

# **NAMING AND DESCRIBING LOCALITIES: AN ASSESSMENT AFTER 20 YEARS OF APPLICATION IN THE SERGIPE BASIN, BRAZIL**

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Finding previously studied or described outcrops on maps or in the field can be anything from straightforward to a nightmare. Locality designations such as “Sergipe”, “near Laranjeiras”, “3 km upstream on the Rio Sergipe” or “Aracaju–Itabaiana road”, which are often found in older publications and on specimen labels, are next to useless. Modern, detailed geological work also requires detailed locality information. Today, the handheld GPS receiver has become a standard geologist’s tool and, properly managed, ensures accurate locality positioning. But the GPS does not satisfy all the requirements of the working geologist. There is also a need for pertinent information about the localities, such as the kind, extent and quality of the outcrop, the dominant lithology and any characteristic or important structural, sedimentological or palaeontological features. This is particularly important in palaeontology, where the same localities are often repeatedly sampled and frequently referred to, orally and in publications. A locality name can be more easily memorized and used in communication than a set of GPS coordinates. In short, what is needed is a convenient system for unambiguous naming and describing localities. In 1983 such a system was introduced and applied to the extensively exposed Cretaceous rocks of the Sergipe Basin. This system, in which each locality is designated by a place name and a running number (for example, Laranjeiras 5), has been widely accepted by subsequent workers and led to nearly 1,000 localities being named and described accordingly in the basin. The present contribution presents the system and discusses its advantages but also the various problems experienced during its past 22 years of use. It is hoped that the system will continue to be used as a standard system for naming and describing localities in the Sergipe Basin and eventually extended to other basins and regions in Brazil.