

37th Meeting of the IHO-IOC GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN), Jeju, Republic of Korea, 24 – 28 June 2024

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2024	
Task 3.6.1	Organize, prepare and report annual meetings of ... associated bodies including...SCUFN

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, Republic of Korea, from 24 to 28 June 2024.



The meeting, chaired by Dr Yasuhiko Ohara [IHO representative] from the Japan Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department (JHOD, Japan), was attended by about 60 participants, which consisted of ten SCUFN members (out of 12), plus representatives of 12 Member States (Canada¹, China, Greece, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Oman, Philippines, the Republic of Korea, United Kingdom and Viet Nam) and subject matter experts (Marine Regions, NOAA (USA), ACUF² (USA), KHOA and KOSBI³ (ROK)). Assistant Director Yves Guillam (SCUFN Secretary) represented the IHO Secretariat.

Mr Se-Joon Kim, Vice-President of KIGAM, Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources, summarized the geology of Jeju Island and introduced the historical names of Jeju Island, as clear confirmation of the relationship between mankind, human culture and nature, and evidence of the specific role of SCUFN in bridging human society and marine environment. He also announced the commissioning of their new state-of-the-art seismic research vessel *Tamhae* 3, her name meaning “Exploring the Ocean”.



SCUFN was extremely honoured with the welcome address by Ms Kyung-wha Back, Director for Territory and Oceans Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, expressing the strong support of the Republic of Korea on the objectives of SCUFN.

At the official dinner in presence of KHOA’s Director Kwan-chang Lim, the SCUFN Secretary had the opportunity to reply to and thank the Republic of Korea and KHOA in particular for their outstanding and continuous support to SCUFN activities. The SCUFN Operational Web Services (SCUFN OWS) operated by KHOA, encompasses several interdependent components:

- the submission interface⁴,
- the review interface, a very efficient interface at the disposal of SCUFN Members for reviewing naming proposals prior to meeting sessions,

¹ Ms Anna Hendi, Chair of the SCUFN UFN Project Team, participated on VTC for the agenda item on the Automated Detection of Features.

² Advisory Committee on Undersea Features.

³ Korea Seabed Information.

⁴ In the final stage of development before commissioning.

- the repository and the SCUFN archive, and
- the improvement of the interoperability with the GEBCO Gazetteer operated by NOAA.

SCUFN Members considered 140 new naming proposals during the meeting, among which:

- 108 were ACCEPTED⁵, sometimes with minor changes of the generic term,
- 4 were kept PENDING, inviting the proposers to provide complementary information,
- 28 were NOT ACCEPTED.

At the start of the sessions dedicated to the review of naming proposals, 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. 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.

Very useful updates were provided by the supporting organizations (NOAA, KHOA) and the subject matter experts from ACUF, and Marine Regions. An excellent demonstration of the new 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 (Secretariat’s resources, KHOA staff), as well as the compliance and the quality control of the proposals.

5. Future Plans

2 Proposal of B-6 Revision

Direct Proposal Submission by IHO Members	Use of B-6 Standard Proposal Form	only with allowed file formats
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>IHO Members</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Proposal Submission</p> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Proposer</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IHO members use the proposal submission system of SCUFN OWS 	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Character limit</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Fast Track Proposal Submission</p> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Character limit and file format restriction - Use a regular proposal form for Fast Track proposal 	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>Compliance with file formats</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submission only with allowed file formats - Compliance with SHAPE file submission rules and coordinates

B-6 and Annex A need to be revised in line with the on-line submission environment.

Korea Hydrographic and Oceanographic Agency

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On the need to amend Publication B-6 once the new submission interface becomes fully operational...

The continuous maintenance by NOAA/NCEI of the GEBCO Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names under the leadership of the Director of the DCDB was also commended. A status report on those (naming) proposers who had provided associated bathymetric data to the IHO DCDB was provided, but it was agreed that there was room for improvement. The SCUFN Secretary took the opportunity to welcome observers from the Sultanate of Oman for the 1st time in such a SCUFN meeting and drew the attention of participants on the excellent article by Oman in

⁵ Or ADOPTED which is the word used by SCUFN when proposals are located in national waters (archipelagic, territorial sea).

the Bulletin N°67 of the UN GEGN⁶, June 2024, explaining how the “*UNGEEN strategic plan aligns with SCUFN & IHO*”.

On the future of SCUFN, a fundamental topic that was identified at the meeting in 2023, 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 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.

The Chair and Secretary thanked the Republic of Korea for their outstanding hospitality and excellent support for the preparation and the efficient arrangements provided during the week. SCUFN also welcomed the offer from Indonesia (Pushidrosal) for their proposal to host the next meeting in Bali, Indonesia, from 10 to 14 November 2025.



Participants in SCUFN-37

⁶ United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (SCUFN Member Trent Palmer).