IOC Circular Letter No 2627

(available in English only)

16 May 2016

To: IOC Member States (Official National Coordinating Body for liaison with the IOC)
Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions for UNESCO of IOC Member States

cc.: The Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission
Officers of other Major IOC Subsidiary Bodies (Scientific, Technical and Regional)

Subject: Nominations for members of GEBCO Guiding Committee (GGC) and GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN)

By this Circular Letter IOC Member States are invited to nominate experts to serve on: (i) the joint IHO-IOC GEBCO (General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans) Guiding Committee (GGC); and (ii) the GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN).

(i) Nominations for IOC appointed members of the GGC:

The GEBCO project is a joint project of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the IOC. Its aim is to provide the most authoritative public domain global reference bathymetric dataset extending from the coasts to the deepest parts of the oceans. In addition, GEBCO operates SCUFN with the objective of harmonizing the policy for the handling of geographical names and the standardisation of undersea feature names for those parts of the world oceans outside national jurisdiction. The GEBCO project is led by the GGC that includes five members appointed by IHO and five members appointed by IOC. Please be advised that there are two vacancies in the IOC membership of GGC.

I am pleased to invite you to nominate a potential expert to fill in the two IOC vacancies in order to complete the full membership of the GGC, and I kindly ask you to forward the name and Curriculum Vitae of the expert no later than 20 June 2016 to the Secretariat, attention of Osamu Miyaki (o.miyaki@unesco.org).

.../...
It is expected that nominated experts will have relevant expertise, in particular, significant knowledge in bathymetry, especially in state of the art ocean surveying and mapping; experience in undersea topographic terrain analysis; familiarity in the field of international marine history; and basic awareness in the marine Earth science discipline.

The successful candidates will be appointed by IOC as GGC members for a term of five years, renewable for one additional five-year term by a majority recommendation of GGC and with the approval of IOC. The two appointed experts will serve in their personal capacity rather than as representatives of their organization and/or country.

Appointed members are expected to attend every meeting of GGC (at least every two years), and those who are absent for two consecutive meetings will normally be considered to have resigned. In this regard, I wish to point out that, because of its financial situation, IOC is not in a position to cover relevant expenses incurred by IOC-appointed members in the relevant GGC meetings. Therefore, the IOC-appointed GGC members are expected to be supported and funded by his/her organization to attend the relevant meetings.

(ii) Nominations for an IOC appointed member of SCUFN:

The setting up of the Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN) arose from the need for a uniform policy for the handling of geographical names and the standardisation of undersea feature names. The role of SCUFN is: (i) to define the nomenclature used for undersea features, e.g. canyon, plateau, fracture zone, etc., as well as naming guidelines; and (ii) to consider and decide on names that have been submitted to SCUFN. All names selected by SCUFN are contained in the IHO-IOC GEBCO Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names. SCUFN normally consists of 12 members, preferably six members being appointed by the IHO and six members by IOC acting in close consultation. Please be advised that there is one vacancy in the IOC membership of SCUFN.

I am pleased to invite you to nominate a potential expert to fill the vacancy in the IOC membership of SCUFN, and I kindly ask you to forward the name and Curriculum Vitae of the expert no later than 20 June 2016 to the Secretariat, attention of Osamu Miyaki (o.miyaki@unesco.org). It is expected that nominated expert(s) will have relevant expertise, which includes profound knowledge in bathymetry, especially in the state-of-the-art of ocean surveying and mapping, experience in topographic terrain analysis, familiarity in the compound field of international marine history, and basic cognizance in the marine Earth science disciplines.

The successful candidate will be appointed as a SCUFN member by IOC for a five-year period, renewable for one additional five-year term by IOC if so recommended by SCUFN through GGC, and he/she will represent IOC as an expert at SCUFN.

Members are expected to attend every meeting of SCUFN (every year), and those who are absent from meetings over two consecutive years are normally considered to have resigned. In this regard, I wish to point out that, because of its financial situation, IOC is not in a position to cover relevant expenses incurred by IOC-appointed members in the relevant meetings of SCUFN. Therefore, the IOC-appointed members of SCUFN are expected to be supported and funded by his/her organization to attend the relevant meetings.

Looking forward to your earliest reply, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

[Vladimir Ryabinin]

Executive Secretary
List of GEBCO Guiding Committee members
(http://www.gebco.net/about_us/committees_and_groups/)

**IHO Appointed Members:**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vice Admiral (Ret) Shin Tani (Chair)</td>
<td>Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rear Admiral Patricio Carrasco</td>
<td>Chile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Captain Norhizam Hassan</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Graham Leslie Allen</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Dr Hyo Hyun Sung</td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
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**IOC Appointed Members**  
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Martin Jakobsson (Vice-chair and Chair of SCRUM)</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Robin Falconer</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
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<td>Dr Marzia Rovere</td>
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**Ex-officio Members**  
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr Martin Jakobsson</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Chair of SCRUM (GEBCO Sub-Committee on Regional Undersea Mapping)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Karen Marks</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Chair of TSCOM (GEBCO Technical Sub-Committee on Ocean Mapping)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Hans-Werner Schenke</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Chair of SCUFN (GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Lisa Taylor</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Director of IHO-DCDB (IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry)</td>
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**Secretary**  
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mr David Wyatt</td>
<td>International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB)</td>
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General Bathymetric Chart of the Ocean (GEBCO) Project –
Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for the Joint IHO-IOC GEBCO Guiding Committee

PREAMBLE

GEBCO was proposed in 1899 and became a reality in April 1903 when HSH Prince Albert I of Monaco offered to organize and finance the production of a new chart series designated: “The General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans” (GEBCO), under the Prince’s Scientific Cabinet. In 1922 the responsibility for GEBCO was passed to the Director of the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco and in 1929 was transferred to the International Hydrographic Bureau (today the IHO). Since 1973, GEBCO has been a joint Project of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO.

The goals of the IHO-IOC GEBCO Project are to:

1. Develop and constantly improve the portrayal of global ocean depths;
2. Act as the designated international authority for undersea feature names;
3. Advance the development and application of sea floor mapping technology;
4. Encourage and facilitate ocean mapping cooperation leading to the exchange and preservation of bathymetric data and associated metadata;
5. Foster collaboration among individuals and organizations with established and developing expertise so as to assist local and regional mapping efforts to attain a global standard of quality;
6. Identify oceanic areas that are insufficiently mapped and recommend to appropriate ocean-going organizations and institutions that such areas are surveyed;
7. Promote education and training in ocean mapping through high level courses in Ocean Bathymetry acknowledged by IHO and IOC;
8. Bring together the ocean mapping community and users of bathymetry thereby leading to products that are more widely used.

GEBCO is an IHO and IOC Project that is open to all those interested in mapping the ocean floor. It relies largely on the voluntary efforts of an international collaborating community of scientists and hydrographers with the support of the IHO and the IOC.

GEBCO is led by the Joint IHO-IOC GEBCO Guiding Committee.

Terms of Reference

The GEBCO Guiding Committee shall:

1. Guide the IHO-IOC GEBCO Project, under the general governance of IHO and IOC while recognising and following IHO and IOC policies.
2. Prepare and disseminate maps, grids, data files and other appropriate depictions of the ocean floor.
3. Identify the needs of the various user communities of the bathymetry of the world’s oceans, study the ways and means whereby these needs can be met.
4. Identify the necessary resources, both human and financial, for its undertakings and make appropriate recommendations to its parent organisations.

5. Stimulate the flow of data relevant to the GEBCO Project by actively identifying sources of new data and encouraging and promoting the release of data to appropriate data banks, with the objective of ensuring that maximum available data are provided to the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (DCDB).

6. Supervise the development, maintenance and routine updating of GEBCO products. Activities are to include but are not restricted to:
   (1) Study and set out procedures for new compilations of bathymetry.
   (2) Develop standards and methodologies for the production of bathymetric maps and grids and recommend their adoption to the IHO and IOC and to the seafloor mapping community.
   (3) Supervise the development, production and updating of a worldwide grid of digital bathymetric data.
   (4) Supervise the preparation and maintenance, in association with national and international bodies, of an authoritative IHO/IOC GEBCO Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names.
   (5) Study and implement the best distribution mechanism for the effective use of GEBCO products by all users.

7. Investigate and develop appropriate logistical and financial arrangements necessary for the furtherance of the GEBCO Project, recognising and taking into account the relevant IHO and IOC policies, and seeking the assistance of the Secretariats of the IHO and IOC as appropriate.

8. Integrate into its products the geographical names of undersea features that appear in the IHO-IOC GEBCO Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names.

9. As required, establish subordinate bodies (sub-committees and working groups) to fulfil the Committee Work Programme and approve the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of those bodies, reviewing annually the continuing need for each subordinate body. The GEBCO Guiding Committee will report annually and intersessionally if necessary, to the IHO and IOC for endorsement on the status of subordinate bodies and encompass their comments before establishing, reviewing, modifying, and/or terminating subordinate bodies; actions which must be included as GGC agenda items to allow sufficient prior consideration by the IHO and IOC secretariats and member states.

10. Direct and monitor the work of its subordinate bodies.

11. Engage with regional mapping projects to encourage their compatibility with, and eventual inclusion in, GEBCO products.

12. Build capacity by encouraging and enabling the training and scientific education of new generations of ocean mapping operational experts worldwide.

13. Pursue, in dialogue with the IHO and IOC, policies that facilitate the suitability of GEBCO products not only for scientific users but also, where appropriate, for educational and socio-economic purposes in the broadest sense.

14. Take all practical opportunities to advocate the scientific and societal benefits of mapping the seafloor.

15. Report annually to the IHO and to the IOC, through their respective governing bodies and should also propose activities to be considered in the IHO’s and IOC’s work programmes, identifying and requesting, where necessary, the required funding support.

16. Prepare an annual GEBCO Work Plan and budget and propose it to each meeting of the IHO and the IOC, through their respective governing bodies. The Guiding Committee should consider and submit to the IHO and IOC governing bodies proposals for new work items under
the GEBCO Work Plan, taking into account the financial, administrative and wider stakeholder consequences.

17. Monitor the execution of the GEBCO Work Plan and receive reports from its Subordinate Bodies, including an evaluation of performance and progress achieved against agreed objectives.

**Rules of Procedure**

1. **Membership**

   1.1 The Committee shall consist of five Members appointed by the IHO, and five Members appointed by the IOC. The Secretariats of the IHO and IOC, in close consultation with the Committee Chair, will seek to strive that all appointed Members are, as far as possible, from different regions so as to achieve a balanced and diverse representation.

   1.2 Appointed Members shall serve for a term of five years, renewable by a majority recommendation of the Committee for one additional five-year term and with the approval of the corresponding parent organization. The Chair shall inform the relevant parent organization of any foreseeable vacancy in a timely manner.

   1.3 The Chairs of GEBCO Sub-Committees established under Article 9 of the Terms of Reference and the Director of the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (DCDB), shall also be voting Members of the Committee. If a Member of the Committee mentioned under paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 above is also the Chair of a subordinate body, that Member shall have only one vote on the Committee.

   1.4 Representatives of the Secretariats of the IHO and the IOC shall be permanent Observers in the Committee. The Secretariats of the IHO and IOC will also be recognised as permanent Observers in all subordinate bodies established by the Committee.

   1.5 The Committee may invite other suitably qualified individuals to take part in specific meetings as Expert Contributors.

   1.6 Members of the Guiding Committee serve as experts\(^1\) in their personal capacity rather than as representatives of their organization and/or country.

   1.7 Members are expected to attend every meeting of the Committee. Members who are absent for two consecutive meetings will normally be considered to have resigned and new nominations shall be sought. No substitution shall be allowed at meetings.

   1.8 Business may be conducted between meetings by appropriate communication systems.

   1.9 All documents related to meetings and decisions of the Committee and Sub-Committees and other relevant documents will be posted on the GEBCO web site linked to the IHO and IOC web sites.

2. **Office Bearers**

   2.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected by the Committee from the voting Members of the Committee and normally should be from different parent organizations. The Chair and Vice-Chair are each elected for up to a five-year term, but not exceeding their current membership of the Committee. They can be re-elected for one additional term by the Committee. The Chair shall conduct the business of the Committee. If the Chair is unable to carry out the duties of the office, the Vice-Chair shall assume the Chair with the same powers and duties.

   2.2 The Committee shall appoint a Secretary for a five-year term which can be renewed by the Committee. If resources permit and at the Committee’s request, a secretary may be provided

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\(^1\) So far as IOC is concerned, the Guiding Committee is classed as a Joint Group of Experts under the IOC guidelines for subsidiary bodies.
by either the Secretariat of the IHO or the IOC. The function of the Secretary shall be defined by the Guiding Committee.

3. **Meetings**

3.1 Representatives from Member States of IHO and IOC may participate as observers in Committee meetings.

3.2 Meetings shall be held at least every two years. The venue and date of the next meeting will normally be decided at the previous meeting, in order to facilitate participants’ travel arrangements.

3.3 The quorum to hold a meeting shall be two more than half of the voting Members of the Committee.

3.4 An extraordinary meeting can be called by the Chair or any Committee Member, with the agreement of the simple majority of all voting members of the Committee.

3.5 The working language of the Committee shall be English.

3.6 The Committee shall strive to make decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions shall be taken by simple majority vote of the Members entitled to vote. The Chair shall have the casting vote if there is a tie.

4. **Amendment and Revision**

4.1 These Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure shall be endorsed and approved by the IHO and IOC according to their current procedures. The Committee may propose to IHO and IOC changes to these Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure with the approval of two thirds of the Committee. Any changes shall enter in force after being endorsed and approved by both IHO and IOC.
List of GEBCO/SCUFN members ([http://www.gebco.net/about_us/committees_and_groups/](http://www.gebco.net/about_us/committees_and_groups/))

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<tr>
<td>Dr Yasuhiko OHARA (Vice-Chair)</td>
<td>Japan</td>
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<td>Cdr. Ana Angélica ALBERONI</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
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<td>LCdr. Felipe BARRIOS</td>
<td>Chile</td>
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<td>Dr Kian FADAIE</td>
<td>Canada</td>
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<td>Prof. Roberta IVALD</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Lic. Walter REYNOSO-PERALTA</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Hans Werner SCHENKE (Chair)</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Mr Norman Z. CHERKIS</td>
<td>USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Hyun-Chul HAN</td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
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<td>Prof. Shaohua LIN</td>
<td>China</td>
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<td>Dr Vaughan STAGPOOLE</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
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1. Terms of Reference

1.1 The Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names reports to the Joint IOC-IHO GEBCO Guiding Committee (GGC) as its designated authority for all matters concerning undersea feature names.

1.2 It is the function of the Sub-Committee to select those names of undersea features in the world ocean appropriate for use on GEBCO graphical and digital products, on the IHO small-scale International chart series, and on the regional IBC series.

1.3 The Sub-Committee shall:

1.3.1 Select undersea feature names from:
   a) names provided by national and international organizations concerned with nomenclature;
   b) names submitted to the Sub-Committee by individuals, agencies and organizations involved in marine research, hydrography, etc.;
   c) names appearing in scientific journals or on appropriate charts and maps;
   d) names submitted to the Sub-Committee by the Chairpersons or Chief Editors of IBC projects, in relation to the work on these projects.

   All selected names shall adhere to the principles contained in IHO-IOC Publication B-6 “Standardization of Undersea Feature Names” and be supported by valid evidence. Such names shall be reviewed before they are added to the Gazetteer.

1.3.2 Define, where appropriate, the extent of named features.

1.3.3 Provide advice to individuals and appropriate authorities on the selection of undersea feature names in international waters and, on request, in waters under national jurisdiction.

1.3.4 Encourage the establishment of national boards on undersea feature names where such boards do not exist.

1.3.5 Prepare and maintain an international and worldwide IHO-IOC GEBCO Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names.

1.3.6 Encourage the use of undersea feature names included in the IHO-IOC GEBCO Gazetteer, on any maps, charts, scientific publications and documents by promulgating these names widely.

1.3.7 Prepare and maintain internationally agreed guidelines for the standardization of undersea feature names and encourage their use.
1.3.8 Review and address the need for revised or additional terms and definitions for submarine topographic features.

1.3.9 Maintain close liaison with the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names, the focal point of which shall be invitations to attend meetings of the Sub-Committee, and with international or national authorities concerned with the naming of undersea features.

1.3.10 Provide, where feasible, historical information regarding the origin of pre-existing published names and historical variant names. This research will include discovery ship and/or organization, information regarding the individual or vessel being commemorated or geographic feature with which the name is associated, origin of variant names if required and source material regarding naming information.

2. Rules of Procedure

2.1 Membership of the Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names is covered by the following rules:

2.1.1 The Sub-Committee shall normally consist of 12 members, preferably 6 members being appointed by IHO and 6 by IOC acting in close consultation.

2.1.2 Appointed Members of the Sub-Committee represent their parent organization as experts and no substitution shall be allowed.

2.1.3 Members of the Sub-Committee shall be appointed for a five-year period, renewable for one additional five-year term by the corresponding parent organization if so recommended by the Sub-Committee through the GGC. The Sub-Committee Chairperson shall inform the relevant parent organization of any foreseeable vacancy in a timely manner.

2.2 The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the Sub-Committee subject to endorsement by the GGC. They should normally come from different Parent Organizations.

2.3 The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson are elected for a five-year period but not exceeding their current membership of the Sub-Committee. The Chairperson will normally be succeeded by the Vice-Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson may be re-elected by the Sub-Committee for one additional five-year period. Should the Chairperson step down before the end of his/her term, the Vice-Chairperson shall take over as Chair till the end of the current term.

2.4 The Chairperson, or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairperson, shall conduct the business of the Sub-Committee. Meetings will usually be held every year, ideally before the GGC meeting. In the intervening period the Sub-Committee shall conduct its business by correspondence (preferably electronic mail).

2.5 Members are expected to attend every meeting of the Sub-Committee. Sub-Committee Members who are absent from meetings over two consecutive years will normally be considered to have resigned and new nominations shall be sought from the relevant parent organization.

2.6 Representatives of non-governmental entities / organizations, or individuals that can provide a relevant and constructive contribution to the work of the Sub-Committee may attend meetings with observer status. In the event that a large number of observers seek to

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1 So far as IOC is concerned, the Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names is classed as a Joint Group of Experts under the IOC guidelines for subsidiary bodies.
attend a meeting, the Chairperson may restrict attendance by inviting them to act through one or more collective representatives.

2.7 Observers from IHO and/or IOC Member States may attend meetings. Attendance shall normally be limited to one observer per Member State.

2.8 Proposals which are to be considered at SCUFN meetings must be submitted 30 days before meetings if in electronic form, or 60 days if in analogue form.

2.9 The quorum necessary to hold a meeting shall be 7 Sub-Committee members. The Sub-Committee should strive to decide by consensus. If a vote is necessary, the majority required for acceptance is a simple majority of the total number of members. Only members present may cast a vote. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote in the case of a tie. This option will be used exceptionally if no consensus can be reached and a decision has to be made.

2.10 The Sub-Committee will not consider undersea feature name proposals that are politically sensitive.

2.11 Recommendations of the Sub-Committee shall be submitted to the GGC for consideration and decision.

2.12 The Chairperson is to submit an annual report to the Chairperson of the GGC.