

12 March 2021

English

**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names
Second session
New York, 3 – 7 May 2021
Item 11 of the provisional agenda *
Toponymic terminology**

**Report of the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology
2019-2021**

Submitted by the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology**

* GEGN.2/2021/1

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Background¹

The Working Group on Toponymic Terminology was established by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) at its 14th session in Geneva in May 1989. In 2002 the Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical, including 375 terms and their definitions in the six official UN languages, was published in one combined volume with appropriate cross-referencing. At the ninth UNCSGN in New York (2007) an Addendum with a total of 23 entries was ratified and approved for insertion in the Glossary. The revised Glossary (that includes the Addendum as a separate Annex) is available for download from the UNGEGN website (on the UNGEGN Publications page).

Recent Activities

In recent years, focus has shifted to the creation of a database of toponymic terminology. This goal was achieved in 2019 with the debut of the database (www.ortsnamen.at/ungegn_glossary). The database is located at the website of the Austrian Board on Geographical Names (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kartographische Ortsnamenkunde) hosted by the University of Innsbruck. When initialized, the database contained the 2002 Glossary plus the 2007 Addendum, with the exception of Chinese and Arabic terms from the 2007 Addendum. Since then, additional changes approved by the Working Group have been added, but only with the English terms and definitions.

At its meeting during the first UNGEGN session in 2019, the Working Group approved the changes listed in the annex to this report. The short meeting was largely confined to discussions of the online database and approving the set of changes.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the Convenor's lack of available time has impacted the work of the Working Group in many ways. The joint meeting with the Exonyms Working Group scheduled for March 2020 was cancelled. Since that time, no significant work has been done amongst the Working Group members. On a positive note, the Working Group's portion of the UNGEGN website² has been updated with more recent information, thanks to UNGEGN Secretariat. The link to the online database hosted by the AKO is now available on the UNGEGN site.

The Working Group maintains a docket of proposed changes to the glossary/database. The docket contains more than 100 terms subject to a range of actions (addition to glossary, edit definition, delete from glossary, etc.). There remain additional proposals submitted in recent sessions and Conferences that require review. Once activities resume, the docket will be one of the tasks for the Working Group to address. It is hoped that once international travel becomes feasible, a joint Working Group meeting could be held to make up for the cancelled one from 2020.

Upcoming Actions for 2021 – 2023

- The Working Group will reach agreement on the docket of proposals for the glossary.
- The Working Group will work towards completing the non-English portions of the glossary database that are missing.
- The Working Group will address new glossary proposals, as required
- The Working Group will explore options for establishing a working group website

¹ For a more complete background, please consult the Report of the Working Group submitted to the first session of UNGEGN (2019)

² http://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/working_groups/wg3.cshtml

Points for discussion

The Group of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the report of the Working Group;
- (b) Endorse the online glossary;
- (b) Provide recommendations on additional changes and improvements to the glossary;

Glossary/Database changes approved by the Working Group

Additions

TERM³	DEFINITION
macrotoponym	A → toponym relating to a feature of global significance, larger than a → choronym : Europe, Pacific Ocean, Australasia
dual names	Two names for the same feature; usually, but not always, in different languages and having the approval of a names authority (see also → multiple names)
multiple names	Two (→ dual names) or more names for the same feature; usually, but not always, in different languages and with some or all having the approval of a names authority.

Changes

NO.	TERM	FORMER DEFINITION	NEW DEFINITION
090	hydrographic feature	→ Topographic feature consisting of water, or associated mainly with water but not consisting of dry land. Examples: lake; underground reservoir; but not an island.	→ Topographic feature consisting of water, or associated mainly with water but not consisting of dry land. Not an undersea feature. Examples: lake, ocean, river, pond, reservoir.
247	odonym	Proper noun of a traffic route feature.	Name of a street or road. Examples: Champs-Élysées, Broadway

³ Glossary/database terms are presented in reading order to reflect appearance in the online database; identification numbers from the printed glossary are retained to aid in locating terms

NO.	TERM	FORMER DEFINITION	NEW DEFINITION
246	proper noun	A word that uniquely identifies an individual person, place or thing. Examples: Albert, Beijing, Budapest	A linguistic expression that uniquely identifies an individual person, place or thing. Examples: Albert, Beijing, Snoopy (a dog), Titanic (a ship)
		The activity or process of conferring → toponyms	The science that has as its object the study of → toponyms. Also known as → toponymy (a).
338	toponomastics	The act of producing a → toponym (i.e. a proper noun) from a common noun or other part of speech. Examples: producing the toponym Bath (England), place of Roman baths, Ira ... etc.	The act of producing a → toponym (i.e. a proper noun) from a common noun, a proper noun other than a toponym or any other part of speech. Examples: producing the toponym Bath (England), place of Roman baths, Vilhelmina (Sweden, a town) from a personal name, Ira... etc.
A343	toponymization	Name of a person or group of persons after or for whom a place is named. Examples: Iago (James) in Santiago; Everest in Mount Everest; Mūsa (Moses) in Wādī Mūsa. The corresponding term in French is ethnonym.	Name of a person or group of persons after or for whom a place is named. Examples: Iago (James) in Santiago; Everest in Mount Everest; Mūsa (Moses) in Wādī Mūsa.
079	eponym	→Gazetteer that presents →toponyms in two (biscriptual) or more different types of →script or →writing system. Examples: Αθήνα, Athína; נצרת, Nazareth; Владивосток, Vladivostok.	→Gazetteer that presents →toponyms in two (biscriptual) or more different types of →script or →writing system. Examples: Αθήνα, Athína; נצרת, Nazerat; Владивосток, Vladivostok.
108	multiscriptual gazetteer		

NO.	TERM	FORMER DEFINITION	NEW DEFINITION
		Fundamental form of a →letter without →diacritics. Examples: Polish l as against ł; Icelandic D as against Ð.	Fundamental form of a →letter without →diacritics. Examples: German o as against ö ; Portuguese a as against ã.
161	basic letter	Map that presents toponyms in two (biscriptual) or more different types of →script or →writing systems. Examples: Αθήνα, Athens; נצרת, Nazareth; Владивосток, Vladivostok.	Map that presents toponyms in two (biscriptual) or more different types of →script or →writing systems. Examples: Αθήνα, Athina; נצרת, Nazerat; Владивосток, Vladivostok.
188	multiscriptual map	Combination of two (or three, in triphthong) vocalic elements in a single syllable. Examples: for /ai/, ei in German “bei”, i in English “time”.	Combination of two (or three) vocalic elements in a single syllable. Examples: for /ai/, ei in German “bei”, i in English “time”.
073	diphthong	Name of a large geographical or administrative unit of land. Examples: Yorkshire; Ar-Rub’; al-Khālī; Misiones; Attiki.	Name of a large geographical or administrative unit of land. Examples: Yorkshire; الربع الخالي (Ar Rub’ al Khālī); Misiones; Αττική (Attiki).
028(A)	choronym		oronym
250(A)	oronym		name, commemorative
B211(A)	commemorative name	Name, commemorative	
	nominative form (of a toponym)	Nominative form (of a toponym)	nominative form (of a toponym)
A240(A)	toponym		transboundary name
A345(A)	transboundary name	Transboundary name	

NO.	TERM	FORMER DEFINITION	NEW DEFINITION
080	epotonym	A →toponym that constitutes the basis or origin of a common noun. Examples: Jerez (for sherry); Olympía (for Olympiad); al-Burtughāl, the Arabic name of Portugal (for Burtuqāl, also Burtuqān, i.e. an orange in Arabic).	A →toponym that constitutes the basis or origin of a common noun. Examples: Jerez (for sherry); Olympia (for Olympiad); al-Burtughāl, the Arabic name of Portugal (for Burtuqāl, also Burtuqān, i.e. an orange in Arabic); Geysir (for geyser).

Deletions

NO.	TERM
020	batch processing
049	data
050	digital data base (also database)
051	digital toponymic data base
054	data directory
057	translingual data interchange
058	data item
068	digital data base
069	digital toponymic data base
096	data field

NO.	TERM
098	computer file
099	firmware
102	computer format
103	file format
127	hardware
141	interactive processing
197	computer menu
240	graphic noise
268	computer program
275	computer record
356	typeface
016	alphanumeric
030	coded representation
034	computer file
035	computer program
036	computer record
059; 266	data portability
351	translingual data interchange
192; 332	thematic map
193; 335	topographic map

