



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
12 February 2025

Original: English

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names 2025 session

New York, 28 April–2 May 2025

Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**Technical expertise: names collection, office treatment,
features beyond a single sovereignty and
international cooperation**

Collection of geographical names aimed at preserving cultural heritage

Summary**

Geographical names play a crucial role in our daily lives by helping us to navigate and organize the spaces that we inhabit. Beyond their practical function, those names hold a deeper significance, reflecting the history, culture and evolution of the places and people associated with them. They offer insights into environment, migration, economic activities, language and religious beliefs, often preserving traditions and the memory of long-forgotten languages or minorities.

In Brazil, the Geographical Names Department of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics contributes to the institutional mission – “to portray Brazil by providing the information required to understand its reality and exercise citizenship” – by collecting the stories behind geographical names. Those narratives help to preserve the origins and cultural value of names.

To ensure consistent and culturally sensitive naming, the Institute developed a technical manual for the collection of geographical names, which is available in Portuguese and English, that contains procedures for accurate data collection, based on the resolutions of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names on the subject and on the procedures presented in the *Manual for the National Standardization of Geographical Names* that was developed by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

* [GEGN.2/2025/1](#).

** The full report was prepared by Ana Cristina Resende, Graciosa Moreira and Leila Freitas (Brazil), Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics. The report will be available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/, in the language of submission only, as document GEGN.2/2025/53/CRP.53.



The report provides information on the technical manual and the three phases of collecting geographical names: office preparation, fieldwork and post-field data consolidation. It also contains a discussion of the expected effects of the use of that manual for the advancement of geographical names standardization work in Brazil, in accordance with strategy 4 (iv) of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names strategic plan and programme of work 2021–2029.
