

SOUTH AFRICA

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1. Summary of regulations, acts, etc.

The South African Geographical Names Council Act of 1998 (Act No.118 of 1988), enacted in 1998 authorises the establishment of the South African Geographical Names Council. The Act requires that there should be one name standardised for geographical feature. The name should be in any of the eleven official languages. The Act also provide for the establishment of the South African Geographical Names Council which is responsible for recommending geographical names for the Minister of Arts and Culture approval.

2. Responsible bodies

South African Geographical Names Council
Provincial Geographical Names Committees in all nine Provinces
Local Municipalities
Chief Directorate of Surveys and Mapping
Post Office
Pan South African Language Board

3. Process of authorization

An application is initially authorised at the local level where consultation and research take place; it is then forwarded to the relevant Provincial Geographical Names Committee. The Provincial Geographical Names Committee will then forward it to South African Geographical Names Council which will make a final recommendation to the Minister. Thereafter the names will be published in the government gazette to officialise them.

4. Storage and availability of authorized geographical names

The names are stored in different government gazetteer publications and the South African Geographical Names Unit maintains a digital geo-referenced database to store authorised geographical names. The database is available for official use and for the public.

5. Use of authorized geographical names

All approved names are used for official purposes and by the public in general.

6. Availability of national toponymic guidelines

Since the approval of the policy of eleven official languages there have been consultations with the language bodies to finalise language rules which will then feed into national toponymic guidelines.

7. Relevant websites

<http://sagns.dac.gov.za>

8. Email contacts

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