi Development Corporation to establish a lasting collaboration that showcases Naskapi toponymy in the Québec toponymic nomenclature.

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India - Strengthening Relationships, Links and Connections in Geographical Names Standardization and for Sustainable Development and Pandemic Recovery

Geographical names

Geographical names or place names (or toponyms) are the proper nouns applied to topographical features and settled (and used) places and spaces on the earth's surface. Toponyms occur in both spoken and written languages and represent an important reference system used by individuals and societies throughout the world.

Survey of India, the National Survey and Mapping Organization of the country under the Department of Science & Technology, is the oldest scientific department of the government of INDIA. It was established in 1767 (India under British Rule) and has evolved rich traditions over the years. In its assigned role as the Nation's principal mapping agency, Survey of India bears a special responsibility of achieving **standardization in geographical names** and also to ensure that the country's domain is explored and mapped suitably to provide base maps for expeditious and integrated development and to ensure that all resources contribute their full measure to the progress, prosperity and security of our country now and for generations to come.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development is an organizing principle that aims to meet human development goals while also enabling natural systems to provide necessary natural resources and ecosystem services to humans. The desired result is a society where living conditions and resources meet human needs without undermining the planetary integrity and stability of the natural system. The Brundtland Report in 1987 defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The concept of sustainable development nowadays has a focus on economic development, social development and environmental protection for future generations.

Sustainable development was first institutionalized with the Rio Process initiated at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. In 2015 the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (2015 to 2030) and explained how the goals are integrated and indivisible to achieve sustainable development at the global level. The UNGA's 17 goals address the global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice.

COVID-19 and Its linkage with SDGs

The *Sustainable Development Report 2020* has shown that countries that perform well on achieving the SDGs have responded more effectively to the pandemic. Although SDGs improve input and output market conditions, this can only happen in the long run. In the short run, legal and regulatory reforms, incentives and promotions, and better infrastructure facilities are needed to attract investment and improve ease of doing business (EDB) scores. However, achieving certain SDGs enhances living conditions and brings demand stability in the economy through sustainable development, reflected through better labour market conditions, reduced poverty, and improved health and education. See figure 1.

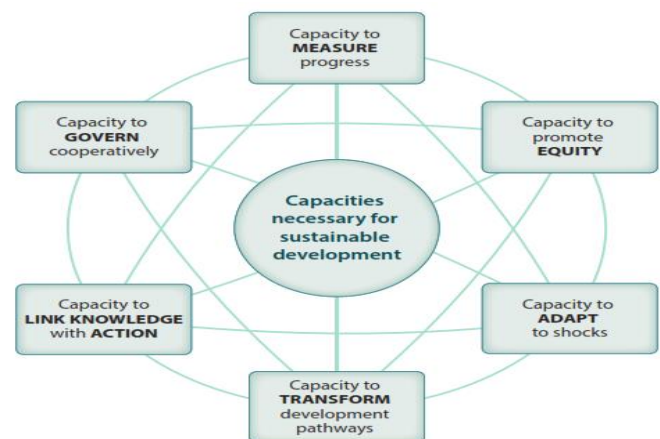


Figure 1 The concept of sustainable development and capacity building measures



At the same time, despite its holistic nature, the SDG framework presents many challenges to operationalizing directed policy action and the comprehensiveness of outcomes. The framework, a normative one-size-fits-all approach, also has compatibility issues between different targets and their monitoring and quantification. The targets are the same for all countries, irrespective of their level of development.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused economies to become increasingly insulated after borders were closed and trade disrupted. It has also exposed the poor state of health infrastructure, social security and disaster preparedness in many countries. A focus on responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), climate action (SDG13), life below water (SDG14), and life on land (SDG 15) can play a crucial role in the post-pandemic recovery process and to protect from future shocks.

Post-pandemic policy planning must move beyond the physical and human forms of capital to include natural and social capital. For instance, economic modelling must depict realistic limits to the degree to which human capital can be substituted for natural capital and account for ecosystem services' critical role and marketed natural resources. It is important to do in-house development of the different types of capital in economic models, and systematically induce sustainability in economic planning.

Table 1: SDGs and Capitals

Sustainable Development Goals	Economic Linkages
1,2,3,4,5,6	To improve the conditions of the labour market, quality of life: Human Capital
7,8,9	Focus on markets, growth and innovation: Physical Capital
12,13,14,15	Protection, conservation and optimal use of environmental resources: Natural Capital
10,11,16,17	Fair, equitable and strong societies: Social Capital

The Sustainable Development Agenda is pivotal to the post-pandemic economic recovery process — and in the overall objective of creating a fair, equitable and sustainable world. This brief underlines two contentions: First, the SDGs contain various forms of capital — human, physical, natural and social — that are beneficial for governments and businesses, and a renewed policy focus on the goals will boost the post-pandemic global economy. Second, statistical evidence confirms a strong causal relationship

between SDGs and the local business environment, and the SDGs will have long-term positive implications in the post-pandemic global economic scenario. It is crucial, however, that these results are treated as *indicative* and not more, given limitations in data availability.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had widespread global economic impacts, and countries are gearing up for recovery. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be crucial. Given that the SDGs incorporate the four pillars of capital — human, social, natural and physical — these targets will be useful in the post-pandemic economic recovery process. This brief utilizes econometric analysis to illustrate how the implementation of the SDGs is a statistically significant variable in a country's improved performance in the Ease of Doing Business Index which, in turn, can aid in building back better as the world enters the upcoming year of the pandemic.

Relationship between Standardization in Geographical naming and Sustainable Development

Place naming is one of the important ways that the Government, industry and communities can work together to support the SDGs. Most of the SDGs require standardized names of places and roads to deliver the work needed to achieve the goals, as well as for effective reporting. National naming authorities are encouraged to indicate how individual naming proposals align with SDGs to support their naming proposals. For example:-

SDG 1: No poverty

Target / Indicator	Place name connection
Target 1.4 Equal rights to ownership, basic services, technology and economic resources	Location and extent defined through place names
Indicator 1.1.1 Proportion of poverty by geographic location	
Indicator 1.4.1 Access to basic services	
Indicator 1.4.2 Legally recognized land ownership	



SDG 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Target / Indicator	Place name connection
Target 9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure Indicator 9.1.1 Population living within 2km of an all-season road	Infrastructure (including roads) to be named to support economic development and allow innovation

SDG 10: Reduced inequalities

Target / Indicator	Place name connection
Target 10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard	Support and encourage naming of places after minority groups and ensure equality in the naming of places

Conclusion

Wherever we go in the world and whatever we do – whether we’re walking around town, using a ride-sharing app, surfing the Internet, or shopping for groceries – we encounter names of places. These geographical names provide us not only with a sense of place but also with a means of getting around, helping us find information and organize the world we live in.

Datasets of geographic names have a direct relationship with all other data themes. Authoritative naming of locations and geographic names are vital to supporting humanitarian aid; protecting life and property; responding to climate change and food security; designing urban space and infrastructure; promoting tourism; advancing indigenous rights and reconciliation; and many more.

The importance of standardized geographical names became very evident during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Geographical names are *sine qua non* for location and identification. They underpin data collection, monitoring and analysis and therefore are undoubtedly necessary for managing and monitoring the post pandemic recovery & Sustainable Development Goals with “Strengthening Relationships, Links And Connections In Geographical Names Standardization”.

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Indonesia - Building Bonds with Academia: BIG Collaborative Initiatives in Geographical Names Activities

Introduction

Indonesia, a country comprising of more than 17.000 islands¹, stands as one of the largest archipelagic nations in the world. It boasts a rich history and diverse culture, with over 300 distinct ethnic groups possessing unique customs and traditions. Additionally, there are over 700 recognized local languages in Indonesia. With its vast territory and the diversity of its history, culture, ethnicity, languages, and customs, it is evident that Indonesia possesses a plethora of geographical features. Each of these geographical features has its unique name and designation in every region, emphasizing the country's rich linguistic and cultural tapestry.

This challenges the Indonesian government to collect geographical names across the entire nation while preserving the historical, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and customary diversity tied to each geographical name. In response to this challenge, the National Names Authority (NNA) in Indonesia, known as Badan Informasi Geospasial (BIG), collaborates with educational institutions to introduce students to the importance of geographical names. This collaboration aims to establish a strategic partnership in the standardization of geographical names.

Collaboration Activities

In 2022, BIG collaborated with educational institutions by organizing a workshop in partnership with *Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB)*, *Institut Teknologi Nasional (Itenas) Bandung*, and a public lecture in partnership with *Universitas Pakuan (UNPAK)*. These activities aim to educate, motivate, and inspire students as the future generation with awareness of the importance of geographical names. The detailed activities are described as follows:

1. *Institut Teknologi Bandung and Institut Teknologi Nasional*

BIG, ITB, and Itenas collaborated to hold a workshop from 10th to 12th, December 2022. Thirty students from both universities participated in the workshop. BIG supported this workshop as a guest lecturer, by sharing knowledge and expertise on geographical name standardization in Indonesia. The workshop comprised various activities, which included seminars, group work, and hands-on exercises, See Figures 1a and 1b.

2. *Universitas Pakuan (UNPAK)*

BIG and UNPAK collaborated to hold a public lecture. Documentation of this collaboration is shown in Figure 2. The public lecture was held on 1st December 2022, and was attended by final-year students., BIG's representative delivered a guest lecture on 'toponymy's role in sustainable development'.

The Outcomes

In the context of strengthening relationships, links, and connections, BIG organizes activities by involving academia, thus establishing a solid partnership between BIG and academics in the geographical names activities. BIG's initiatives have yielded positive results, such as increasing awareness among academics about the importance of geographical names and preserving valuable local wisdom related to toponymy.



The workshop organized by BIG in collaboration with ITB and Itenas has provided students with knowledge about toponymy and the use of the Indonesian geographical names information system (*Sistem Informasi Nama Rupabumi* -

¹ Gazetteer of The Republic of Indonesia 2022



SINAR)² as a tool for collecting geographical names. These workshops have also enabled students to explore the study of toponymy and apply the knowledge gained in their academic pursuits, including completing their theses or final projects. BIG is committed to supporting students and campuses that offer toponymy-related courses, and is ready to assist students interested in furthering their studies. One upcoming event is the organizing and staging of a toponym data collection competition, to empower students and introduce the general public to the value and benefits of toponymy.

The public lecture held at UNPAK in collaboration with BIG provided an understanding of the use of geographical names for sustainable development, especially in daily life activities such as navigation, tourism, and the economy. This public lecture raised awareness for UNPAK institutions of the importance of toponymy. As a matter of fact, UNPAK has been including toponymy in its curriculum. Furthermore, UNPAK plans to hold training regarding the use of geographical names for students.

The involvement of academic communities, including lecturers and students, as well as collaboration with researchers and experts in toponymy, is expected to increase the number of scientific studies related to toponymy in Indonesia. This involvement includes studies in the form of theses or final projects, articles, social media content, and scientific publications in national and international journals. The increased focus on toponymy will help raise awareness about the importance of toponymy in various fields, including geography, history, culture, and tourism.

Future Activities

Following the successful joint efforts with ITB, Iteas, and UNPAK in 2022, BIG is gearing up to hold yet another workshop in 2023 involving academic communities. In 2023, BIG plans to collaborate with the International Geography Olympiad (iGeo) committee in Indonesia to organize a workshop targeting about 1400 geography teachers from across Indonesia as its participants. The activity is intended to provide participants with an understanding of geographical name standardization in Indonesia, enabling them to convey the knowledge to their students in their respective schools. By achieving this, a generation who grasp the importance of geospatial information, specifically geographical names, which serve as the identity of a geographical feature that incorporate various aspects such as history, culture, ethnicity, language, and customs. This initiative signifies a lasting investment in human resources to promote growth and advancements in the geospatial field while preserving local history,

culture, ethnicity, language, and customs. Furthermore, nurturing a geospatially inclined generation from an early stage is expected to stimulate innovative strategic partnerships that consistently enhance and excel in geographical information, precisely geographical names field.

Final Thoughts

The collaboration with academic communities, including researchers, experts, lecturers, and students, has been instrumental in advancing toponymic studies in Indonesia. It has preserved valuable local wisdom and fostered continuous progress and excellence in geographical naming activities. This partnership represents a long-term investment in human resources, driving the development and growth of the geospatial field while preserving Indonesia's diverse linguistic and cultural heritage. Through such collaborations, Indonesia is poised to make significant strides in toponymy, ensuring accurate documentation of geographical names and fostering a deeper appreciation for their multifaceted significance.

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² Indonesian geographical names information system (SINAR): improving the interoperability and usability of geographical names



Strengthening relationships, links and connections in New Zealand’s geographical naming

Introduction

All liaison, networking or collaboration with clients, customers, contractors, stakeholders, peers, public, iwi³/hapū⁴/whānau⁵/marae⁶, government agencies, local authorities, private organisations, etc. is hugely important for New Zealand’s national naming authority, the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa. Why? Because we need to:

- keep pace with what people want and need,
- tap into the best thinking and experience,
- learn about and adjust accordingly to changing societal expectations,
- make appropriate technology upgrades, and
- educate about the decisions we make and the requirement to use official geographic names.

All interactions allow us to gather on-the-ground information, views and reactions, and strengthens the legitimacy of our decisions. Engaging effectively contributes to the development of effective policies, assists us in providing robust advice, and helps to deliver improved outcomes.

In particular, government agencies have clear guidance on engagement expectations when consulting or interacting with Māori, to produce better quality outcomes and realise Māori Crown partnerships and aspirations.

Treaty of Waitangi principles of participation, protection and partnership

In New Zealand the Treaty of Waitangi settlement process enables Māori to seek redress for Crown breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi (signed 1840). Claimants and the Crown negotiate a legal document called a Deed of Settlement which outlines the settlement package. For historical Treaty claims sought by iwi, the cultural redress aspect of the settlement package often includes the restoration of original Māori geographic names. These names become official when the settlement passes into law and must be used on all official documents including maps. The names are also protected from future change unless the Post-Settlement Governance Entity (the representative group which manages the settlement on behalf of the iwi) consents. The Treaty settlement process is managed by the Crown agency

Te Arawhiti (Office for Māori-Crown Relations) in collaboration with a range of government agencies including our national naming authority. We consider all Treaty geographic name proposals and provide formal advice to Te Arawhiti, with the Minister of Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations making the final decisions. We work closely with Te Arawhiti to ensure the successful implementation of geographic names redress through the Treaty settlement process, from initial consideration of proposals to formal implementation. These factors have contributed to a strong working relationship with Te Arawhiti: an underlying relationship agreement, regular face-to-face meetings, the prompt provision of clear advice and guidance, and a shared goal of ensuring the best possible outcome for Treaty claimants seeking geographic names’ redress.



Mori Mori Deed of Settlement signing ceremony, 14 February 2020, Chatham Island | Rēkohu | Wharekauri., which included 58 geographic names and 4 reserve names. Ministers of the Crown and the Surveyor-General were among the invited officials.

Mana whenua⁷

Collecting and encouraging the use of original Māori geographic names and applying their correct orthography (such as spelling, macrons, hyphens or composite words) are our legal functions under the legislation that established our national naming authority. We are strengthening our engagement with mana whenua to achieve these functions and obligations. We are mindful of Maihi Karauna, the Crown’s Strategy for Māori

³ tribe
⁴ sub tribe
⁵ family

⁶ Formal meeting place for iwi, hapū and whānau
⁷ Indigenous people with jurisdictional rights and status over their tribal area



Language Revitalisation 2018–2023. We embrace Te Arawhiti’s engagement framework and guidelines. We recognise the Treaty of Waitangi principles of partnership, participation and protection, and give them practical effect through processes such as our:

- [Kaupapa⁸ for Māori Place Names](#)
- [Consulting with Māori](#)
- Relationship Protocol with Te Arawhiti
- Guidelines for collecting original Māori geographic names
- Mahi Tahi (relationship) agreement with Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (Māori Language Commission)
- Relationship Protocol with Te Puni Kōkiri (Ministry of Māori Development)
- [Guidelines for Treaty name proposals](#)
- Minister for Land Information’s River Accords meeting post settlement commitments for Waikato-Tainui, Te Arawa River Iwi Trust, Raukawa Settlement Trust and Maniapoto Māori Trust Board
- [Generic terms policy](#)
- Contemporary Māori geographic names policy
- [Māori Language Plan](#).

Our relationships with the government

Minister for Land Information

- Makes final decisions on controversial place name proposals.
- Media spokesperson on controversial place name decisions.
- Receives our Annual Report for tabling in Parliament.
- Receives advice on matters to do with geographic names.
- For alterations to councils’ district and region names, recommends that the Governor-General amends the name of the relevant council to give effect to the alteration.
- Appoints eight of the ten national naming authority’s members. The other two are ex-officio from the host department Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand.
- In making appointments, will take account of any nominations from the four River Accords.

Minister in Charge of Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations

Decides on official geographic names including reserve names negotiated as part of the cultural redress of Treaty settlement negotiations between the Crown and claimants. Final decisions are given effect by individual Treaty settlement legislation.

⁸ ‘Kaupapa’ means policy in this instance

Minister of Conservation

Decides on official reserve names, reviewed by us but not concurred with, as they do not conform with the criteria in a standard for reserve names.

Central government

We have active working relationships with many government agencies:

- Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand for maps, charts, website, data service and its other products – we have a strategic goal to work closely with Toitū Te Whenua LINZ to achieve our goals
- Te Arawhiti – Office for Māori Crown Relations for Treaty of Waitangi geographic names
- Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori – Māori Language Commission for orthographic advice on Māori geographic names
- Te Puni Kōkiri – Ministry of Māori Development to engage with mana whenua
- Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai for Crown reserve names
- NIWA Taihoro Nukurangi (National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research) for undersea feature names
- GNS Science Te Pū Ao (Geological and Nuclear Science) for undersea feature names
- Antarctica New Zealand for Antarctic geographic names
- Manatū Taonga Ministry of Culture and Heritage for national commemorations
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Manatū Aorere) for international liaison, including Antarctica and in the Southern Ocean
- Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga for the New Zealand history curriculum
- Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency for bilingual road signs.

Local government

Our Local Government New Zealand member provides a valuable link to the work of regional and district councils in respect of geographic names. Ongoing engagement with councils remains a critical part of the geographic naming process and we proactively seek opportunities to communicate, especially about restoring original Māori geographic names for cities and towns.

Public consultation

It is essential to engage/consult with local communities for robust, enduring, consistent, accurate and standardised geographic naming. Taking into account the public’s views is critical to informed decision making. We follow a rigorous and extensive process to reach as many people as possible. This



includes government notification, newspaper advertisements, websites, consultation pages with online submission forms, extensive email distribution lists, Ministers of Parliament, councils, mana whenua, media releases, and social media posts (including boosts). The final decisions are based on good practice geographic naming with good reasons; they are not based on majority numbers for or against proposals.

Making information readily available

An effective way to increase use of standardised official geographic names is to ensure they are encountered by people on a daily basis. Making data freely available and easy to re-use is a first key step but not enough if nobody knows about it. Strengthening relationships with third parties using geographic names in their products, whether commercially or open source, is crucial to ensure authoritative naming information is used. These relationships need not be formal agreements, as results can be achieved simply through being readily available and responsive to their needs.

When Google Maps is used for navigation or Wikipedia is searched for information, they are likely to see the official geographic name determined by us. We have provided advice on official naming decisions to Google for several years and now have a direct contact point in Sydney, Australia. Our Secretariat staff have met online to discuss integrating New Zealand's data straight from the source, to resolve issues raised through public enquiries, and to ensure the integrity of official geographic names since users can also submit feedback. Likewise, while anyone can edit Wikipedia™, our persistent/unique identifiers for geographic names are integrated in Wikidata (which sits behind it) and it has a policy to use official geographic names in article titles. Our Secretariat staff are responsive to enquiries from 'Wikimedians' and other power-users who support the backbone of Wikimedia projects, which has in part led to these benefits.

International liaison – continental shelves case study

Our oceans are a critically important part of the earth's system. They regulate the weather and climate, are essential for producing freshwater, and soak up carbon. They also provide food and other resources, as well as being trade and migration routes. The ocean floor tells us about plate tectonics, which is important to New Zealand as we sit on the ring of fire. The global community is relying on ocean science and monitoring now more than ever to understand the climate, ecosystems, sustainable development and natural disasters.

An important and practical part of seafloor data is the names of features, and knowing exactly where they are. They're a consistent reference for science and a valuable contribution to

good ocean governance. Undersea feature names not only help to identify locations, assist with maritime safety, and provide context for exploration, they are important reminders of the history, culture and identity of our nations and communities.

New Zealand works with the Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN), an international group of experts on undersea feature naming, to ensure that our names are accepted for use internationally. Our work on clearly identifying and officially naming undersea features on the continental shelves of New Zealand and the Ross Dependency of Antarctica provides an authoritative and consistent frame of reference for scientific and economic research, exploration, and environmental protection and management. Naming features on the ocean floor is also a way of telling the story of New Zealand's history and culture. New Zealand's contribution to SCUFN has always been well received and to date SCUFN has accepted approximately 390 of New Zealand's official undersea feature names. A successful relationship has been developed with the Republic of Korea including proactive mutual liaison for undersea names in the Southern Ocean.

Summary

We have a well-known proverb that is most apt in terms of strengthening relationships, links and connections: 'He aha te mea o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata', 'What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people'.

As a statutory body of government, the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa upholds that 'Our purpose is to secure and celebrate New Zealand's unique identity through place names'. And our vision statement also refers 'We enable meaningful connections between people, places and language through four goals: naming places, outreach, using official names and improving capability and processes'.

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Panama - Los Topónimos O Nombres Geográficos: Fortaleciendo Relaciones, Vínculos Y Conexiones

Los topónimos o nombres son formas de identificación para facilitar las relaciones, vinculaciones y conectividades de sitios, poblados, accidentes geográficos o sucesos que se ubican en un espacio geográfico. Desde tiempos antiguos los topónimos eran formas de direccionamiento expresados en lenguaje gestual o en dibujos muchas veces grabados en rocas o ámbares de algún tipo. El ser humano requiere localizarse de diversas formas y una de ellas es el topónimo o nombres geográficos que adquieren diversas maneras de expresarse. Los mapas son una forma de plasmar el nombre de un sitio o accidente geográfico, constituyéndose en un mecanismo práctico de localización. Un nombre geográfico, además de permitir una localización más precisa, sirve de expresión de la identidad de un lugar, pueblo o país por ello es de especial importancia que surja desde la base de la sociedad que representa con respeto de las expresiones locales o formas autóctonas de expresión.

En la República de Panamá, la cartografía nacional es el medio en que se expresa la oficialización de los nombres geográficos constituyendo una forma idónea de localización. Contamos con una cartografía actualizada al año 2016, con antecedentes conocidos desde el período colonial español, luego con variadas expresiones durante la república que se actualizan con acciones de validación y agregación de nuevos topónimos a través del Instituto Geográfico Nacional “Tommy Guardia”. El 2 de junio de 1970 se creó la Autoridad de Nombres Geográficos de Panamá (ANGP) a través del decreto 212 y se reactivó desde diciembre del año 2022 para la oficialización de topónimos. Los nombres geográficos, en la República de Panamá, se asignan luego de un procedimiento que inicia desde la base de la sociedad, las comunidades y autoridades municipales.

El Instituto Geográfico Nacional “Tommy Guardia” realiza giras periódicas de validación, identificación de inconsistencias y nuevos nombres geográficos para la actualización de su cartografía nacional. En las giras o misiones técnicas se validan los nombres con encuestas que se realizan en las comunidades que luego se hacen llegar a los municipios, también las comunidades a través de su Honorable Representante (figura política base de la gobernabilidad), pueden elevar solicitud pertinente al Consejo Municipal respectivo respaldado con el aval de una inspección técnica del IGNTG, para que el Consejo Municipal emita resolución de solicitud dirigida a la ANGP quien las evaluará y procederá a la confección de una resolución que luego de publicada en la Gaceta Oficial, el nombre geográfico o topónimo quedará así debidamente oficializado.

La República de Panamá cuenta desde el año 2016, con una cartografía a escala 1:25000 de todo el país y a escala 1:5000 para los principales centros poblados que permite una localización más precisa y detallada con sus nombres o topónimos que identifica y localiza las ciudades,

pueblos, caseríos, hidrografía, costas y mares, así como diferentes accidentes geográficos. Los topónimos o nombres geográficos son validados periódicamente. Actualmente estamos desarrollando el proyecto piloto Distrito de Tonosí para validar, identificar inconsistencias y actualización, así como nuevos nombres para los accidentes geográficos.



Ilust. 2 Rep. de Panamá, Provincia de Los Santos, corregimiento de Cambutal - Situada al sureste de la Península de Azuero



Ilust. 2 Playa Blanca, Rep. de Panamá, Provincia de Los Santos, corregimiento de Cambutal - Situada al sureste de la Península de Azuero



En Tonosí cabecera, área urbana que es sede de las autoridades municipales del Distrito de Tonosí, se trabaja en un nomenclátor para el sistema vial y centros públicos de importancia que faciliten la localización y permitan establecer un sistema que pueda ser considerado lenguaje referente para su aplicación a escala nacional y conectividad universal. En el caso Tonosí cabecera 1:5000 el modelo adoptado para el ordenamiento territorial de la toponimia fue el de aplicar el sistema cartesiano que divide en cuadrantes geográficos a la ciudad estableciendo un punto cero desde donde se parte para aplicar la nominación geográfica por cada cuadrante así; cuadrante I Nor Este, Cuadrante II Nor Oeste, Cuadrante III Sur Oeste y Cuadrante IV Sur Este. Así de esta manera se inicia el nomenclátor con el prefijo de su ubicación en el cuadrante respectivo seguido del sufijo o parte nominal cuando se aplique por ejemplo Ave. I Sur Este Central, otra como Calle 1 noreste Estudiante.

Una vez completado el Piloto Nomenclátor Distrito Tonosí, se habrá logrado la validación, resolución de inconsistencias y nuevos nombres geográficos estableciendo tiempos y dinámica de campo necesarias, personal equipo y procesos socio políticos requeridos para la actualización periódica de los topónimos a escala nacional que permitan, preliminarmente, completar el proceso para una actualización que debe estar lista cada 5 años para que puedan utilizarse y equiparse institucionalmente para eventos de censos nacionales y elecciones quinquenales.

En Panamá, donde la localización es elemento esencial para la dinámica del funcionamiento del Estado, los proyectos y el quehacer ciudadano así como una economía que tiene elementos de carácter nacional e internacional en función del papel del Canal de Panamá para el Comercio Internacional, el papel de sitio geográfico central como punto de acopio y redireccionamiento de comunicaciones internacionales, los topónimos, adecuadamente georreferenciados, juegan un papel de primera y vital importancia. Una cartografía nacional con topónimos debidamente validados, así como todos sus puntos geográficos más destacados identificados y georreferenciados es una herramienta de primer orden para toda la actividad humana y el Estado panameño tiene como meta contar, al más breve plazo, con la nueva cartografía totalmente validada, resueltas las inconsistencias, así como puntos más importantes identificados y georreferenciados.

En resumen los topónimos o nombres geográficos son elementos de la cartografía nacional imprescindibles para localización de pueblos, accidentes geográficos, vialidad, sitios, edificaciones, hidrografía, etc.,

así como para toda la actividad económica, de movilización humana y para el manejo de todos los elementos del espacio de la nación panameña, contribuye además con la información necesaria para la navegación marítima local e internacional en virtud de paso del componente naviero internacional que pasa por el Canal de Panamá y aguas marinas jurisdiccionales de Panamá. De esta manera contribuimos al esfuerzo de las Naciones Unidas para destacar y aplicar las normativas de los topónimos como elemento fundamental en fortalecer las relaciones, vínculos y conexiones en toda la geografía universal.



Ilust. 3 Vista desde Playa Cambutal, Rep. de Panamá, Provincia de Los Santos, corregimiento de Cambutal - Situada al sureste de la Península de Azuero.

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Panama – Toponyms Or Geographical Names: Strengthening Relationships, Links And Connections

Toponyms or geographical names are forms of identification to facilitate the relationships, links and connectivities of sites, towns, geographical features or events that are located in a geographical space. Since ancient times, place names were forms of direction expressed in gestural language or in drawings often engraved on rocks or ambers of some kind. The human being needs to be located in different ways and one of them is the toponym or geographical names that acquire different ways of expressing themselves. Maps are a way of capturing the name of a site or geographical feature, constituting a practical mechanism of localization. A geographical name, in addition to allowing a more precise location, serves as an expression of the identity of a place, town or country, so it is especially important that it arises from the base of the society it represents with respect for local expressions or indigenous forms of expression.

In the Republic of Panama, national cartography is the means in which the officialization of geographical names is expressed, constituting an ideal form of localization. We have a cartography updated to 2016, with known antecedents from the Spanish colonial period, then with varied expressions during the republic that are updated with validation actions and aggregation of new place names through the National Geographic Institute "Tommy Guardia". On June 2, 1970, the Geographical Names Authority of Panama (ANGP) was created through Decree 212 and was reactivated from December 2022 for the officialization of Toponyms. Geographical names, in the Republic of Panama, are assigned after a procedure that starts from the base of society, communities and municipal authorities.

The National Geographic Institute "Tommy Guardia" conducts periodic tours of validation, identification of inconsistencies and new geographical names for the updating of its national cartography. In the tours or technical missions the names are validated with surveys that are carried out in the communities that are then sent to the municipalities, also the communities through their Honorable Representative (basic political figure of governance), can raise pertinent request to the respective Municipal Council supported with the endorsement of a technical inspection of the IGNTG, so that the Municipal Council issues a resolution of application addressed to the ANGP who will evaluate them and proceed to the preparation of a resolution that after being published in the Official Gazette, the geographical name or toponym will thus be duly officialized.

The Republic of Panama has since 2016, with a cartography at scale 1:25000 of the entire country and at scale 1:5000 for the main population centers that allows a more precise and detailed location

with their names or toponyms that identifies and locates the cities, towns, hamlets, hydrography, coasts and seas, as well as different geographical accidents. Place names or geographical names are validated periodically. We are currently developing the Tonosí District pilot project to validate, identify inconsistencies and update, as well as new names for geographical features.



Ilust. 5 Rep. de Panamá, Provincia de Los Santos, corregimiento de Cambutal - Situada al sureste de la Península de Azuero



Ilust. 5 Playa Blanca, Rep. de Panamá, Provincia de Los Santos, corregimiento de Cambutal - Situada al sureste de la Península de Azuero



In Tonosí cabecera, urban area that is the seat of the municipal authorities of the District of Tonosí, work is being done on a gazetteer for the road system and important public centers that facilitate the location and allow to establish a system that can be considered reference language for its application on a national scale and universal connectivity. In the case Tonosí header 1:5000 the model adopted for the territorial ordering of toponymy was to apply the Cartesian system that divides the city into geographical quadrants establishing a zero point from where it starts to apply the geographical nomination for each quadrant as well; Quadrant I Northeast, Quadrant II Northwest, Quadrant III South West, and Quadrant IV Southeast. Thus, in this way, the gazetteer begins with the prefix of its location in the respective quadrant followed by the suffix or nominal part when applied for example Ave. I South East Central, another as Calle 1 northeast Student. Once the Tonosí District Nomenclature Pilot is completed, the validation, resolution of inconsistencies and new geographical names will have been achieved, establishing the necessary times and field dynamics, personnel, equipment and socio-political processes required for the periodic updating of the place names on a national scale that allow, preliminarily, to complete the process for an update that must be ready every 5 years so that they can be used and institutionally equipped to national census events and quinquennial elections.

In Panama, where location is an essential element for the dynamics of the functioning of the State, projects and citizen work as well as an economy that has elements of national and international character depending on the role of the Panama Canal for International Trade, the role of central geographical site as a collection point and redirection of international communications, Place names, properly georeferenced, play a role of first and vital importance.

A national cartography with duly validated toponyms, as well as all its most outstanding geographical points identified and georeferenced is a tool of the first order for all human activity and the Panamanian State aims to have, in the shortest term, with the new cartography fully validated, resolved the inconsistencies, as well as more important points identified and georeferenced.

In summary, place names or geographical names are elements of the national cartography essential for locating towns, geographical accidents, roads, sites, buildings, hydrography, etc., as well as for all

economic activity, human mobilization and for the management of all the elements of the space of the Panamanian nation, also contributes with the necessary information for local and international maritime navigation by virtue of the passage of the shipping component international that passes through the Panama Canal and jurisdictional marine waters of Panama. In this way we contribute to the effort of the United Nations to highlight and apply the regulations of place names as a fundamental element in strengthening relationships, links and connections throughout the universal geography.



Ilust. 6 Vista desde Playa Cambutal, Rep. de Panamá, Provincia de Los Santos, corregimiento de Cambutal - Situada al sureste de la Península de Azuero.

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Russian Federation - Strengthening the relationships, connections and interaction in the field of geographical objects naming

The progress in the national standardization of geographical names is promoted by the continuous exchange of practices among specialists from different countries within the framework of international cooperation.

The Russian Federation attaches great importance to international cooperation in the area of geographical names. Rosreestr represents the interests of the Russian Federation at various international platforms.

A representative of Rosreestr is chairing the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (hereinafter - the Division).

Within its competences, Rosreestr represents the Russian Federation in the Interstate Council on Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Earth Remote Sensing of the CIS Member States (hereinafter - the Interstate Council), where it chairs the Working Group on Geographical Names of the Interstate Council.

On June 23-24, 2022, the meetings of the UNGE GN Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia and the Working Group on Geographical Names of the Interstate Council were held in Moscow (Russian Federation) at the National Research University "Higher School of Economics".



June 2022 (Photo credit: Ekaterina Kozlova (Rosreestr))

The meetings were attended by experts from Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The participants discussed current trends in the sphere of names of geographical objects, took note and debated the reports and presentations: "Modern trends in the names of geographical objects in the Russian Federation", "Belarusian toponymy: main directions of development", "On activities in the field of names of geographical

objects in the Republic of Armenia", "On the state of work in the field of names of geographical objects in the Republic of Uzbekistan", "State supervision of the names of geographical objects in Russia".

Considering that the year of 2022 was declared in Russia the year of cultural heritage of the nationalities of the Russian Federation, the representative of Rosreestr made a presentation "Geographical names - the most valuable monuments of spiritual culture of the peoples of the Russian Federation".

Given the increased interest in the field of State Geographic Information Systems as the basis for modern digital services, the countries of the Division presented reports: "About the ongoing work on the maintenance of the State Catalogue of Geographical Names in the Republic of Kazakhstan", "About the work on the creation of a unified Catalogue of Geographical Names of the Republic of Tajikistan".

Joint meetings within the Division and the Working Group of the Interstate Council allow sharing the best practices of the participating countries and developing new solutions and approaches in the field of geographical names.

All countries of the Division have enacted national regulatory legal acts that provide the legal frameworks for the creation, normalization, use and preservation of national geographical names, and have designated official national bodies empowered to make decisions on geographical names.

Toponymic commissions on geographical names operate to coordinate the efforts of specialists and interested organizations and agencies in that field.

The creation and maintenance of national electronic catalogues, registers and databases of geographical names are well under way. Many of them already meet the demands of state bodies, organizations, companies and citizens for official information on geographical names.

The experience of the Russian Federation in using of a national system of transliteration of the Cyrillic alphabet with letters of the Latin alphabet is applied



by the countries of the Division (Belarus, Kazakhstan).

For more than 20 years representatives of the countries of the Division (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) have been actively cooperating with the Working Group on Geographical Names of the Interstate Council. The Working Group's task is to exchange, on a regular basis, information regarding official modifications of geographical names. A practical outcome of that cooperation has been the joint preparation and annual updating of an electronic information bulletin "Changes in the geographical names of the CIS States". The Bulletin contains information about official changes in geographical names of CIS Member States since 1990. The Bulletin consists of Russian forms of geographical names along with their spelling in the national language of a corresponding country. The Bulletin is published on the official website of Rosreestr (www.rosreestr.gov.ru).

In 2022, the Interstate Council supported the implementation of a joint project to create a spatial data portal for the CIS Member States. The geoportal will provide the exchange of sets of basic and thematic spatial data for open use.

This project will promote multilateral international cooperation of an applied nature, the purpose of which is to exchange experience and jointly develop competencies, including in the field of geographical names.

Within the framework of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) Rosreestr works on inclusion into the Composite Gazetteer of geographical names of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research of the names of geographical objects discovered or highlighted by Russian researchers within open sea and Antarctic, registered in the State Catalogue of Geographical Names.

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Report on the Panel discussion “Strengthening relationships, links and connections in geographical names standardization and for sustainable development and pandemic recovery”

2 May 2023, 5:15-6:10 p.m.
2023/Third session, UNGEGN, New York

This article reports on the panel discussion organized during the 2023 session with the same theme as the special feature of this Bulletin.

Introduction (Sungjae Choo, Vice-Chair, UNGEGN, Moderator)

The title of this panel discussion shared the main theme of the 2023 UNGEGN Session, and was aligned to the UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029, Strategy 2: Relationships, links and connections. It was also relevant to the theme of the 2023 High-level Political Forum on sustainable development, and on a higher level, to Sustainable Development Goal number 17, “Partnerships for the Goals.”

Over time, UNGEGN has expanded its outreach beyond its core expert group. Sessions have provided a forum where experts from the interrelated fields of geography, cartography, geospatial information, linguistics and history across the world converge to learn from one another, to share good practices and norms, as well as new developments in geographical names administration and standardization. Broader involvement with other stakeholders, including bodies of the United Nations, scientific, technical and academic groups, and private map-makers or map-users, ensures a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to geographical names administration and standardization.

As Chair of the panel, I encouraged the panel to consider the interests of UNGEGN, from the perspectives of relationships, links and connections. The focus was on establishing connections within UNGEGN’s Divisions to facilitate communication and knowledge exchange among countries

within their respective geographical and linguistic regions. We also discussed the significance of fostering purposeful connections with specific groups, such as the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), as well as strengthening ties between Member States or Divisions and UNGEGN as a whole. These connections ensure that all stakeholders have a voice and their perspectives should be considered in UNGEGN’s decision-making process. I provided an example highlighting the importance of connecting with prominent naming bodies, citing UNGEGN’s involvement in Antarctic place naming principles. Looking ahead, UNGEGN is actively seeking to expand its connections through initiatives such as UN Maps.

The aim of this panel discussion was to find ways of strengthening relationships, links and connections, centered on sharing expertise on geographical names standardization, and geared to the proper dissemination and use of those standardized names.

Given this background, I raised the following questions:

1. What is the status of the relationships, links and connections of your institute, group or organization to geographical names standardization and to UNGEGN?
2. What does "strengthening" mean to you? What are the reasons for strengthening? Are there any barriers or measures to achieve it?
3. Do you think strengthening relationships, links and connections in geographical names standardization will



(From the left) Sungjae Choo, Mohamad Arief Syafi'i, Francisco Moneo, Kohei Watanabe, Guillaume Le Sourd and Cole Kelleher © UN Web TV



contribute to sustainable development or pandemic recovery? If yes, can you give an example?

4. What are your suggestions to UNGEGN, accommodate the interests of your institute, group or organization?

Discussion

Mohamad Arief Syafi'i, Deputy of Basic Geospatial Information at Geospatial Information Agency (BIG) in Indonesia, emphasized the vital role his agency played in preserving historical and cultural names. Indonesia recognized the significance of using standardized geographical names, and involved as many people and institutions as possible in the process. By highlighting the connection between geographical names and a place's history, he illustrated how certain names, such as one meaning 'sinking land', served as a warning due to past liquefaction incidents. The standardized names were published in the Gazetteer of Indonesia, and had positively contributed to the Indonesian government's development endeavours.

Francisco Moneo, Group Product Manager at Google Maps, highlighted the vital role of geographical names in enhancing user navigation and enabling complex queries, and for supporting Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 3 "Good health and well-being," by facilitating health and infrastructure planning strategies. Google, in collaboration with UNGEGN, aimed to offer names in local languages at the primary level, alongside exonyms. To encourage inclusivity, Google provided a web tool for data upload and encouraged the addition of more names in various languages. He also emphasised the importance of comprehending diverse needs and to address limitations while publishing data.

Kohei Watanabe, a Steering Member of the Joint IGU/ICA Commission on Toponymy, highlighted the strong connections between UNGEGN and academia. He pointed out that many UNGEGN delegates were academics. He suggested that collaboration between UNGEGN and academia had the potential to drive research and generate comprehensive insights, ultimately leading to solutions to contemporary issues. One such example was the Working Group on Exonyms meetings, which had sparked significant research on the topic and resulted in the publication of books containing papers from these meetings.

Guillaume Le Sourd, Geographic Information Officer at the United Nations Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT), highlighted their responsibility in ensuring accurate romanizations in the World Geographical Names Database. He emphasized the importance of raising awareness and knowledge of geographical names among UN MAPS staff. UN MAPS encouraged Member States to provide precise geographical names information which would subsequently be used for UN deployments.

Cole Kelleher, the United States Representative to the Standing Committee on Antarctic Geospatial Information (SCAGI),

highlighted the importance of standardization in facilitating emergency search and rescue operations in Antarctica. He emphasized the necessity of building strong relationships, acquiring local knowledge, and fostering collaboration to promote cooperation in the region. SCAGI also highlighted the value of shared logistics, particularly during the pandemic, as a means of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in operations.

In terms of suggestions for UNGEGN, Google highlighted the importance of sharing goals and motivations within UNGEGN to identify common areas of interest and collaborate in establishing authoritative names. An expert of the Arabic Division called on large companies using geographical names data on their websites to engage with National Names Authorities to access accurate names. Google acknowledged their efforts to incorporate National Names Authorities' data wherever possible, but acknowledged challenges in identifying them in certain countries.

Conclusion

The panel discussion provided an opportunity for diverse stakeholders to come together and collaborate on a global scale. It underscored the importance of collaboration, shared expertise, and engagement with stakeholders to promote effective standardization and utilization of geographical names. Through these collaborative efforts, the panel discussion sought to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and promote effective partnerships for a more sustainable future.

The result of the panel discussion was noted as the Decision 3/2023/22, which

- recognized that strengthening relationships, links and connections between the Group of Experts and other actors related to geographical names, including national names authorities, bodies of the United Nations, scientific, technical and academic groups, and private map-makers or map users, would increase the capacity to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and aid recovery from the pandemic, but also that there were restrictions and barriers; and
- requested the Bureau and relevant working groups to take measures to find organized ways of sharing expertise on geographical names standardization and proper dissemination and correct use of standardized geographical names.

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The close relationship between UNGEGN and the Joint ICA/IGU Commission on Toponymy

The International Cartographic Association (ICA) and the International Geographical Union (IGU), the global umbrella organizations of cartography and geography, were always hesitant to establish commissions on toponymy with the argument that this field was already covered by UNGEGN. It was Helen Kerfoot, the then UNGEGN Chair, who convinced their representatives that establishing such commissions would not mean parallelism, but supplementation and encouraged them to pursue this option.



Figure 1. The “founding fathers” of the Joint ICA/IGU Commission on Toponymy at the IGU Regional Conference 2011 in Santiago, Chile – from left to right: Cosimo Palagiano, Ron Abler, Paulo de Menezes, Peter Jordan

The first consultations to establish commissions on toponymy took place at the International Cartographic Conference 2009 in Santiago, Chile, where Georg Gartner, the then ICA President, supported this idea, but advocated for establishing only one commission as a joint venture of ICA and IGU. The consultations were continued in 2011 at the 26th UNGEGN Session in Vienna [Wien], Austria, and at the International Cartographic Conference 2011 in Paris, France. At the IGU Regional Conference of 2011 in Santiago, Chile, the then IGU President Ron Abler, finally agreed to a joint ICA/IGU commission headed by two co-chairs, one from ICA side and one from IGU side, and subject to the regulations of both organizations. From the very beginning Cosimo Palagiano,

Italy, and Peter Jordan, Austria, the current co-chairs of the Commission, played a supportive role. Paulo de Menezes, Brazil, was proposed by Georg Gartner to be the first Commission chair from the ICA. Together with Ron Abler the three gentlemen concluded the consultations in Santiago in 2011 (see Figure 1). The IGU Congress of 2012 in Cologne [Köln], Germany, provided the first opportunity for the new commission to organize a session and to present to a wider audience.

UNEGGN experts were also from the very beginning involved in the new commission and contributed a lot to its development. Besides the current Commission chairs Cosimo Palagiano and Peter Jordan (the latter between 2006 and 2017 Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms and later UNGEGN’s Liaison Officer to ICA), the following UNGEGN experts have served as steering board members of the Commission from 2012 to present:

- Peter E. Raper, South Africa, former UNGEGN Chair;
- Ferjan Ormeling, the Netherlands, former Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy and former UNGEGN’s Liaison Officer to ICA;
- Sungjae Choo, Republic of Korea, current UNGEGN Vice-Chair and Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Evaluation, Implementation and Publicity; and
- Kohei Watanabe, current Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms. The list of 170 corresponding members comprises a number of other UNGEGN experts.

It was due to this significant personal identity that the Joint ICA/IGU Commission on Toponymy grasped several topics popping up in UNGEGN Sessions and was able to elaborate them further in conference sessions, symposia and conferences, as well as by subsequent proceedings. These activities and outputs fulfilled the objective of providing UNGEGN with its main goal of place-name standardization with a sound scientific basis in the fields of cartography and geography. This is especially true for the following topics:

- “Place-name changes”, highlighted by the symposium in Rome [Roma] in 2014 with proceedings published in 2016;
- “Place names, diversity and heritage”, to which in 2015 a symposium in Clarens, South Africa, was devoted, that resulted in a special issue of “Nomina Africana”, the journal of the Names Society of Southern Africa;



- “Role and structure of national place-name boards”, discussed in a pre-conference workshop of the International Cartographic Conference of 2019 in Tokyo [Tōkyō];
- “Recognition, regulation, revitalisation: place names and indigenous languages” consulted in 2019 by a symposium again in Clarens, South Africa, and published in proceedings in 2020;
- Place names and migration” of a symposium in Vienna [Wien] in 2019 resulting in proceedings in 2021;
- “Standardization and the wealth of place names – aspects of a delicate relationship” of a virtual symposium in 2021 locally organized by the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa, and resulting in proceedings published in 2022; and
- “Place names as a part of the cultural heritage”, the theme of the Commission’s session in the framework of the IGU Conference on Heritage Geographies in Lecce, Italy, in 2021, resulting in an issue of “Onoma”, the journal of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences to be published in 2023.

Most recently a project has been initiated that can be regarded as a cooperation between UNGEGN and the Joint ICA/IGU Commission on Toponymy: the research and book project “Minority place-name standardization. A comparison of regulations and approaches in Europe” to be edited by Peter Jordan in 2024. Executed under the auspices of the Joint ICA/IGU Commission on Toponymy and the IGU Commission on the Geography of Governance, ten current experts and one former UNGEGN expert have contributed country chapters to this book project including Pierre Jaillard, the current UNGEGN Chair.

This close cooperation between UNGEGN and the Joint ICA/IGU Commission on Toponymy will continue, also after ICA’s next General Assembly in the framework of the 31st International Cartographic Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, 13-18 August 2023, where Peter Jordan will according to ICA regulations be replaced as the Commission Chair from ICA by Matjaž Geršič, Slovenia, an UNGEGN expert. Being well-established in UNGEGN was not really a precondition but certainly an asset for his designation as the future ICA Commission Chair.

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UNGE GN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work (SP&PoW) 2021-2029

The first two years of implementing the UNGE GN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029

Progress for the first two years

The progress of implementing the UNGE GN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029 (SP&PoW) for the first two years since its adoption in 2021 was reported and welcomed in the 2023/Third session. Details can be found in [GEGN.2/2023/22/CRP.22](#) and its [appendix](#).

Out of the 51 action items, those in the following table were noted. Details of the progress were reported in separate papers, as shown in the last column of the table.

Table 1. Action items noted as showing progress in the first two years of the Plan

Strategies	Action items	Progress	CRPs
1. Technical expertise	1-i-2	A discussion paper on geographical names data standards has been prepared.	GEGN.2/2023/99
	1-i-5	UNGE GN World Geographical Names Database has been redesigned.	GEGN.2/2023/111
	1-iii-8	A survey on free, accessible and open geographical names data was conducted.	GEGN.2/2023/74
	1-iii-9	Two webinars were held.	GEGN.2/2023/75
2. Relationships, links and connections	2-i-1	Involvement in several ECOSOC activities	GEGN.2/2023/4
	2-i-2	Participation and reporting in the sessions of UN-GGIM	GEGN.2/2023/4
	2-i-2	collaboration project between UNGE GN and UN-GGIM in progress	GEGN.2/2023/115
	2-i-3	Participation in the meeting of UN-GGIM Regional Committee for Africa	
	2-iii-9	A webinar was organized and convened.	
3. Effective work programmes	3-ii-2	UNGE GN publications were reviewed and subsequent revisions are in progress.	GEGN.2/2023/99
	3-ii-2	<i>Glossary of Terms</i> was discussed at the Working Group in September 2022.	GEGN.2/2023/31
	3-ii-3	An article on the function of Toponymic Guidelines was published in Bulletin 63.	GEGN.2/2023/61
	3-ii-4	A preliminary study was conducted to codify the resolutions and recommendations.	GEGN.2/2023/87
	3-ii-6	The UNCSGN resolutions database has been re-designed to include new recommendations.	GEGN.2/2023/87
	3-iii-7	Three meetings of the Bureau and Division Chairs were held.	GEGN.2/2023/4
	3-iii-7	Current organizational structure of working groups and task teams was reviewed.	
4. Culture, heritage and language recognition	overall	Six focus groups were created and discussion is in progress.	
	4-ii-7	Experts participated in the Commission on Toponymy in Paris, July 2022.	
	4-iii-10	Working Group on Exonyms held a meeting in Ljubljana, August-September 2022.	GEGN.2/2023/106
5. Promotion and capacity building	5-i-1	A webinar was organized and convened.	
	5-i-1	Representatives of UNGE GN participated in the UN Maps Conference in Valencia, Spain.	
	5-ii-4	A list of special feature themes for UNGE GN Bulletin was prepared and agreed on.	
	5-iii-6	Discussion on social-media presence has begun.	



Substantive topics to be further discussed

It was a big challenge to have progress in the implementation of SP&PoW in the restrictions caused by the worldwide pandemic. It was fortunate, however, to achieve progress thanks to technical supports. A series of business meetings, webinars and workshops were facilitated online to implement action items, substantially as well as procedurally.

The following substantive topics were noted to be further discussed with in-depth face-to-face conversation in the coming years:

- The function and operation of Bureau, Working Groups and Divisions to consider any further change in operations and organizational structure of UNGEKN (3-iii-7);
- Elaborating relevant aspects of UNGEKN to the goals and targets of sustainable development and find ways to develop them in its work programmes (3-iii-11 and general alignment to UN SDGs); and
- Considering the broad and complex situation of geographical names as cultural heritage and elaborating on the action items of Strategy 4.

Amendments proposed and adopted

Two amendments were proposed and adopted in the in the 2023/Third session. One was simplifying action item 2-iii-10 in order to keep harmony with other items and avoid unintentional restrictions. The other was a set of adjustments of outputs between Strategies and of actors and time frame. An output "re-develop UNGEKN World Geographical Names webpage" under the action item 5-ii-3 (UNGEKN Website development and maintenance) moved to 1-i-5 (Promote and support the establishment of an authoritative international database/gazetteer). Responsible actors and time frame were amended for action items 2-i-5, 3-iii-10 and 5-i-1. A revised version of the SP&PoW including all these amendments will be uploaded to the UNGEKN website as soon as the updates are made.

Way forward

Recommendation 1(e) of the 2021/second session emphasized the involvement of all components of UNGEKN in the implementation of the SP&PoW. It was good to see a number of reports submitted to the 2023/Third session organized to this recommendation. It is further anticipated to share reports of Member States and divisions as well as of working groups and task teams on their activities regarding the SP&PoW in future sessions.

As there was also growing need to align discussions of the UNGEKN sessions with the focus areas of the SP&PoW, the Bureau proposed a new format of the agenda with this perspective, as shown in the [provisional agenda of the 2025/fourth session](#).

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FROM THE DIVISIONS

Reuniones de la División América Latina: hacia una región integrada

En seguimiento a las acciones definidas en la Estrategia 2: Relaciones, vínculos y conexiones apartado ii: "Colaborar con organismos científicos, técnicos y académicos ajenos a Naciones Unidas para proporcionar conocimientos sobre la normalización de nombres geográficos y crear sinergia para promover el trabajo del UNGEGN y de los Estados Miembros ..." del Plan Estratégico y Programa de Trabajo 2021-2029 del Grupo de Expertos de Naciones Unidas sobre Nombres Geográficos y aprovechando la sinergia generada durante el evento organizado por el Instituto Nacional de Información Geográfica de Corea en coordinación con el Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia (IPGH) realizado a finales de 2022, se han estado organizando una serie de reuniones con expertos de los estados miembros, con el objetivo de establecer un marco común de actuación en la región América Latina respecto al tema de nombres geográficos.

Sesiones

La primera reunión fue realizada el 24 de enero del presente año, como una reunión de integración en la que los representantes de institutos geográficos u organismos gubernamentales encargados de la gestión de la toponimia de cada uno de los estados miembros tuvieron oportunidad de conocerse y tener un acercamiento con las acciones que se realizan en el UNGEGN, en particular con lo mencionado en el Plan Estratégico y Programa de Trabajo 2021-2029. Además, se hizo de su conocimiento que la página web1 de la División está a su disposición para difundir eventos, documentos o cualquier material que consideren pertinente para apoyar al resto de los países de la región sobre la gestión de sus topónimos.

Posterior a la mencionada, se han realizado cuatro reuniones de trabajo ordinarias con periodicidad mensual y dos extraordinarias con el fin de mantener un canal de comunicación abierto para difundir las buenas prácticas y eventos sobre nombres geográficos. En estas reuniones, algunos estados miembros han mostrado los productos y servicios producidos e implementados en su país, generando ideas innovadoras en el resto de los asistentes para mejorar su propia información respecto a cómo gestionar, organizar y difundir sus nombres geográficos.

Diagnóstico y programa de trabajo

Recientemente, se propuso a los expertos asistentes a las reuniones, la conformación de grupos al interior para poder definir un instrumento de evaluación (cuestionario) que permita la elaboración de un diagnóstico inicial y establecer una línea de base que defina el nivel de avance en la gestión de la información toponímica regional. Esto, con el objetivo de crear un programa de trabajo que impulse a aquellos miembros con menor desarrollo sobre el tema y que



aproveche las capacidades técnicas de aquellos con mayor desarrollo, motivándolos al mismo tiempo para seguir innovando en el tema.

Referencias

¹ División América Latina del UNGEGN - <https://www.genung-dal.org.mx/>

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Latin America Division Meetings: Towards an Integrated Region

Pursuant to the actions defined in Strategy 2: Relationships, links and connections, section ii: "Collaborate with non-United Nations scientific, technical, and academic bodies to provide expertise on geographical names standardization and create synergy to promote the work of UNGEGN and UN Member States; ..." of the Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029 of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNEGGN) and taking advantage of the synergy generated during the event organized by the National Geographic Information Institute of Korea in coordination with the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) held at the end of 2022, a series of meetings with experts from Member States within the Latin American Division have been convened. The objectives of the meetings were to establish a common range of action in the Latin American region with respect to the issue of geographical names standardization.

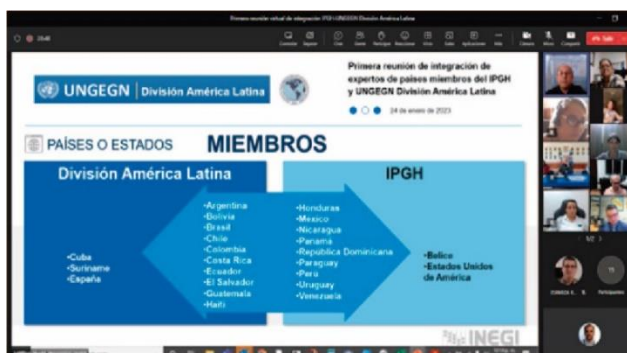
Sessions

The Latin American Division held its integration meeting on January 24, 2023 which focused on forging relations among representatives of geographical institutes or government agencies responsible for the management of toponymy. Each Member State had the opportunity to introduce themselves and decide on an approach regarding the activities being conducted by UNGEGN, in particular, the strategies and actions detailed in the Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029. In addition, it was made known that the web page¹ of the Division is available for its members to disseminate events, documents or any material that is considered relevant to support the countries of the region on the management of their geographical names.

Since the first meeting, four regular monthly and two extraordinary working meetings have been held. The objectives of these meetings were to maintain open communication channels among the Division's members and to disseminate good practices and events on geographical names. In these meetings, some Member States showed the products and services produced and implemented in their country, which generated innovative ideas from the other attendees to improve the management, organization and dissemination of their geographical names.

Diagnosis and programme of work

Recently, it was proposed to the experts attending the Divisional meetings, that groups should be set up within the framework in order to define an evaluation instrument (questionnaire) that would allow an initial diagnosis to be prepared and to establish a baseline defining the level of progress in the management of regional toponymic information. This aims to create a work programme that encourages members with less development on the subject to learn from the technical capacities of those with greater development, motivate them and at the same time continue innovating on the subject of geographical names standardization.



References

¹ UNGEGN Latin America Division - <https://www.genungdal.org.mx/>

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FROM THE COUNTRIES

Report of the Geographical Name's Activities of Egypt (2019-2023)

The report covers Egypt's activities that have been conducted and implemented taking into consideration recommendations issued by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names for the period 2019-2023. The activities are as follows:

Data services, applications and products:

- **CAPMAS Egypt's Geodatabase:** The central agency for public mobilization and statistics (CAPMAS) continues regularly collecting and updating its geodatabase with placenames (districts, towns, streets, villages, and water features and establishments, suburbs among others)
- In 2019 CAPMAS conducted field surveys for identifying spatial location and geographical names of 30,065 small villages(suburbs).
- **The National Project for the Integration of the Spatial Information Infrastructure of the Egyptian Planning System:** this project aims to integrate the spatial data layers created by government agencies to develop a unified base map on a scale of 1/2500 and to achieve integration and sharing of data between the various state institutions. Geographical names is among the basic layers data required for of spatial integration.

Coordination and cooperation with UN-GGIM:

- Egypt's members of UNGEGN and UN-GGIM from all relevant authorities are participating in National spatial data infrastructure committees for establishing a unified map of Egypt.
- They participate in all activities related to both bodies including attending national, regional and global conferences and meetings.
- They also share information related to international frameworks and guidelines.

Coordination and cooperation with ADEGN:

- Participation and coordination as Vice-chair of ADEGN in the preparation of reports for the Division and its technical committees, training ,and representing the Division in UNGEGN sessions, organizing meetings and conferences of the Division.
- Work in coordination with the Romanization Systems Committee of the Arab Division on reviewing the unified

system for Romanization 2017 and following up on its implementation across Arab countries.

- Coordination with Arab experts on issues related to processing of geographical names, given that geographical names is one of the core layers within national and international spatial data infrastructures (SDI).

Coordination and cooperation with UNGEGN:

Coordination and cooperation with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and its technical committees in:

- Participated in the international consultation to monitor and evaluate UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029, by providing notes and proposed amendments.
- Prepares the UNGEGN conferences Arabic version of resolutions searchable database with the UNGEGN Evaluation, Implementation and Publicity working group in partnership with the Korea Geographic Information Authority and published on <http://www.ngii.go.kr/portal/ungn/mainArab.do>.
- Prepared The Arabic version of resolutions adapted by the eleven United nations conference of geographical names (the original document prepared by the Ministry of Natural Resources in Canada), which includes the resolutions of the eleventh United Nations conferences , https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/documents/RES_UN_Arabic_updated_1-11_CONF_final.pdf

Awareness and training in the field of standardizing geographical names:

- Participated with the Arabic Division and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names in awareness-raising and training activities, including holding workshops and training courses, and participating in the magazines of the Arabic Division and the Group of Experts.



National and international meetings, conferences and seminars

- **Tenth session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM):** Held by default Three two -hour informal meetings, on 26-27 August and 4 September 2020. More than eighty delegations from Member States participated in each of the three meetings.
- **Eleventh session of (UN-GGIM) 23rd and 24th and 27 August 2021:** The Committee carried out its work during the eleventh session through correspondence, informal consultations and consideration of proposals through the silence procedure pursuant to Economic and Social Council decision 233/2021.
- **Twelfth Session of the (UN-GGIM):** Pursuant to Resolution (E/RES/2022/24) entitled “Strengthening Arrangements for the Management of Global Geospatial Information” , The resolution reaffirms the importance of strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee, in particular to achieve its operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations .
- **The Ninth conference of the Arab Division of Experts on Geographical Names**

It was organized by the Arab Division of Geographical Names Experts in coordination with the Royal Jordanian Geographical Center and the Oman Survey Authority, in Muscat - Oman, from 3 to 7 December 2022, more than 150 participants from 16 Arab countries attended (UAE, Jordan, Bahrain, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Oman, Palestine, Qatar Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Yemen) from specialists in geography, languages and surveying, and from academics in Arab universities

Objectives:

- Documenting geographical names
- Application of the Arabic system of Romanization 2017
- Activating the technical committees of the Arab Division of Geographical Names .
- Linking geographical information with place names
- Geo-enablement of geographic names

The agenda topics:

- The activities and achievements of the Arab countries in the field of geographical names
- The use of GIS applications in monitoring and documenting geographical names
- Geographical names and other sciences
- Geographical names and their role in geographical empowerment
- The role of geographical names in the integration of geographical information

For full report

https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/3rd_session_2023/documents/GEGN2_2023_6_Report_AD_E.pdf

- **The meeting of the Arab Division held on December 6, 2022 Muscat Oman:** A number of topics were discussed including the new administrative body for the Division, formation of two committees for Romanization systems and geographical names management, discussing the status of establishment of national bodies for geographical names, application of the unified system of Romanization 2017 in the Arab countries and an update of the website of the Arabic Division.

Publicity and publications:

- CAPMAS Updates periodically the administrative units Guide of Egypt which includes all the names of governorates, districts, and villages, as well as maps at the governorates level.
- Updating the contents of ADEGN website by the activities of the Arabic Division
- Sharing essays for ADEGN Geographical Names magazine and UNGEGN Bulletins.
- Updating the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names website with all the activities of the Arab Division (conferences - seminars - the formation of the administrative body - the decisions issued by the Division)

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Role of Royal Jordanian Geographic Center and the National Committee on Geographical Names in Crisis Management

(CORONA Pandemic)

The Royal Jordanian Geographic Center (RJGC) is considered one of the elite national establishments that work under vivid future visions that promote excellence in performance, focus on quality with full transparency, in addition to developing systems and services to meet local and regional needs. The center seeks to deliver surveying services (land, aerial, and space) along with geographic information and maps of high accuracy and precision to serve comprehensive and sustainable development projects. This can easily be done through professional and distinguished employees. The center was solely tasked to address all venues related to surveying, aerial photography, production of maps of all scales, supplying geographic information and data, and remote sensing applications in all fields to include detection and management of natural resources in service of national development.

The National Committee for Geographic Names was established in 1984 by a decision from the Prime Minister that incorporates ministries and universities in addition to the RJGC. In 2000 the committee was reformed to include other ministries that relate to geographic names; since then the following have been achieved:

- Unifying geographic names in Jordan.
- Updating and disseminating the Jordanian geographic names Index.
- Recommend to the prime minister's office the suggested geographic names and those to be altered or to be newly named.
- Adopted the systems used by the United Nations for writing geographic names.
- Developed an information bank for new or replaced names.

The establishment of information databases is considered fundamental for preplanning to support the decision-making process on a timely basis, especially to effectively respond to disasters and crises. In addition, having a common source for criteria and notions is vital particularly when responding to crises.

The strategy that Jordan had adopted in confronting the Corona virus pandemic contributed significantly to mitigating the effects and ramifications of the pandemic. Despite the

population which then was about 9 million, its diversity to include the refugees, in addition to Jordan's open approach regionally and beyond, the number of casualties remained among the best five countries worldwide. Statistics show (as of 13 April 2020) the number of casualties did not exceed 397, with only 7 deaths. Jordan was ranked among the top five countries in the world in dealing with the pandemic.

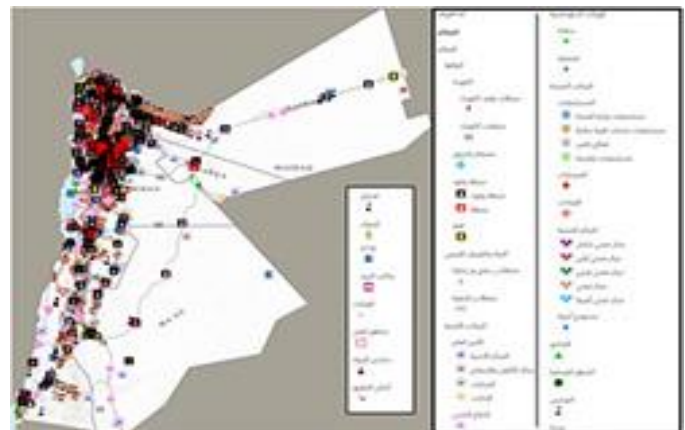
"Information is a highly precious commodity; it is in fact the first commodity that should be delivered"

*-Standardization of Geographic Names in Humanitarian Information Management
(Towards a Humanitarian Spatial Data Infrastructure)
Suha Ulgen & Craig Williams, page 3*

RJGC has played a pivotal role in supplying decision makers with accurate, current and reliable data that contains standardized and precise geographic names in Jordan, in addition to the correct street names that were supplied by the National Committee for Geographic Names. Interactive maps were designed and displayed on the main screen at the National Center for Security and Crises Management (NCSCM) as follows:

First: Creating interactive maps that show:

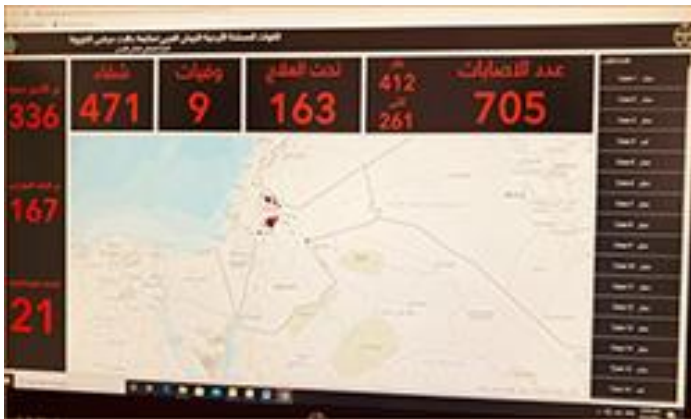
- Locations of casualties with general description to each case.
- Barricade points between governorates.
- Points of Interests (POIs) in Jordan such as hospitals, health care centers, Hypermarkets, banks, Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)...etc.



Second: Developing the following interactive applications:

- A dashboard that is used to demonstrate statistics on casualties, deaths, and those recovered with their locations.
- A mobile phone application that collects data on locations and health status of casualties in the field.
- Supply relevant data incorporating locations for NCSCM.
- Pictured data as a fundamental (basic) map.
- Points of interest all over Jordan.
- Urban and residential areas.
- Points of closure and barricades used by the military between governorates during COVID-19.
- Main roads network.
- Applying field maps to collect field data.
- Prepare maps of areas of vaccination, sterilization and isolation (quarantine).

The accumulative information dashboard displays the number of cases, how these cases are distributed across the country, analysis of change of cases trend (accumulative, active, recovering or terminal, along with data on infection levels in Jordan.



ARCGIS Pro was used in conjunction with the(Jordan Spatial Data Infrastructure) JSDI to design WEB applications. All data was loaded on the basic system (ArcGIS Portal Enterprise) which clarifies accurate locations for the required data.

“In order to deliver this information promptly when needed in a professional approach, an information data infrastructure must be in place prior to the occurrence of crises”

-Mohammad Abd Al Jawad Sheikha

Therefore, during COVID-19 Pandemic several decisions were taken based on data collected from locations such as prior enclosure, total or partial enclosure, sterilization, vaccination and isolation along with selecting appropriate locations for building health and inspection facilities.

“Without common names & nomenclatures, it is difficult to respond to crises effectively”

- Mohammad Abd Al Jawad Sheikha

- Using names and vocabularies not commonly agreed on will cause misunderstanding and confusion.
- If agencies developed or adopted individual systems that refer to locations in uncommon names or codes, it will be very difficult to exchange information and data.
- Subsequently, valuable information will not be exchanged or recorded among agencies and will therefore be permanently lost.

In Conclusion:

At the national level, we need to unify and standardize terms and geographic nomenclature in such a way that their selection be carefully chosen to reflect the common understanding among all stakeholders, based on the polices and guidelines set forth by the National Committee for Names.

At the global level, the geographic names standards such as the ones suggested to convert the writing in Romanization is an example for such endeavor.

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The activities of the Sultanate of Oman in the field of geographical names from 2021 – 2023

Summary:

There were major changes in Oman during the period **2021 – 2023**, most notably the death of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed on January 10th, 2020, who ruled Sultanate of Oman for 50 years, during which the country witnessed a major development renaissance in various fields. He was succeeded by Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, who pledged to continue the march of his predecessor Sultan Qaboos, in improvement and development.

The Sultanate of Oman continued its activity in the field of geographical names standardization during the period 2021 to 2023, and despite the Covid19 pandemic that hit the whole world, and led to the cessation and paralysis of some activities, especially the economic aspect and the hosting of conferences, and meetings. However, many events and activities related to geographical names standardization continued with the taking of health precautions, some of which were carried out virtually.

The activities of the Sultanate of Oman in the field of Geographical Place Names from 2021-2023

Geographic place names have always had special status in the Sultanate of Oman. It is as old as the Oman's thousands of years history. This is reflected clearly from preserving the old geographic place names and among them is "oman", the

country's old and up to now names fields and activities diversified as historical, geographical, cultural and political. The latest activities and achievements of the Sultanate of Oman in this field is its hosting of the Ninth Conference of Arab Experts in Geographical Names from 5 to 7 December 2022.

In this paper, a summary of the Sultanate of Oman's activities in the field of geographic place names standardization will be presented.

1. The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the National Survey Authority, hosted the Ninth conference of Arab experts in geographical names during the period 5-7 December 2022 in the capital, Muscat, in cooperation with the Arab Division of Geographical Names and the Royal Jordanian Geographical Center. The conference was entitled *Geographical Integration, Enacting the Name and Location: (Importance and Impact)*. The conference was attended by more than 120 experts representing 16 Arab countries. The conference, in which more than 40 scientific working papers were presented, dealt with many topics related to geographical names standardization and Arab cooperation in this field. The Sultanate of Oman presented 6 working papers, which are listed in the table below

SN	Title	Date	Presenter
1	The achievements of the Sultanate of Oman in the field of geographical names	5 Dec. 2022	Colonel / Yusuf bin Harith Al Nabhani
2	Encyclopedia of the Land of Oman	5 Dec.2022	Colonel / Yusuf bin Harith Al Nabhani
3	A suggested conception of a dictionary of Arab geographical features: a study An analysis of the scientific heritage of the Omani navigator Ahmed bin Majid	6 Dec.2022	d. Hamid bin Saif Al-Nawfali, Ministry of Education
4	A project to update maps of 1:50,000 geographical names of submerged marine features	6 Dec.2022	Civilian Officer Fatima bint Mubarak Al-Dairi Omani National Hydrographic Office
5	Geographical names that have been going on since ancient times,	6 Dec.2022	Prof. Dr. Nael Hanoun / Al-Khalil bin Ahmed Al-Farahidi Center for Studies Arabic and Humanities University of Nizwa
6	The feasibility of benefiting from the application of addressing systems and their impact on a city Sohar	7 Dec.2022	Eng. Yaqoob Al-Hendassi Suhar Municipality



2. During the Ninth conference of Arab experts on geographical names, the Sultanate of Oman, represented by Colonel Yusuf bin Harith al-Nabhani of the National Survey Authority, was elected as the first vice president of the Arab Division of Geographical Names.
3. The National Survey Authority:-
 - a. Participated virtually in the eighth meeting of the Regional Committee of Arab States of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on February 23, 2021.
 - b. participated virtually in the Second session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names 2021.
 - c. continued to produce 1:10,000 topographic maps.
 - d. has started a project to produce maps of the 11 governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, which is expected to be completed in the middle of the current year, 2023.
 - e. launched the geospatial portal during the opening of the Ninth Conference of Arab Experts on Geographical Names on December 5, 2022. The link below shows the address of the portal: www.nsaomangeoportal.govom/ar.
 - f. has produced a map of the Sultanate of Oman (administrative domain), which shows the administrative borders of the 11 governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, after the issuance of Royal Decree No. (114/2011) on October 26, 2011, regarding the administrative division of the Sultanate of Oman and
 - g. participated in the third session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names 1 - 5 May 2023 UNHQ, New York

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National Geographic Gazetteer: harmonization of Official Gazetteers in Spain

For some time now, the activities in the Geographical Names Service of the National Geographic Institute of Spain (*Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN)* in Spanish) has been clearly focusing on the frame, among others, of strategy 2 (Relationships, links, and connections) of the Strategic Plan 2021–2029 of the Group of Experts on Geographical Names of United Nations (UNGEEN).

In this regard, it is worth highlighting the recent implementation and start-up of the National Geographic Gazetteer (NGG) web application. Although for now it is only an IT tool that allows viewing and consulting the state of the NGG, since this Gazetteer has not been completed or approved by the competent body.

We can say that NGG application clearly responds to Spain's connections with international and national organizations –on one hand because it follows United Nations recommendations and European Union regulations, and on the other hand due to relationships with other geographical names authorities of Spain, such as Autonomous Communities. The Application we are talking about, NGG web application, is doubtless relevant because it offers to any user, openly and free of charge, the set of geographical names that must be used in every official cartography produced in Spain.

The National Geographic Gazetteer (NGG) legal basis can be found, in Spain's regulations, in the Royal Decree 1545/2007 that regulates the National Cartographic System. Its article 23 states that NGG, which is a dynamic record of information, includes the official geographical names that must be used in official cartography. The mentioned Royal Decree also explains that NGG is the harmonization of the National Geographic Basic Gazetteer of Spain – it is produced by the National Geographic Institute of Spain and encloses the official georeferenced toponymy on maps at scales of 1:25,000 and smaller– and the Official Geographical Gazetteers of each Autonomous Community. All these Gazetteers contain local geographical names on maps at a scale greater than 1:25,000.

The law also says that the Permanent Commission of the Superior Geographic Council, at the proposal of the Specialized Commission on Geographic Names (*Comisión Especializada de Nombres Geográficos* in Spanish), is the body in charge of approving the toponymy criteria that must be applied in the use and treatment of Official Geographical Gazetteers in Spain. In this sense, the Specialized Commission on Geographical Names composed an essential document: "Regulations on Geographical Names in Spain". Written up in

2016, in the cited handbook we can see three fundamental pillars regarding international regulations:

1. Recommendations of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names;
2. Recommendations of the International Hydrographic Organization; and
3. Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE).

Going into detail of NGG Project, first, essential requirements are established to harmonize the gazetteers databases. This means that they must be interoperable, which is achieved through compliance with INSPIRE model (D2.8.1.3 INSPIRE Data Specification on Geographical names). Though currently not all Autonomous Communities Gazetteers conform essential requirements, so they are not ready to be interoperable.

The NGG web application has already been launched with the Gazetteers meeting the requirements: the National Geographic Basic Gazetteer of Spain and four official Gazetteers of Autonomous Communities (those can be consulted through *CODSI* website, the INSPIRE Official Catalog of Data and Services). Then, for the time being the Project is 30 percent completed but, as soon as the remaining Regional Gazetteers comply with interoperability requirement, they will be included in NGG.

Detail of the NGG search box

In any case, as we are saying the NGG web application is already running. It allows us to locate geographical names by different ways: by its name (or part of it), by data source or by classification of the geographical entity. Of course, all these filters are combinable, so we can carry out a personalized search according to our interests. In addition, we can also search names by views, simply by approaching an area of Spanish territory. From zoom level 14 (corresponding to an approximate scale of 1:34,000) onwards, queries start loading geographical names in the display area. Also, we would be able to apply a filter to the visual search, keeping those names that meet our specificized refine (for example, geographical names containing generic name "house" or entities with "transport infrastructure" category).



Detail of the viewer with search results

In addition to the above, the Application has tools related to viewing, printing, distance measurement, language (currently we can choose between Spanish or English), among others. We can also define the background layer, between some maps or orthophotos, as well as the coordinate system. If we have any questions or want more details, there is a "more information" button that opens the help of the NGG web application.

Conclusions

We can say that the National Geographic Institute of Spain is proud of the NGG new Application that is open and free of charge for all users. Even as it has not been yet 100 percent implemented, since the App is in trial period and pending approval, any user can already test the web Application through the following link.

https://visualizadores.ign.es/nomenclator_ngn/

It pools together some Official Spanish Gazetteers, allows users to carry out toponymic research, gives the opportunity to improve the Gazetteers databases and allows progress in geographical names standardization in Spain, as United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names recommends in their resolutions and manuals.

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News from Brazil

Brazil took part in the 2023 Session of UNGE GN and on 3rd May 2023 presented their work on resolving inconsistencies of geonames on different scales base maps in the National Dialogue, under *Theme 3: Technology, innovation and standards for geographical names data management*.

Pursuing the objectives of strategies 2 and 5 of UNGE GN Strategic Plan and Program of Work, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) is promoting the integration of its UN-GGIM and UNGE GN representations, as well as the awareness of all the staff of the Directorate of Geosciences about the work carried out by the Institute in the international scene. For this purpose, the representatives of the IBGE who participates in the UNGE GN and in the GGIM will take part in a series of lectures for the whole Directorate on 12th June 2023. Their speeches will cover an introduction to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGE GN), its objectives, its structure and functions, and the work carried out by Brazil in the newly reactivated UNGE GN Portuguese-speaking and Latin America divisions, as well as in the IGU/ICA Joint Commission on Toponymy.

In order to address UNGE GN’s strategies 4 and 5, on 31st July, 2023, Brazil’s UNGE GN representatives Ana Cristina Resende, MA and Graciosa Moreira, PhD, will be delivering a lecture at the *Escola Nacional de Ciências Estatísticas - ENCE* (National School of Statistical Sciences). This is a Federal Institute of Education which belongs to the IBGE and offers undergraduate and graduate courses such as Major in Statistics, Specialization Course (*Lato Sensu*) in Environmental Analysis and Territory Management; Master’s Program (*Strictu Sensu*) in Population Studies and Social Surveys. The lecture will address the importance of geographical names in the numerous fields of knowledge, especially focusing on those dealt with by the School, and the possibilities for research projects in these fields involving geographical names.

Finally, regarding strategy 3, the IBGE is pleased to announce the publication of the *Manual Técnico de Coleta de Nomes Geográficos* (Technical Manual for the Collection of Geographical Names), due on 17th July, 2023. The Manual addresses the fundamentals and basic procedures of the methodology for the field collection of geographic names. It was prepared based on the experience of the IBGE in official mapping projects and in the treatment of geographical names.



National Dialogue



Portuguese-speaking Division





The methodology presented in the Manual can be used in any type of project, and does not depend on the use of digital resources. Therefore, it serves both projects developed for the use of digital tools and for projects developed in analogic environments.

Considering that an efficient collection of geographical names generates decisive information for the standardization of geographical names and gathers precious information for research of various natures, the Directorate of Geosciences of the IBGE hopes to contribute with this Manual to the work of public and private institutions and of independent researchers who wish to develop projects involving geographic names in Brazil and in other Portuguese-speaking countries. It is worth noticing that this publication seeks to contribute to the efforts for the standardization of geographical names carried out by the Portuguese-speaking Division, vice-chaired by Brazil.

Ana Cristina da Rocha Bérenger Resende

Vice-chair of UNGEGN Portuguese-speaking Division
Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE
Head of the Geographical Names Department of the
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SPECIAL PROJECTS AND NEWS ITEMS

New Book: Place Naming, Identities and Geography, Critical Perspectives in a Globalizing and Standardizing World

A book of interest to all involved with the standardization of geographical names has been published this year by Springer Nature, Switzerland, as part of the EUROGEO Book Series, Key Challenges in Geography. **“Place Naming, Identities and Geography, Critical Perspectives in a Globalizing and Standardizing World”**, edited by Gerry O’Reilly, Dublin City University, is a 659-page volume including the work of 48 contributors from around the world.

The book presents research on geographical names and naming on land and sea, from various viewpoints relative to theoretical concepts, case studies and education. Following the “Introduction: Approaching Place Naming Narratives”, the texts are divided into five sections:

- Challenging Conceptual and Theoretical Approaches in Place Naming (7 items);
- Approaches to Implementing Standardization of Place Names (7 items);
- Geo-Histories, Legacies, and Toponym Transitions (6 items);
- Toponymy: Narratives, Languages, Culture, and Education (6 items); and
- The Relationship Between Geographical Naming and Cultural Politics (1 item).

Many of the authors will be familiar names to those participating in UNGEGN activities, and information from a variety of countries will be welcomed by readers: for example, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Estonia, France, Gibraltar, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malta, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Southern Africa (as a group of countries), Spain, and Turkey. While some articles are country-specific, others address topics from a more general perspective. Among the subjects covered readers will find, for instance, reference to the human perception of space; neo-toponymy; historical maps; toponymy and map-scale; place names in education; UNGEGN training courses; urban toponymy; naming collective farms; postcolonial toponymic landscapes; names and language; politics of place names; challenges in geographical names management; names and the environment; etc.

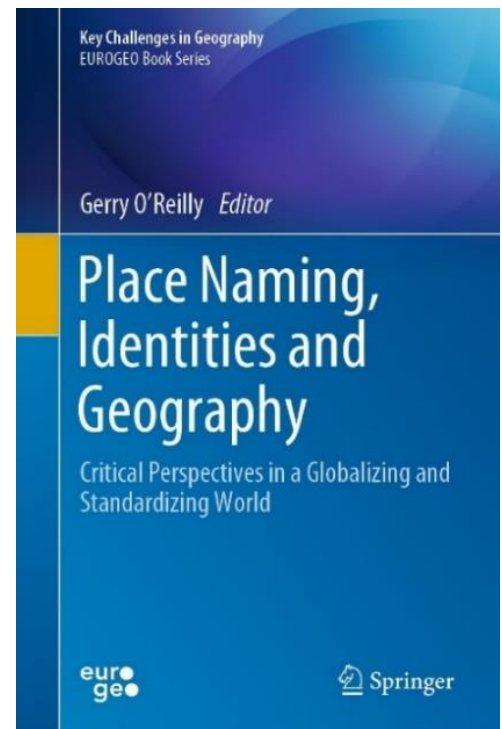
Although this collection of articles is available in hard-cover book form, it can also be purchased as an eBook (ISBN: 978-3-031-21510-0) at a very reasonable price. Details of the contents, the authors, and how to order can be found at <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-21510-0>.

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IN MEMORIAM

Herman Bell (1933-2023)



Photo credit: **Maciej Zych**

Professor Walter Herman Bell, a long-standing and greatly treasured member of the UNGEGN community for more than twenty years, sadly passed away on February 7th, 2023, just one month shy of his ninetieth birthday.

Herman Bell was born on March 10th 1933 in Richmond, Virginia. After studying in Berlin and Oxford, he returned to the United States in 1965, where he acquired qualifications in Linguistics in 1966 and Nubian Toponymy in 1968. It was the Nubian world in Sudan and Egypt that particularly captured Herman's attention. In the early 1960s he undertook a survey of Nubian place names at the time of the construction of the Aswan Dam, which led to the flooding of Nubian homelands. Herman then enjoyed professorial spells in Sudan and Saudi Arabia. Returning in 1993 to the UK, he became Dean of Academic Affairs at the Oxford Academy for Advanced Studies (until 2003), and in the years since 2000 he had been an Honorary Fellow in the Institute of Arab & Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter.

Herman had made his name in toponymic circles with his 1970 authorship of *Place Names in the Belly of Stones*, the first study of toponyms in a sparsely inhabited stretch of the Sudanese Nile. But it was not until the year 2000 that he first became involved with UNGEGN, representing Sudan courtesy of his role as Consultant to the Sudan National Committee for Geographical Names. He attended UNGEGN sessions on behalf of Sudan in 2000 and 2004, as well as the 8th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in Berlin in 2002. Relinquishing this official role in 2007, Herman became an independent member of the UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms, attending and contributing to all seven of its meetings between 2010 and 2018. His writings during this period were very much focused on Nubian issues, with articles such as *Nubian Perceptions of Exonyms and Endonyms* (2012), and *Toponymic Teleology: Endonyms in an Endangered Language* (2013), both subsequently published in the *Name & Place* series, devoted to documenting toponymic literature and research.

Herman had since the 1960s been distressed by the effects on the Nubian people of the construction of the Nile dams, which had seen riverine Nubians forced to vacate their traditional villages and move to newly constructed settlements, some of which were elsewhere in Sudan, where they were "named" solely by means of numbers, and others which were in Egypt. He lamented this destruction of culture, and remained committed to preserving and promoting the Nubian cause right through into his eighties, even lecturing on Nubian culture and heritage in Khartoum at the age of 85.

Herman was a man blessed with great kindness and a true generosity of spirit. He would see the best in people. And although he embodied a phenomenal breadth of knowledge and experience, he always wore these attributes lightly and disseminated them freely and widely. All of us in UNGEGN have lost a colleague of rare qualities, and we shall miss him greatly.

Paul Woodman

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