

Paper for Consideration by SCUFN

**Proposals for improving the SCUFN procedure for the adoption of feature names
proposed by national geographical names authorities**

Submitted by:	IHB (as SCUFN Secretary), Dr Vaughan Stagpoole (IGNS, NZ and SCUFN Member)
Executive Summary:	At SCUFN27, it was agreed that there was a need to improve the cooperation with national naming authorities to make the work more efficient. New rules of procedure, including a fast-track route, are suggested to facilitate the adoption of undersea feature names which are submitted by accredited national naming authorities. These rules apply also to feature names that have appeared on published charts, maps or in scientific literature for many years. .
Related Documents:	Not applicable
Related Projects:	The New Zealand Geographic Board's review of existing undersea feature names

Introduction / Background

1. In 2014, following the SCUFN27 meeting and considering the limited resources available within its Sub-Committee, the Secretariat of the GEBCO Sub Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN) decided to contract several tasks in order to improve the content of the IHO-IOC online GEBCO Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names Database and thereby improve SCUFN operations. The following tasks were contracted to the former SCUFN Secretary.

Tasks	Objectives	Outcome reported in
1&2	<i>Major upgrade of the quality of the content of the database and consistency check by populating the fields ""Minimum depth", "Maximum depth", "Total relief", "Dimension/Size", "Associated meeting", "Proposal date" and "Discovery date"</i>	Doc. SCUFN28-07.2A
3	<i>Harmonization and standardization of the spelling of proposers and discoverers</i>	Doc. SCUFN28-07.2A
4	<i>Establishment of a wish-list of potential improvements to the interface of the on-line Gazetteer</i>	Doc. SCUFN28-07.1A
5	<i>Preparation of recommendations from the comprehensive use, in test mode, of the new interfaces www.scufnterm.org,</i>	Doc. SCUFN28-07.2B

	<i>www.scufn.submission.org, and www.scufnreview.org</i>	
6	<i>Preparation of proposals for improving the procedure when assessing feature names lists proposed by national geographical names bodies</i>	Doc. SCUFN28-05.2C
7	<i>Monitoring of the PENDING names and management of the reserved-specific-list names</i>	Doc. SCUFN28-07.2C

2. This submission paper is based on the outcome of Task 6 - *proposals for improving the procedure when assessing feature names lists proposed by national geographical names bodies* - , enriched by subsequent exchanges between Dr. Vaughan Stagpoole and the SCUFN Secretary.

3. Useful references from Publication B-6 “Standardization of Undersea Feature Names”, relating to national naming authorities are provided in [Annex A](#).

4. In 2011, the New Zealand Geographic Board (NZGB) notified SCUFN that it was reviewing existing undersea feature names around New Zealand and in Antarctica. The NZGB identified about 490 names that have been in long term use and have appeared on published charts, maps or in scientific literature that would be of interest to SCUFN. It was noted that using the usual process of individual names submitted via undersea feature name proposal forms, it would take SCUFN a very long time to consider all of the NZGB’s names. Therefore SCUFN agreed at its 2011 meeting to a process for considering these names through a more timely process. Based on the experience gained during consideration of the NZGB’s names, the process described in [Annex B](#), includes possible procedural improvements for SCUFN consideration.

Proposal

5. The revised procedure proposed in [Annex B](#) is based on the principle that national geographical naming authorities and the SCUFN have shared competences and should apply common criteria when naming undersea feature names.

6. The revised procedure proposed in [Annex B](#) acknowledges that while SCUFN is the IHO-IOC authoritative body for naming undersea feature names in an international context, there is no doubt that national geographical naming authorities consider themselves as competent and authoritative in their areas of interest or jurisdiction.

7. The revised procedure proposed in [Annex B](#) acknowledges that provided that the relevant national naming authority follows the accepted international standards for naming such as in B-6 for naming undersea feature names, then SCUFN should be able to adopt any proposal from these bodies with minimal intervention.

8. In summary, two routes are now proposed to adopt undersea feature names (UFN), according to different criteria:

- the “normal” current route, which leads to a comprehensive review at SCUFN meetings;
- the “fast-track” route, which leads to a short report at SCUFN meetings.

9. Recommended criteria for selecting:

- the “fast track” route are: undersea feature name (“already-used” or “new”) within an area of interest/jurisdiction proposed by a SCUFN-recognized national naming authority;

- the “normal” route is applied to all other cases.

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that:
 - a. SCUFN considers the new procedure suggested in [Annex B](#) and the criteria as summarized above.
 - b. SCUFN members consider in advance the possibility of becoming ad hoc panel members and contributing to the SCUFN assessment work between sessions for a better management of the estimated number of feature names that can be assessed and adopted per year;
 - c. SCUFN considers the procedure for the registration and the recognition of national naming authorities;
 - d. SCUFN experiments this procedure for 2 years, before any amendment to the existing documentation is proposed;
 - e. SCUFN Chair reports on the outcome of this proposal to national geographical names authorities, to the GEBCO Guiding Committee and to the UNGEGN.

Justification and Impacts

9. Benefits: Faster processing of undersea feature names. Better cooperation with national naming authorities without duplication.
10. Resource implications on SCUFN Members.
11. High priority request as there is currently a back log of names proposed by NZGB (and more to come from other national geographical names authorities).

Action required of SCUFN

12. SCUFN is invited to:
 - a. note this report
 - b. consider the recommendations made in section 8 and propose a way forward.

**References from Publication B-6 “Standardization of Undersea Feature Names”
relating to national naming authorities**

“The Sub-Committee shall select undersea feature names from:

names provided by national authorities and organizations concerned with nomenclature;

...

All selected names shall adhere to the principles contained in this publication and be supported by valid evidence. Such names shall be reviewed before they are added to the Gazetteer.”

(B-6, Introduction, section 2.ii)

“Names approved by national authorities in waters beyond the territorial sea should be accepted by other States if the names have been applied in conformance with internationally accepted principles. Names applied within the territorial sea of a State should be recognized by other States.”

(B-6, section I.D)

“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 appropriate national authority applying the names.”

(B-6, section I.F)

“In international programmes, it should be the policy to use forms of names applied by national authorities having responsibility for the pertinent area.”

(B-6, section I.G)

“There is significant benefit to be gained from mutual consultation by all interested parties in preparing and submitting proposals to SCUFN. National naming authorities are encouraged to consult on undersea features names in their mutual areas of interest prior to submitting proposals to SCUFN.”

(B-6, section III.D)

“National authorities approving names of features should regularly publicize their decisions.”

(B-6, section III.G)

**Draft Procedure for the adoption of undersea feature names
proposed by national geographical naming authorities**

1. Scope

1.1 This procedure applies for undersea feature names proposed by national geographical naming authorities that are recognized by SCUFN.

1.2 This procedure applies:

- a. for undersea feature names that are in long term (before 1990) common use and appear on published charts, maps or in scientific literature; and,
- b. under certain preliminary conditions, for new names proposed for undersea features that have recently been discovered or for undersea feature names that do not appear on charts and maps or are not regularly used in scientific literature.

2. Preliminary conditions

2.1 SCUFN will maintain a list of recognised national geographical naming authorities, with references/links to the appropriate national regulations and authority under which they function.

2.2 Any national geographical naming authority wishing to be recognized and listed in the SCUFN register shall provide SCUFN, via the secretary, with references/links to the appropriate national regulations and authority under which it functions together with its rules of procedure or guidelines for naming undersea feature names. These rules or guidelines must clearly indicate close alignment with the standards and principles for naming described in Publication B-6.

2.3 Applications for recognition by SCUFN as a national geographical naming authority for the purposes of this procedure, can be made at any time and will be considered at each meeting of SCUFN.

3. Methodology

Submission by SCUFN-recognized national naming authority

Step 1: Recognised national naming authority proposes undersea feature name (or a set of names) as adopted under their *governing* rules to SCUFN Secretary, including:

- a. a basic list of proposed names with their coordinates;
- b. the general location of the names (graphics, maps, chartlets that clearly depict the feature name would be required) in the *area of interest* of the national naming authority (if appropriate, limits of territorial waters, EEZ, extended continental shelf, Antarctica, as *considered* by the naming authority, should be displayed).
- c. confirmation that the names have been designated in conformance with B-6 or equivalent

Submissions may be made at any time.

Maximum: 50 names per year.

Step 2: SCUFN Secretary confirms eligibility of submitting authority and circulates proposals to SCUFN Members for validation review. Review to confirm that each name conforms to SCUFN (B-6) guidelines and that it can be included directly in the SCUFN Gazetteer without further review or consideration by SCUFN → “fast-track” route option.

Step 3 If no objection is raised by any SCUFN Member within 60 days, then Secretary will include the submitted name(s) of the feature(s) directly in the SCUFN Gazetteer and provide a summary report to SCUFN meetings on any proposals accepted or rejected under this procedure during the intersessional period → “fast-track” route option.

Step 4 If any objection is raised on any name or feature by a SCUFN Member, the Secretary will invite an ad hoc review panel to re-consider and attempt to resolve any objections raised, to the satisfaction of the submitting organization and any objecting Member of SCUFN.

Step 5 If the objection is resolved, the Leader of the ad hoc review panel shall report to the next SCUFN meeting and the Secretary will include the agreed feature and name in the SCUFN Gazetteer; or

If the objection cannot be resolved, the Leader of the ad hoc review panel shall report to the next SCUFN meeting → “normal” route option. The Leader shall provide a briefing and present any recommendations on whether the matter should be considered further by the SCUFN, or dismissed. As a matter of principle, the plenary SCUFN meeting should normally follow the recommendations of the ad hoc review panel.

3. Ad hoc review panels

3.1 Ad hoc review panels shall comprise three members of SCUFN, on a voluntary basis. The members, including the Leader, shall be designated by the Secretary, in consultation with the Chair of SCUFN if necessary.

3.2 As all SCUFN members represent their parent organization (IHO, IOC), and not any national naming authority, the composition of the panel will be decided on a case-by-case basis for efficiency purposes.

3.3 The Secretary shall provide the members of an ad hoc review panel with all relevant information in order for them to undertake their work, including, as appropriate:

Specific Name:

Generic term:

Latitude:

Longitude:

References:

History: when first appeared on charts and/or discoverer - where known

Origin of name: notes on the reason for the name - where known

Additional information: any relevant information such as chart/s maps and papers that are the key references for the name

Max depth:

Min depth:

Total relief:

Dimensions:

Polygon/polyline: for GIS

It is essential that supporting bathymetric map(s)/chart(s)/diagram(s) are provided and/or are accessible online via hyperlinks pointing to the relevant files.

