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**PROPOSAL ON ADOPTION OF NEW GENERIC TERMS FOR BATHYMETRIC  
PUBLICATION No. 6**

(Y. Ohara, H-C. Han, V. Stagpoole)

**Introduction**

In 2008 Dr Yasuhiko Ohara presented an analysis of generic terms used in undersea feature names (SCUFN21-04.2A). Dr Ohara identified several issues relating to the use of generic terms, including names in the GEBCO gazetteer that have generic terms that are not listed in Bathymetric Publication No. 6 (Guidelines Proposal form Terminology) and terms in publication No. 6 not used in the gazetteer. He also identified two terms (mud volcano and rift) that are commonly used in scientific and hydrographic literature and asked if these should be added in publication No. 6. In this document we propose that SCUFN consider new generic terms for inclusion in Publication No. 6.

**Background**

Continuing technological developments and the production of higher resolution maps that identify new types of features is leading to better understanding of the geological origins of undersea features. With improved understanding of the processes involved in the creation and evolution of features, more specific generic feature names are becoming common in scientific and hydrographic literature. These terms are more precise because they describe the fundamental geological characteristics of an undersea feature. Names such as sand ridge and mud volcano are now in common use, essentially because they provide a more accurate generic description of features, and also describe the geological basis (genetic origin) of the feature. These terms are repeatedly used and are generally accepted by the scientific and hydrographic community as part of the correct feature name.

Several generic terms based on genetic interpretations are included in Bathymetric Publication No. 6 (Guidelines Proposal form Terminology). Terms such as fan, fracture zone, levee, trench describe features with specific geological origins, and in some cases the definition requires that they have an express geological origin (e.g., fan and levee are formed from depositional processes). There are, however, commonly used generic terms in some feature names that are not listed within the existing generic terms in Publication No. 6. In addition, there are already generic names adopted by SCUFN for features that are located partially in territorial seas of nations that have adopted generic terms not listed in Publication No. 6.

We note that new generic terms are appearing in the literature more frequently and there is a need for SCUFN to have the ability to add new generic terms based on genetic interpretations to Publication No. 6. This will also allow better alignment of Publication No. 6 with the gazetteer.

New generic terms are being used in territorial seas and adopted by national naming authorities. In order to avoid a proliferation of generic feature names for single features – one of the reasons that SCUFN was brought into existence – SCUFN needs to have the flexibility to consider and adopt new generic terms as the need arises.

**Proposal**

We propose that SCUFN consider new generic terms, on a case by case basis, that describe features in terms of current scientific and hydrographic usage, and after due consideration, add these terms

to the Bathymetric Publication No. 6.

Terms that need immediate consideration are:

1. MUD VOLCANO – a mound or cone-shaped feature, up to several hundred metres high, formed by expulsion of liquids and gasses at the seabed. (a definition may also have been submitted 2 years ago by Y. Ohara)
2. SAND RIDGE(S) - A low ridge, or series of long, wide, low, parallel ridges of sand, sometimes crescent shaped. (adapted from Ana Angelica email of 7/1/2010)
3. RIFT – An elongate trough bounded by two or more faults formed as a breach or split between two bodies that were once joined

### **Reference**

SCUFN21-04.2A, A springboard for discussion on B-6 terminology section revision by Yasuhiko Ohara, March 21, 2008. [http://www.iho-ohi.net/mtg\\_docs/com\\_wg/SCUFN/SCUFN21/SCUFN21-04.2A\\_B-6\\_WG\\_Terminology.pdf](http://www.iho-ohi.net/mtg_docs/com_wg/SCUFN/SCUFN21/SCUFN21-04.2A_B-6_WG_Terminology.pdf).