

18 March 2019

English

**United Nations Group of Experts On
Geographical Names
2019 session**

New York, 29 April – 3 May 2019

Item 8 of the agenda *

Social and economic benefits, supporting sustainable development, measures taken and proposed for the implementation of resolutions and evaluation of the work of the Group of Experts (Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation)

Report on the implementation by New Zealand of resolutions adopted at the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names

Submitted by New Zealand**

Summary:

The full report provides comments from New Zealand on its implementation of the resolutions adopted at the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names between 1967 and 2017. It refers to the resolutions that New Zealand reported on at the Tenth and Eleventh Conferences, held in 2012 and 2017, that are relevant to the work of the national naming authority of New Zealand, the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa. The report provides an update on the measures that New Zealand has taken with regard to the resolutions adopted at the Conferences held in 2012 and 2017, and its experience in implementing those resolutions. Where appropriate, it provides comments on the social and economic benefits of, and support for, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

* GEGN.2/2019/34/CRP.34

**Prepared by Wendy Shaw, Secretary, New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa

Contents:

- 1. Resolutions previously reported on by New Zealand**
- 2. Resolutions pre 2012 not reported on**
- 3. Resolutions relevant to New Zealand from Conferences held in 2012 and 2017**
- 4. Measures taken by New Zealand for the three relevant 2012 resolutions**
 - 4.1 Criteria for establishing and evaluating the nature of geographical names as cultural heritage (X/3)*
 - 4.1.1 Guideline to collect original Māori place names**
 - 4.1.2 Project to combine a cultural heritage atlas with the New Zealand Gazetteer**
 - 4.1.3 Recorded Māori place names updated with macrons**
 - 4.2 Discouraging the commercialization of geographical names (X/4)*
 - 4.2.1 NZGB Standard for undersea feature names**
 - 4.2.2 NZGB Frameworks document**
 - 4.3 Split of the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division into the Asia South-East Division and the Pacific South-West Division (X/5)*
 - 4.3.1 Pacific South-West Division**
- 5. Contact**

1. Resolutions New Zealand has previously reported on

Of the 211 resolutions UNCSGN has made to date, New Zealand reported in 2012 and 2017 on the implementation of relevant resolutions under these subjects:

3. International cooperation in the Standardization of Geographical Names
5. National Standardization
7. Education and Training in Treatment of Geographical Names
8. Terminology (Including Glossaries)
10. Preparation of Gazetteers
11. Bibliographies
13. Automated Data Processing/Digital Data
15. Romanization/General
17. Maritime and Undersea Feature Names
18. Names of Features Beyond a Single Sovereignty
21. Manual of National Name Standardization
23. Minority Languages

2. Resolutions pre 2012 not reported on

Other subjects with relevant pre 2012 resolutions not yet reported by New Zealand are:

4. Toponymic Guidelines for Map and other Editors: Resolutions IV/4, V/11, V/14, VI/7
6. Regional meetings: Resolutions I/7, II/19, VII/3
9. List of Country Names: Resolutions III/6, III/17, IV/10, IV/11, VI/10, VII/8, VIII/12
12. Exchange of Experience: Resolutions I/6, II/20
22. Aids to Pronunciation: Resolution III/7

New Zealand will report on these resolutions at future UNGEGN sessions.

3. Resolutions relevant to New Zealand from Conferences held in 2012 and 2017

2012:

- X/3. Criteria for establishing and evaluating the nature of geographical names as cultural heritage
- X/4. Discouraging the commercialization of geographical names
- X/5. Split of the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division into the Asia South-East Division and the Pacific South-West Division

2017:

None.

4. Measures taken by New Zealand for the three relevant 2012 resolutions

4.1 Criteria for establishing and evaluating the nature of geographical names as cultural heritage (X/3)

‘To recognize and protect such a geographical name or a corpus of geographical names, the following criteria be used:

- (a) The age of a name, as indicated by the date of the oldest possible record of the name;
- (b) The resilience of a name, as indicated by the duration of its continued use up to the present or by its notable capacity to transcend history;
- (c) The rarity of a name or of a toponymic phenomenon pointed out by the name;
- (d) The “testimoniality” of a name, or its capacity to clearly embody a cultural, geographical, historical, social or other reality that is specific to the place and an essential component of local, regional or national identity;
- (e) The appeal of a name, which corresponds to a feeling of belonging associated with the name and the place it designates;
- (f) The imageability of a name, or its capacity to inspire ideas or strong, rich images within users, without these images or ideas necessarily referring to history or local trivia.’

4.1.1 Guideline to collect original Māori place names	
Measure taken by New Zealand	<p>The NZGB developed a new guideline in 2019 to ‘Collect original Māori place names’ in the New Zealand Geographic Board Gazetteer, to meet a statutory function to ‘collect original Māori names for recording on official charts and official maps’.</p> <p>The guideline requires evidence to support collected names, including published documents and histories, traditional waiata¹, including Kā Huru Manu (Ngāi Tahu's cultural atlas), and may also be from oral traditions, published maps, plans, documents, books, etc.</p> <p>The guideline lists these criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must meet the definition of an ‘original Māori name’ as per the NZGB Act 2008 • Must be from a reliable source • Must define the feature type, its location and/or extent • May include a story and/or meaning, where known
Implementation experiences	<p>While the UNCSGN resolution prescribes in detail the requisite criteria for establishing and evaluating the nature of geographical names as cultural heritage, their application have been significantly adapted to meet the purpose of this New Zealand guideline.</p> <p>The intent of the New Zealand guideline is to collect original Māori place names without too much effort. Future steps to make them official would include more detailed research, consultation, reporting and formalising. Implementing this guideline will help shape how we continually develop and improve it, to ensure its success.</p>
Social and economic benefits ***	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a cultural perspective, being able to discover collected original Māori place names in the publicly available New Zealand Gazetteer has

¹ Waiata – song(s)

	<p>enormous benefit to the indigenous people who gave those names in terms of acknowledging heritage, connection, identity and belonging. And they restore mana² and pride.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once published in the New Zealand Gazetteer they can move toward being officially recognised in the future. • Crown-Māori relationships are strengthened: actions speak louder than words. • The inclusion of traditional Māori place names will add significant depth to the official record. • Economic benefits have not been explored. However, there may be benefits for the tourism industry in New Zealand – knowing the story about ‘place’.
Sustainable development goals/targets ****	<p>Ancestral Māori lived in very close harmony with the natural world, especially the land and its resources. Many of New Zealand’s Māori place names describe not only the physical aspects of a feature, but provide information about the natural and cultural conditions at the time it was given. Such place names not only describe the land physically, they can unlock its resources, provide practical information, and help future communities to adapt to their changing environments.³</p> <p>Contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 10: Reduced inequalities: 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.</p>

4.1.2 Project to combine a cultural heritage atlas with the New Zealand Gazetteer	
Measure taken by New Zealand	The NZGB agreed in 2018 to accept Kā Huru Manu (Ngāi Tahu's cultural atlas) place names into the New Zealand Gazetteer. See full details in a separate report from New Zealand GEGN.2/2019/35/CRP.35 at UNGEGN Session #1 in 2019, ‘Report on New Zealand’s Project to combine Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu’s Cultural Heritage Atlas, Kā Huru Manu , with the New Zealand Geographic Board Gazetteer ’
Implementation experiences	<p>Again the UNCSGN resolution’s criteria have been significantly adapted to meet the purpose of this project.</p> <p>The NZGB recognises Kā Huru Manu is a highly valuable resource of information outside of government. The NZGB acknowledged the huge effort from Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu to produce this cultural mapping atlas over many years, using various forms of public records, authoritative published historical works, oral histories, and hapū/marae wānanga, all with oversight from a core forum of kaumātua⁴.</p> <p>Of the ~1200, 400 are expected to be fast-tracked as official and 800 are expected to be collected in the New Zealand Gazetteer in 2019.</p>

² Mana – authority

³ https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEgn/docs/Bulletin/UNGEgn_bulletin_54_finalver.pdf

⁴ Kaumātua – elders

Social and economic benefits	<p>Same as above ***.</p> <p>Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu responded in October 2018: “It’s fair to say we are pretty excited about Kā Huru Manu and its recognition by NZGB as an authoritative source. It is a result we are very keen to promote within Ngāi Tahu, if not wider. It would be great to discuss publicity further with NZGB.” “While this does not mean that all of our place names in Kā Huru Manu will quickly become official, the decision is expected to provide significant efficiencies.”</p> <p>Economic benefits have not yet been explored. However there may be benefits for the tourism industry in New Zealand – knowing the story about ‘place’.</p>
Sustainable development goals/targets	<p>Same as above ****.</p> <p>Contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 10: Reduced inequalities: 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.</p>

4.1.3 Recorded Māori place names updated with macrons	
Measure taken by New Zealand	<p>The NZGB agreed in 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That a macron does not alter the spelling of a name but rather standardises its orthography, and • that the addition of a macron does not prevent a name being approved under section 24 of the NZGB Act 2008 because it is not an alternative name. <p>The decision on this practice was published in NZGB’s Frameworks document version 10, section 41, ‘Māori place names’, page 70.</p>
Implementation experiences	<p>The rationale for this new approach was influenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The groundswell in New Zealand by government and numerous other organisations over the past 2-3 years to use macrons in Māori words and place names on signs, maps, brochures, newspapers, databases, etc, • The statutory requirement for the NZGB to use the correct orthography of any Māori name, and • The statutory intention to move recorded place names to official. <p>The NZGB has applied this new practice at its past two meetings (September 2018 and April 2019, with no adverse public reaction.</p>
Social and economic benefits	<p>Same as above ***.</p> <p>Using the correct standardised orthography for any language is important to understand the meaning of words and acknowledges the importance of getting the spelling right. Economic benefits have not been explored. However there may be benefits for the tourism industry in New Zealand – knowing the story about ‘place’.</p>

Sustainable development goals/targets	<p>Representing an official language of New Zealand accurately with standardised orthography in place names contributes to the cultural wellbeing of the whole nation. This assists with reconciliation of historical grievances by Māori.</p> <p>Contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 10: Reduced inequalities: 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.</p> <p>Contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions: 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.</p>
---------------------------------------	---

4.2 Discouraging the commercialization of geographical names (X/4)

‘National toponymic authorities to discourage the designation of geographical names that seek a commercial purpose, as well as various practices involving the commercialization of geographical names, by adopting standards that address these issues.’

New Zealand reported on this resolution at the 2017 Conference, with two measures:

4.2.1 NZGB Standard for undersea feature names	
Measure taken by New Zealand	The NZGB’s Standard for undersea feature names NZGBS60000 states the names of commercial entities or their products will not be accepted for naming an undersea feature.
Implementation experiences	<p>The standard for undersea feature names was published in September 2016. In 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecom Knoll changed to Te Punga Hill • Mobil Seamount changed to Taranui Seamount <p>The NZGB is proactive in identifying existing ‘commercial’ place names and will assess next steps case by case.</p>
Social and economic benefits	Demonstrates objective place naming, not influenced by large corporates (whether real or imperceptible) and not offering any unfair commercial advantage.
Sustainable development goals/targets	<p>Contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life below water: 14.C Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want.</p>

4.2.2 NZGB Frameworks document

Measure taken by New Zealand	The NZGB's Frameworks state that the NZGB's policy is to avoid naming geographic features after a commercial product or its manufacturer, institution or organisation.
Implementation experiences	Version 10 of this document was published in April 2018. In recent years the NZGB has not received any place name proposals for commercial subjects/entities. In 2018 the NZGB identified a need to develop separate standards for New Zealand and Antarctic place names. Drafts are to be completed by June 2019. Both standards will include the avoidance of commercial names.
Social and economic benefits	Expected to demonstrate objective place naming, not influenced by large corporates (whether real or imperceptible) and not offering any unfair commercial advantage.
Sustainable development goals/targets	Contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on land : 15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.

4.3 Split of the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division into the Asia South-East Division and the Pacific South-West Division (X/5)

'That the Asia South-East Division and the Pacific South-West Division be granted full recognition as linguistic/geographical divisions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.'

4.3.1 Pacific South-West Division	
Measure taken by New Zealand	Soon after the resolution was made Australia and New Zealand liaised through the Permanent Committee on Place Names to discuss how to engage Pacific Island nations. New Zealand has made no progress in this endeavour. The New Zealand government, through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, announced that the New Zealand Aid Programme for the three years starting 1 July 2018 will be bigger and re-oriented. This may provide a path to activate the Pacific SW Division.
Implementation experiences	Once the Pacific SW Division becomes operational it will report its activities to UNGEGN. Priorities of the Pacific SW Division may be place naming associated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sea level rise • the Seabed 2030 project • recording traditional place names • assigning new place names on land and undersea
Social and economic benefits	Nation building is a benefit that comes from recognising people's connection with their land through naming it and having their place names recognised officially.

Sustainable development goals/targets	<p>Contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 13: Climate action: 13.B Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.</p> <p>Contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life below water: 14.C Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want.</p> <p>Contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on land: 15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.</p>
---------------------------------------	---

5. Contact

For more information about geographic naming in New Zealand contact:

Wendy Shaw

Secretary for the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa

c/- Land Information New Zealand

Radio New Zealand House

155 The Terrace

PO Box 5501

Wellington 6145

New Zealand

Phone +64 4 460 0581

Mobile +64 27 4807 082

Email wshaw@linz.govt.nz