24\textsuperscript{th} session of East Central and South-East Europe Division

Side meeting of 2\textsuperscript{nd} session of UNGEGN
Wednesday 28 April 2021, worldwide – virtual platform
Darina Porubčanová, chairperson of ECSEED
Meetings

• last ECSEED meeting - Side meeting of the 1\textsuperscript{st} session of new UNGEGN 1 May 2019 in New York

• till today – no meetings – Coronavirus crisis

• the most of the ECSEED activities - regarding recognitions, conclusions and recommendations from the 22\textsuperscript{nd} Session of ECSEED 13 February in Bratislava
Conclusions, recognitions and recommendations from the 22\textsuperscript{nd} session of ECSEED 13 February 2019 in Bratislava:

- The delegates from participating countries recognized positive achievements and the progress made in the work of geographical names standardization. The delegates recommended that the ongoing process must continue.

- The delegates agreed to encourage their national geographical authorities to initiate the cross-border harmonization of the boundaries of the geomorphological units.

- The delegates agreed to check the Google maps and similar web applications for potential errors in the geonames displayed in these web applications.

- The next 23\textsuperscript{rd} session of the Division was planned to be held in 2021 in Bratislava ahead of the upcoming 2\textsuperscript{nd} UNGEGN session on standardization.
Activities in 2019-2021

• Updating contacts – several times

• Harmonisation of geomorphological units on the state border

• Mistakes in Google maps

• Model of National report

• Unfortunately no meetings – corona crisis
Discrepancies between the course of borders and the geonames of geomorphological units at state borders

Slovakia as a presiding country has done these activities:

• Slovak national geonames authority has addressed this problem to the competent authority (Institute of Geography, Slovak Academy of Sciences), which manages the geomorphological division of the country
• Institute of Geography - improves the geomorphological division of the country
• However, harmonization of geomorphological units between neighbouring countries on state borders - very difficult, even impossible
• The reason – the geomorphological division is not the same (each country has its own division), therefore at present it is not possible to harmonize geomorphological units with neighbouring countries

Member countries - informed about these activities
Small research - how member countries proceeded – the results – in Divisional report:
Mistakes in Google maps

Google maps - one of the most used web map applications, unfortunately there are mistakes in geonames

First time - introduced this problem – divisional meeting in Ljubljana in 2015

Opened again - divisional meeting in 2019 in Bratislava

The recommendation from the session in Bratislava: each member country - check their geonames in Google maps and other web applications

Presiding country(Slovakia) - checked some parts of its area in this application - found several mistakes in geonames

• Slovakia contacted the administrator of Google maps application, explained the problem, suggested to provide the database (either Slovakia provides to Google or Google provides to Slovakia) and correct found mistakes – most efficient way

• Google maps administrators diplomatically avoided this option

• Google administrators recommended - Geo Data Upload tool (for correcting mistakes with the possibility to communicate with operators of Google Maps)
Presiding country tried it.

**Experiences and findings:**

**Advantages:** easy to use, corrections made by Google administrators - only few days

**Disadvantages:** lengthy process - finding mistakes by checking all the area on the maps with all categories; better solution is direct comparison of the databases

Member countries - informed about these activities

**Divisional report:**

**Point for discussion** – recommendation for UNGEGN to create a suggestion for Google maps application to use the official databases of standardised geonames for avoiding mistakes in the geonames

**Small research** - how member countries proceeded – the results:


What could help in motivating the Google maps administrators to provide geonames databases?
1. if more countries contacted Google maps administrators
2. if UNGEGN prepared a recommendation for Google Maps and similar applications to use only standardised geonames
Model of National report

- 5th conference in Montreal in 1987 - resolution recommended to create a detailed plan (model) for drafting of national reports

- useful recommendation, but it hasn’t been carried out

- 22nd session of the ECSEED - decision - presiding country will prepare model

- the proposal of model was created and sent to member countries in February 2021

- 24th session of the East Central and South-East Europe Division the member countries – discussion about the model proposal
Model of the National report

- the use of the model is voluntary
- contains all geonames themes
- added proposed new themes
- in the form of a table for better clarity
- additional instructions for filling the table
Model of National report

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

National report of (country) for the period ... (years)

Place for your flag

Author and his/her job position, organization, link - where experts can find the report.
Participation of the country in the division (divisions)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.</strong></td>
<td>Multilingual areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B.</strong></td>
<td>Administrative structure of national names authorities, legislation, policies and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C.</strong></td>
<td>Lexicographic guidelines for map editors and other editors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D.</strong></td>
<td>Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E.</strong></td>
<td>Including indigenous, minority and regional language names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F.</strong></td>
<td>Exonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G.</strong></td>
<td>New exonyms, extinct exonyms, projects regarding exonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H.</strong></td>
<td>Toponymic data files and gazetteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I.</strong></td>
<td>Content requirements and standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J.</strong></td>
<td>Data management and interoperability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K.</strong></td>
<td>Data services, applications and products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L.</strong></td>
<td>Including gazetteers and web services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M.</strong></td>
<td>Terminology in the standardization of geographical names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N.</strong></td>
<td>New or changed definitions and terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>O.</strong></td>
<td>Writing systems and pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P.</strong></td>
<td>Romanization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q.</strong></td>
<td>Conversion into non-Roman writing systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R.</strong></td>
<td>Writing of names in written languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S.</strong></td>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T.</strong></td>
<td>Country names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.</strong></td>
<td>New or changed country names from the UNGEGN List of Country Names that were imported to the list of geonames in this country (in language of this country)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V.</strong></td>
<td>Toponymic education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W.</strong></td>
<td>Toponymic coursework, workshops, conferences, issues, and solution of problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>X.</strong></td>
<td>Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Y.</strong></td>
<td>Features comments, guidelines, or more mentions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Z.</strong></td>
<td>Bilateral and international agreements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional instructions:**

- "If the country has no news or information relevant to the theme, please fill in: without changes: the country is solving or has solved the theme but has no news in this period"
- "If the country hasn't solved the theme, please fill in: unsolved (the theme hasn't been solved in this country yet - it hasn't been necessary or it hasn't been possible)
- "please, fill in the national report with a few key words, concisely and clearly (except summary), but if it is necessary, describe it in more detail"
- "This is the model of the national report, which is recommended to use when creating the national report of your country. It is only a recommendation. It's up to you/your choice, if you follow this model or you create your own format of the national report."
Comments and reminders

• Change or add something
• Deadline: 14 May 2021

Comments:
1. now
2. via e-mail: darina.porubcanova@skgeodesy.sk

After incorporation of comments – will be sent to UNGEGN Secretariat
Conclusion and plans for the future

- **mistakes in Google maps** – information for UNGEGN in Divisional report of ECSEED, maybe discussion with UNGEGN or UNGEGN member countries

- **model of the national report** – incorporating comments and sending it to UNGEGN

- contacts updating of geonames experts and geonames authorities of member countries
  Changes via e-mail: darina.porubcanova@skgeodesy.sk

- 25th meeting of ECSEED – regarding Coronavirus situation, maybe in the end of 2021

- we would like to hand over the presidency to the next country beginning from 2022
Thank you for your attention