

SCUFN31-05.4C
Report of UNGEGN

The aim of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) is to encourage national and international geographical names standardization, promote the international dissemination of nationally standardized geographical names information, and adopt single romanization systems for the conversion of each non-Roman writing system to the Roman alphabet. UNGEGN has not met since SCUFN-30 (2017). As reported in Genoa, the 11th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) and the 30th session of the UNGEGN were held from 7-18 August 2017 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The SCUFN Secretary participated, summarizing the IHO report and making a special presentation. Please see the SCUFN-30 Report for more details.

UNGEGN is composed of 11 working groups and 24 regional and linguistic operational divisions, many of which conduct business and hold meetings separate from the UNGEGN sessions. A meeting of several of these bodies, and a special symposium, was held 10-13 October 2018 in Brussels. Over the past year, the UNGEGN has been focused on modernizing and streamlining its operations. In the new operational model, UNGEGN will hold biennial meetings, known as sessions, of five-days in length. The UNCSGN events, formerly held every five years, have been eliminated; the purpose of the conferences and UNGEGN sessions will be unified in the biennial sessions. On 24 July 2018, during its 51st plenary meeting, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted the resolution containing the rules of procedure and draft agenda of the first session of the “new” UNGEGN. The first UNGEGN session will be held 29 April – 3 May 2019 in New York.

With the encouragement of the United Nations Statistics Division, UNGEGN is seeking stronger ties with the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM). The UN-GGIM is active in a wide range of activities to include marine geospatial information. The eighth UN-GGIM session was held 1-3 August 2018 in New York. A joint meeting of the bureaux of UNGEGN and UN-GGIM was held during the 8th session. For more information on UN-GGIM, please see <http://ggim.un.org/>.

As national authorities for standardization report on their activities and progress to UNGEGN, developments in undersea feature name standardization are noted. UNGEGN continues to encourage strengthening liaison relationships with other international bodies, such as the IHO. All papers submitted to past UNGEGN and UNCSGN events are posted at the UNGEGN website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/default.html>).