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English

**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names****2025 session**

New York, 28 April – 2 May 2025

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda *

**Reports: Governments on the situation in their countries
and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names****Report of New Zealand ****

Submitted by New Zealand

Summary

The report for the 2025 session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names highlights the progress made by the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa towards delivering its statutory functions and fulfilling its strategic intentions.

The Board's commemoration of its 100th anniversary in 2024 is a key focus of the report. Digital 'milestones and moments' articles were published online, offering a snapshot of significant events of the past 100 years. The Board also posted a 100-year timeline with biographical information on all past and present Board members. The centenary offered an opportunity to refresh the look and feel of the online New Zealand Gazetteer (including improving accessibility shortfalls), to add more history, origin and meaning as a result of structured research methods, and to increase the audio files for the pronunciation of Māori geographical names. One hundred years of operation has revealed how far New Zealand has come from the early days when naming places helped ensure that mail was delivered, phone calls were connected and passengers knew where their trains were going. Correct spelling and standardised nomenclature, as well as collecting original Māori place names, were requirements from the outset in 1924. In the following decades, the Board has made many significant and controversial decisions on geographical names, each providing a window into the country's unique cultural heritage.

This report will also address relevant headings from the Group of Experts model national report template. It will cover topical items from the past couple of years that have been implemented to improve processes, policies and practices which contribute to efficiencies, education and engagement. For example, some of the Board's activities include new publications, virtual field trips, Treaty of Waitangi commitments and annual reporting.

* GEGN.2/2025/1

**Prepared by Wendy Shaw, Secretary of the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa

Statutory functions

The Board's functions, as well as its purpose and duties, are prescribed in its guiding legislation, the New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008¹. The overarching intentions cover:

- achieving a coordinated and standardised approach to geographical naming
- establishing effective procedures, including consultation
- recognising cultural and heritage values
- providing access to an authoritative record of official geographical names.

Some specific provisions in the Board's legislation, as agreed by Parliament, include:

- give places and features official geographical names
- approve as official existing recorded geographical names that are unofficial
- change geographical names (for example, by correcting their spelling)
- alter district and region names of territorial authorities
- provide advice on geographical names that are part of cultural redress in Treaty of Waitangi claim settlements
- review and concur with Crown reserve names managed by the Department of Conservation
- ensure official geographical names are used in official documents
- maintain the *New Zealand Gazetteer* of all geographical names within the Board's naming jurisdiction.

Strategic intentions

The Board's vision from its 2020-2025 strategy ² is to enable meaningful connections between people, places and language through four strategic goals: naming places, outreach, using official names, and improving capability and processes. Success is evidenced by the increased engagement from the public submitting on proposals, increased commenting in Facebook posts, the media better understanding and reporting on information, and the increased numbers of proposals. The Board is currently working on updating its strategy 2025-2030, intending to identify functional responsibilities and linking them with operational implementation. This will help identify tangible fulfilment of the Board's strategic intentions. The updated strategy is intended to have just two goals:

1. Naming places

Officially name features and places so that people can effectively communicate information about location and preserve New Zealand's heritage and culture

2. Engagement, Education and Encouragement

Make information including stories about geographical names readily available.

With recent tighter fiscal constraints on government spending and a greater focus on effective regulation to deliver core work, some of the more aspirational goals and objectives from the 2020-2025 strategy may be removed in favour of more fundamental, clearer and achievable outcomes. They, along with legislation, provide the Board's mandate to continue to deliver standardised, consistent, informed, robust, accurate and enduring geographical name decisions.

¹ <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2008/0030/30.0/dlm1065412.html>

² <https://www.linz.govt.nz/resources/strategy/new-zealand-geographic-board-strategy-2020-2025>

Centenary

See details of the centenary commemorations in Appendix 1. All information about the Board's centenary is available from webpages under these headings:

- Landing page³
- Milestones and notable moments⁴
- Board members over the past 100 years⁵

Standardisation progress

The Board's efforts over the past two years have remained focussed on meeting its legislative responsibilities and its strategic intentions. Tasks and projects specifically relating to strategic goals and objectives, are documented in a separate but aligned work programme, showing priorities and visibility of progress and completion. Actions, programmes, initiatives and projects are reported regularly to the Board by its Secretariat for these objectives:

- officially naming all relevant and appropriate places, including cities, towns, suburbs and localities in Aotearoa New Zealand
- contributing to, influencing and applying international good practice for standardised and consistent geographical naming
- engaging with Māori communities and restoring original Māori geographical names
- providing advice to support the cultural redress of Treaty of Waitangi settlement geographical names
- increasingly engaging with the public through the Board's online presence
- partnering with organisations and media (including Māori media) to promote the use and understanding of geographical names
- publishing documents in Māori and English to reach a broader audience
- working closely with Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (the Board's host government department) to achieve the Board's goals.

Meetings and decisions

The Board typically holds three meetings each calendar year. Its three expert committees meet to consider proposals for Antarctic, Undersea and Māori geographical names, and make recommendations to the Board. Ratified minutes of each Board meeting are posted online⁶:

- Board: 7 meetings since UNGEGN 2023
- Undersea Feature Names Committee: 2 meetings since UNGEGN 2023
- Antarctic Names Committee: 1 meeting since UNGEGN 2023
- Komiti Taunahatanga Māori: 4 meetings since UNGEGN 2023

³ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/about-new-zealand-geographic-board/celebrating-100-years-place-naming>

⁴ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/about-new-zealand-geographic-board/celebrating-100-years-place-naming>

⁵ https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1If16XddEu9D-19btm528LkEE9DZmjHPTrgV03cDw&font=Lustria-Lato&lang=en&initial_zoom=4&height=1200

⁶ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/about-new-zealand-geographic-board/new-zealand-geographic-board-hui-and-minutes>

Decisions of the Chairperson (under delegation), the Board and the Minister for Land Information are notified according to the requirements of the legislation, namely the *New Zealand Gazette* and national and local newspapers. Decisions are also posted on the Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand website – consultations⁷, proposals⁸, news⁹, reports¹⁰, submissions, and recent decisions¹¹. This table from the Board’s Annual Report 2023/2024 shows the various types of geographical names that the Board considered over three meetings during that financial year:

Corrigenda, amendments	14
Declined (mostly Auckland recorded names that weren’t orthographically correct)	204
Deferred	24
Discontinued	7
Noted	35
Minimum requirements not met	27
Proposed (publicly consulted)	12
Approved	542
Undersea	5
Report to the Minister for Land Information	10
Treaty	45
Updated <i>Gazetteer</i>	3
No action	3
Total	931

Public Engagement

Public engagement has increased over the past two years, mainly due to raising the Board’s social media presence. As a result, many more submissions are being received, especially for controversial proposals. The challenge for the Board is in how to process the increased volume and distil them for consideration by the Board in a timely and accurate manner. Criteria categories have therefore been determined to help with the analysis of significant numbers of submissions. The objecting submission categories include:

- Waste of time and money. Money can be spent in more useful ways
- Long term use
- Confusion (location identification, safety, practical, tourism, services)
- Māori revitalisation (divisive, anti-Māori sentiments, racial, pandering, minority)
- Lack of community support
- Individual Māori views (particularly if they have an alternative original Māori name)
- Identity/connection/culture/history (equitable colonial history)
- Other (including vitriolic)
- The name is too difficult to remember/pronounce/spell
- Language, macrons, spelling
- Consultation process (ineffective, insufficient, biased)
- Businesses, branded products, schools, etc will have to change their names
- Submitters didn’t provide any reasons

⁷ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/consultations>

⁸ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/consultations/puawhe>

⁹ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/news/2024-12/place-name-decisions-announced>

¹⁰ https://www.linz.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2024-06/nzgb_board-proposal-report-te-toangaroa_20240606.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/recent-place-name-decisions>

- Other names proposed.

Using Artificial Intelligence to help process submissions

For the recent suburb name change proposal from Petone to Pito One¹² (rejected by the Minister for Land Information in December 2024), the Board received 2,843 submissions: 2,081 supporting and 762 objecting. In 2025 the Board will investigate how Artificial Intelligence (AI) might assist with processing such large volumes of submissions using the submission categories listed above. The ethics of applying AI to personal views expressed in good faith will be carefully considered by the Board to ensure factual analysis and preserve integrity, security and privacy. The automated results will be compared with the manual analysis already completed, and if the success rate meets a high threshold (say ~95%), then the balance could be processed manually. The Board's decision on implementing AI is some time away, but AI is expected to be used in some form.

Implementing UN resolutions

Refer to the New Zealand report under Agenda item 7(a) entitled 'New Zealand's implementation of relevant UNGEGN resolutions, recommendations and strategic intentions'.

Cultural heritage

Tangata Whenua Place Names maps

Refer to the New Zealand report under Agenda item 8(a) entitled 'New Zealand's Tangata Whenua Place Names maps – challenges and lessons learned'.

UNGEGN's view

UNGEGN stated in its report to UN-GGIM¹³ of August 2024¹⁴, 'UNGEGN recognize geographical names as a fundamental geospatial data theme because of their essential function in the common identification of features and places of the real world. However, through their origin, their history and their current meaning, many of these names also express historical, linguistic and cultural data for which their users, particularly those of Indigenous peoples and minority language groups, attach a value far greater than that of this primary function. Respectful treatment of these names is, therefore, a necessity in terms of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular target 11.4: "strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage," and a benefit by improving the uptake and dissemination of geographical names tools among the general public.'

Original, ancestral, cultural Māori geographic names

The Board's legislation requires that it 'encourages the use of original Māori place names for recording on official charts and official maps' and that it 'collects and uses original Māori place names on official maps and charts'.

It is not the Board's intention to replace every English or European geographical name with a Māori geographical name. However, most geographical name proposals considered are for restoring or correcting original Māori geographical names. The Board does not typically make proposals itself. Rather, proposals come

¹² <https://www.linz.govt.nz/consultations/pito-one>

¹³ United Nations Group of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

¹⁴ https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/14th-Session/documents/E-C.20-2024-18-Add_1_Group_of_experts_on_geographical_names_9July2024.pdf

from the public, other government agencies, councils, other private organisations, and Māori.

Under a separate process, original Māori geographical names are often reinstated/restored or changed as part of Treaty of Waitangi settlement redress. Many were replaced or lost through colonisation. They are taonga (treasure) to Māori, often recalling important ancestors or historical events. The Board therefore works closely with Te Arawhiti (Office for Māori Crown Relations) and other government agencies to ensure that geographical names proposed through Treaty of Waitangi settlements meet good naming practice.

Treaty of Waitangi settlement commitments

The government recently agreed to a framework to enhance the Crown's accountability to its Treaty of Waitangi settlement commitments. It requires core Crown agencies to individually record and track the status of their settlement commitments in Te Haeata – the Settlement Portal¹⁵. The Board's Treaty commitments primarily relate to:

- restoring Māori geographical names
- publicly notifying Treaty settlement redress geographical names as official
- updating the *New Zealand Gazetteer*
- any subsequent alterations to the names.

The Board is also responsible for assigning, altering or discontinuing Crown reserve names that are part of Treaty settlement redress, and have certain commitments under four River Accords with those Māori groups.

Kā Huru Manu

Another way that the Board gives practical effect to its legislative responsibilities is through the Kā Huru Manu¹⁶ (online cultural heritage atlas) joint project between itself and the main tribe in the South Island or Te Waipounamu, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. Refer to further details in the New Zealand report under Agenda item 8(a) entitled 'Special New Zealand presentation on Ngāi Tahu's online cultural heritage atlas, Kā Huru Manu'.

Contemporary Māori geographic names policy

Another activity to address cultural heritage in geographical names was raised in October 2021 when the Board agreed that a guideline or reference document would be beneficial to aid consideration of new contemporary Māori geographical names being proposed to it. The Board wondered if the issues were any different when considering contemporary non-Māori geographical names. Also, whether there may be no distinction between contemporary and traditional Māori geographical names. What is traditional now was contemporary at one point in time, so the question of relativity in terms of the historical timeline is important to assess. Whakapapa (genealogy) and the connectiveness of a name are also important. The policy would need to ensure, enable and allow the process to be led by Māori. In all cases, a contemporary Māori geographical name must have relevance and cultural context to the place or feature being named. The Board encourages contemporary Māori geographical name proposals to ensure New Zealand enjoys a cultural balance in its geographical naming. The Board's new policy was discussed at its recent 31 March 2025 meeting, the outcome being some minor edits before eventually publishing online with various other Board policies.

Fast-track approval of unofficial recorded Māori geographical names to become official

In 2023 the Board altered the fast-track approvals programme that began in 2020 because the number of unofficial recorded geographical names was too high for some Māori groups to process and so they were not responding to consultation requests. The Board

¹⁵ <https://tehaeata.govt.nz/nau-mai-haere-mai-ki-te-haeata?destination=/kia-ora>

¹⁶ <https://kahurumanu.co.nz/atlas>

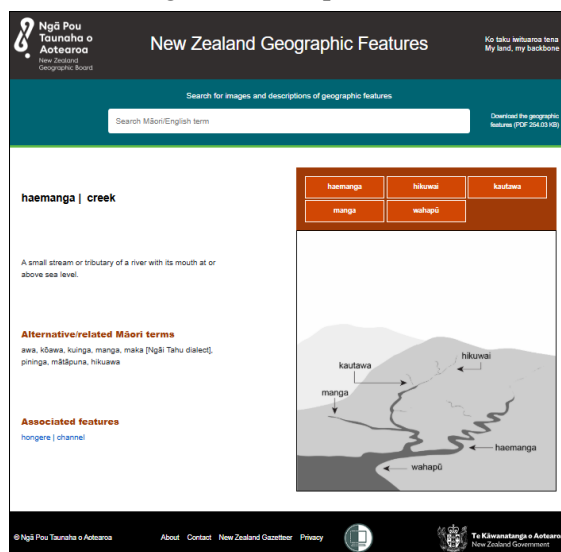
therefore decided to focus on processing unofficial recorded Māori geographical names first, adding macrons where appropriate and giving local Māori more time to respond if needed. The Board will continue to approve unofficial recorded Māori geographical names as official, so long as they meet the legislative criteria (ie the definition of recorded is met, the name is non-controversial, and there are no other known recorded names for that place or feature). These are the Board's approval statistics to date:

Council name and total	Date completed		
Auckland Council (541 Māori names)	2023	Masterton District (66 Māori names, 54 non-Māori names)	2019
Carterton District (35 Māori names, 77 non-Māori names)	2019	Offshore Islands (Department of Conservation, 198 non-Māori names)	2020/21
Gisborne District Council (908 Māori names, 42 non-Māori names)	2020/21	Porirua City (9 Māori names, 19 non-Māori names)	2019
Kapiti Coast District (55 Māori names, 2 non-Māori names)	2019	South Wairarapa District (84 Māori names, 103 non-Māori names)	2019
Lower Hutt City (24 Māori names, 61 non-Māori names)	2019	Tasman District Council (60 Māori names, 449 non-Māori names)	2020/21
Marlborough District Council (194 Māori names, 753 non-Māori names)	2020/21	Upper Hutt City (15 Māori names, 46 non-Māori names)	2019
		Wellington City (16 Māori names, 91 non-Māori names)	2019

Generic Terminology

The Board uses a generic terms policy which provides guidance when it and proposers are considering and applying generic terms to the specific parts of geographical names. The primary purpose of the generic term is to describe the feature itself, eg River or Mountain. The generic term is therefore valuable for general use by the public, but especially for location identification, safe navigation and emergency response. A name without a generic term can make it difficult to identify the feature or its location. This policy was established in 2019 but has been operational for many decades¹⁷.

A supporting tool relating to generic terms and which also assists considering and applying Māori generic terms to geographic names, is the New Zealand Geographic Features website¹⁸. This website offers line drawings to identify Māori generic terms from which descriptions, the English generic term and associated feature generics are presented:



¹⁷ https://www.linz.govt.nz/sites/default/files/corp/nzgb_generic-terms-policy_20191018.pdf

¹⁸ <https://geographicfeatures.linz.govt.nz/>

Writing systems and pronunciation

Refer to the New Zealand report under Agenda item 5(c) entitled ‘Audio pronunciation functionality in the New Zealand Gazetteer for Māori geographical names’.

Toponymic education

New Zealand’s initiatives to educate about geographical names are not structured or frequent. The Board tends to contribute to national events to tell the geographical naming story. In the past the Board has created its own projects such as for *Tuia 250 First Encounters* where the Board researched over 260 geographical names given by Captain Cook¹⁹, and for *WW100* centenary, where the Board published 30 geographical names commemorating aspects of WW1²⁰.

In June 2024, because of demand, the Board reprinted another 1,000 copies of the Board’s book ‘Place Names of the Ancestors, A Māori Oral History Atlas’²¹. This bilingual book that was first published in 1990, tells the stories of early Māori discoverers, explorers and travellers from the first wave of migration waka (canoes), and the places they named. This valuable resource is used by schools and universities, as well as researchers and tourists.

International cooperation

SCUFN²²

The Board continues to work with the SCUFN, an international body of oceanographic and hydrographic experts who select names for features on the ocean floor worldwide. New Zealand wants to ensure that its geographical names that are more than 50% beyond its 12 nautical mile territorial limit, are accepted for use internationally. In the 2023/2024 financial year SCUFN accepted all 18 of New Zealand proposals, which means that SCUFN now recognises 413 of New Zealand’s 434 official undersea feature names (95%). The remaining 21 names will be processed in the future as time permits.

SCAGI²³

In August 2023 and 2024 the Board’s Secretary joined the annual meeting of SCAGI online. SCAGI manages and enhances the geographic framework for Antarctic scientific research, operations, environmental management and tourism. New Zealand reported on geographical naming work in the Ross Sea region of Antarctica. New Zealand’s contribution to SCAR’s CGA²⁴ enables the recognition and discovery of New Zealand’s geographical names with their stories and ensures high quality geographical naming data is available internationally. The Board has also been rationalising its Antarctic geographical names data to ensure it is consistent with international data in this shared operational area.

PNWG²⁵

The several naming jurisdictions within Australia and one national naming authority within New Zealand meet regularly on matters of mutual interest. The focus is typically the Australian feature catalogue, composite Gazetteer of Australia, Australian Place Name Principles, strategic direction, issues shared such as offensive names, gender balance and diversity, and sharing experiences through networking together. This group has been in operation since 1984 and is giving practical effect to standardising geographical names in both countries. Refer to the country report from Australia, under Agenda item 4(b), which offers greater insights into PNWG and its relationship with its governing bodies.

UNGEGN

New Zealand has been an active member of UNGEGN for at least three decades – from attendance by past Chairpersons of the Board as well as attendance by its current Secretary. Additionally, the Board’s Secretary has served as Rapporteur since 2019 (and informally before that assisting in Rapporteur duties).

¹⁹ <https://www.linzi.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/place-name-stories/place-names-cooks-voyages>

²⁰ <https://www.linzi.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/place-name-stories/new-zealands-first-world-war-place-names>

²¹ <https://www.linzi.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/place-name-stories/maori-oral-history-atlas>

²² Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names

²³ Standing Committee on Antarctic Geographic Information

²⁴ Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research Composite Gazetteer of Antarctica

²⁵ Place Names Working Group

As a Bureau member the Secretary attends inter-sessional meetings (core Bureau, extended Bureau and Divisional Chairs). Both UNGEGN and UN-GGIM are supported by the same government department, Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand. This department has broad responsibilities ranging from the survey and title system, location information, topographic mapping, hydrographic charts, administering the overseas investment process, managing Crown assets, regulating property valuations, managing Treaty of Waitangi settlement commitments, and supporting the Board as New Zealand's national naming authority.

An ongoing commitment from the Board is to contribute to UNGEGN's Bulletin published twice a year. The contents of Bulletins hold a wealth of collective knowledge and information from around the world, providing inspiration, context, justification, insights and best practices. New Zealand started contributing articles from Bulletin #51 in November 2016 'National Names Authorities – structures and operations', with the latest offering in Bulletin #68 from December 2024, 'The role of geographical names in preserving cultural heritage'.

It continues to be an honour and privilege to be part of a global group of experts, passionate about the standardisation of geographical names both nationally and internationally.

Process improvement, policies and practices

Standards²⁶

In December 2023 we updated our Standards for New Zealand, Antarctic and undersea feature naming (English and Māori versions) to include:

- recognition of New Zealand's diverse and inclusive society and culture, and gender balance in geographical naming, and
- encouraging proposals for contemporary Māori geographical names.

Policies

See paragraph above headed '*Contemporary Māori geographic names policy*'. Another new policy relates to defining the extents or boundaries of suburb and locality names. The new approach agreed by the Board in April 2024 will involve notifying the extent but not including it in any final gazette notice. Final boundary extents can be included in the department's separate NZ Suburbs and Localities dataset and managed as part of that dataset going forward – along with any minor boundary adjustments. The main benefit would be that future changes to boundaries would not require another formal proposal to the Board. These arrangements need to be set out formally as it is not desirable to divest these statutory responsibilities entirely to the department. The Board considered the draft policy at its meeting on 31 March 2025, the outcome being some minor edits before eventually publishing online with various other Board policies.

Minimum requirements for proposals²⁷

In July 2023 we reviewed the mandatory requirements for proposals to ensure that all necessary information is provided by proposers to allow their proposals to be processed. In May 2024 we updated our policy and guide list to include the requirement that councils consult with neighbouring councils on their district and region name proposals.

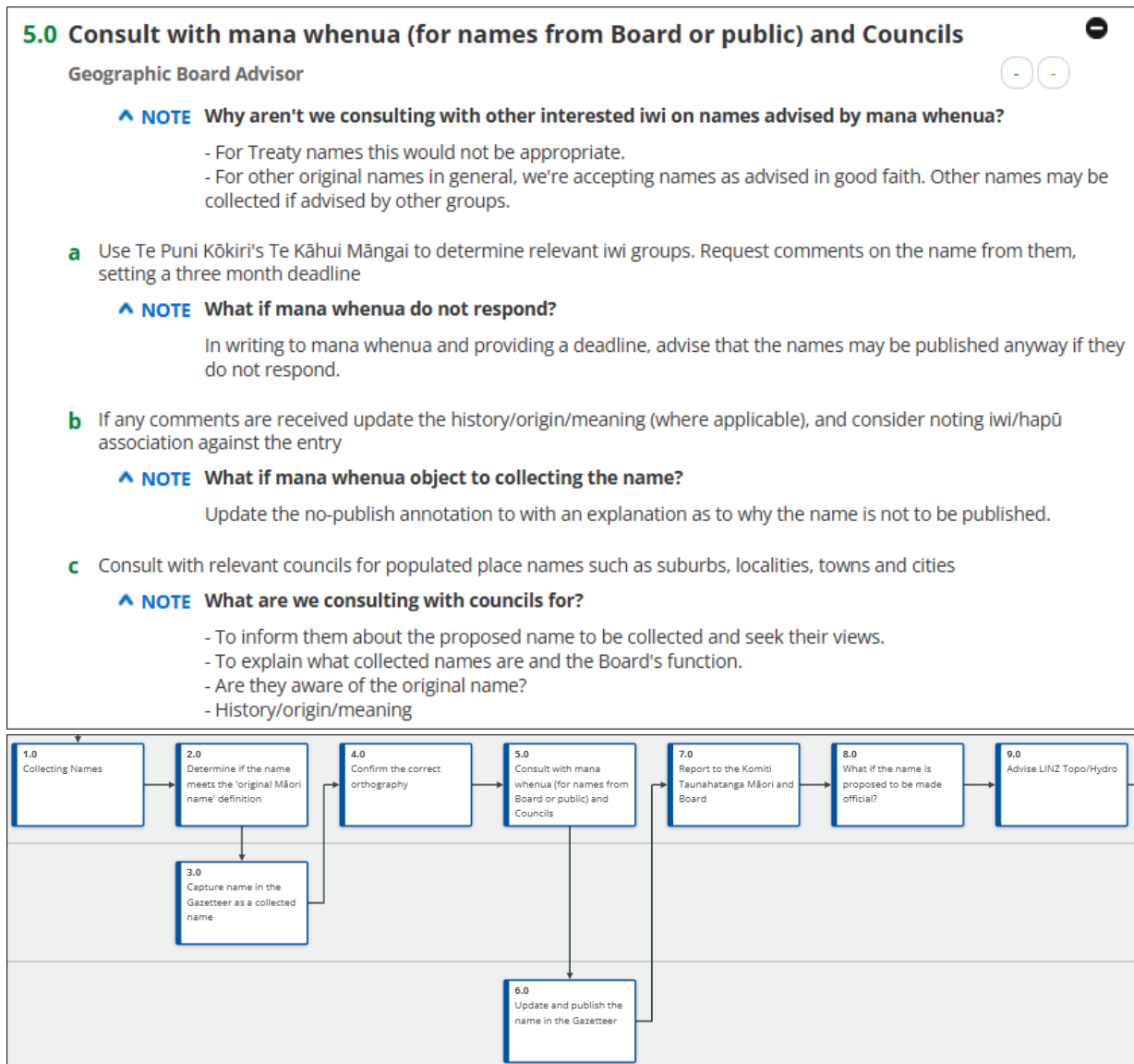
Promapp process

The Board has around 25 processes that have been mapped to support consistent and accurate operations of the Secretariat. They were first produced in 2014 because nothing was documented. They were fully reviewed in 2018/19 and are currently being fully reviewed again in 2025. This ensures improvements to processes are fully captured, and terminology and links are updated. Opportunity is also taken to update various standardised templates. The processes are particularly helpful to new team members or for processes that are not used regularly. They also help demonstrate that we follow robust processes when challenged or requested. At some stage in the future an automated workflow tool would

²⁶ <https://www.lin.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/about-new-zealand-geographic-board/board-documents-policies-and-standards>

²⁷ <https://www.lin.govt.nz/resources/guide/minimum-requirements-geographic-name-proposals>

use these processes as the base requirements. Here is an activity in the ‘Collecting original Māori names’ process and its associated map:



Official Information Act (OIA) requests

New Zealand's government agencies are required to release official information under the Official Information Act 1982²⁸. The processes for release of information and protection of confidential and private information are well established and managed by the Office of the Ombudsman. The overarching intention is to release and not withhold any information. The Board receives its share of OIA requests throughout the year, especially when geographical name proposals are controversial. To assist with the transparency of the information provided, most government agencies adopt a proactive release process, whereby the response letter and attached released information (whether redacted or not) are posted online for full discovery by not only the requester, but any other interested persons. The Board has recently updated its OIA checklist to include sign-offs for proactive releases (accounting for legal and Ministerial privilege, as well as impacts for media). For example, see the proactive release for supporting documents for the Board's proposal report²⁹ for Waimarino (confirmed by the Minister for Land Information) and Waimarino Railway Station (rejected by the Minister for Land Information).

²⁸ <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1982/0156/latest/DLM64785.html>

²⁹ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/resources/oia-release/supporting-documents-nga-pou-taunaha-o-aotearoa-new-zealand-geographic->

Keeping track of proposals, submissions on proposals and enquiries

The Board has recently replaced two very outdated Access databases (created in 1998). The proposals/submissions database had functions in three stages: data entry, data storage, and reporting. The reporting stage never functioned properly. This database was set up to capture information with indications of workflow or general record keeping/reference. The enquiries database kept a record of general geographical name enquiries.

As an interim measure to mitigate the risk of using outdated and unsupported software, and before possibly creating automated workflow tools for both, the Board created in January 2025 two simple spreadsheets in a register format, to capture basic information, which can still be analysed for metrics by sorting and distilling data fields. For example, how many enquiries were received since the last Board meeting, or which proposals have yet to be considered by the Board?

Contact

For any enquiries, comments and feedback please contact:

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Appendix 1 – Centenary

The legal framework for official geographical naming in Aotearoa New Zealand began in the late 1800s under the Royal Geographic Society of London followed by the Designations of Districts Acts 1894 and 1908. These laws gave the Governor-General the power to make geographical names official.

The need for a national naming authority arose primarily to avoid public confusion and to support the provision of key services such as post and telegraph offices and railway stations. So, 100 years ago in 1924, the Minister of Lands established the Honorary Geographic Board of New Zealand to consider and make recommendations on place and feature names.

Later, the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946 established the New Zealand Geographic Board, with powers to make geographic names official and enforce their use.

The current New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008 largely continued the provisions in the 1946 Act, including collecting original Māori geographical names. This confirmed the ongoing need and relevance of standardised and consistent geographical naming. The 2008 Act modernised public notification requirements, extended the Board's jurisdiction, confirmed its role in official geographical naming, established a publicly searchable *New Zealand Gazetteer* of geographical names, and strengthened compliance and enforcement provisions.



Timeline of the legal framework for official geographical naming in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Geographical naming location finding, identity and connections enjoyed by modern society applied in equal measure in 1924 and throughout the decades, and are why the Board still exists and remains relevant and appropriate today. Standardised geographical naming ensures that New Zealanders can have certainty and context about ‘where’ and celebrate our culture and heritage in the geographical names given.

The 2024 Centenary offered a chance to reflect, commemorate and celebrate New Zealand’s unique cultural and national identity through geographical names – from the first wave of Māori explorers, followed by the next wave of European settlers in the early 1800s, to the modern-day influences of a multicultural and diverse society. During 2024 the Board set out to:

- celebrate New Zealand’s unique identity and historical impact through geographical naming
- raise awareness of the Board’s work and its people
- recognise the Board’s partners, stakeholders and former members.

The Board undertook these Centenary tasks during 2024:

- Centenary logo in email signatures:



- photo of the current Board at its October 2024 meeting to compare with the September 1924 Honorary Board:



- the Secretary spoke about the Board's Centenary at the GeoCart'2024³⁰ conference in August 2024.
- former Board member Professor Mike Roche, along with current Board member Professor Robin Kearns and the Secretary gave keynote panel presentations at the New Zealand Geographical Society³¹ conference in November in 2024, speaking about the Centenary from different perspectives.
- New website landing page introducing the Centenary³².
- 'long form resource' webpage with articles on notable 'moments and milestones' over the past 100 years, including five past Board member biographical articles written by former Board member Professor Mike Roche³³:

³⁰ <https://cartography.org.nz/geocart2024/>


³¹ <https://www.nzgsconference2024.co.nz/>

³² <https://www.linz.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/about-new-zealand-geographic-board/celebrating-100-years-place-naming>

³³ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/resources/guide/centenary-milestones-new-zealand-geographic-board-nga-pou-taunaha-o-aotearoa>

1894 – Designation of Districts Act 1894	1940 – Centennial Atlas	1989–2005 Evelyn Stokes on the New Zealand Geographic Board
1908 – Designation of Districts Act 1908	1946 – New Zealand Geographic Board established under the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946	1990 – Place Names of the Ancestors – A Māori Oral History Atlas published
1924 – Honorary Geographic Board of New Zealand established	1955–1972 – John Pascoe on the New Zealand Geographic Board	1995 – New maps of Tangata Whenua place names launched
1920s–40s – Correspondence with notable Board members from the past	1956 – Board gains the ability to name features in Antarctica	2008 – New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008
1924–1928 – Surveyor-General William Neill and the establishment and workings of the Honorary Geographic Board	1964–1976 – Mapping (and naming) the backcountry	2013 – Te Ika-a-Māui North Island and Te Waipounamu South Island made official alternative names for our two main islands
1924–1945 – Maurice Crompton-Smith (1864–1953) – an original member of the Honorary Geographic Board	1983–1986 – The great debate – Mount Taranaki or Mount Egmont?	2023 – Second edition of the Tangata Whenua place name maps launched
1924–1957 Johannes Carl Andersen – member of the Honorary Geographic Board (1924–1946) and the New Zealand Geographic Board (1946–1957)	1988 – Māori name Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa adopted	2024 – Looking back at 100 years of Board members
	1989–2005 Evelyn Stokes on the New Zealand Geographic Board	

- website timeline of all Board members, with their membership details and links to biographical information³⁴:



April 1, 1947 – May 7, 1976

Pei Te Hurinui Jones (1898–1976)

Membership details: Recommendation of the Minister of Native Affairs.
New Zealand Geographic Board member for **29 years, 1 month**: 1947-04-01 to 1976-05-07 (died in office).
Total length of Board membership: **37 years, 2 months**.
First notified in the *New Zealand Gazette*: 11 April 1947, Issue 20, Page 465.
Succeeded by Tilly Reedy.

Biography/profile:


- Bruce Biggs, 'Jones, Pei Te Hurinui', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, first published in 1998, Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand
- Mary Hurst, Dr Pei Te Hurinui Jones – an outstanding New Zealander, *Footprints of History*, No. 17, Nov 1996, pp.6–11, Te Awamutu Historical Society; Otirohanga Historical Society; Te Kuiti Historical Society; Waitomo Caves Museum Society

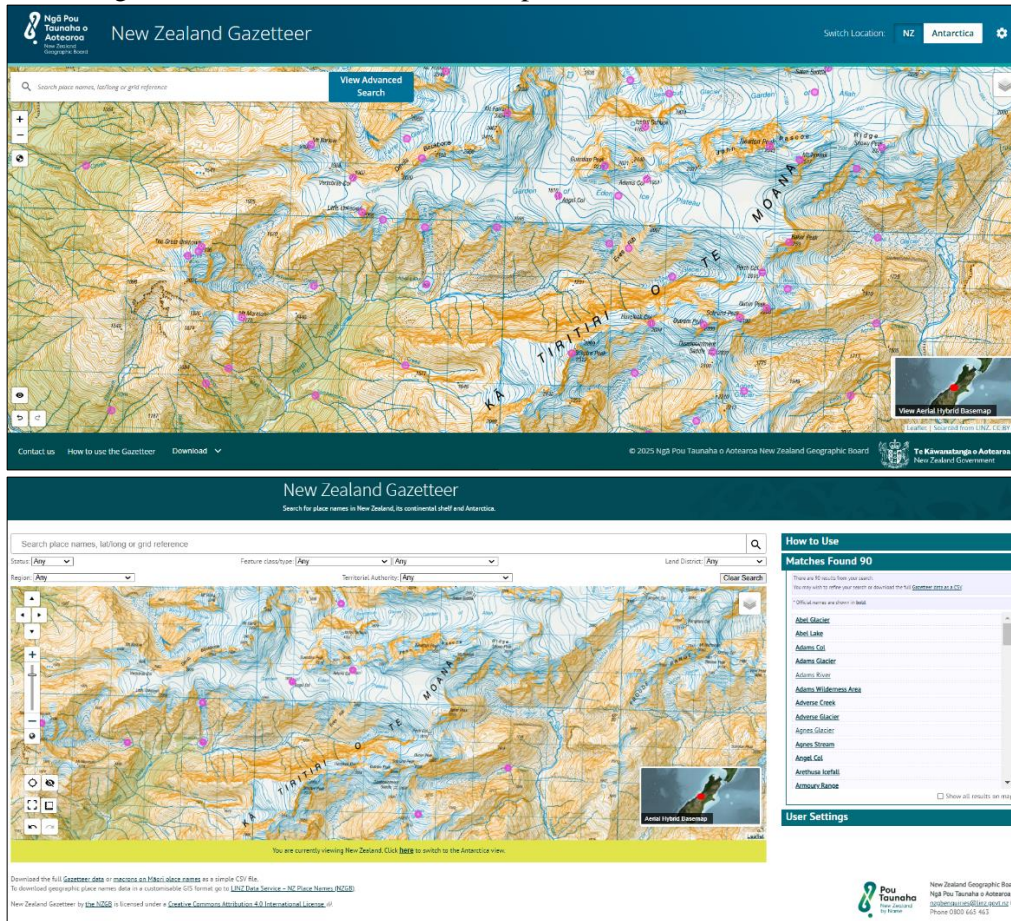
- still to come a website timeline of all Secretaries.
- a monthly social media presence, mainly through Facebook posts that linked to the 'moments and milestones' articles.
- still to come is an article about the contribution of Sir Āpirana Ngata's (an early Board member) to the Board's role in correct orthography for Māori geographical names, and his influence on this. Scheduled to be completed by the end of March 2025.
- to complete the Centenary offerings, interviews may be sought with two past Board Chairpersons.
- Refreshing the New Zealand Gazetteer³⁵ to be more appealing to users, with these enhancements:
- improvement of accessibility was improved to meet international standards, including machine readable text labels for buttons.
- Modernisation of the UI (User Interface) with multiple visual improvements, but without loss of functionality. One new function provides for the inclusion of amending

³⁴ https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1ftI6XddEu9D-19btm528LkEE9DZnmjHPTrgV03cDw&font=Lustria-Lato&lang=en&initial_zoom=4&height=1200

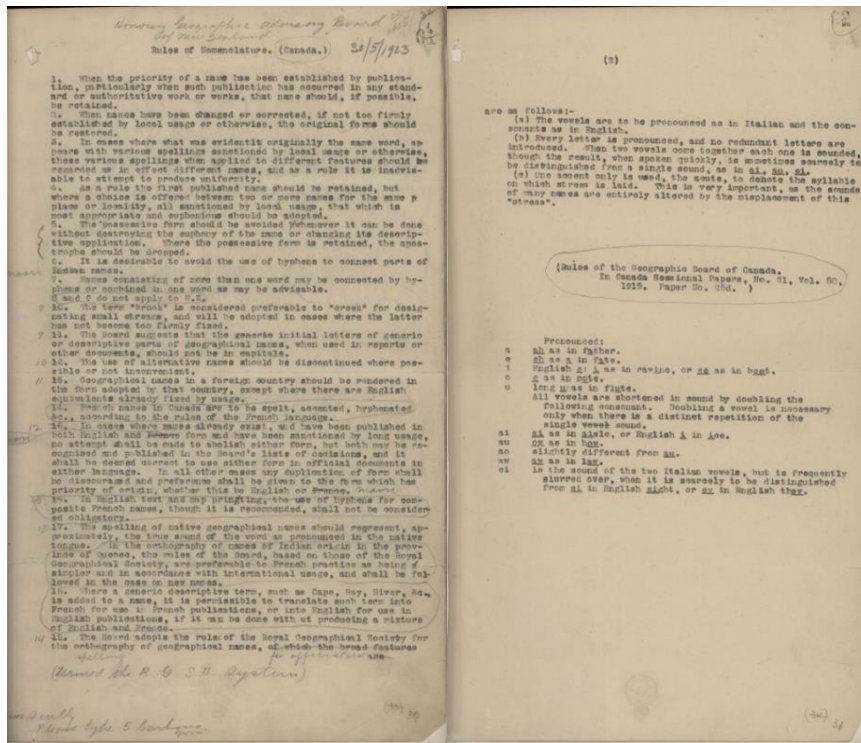
³⁵ <https://gazetteer.linz.govt.nz/>

 Ngā Pou Taumōhio o Aotearoa
 New Zealand Gazetteer

 Switch Location: NZ Antarctica 



- Research for the Centenary revealed that the Honorary Board used Canadian Rules of Nomenclature (1923) as a guide to New Zealand's first Rules of Nomenclature – tailored of course for New Zealand's situation:



- The Centenary also presented an opportunity for the Board to build on the history, origin and meaning ‘field’ in the Gazetteer, since it was regularly referred to in the ‘moments and milestones’ articles. Through structured research methods, nearly 300 geographical name stories have been delivered under this project in the past two years, through a contract with former Board member Mike Roche. They are mostly for localities but also include historic sites and suburbs and are spread throughout the country with 33.5% being in Te Waipounamu or the South Island and 66% in Te Ika-a-Māui or the North Island. The Board will continue this task, however there are still ~34,000 geographical names (out of ~54,000) in the Gazetteer without a story – noting it is a statutory function that the Board may include ‘any background information relevant to the history and name’. Because of limited capacity, the work will take decades to complete in-house. Tight budget constraints mean that recommencement of the contracted project with Mike Roche, is very unlikely. An example of an entry refers for Butler Point³⁶:

History/Origin/Meaning:

Probably named after the Rev. John Butler, the first ordained minister to work among Maori. But it may have been named after Captain William Butler, master of the whaling barque Nimrod, who settled opposite the Mangonui wharf in 1840. Source: Reed, A.W. & Peter Dowling, Place Names of New Zealand, 2010.; Named after Captain William Butler (1814-75), master of the whaling barque Nimrod, who settled opposite Mangonui wharf in 1840. A pā named Moehuri was earlier located on Butler Point, linked to Moehuri captain of the waka Raukarama who, guided by a large shark, landed in Mangōnui Harbour. Butler established a flax and timber trading station at what was known as Waikeke, a peninsula close to deep water anchorages. Here he provisioned vessels from the American Pacific whaling fleet. Thomas Ryan claimed five land purchases made from 1836-1838 for 2280 acres (923 ha) for £128 in goods (including oil, blankets, tobacco, soap and muskets) for land stretching from Rangitoto Point to Waitetiki Stream. From

Ryan, William Butler (1814-75) purchased small areas at Butler Point – then known as Ryan's Point, for his trading station. His establishment became known as Captain Butler's Point by the 1860s. Butler was MP for Manganui from 1861-66. Butler's Point is named on the 1927 Manganui cadastral map NZMS 013 NAK12 drawn by William Bardsley in 1921. It was not included on the initial 1:63360 provisional topographical sheets in 1943 and ethnologist and Honorary Geographic Board member Johannes Andersen (1874-1962), in reviewing the sheets for the 1943 map, was determined to apply Green Point to the point. The Honorary Board agreed, and the name was gazetted in 1948. However, when printed the 1943 map sheet showed neither Butler Point nor Green Point. Correspondence between the Chief Surveyor for Auckland and the New Zealand Geographic Board failed to identify detailed evidence and both names were omitted from the new topographical series in 1958. Butler Point was reinstated on the 1964 topographical map.

³⁶ <https://gazetteer.linz.govt.nz/place/17670>