

Paper for Consideration by SCUFN

Report of the work made during the inter-sessional period

Regulating SCUFN work by correspondence

Submitted by:	IHO Secretariat (as SCUFN Secretary)
Executive Summary:	This document proposes a new SCUFN Rule of Procedure (ROP) as well as implementation modalities to regulate the inter-sessional votes of SCUFN members on naming issues relating to PENDING names or existing names in the Gazetteer.
Related Documents:	<i>None</i>
Related Projects:	<i>None</i>

Introduction / Background

1. In past years, proposals have been submitted to SCUFN members to decide by correspondence (e-mails) on issues relating to PENDING names from previous meetings or on existing names in the Gazetteer. While these proposals were mostly supported by SCUFN members, there were criticisms that the voting process by correspondence did not follow strict rules as this is the case for votes at face-to-face meetings that abide by SCUFN Rules of Procedure. This paper aims at addressing this gap and proposes a new Rule of Procedure and associated implementation modalities.

Analysis/Discussion

2 Decisions are made at SCUFN meetings to keep certain names “pending”, for example because the supporting bathymetric data is insufficient or the proposed specific term is considered inappropriate. It is then secretary’s role to intersessionally request and obtain the missing data or information from the proposer, before turning again to SCUFN members. The latter action can either be done at the next SCUFN meeting or be conducted between sessions by correspondence. It may also happen that issues on names in the Gazetteer are raised by particular users, which need consideration by SCUFN members (as an example, see Annex C to SCUFN34-07.2B Rev2, reporting on issues concerning some 50 names in the Gazetteer that could be solved by correspondence).

3. There is no doubt that the main advantage of SCUFN meetings, in particular face-to-face meetings, is the possibility to efficiently discuss the proposals with all SCUFN members and secretary present. This allows the engagement of all participating members. Further, the decision process at SCUFN meetings requires the adherence to strict rules as defined in SCUFN Rules of Procedure, such as quorum of seven members required or simple majority of the total number of members needed in case of a vote. The disadvantage of waiting for the subsequent SCUFN meeting to address all pending names is to burden the meeting agenda, where time is precious.

4. On the other hand, SCUFN members are left alone to judge and decide, if a vote is conducted by correspondence. However it often occurs that pending name issues are easy to tackle, once the required data / information is available. Or that issues raised by some users on existing names in the Gazetteer, for example spelling mistakes, are straightforward to resolve. Addressing such cases by correspondence, between sessions, will save time at the next meeting. Thus, 15 pending names from Caladan Oceanic (USA) have been approved in spring 2022 by SCUFN members, by correspondence, on the basis of new information provided by the proposer. At present, there is no Rule of Procedure to regulate intersessional work of SCUFN.

Recommendations

It is recommended:

5. To add a Rule of Procedure to regulate SCUFN intersessional work, as follows:

2.xx With a view to save the limited time available at SCUFN meetings, SCUFN work may be progressed by correspondence intersessionally. If a vote is necessary, a quorum of 7 participating Sub-Committee members is required. Also, the majority required for acceptance is a simple majority of the total number of members.

6. To approve the associated implementation modalities as in [Annex A](#).

Justification and Impacts

7. Regulating SCUFN intersessional work by correspondence, through a new Rule of Procedure, aims to put on an equal footing, decisions taken at meetings and by correspondence.

Action required of SCUFN

8. SCUFN is invited to:

- a. note this report
- b. consider the recommendations in sections 5 and 6.

Intersessional SCUFN Work by Correspondence – Practical Voting Arrangements

1. Application Scope

SCUFN Members may be asked to vote between sessions in the following cases:

- PENDING names from a previous SCUFN meeting, for which the requested data / information has been obtained from the proposer by the secretariat.
- Names in the Gazetteer, for which issues have been raised by certain users.

2. Terms and Conditions

- Free implementation by the Secretariat, in accordance with the newly proposed Rule of Procedure (quorum and voting results).
- Voting process by electronic mail. Acknowledgement by each SCUFN member of the Secretariat's e-mail asking for vote. Deadline of three (3) weeks to reply. Only effective answers are taken into account: Yes, No or Abstain (no silent procedure).
- Names not accepted as a result of the vote are postponed for consideration at a next SCUFN meeting. Names accepted lead to an update of the Gazetteer accordingly.
- A report is provided by the secretariat to the next SCUFN meeting, on intersessional voting results.