Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers (WG TDFG) of UNGEGN

Meeting in Brussels, BE

12 October 2018

Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu, Convenor

Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG)

Item 1: Agenda

Time	Item#	Item	Speaker
11:00 – 11:05 5’	**1**	**Opening** • Decisions of the 11th UNCSGN and 30th UNGEGN relating to the Working Group	 Pier-Giorgio
11:05 – 11:15 5’ 5’	**2**	**Liaison with international standardization bodies (ISO, OGC, Unicode)** • General information o 2017 ISO/CD 19112:2017(E) - Spatial referencing by geographic identifiers • UNICODE	 Pier-Giorgio Catherine/Allison
11:15 – 11:35 20’	**3**	**Liaison UNGEGN with UN-GGIM** • Activities related to upcoming events/activities o What can we do for UNGEGN 2019? ▪ 1st UNGEGN Session – Workshop ideas? • What can we do for UN-GGIM-9 2019? ▪ Contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)	 Pier-Giorgio, Catherine
11:35 – 11:50 5’ 5’ 5’	**4**	**Activities of the WG** • Support of Training Courses in Toponymy • Support of UNECA’s Geonym application • Other?	 Pier-Giorgio Pier-Giorgio All

Item 1: Opening

- Decisions by 11th UNCSGN /30th UNGEGN in NY 2017

Task	Report	Responsibility	Status
3. In working paper No. 1, the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers reported on its activities for 2016 and 2017. […] **General progress against the work plan and future activities of the Working Group were noted.**	30th UNGEGN	general	No action needed
32. Special note was made of the world geographical names database of the Group of Experts and experts were **encouraged to contribute to the collection of information for the database**.	30th UNGEGN	general	Continuous contributions by the Member States

Item 1: Opening

- Decisions by the WG at the meeting in NY 2017

Task	Responsibility	Date (final)	Status
Get in touch with national representatives in ISO, OGC to make aware of GN issues and be informed about drafts	All members	ongoing	Feedback?
Approach UNECA (through chair?) regarding Gazetteer application	Convenor	30.08.2017	done
Involve WG in global and regional assessments (UN-GGIM WG FDT)	Convenor	ongoing	done
Updates its work plan and actions 2017 – 2019 with regard to the discussions about the relationship with UN-GGIM and SDGs	All members	30.10.2017	done
Integrate the two panel discussion contents into the online discussion forum	Convenor	30.08.2017	done
Write an article in the UNGEGN Bulletin about the geospatial dimension in the SDGs	Convenor	30.12.2017	done

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Item 2: (1) ISO TC 211

- Ballot event notifications of the International Organization for Standardization's Technical Committee 211 Geographic information/Geomatics (ISO/TC 211)
- Most documents were addressed to general geographic information issues.
- In March 2017 ISO/CD 19112:2017(E) - Geographic information – Spatial referencing by geographic identifiers has been updated.
  - This document defines the conceptual schema for spatial references based on geographic identifiers.
  - The new content on the gazetteer structure has been put together by the geospatial community supporting general use cases.
  - Although it is assumed that the updated ISO/CD 19112:2017(E) won`t have a huge impact on the geographical names data provision – reflecting the complexity of the named place concept – it will be assessed by the Working Group.

Item 2: (1) ISO TC 211

- Status:

ISO 19112:2003
Geographic information -- Spatial referencing by geographic identifiers

ISO/PRF 19112 [Under development]
Geographic information -- Spatial referencing by geographic identifiers

50 Approval	**50.00** Final text received or FDIS registered for formal approval	**50.20** Proof sent to secretariat or FDIS ballot initiated: 8 weeks	**50.60** Close of voting. Proof returned by secretariat	**50.92** FDIS or proof referred back to TC or SC	**50.98** Project deleted	**50.99** FDIS or proof approved for publication

- Any activities in the countries?

Item 2: (2) Unicode Consortium

→ Liaison officer Catherine Cheetham / Allison Dollimore

- The Working Group reviews character encodings required for geographical names and informs about gaps in the Unicode standard.
- The latest version 11.0.0 was published on **5 June 2018**. This version supersedes all previous versions of the Unicode Standard.
  - Unicode 11.0 adds 684 characters, for a total of 137,374 characters. These additions include 7 new scripts, for a total of 146 scripts, as well as 66 new emoji characters.
  - The new scripts and characters in Version 11.0 add support for lesser-used languages and unique written requirements worldwide. Funds from the Adopt-a-Character program provided support for some of these additions.

https://www.unicode.org/versions/Unicode11.0.0/UnicodeStandard-11.0.pdf

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Item 3: Liaison with UN-GGIM

UN-GGIM / UN-GGIM: Europe – Highlights 2017-2018

- Rationale was presented within the Symposium
  Session 4: International standardization ---
  Presentation “Support of geographical names data files and gazetteers to UN-GGIM activities and 2030 Agenda”
  - 2nd Report of UNGEGN to the 8th Session of the Committee of Experts on GGIM
    - Collaborative activities
    - Other UNGEGN areas of work
    - The way forward – Future opportunities

http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/8th-Session/documents/E-C20-2018-17-Add_1Strengthening-Collaboration-UNGEGN-27July2018.pdf

Item 3: Liaison with UN-GGIM

UN-GGIM / UN-GGIM: Europe – Highlights 2017-2018

Working Group on Fundamental Data Themes

How did the Working Group on Fundamental Data Themes do against the ToRs?

1. Produce a recommendation for a minimum list of global fundamental geospatial data themes. ✓
2. Each data theme should be supported by a description and guidelines. ✓
3. Take account of existing activity being undertaken by UN-GGIM regional committees, ensuring that where possible existing resources are used. ✓
4. Consider the prioritisation of the data themes and how they link to other data needs with in the UN-GGIM programme of work. ✓
5. Consider the specific needs and vulnerabilities of small island developing States. ✓
6. Ensure that the data themes should be technical in nature as not to raise political concerns. ✓

And

7. Suggestions from the Committee of Experts at GGIM7 ✓

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UNITED NATIONS E/C.20/2018/7/Add.1

Economic and Social Council 13 July 2018

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Eighth session
New York, 1-3 August 2018
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Determination of global fundamental geospatial data themes

Determination of global fundamental geospatial data themes

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present paper contains the report prepared by the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe on behalf of its working group on global fundamental geospatial data themes for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its seventh session, held in New York from 2 to 4 August 2017, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 7/104, in which it adopted the proposed minimum list of global fundamental geospatial data themes and expressed support for the offer of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe to continue to develop more details for each theme and to draw up plans for promoting the proposed minimum list and making it better known, accepted and applied within the wider community, including the non-geospatial community. In this present report, the Regional Committee for Europe outlines its action to advance the work on the determination of the fundamental geospatial data themes at the global level. It also describes its engagement with the other regional committees and their relevant working groups, its engagement with other working groups of the Committee of Experts, the methodology used and the review process that it has undertaken to produce high-level descriptions for each of the themes. The report includes summaries of activities undertaken by the working group to promote the themes within the geospatial and non-geospatial communities, including workshops in Africa and promotional activities at other events. The report also includes recommendations for next steps the Committee of Experts may wish to consider.

* E/C.20/2018/1

1

http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/8th-Session/documents/E-C20-2018-7-Add_1-Global-fundamental-geospatial-data-themes.pdf

Item 3: Liaison with UN-GGIM

UN-GGIM / UN-GGIM: Europe – Highlights 2017-2018

Working Group on Fundamental Data Themes

Theme: Geographical Names:

Contributions by UNGEGN
Bureau and Convenors

Theme title:	**Geographical Names**
Description	
Geographical names provide orientation and identity to places. They are location identifiers for cultural and physical features of the real world, such as regions, settlements, or any feature of public or historical interest. They are often used as a proxy for other data themes such as Settlements.	
Why is this theme fundamental?	
Geographical names are used throughout the world as a geographic identification system and thus have potential to inter-relate and cross-reference disparate data sources, both spatial and non-spatial. Standardised geographical names are essential for effective communication between citizens, governments of all levels, decision-makers, and policy-makers. Geographical names are often used for geocoding and mapping. The geocoding use case consists of transforming an indirect location identifier (here a geographical name) into a direct location identifier defined by a set of coordinates. Geographical names are the most common, understandable, and widely used entry-point for broader searches for geospatial data and information and are therefore, necessary as search criteria in gazetteers, geoportals, spatial data catalogues etc. Geographical names are also required for a wide range of topographical and thematic map output at any scale. They are necessary for a consistent communication and visualisation of any SDG related issue or action.	
Which sustainable development goals (SDGs) will it help to meet?	
The wide use of geographical names makes them relevant for all SDGs.	
Geospatial data features in more detail	
The Geographical Names theme may comprise attributes of feature types that are already in another fundamental geospatial data theme, such as Transport Networks or Water, and/or as feature types that are not yet in another theme. A named place (e.g. settlement, mountain, bay) may have several names in different languages. Many named features have indeterminate boundaries but, where feasible, their delineation should be included.	
Possible sources of geospatial data	
National geographical names datasets are usually maintained by public authorities for features on land, coastal or marine areas. Additionally, many datasets are published by (semi-official) bodies with a particular goal (e.g. for certain region, languages, topics...).	
Existing geospatial data standards	
Note: This is indicative. Other lists of standards exist and UN-GGIM will seek to work with thematic experts to develop a list of relevant data standards. • Technical reference manual for the standardization of geographical names, (UNGEGN), 2007, ISBN: 92-1-161500-5; • INSPIRE Data Specification on Geographical Names – Technical Guidelines 3.1; • ISO 639 Language Code List for the language of origin of geographical names; and, • UTF-8 character set (UNICODE) for the exchange of syllabics, diacritics and other special characters.	

Item 3: Liaison with UN-GGIM

UN-GGIM / UN-GGIM: Europe – Highlights 2017-2018

Working Group on Fundamental Data Themes

The Committee of Experts is invited to:

(a) Take note of the report and express its views on the valuable progress of the Working Group, including the **provision of theme descriptions** for the 14 global fundamental geospatial data themes; and

(b) **Provide guidance on steps to promote, communicate and raise awareness** of the 14 global fundamental geospatial data themes widely across the global geospatial information community, UN-GGIM Regional Committees, wider UN System, and within the broader global geospatial ecosystem.

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Item 3: Liaison with UN-GGIM

UN-GGIM / UN-GGIM: Europe – Highlights 2017-2018

- The European UNGEGN experts provided expertise for commenting and discussing a draft recommendation for content of the theme 'Geographical Names' provided by **UN-GGIM: Europe Work Group on Core Data**.
  - UNGEGN experts referred to two main use cases:
    1. search criteria in geoportals, which require completeness,
    2. mapping, for which population and true
  - Geometry (providing feature size) is useful selection criterion
  - UNGEGN's input largely focused on
    - conveying the importance of geographical names as an indication of cultural heritage and history, and also
    - Demonstrating geographical names' uniqueness, which does not appear in imagery, however they are of vital importance in crisis situations

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Item 4: Activities of the WG

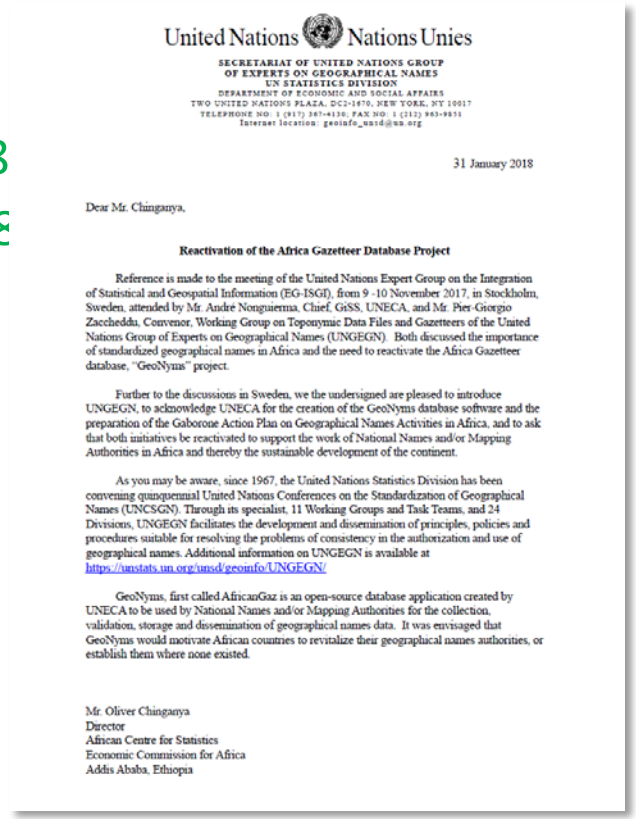
- Support of Training Courses in Toponymy
  → last one in Manila, Philippines March 2018… next one?

Item 4: Activities of the WG

- Support of UNECA's Geonym application

  → letter to UNECA was sent in January 2018 and a response received in February 2018

Importance of continued cooperation stressed by UNECA…



United Nations Nations Unies

SECRETARIAT OF UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
UN STATISTICS DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
TWO UNITED NATIONS PLAZA, DC2-1670, NEW YORK, NY 10017
TELEPHONE NO. 1 (917) 367-4130; FAX NO. 1 (212) 963-9851
Internet location: geoinfo_unsd@un.org

31 January 2018

Dear Mr. Chinganya,

Reactivation of the Africa Gazetteer Database Project

Reference is made to the meeting of the United Nations Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (EG-ISGI), from 9 -10 November 2017, in Stockholm, Sweden, attended by Mr. André Nonguierma, Chief, GISS, UNECA, and Mr. Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu, Convenor, Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN). Both discussed the importance of standardized geographical names in Africa and the need to reactivate the Africa Gazetteer database, "GeoNyms" project.

Further to the discussions in Sweden, we the undersigned are pleased to introduce UNGEGN, to acknowledge UNECA for the creation of the GeoNyms database software and the preparation of the Gaborone Action Plan on Geographical Names Activities in Africa, and to ask that both initiatives be reactivated to support the work of National Names and/or Mapping Authorities in Africa and thereby the sustainable development of the continent.

As you may be aware, since 1967, the United Nations Statistics Division has been convening quinquennial United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN). Through its specialist, 11 Working Groups and Task Teams, and 24 Divisions, UNGEGN facilitates the development and dissemination of principles, policies and procedures suitable for resolving the problems of consistency in the authorization and use of geographical names. Additional information on UNGEGN is available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/

GeoNyms, first called AfricanGaz is an open-source database application created by UNECA to be used by National Names and/or Mapping Authorities for the collection, validation, storage and dissemination of geographical names data. It was envisaged that GeoNyms would motivate African countries to revitalize their geographical names authorities, or establish them where none existed.

Mr. Oliver Chinganya
Director
African Centre for Statistics
Economic Commission for Africa
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Mr. William Watt, Chair of UNGEGN
Mr. Brahim Atoui, UNGEGN Task Team for Africa
Mr. Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu, UNGEGN WG on Toponymic Data and Gazetteers
UNHQ, New York
E-mail: Pier-Giorgio.Zaccheddu@bkg.bund.de

Date: 21 February 2018
Ref.: ACS/02/18/0033

Dear Colleagues,

RE: Reactivation of the Africa Gazetteer Database Project

Reference is made to your letter dated 31st January 2018 requesting ECA support to revamp the Africa Gazetteer Database and continue the implementation of the GeoNyms project.

As you may know, the Africa Gazetteer project has always been part of the ECA's Work Programme since its inception. Since then, several major steps have been achieved including the development of the GeoNyms application, the testing of the prototype in selected countries, the elaboration of the Gaborone Action Plan on Geographical Names and the raising of GeoNyms as a one of the key pillar for the implementation of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa).

Unfortunately, the implementation has lost pace mainly because of the lack of financial resources to carry out some of the project activities. Therefore, there is a need for additional effort to revamp the current version of the application in order to produce a robust system that adheres to the requirements of a web-based software tool; and to organize training workshops to build capacity in member States for the use of the application.

As part of its continued effort to deliver its remit, I am pleased to inform you that the Commission will assist in the following areas: re-design and development of the functionalities to enhance the application; organization of ad hoc workshops in the sideline of geo-related events in Africa to present the application; carrying out of advisory missions to African countries, as needed.

I look forward to our continued cooperation in this important endeavor that will be valuable in the implementation and tracking of the SDGs indicators.

Yours sincerely,

Oliver Chinganya
Director
African Centre for Statistics

Cc: Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, Director, UNSD
Mr. Andre Nonguierma Chief, GISS

Item 1: Agenda

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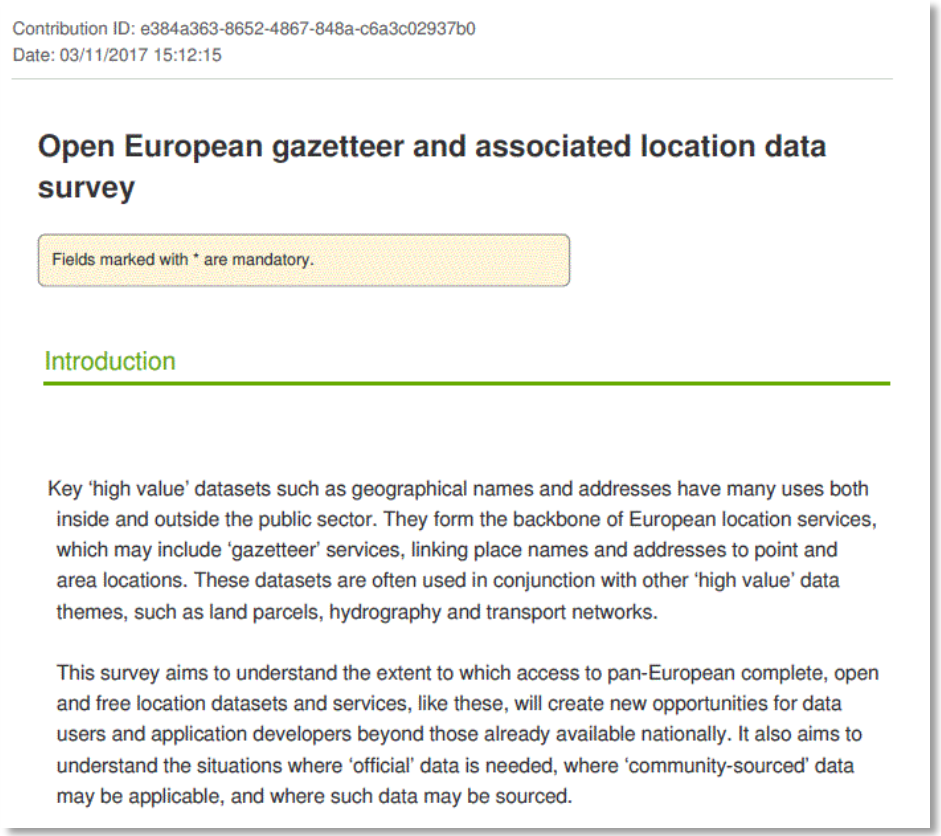
11:50 – 12:10 10’ 10’	**5**	**Support of national and regional activities** • Toponym gazetteer system of our country's new address system of the Republic of Korea • Merging standardized and non-standardized gazetteers – A case study for transboundary named entity recognition (NER)	Young-Hoon (John) Kim Gerhard Rampl
12:10 – 12:20 10’	**6**	**Discussion forum within the WG website / Online discussion forum** • Discussion & Input & remarks for the discussion forum	Annette, Teemu, Catherine, Pier-Giorgio
12:20 – 12:25 5’	**7**	**Next meeting of WG TDFG** • 1st UNGEGN, 29 April – 3 May 2019, New York	All
12:25 – 12:30 5’	**8**	**AOB & Closing** • Any issues, concerns, suggestions, …	All

Item 5: Support of national and regional activities

EuroGeographics & Joint Research Center (JRC)
"survey on pan-European gazetteer services"

- Request in March 2017 for a "gazetteer service for Europe", providing authoritative names data exists!
- What is the envisaged concept and architecture?



Contribution ID: e384a363-8652-4867-848a-c6a3c02937b0
Date: 03/11/2017 15:12:15

Open European gazetteer and associated location data survey

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

Key 'high value' datasets such as geographical names and addresses have many uses both inside and outside the public sector. They form the backbone of European location services, which may include 'gazetteer' services, linking place names and addresses to point and area locations. These datasets are often used in conjunction with other 'high value' data themes, such as land parcels, hydrography and transport networks.

This survey aims to understand the extent to which access to pan-European complete, open and free location datasets and services, like these, will create new opportunities for data users and application developers beyond those already available nationally. It also aims to understand the situations where 'official' data is needed, where 'community-sourced' data may be applicable, and where such data may be sourced.

Item 5: Support of national and regional activities

EuroGeographics & Joint Research Center (JRC)

"survey on pan-European gazetteer services"

- Results in September 2017

https://ec.europa.eu/isa2/actions/elise_en

Item 5: Support of national and regional activities

- Presentation within the Symposium
  Session 4: International standardization ---
  Developments of GeoLocator and Regional Gazetteer in ELS/OpenELS, Saulius Urbanas & Roman Stani-Fertl

Two more presentations in 20'…

- *Toponym gazetteer system of our country's new address system of the Republic of Korea, Young-Hoon (John) Kim*
- *Merging standardized and non-standardized gazetteers – A case study for transboundary named entity recognition (NER), Gerhard Rampl*

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Item 6: Discussion forum within the WG website

- Discussion forum within the WG website / Online discussion forum

https://wiki.gdi-de.org/display/wgtdfg/Discussion+forum

Item 6: Discussion forum within the WG website

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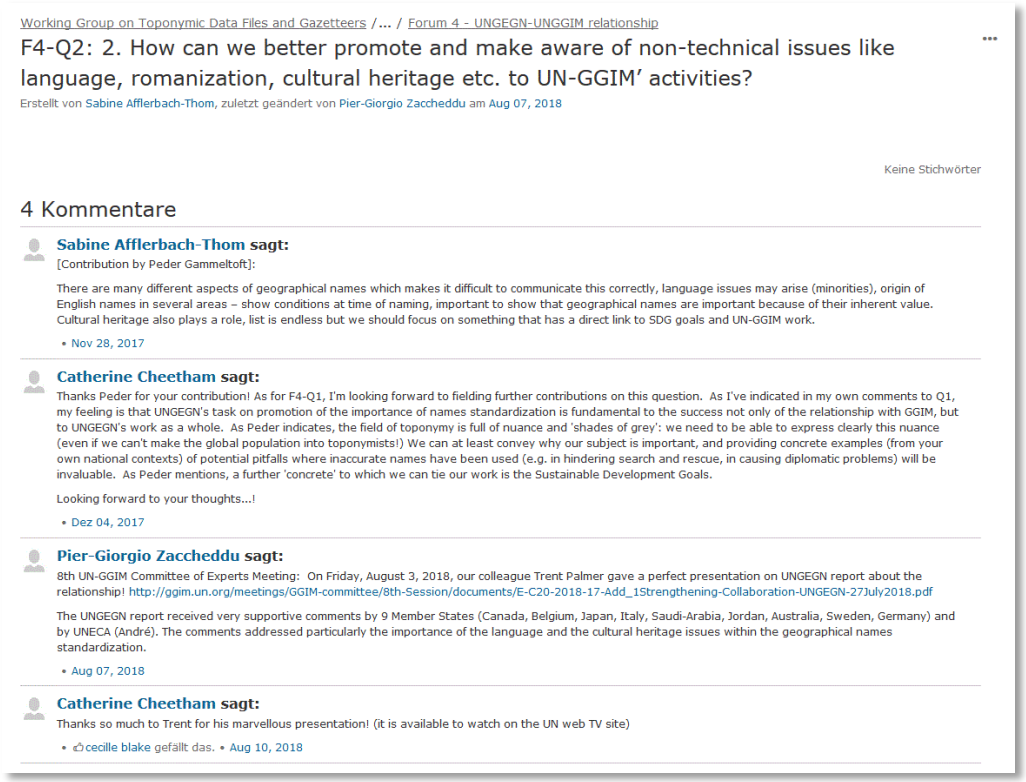
→Few input to the linkage **UNGEGN and UN-GGIM – Relationship** document

→No input & remarks to the **old topics** in the discussion forum!



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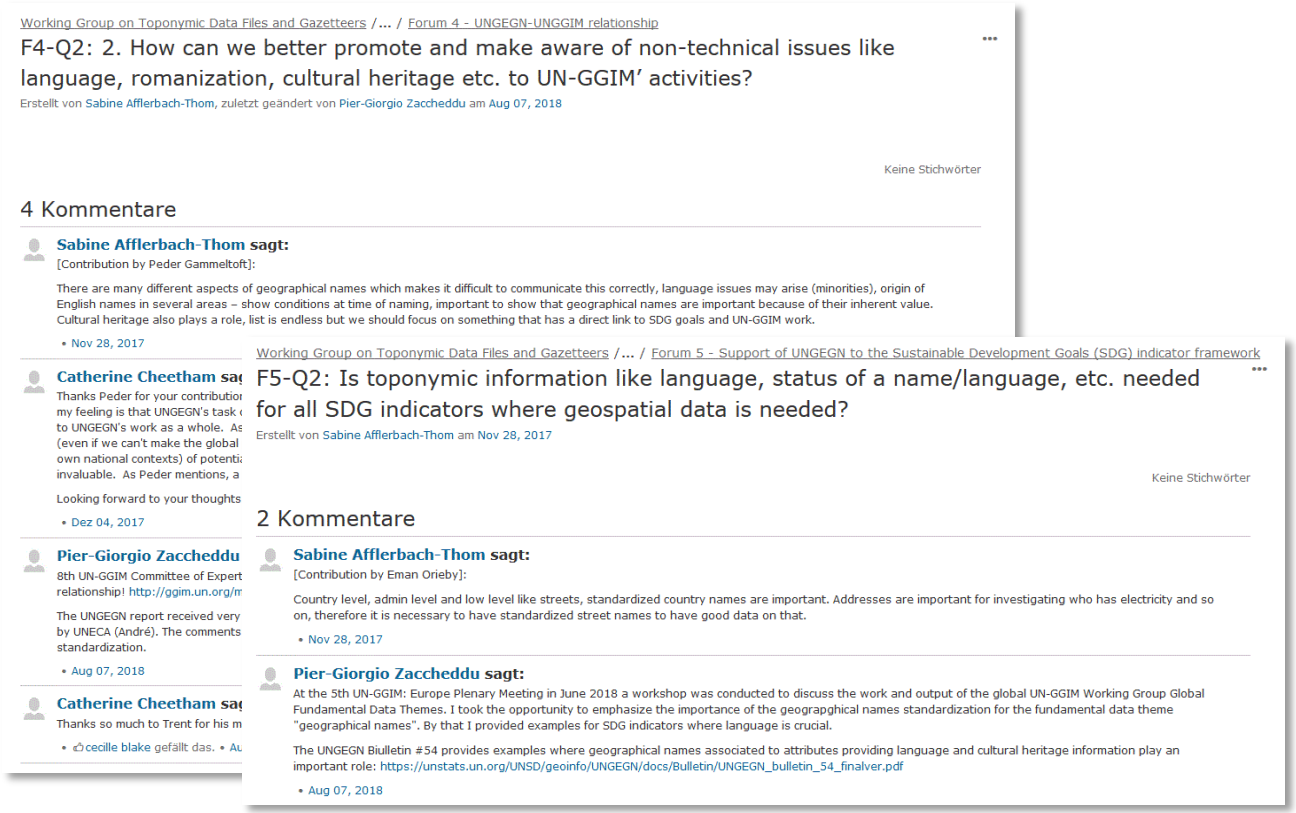
→Few input to new discussion items on **SDGs**



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Item 7 and 8: Next meeting & AOB & Closing

- 1st UNGEGN, 29 April – 3 May 2019, New York
  - Working Paper?
    - please send any ideas and plans to draft a Working Paper to the Convenor
  - What else can we do?
    - Workshop ideas… proposals?
      - LinkedData applications in the Member States?
      - Toponymic Data Files re-engineering due to SDG requirements?
  - What can we do for UN-GGIM 2019? (besides the report)
    - More/other contributions to the Agenda 2030 / UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)?
    - Input to the “UNGEGN-UN-GGIM Liaison group”?
    - …

Item 7 and 8: Next meeting & AOB & Closing

- Input to the UN World Geospatial Information Congress, 19-21 Nov' 2018, Deqing, China…? http://www.unwgic2018.org/welcome.html

Item 7 and 8: Next meeting & AOB & Closing

- Decisions by the WG at the meeting in Brussels 2018

Task	Responsibility	Date (final)
Invite UNICODE to the next UNGEGN Session in April 2019	UK	01/2019
Clarify how to get in touch with ISO in order to contribute to the ISO Language Codes Technical Committee	Convenor with UNGEGN Bureau	11/2018
Start and coordinate preparations for potential workshops/special presentations (linked data, speech technology, SDG requirements)	Convenor	01/2019

AOB & Closing

Closing…

… Thank you!

See you somewhere…at the latest in New York in 2019!