

GEBCO SUB-COMMITTEE ON UNDERSEA FEATURE NAMES (SCUFN)

SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE, version 28 June 2024

References:

- A. SCUFN-36, 2023 – *SCUFN36/05.2/03 and /04 on the need to establish a new Sub-Group for SCUFN to prepare the future.*
- B. SCUFN-37, 2024 – Decision SCUFN37/03.5/01, adoption of TORs.

1. Terms of Reference

- 1.1 The SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group reports to the IHO-IOC GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names.
- 1.2 The main function of the SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group is to support SCUFN to face the existing and future challenges relating to the international recognition of undersea feature names such as: consequences of the automated detection of new features thanks to the increase of seabed mapping initiatives made during the Ocean Decade, use of artificial intelligence, subsequent inflation of proposals, detection of increasing number of minor features with new technologies, nomenclature standards in force, adoption of scientific and cultural names for important features only, possibility of using multiple languages, evolution of the GEBCO Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names database model towards S-100, new attributes, variants, indigenous names, education and communication.
- 1.3 The technical mid-term objectives (2026) of the Sub-Group are:
 - a. To support the work of SCUFN with due respect to the Guidelines on the Standardization of Undersea Feature Names in force (IHO-IOC Publication B-6) and based on the recommendations made by the Sub-Group to SCUFN at plenary meetings, to submit proposed amendments to B-6, if appropriate.
 - b. To define a more comprehensive UFN database model, B-6 upward-compliant, based on the S-100 draft UFN Product Specification under development by the Undersea Feature Name Project Team. This new model should be built over the existing UFN database model but enhanced by the addition of a Unique Identifier (systematic but simple alphanumeric neutral nomenclature¹), by more precise geometric criteria available in the Cookbook for Generic Terms of Undersea Feature Names. It should also facilitate the inclusivity as described in section 1.2 (multiple languages, variants, to be defined for all features which are proposed to SCUFN, dependency with associated features, and obviously existing attributes² in proposal forms).
 - c. To define the criteria for eligibility to a traditional GEBCO Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Name, of all recognized features having a Unique Identifier; Criteria could be based on size, shape, scientific importance, seabed anomaly... as well as more flexible name display rules (romanization, multilingual, variants, etc.) compliant with IHO Resolution 1/1972 as amended³ (UN GEGN Principles) and ISO-derived

¹ Similar to Star Names.

² Reason for choice, Proposers, etc.

³ [IHO Publication M-3](#): IHO Resolution 1/1972 – *International Standardization of Geographical Names*.

standards such as the European INSPIRE Standard on Geographical Names⁴ as far as possible;

- d. To develop the technical specifications for aligning the tools currently in place with the new model (GEBCO Gazetteer, SCUFN OWS (submission, review, repository));
- e. To subsequently define the amendments to the current submission and reviewing procedures, including the communication aspects after SCUFN meetings.

1.4 In line with the new GEBCO strategy, the Sub-Group is also invited to prepare a SWOT analysis of SCUFN activities and subsequent recommendations (strategic evolution, technical adaptations, decision-making, communication, education, ...) that could be used as potential inputs to the mid-term revision of the new IHO Strategic Plan 2027-2032 (deadline 2029) which will be adopted in April 2026 at the 4th Session of the IHO Assembly.

2. Rules of Procedure

- 2.1 The SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group reports to the IHO-IOC GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names.
- 2.2 The SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group shall comprise at least one SCUFN Member, representatives of IHO and IOC Member States (MS), IHO-IOC GEBCO Subject Matter Experts, Expert Contributors (EC) and observers from accredited NGOs. The SCUFN Secretariat may also be represented. A membership list shall be maintained by the SCUFN Secretariat and posted on the IHO website.
- 2.3 Membership is open to entities and organizations that can provide relevant and constructive contributions to the work.
- 2.4 The Chair of the SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group should normally be a SCUFN Member.
- 2.5 The Secretary should normally be drawn from a member of the SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group.
- 2.6 The SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group should work primarily by written correspondence and teleconferences.
- 2.7 Decisions should be made by consensus. Dissenting opinions, if any, should be reflected in the annual SCUFN Naming 2030 Sub-Group report to SCUFN.

⁴ https://knowledge-base.inspire.ec.europa.eu/geographical-names_en