Agenda Item 11.1.1.1

SCUFN Report

Submitted by SCUFN Chair

SUMMARY
Executive Summary: This document provides details of the work and activities of the SCUFN33 meeting.
Action to be taken: None
Related documents: None

1. **Meeting venue**

    The 37th meeting of the IHO-IOC GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN) was hosted jointly by the Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources (KIGAM) and the Korea Hydrographic and Oceanographic Agency (KHOA) in Jeju City, Republic of Korea, from 24 to 28 June 2024.

2. **Participants**

    The meeting was attended by about 60 participants, which consisted of ten SCUFN Members (out of 12), plus representatives of 12 Member States (Canada, China, Greece, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Oman, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, United Kingdom and Viet Nam) and subject matter experts (Marine Regions, NOAA (USA), ACUF (USA), KHOA and Korea Seabed Information). Assistant Director Yves Guillam (SCUFN Secretary) represented the IHO Secretariat.

3. **Submitted proposals**

    With the new article 2.11 of SCUFN ToR/RoP adopted in March 2024, which limits the maximum number of new or revised undersea feature name proposals to be considered by SCUFN in a plenary meeting up to 250 (and a limit of 25 new proposals for one country), and the South China Sea is still frozen for naming proposals of undersea features located in this area (Decision SCUFN36/04.6/01), the Sub-Committee received much lesser number of proposals than the last SCUFN-36 meeting (140 proposals vs. ~450 proposals).

    The submitted countries (entities) are: Brazil (5 proposals), Portugal (1 proposal), India (7 proposals), USA (1 proposal), Chile (4 proposals), Colombia (1 proposal), Philippines (25 proposals), Russia (1 proposal), Japan (10 proposals), Palau (1 proposal), Indonesia (18 proposals plus 16 fast-track proposals), Canada (25 proposals plus 3 fast-track proposals), and China (22 proposals).

    The Sub-Committee considered 140 new naming proposals during the meeting, among which:

- 108 were ACCEPTED (or ADOPTED), sometimes with minor changes of the generic term,
- 4 were kept PENDING, inviting the proposers to provide complementary information,
- 28 were NOT ACCEPTED.

4. **Status of the South China Sea issue**
An update on the progress made by the interested parties (China, Malaysia, Philippines and Viet Nam) on the discussions related to the naming of features located in the South China Sea (SCS) was shared by Malaysia. SCUFN noted that these efforts included two side meetings, namely a tripartite meeting involving Malaysia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, and a bilateral consultation between Malaysia and China. SCUFN commended Malaysia for leading these initiatives.

This was followed by official statements by the same interested parties confirming the need to consider the SCS still "frozen" for naming features. With the exception of Philippines who "…urged SCUFN to urgently lift the freeze of the SCS, and resume with considering and approving naming proposals for undersea features…". In the absence of a joint proposal for a way forward in the SCS submitted to SCUFN, SCUFN agreed to keep on with the decision made at SCUFN-36 (Decision SCUFN36/04.6/01) in 2023.

5. **List of Naming Authoritites in the SCUFN Website**
The SCUFN Secretary provided a short update on the maintenance of the List of Naming Authorities, available on the SCUFN website, and highlighted its importance in particular for those Coastal States willing to be informed who are marked with asterisks in the SCUFN website, prior to a SCUFN meeting, when a naming proposal is located in their areas of interest.

The SCUFN Secretary shared his impression that it is likely that sooner or later, all coastal States will desire to be included in the list with the statement that they wish to be kept informed in the case undersea features to be named are located in their areas of jurisdiction or interest. This will have consequences on the Secretariat's workload and procedures.

6. **Future of SCUFN**
The establishment of a SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group was decided in SCUFN-36. This Sub-Group aims to prepare the future of SCUFN through the development of a new designator model, based on Geographic Feature Unique Identifier, and accepting multilingual attributes for the same feature. Regarding this sub-group, the following significant progress was made, as reported by the SCUFN Secretary:
- Liaison with the founder of the Working Group on Star Names of the International Astronomical Union for benchmarking best practices, rules of procedures and nomenclatures,
- Approval of the Terms of Reference and establishment of the new SCUFN Sub-Group Naming 2023 at SCUFN-37,
- New members announcing their intention to join and contribute to this sub-group, including subject matter experts in data modelling (Marine Regions, NOAA and Canada).

SCUFN tasked the SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group to start the development of a new UFN S-100 compliant data model and present it at SCUFN-38. SCUFN further noted the signature by the SCUFN Chair of the Ocean Decade Canada-GEBCO Project Implementation Plan: Detection of Undersea Features, already presented at SCUFN-36 by Canada.

7. **GEBCO Gazetteer and SCUFN Operational Web Services (OWS)**

The continuous maintenance by NOAA/NCEI of the GEBCO Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names under the leadership of Jennifer Jencks, the Director of the IHO Data Center for Digital Bathymetry, was also commended.

Mr Chris Slater, IT Manager for NOAA/NCEI who leads the software development team of the GEBCO Gazetteer, provided a very comprehensive status report explaining the various enhancements and fixes that were made since SCUFN-36.

The updated on-line submission interface on SCUFN OWS was provided by KHOA and the developers of KOSBI. Aiming to facilitate the direct upload of naming proposals by the proposers themselves, this new component should improve the efficiency within SCUFN drastically, as well as the compliance and the quality control of the proposals.

8. **Action**

The GGC is requested to:
a. **Note** the contents of this report.