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Geographical Names
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Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**National and international standardization of geographical
names: names collection, office treatment, national
authorities, features beyond a single sovereignty and
international cooperation****Basis and principles of the standardization of geographical
names in Finland****Summary****

In Finland, the names of natural features and the oldest settlements are inherited names that came into being and were established in the language of the local community. They are a part of our common cultural heritage. The starting point for national standardization is that such names are also used in all official contexts. No authority in Finland has the power to name natural features or change their names.

In Finland, national standardization primarily concerns the inherited place names maintained in the Geographic Names Register of the National Land Survey. Planned place names under the responsibility of different authorities, such as road and street names, names of administrative areas, names of new residential areas and names of transport sites, are not covered by systematic standardization. It is recommended, however, that standardized inherited place names also be utilized, where possible, in planned names, combining them with already familiar names and places.

The report describes the standardization status of different types of place names in Finland. It also considers the benefits that legislation on place names would bring to standardization.

* [GEGN.2/2021/1](#).

** The full report was prepared by Ulla Onkamo, Institute for the Languages of Finland, and Teemu Leskinen, National Land Survey of Finland. It will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2021/52/CRP.52, in the language of submission only, at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd_session_2021/.

