Comments received for
ISO 639-3 Change Request
2009-039

Outcome: Rejected

Effective date: 2010-01-18
Registration Authority decision on Change Request no. 2009-039: to change the scope of the code element “[nds] Low Saxon” to a macrolanguage, and add the new individual language [urs] “Urkers”

The request to change the scope of [nds] Low Saxon from individual language to macrolanguage is rejected because it neglects to address the state of the language within Germany, the country with which [nds] is associated in Ethnologue: Languages of the World 16th ed. (and previous editions.) This request addresses only the situation of the members of the Low Saxon classification present in the Netherlands, disregarding the existence of the varieties of the specific language Low Saxon [nds] in Germany, and ignoring members of this classification in other parts of the world. The confusion over having a classification share the same name as a member language of that classification in the Ethnologue is understandable. However, this request does not improve the clarity of the Low Saxon classification and would result in deleting the varieties of Low Saxon in Germany (treated in that context as a single language of numerous dialects) from the ISO 639-3 standard.

The request to add the individual language “Urkers” to the standard is deferred at the present subject to a review and clarification of the languages and language code elements associated with the classification of Low Saxon (Low German) across the region. The ISO 639-3 Registration Authority invites additional input, and would welcome a change proposal that treats Low German in a more comprehensive manner.