



Standard for undersea feature names

NZGBS60000

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Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this standard these terms and definitions apply:

Term/Abbreviation	Definition
alternative names	any two or more names for the same undersea feature. Once official, any one, or all, of those names may be used
continental shelf	as defined in s 2(1) of the Continental Shelf Act 1964
dual name	a name with two specific parts, normally from different languages, typically Māori and English. Both parts of an official dual name must be used together as one string
exclusive economic zone	as defined in s 9 of the Territorial Sea, Contiguous Zone, and Exclusive Economic Zone Act 1977
GEBCO SCUFN	General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans, Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names
generic term	describes the type of geographic feature
NM	Nautical Mile
NZGB	New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa
NZGBA	New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008
official geographic name	as defined in s 4 of the NZGBA
orthography	the conventions and rules of how to write a language
recorded name	as defined in s 4 of the NZGBA
Ross Dependency	as defined in s 7(1) of the Antarctica (Environmental Protection) Act 1994
specific term	the part of the name that doesn't describe the type of geographic feature
territorial sea	as defined in s 3 of the Territorial Sea, Contiguous Zone, and Exclusive Economic Zone Act 1977
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982
UNCSGN	United Nations Conference on the Standardisation of Geographical Names
undersea feature	as defined in s 4 of the NZGBA

Foreword

Introduction

Under the New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008 (NZGBA) the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa (NZGB) assigns, approves, alters, adopts and discontinues official and recorded geographic names of undersea features on the continental shelf of New Zealand and within the Ross Dependency of Antarctica.

Many undersea feature name proposals that the NZGB considers are located beyond New Zealand's territorial limits, so are subject to international agreements and review. The General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans Subcommittee on Undersea Feature Names (GEBCO SCUFN) reviews the NZGB's proposals on undersea feature names before it accepts or adopts them for general international use and publication on its products, in particular for safety of navigation. The criteria defined in this standard are closely aligned to the GEBCO SCUFN criteria to ensure that New Zealand's names of undersea features are consistent internationally.

Purpose of the standard

This standard sets out the NZGB's criteria and principles for naming undersea features.

Brief history of this standard

This standard supersedes the *Interim standard for undersea feature names - NZGBS60000*.

References

These documents are necessary for the application of this standard:

- International Hydrographic Organization 2001, Standardization of Undersea Feature Names, Publication B-6, 4th edition, International Hydrographic Bureau, Monaco.
- New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008 (NZGBA).
- Frameworks of the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa.
- Protocol for Undersea Feature Naming in the Area of Interest of the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa.

1 Scope

- (a) This standard specifies the criteria that the NZGB will take into account when considering whether to assign, approve, alter, adopt or discontinue an official or recorded undersea feature name in accordance with the NZGBA.
- (b) This standard defines the rules of naming for undersea features on the continental shelf of New Zealand and within the Ross Dependency of Antarctica.
- (c) This standard applies to undersea features located between the line of lowest astronomic tide and whichever of these is furthest from New Zealand:
 - (i) the 200 nautical mile limit of the exclusive economic zone, or
 - (ii) the seaward extent of the continental shelf where it extends beyond this distance.

2 Intended use of standard

The NZGB will use this standard when considering proposals to assign, approve, alter, adopt or discontinue official and recorded undersea feature names.

3 General criteria for undersea feature names

The NZGB will take into account these criteria when considering proposals to assign, approve, alter, adopt or discontinue official and recorded undersea feature names. These criteria ensure that official undersea feature names are consistent and conform to international standards.

- (a) International concern for naming undersea features is limited to those features entirely or mainly (more than 50%) outside of the external limits of the territorial sea, not exceeding 12 nautical miles (NM) in agreement with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The NZGB may give names to or remove undersea feature names within the territorial sea of New Zealand without international consultation, in accordance with the standard process for name proposals set out in ss 16 to 21 and 24 of the NZGBA.
- (b) Other national naming authorities are encouraged to consult with the NZGB on undersea feature name proposals in the NZGB's jurisdiction prior to submitting their proposals to SCUFN, as set out in the NZGB's Protocol for Undersea Feature Naming.
- (c) The NZGB may adopt or approve existing recorded undersea feature names that have been in long term use on a case by case basis, even if they do not conform to normal principles of good naming practice. Existing official and recorded names may be altered to avoid confusion, remove ambiguity or to correct spelling.
- (d) The NZGB may adopt an undersea feature name beyond New Zealand's 12NM territorial sea and within the NZGB's jurisdiction, which has been formally named by another national naming authority, if the name complies with internationally accepted naming principles.
- (e) When two names have been applied to the same undersea feature, the older name should generally be accepted. An exception might be when an original Māori name exists for the feature, in which case it may be used. The use of dual names or alternative names may also be appropriate.
- (f) Where a single name has been applied to two or more different features, generally the feature named first should retain that name. Alternatively, using different generic terms can minimise duplication.
- (g) Names using non-Roman script should be transliterated to English. When the proposer uses diacritic marks or special characters, these will be incorporated into the official name to preserve the endonym¹. Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission) will advise on the correct orthography of Māori names.

¹ Name of a geographic feature in one of the languages used in the area where the feature is located.

4 Principles for naming undersea features

4.1. Specific terms

The NZGB will apply these principles when considering proposals to assign, approve, alter, adopt or discontinue official and recorded undersea feature names:

- (a) Names are to be short and simple and not be repeated elsewhere.
- (b) A name must not be derogatory, offensive or in poor taste.
- (c) The names of living people will not be accepted, in accordance with the recommendation in UNCSGN Resolution VIII/2.
- (d) The names of commercial entities or their products will not be accepted.
- (e) The names of people who have held high offices, or who have not made an outstanding, fundamental or meaningful contribution to ocean sciences, exploration or marine protection, will not be accepted.
- (f) Names that are misspelled will not be accepted.
- (g) The English possessive form should not generally be used, but if used, the apostrophe must be dropped.
- (h) The main concern in naming is to provide effective, conveniently usable and appropriate reference. The commemoration of persons or ships is a secondary consideration.
- (i) Where appropriate, the specific term should be named after the geographically connected and already named land based geographic feature, with consideration given to the original Māori name. For example: Haast Channel is associated with Waiatoto River so it was officially altered to Waiatoto Channel, Foulwind Canyon is associated with Cape Foulwind, and Koutunui Point is associated with Koutunui Bank. Consistent and correct orthography should be applied to associated names.
- (j) Other choices for specific terms can commemorate ships or other vehicles, expeditions or scientific institutes involved in discovering and/or defining the extent of the feature, or to honour the memory of famous people who have made a meaningful contribution to ocean sciences, exploration or marine protection. When a ship name is used, it should be that of the discovering ship, or if that has been previously used for a similar feature, it should be the name of the ship verifying the feature.
- (k) Groups of like features may be named collectively for specific categories of historical persons, mythical features, stars, constellations, fish, birds, animals, etc. Examples of groups of like features named collectively include:

Group	Features
Musicians Seamounts	Bach Seamount Brahms Seamount Schubert Seamount
Electricians Seamounts	Volta Seamount Ampere Seamount Galvani Seamount

- (l) Descriptive names are acceptable, particularly when they refer to distinguishing characteristics, for example, Hook Ridge and Horseshoe Seamount. However, this is only advised when a characteristic shape, colour or other distinguishing attribute has been established.
- (m) Appropriate English or Māori specific terms are acceptable. The NZGB will also consider specific terms from other languages. The specific part of an undersea feature name should not be translated from the language of the nation providing the name, but should be romanised if necessary.
- (n) The use of acronyms or abbreviations in undersea feature names is discouraged, but may be considered if the proposed name is otherwise deemed appropriate.

4.2. Generic Terms

The NZGB will apply these principles when considering proposals to assign, approve, alter, adopt or discontinue official and recorded names for undersea features:

- (a) Generic terms must be selected from the list of definitions in Appendix A: Approved generic terms to reflect physical descriptions of features.
- (b) Existing names that use generic terms not listed in Appendix A may be altered, for example, Volcano to Seamount, Sea Valley to Valley.
- (c) As mapping of the ocean seafloor continues, undersea features will be discovered for which the existing terminology (defined in Appendix A: Approved generic terms) may not be adequate. New terms required to describe those features may be added to this standard and the standards that GEBCO SCUFN publish.
- (d) Māori language generic terms will not be accepted for any undersea feature names, due to SCUFN's requirements for English generic terms

5 The process for naming undersea features

To find out how to make a proposal to name an undersea feature, and the process the NZGB follows, see: <http://www.linz.govt.nz/regulatory/place-names/propose-place-name/proposing-undersea-feature-name>

A flowchart of the process is attached in Appendix B.

Appendix A: Approved generic terms

This table lists the approved generic terms from the IHO's *B-6 Guidelines* for undersea feature names.

1. Italicised terms in the definitions are defined elsewhere in the list.
2. The plural form of a generic term may be used to represent a closely associated group of features of the same generic type, for example, Seamounts.
3. Generic terms for features that have a genetic implication are marked with an asterisk (*). Name proposals that contain a generic term with genetic implications must include geological and/or geophysical evidence as well as bathymetric data.
4. Images illustrating the generic terms listed below can be seen on: <http://www.kosbidb2.co.kr:8080/recommend/#>

Generic Term	Definition
Abyssal Plain	an extensive, flat, gently sloping region, usually found at depths greater than 4000m
Apron	a gently dipping <i>slope</i> with a smooth surface, commonly found around groups of islands and <i>seamounts</i>
Bank	an elevation of the sea floor, at depths generally less than 200m, but sufficient for safe surface navigation, commonly found on the continental shelf or near an island
Basin	a depression more or less equidimensional in plan and of variable extent
Caldera*	a roughly circular, cauldron-like depression generally characterised by steep sides and formed by collapse or partial collapse, during or following a volcanic eruption
Canyon	an elongated, narrow, steep-sided depression that generally deepens down-slope
Deep	a localised depression within the confines of a larger feature, such as a <i>trough</i> , <i>basin</i> or <i>trench</i>
Escarpment	an elongated, characteristically linear, steep slope separating horizontal or gently sloping areas of the sea floor
Fan	a relatively smooth, depositional feature continuously deepening away from a sediment source commonly located at the lower termination of a <i>canyon</i> or canyon system
Fracture Zone*	a long narrow zone of irregular topography formed by the movement of tectonic plates associated with an offset of a spreading ridge axis, characterised by steep-sided and/or asymmetrical <i>ridges</i> , <i>troughs</i> or <i>escarpments</i>
Gap	a narrow break in a <i>ridge</i> , <i>rise</i> , or other elevation. Also called <i>passage</i>
Guyot	a <i>seamount</i> with a comparatively smooth flat top
Hill	a distinct elevation generally of irregular shape, less than 1000m above the surrounding relief as measured from the deepest isobath that surrounds most of the feature
Hole	a depression of limited extent with all sides rising steeply from a relatively flat bottom
Knoll	a distinct elevation with a rounded profile less than 1000m above the surrounding relief as measured from the deepest isobath that surrounds most of the feature
Levee	a depositional embankment bordering a <i>canyon</i> , <i>valley</i> or <i>sea channel</i>

Generic Term	Definition
Moat	an annular or partially annular depression commonly located at the base of <i>seamounts</i> , islands and other isolated elevations
Mound*	a distinct elevation with a rounded profile generally less than 500m above the surrounding relief as measured from the deepest isobath that surrounds most of the feature, commonly formed by the expulsion of fluids or by coral reef development, sedimentation and (bio)erosion
Mud Volcano*	a <i>mound</i> or cone-shaped elevation formed by the expulsion of non-magmatic liquids and gasses
Passage	see <i>gap</i>
Peak	a conical or pointed elevation at the summit of a larger feature
Pinnacle	a spire-shaped pillar either isolated or at the summit of a larger feature
Plateau	a large relatively flat elevation that is higher than the surrounding relief, with one or more relatively steep sides
Province	a geographically distinct region with a number of shared physiographic characteristics that contrast with those in the surrounding areas. This term should be modified with the generic term that best describes the majority of features in the region, for example, 'Seamount' in 'Baja California Seamount Province'
Reef	a shallow elevation composed of consolidated material that may constitute a hazard to surface navigation
Ridge	an elongated elevation of varying complexity, size and gradient
Rift*	an elongated depression bounded by two or more faults formed as a breach or split between two bodies that were once joined
Rise	a broad elevation that generally rises gently and smoothly from the surrounding relief
Saddle	a broad pass or col in a <i>ridge</i> , <i>rise</i> or other elevation
Salt Dome*	a distinct elevation, often with a rounded profile, one km or more in diameter that is the geomorphologic expression of a diapir formed by vertical intrusion of salt. Commonly found in a <i>province</i> of similar features
Sand Ridge*	an elongated feature of unconsolidated sediment of limited vertical relief and sometimes crescent shaped. Commonly found in a <i>province</i> of similar features
Sea Channel	an elongated, meandering depression, usually occurring on a gently sloping plain or <i>fan</i>
Seamount	a distinct generally equidimensional elevation greater than 1000m above the surrounding relief as measured from the deepest isobath that surrounds most of the feature
Seamount Chain	a linear or arcuate alignment of discrete <i>seamounts</i>
Shelf	the flat or gently sloping region adjacent to a continent or around an island that extends from the low water line to a depth, generally about 200m, where there is a marked increase in downward slope
Shoal	a shallow elevation composed of unconsolidated material that may constitute a hazard to surface navigation
Sill	a relatively shallow barrier between <i>basins</i> that may inhibit water movement
Slope	the sloping region that deepens from a <i>shelf</i> to the point where there is a general decrease in gradient
Spur	a subordinate <i>ridge</i> protruding from a larger feature

Generic Term	Definition
Terrace	a flat or gently sloping region, generally long and narrow, bounded along one edge by a steeper descending slope and along the other by a steeper ascending slope
Trench*	a long, deep, asymmetrical depression with relatively steep sides that is associated with subduction
Trough	a long depression generally wide and flat bottomed with symmetrical and parallel sides
Valley	an elongated depression that generally widens and deepens down-slope

This table lists generic terms that are used for some existing recorded undersea features names. However, they are considered to be obsolete and it is not recommended that they be used for new undersea feature names:

Abyssal Hill	an isolated small elevation on the deep seafloor
Archipelagic Apron	a gentle <i>slope</i> with a generally smooth surface of the sea floor, characteristically found around groups of islands or <i>seamounts</i>
Borderland	a region adjacent to a continent, normally occupied by or bordering a <i>shelf</i> and sometimes emerging as islands, that is irregular or blocky in plan or profile, with depths well in excess of those typical of a <i>shelf</i>
Channel	see Sea Channel
Cone	see <i>fan</i>
Continental Margin	the zone, generally consisting of <i>shelf</i> , <i>slope</i> and <i>continental rise</i> , separating the continent from the deep seafloor or <i>abyssal plain</i> . Occasionally a <i>trench</i> may be present in place of a <i>continental rise</i>
Continental Rise	a gentle slope rising from the oceanic depths towards the foot of a continental <i>slope</i>
Continental Shelf	see <i>shelf</i>
Median Valley	the axial depression of the <i>mid-oceanic ridge</i> system
Mid-Oceanic Ridge	the linked major mid-oceanic mountain systems of global extent
Promontory	a major <i>spur</i> -like protrusion of the continental <i>slope</i> extending to the deep seafloor. Characteristically, the crest deepens seaward
Scarp	see <i>escarpment</i>
Sea Valley	see <i>valley</i>
Shelf-Break	see <i>shelf-edge</i>
Shelf-Edge	the line along which there is a marked increase of slope at the seaward margin of a <i>continental</i> (or island) <i>shelf</i> . Also called <i>shelf break</i>
Submarine Valley	see <i>valley</i>
Tablemount	see <i>guyot</i>

Appendix B: The process for naming undersea features

