

**25th SCUFN MEETING**  
**Wellington, New Zealand, 23-27 October 2012**

**Names Transliteration (G. Agapova and N. Turko, GINRAS, Russia)**

Note by the Secretary: This paper was previously tabled at SCUFN20 (SCUFN20-05E) and SCUFN24 (SCUFN24-07.4A). However, due to lack of time, it was not possible to discuss the matter during these meetings. See also [Romanization of Russian Geographical Names \(UN System\)](#) on the GEBCO website.

Item 3.4 in "Action Items by Galina Agapova" ([Report of SCUFN-XIX](#), Annex 4, p.41) was done by Nataliya Turko during the SCUFN-19, as told in p.10.3 "Submit a detailed written proposal...to address questions and issues regarding transliteration included in GEBCO Products", and questions are listed above in the p.10.3.

If these questions are still not clear, I'll try to explain our position one more time.

1. In GEBCO products (GDA and Gazetteer) we include undersea features names from different countries. Users of the products should be able to read and pronounce the names in the same way. For this names should be in one language and one system of transliteration to this language should be used.

In 3d and 4<sup>th</sup> editions of GEBCO undersea feature names were in French, in 5<sup>th</sup> – in English. What language should be used – is a question of the specification of the map. I can give as example the Specification of IBCEA, section 501 C. ([http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/mgg/ibcea/html/ibcea\\_se.htm](http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/mgg/ibcea/html/ibcea_se.htm)) -attached

I remember that the same position was approved for the IBCM Specification, prepared by Russian Hydrographic Office as publisher. In the specification of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition section 500 was approved that nomenclature would be in English, but nothing was said about names, only that they would be provided by scientific coordinators. Seems it was practically decided to be in English, because it would be strange to have the term and own name in different languages..

At present time in GEBCO Gazetteer appeared, instead of names in English, some others (one can see that all types of features are in English) ([http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/mgg/gebco/gazet\\_mar2006.xls](http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/mgg/gebco/gazet_mar2006.xls)):

Açor	Bank
Açores Este	Fracture Zone
East Azores	Fracture Zone
Águilas	Seamount, Bank
Alborán	Ridge, Basin, Seachannel
Bérrio	Saddle
Bijagós	Canyon
Camarón	Knoll
Camões	Seamount, Bank
Çandarli	Basin, Shelf
Ceará	Seamounts, Terrace, Abyssal Plain, Ridge
Colón	Seamount, Ridge
Côte d'Ivoire	Escarpment
De Santarém-Escobar	Bank

Dom João de Castro	Bank
Dos Niños	Knoll
Dvorák	Seamount
East Alborán	Basin
Ekström	Basin
Engaño	Canyon
Farallón	Basin
Fernando de Noronha	Ridge
Fernão Barreto	Ridge
Fernão Oulmo	Ridge
Frøya	Bank
Fugløy	Bank
Gökova	Trough
Gonçalves Zarco	Peak
Gröll	Seamount
Île Rousse	Canyon
Ingøydjupet	Hole
Jagüey	Spur
João de Lisboa	Passage
João Leonardes	Hills
João Pessoa	Plateau
João Valadão	Ridge
Küre	Escarpment
La Coruña	Valley, Seamounts
La Désirade	Escarpment, Valley
La Feuillée	Bank
La Pérouse	Seamount
La Renaiçença	Hills
La Réunion	Trough
Lapérouse	Bank
Lapérouse	Fracture Zone
Maimón	Basin
Maimonide	Ridge
Mazarrón	Escarpment
Möller	Trough
Nazaré	Canyon

Nazareth	Bank
Niños	Knoll
Niños	Valley
Nordenskjöld	Basin
Ôjin	Guyot
Oléron	Canyon
Parnaíba	Ridge
Pedro Nunes	Seamounts
Petit Rhône	Canyon
Pinzón	Knoll
Portimão	Canyon
Provençal	Escarpment
Provençaux	Bank
Príncipes de Avis	Hills
Príncipes de Avis	Terrace
Pêro Correia da Cunha	Hill
Queirós	Seamount
Queirós	Fracture Zone
Quitasueño	Bank
Quitasueño	Gap
Ré	Canyon
Rhône	Fan
Rhône	Cone
Røst	Bank
Río De La Plata	Canyon
Sala y Gómes	Ridge
San José	Canyon
San Pedro Mártir	Basin
San Quintín	Basin
São Gabriel	Valley
São Miguel	Hole
São Paulo	Channel
São Paulo	Fracture Zone
São Paulo (Santos)	Plateau
São Pedro	Canyon
São Rafael	Canyon

<b>São Vicente</b>	<b>Canyon</b>
<b>Sète</b>	<b>Canyon</b>
<b>Setúbal</b>	<b>Canyon</b>
<b>Sørbakken</b>	<b>Slope</b>
<b>Sørkapp</b>	<b>Bank</b>
<b>St. Barthélemy</b>	<b>Valley</b>
<b>St. Géran</b>	<b>Ridge</b>
<b>Tanoûdêrt</b>	<b>Canyon</b>
<b>Tiburón</b>	<b>Basin</b>
<b>Tofiño</b>	<b>Bank</b>
<b>Tres Mariás</b>	<b>Basin</b>
<b>Vitória</b>	<b>Seamount</b>
<b>Vitória-Trindade</b>	<b>Seamounts</b>
<b>Vöring</b>	<b>Plateau</b>
<b>Wüst</b>	<b>Seamount</b>
<b>Yucatán</b>	<b>Basin</b>
<b>Yucatán</b>	<b>Escarpment</b>
<b>Yucatán</b>	<b>Shelf</b>
<b>Zélée</b>	<b>Bank</b>

Situation looks crazy even with names from countries with Latin alphabet, because in every language additional signs are used to fit the phonetics of the language. In this case we need to mark (in Gazetteer? On map?) which language is the name originated from and according which rules it should be pronounced.

We hope to get to SCUFN more proposals from different regions (and regional projects), with variety of languages and alphabets, and the problems will grow up. So we should find the solution in the near future.

2. GEBCO is international IHO/IOC project, and official UNESCO and IHO (article XII) languages are English or French. So we can choose between them.

In Guidelines for the standardization of undersea feature names, section I.General p.F is written:

“Names not in the writing system of the country applying the names on maps or other documents should be transliterated according to the system adopted by the national authority applying the names.”

The publisher of GEBCO DGA now is BODC. Is also important that traditional marine community (navigators, hydrographers and marine scientists) are using English for communications.

We think that English is also more comfortable for publishers and user, because has no diacretic symbols and can be used in printing and Web-pages without special codes.

Taking into consideration what is mentioned above, we propose to discuss the matter at SCUFN-XX and look more carefully (or edit) GEBCO specification.

Our opinion is that is preferable to put names in English and transliterate non-english names according to the system adopted by the national authority of UK. We think that our colleagues can inform us about this system(s?).