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Activities relating to the Working Group on Exonyms

New list of Polish geographical names of the world *

Submitted by Poland

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New list of Polish geographical names of the world

At the end of 2013, “Official list of Polish geographical names of the world” (“Urzędowy wykaz polskich nazw geograficznych świata”) was published. It was prepared by the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland. This is the second list comprising Polish exonyms from the whole world – the previous one, entitled “Polish geographical names of the world”, was issued in the years 1994-96.

The list includes names of geographical features from all continents, as well as names of undersea features, however, the names of objects lying entirely in the Polish territory have been excluded. The list refers only to the features for which Polish geographical names (exonyms) are recommended. Therefore geographical features for which this kind of name either does not exist or are not recommended have not been included.

The Polish names for 13,359 geographical features have been given in the list. Most of the features are included in the chapter with European countries – 9,646. Among the countries, the most numerous are the ones with names from Ukraine (2222 named features) and Belarus (2020). Due to the fact that the names of transboundary features have been repeated in the lists of individual countries, there is a total capacity of 14,975 name entities in the publication. In addition, 238 Polish variant names are included in the list, as well as 254 long forms of names, mostly used in official relations. Compared to the previous publication, the Commission has significantly extended the number of recommended Polish names for geographic features (mostly towns) that lay on areas which belonged to Poland before World War II, particularly in the areas nowadays inhabited by Polish minority. For this reason, the lists of Polish names from Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine have been significantly enhanced.

The list has been divided into eight parts (chapters). Seven of them correspond to the traditionally determined parts of the world (Europe, Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Australia and Oceania, Antarctica). The last one is devoted to undersea features. Chapters of the particular parts of the world begin with the list of recommended Polish names of the great regional units and oceans. Next, the names are posted according to alphabetically arranged countries and non-self-government territories. Names of geographical features from the areas of individual countries or territories are have been arranged by 59 categories, the existence of which depends on the specifics of the particular country or territory. In the eighth chapter, related to undersea features, names are posted according to the location of features on five oceans with the separately listed features from the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. Names of individual geographic features included in this chapter have been arranged by 14 categories. Among all categories, the most numerous category is “localities” in which 5,238 Polish names of features are given, following the category “administrative units” (with 1669 features) and “rivers” (667 features).

For each entity, the Polish name (exonym) followed by the original name (endonym) is given. For names in languages that are written in non-Roman scripts, the Romanized forms are provided. Next, the features’ coordinates are posted. If necessary, the additional information and observations are provided, such as information about localization of a transboundary feature in other countries, additional characteristics of a feature or its localization, and selected historical names of a feature. The alphabetical index of all Polish names is attached at the end of this publication.

The list has been published in Polish only, but there will be prepared an inset in English. The whole publication is available on the website of the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland: <http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/english/wydawnictwa.php>.