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TOPONYMIC GUIDELINES FOR CARTOGRAPHY SURINAME  
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# Toponymic Guidelines for Cartography

## Suriname.

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### I. Languages.

#### 1. General remarks.

Suriname is a multilingual country with Dutch being the only official language. Sranan is a widely spoken, national language. The other languages are more or less of regional and local importance, or restricted to use within the respective ethnic groups.

#### 2. Official language.

The official language (parliament, courts, schools, official documents) is Dutch and is written in its standard form in the Roman alphabet.

Spelling rules for Dutch geographical names:

#### 1. Spelling of the vowels (and Diphtongs).

The vowels are represented by the letters a, e, i, o, u, or by combinations of these letters.

Depending on the last sound and spelling tradition diphtongs are written with i, u, j, or w in last position.

#### 2. The spelling of the consonants.

The consonants are represented by the letters b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, z, or combinations of these letters.

The use of the apostrophe.

The apostrophe takes the place of one or two omitted letters e.g. 's Hertogenbosch (des Hertogenbosch).

Furthermore in some genitives e.g. Sint Anna'sbaai (Med. Antillen

### The use of the hyphen.

The hyphen is used in geographical names, in which an adjective appears e.g. Nieuw-Amsterdam (Suriname) and also in saint-names e.g. Sint-Michiels gestel (Noord-Brabant; the Netherlands).

### The use of capitals.

Capitals are used in proper names and as geographical names and proper names they are consequently written with a capital letter. In binominal geographical names both parts start with a capital Groot-Chatillon (Suriname); the initial letter of connecting particles as in Bergen-op-Zoom (the Netherlands) is in lower case.

### 3. National language.

The national language is Sranan-tongo or Sranan and is written in the Roman alfabet.

The Sranan alfabet:

Aa	Ii	Pp	Yy
Bb	Kk	Rr	
Dd	Ll	Ss	
Ee	Mm	Tt	
Ff	Nn	Uu	
Gg	Oo	Ww	

The other letters C, H, J, Q, V, X and Z are only used in foreign words.

Spelling rules for Sranan geographical names.

All words are written in their full form as pronounced by educated language-users in the capital of Suriname.

No vowel nor consonant is ever doubled.

The following diacritical marks are used: apostrophe, accent aigu and accent grave.

Concerning the vowels:

The so-called voiceless e-sound is never written.

The nasalized vowels are represented by the vowels concerned followed by the letter N e.g. dansi (to dance), ten (time), tin (ten) don (stupid), spun (spoon).

The diphthongs are: AY, AW, OY, OW, EY, EW, UY.

In most maps of Suriname, one will find the digraph OE in geographical names, representing the dutch OE-sound. This sound is represented in Sranan by the letter U. This replacement already takes place in Sranan geographical names on new maps.

Some combinations of consonants:

TY, DY and NY are used but never before I and E, further NG and SY.

The writing together of words.

When expressing a name (e.g. geographical name) a combination of two different words is always written together (e.g. Bonidoro). (If written apart Boni doro means (a person named Boni) has arrived).

(Bigipan - if written apart this means "big cooker").

#### The use of hyphens.

If the combination comprises three or more parts, the hyphen is used between those parts which belong the least together. (Nomerimi-kondre; kondre = village, place, land and nomerimi means "don't touch me").

#### The use of capital letters.

Capital letters are used at the beginning of names (antroponyms and toponyms).

#### Geographical names.

Geographical names, in which generic terms feature the hyphen (or where desirable an apostrophe) is used:

- anu*	(branch)	- kampu	(camp)
- bangi	(bank)	- kondre	(village)
- bergi	(mountain)	- kriki	(creek)
- dan	(dam)	- liba	(river)
- ey	(height)	- mofo	(stream-mouth)
- ede	(head)	- mongo	(hill)
- gotro	(gutter)	- olo	(cove)
- gron	(locality)	- pan	(pool)
	- pasi	(trail)	
	- prati	(tributary, river-islet)	
	- presi	(place, locality)	
	- sabana	(savannah)	
	- santi	(sandplate, sandy ground)	
	- ston	(rock, rockformation)	
	- sula	(rapid)	
	- tabiki	(river-islet)	
	- uku*	(bend)	
	- watra	(stream)	

A hyphen is also used in the following combinations:

- baka(sey)	(behind)	e.g.	Alasa-baka(sey)
- gran	(big, main)	"	Gran-rio
- ondro	(downstream)	"	Peto-ondro
- pikin	(small)	"	Pikin-santi
- tapu*	(upstream)	"	Mongo-tapu.

Geographical names where-in combinations with one of the following adjectives appear, are written together (except in combination with a generic term, starting with a vowel in those cases the hyphen is used).

- bigi	(big)	- njun*	(new)
- blaka	(black)	- redi	(red)
- dri	(three)	- tu	(two)
- fosi	(first)	- weti	(white)
- kowru*	(cold)	e.g.	kowruwatra
- langa	(long)	e.g.	langa anu

#### 4. Minority languages.

As such are considered in Suriname the following languages:

- a. Ndyuka
- b. Saramaka
- c. Sarnami Hindustani
- d. Caraib language
- e. Arowak language.

a. Ndyuka together with Sranan and Saramaka form the creole languages.

Although Saramaka differs fundamentally from Sranan and Ndyuka - which are almost alike - for cartographic purposes the same alfabet as used for Sranan is applied for the other two languages also.

Major difficulties arise in the pronunciation of the names: f.i. not in Ndyuka and neither in Saramaka the consonant "r" is heard.

Compared to similar words in Sranan the consonant "l" replaces the "r" or the vowel preceding or following the "r" is prolonged e.g. Dritabiki is pronounced as Diitabiki, Gran-rio is pronounced as "Gʁan lio".

\*) Before the introduction of the standardization of sranan geographical names the double vowel "oe" was employed instead of the vowel "u".

b. Because as stated Saramaka is quite different from Sranan and Ndyuka, it also uses different generic terms in the geographical names:

buka	-	mouth
dan	-	rapid
funda	-	trough
kununu	-	mountain
lio	-	river
maw	-	tributary
prati	-	river - island
pu	-	swamp
sandu	-	sandbank along the river
sitonu	-	rock, stone.

c. Sarnami Hindustani.

As starting point for the spelling the pronunciation by educated language-users and not an orthography (f.i. Devanagari - or Urdu script) of Sarnami Hindustani as it is spoken in Suriname is taken.

Romanizing the Sarnami Hindustani the following rules are accepted:

1. No diacritical marks.
2. As few letters as possible.
3. No doubling of letters (unless necessary for the pronunciation).
4. The same letter for the same sound and the same sound for the same letter.
5. Conformity with the Surinamese languages.

The alfabet used, consists of 23 letters i.e.

A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K,L,M,N,O,P,R,S,T,T,U,V,Y and Z

(Q, W and X are not used except in proper names and

foreign words). The diphtongs are: ai and au; while

nasalizing a vowel is performed by placing a n behind

the vowel. Use is made of the trema and hyphen.

Capital letters are used in (among other things) proper names and geographical names.

As much as possible conformity with the Surinamese languages is aimed at; diversion of this principle was necessary with the diphtong au (aw in Sranan) and the consonants C,H and V for reasons of pronounciations.

Although no specific Sarnami Hindustani toponyms are found in Suriname maps, the Hindustani people prefer to use translations or transcriptions of the official geographical names.

Not having specific generic terms, they use the Sranan word "boyti" (i.e. plantation or countryseat) to indicate roads passing through these entities.

Most times the dutch designations to these entities are replaced by the owner's name in Hindi sounds f.i. Kweeklustweg becomes Dhames-boyti (de Meza being the owner of Kweeklust); Frederikshoopweg = Kopin-boyti.

The Dutch generic term burg (=stronghold, hide-out) becomes either borgu or bog f.i. Domburg = Domborgu; Mariënborg = Maryambog.

## II. Names authority and names standardization.

As yet there is no official Names Authority in Suriname except for the micro-toponymy (street-names) of which the Ministry of Home affairs takes care.

Concerning geographical names in relation to cartography the following statement may suffice.

The Surinamese Cartographic Commission - including the working group Toponymy - takes care of the standardization of geographical names of inhabited places, mountains, hills, stream and the like. This standardization is not yet finished.

The Central Bureau for Aerial Mapping (CBL), which is in charge of the cartography in Suriname, publishes these standardized names in the first place in the topographical map-sheets in the scale 1:50.000. These names are then the official toponyms. (For more details see E/Conf 69/L37 of June 27, 1977 Paper of Suriname).

A gazetteer is in progress but not yet concluded, containing:

- a. geographical name;
- b. entity;
- c. geographical coördinates;
- d. administrative unity;
- e. sheet index.

## III. Source material.

The data regarding the geographical names are derived from:

- a. old maps;
- b. voyage- and expedition reports;
- c. interviews with local people.
- d. more recent maps (CBL) scale 1:200.000.

The following directives are valid for the standardization of geographical names:

- a. All geographical names of distinct Surinamese origin are written according to the spelling of Sranan, as presented under chapter I.3.
- b. Dutch, French and English toponyms are written according to the official spelling of the language concerned.
- c. The generic term in Dutch, English or French geographical names is retained in the same language as the descriptive part of that name.

In all other cases (Indian, Ndyuka, Saramaka, Sranan, etc.) the generic term will always be indicated in Sranan.

- d. In case the origin of the geographical name is uncertain either Dutch or Sranan is used in the standardization. (In the coastal area, where the influence of Dutch is predominant and some toponyms gained public rights, preference is given to Dutch).

#### IV. Glossary of appellatives, adjectives and other words, necessary for the understanding of maps and cadastral plans:

I = Indian(amer); S = Sranan; N = Dutch; SA = Saramaka

S = SRANAN

N = DUTCH

SA = SARAMAKA

##### A

anu (S)

branch

##### B

baka (S)

back, behind

bangi (S)

shoal (sand, mud)

bank (N)

idem

basu sey (SA)

downstream

berg (N)

mountain

bergi (S)

idem, hill

bigi (S)

big

bilu (S)

downstream

bos (N)

forest

boyti (S)

country-seat

blaka (S)

black

bradi (S)

broad

buka (SA)

mouth

burg (N)

stronghold

busi (S)

forest, jungle.



S = SRANAN

N = DUTCH

SA = SARAMAKA

D

dam (N)	dam
dan (S)	dam, dike
dan (SA)	rapid
distrikt (N)	administrative division
dyari (S)	yard, garden
dorp (N)	village
dray (S)	turn
dri (S)	three.

E

(h)ey (S)	height
ede (S)	head
eiland (N)	island

F

fosi (S)	first
funda (SA)	through

G

gebergte (N)	mountain, range
gotro (S)	gutter
gracht (N)	irrigation canal
graf (N)	grave
gran (S)	big, main
gron (S)	locality
groot (N) grote	big

H

halte (N)	railroad stop, bus stop
(h)ey (S)	height
heuvels (N)	hills
hoek (N)	point
hoofd (N)	head
holo (S)	hole, cave
hoop (N)	hope

I

(h)ila (S)	island
ile(t) (French)	island
ityoli (icholi)(I)	rapid.

K

kamp (N)	camp
kampu (S)	"
kanaal (N)	canal
keten (N)	mountain, range
kreek (N)	stream
klein (N), kleine	small, little
kondre (S)	settlement, village
kowru (S)	cold
kriki (S)	stream
kununu (SA)	mountain.

L

langa (S)	long
lanpresi (S)	landing-place
leiding (N)	irrigation canal
liba (S)	river
linker (N)	left
lio (SA)	river
lust (N)	pleasure

M

maw (SA)	tributary
meer (N)	lake, reservoir
midden (N)	middle
mofo (S)	mouth
mongo (S)	height, hill
moy (S)	beatiful

N

nieuw (N)	new
nyun (S)	new
noord (N)	north

O

(h)olo (S)	hole, cove
ondro (S)	downstream, underneath
ondrosey (S)	lower side
opo (S)	upper side
opoliba (S)	up-stream
oposey (S)	upper course
oost (N)	east.

P

pan (S)	waterpool
pasi (S)	trail, path, road
patayá (I)	village
patare (I)	cultivated spot
patatpe (I)	obsolete spot
paw (I)	river-island
piek (N)	peak
pikin (S)	little, small
placer (S)	placermine
polder (N)	polder
post (N)	governmental or mission post
prati (SA)	river-island
prati (S)	branching
presi (S)	place, locality
pu (SA)	swamp
punt (N)	point

R

rechter (N)	right
redi (S)	red
rivier (N)	river
rots (N)	rock in (water or land)
rust (N)	rest
rio (SA)	river

S

sabana (S)	savanna
savanne (N)	"
sandu (SA)	sandbank (river)
santi (S)	sandy ground, plate
saut (French)	rapid
se (S)	sea
sey (S)	side
sitonu (SA)	rock
sluis (N)	sluice gate
stad (N)	town
ston (S)	stone
straat (N)	street
strati (S)	street
sula (S)	rapid, waterfall

swampu (S)	swamp
stroomversnelling (N)	rapid
<u>T</u>	
tabiki (S)	river-island
tapu (S)	upperside, topside
top (N)	peak
tu (S)	two
tuin (N)	garden
<u>U</u>	
uku (S)	point, corner
<u>V</u>	
val (N)	waterfall, rapid
versnelling (N)	rapid
<u>W</u>	
waterval (N)	waterfall, rapid
watra (S)	stream, water
wey (S)	meadow
west (N)	west
weg (N)	road
weti (S)	white
<u>Z</u>	
zicht (N)	view
zorg (N)	care
zuid (N)	south.

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