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**United Nations Group of Experts on  
Geographical Names****2021 session**

Virtual, 3–7 May 2021

Item 11 of the provisional agenda\*

**Toponymic terminology****Generic terms in the Canadian Geographical  
Names Database****Summary\*\***

A primary objective of the 2020–2025 strategic plan for the Geographical Names Board of Canada is to improve the content and the management of the Canadian Geographical Names Database.

Generic terminology goes hand in hand with geographical naming. It is essential for the organization and classification of geographical names. The Board's secretariat and the Translation Bureau, Public Services and Procurement Canada, are working together to conduct a full examination of all the generic terms representing geographical features in the Database, including their definitions, organization and current relevance. This is no small feat, given that there are more than 1,400 generic terms in the Database.

The Board will review and draft:

- The generic code classification, concise code classification, category and subcategory and their organization.
- Plural forms of the generic terms (e.g., Lake vs. Lakes).

The Translation Bureau, in collaboration with the Board's secretariat, will:

- Review terminology used in the generic definitions.
- Organize the generic terms on the basis of a single-concept approach to meet International Organization for Standardization terminology standards.
- Examine the feasibility of having a fully bilingual generic code list.

The Board's secretariat will examine the impact on Natural Resources Canada services, naming jurisdictions and the general public.

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\* [GEGN.2/2021/1](#).

\*\* The full report was prepared by Kristina Kwiatkowski, Geographical Names Board of Canada secretariat, Natural Resources Canada, and Carolina Herrera, Public Services and Procurement Canada. It will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2021/59/CRP.59, in the language of submission only, at [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd\\_session\\_2021/](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd_session_2021/).

